



NEWSLETTER

URBAN STUDIES



May 2015

Students Travel to Berlin as Part of Seminar

RENATA ROBLES

This past semester, Professor Dietrich Neumann received a Global Experiential Learning and Teaching (GELT) grant from the Office of Global Engagement to teach “Berlin: Architecture, Politics, and Memory”. The class consisted of twelve seniors concentrating in Urban Studies, History of Art and Architecture, and Architectural Studies and explored these three core themes in the context of Berlin by touring the city over spring break.

Throughout the semester, students researched the monuments, memorials, and other significant sites that mark the historical landscape of the city and presented them to the class. Though a pilot strike at Lufthansa threatened the trip, the students and Professor Neumann arrived safely on new last minute tickets in two separate groups, after a quick stop in Dublin. While in Berlin, each student gave tours of the different urban and memorial sites throughout the city, for which the students had compiled a guidebook with historical images, dates and other contextual information.

We discussed if we felt a particular monument or memorial was successful in communicating its intentions, or the difference between our expectations or previous understanding of a space and the actual experience. For example, one site we had discussed at great length was the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe. The Memorial is one of the most famous commemorative sites in the city and we found our assumptions and impressions changed once we visited the site ourselves. Berlin is one of the most vibrant and exciting cities in Europe today. Our research and countless site visits on our daily walks through the streets of Berlin helped us to understand its dramatic and conflicted history. [PHOTO ON PAGE 5]



Bernard Tschumi lecturing to a packed RISD auditorium on Friday, April 24, delivering the keynote address for the symposium “Intersecting Pedagogies: Architecture, Urbanism and the Humanities”

Inter-Institutional Conferences Draw Crowds

For two days at the end of April, deans from architecture and urban planning programs from the US and Europe discussed the future of pedagogy in our field in the face of unprecedented challenges and possibilities in urban environments worldwide. The symposium, titled “Intersecting Pedagogies: Architecture Urbanism and the Humanities,” began with a keynote speech by prominent architect and educator Bernard Tschumi on Friday night in a packed RISD auditorium. The next day saw presentations and roundtable discussions at the List Art Center. The list of speakers and moderators could hardly have been more prominent: Prof. Thomas Kelly (UIC), Prof. Hansy Better (RISD), Dennis Crompton (Archigram, London), Prof. Matthias Sauerbruch (Berlin), Prof. Kent Kleinman (Cornell), Prof. Nader Tehrani (MIT), Dean Martha Thorne (IE University, Madrid), Dean Stan Allen (Princeton), Dean Amale Andraos (Columbia), Bernard Tschumi (architect Paris/New York, Dean Emeritus Columbia).

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A Word from Program Director Dietrich Neumann

Our program had an immensely fruitful and exciting academic year, and I am grateful for the spirited help, initiative and input from so many sides. First and foremost, our manager Meredith Paine has not just continued to be the heart and soul of the program, meeting with every single student and helping them stay on track with their requirements, but she has also paved the way for the many new initiatives this year, be it our very successful series of six ‘Urban Studies Bus Tours,’ or the production of the now bi-annual newsletter. Meredith has also been deeply involved in all aspects of planning for our move to Maxcy Hall over the summer, where we will inhabit a sequence of bright and airy interconnected rooms that hopefully will soon be just as beloved as our current home, which sadly has to make room for the new Engineering School.

Isaac MacDonald ‘15 is the Editor in Chief of the new (beautiful!) Urban Journal appearing for the first time this commencement weekend. It brings together essays, poetry and artwork of students & faculty in our program. Under Isaac’s editorship, the Urban Studies newsletter is now appearing twice annually. Stefano Bloch and myself organized two major conferences in the spring - see separate notes in this newsletter. Many of our new initiatives have been supported by the Harriet David Goldberg Endowment.

We have more concentrators than ever, and are moving ahead with plans for a new 5th year master in Urban Studies. Jenna Klorfein ‘15.5 and Andrew Brown ‘15 ably served as DUG leaders and helped with many of our initiatives. On May 1, the honors and capstone students presented their theses, followed by our traditional end-of-the-year party - for the last time in our backyard at 29 Manning. The faculty met several times throughout the semester and for its own end-of-the-year dinner at the end of April. Thanks to a surprise visit from Steve Cowell ‘72 (see his recollections in the new Urban Journal), we realized that Urban Studies is about to have its 45th birthday next year, which we will surely celebrate - another reason to look forward to the next academic year!



