

11.329 Social Theory and the City

Session 13:

Part 1: Photographs in Urban Planning

Summary:

During the first half of class, discussion focused on a draft work-in-progress written and presented by Steve Moga. His work explored the subject of photography and how it can be used to impact the work of planners. He presented a series of photographs that he had encountered while he was working with the photography collections at the Los Angeles Public Library. Discussion focused on the issues that arise from photography: who is seeing, what is being shown, how it is reality, how it is a manipulation of reality, etc. and how those issues impact planners who work with photographs as documents and photography as a tool.

Theoretical issues underpinning the content:

The observer vs. the observed

Truth vs. ideology

Aesthetic versus documentary nature of photography

Text vs. context

Roland Barthes' theories as expressed in *Camera Lucida*

Example Photographers:

Walker Evans

Robert Frank

Jacob Riis

Lewis Hine

Dorothea Lange

Part 2: Immigrant Spaces

Summary:

During the second half of class, discussion focused on a working paper published as part of the Rosemarie Rogers Working Paper Series at the Inter-University Committee on International Migration, *Ice Skating and Island Hopping: Refugees, Integration, and Access in a Segregated City*, and a draft work-in-progress, *Fast Food / High Speed / Hip Hop: Migrants and Globalized Spaces in European Cities* written and presented by Jennifer Mack. In the former, she analyzed a Red-Cross sponsored program intended to integrate immigrants into mainstream Swedish culture by bringing Swedes and immigrants together to learn about Sweden and explore sites important to Swedish identity. She found, however, that when asked to draw a mental map of Stockholm, immigrant program participants were not inclined to include traditionally "Swedish" locations in their maps. Rather they emphasized the importance of spaces that were not inherently Swedish as their most important destinations. Jennifer explores this concept in greater depth in the second essay and brings in examples from immigrant communities in Spain and Germany as well.

Theoretical issues underpinning the content:

- National identity
- Hip hop and globalization
- Spaces of hip hop
- Generational differences
- Integration and resistance