

SEBS Honors Seminar: The Power of Walking, Listening, and Watching

11:550:296 SEBS Interdisciplinary Honors Seminar

Thursdays, 2:00pm–5:00pm, Blake Hall Room 128 (Cook Campus, 93 Lipman Drive, New Brunswick)

Dr. Anette Freytag, Professor of the History and Theory of Landscape Architecture

Department of Landscape Architecture, Rutgers University, SEBS (anette.freytag@rutgers.edu)

Office Hours: Thursdays, 10:00am-12:00pm by appointment only (please email me)

In person at IFNH or via Zoom.

LMS used in this course: **CANVAS**

Guest lecturers: Megan Lotts, MFA, MILS, Art Library faculty and Artist (RU Libraries), Dr. Scott Ordway, Head of Music Composition (MGSA), Caspar Schärer, M. arch, MAS Spatial Planning, ETH Zurich, Prof Dr. Henrik Schultz, Landscape Planning + Regional Development, Osnabrück University of Applied Sciences; Dr. Nadine Schütz, architect and sound artist, Echora Paris/Zurich and others TBC (Dr. Lauren Errickson, Director of Rutgers Gardens and responsible for Campus Engagement; Theresa Hyslop, of ETM Associates, who are commissioned with a vision plan for RU Gardens; Diane Jones Allen, Professor of Landscape Architecture at The University of Texas at Arlington; Dr. Frank Wong, Rutgers IPO-Institutional Planning and Organization)

OVERVIEW

Failing to understand and appreciate the distinctive qualities of our environment reduces our capacity to demand and bring about positive changes for the welfare of all organisms living in that environment. In this interdisciplinary course, students will develop a heightened awareness of the aesthetic dimensions of landscape form and environmental sound. They will do this through a focus on the cultural techniques of walking, watching, and listening, showing how powerful and transformative the knowledge gained from these activities can be.

Assignments will place emphasis on reading, walking, listening, writing, and creative work. We will study texts by the US landscape historian J. B. Jackson, who focused on the vernacular landscape, by the French philosopher Michel de Certeau, who reflects on walking as a subversive spatial practice, by US landscape architect and urban planner Diane Jones Allen, who described unwalkable neighborhoods as *Transit Deserts*, by US storyteller and cultural geographer Carolyn Finney, who deplores the perils of being black in public spaces, the Swiss macroeconomist and design critic Lucius Burckhardt, who playfully named his “science of walking” *Strollology*, or by the Austrian author Peter Handke, who was awarded the 2019 Nobel Prize in Literature, and writes about his walking experiences in peripheral urban and rural landscapes, among many others. We will study the works of landscape architects, who base their designs on their walking experience and do sketch walks led by Art Librarian Megan Lotts. Additionally, we will listen to and discuss musical compositions from the 18th century to the present day which engage with themes of nature, ecology, landscape, and climate. The course assessment will take place through a walking journal that the students will start on the first day of classes. Notebooks are provided and will be collected throughout the course (Midterms) and at the end (Finals).

RATIONALE

Cities, townships, and suburbs in New Jersey are heavily reliant on cars, which hinders the development of daily habits that support healthy and sustainable lifestyles, including opportunities for community interactions like chatting and playing. If you take this class, you will learn what it means to develop a

“landscape approach” to design and planning, improve your ability to “read” your environment, and gain awareness of how to build a society in which equity and sustainability are not just buzzwords. Through a combination of assigned walks, sound walks, reading and musical listening assignments, you will gain deeper awareness of how your environment is planned out and how the acoustic dimension of landscape impacts our health and wellbeing. Furthermore, you will understand how subversive and how enriching walking, listening, and observing can be.

To attend this course, students must commit to a daily walking/movement and observation routine of approximately 20 minutes per day for the first two weeks of classes and a series of assigned walks throughout the course – a practice that will benefit your physical and mental health. If you can implement daily walking into your life by the end of the class, it will change your life!

To achieve a change in awareness we will have a NO PHONES, NO LAPTOPS policy in this course. It is an experiment of detoxing for a span of 3h. Please note in your journals on how you experience this.