The program manager Meredith Paine surrounded by graduating seniors at the end of the year party in the backyard of 29 Manning on Friday May 1.

Seniors Present Research in Front of Faculty and Friends

The Urban Studies Program celebrated the graduation of its seventeen seniors (plus two members of the class of 2015.5) with an end of the year presentation of research and reception. All graduating students presented research --three honors theses and fifteen capstone projects.

The theses emerged from a semester of independent research in the fall and a thesis seminar taught by Professor Zipp in the spring. The capstone projects were drawn from class work in urban studies seminars that students selected as their “capstone course.” Highlights included dual-degree concentrator Pierie Korostoff’s research on “Yarn Bombing as Guerilla Warfare” and Lizzie Sturr’s GIS-based analysis “Land Use Change Around Havana, Cuba 1985-2010.” The afternoon was incredibly diverse, with topics ranging from a case study of Providence’s entrepreneurial network to an architectural analysis of post-war Berlin, a testament to the wide array of disciplines and ideas contained within the Urban Studies Program.

Following the presentations presenters and audience members proceeded to a reception at 29 Manning Walk, the current program building which is slated to be demolished this summer. At the reception the department gave out its annual awards. Congratulations to Thomas Schubert ‘15 winner of the Urban Studies Prize for the Best Honors Thesis and to Giulia Nicita ‘15 winner of the award for the best overall performance in Urban Studies.



Round table discussion at the Intersecting Pedagogies: Architecture, Urbanism and the Humanities Conference on April 24th and 25th at the List Art Center (jointly organized with Brown's History of Art Dept. and RISD's School of Architecture).

Inter-Institutional Conferences Draw Crowds

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The results of the symposium will be presented in a publication in the fall. They will be of great interest for anyone concerned with the question of how well architects and urban planners are prepared for the extraordinary breadth and complexity of today's urban and technological challenges. There was no doubt among the participants that the humanities and deep, contextual studies will play a major role in any curricular evolution in the near future. The symposium helped to launch the Brown / RISD initiative towards a joint urban master's degree, which will take off next year with an enhanced undergraduate architectural studies concentration. It was jointly organized by Dietrich Neumann, Director of Urban Studies and Laura Briggs, Chair of Architecture at RISD and Hansy Better, Graduate Director at the RISD Architecture School. The conference was funded through the Brown-RISD Committee for Institutional Collaboration (BRCIC), the John Nicholas Brown Center for Public Humanities, the Harriet David Goldberg Endowment, the Departments of History of Art and Architecture and the Program in Urban Studies.

This conference was one of two popular cross-institutional conference planned by urban studies faculty members this semester. Only a few months earlier, on one of the less snowy evenings in February, Urban Studies received visitors taking part in a funded Brown-RISD event produced and hosted by Professor Stefano Bloch along with RISD Landscape Architecture faculty member Alexis C. Landes. Creative Arts Council funding for the Brown/RISD panel, entitled "Placemaking in the Creative Capital: Innovating Urban Districts," made it possible to bring in leaders in the area of innovative urbanism from around the country, including Megan Canning, one of the designers of the pedestrian Times Square, and Gordon Douglas from NYU who took the train up from New York City, Blaine Merker of Rebar Art and Design and Gehl Studio, the firm behind "Park(ing) Day," who flew in from San Francisco, Alex Feldman of U3 Advisors who came up from Philadelphia, Thomas Pacello who arrived from Memphis where he is the City Director, and our own Bob Azar, Director of Current Planning for Providence, who walked over from Wayland Square looking at dapper as ever.



In addition to the riveting introductory talk by Professor Bloch and exceptional presentations by the panelists, the highlight of the evening was the huge turn out of community members from around Providence, which included RISD and Brown faculty and students, local artists including the creator of Water Fire, area activists, members of law enforcement, business owners, residents from both the west and east sides, and members of the city zoning board and planning commission. As Bob Azar put it "the last time there was this sort of mix of planners, activists, artists, residents, academics, and business leaders in a room together in Providence it was because someone was about to be in big trouble!"

