PhD Course in
Urban Geography/Urban Studies/Cultural Studies
Theme: Urban Rage in the Urban Age: Crises and the Transformation of Cities
Fall 2019: November 12-15
Uppsala Sweden
Application Deadline: 30 September 2019
(Earlier Applications Encouraged)

Course Organizers:
Prof. Don Mitchell, Department of Social and Economic Geography, Uppsala University
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Dr. Catharina Thörn, Department of Cultural Studies, University of Gothenburg
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Prof. Mustafa Dikeç, Department of Urban Studies, Malmö University (mustafa.dikec@mah.se)

Course Rationale and Description:
As has been well noted in the scholarly literature and popular discourse, we now live in an urban age. As Lefebvre argued fifty years ago, the industrial revolution seems to have been supplanted by an urban revolution. If this is the case, then what used to appear as industrial crises increasingly now appear as urban crises. The goal of this course will be to better understand what these crises are, how they have been interpreted and policed, and what this means for the shifting geography of cities.

For if this is an urban age, it is also a time of urban rage – of riot, rebellion, uprising, and insurrection – as the social democratic, socialist, and neoliberal orders that marked the early stages of the urban revolution have sequentially broken down, and as a new social order has yet to solidify. Understanding the role riots, uprisings, and revolts in the production of urban space, urban disorder, and the nature of emerging new urban orders, is thus of utmost importance.

Geographers, urbanists, and scholars of culture have contributed to a vibrant and growing literature on urban unrest, which, through its specific focus on the spatiality of urban riot, revolt, and uprising, can be distinguished from (even as it builds upon) earlier scholarship on social movements and urban disorder.

In this course we will:

- Begin on day one with a reading of “foundational” works on rioting and its policing;
- Spend a second day focused solely on a highly prescient (if now 40-year old) text, Policing the Crisis, which is indispensable for contemporary understandings of urban crisis, urban unrest, and urban policing;
- Devote a third day to a highly influential popular culture “text” of urban rage, La Haine (Hate);
- And then focus our fourth day on the current moment of urban unrest seeking to understand it in light of what we have learned from the past scholarship and cultural representations as well as what can be gleaned from contemporary urban social theory.
In addition, students will have an opportunity to present their own research or paper ideas and there will be ample time for less formal discussion with course colleagues and the course instructors.

Each day’s seminars will be structured around five leading questions:

1. **What’s the crisis – and how can it be explained?**
2. **Where, why, and how does (urban) anger manifest itself – and what are its uses?**
3. **How is the crisis, and the anger, policed – and to what effects?**
4. **What effects does all this have on cities – their geography, social relations, political economy, politics, etc.?**
5. **What does the study of urban rage and its policing teach us about the nature of the urban age?**

This will be an intensive seminar with all three course leaders participating in all modules. Students are likewise expected to be fully present for all parts of the course.

**Examination will occur by a final paper of 6,000-8,000 words.** For the paper, we expect students to write on a moment of significant urban upheaval – past or present – drawing, if possible, on cultural representations (films, popular literature, etc.), as well as scholarly work. Papers should be written in direct relation to the five organizing questions of the course (or a subset of them).

**While writing a paper in the norm for this course, students wishing to submit an alternative to a paper (e.g. film, podcast, exhibition) may discuss their ideas for doing so with the course organizers.**

**Keep in mind:** Your overall research project need not be directly about urban rage. You can use this opportunity to develop a related set of arguments, or to examine your project from a new direction (what difference does the possibility of urban unrest, or policing in anticipation of it, for example, make to your specific topic?). Or you can use this paper as an opportunity to focus on something you’ve always wanted to examine but that does not fit directly within the scope of your PhD research.

**Participating students will be expected to present** their central arguments as well as an overview/outline of their final paper/project during the block set aside for student presentation.

**To Apply:**
Send an email to Don Mitchell ([Don.Mitchell@kultgeog.uu.se](mailto:Don.Mitchell@kultgeog.uu.se)) expressing your interest in the course. Include an explanation of how the course might influence or be valuable to your scholarly interests. Seats in the course are limited so we cannot guarantee everyone admission. Applications will be accepted up until **30 September, 2019** – early applications appreciated – and the organizers will inform all applicants whether or not they are admitted to the course shortly after the deadline.