LEARNING GOALS & ASSESSMENTS

Learning Goals <i>At the end of this course, students will:</i>	Assessments
1. Be able to assess an environment differently by walking and listening, as well as to appreciate the social and aesthetic costs of un-walkable environments.	Complete guided walks, keep a walking journal, related reading, writing.
2. Raise the awareness for the current climate emergency through aesthetic and emotional engagement as a result of arts integrated research and practice.	Discussing artworks that address topics of nature, landscape, climate, and related themes, as well as the historical traditions upon which they draw during class time and as homework. Complete assigned readings and listening assignments.
3. Generate ideas for original research and creative work that draws from both the arts and the sciences.	Attend class each week with prepared discussion questions.

GRADING

In addition to assigned listening and readings, course requirements include:

1) Weekly assignments for walking, reading, and journaling. 10 Assignments each 6 points.	60%
2) A final project that builds on the journaling in writing and sketching. Contribute to promote Access to Rutgers Gardens, other than by car. One of the days to do so can be Rutgers Day, on April 26. Submit your walking journal at the end of the course.	10%

<p>3) Attendance and participation. This is an interdisciplinary seminar that puts the focus on experiential learning. It helps students to be more aware and critical of the environments they live in. Attendance and active participation are highly important, as this is an experience based, student-centered, discussion-based course. Each week, you are expected to prepare three discussion questions for the class to consider. You write them into your notebook/walking journal, with a date and the week of the class. You get the points in week 7 and week 15.</p> <p>Your questions could be something about your journaling, a reading, a film sequence, or musical piece you would like to understand more deeply, an inquiry regarding a point of view you found provocative, or any other question you think would be useful for the group to address jointly. Attendance and participation accounts for 20% of the final grade. Each unexcused absence lowers the final grade by 5%; each class for which you do not bring discussion questions lowers the grade by 2%.</p>	30%
<p>4) Extra credit opportunities: We make an experiment this semester: no phones, no laptops during class time throughout the course. Please write in your journals on how this affects you- as often as it does. Mark the entry with: EXTRA CREDIT. Reflect also what it does to you to write per hand in a paper journal.</p>	10 points

COURSE EVALUATION

Final Grades include: A (90-100%), B+ (86-89%), B (80-85%), C+ (76-79%), C (70-75%), D (60-69%), F (less than 60%)

ABSENCE POLICIES

Students are expected to attend all classes; **if you expect to miss a class, please use the University absence reporting website <https://sim.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate the date and reason of your absence.** An email is automatically sent to me. Each unexcused absence lowers the grade by 5%.

Stay home if you feel sick! Covid-19 information and protocol: <https://coronavirus.rutgers.edu>

COMMUNICATION

If you have questions during the semester, please email the professor (anette.freytag@rutgers.edu) and I will generally reply within 24 hours, Monday through Friday. No emails or important course announcements over the weekend. Every email has to start with a hello and end with a goodbye to be considered.

CANVAS / READING ASSIGNMENTS

Please make sure to check the class CANVAS website regularly. All assigned reading material and all necessary information will be uploaded and regularly updated. You are expected to complete assigned readings and exercises before the start of class and give your personal reflection on the text. Thus, it is essential that you commit to coming to class prepared and that you fully participate in class discussions and assignments. PREPARE three questions for every class, that you write down in your walking journals. Assignments might change according to upcoming proposals from students and the teacher throughout the development of the course.



SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

WEEK 1, 01/23: INTRODUCTION

1. Why are we here? Introducing the main themes of the class (walking, watching, and listening) and how they can help you transform an environment.
2. Going through the Syllabus. Giving out the notebooks.
3. Students present themselves to the class by sharing their walking routines (if you are walking at all) and expectations.
4. Going out. Set a timer for 5 minutes. Standing or sitting still or walking (temperature!). Observe your reactions. Write them down. Discuss in class.
5. Presenting a project of collaboration by Dr. Anette Freytag (SEBS) and Dr. Julia Ritter (formerly MGSA/Dance) with seven Rutgers units: [The March to Rutgers Gardens](#), a choreographed, arts-integrated two mile hike to advocate for access to nature for all.
6. [Watershed](#) and other compositions and sound installations by Dr. Scott Ordway (MGSA)
7. Access Rutgers Gardens
8. Key terms: Landscape, ecology, climate, health, walking, arts-integrated collaboration, spatial justice