The event was followed by a large gathering at DenDen Café Asiana on Benefit Street, which included Professor Sandy Zipp and Urban Studies concentrators Maggie Livingstone, Edward Mansius, Jenna Klorfein, and Ricky Herrera all continuing the conversation about placemaking in the 21st century over bibimbap and jap chae.



Students travel to Berlin as part of "Berlin: Architecture, Politics, and Memory".



Prof. Neumann with the participants of the year's last Urban Studies Bus Tour on Friday May 8 on the 8th floor roof terrace of 121 North Main Street, which offers an unequalled view of downtown Providence.

Bus Tours Continue Into Spring Semester, Finish Strong

Continuing the Urban Studies Bus Tours from last semester, three more faculty members led tours that used their fields of expertise to share a perspective on the city of Providence. The six tours throughout the year were well-received by locals and students alike.

A tour by Nate Baum-Snow explored the economic and demographic history of Providence's neighborhoods over the past 50 years. Another by visiting lecturer Yesim Sungu-Eryilmaz titled "Can Urban and Agriculture Coexist" visited a variety of urban agriculture locations including the South Side Community Land Trust. Finally, Program Director Dietrich Neumann led his bus tour "Providence: A Modern City" (based on William Kirk's 1909 book with that title) to sites of urban renewal, in the 1860s-1880s under Mayor Thomas Doyle, to the 1960s Weybosset Hill and Cathedral Square area, and discussed Waterplace Park and plans for the former I-195 Corridor.



Eager participants look on as Yesim Sungu-Eryilmaz gives bus tour on urban agriculture in Providence

Faculty Update

The Urban Studies Faculty spans a wide variety of Departments and areas of expertise. Here's some of what they've been up to!

Bob Azar just finished up teaching Transportation: an Urban Planning Perspective for the first time. He's looking forward to teaching Downtown Development once again in the fall. In his day job, he was recently promoted to Deputy Director of the Providence Department of Planning and Development, where he now oversees all development review and long-range planning functions for the city. On May 21st, along with the Mayor and Director he will be accepting the Outstanding Smart Growth Policy Award for Providence's new zoning ordinance at the 2015 Rhode Island Smart Growth Awards.

During the Spring Semester, **Nathaniel Baum-Snow** greatly enjoyed teaching his course in Urban Economics to a group of undergraduate Urban Studies and Economics concentrators. He has also continued his research on transportation infrastructure and urban growth in China, which he presented in numerous forums, including at a conference about regional development in Tianjin, China. He also made progress on a new research project that investigates the reasons for the remarkable amount of recent gentrification in downtown areas of U.S. cities. He will present this research at a policy conference hosted by the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland in June.

Stefano Bloch's research brought him to Chicago during that past semester, where he presented his current research on what he is calling "place-based elicitation" at the annual conference of the Association of American Geographers. Back in Providence Stefano's students continued working on our graffiti-violent crime correlation study to be submitted for peer review by the end of the calendar year. The research was in part inspired by the tour of graffiti and street art he led in the spring as part of Professor Neumann's Urban Studies Bus Tour series. In the classroom Professor Bloch taught the second iteration of "Bottom-up Urbanism," for which students curated individual spaces on the seminar website: brownbottomupurbanism.weebly.com. Stefano will continue on in our new location in Maxcy Hall as the new Presidential Diversity Fellow where he will again be teaching "Crime and the City" as well as working with excellent concentrators whose senior research conceptually and methodologically spans urban studies' wide disciplinary spectrum.

This semester Professor **Rebecca Carter** taught two courses, The Anthropology of Disasters (ANTH 1255) and In Search of the Global Black Metropolis (URBN 1240). In the disasters course students worked to think about disasters anthropologically, as long-term processes. In the course on the global black metropolis, students embarked on an interdisciplinary journey and exploration of black urban life in cities around the world -- case studies included Bronzeville, Harlem, Liverpool, Hong Kong, Rio de Janeiro, and Accra. As a recipient and project co-director (with Courtney Martin, History of Art and Architecture) of a Pembroke Center Seed Grant for Faculty Research, Professor Carter participated in a research and writing collective ("Writing the Undercommons") based at Brown. This collective focused on the interdisciplinary study of humanism and humanness and featured a public symposium, which she helped to organize: "The Archives of Erasure" held April 22. Finally, Professor Carter was the recipient of a Richard B. Salomon Faculty Research Award from Brown, which will fund my upcoming research this summer in France. The project, titled, "From Slavery to the Human Rights City: Confronting the Past while Planning the Future in Nantes" explores the framing and enactment of the 'human rights city.' This summer she will be hard at work on her book manuscript, Prayers for the People: Homicide and Humanity in the Crescent City, which is based on her first research project in New Orleans.

