

**JPG 1516: Declining Cities**  
**Department of Planning and Geography**  
**Semester: Spring 2017**  
**Thursdays 2-4pm**  
**Location: SS 5017a**

**Instructor:**

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Office Hours: XXX, and by appointment

**General description:**

The majority of urban theory is implicitly or explicitly oriented around the idea of growth. In the face of decline, the most common policy proposal is to (try to) reignite growth. Existing theoretical paradigms frame such places as problems or anomalies despite the fact that virtually every city has (or will) experience some form of decline somewhere within its boundaries. This class explores how to understand and engage with urban decline. The hope is that this exercise will shed light not only on iconic declining places like Detroit, but also on the nature of uneven development and how it is the rule rather than the anomalous exception within capitalist urbanization. Framing decline in this way allows us to see that vacated spaces within an otherwise growing city like Toronto are produced by similar forces as vacated spaces in declining industrial or resource-based regions.

**Readings:**

Most course readings are retrievable through the University of Toronto Library System; the remainder will be provided to students directly (details TBA).

**Policies:**

**Assignment submission:** The final paper for this class must be submitted (hard copy) by the date listed below. Written work will incur a penalty of 15 percent per day (with nothing accepted one week after the deadline).

**Academic integrity:** I expect that most of you are well-acquainted with the university's policies regarding plagiarism and academic misconduct. Briefly, the quotation or paraphrasing of an author without proper citation is strictly prohibited, as is the submission of an assignment that you did not complete (e.g. buying a term paper, re-using old term papers). For more information about this matter, please visit: <http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/facultyandstaff/Pages/Academic-Integrity.aspx>

**Disability services:** If you require accommodations for a disability, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom or course materials, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible: [disability.services@utoronto.ca](mailto:disability.services@utoronto.ca) or [www.accessibility.utoronto.ca](http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca).

**Evaluation:**

**15 percent:** Participation in discussion/ engagement with the reading. I am not going to police the latter vigilantly nor do I intend to penalize students who are not particularly outgoing. But by the same token,

it is crucial for students to engage with the readings as seriously as possible. As part of this component, students will be required to provide a short presentation on one of the supplemental readings listed below. The presentation should be no more than 5 minutes in length and be centered around relating the article in question to the day's required reading.

**25 percent:** Interventions assignment. Produce a three-page hand-out and deliver a presentation on a planning, policy, or activist approach that has been used in the past to manage or mitigate some aspect of urban decline. Examples can be state-based (such as government take-over of dis-used land to build public goods) or activist based (such as forming a co-operative or protesting an essential cause of decline). The essential element though is that it be a tangible policy or approach that has been used by a person, institution, or government in the past. More details about this assignment will be announced in class. These presentations will occur on February 16 and March 2.

**60 percent:** Final paper and presentation. You are required to develop, research, and write a 15-20 page paper on some aspect of urban decline. Each student will present the paper briefly (<10 minutes) in class on March 30 or April 6. The paper itself will be due one week after the end of classes, April 13.

### Schedule:

\* Reading available on the class portal site (Blackboard); all others available online through the library online system (either journals or online books)

#### **Week 1: Introduction to the course**

- why study decline?
- scope of course and content
- expectations
- introductions

#### **Week 2 (January 12): The nature of urban decline**

- types of decline
- causes of decline
- geography of decline
- land abandonment as a type of decline
- models of explaining decline
- paradigms of natural or autonomous order
- where does human/ political intervention matter?

### Readings:

Dewar, M., and Weber, M. (2012). City abandonment. in: R. Crane and R. Weber (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Urban Planning*. Oxford University Press. (available as an online resource through the UofT Library)

Friedrichs, J. (1993). A theory of urban decline: Economy, demography and political elites. *Urban Studies*, 30(6): 907-917.

Martinez-Fernandez, C., Audirac, I., Fol, S., and Cunningham-Sabot, E. (2012). Shrinking cities: Urban Challenges of Globalization. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 36(2): 213-225.

Reckien, D., and Martinez-Fernandez, C. (2011). Why do cities shrink? *European Planning Studies*, 19(8): 1375-1397.

Supplemental readings:

Hall, H., and Hall, P.V. (2008). Decline and no growth: Canada's forgotten urban interior. *Canadian Journal of Regional Science*, 31(1): 1-18.

Beauregard, R. (2009). Urban population loss in historical perspective: United States, 1820-2000. *Environment and Planning A*, 41: 514-528.