Resource: Website: rutgers-aircollaborative.net

Homework Assignment

- ❖ Starting your walking journal and start walking for about 20 minutes per day. No headphones. Write down your experiences. Can you put some of your experiences in relation to what we have discussed on the first day of this course? Be ready to present in class in week 2.
- ❖ Prepare the following reading for discussion in the next class:
O’Brassil-Kulfan, Kristin: “‘A Wandering Life’: The Physical Landscape of Indigent Transiency.” In: *Vagrants and Vagabonds: Poverty and Mobility in the Early American Republic*, New York University Press, 2019. ProQuest Ebook Central (Excerpt, no page numbers)

WEEK 2, 01/30:

FROM VAGRANCY TO THE CAR-BASED SOCIETY. AMERICAN STORIES OF THE VERNACULAR LANDSCAPE

- ❖ Check-in: students report back on how their first week with a daily walking routine went.

Wandering Lives: Poverty & Mobility in Early America

- ❖ Input instructor and class discussion of **Dr. Kristin O’Brassil-Kulfan** (SAS Public History & AIR Collaborative) assigned book chapter from *Vagrants and Vagabonds: Poverty and Mobility in the Early American Republic* text followed by an in-class writing assignment, and a group discussion.

Reading assignment to be prepared for class / note down three questions

- ❖ O’Brassil-Kulfan, Kristin: “‘A Wandering Life’: The Physical Landscape of Indigent Transiency.” In: *Vagrants and Vagabonds: Poverty and Mobility in the Early American Republic*, New York University Press, 2019. ProQuest Ebook Central (Excerpt, no page numbers)

In this session, we'll explore the early American legal and social history of vagrancy and the criminalization of mobility and poverty. This is a history in which walking was used as a survival mechanism (traveling on foot to look for work, food, shelter, relief) as well as punishable by incarceration (traveling on foot through a community if you were a stranger and especially if you were poor could land you in jail with a vagrancy charge). Some of the people whose lives Dr. KOB encountered in the archives walked on foot the whole way from Massachusetts to Pennsylvania, etc., many walked between New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania with regularity. We will consider how people experiencing homelessness have traversed public spaces historically and in our own time, and how their agency has been and continues to be circumscribed by capitalism, police surveillance, and carcerality.

In-class writing assignment:

If, while you were out walking, you were stopped by a watchman or justice of the peace [aka police officer], in the manner that the nineteenth century people whose experiences we discussed were stopped, and they asked to "give an account of yourself" or prove you have "means of subsistence," how would you respond? What evidence of your means of subsistence would you be able to provide? Why should one's ability to prove they have the means of subsistence be relevant to whether or where they can walk in public space?

How does one's choice about where or how or when to walk reflect one's membership in a community?
How long does it/would it take for you to feel comfortable going out walking alone in a new community?
How free do you feel to walk within your community?

Who or what decides where you are legally allowed to walk? Who or what decides where you feel comfortable walking? Do you feel your class/socioeconomic status invites or excludes you from walking in certain spaces? What about your race, gender, sexuality, or any other characteristic?

Please reflect on these questions and write your thoughts into your walking journal, 2-3 pages.

Group discussion / class discussion.

BREAK

J.B. Jackson (1909-1986) and the Vernacular American Landscape

Watching together: *A Figure in the Landscape* (1989) (documentary). We will understand the experience as well as the planning rationale of our surrounding "vernacular" landscape. "Learning how to see the landscape" was J. B. Jackson's most important quest.

Short bio: John Brinckerhoff "Brinck" Jackson was a writer, publisher, instructor, and sketch artist in landscape design. Herbert Muschamp, architecture critic of the New York Times, stated that J. B. Jackson was "America's greatest living writer on the forces that have shaped the land this nation occupies."

Homework Assignment

- ❖ Walking: After our discussion on excerpts of J. B. Jackson's ideas as presented in the documentary *A Figure in the Landscape* (1989) please go for a walk and document one typical feature of the vernacular US American landscape and write down in which context J. B. Jackson presented this detail. Post to the discussion forum and please comment on at least one posting of a colleague.
- ❖ **Reading assignments to be prepared for class (3 questions)**
Ingold, Tim: "Culture on the ground: the world perceived through the feet." In: *Being Alive. Essays on Movement, Knowledge and Description*, London: Routledge (2011): 33–50.