**Course Schedule Begins Next Page**
Course Schedule

**Tuesday, 12 November, 2019**

13:15-14:00, Introductions and Introduction to the Course
14:15-17:00 (with a break): Classics: The History, Sociology, and Geography of Rioting and Rage

1. What’s the crisis – and how can it be explained? 2. Where, why, and how does (urban) anger manifest itself – and what are its uses? 3. How is the crisis, and the anger, policed – and to what effects? 4. What effects does all this have on cities – their geography, social relations, political economy, politics? 5. What does the study of urban rage and its policing teach us about the nature of the urban age?

**Required Reading**

James Baldwin, “The Harlem Ghetto,” in *Notes of a Native Son* (Boston: Beacon, 2012) – (originally published 1964, many other editions available)


**Wednesday, 13 November 2019**

09:15-12:00 (with a break): Policing the Crisis, Part I: Three Interpretations

1. What’s the crisis – and how can it be explained? 2. Where, why, and how does (urban) anger manifest itself – and what are its uses? 3. How is the crisis, and the anger, policed – and to what effects? 4. What effects does all this have on cities – their geography, social relations, political economy, politics? 5. What does the study of urban rage and its policing teach us about the nature of the urban age?

*Take 1*: Cultural studies – Catharina Thörn

*Take 2*: Urban and cultural geography – Don Mitchell

*Take 3*: Political theory and urban studies – Mustafa Dikeç

**Required Reading:**


12:00-13:30: Lunch

13:30-16:30 (with a break): Policing the Crisis, Part II: Seminar Discussion – Digging Deep

1. What’s the crisis – and how can it be explained? 2. Where, why, and how does (urban) anger manifest itself – and what are its uses? 3. How is the crisis, and the anger, policed – and to what effects? 4. What effects does all this have on cities – their geography, social relations,
political economy, politics? 5. What does the study of urban rage and its policing teach us about the nature of the urban age?

**Required Reading:**


**Thursday 14 November, 2019**

09:15-12:00 (with a break): Student Presentations

Be prepared to discuss your research/paper projects. Focus particularly on how you want to address the key questions of the course (or a subset of them):

1. What's the crisis – and how can it be explained?
2. Where, why, and how does (urban) anger manifest itself – and what are its uses?
3. How is the crisis, and the anger, policed – and to what effects?
4. What effects does all this have on cities – their geography, social relations, political economy, politics?
5. What does the study of urban rage and its policing teach us about the nature of the urban age?

12:00-13:00 Lunch

13:00-15:00 Introduction and Screening of *La Haine* (1995)

15:00-15:15 Break

15:15-17:00 Seminar on *La Haine*. How does it, along with the reading so far, help us address:

1. What's the crisis – and how can it be explained?
2. Where, why, and how does (urban) anger manifest itself – and what are its uses?
3. How is the crisis, and the anger, policed – and to what effects?
4. What effects does all this have on cities – their geography, social relations, political economy, politics?
5. What does the study of urban rage and its policing teach us about the nature of the urban age?

19:00 (+/-) Course Dinner

**Friday 15 November 2019**

9:15-12:00 Rioting in the Millennial City

1. What's the crisis – and how can it be explained?
2. Where, why, and how does (urban) anger manifest itself – and what are its uses?
3. How is the crisis, and the anger, policed – and to what effects?
4. What effects does all this have on cities – their geography, social relations, political economy, politics?
5. What does the study of urban rage and its policing teach us about the nature of the urban age?

**Required Reading**


*Note:* Every student should read Chapter 1 and choose one other chapter, read it closely, and be ready to lead a discussion on it based on the five questions.

12:00-13:00 Lunch

13:00-14:00 Summary Discussion, Wrap-Up and Departure

**20 January, 2020: Course Paper Due!**
Supplementary Reading

All the required reading is listed above and we expect you to read all of it – with some care! – before coming to the course (two books + 60 or so other pages). The following list might help you follow up on ideas before, during, or after the course. It is hardly exhaustive, but might provide some useful starting points. Excellent bibliographies are provided in Dikeč’s *Urban Rage* and Mayer et al’s *Urban Uprisings*.