Bernt, M., Haase, A., Grobmann, K., Cocks, M., Couch, C., Cortese, C., and Krzysztofik, R. (2014). How does(n't) urban shrinkage get onto the agenda? Experiences from Leipzig, Liverpool, Genoa, and Bytom. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 38(5): 1749-66.

**Week 3 (January 19): Resisting decline**

- urban "resilience"
- the power of regional governance (or lack thereof)
- regional governance and other measures to fight decline
- is there a natural wave to city fortunes?
- can locational advantage (or disadvantage) be changed?
- impacts of deindustrialization

Readings:

Cowell, M. (2013). Bounce back or move on: Regional resilience and economic development planning. *Cities*, 30: 212-222.

\* Neumann, T. (2016). Introduction: Cities and the Postindustrial Imagination. Pp. 1-13, in *Remaking the Rust Belt: The postindustrial transformation of North America*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

\* Polese, M. (2015). The resilient city: On the determinants of successful urban economies. Pp. 145-161, in R. Paddison and T. Hutton (eds.), *Cities and Economic Change: Restructuring and dislocation in the global metropolis*. London: Sage.

\* Safford, S. (2009). Chapter 1, in *Why the Garden Club Couldn't Save Youngstown: The transformation of the Rust Belt*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Supplemental readings:

Molotch, H. (1976). The city as a growth machine: Toward a political economy of place. *The American Journal of Sociology*, 82(2): 309-332.

Reed, A. (1987). A critique of neo-progressivism in theorizing about local development policy: A case from Atlanta. Pp. 199-215, in CN Stone and HT Sanders (eds.), *Comparative Urban and Community Research*. Lawrence: University of Kansas Press.

Wiechmann, T. and K. Pallagst (2012). Urban shrinkage in Germany and the USA: A comparison of transformation patterns and local strategies. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 36(2): 261-80.

**Week 4 (January 26): Race and urban decline**

- social divisions and decline; cause, consequence, or both?
- planning for social division (and economic decline)

Readings:

Coates, T-N. (2014). The case for reparations. *Atlantic Monthly*. Available at: <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/06/the-case-for-reparations/361631/>

Hackworth, J. (2016). Why there is no Detroit in Canada. *Urban Geography*, 37(2): 272-295.

\* Massey, D., and Denton, N. (1993). Chapter 2, in *American Apartheid: Segregation and the making of the underclass*. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.

\* Power, A., Ploger, J., and Winkler, A. (2010). Chapter 8-Belfast, in *Phoenix Cities: The fall and rise of great industrial cities*. Bristol: The Policy Press.

Supplemental readings:

Bradford, C. (1979). Financing home ownership: The federal role in neighborhood decline. *Urban Affairs Quarterly*, 14(3): 313-335.

Glaeser, E., and Shleifer, A. (2005). The Curley Effect: The economics of shaping the electorate. *The Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization*, 21: 1-19.

Metzger, J.T. (2000). Planned abandonment: The neighborhood life-cycle theory and National Urban Policy. *Housing Policy Debate*, 11(1): 7-40.

Reed, A. (1988). The black urban regime: Structural origins and constraints. Pp. 138-189, in M. P. Smith (Ed.), *Power, community and the city: Comparative urban and community research*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction.

**Week 5 (February 2): Urban removal**

- the politics of defining blight
- economics of physical decline: reasons for demolition, disinvestment, etc.
- removing physical blight
- right-sizing, urban renewal
- triage
- "middle" neighborhoods

Readings:

Cooper-McCann, P. (2016). The trap of triage: Lessons from the 'Team Four Plan'. *Journal of Planning History*, 15(2): 149-169.

Hackworth, J. (2016). Demolition as urban policy in the American Rust Belt. *Environment and Planning A*, 48(11): 2201-2222.

Mallach, A. (2011). Demolition and preservation in shrinking US industrial cities. *Building Research and Information*, 39(4): 380-394.

Supplemental readings:

Rhodes, J., and Russo, J. (2013). Shrinking 'smart'? Urban redevelopment and shrinkage in Youngstown, Ohio. *Urban Geography*, 34(3): 305-236.

Schilling, J., and Logan, J. (2008). Greening the rust belt: A green infrastructure model for right sizing America's shrinking cities. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 74(4): 451-66.