WEEK 3, 02/06: DISCUSSING THE CAR BASED AMERICAN LANDSCAPE & THE BENEFITS OF WALKING

In **the first part of our class**, we will revisit the documentary on J. B. Jackson *A Figure in the Landscape* and discuss sequences of it. We will also present your homework assignments and how YOU chose to portrait the American Vernacular Landscape.

In the **second part of the course**, we will discuss Tim Ingold's work on walking in Chapter Three of *Being Alive* which is subtitled: "The world perceived through the feet". This approach to perception uses a phenomenological method that is available to everyone, and we will be making some of our own observations, while going out.

Reporting back to class after going out.

If there is time, we will briefly discuss the 2023 film *Perfect Days* by Wim Wenders (also in view of Week 4).

[Watch the Official Trailer](#) (Released in December 2023)

Perfect Days, written by Wim Wenders and Takuma Takasaki, and directed by Wim Wenders.

Hirayama (Koji Yakusho) cleans public toilets in Tokyo. Outside of his structured routine, he cherishes music on cassette tapes, reads books and takes photos. He lives his life in simplicity and daily tranquility. Through unexpected encounters, he reflects on himself and on finding beauty in the world.

Analysis: [Perfect Days: The Power of No Mind by Tim Thoughts.](#)

Homework Assignment

- ❖ When you walk this week, please consider what you have learned from Tim Ingold's text / from our discussion and how it changed your walking/perceiving. Write one page into your walking journal. Do you have the impression that you create knowledge with your walking? If so: what kind of knowledge? Please write ½ page in your walking journal why or why not.
 - ❖ **Readings to be prepared for next class (three questions):**
Handke, Peter: "The Long Way Around." In *Slow Homecoming* (Translated by Ralph Manheim), New York: Farrar / Straus / Giroux (1985): 3-137. Please read pp. 3-11 (only the first paragraph of p. 11)
Handke, Peter: "The Lesson of Mont Sainte Victoire." In *Slow Homecoming* (Translated by Ralph Manheim), New York: Farrar / Straus / Giroux (1985): 139-211. Please read pp. 201-211.
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WEEK 4, 02/13: WALKING, WRITING, DESIGNING - TOPOLOGY AND PHENOMENOLOGY I: WINGS OF DESIRE

Introduction to Peter Handke's work and why we read it in this course.

Peter Handke (born 1942) is an author, novelist, translator, and screenwriter from Austrian descent (born in the home state of the instructor), who was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2019 "for an influential work that with linguistic ingenuity has explored the periphery and the specificity of human experience." Movement in space is a central motif in Handke's work, whereby his observations and descriptions focus especially on the margins of urban space. Walking in the city, out into the periphery, crisscrossing and passing through nature are frequently recurring motifs. At such moments, Handke finds a "legibility" and "experienceability" of landscape that corresponds to his poetic ideal. Through watching the movie *Wings of Desire* for which Peter Handke wrote the screen play as well as an investigation into why Peter Handke was so influential to the work of landscape architects in the 1980s and 1990s, we explore how his work and those of whom he influenced is considered to heighten human awareness and changes the conscious of the people exposed to this work.

Watching excerpts of the film Wim Wenders' *Wings of Desire* together.

(00:25-7:45; 23:53 - 30:53; 36:01-46:32; eventually 1h:37- end)

Wenders, Wim (Script by Peter Handke). *Wings of Desire (Der Himmel über Berlin)*, 1987

Film description from distributor: Damiel (Bruno Ganz) and Cassiel (Otto Sander) are angels who watch over the city of Berlin. They don't have harps or wings and they prefer overcoats to gossamer gowns. They can travel unseen through the city, listening to people's thoughts, watching their actions, and studying their lives. While they can make their presence felt in small ways, only children and other angels can see them. They spend their days serenely observing, unable to interact with people, and they feel neither pain nor joy. One day, Damiel finds his way into a circus and sees Marion (Solveig Dommartin), a high-wire artist, practicing her act; he is immediately smitten. As he watches her, Damiel makes a decision: he wants to be human, and he wants to be with Marion, to lift her spirits and to share her pain. Wim Wenders' *Wings of Desire* is a remarkable modern fairy tale about the nature of being alive.

❖ More resources

Watch [Official Trailer 1987](#)

A O. Scott reviews the "Wings of Desire", a meditation on the nature of time and intimacy: [Critics' Pic The New York Times](#)

Brad Deane, Senior Manager of Film Programmes at TIFF Bell Lightbox, on [Wim Wenders' 'Wings of Desire in the National Post](#).

