### Class Details

**Between Fiction & Reality: New York and Paris**

NYUParis, Spring 2016  
*In French.*

### Class Description

Through a conception of the city as a microcosm of society, this course will initiate NYU in Paris students to international urban comparative methods. Focusing on the cities of Paris and New York, it will compare how, over time, one constructs one’s own imaginary through literature, cinema, architecture, events, urban policies, the press, art and experience and how different it may be from facts and data brought by experts on cities. Who speaks for the city and how? What representations emerge?

As major metropolises, Paris and New York are deeply engaged in processes of globalization, in both “hard” and “soft” versions. Each city has to stay competitive, to accumulate wealth, to retain its inhabitants as well as to attract tourists, business professionals, students, and immigrants. Each metropolis dreams of one day becoming a “green” city. Each is also familiar with failure, needs to wrestle with problems of inequalities and discriminations. Social disorders associated with these cities come both from external forces (terrorist attacks) and internal problems, like urban disorders in marginalized neighborhoods. Danger exists in these cities, amplified by the media and social networks playing up urban anxieties.

In this course, we study these phenomena through the analysis of ethnographers, writers, film makers, historians, journalists, architects, street artists, politicians, urban planners and scholars. We examine the views of the elites as well as of “invisible” residents, analyze politicians’, administrations’, civic organizations’ statements, decisions and actions. The testimonies of immigrants/minorities and their children provide another comparative terrain with issues relating to race, discriminations and violence. Finally, the course studies the changes in each city’s image over time, and questions how various representations of the city have been constructed by actors in the cities themselves. For each theme, we alternate the study of Paris with the study of New York and discuss how the two cities compare.

Students are asked to read and analyze texts as well as see films before classes. They are expected to send 1-2 questions **a day before** the class to the student in charge of the oral presentation and contribute structuring the discussion. Students are evaluated on their work.
and participation to discussions. Each student conducts an oral and a written presentation connected to the themes of the course and delivers as well as a 7 page- research paper due on week 11.

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**Bibliography**


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Globalization, Fear and Insecurity: the Challenges for Cities North and South, Basingstoke, NH, Palgrave Macmillan, 2012


E. Hemingway *Paris est une fête*, Paris Gallimard.

G. Kepel *Banlieue de la République*, Paris Gallimard, 2011


Anne Raulin *Manhattan ou la mémoire insulaire*, Paris, Institut d'ethnologie, 1997

James Sanders, *Celluloid Skyline*, New York and the Movies


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**Week 1**

Goal of the course, explanations, distribution of work

**First Part: Fiction and Representations**

How is the urban imaginary formed via **ethnographers** ? New York


**Week 2**

How is the urban imaginary formed via **historians** ? Paris


Comparing the two sources (Raulin and Harvey) and the knowledge they bring re: representations.

**Week 3**

How is the urban imaginary formed via **writers’ views** of New York

Paul Auster on New York (advanced viewing of video on reserve).

E. Albee (reserve)

A. Gopnik: *Just a bar* (reserve)

Reading: Tom Wolf *Radical Chic* pp. 32-56

**Week 4**

How is the urban imaginary formed via **writers’ views** of Paris.


Reading Edmund White *The Flâneur*, Bloomsbury pp.16-51

Comparisons of approaches Paris-New York
Week 5
How is the urban imaginary formed via film makers
*Women's solitude in the city*: Comparisons of French and American approaches

Reading James Sanders, *Celluloid Skyline*. New York and the Movies pp. 3-12; 2-42; 142-184
*Students should view in advance Sue Lost in Manhattan* or *Blue Jasmine* (on reserve) and *Cléo de 5 à 7* (Agnès Varda) (on reserve)

Week 6
How is the urban imaginary formed via film makers on Paris
*Youths at risk in the city*: Comparisons of French and American approaches

*Students should view in advance* *Le petit fugitif* and *Les 400 coups* (F. Truffaut) (on reserve)

Week 7
How is the urban imaginary formed via architects in New York and Paris

Comparisons of approaches: high rise buildings vs the horizontal city
Articles by Kimmelman on “1 World Trade Center”, on La Tour Triangle (on reserve)
Paquot *La folie des grandeurs* pp. 29-134

Week 8
*The arts of resistance* in Paris and New York
Street art, innovations from peripheries
Reading: *Nemo* by Pennac (Hoëbeke, 2006) and search websites.
May 68 Rothman *Mai 68 raconté à ceux qui ne l’ont pas vécu*: 13-76
Keith Jarring and Basquiat (video)

Comparisons of approaches Paris-New York

Week 9
Part II: The reality of New York and Paris: comparisons

New York and Paris, Global Cities, rich, poor and multicultural…
Reading Saskia Sassen *La ville globale* (Paris, Descartes). Intro and chapter 1.
Reading SBG « Paris, a soft global city » *Le débat*, on reserve
SBG: PPT on inequalities Paris-New York and Piketty
Discussion on inequalities

*Topic of final research paper with a brief outline should be delivered*

Week 10
The social vulnerability of cities
Reading: M. Katz and T. Sugrue “Pourquoi les villes américaines ne brûlent-elles pas plus souvent ?” in L’Atlantique multiracial(on reserve).
Reading G. Kepel Banlieue de la République, Paris, Gallimard, 2011, 54-75 ; 268-31

Week 11 Making cities safer

Reading: SBG Globalization, Fear and Insecurity Palgrave, 2012: chapters 2,3,5
SBG: PPT on policing and anti-terrorist approaches Paris and New York
Discussions on the policing of the two cities and the different approaches (re: the militarization of the police and stops and frisks.

Week 12 New York and Paris, the art of eating
Barthes Mythologies
Fischler Américains et Français face à la nourriture
Reading: Druckerman Eat up (on reserve), Le repas, un art français (on reserve)

Research Project papers are due

Weeks 13 Discussing Bob Swaim: France Made in USA
Students start their oral defense.

Week 14 Conclusion. All other research papers will defended orally and individually that week.

Assignments
The course is organized as a seminar. Students are expected to have done the reading and assignments for each class, to prepare questions sent to the presenter and to participate in class discussion. Each oral presentation will give way to discussions, thus building a specific comparative and collective knowledge from class to class. Participation in this critical discussion will be graded. Assigned texts will be available on reserve and films and videos will be available on reserve.

Formal requirements:
- Class participation (Class attendance.
- Directed reading questions. Students are to prepare questions on designated readings sent the day before the reading is due (see class schedule). Students are invited to comment student’s presentation in order to improve their own presentation : 15% (first presentations benefit from general tolerance).
- Oral presentation on books, texts, videos, films in the list chosen with the instructor: 30%.

- Written presentation following oral presentation, taking into account remarks by students and instructor :30%
- Independent research project, a 5-7 page paper due week 11 and discussed individually at the end of the seminar: 25%

Your Instructor
Sophie Body-Gendrot is Professeur Emeritus of the Université Sorbonne-Paris IV; she was awarded Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur in 2012 and Chevalier de l'Ordre des Palmes Académiques in 2006.

She serves as consultant for the Urban Age international program at the London School of Economics (2004 - present), as an expert for the European Research Council and the Conseil de l'Europe. She is a researcher at the Centre national de recherche scientifique (CNRS-CESDIP). She is one of the editors of the annual review, L’esprit des villes (InFolio)
She also teaches at CELSA (center of studies for information and communication- masters and MBA) and ENA
Her numerous publications include (partial listing):

Policing the Inner City in France, Britain and the US (cowrit) Palgrave Pivot, 2014,152p