Wallace, D., and Wallace, R. (2011). Consequences of massive housing destruction: the New York City fire epidemic. *Building Research and Information*, 39(4): 395-411.

**Week 6 (February 9): Punishment as urban policy**

- penalizing the most marginalized
- perpetuating marginalization
- incarceration, anti-homelessness laws, weed and seed program
- relationship to triage
- social mix ideas and policy (culture of poverty arguments)
- penalizing residents; enticing (non-resident) investors

Readings:

Coates, T-N. (2015). Moynihan, mass incarceration, and responsibility. *Atlantic Monthly*. Available at: <http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/09/moynihan-mass-incarceration-and-responsibility/407131/>

Goetz, E. (1996). The US war on drugs as urban policy. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 20(3): 539-49.

Kelling, G. and Wilson, J.Q. (1982). Broken Windows: The police and neighborhood safety. *Atlantic Monthly*. Available at: <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1982/03/broken-windows/304465/>

Smith, J. (1999). Cleaning up public housing by sweeping out the poor. *Habitat International*, 23(1): 49-62.

Thompson, H.A. (2010). Why mass incarceration matters: Rethinking crisis, decline, and transformation in postwar American history. *The Journal of American History*, 97(3): 703-734.

Supplemental readings:

Hinton, E. (2016). Chapter 1, in *From the War on Poverty to the Ward on Crime: The making of mass incarceration in America*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Meeks, D. (2006). Police militarization in urban areas: The obscure war against the underclass. *The Black Scholar*, 35(4): 33-41.

### **Week 7 (February 16): Planning Interventions Presentations**

#### **READING WEEK (February 20-24)**

### **Week 8 (March 2): Planning Interventions Presentations**

#### **Week 9 (March 16): Reparations for rentiers**

- deregulation and accommodation for land investors: title clearing, tax incentives, side lots
- contrast with penalty emphasis for actual citizens

#### Readings:

Akers, J. (2013). Making markets: Think tank legislation and private property in Detroit. *Urban Geography*, 34(8): 1070-1095.

\* Hackworth, J. (2015). The normalization of market-fundamentalism in Detroit: The case of land abandonment. Pp. 75-90, in M.P. Smith and L.O. Kirkpatrick (Eds.), *Reinventing Detroit*. New Brunswick, N.J. and London: Transaction Publishers.

Harvey, D. (1989) From managerialism to entrepreneurialism: The transformation of urban governance in late capitalism. *Geografiska Annaler B*, 71: 3-17.

Weber, R. (2002). Extracting value from the city: Neoliberalism and urban redevelopment. *Antipode*, 34(3): 519-540.

#### Supplemental readings:

Peck, J. (2006). Liberating the city: between New York and New Orleans. *Urban Geography* 27(8): 681-783.

Rybczynski, W., and Linneman, P. (1999). How to save our shrinking cities. *Public Interest*, 135, 30-44.

#### **Week 10 (March 23): Alternatives**

- alternatives: CLTs (are they necessary in declining environments); right-sizing
- argument against affordable housing in declining environments
- argument for affordable housing in declining environments
- opportunities of declining spaces
- challenges of declining spaces
- using the status quo differently (expanded rent vouchers)

#### Readings:

\* Darden, J., and Thomas, R. (2013). Chapter 13, in *Detroit: Race riots, racial conflicts, and the efforts to bridge the racial divide*. Lansing: Michigan State University Press.

Desmond, M. (2015). Epilogue from *Evicted*. New York: Crown Publishers.

Knox, P. (2005). Creating ordinary places: Slow cities in a fast world. *Journal of Urban Design*, 10(1): 1-11.

LaCroix, C. (2011). Urban green uses: the new renewal. *Planning and Environmental Law*, 63(5): 3-13.

Supplemental readings:

Lawson, L., and Miller, A. (2012) Community gardens and urban agriculture as antithesis to abandonment: Exploring a citizenship-land model. Pp. 17-40 in M. Dewar and J.M. Thomas (eds), *The City after Abandonment*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Schneider, V. (2015). Property rebels: Reclaiming abandoned, bank-owned homes for community uses. *American University Law Review*, 65: 399-433.

Thompson, M. (2015). Between boundaries: From commoning and guerrilla gardening to community land trust development in Liverpool. *Antipode*, 47(4): 1021-42.

**Week 11 (March 30) & Week 12 (April 6): Final paper presentations**

**Final paper due: April 13**