Watching together and discussing from the view of music/composition and experience/landscape.
Take notes in your walking journals // group discussions.

- ❖ In which way do children react differently to the angels compared to adults?
- ❖ What do you think the filmmaker / the screenwriter wanted to say about children's ways of observing their environments?
- ❖ How does the very slow pace of the film affect you? What effect may such a slow pace have on observing people and landscapes?
- ❖ What kind of spaces of the city of Berlin did you see depicted in this movie? What do you think about the scene where the old Jewish man walks along the "terrain vague" (in-between-land, periphery, urban wasteland) of "Potsdamer Platz" that used to define the urban space along the Western Side of the Berlin Wall?
- ❖ What does the live concert of Nick Cave & the Bad Seeds add to the narrative and atmosphere of the film?

❖ **Homework assignment**

Please read the Handke texts again and walk. Write in your notebook what you think about the texts, what you like, and should you find the texts difficult to follow: why? Does the reading influence your walking and your awareness of your surroundings? Please write two pages. We will discuss your walking experience and the experience of watching the film at the start of our next class.

WEEK 5, 02/20: WALKING, WRITING, DESIGNING - TOPOLOGY AND PHENOMENOLOGY II: LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

In this class, we will stay with Peter Handke, raised awareness, phenomenology and topology and look what this means for the designing of actual landscapes. In the first part of the session, we will discuss your walking experience after reading the Handke texts and revisit Handke's work for literature and film and how this is related to the theme of our course- The Power of Walking, Listening, and Watching.

Then, we will have a lecture/presentation and discussion what this means for form giving in design disciplines.

Lecture by Instructor

Walking, Writing, Designing: Peter Handke's Influence on Postmodern Landscape Architecture

Three Swiss landscape architects of international renown claim that the Austrian author Peter Handke (b. 1942) has crucially influenced their design work: George Descombes (b. 1948), Dieter Kienast (1945–1998) and Günther Vogt (b. 1957). Movement in space is a central motif in Handke's work, whereby his observations and descriptions focus especially on the margins of urban space. Walking in the city, out into the periphery, crisscrossing and passing through nature are frequently recurring motifs.

At such moments, Handke finds a “legibility” and “experienceability” of landscape that corresponds to his poetic ideal, for which he was awarded the Nobel Prize in 2019. The lecture shows how Handke, who found his way to a phenomenological aesthetic in the late 1970s and the three landscape architects aimed to uncover an experience of an existing landscape that is, however, only manifested through form.

Discussion on form, experience, and scenography in texts and landscapes.

❖ **Homework walking assignment to be completed by Week 11 – 04/03:**

After reading Handke and watching "Wings of Desire", please do a walk of about 30min somewhere in an urban periphery / in-between-land / terrain vague / or an urban wasteland before our next class (Boyd Park and Deiner Park qualify as in-between-land or urban periphery) . Be sure to be safe and look for company when walking. Describe your experience of walking within this space. Take pictures and post them to the discussion forum. Be ready to share your experience in week 10.

❖ **Readings to be prepared for week 7–03/06 (three questions):**

❖ Revill, George: “Landscape, Music, and Sonic Environments.” In *The Routledge Companion to Landscape Studies*. New York: Routledge (2019): 264–274

❖ Hellerstein, Erica. “The Grievors of Climate Change”, *Noema Magazine*, December 2022: [LINK \(https://www.noemamag.com/the-grievors-of-climate-change/\)](https://www.noemamag.com/the-grievors-of-climate-change/)

WEEK 6, 02/27: URBAN SKETCH WALK - CRITIQUE OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Dr. Freytag is on the Search Committee of the new Dean for the Mason Gross School of the Arts and has to attend a session to interview candidates. Art Library faculty Megan Lotts, MFA, MLIS will run this class.

Before you go out sketching:

Guest lecture by Art Librarian Megan Lotts: "Walking Artists, Walking Performances"

Megan Lotts is the Art Librarian at Rutgers, where she teaches research workshops, builds collections, facilitates programming, and events, and closely engages with students and faculty researching in the Arts. Lotts has presented her research both nationally and internationally. In 2021 the American Library Association published her first book *Advancing a Culture of Creativity in Libraries: Programming and Engagement* and in 2024 her second book *The Playful Library*.