Howard Chudacoff is currently in Paris. His new book, Changing the Playbook: How Power, Profit, and Politics Changed College Sports, is to be published this fall.

This spring, **Gavin Hogben's** teaching life has focused on developing and introducing the new Urban Studies course, Drawing, Making and Creating in 2D, 3D and CAD for Architecture and Urban Design. Just as design is a curious hybrid of theoretical and practical modes of inquiry, the course format has combined elements of traditional seminar and design studio teaching: readings, talks and discussions being offered alongside technical demonstrations, design assignments and critiques. Also, this spring, under the title, GROUNDED: Returning Embodied Perception and Material Agency to the Land(-scape) - a Tale of Long Paths and Short Cuts, Gavin presented a talk at the Yale University School of Architecture on lessons that architects and landscape designers might learn from recent work in brain science and material anthropology - themes underlying research

he is doing on the transformation of museums in the digital era.

At the same time, his professional life in architecture has been focused on a new project for a craft beer bar and store in Manhattan's Lower East Side. The work follows on from a previous project completed in 2013.

Patrick Malone has just completed revisions for an article on steam power in the textile industry of New Bedford, MA. The illustrated article will be included in a special theme issue of IA: The Journal of the Society for Industrial Archeology. He also advised on industrial history for a current exhibit at the New Bedford Whaling Museum. He still has a desk in the John Nicholas Brown Center and is continuing to do research and writing.

Jim Morone just published a book called *The Devils We Know: Us and them in American Political Culture*. The book is a series of essays, written by Morone in the last few years. His students will definitely recognize many of them: a Huck Finn essay (Huckleberry Finn's Hard Racial Lesson) that will be very familiar to my old friends from the urban seminar and discussions of race and immigration that should stir memories of City Politics. Professor Morone has also been very engaged by the terrible events in the news -- the killing of unarmed black men and all the difficult underlying issues about American community and justice. He has given lectures on what's been happening -- in New York, Seattle, Paris, Nice, and elsewhere and touches on it in a new piece coming out in the next issue of *Foreign Affairs*.

This year Jim had the great pleasure of chairing the Brown University faculty. This involved representing the faculty to the administration and organizing the monthly town hall faculty meetings that are a unique feature of Brown's governance. It gave him a wonderful chance to collaborate with colleagues across the campus -- and to think hard about the kind of community our university can and should be.

Finally, Professor Morone has been directing and reorganizing the Taubman Center for public policy and developing many new links to other units on campus. Stay tuned for future collaborations with urban studies!

Dietrich Neumann taught his 19th Century Architecture class and a new seminar called "Berlin: Architecture, Politics & Memory" (see separate report in this newsletter). Leading up to the trip the students met every week to discuss the reading and present their research. Prof. Joerg Gleiter from Berlin's Technical University as well as

Prof. Renata Stieh and Frieder Schnock, conceptual artists from Berlin traveled to Providence to meet with the students and discuss their work in public lectures. and we met them again during our trip.

Dietrich Neumann gave invited lectures at Delft University, Yale University, Cooper Union in New York and at the University of Illinois in Chicago and lectured to Brown Alumni in San Diego and Los Angeles. His essay on Brown's List Art Building will appear in the new issue of AA Files in early June.

Josh Pacewicz has spent the spring semester teaching Urban Fieldwork Methods and an upper division Economic Sociology course in the Sociology department. He has also been overseeing recruitment and admission of Sociology's incoming graduate student cohort as a member of the graduate committee and completing a manuscript of this book, which should come out some time next year. He has also began an interview-based project of Rhode Island's nonprofit sector in the wake of the Great Recession.

