

THE
'WALKING IN MY SHOES'
a radical oral history project PROJECT



Building an Urban Archive

Urban Studies 101: Poverty & Affluence
Queens College, CUNY | Spring 2017
Professor Kristen Hackett

Introduction

This semester we as a class will create a publicly-facing urban archive. When completed, this archive will house resources that may assist members of the general public in gaining a deeper, historically-situated understanding of contemporary urban issues. This archive will supplement other projects associated with The 'Walking in My Shoes' Project including our case studies in East New York and the Bronx.

Your contributions to the archive have been structured into the assignments you will complete for this course over the Spring 2017 semester. These are listed below and on our course website in more detail. The majority of these assignments will be posted to the archive, disseminated through social media – and thus made available to the general public.

Though this archive serves a public purpose, the creation of a public archive as a course project is also an important pedagogical decision on my part. It is my hope that your participation in this project will enhance your learning experience in this class, and your engagement with course material, as well as better prepare you to technologically and socially to be an active & competent member of our democracy.

Specifically, this project aims to facilitate self-directed and peer-directed student learning and engagement of course topics by creating a space beyond the bounded classroom for students to be “knowers” (rather than learners and regurgitators) and public discussion leaders on topics of interest to themselves and their communities. Moreover, this project aims to increase students’ familiarity with digital technologies (including the WordPress-based Qwriting platform, Google Drive, Twitter, etc.) and to engage them in thoughtful/thought-provoking praxis regarding the functionalities and potentials of these technologies for learning, sharing information, and engaging in dialogue and discussion with others.

In sum, I think this project offers an excellent opportunity to get students involved in meaningful, community-based work in New York City, and during a particular political moment when coalition building and synergies seems more necessary than ever. In a more profound way, perhaps by providing students with this opportunity now, we may contribute to a very different teaching of this class in 20-50 years.

This packet contains all of the information you will need to be a successful participant in the creation of this blog, and in the completion of this course. Please review it carefully, and try not to lose it. Of course, a digital copy is available on the course website.

General Course Information

This course project is a part of this larger archival project called
The 'Walking in My Shoes' Project (WIMS).

<http://walkinginmyshoes.nyc>

@WalkInMyShoeNYC

WIMS is a digital living archive that aims to document and reflect on contemporary urban issues as they take place in neighborhoods across NYC. The architects of the archive will be myself and my students, who will participate in semester-long, community-based research projects around NYC. Our hope is that this repository will provide those interested with a deeper understanding of contemporary urban issues, and the ways in which these issues touch down in the everyday lives of many New Yorkers.

This course project is hosted on

Qwriting

<http://qwriting.qc.cuny.edu>

Qwriting, powered by WordPress, is an online publishing platform for faculty and students at Queens College, CUNY. This platform provides QC classrooms with the option of creating a publically available record of their course.

This course project is based on the tenets of

Open Digital Pedagogy (ODP)

The tenets of ODP contrast with traditional classrooms and pedagogical approaches in (at least) three important ways:

1. ODP understands the classroom as a fluid space that is continuous with the larger world, rather than divorcing the space from the everyday lives of those within the space. Relatedly, ODP embraces the classroom as an open, public, and publically available space, rather than a closed, exclusionary space
2. ODP aims to cultivate a community of learning and learners who learn from from each other in a multidirectional way, rather than situating the teacher as the knower and the student as the learner.
3. ODP understands the intentional deployment of digital technologies as an important tool that can facilitate the fulfillment of these two objectives.

<http://walkininmyshoes.nyc> | khackett@walkinginmyshoes.nyc | @WalkInMyShoeNYC

Assignments

Assignment 1: The Urban at 1st Glance | Due Wednesday 9/7/17

For this assignment you will walk around the city for at least one hour and contemplate what you think about course-related concepts like urban development, poverty and affluence. This assignment will be your first public post to the blog.

Assignment 2: Course Reading Crowdsource | Due Pre-Midterm, Varies

For this assignment you will be expected to add thoughts to a class discussion that will take place in the comments section of a blog post on our course site. The class discussion will be in relation to a particular reading, topic or set of questions selected by Professor Hackett. Students are expected to engage one another's comments in critical, supportive and productive ways.

Assignment 3: Poverty Debate | Due Friday 9/16/17

For this assignment you will work in groups to create a debate amongst political pundits who hold varying views on why poverty is a quality of our society. Students will use their QC Google drives to coordinate and submit their dialogues.

Assignment 4: Urban Dictionary | Due 3/11/17 & 5/3/17

For this assignment you will contribute entries for four key terms into a class glossary by posting to the blog. This glossary will be available to you to when studying for exams and available to the the public when trying to understand complex urban phenomenon.

Assignment 5: (B)(V)logging the Urban | Due Post-Midterm, Varies

For this assignment you will submit two blog entries and comment on three blogs written by peers. The assignment aims to continue our weekly discussions of course material while providing students with an opportunity to lead the discussion. Students will be assigned to specific tasks each week to coordinate.

Assignment 6: Developing a Digital Public Education Tool | Due TBA

For this assignment you will work in groups to devise a digital public education tool that focuses on a particular topic agreed upon by the group. This assignment situates students not only as knowers, but as public discussion leaders.

Assignment 7: The Urban at 2nd Glance | Wednesday 12/21/17

For this assignment you will return to your initial blog post (The Urban at 1st Glance) and 'drop some knowledge' on your former self. This is an opportunity for you to reflect on what you

have learned over the course of the semester, and how your understandings of urban development, poverty, affluence, etc have changed, grown, expanded, etc.