Her research interests include creativity, outreach & engagement, makerspaces, play, and the work of library liaisons. Megan earned her MFA (2004) and MLIS (2007) from University of Wisconsin-Madison and has a BFA in Painting (2000) and BFA in Art History (2002) from the University of Illinois- Champaign-Urbana.

Urban sketch walk lead by Megan Lotts

Megan Lotts initiated “Drawing Rutgers” and led several “Urban Sketching” Campaigns. The latter was inspired by the Urban Sketchers Movement (President: Richard Alomar, Department Chair at Rutgers Landscape Architecture, who launched the first Rutgers Urban Sketchwalk Campaign together with Megan Lotts)

After the class/Homework assignment: Take photos from the resulting sketches in your walking journal and upload them to the discussion forum. Comment your posts: What did this exercise mean for you? Was it hard? Joyful? Interesting? Challenging?

Reminder: Reading assignment for next class (three questions):

- ❖ Revill, George: "Landscape, Music, and Sonic Environments." In *The Routledge Companion to Landscape Studies*. New York: Routledge (2019): 264–274
- ❖ Hellerstein, Erica. "The Grievors of Climate Change", *Noema Magazine*, December 2022: [LINK](https://www.noemamag.com/the-grievors-of-climate-change/) (<https://www.noemamag.com/the-grievors-of-climate-change/>)

WEEK 7, 03/06: MUSIC, SOUND, AND LANDSCAPE – ACOUSTIC ECOLOGY, MEMORY, PLACE MAKING

This class will bring sound, music and landscape together, discuss the acoustic dimension of landscape architecture and show how artists address the climate crisis through walking, listening, and composing.

In the first part of the class, we will have a **guest lecture** and Q&A via Zoom

Dr. Nadine Schütz (Sound Artist, Architect, and IRCAM Fellow, Paris): The Acoustic Dimension of Landscape Architecture: Memory and Place

- ❖ Assigned Reading: Revill, George: "Landscape, Music, and Sonic Environments." In *The Routledge Companion to Landscape Studies*. New York: Routledge (2019): 264–274

The second part of the class features **Dr. Scott Ordway's** (MGSA- Head of Composition) **symphonic work: *The End of Rain* (2022)**. *The End of Rain* is a 50-minute symphonic work commissioned by the [Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music](#) and featuring [Roomful of Teeth](#). The text is based on crowdsourced stories of wildfire and drought from 225 Californians, accompanied by documentary video by the composer. Dr. Ordway also published a related hardcover book of photography. This is an extraordinary work that addresses the climate crisis and consequential losses, that gains a special significance with the ongoing disastrous fires in Los Angeles.

- ❖ Assigned Reading: Hellerstein, Erica. "The Grievors of Climate Change", *Noema Magazine*, December 2022: [LINK](https://www.noemamag.com/the-grievors-of-climate-change/) (<https://www.noemamag.com/the-grievors-of-climate-change/>)

Ressources:

Kosman, Joshua. "Cabrillo Festival springs back into action with a beautiful climate elegy." *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 2022: [LINK](https://datebook.sfchronicle.com/music/review-cabrillo-festival-springs-back-into-action-with-a-beautiful-climate-elegy) (<https://datebook.sfchronicle.com/music/review-cabrillo-festival-springs-back-into-action-with-a-beautiful-climate-elegy>)

Listening

Ordway, Scott. *The End of Rain* (2022) [LINK](#), password= "california"

MIDTERM – DR. FREYTAG WILL COLLECT ALL NOTEBOOKS AND RETURN THEM TO YOU IN WEEK 8!

No walking assignment this week.