Professor **Hilary Silver** taught a research seminar for Urban Studies concentrators on "Housing and Homelessness," in which students conducted their own independent studies on topics related to this theme. She continues to serve as a Commissioner of the Providence Housing Authority.

Following on a workshop this fall of the Youth in the Middle East Working Group at the Georgetown University Center for International and Regional Studies, School for Public Service in Qatar, Professor Silver worked on an article on "Youth Exclusion" for an edited volume. The group will meet again in Doha later this year.

She also wrote an essay on "The Urban Sociology of Detroit" for a special issue of *City & Community*, the journal she edits, which will appear later this year. She was appointed as a "CROP Fellow" of the Comparative Research Programme on Poverty, International Social Science Council, based at the University of Bergen, Norway.

During the Spring Semester, **Yesim Sungu** taught Quantitative Analytical Methods for urban planning and has continued to work on three research projects. First one is urban agriculture and land insecurity which was the theme of the fifth bus tour organized by the Urban Studies program. For the second project, she collaborates with the City of Boston examining the geographic distribution and nature of mortgage lending in Boston.

Last but not least is the crime and graffiti in Providence with colleague Stefano Bloch.

This academic year **Sandy Zipp** has been running the senior thesis seminar in Urban Studies. He had the pleasure of helping the three US thesis writers--Isaac MacDonald, Thomas Schubert, and Erin Schwartz-- work their way through the thesis process. Most of Professor Zipp's research time this past semester has been spent writing away on my current book project, a study of the political culture of American internationalism during World War II. The book uses the journey around the world in 1942 of Wendell Willkie (FDR's opponent in 1940) and his best selling book *One World* to investigate the complex fate of a vision for an interdependent role for the US in the world during and after the war.

Professor Zipp got the idea for the book, which has me wearing my American Studies hat a bit more than my Urban Studies cap, from his first book on urban renewal in Manhattan, which focused on the influence of internationalism on the building of the United Nations headquarters. Sandy be on leave next year to work on the Willkie book, which will be published by Harvard University Press, and is traveling this month to Munich to speak about it at a conference on American exceptionalism.

During Spring 2015, Professor **Kenneth Wong** published a research article, "Federal ESEA Waivers as Reform Leverage: Politics and Variation in State Implementation," in *Publius: The Journal of Federalism*. Professor Wong also co-directed the Family Impact Seminar, which hosted an invitational presentation on the two-generation strategies to address systemic poverty at the Rhode Island Senate Lounge on March 31. In late April, the Brown Club of Oregon invited Professor Wong to deliver a keynote presentation on his research on urban education reform at its spring meeting in Portland, OR.

Alumni Spotlight

Chris Cirillo became the Executive Director of Lott Community Development Corporation in July 2012. Based in East Harlem, Lott has developed and continues to manage approximately 700 affordable rental apartments in Northern Manhattan. Before joining Lott, Chris spent 6½ years as Vice President for Development at The Richman Group Development Corporation. Chris previously held several positions at the New York City Department of Housing Preservation & Development (HPD). Chris is a 1995 graduate of Brown University, where he received a Bachelor of Arts with honors in Urban Studies. He is currently studying for his Master of Science in Historic Preservation at Pratt Institute.

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Urban Studies Program
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Courses Offered Within Urban Studies Fall 2015

The City: An Introduction to Urban Studies
Professor Dietrich Neumann

Planning Sustainable Cities
Professor TBA

Urban Life in Providence: An Introduction
Assistant Professor, Rebecca Carter

Crime and the City
Mellon Post-Doctoral Fellow Stefano Bloch

Urban Regimes in the American Republic
Professor Marion Orr

Downtown Development
Robert Azar, Director of Current Planning, Providence

Alumni Spotlight

Tei Carpenter graduated in 2005 from Brown and then received a Master's of Architecture at Princeton. She is currently a Wortham Fellow at Rice University's School of Architecture as the Wortham Visiting Lecturer. She founded her own architectural design practice, Agency-Agency this past summer. Tei is currently working on a beach house renovation in Cape Cod which will be complete in May and a 20,000sf office building in downtown Houston for a mentoring non-profit called Big Brothers Big Sisters which will begin construction in March. This Spring Tei curated a lecture series titled "Plug-Ins" on behalf of the Rice School of Architecture and Rice Design Alliance.

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