Reading assignment for next class:

Jim Taranto, *Revealing Edges: Connecting Rutgers Gardens to Cook Campus at a Pedestrian Scale*, Rutgers University, Master of Landscape Architecture, Graduate Project, 2013

WEEK 8, 03/13 (rain check 03/27): WALK TO RUTGERS GARDENS - CONNECTIVITY, EQUITY, ACCESS

Field trip. We meet at 1:55pm in class (you get back your walking journals!) and walk promptly to the Cook Research Farm. It will be muddy and cold. Bring walking shoes or boots that you can easily wash!
Using photography and notes/sketches as tools to explore, understand, and critique landscape design

WALKING FROM BLAKE HALL TO RUTGERS GARDENS AND BACK VIA COOK RESEARCH FARM

Reading to be prepared for class: Jim Taranto, *Revealing Edges: Connecting Rutgers Gardens to Cook Campus at a Pedestrian Scale*, Rutgers University, Master of Landscape Architecture, Graduate Project, 2013

Homework Assignments

- ❖ **Walking Journal Assignment:** Write down what you have experienced today. How did you feel exploring the Cook Research Farm, passing US Route 1, and discovering a foot path to Rutgers Gardens. Imagine a future, where you could walk to the gardens. Would you go there? What would you do? Write 2-3 pages. This shall inspire you for your contribution to Access Rutgers Gardens.
- ❖ **Start thinking of your final project!** Your final project should consist of ideas on how to contribute to improve Access to Rutgers Gardens, other than by car. What would you do? How would you convince Rutgers leadership, local politicians, the local community that Rutgers Gardens have to become accessible?

WEEK 9, 03/15: SPRING BREAK – NO CLASSES

WEEK 10, 03/27: WHAT CAN YOU DO TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO RUTGERS GARDENS?

Group work and brainstorming session (if it snows or rains on 03/13, these sessions will be switched)

Readings to be prepared for class

- Jim Taranto, *Revealing Edges: Connecting Rutgers Gardens to Cook Campus at a Pedestrian Scale*, Rutgers University, Master of Landscape Architecture, Graduate Project, 2013
- <https://rutgers-aircollaborative.net/projects/marchrugardens.html>
- <https://rutgers-aircollaborative.net/projects/accessgardens.html>

Possible guests for this class (TBC): Theresa Hyslop, of ETM Associates, who are commissioned with a vision plan for RU Gardens; Dr. Lauren Errickson, Director of Rutgers Gardens and responsible for Campus Engagement, Dr. Frank Wong, Rutgers IPO- Institutional Planning and Organization.

Reminder: Do not forget to complete your homework for 04/03 (assigned on 02/15)

After reading Handke and watching "Wings of Desire", please do a walk of about 30min somewhere in an urban periphery / in-between-land / terrain vague / or an urban wasteland before our next class (Boyd Park and Deiner Park qualify as in-between-land or urban periphery) . Be sure to be safe and look for company when walking. Describe your experience of walking within this space. Take pictures and post them to the discussion forum. Be ready to share your experience in week 11.

OUTLOOK: GROUP WORK READING AND PRESENTING in Week 12 (two weeks from now)

Jeff Speck, "The Ten Steps of Walkability," in: Speck, *Walkable City. How Downtown Can Save America, One Step at a Time*. North Point Press: New York 2021, pp. 65-253 (all 10).

Please form groups of two choose one chapter (in class of 03/27), read it and prepare it for presentation in the class of Week 12: 04/10.

Readings to be prepared for next class- Week 11 (three questions):

Burckhardt, Annemarie and Lucius: "Strollology. A Minor Subject. In Conversation with Hans Ulrich Obrist (2000)." In: *Why is Landscape Beautiful? The Science of Strollology*, edited by Markus Ritter and Martin Schmitz. Berlin, Basel, Boston: Birkhäuser (2015): 7–16.

De Certeau, Michel: "Walking in the City" (= Chapter 7 in Part III Spatial Practices). In *The Practice of Everyday Life*, Berkeley and LA: University of California Press (1988): 91–110.

WEEK 11, 04/03: LIVING DOWN BELOW: HOW WALKING CAN CHANGE PLANNING I

We start this class with your reports on your *terrain vague* – in-between land – urban periphery walks and photos and reports. The rest of the course is dedicated to the question how walking can transform planning.

Guest Lecture Prof Dr. Henrik Schultz (TBC), Landscape Planning + Regional Development, Osnabrück University of Applied Sciences: Walking as a tool for large scale planning.

20-30min lecture, followed by Q+A

Lecture, discussion, and on-site activity:

Unlearning planning. Get rid of the "Eye of God" view. How can we change the planning practice and education by walking? – with an introduction to *Strollology, The Science of Walking*.

Guest appearance by Dr. Freytag's research partner in Switzerland: Caspar Schärer (architect).

We currently write a handbook for planners and policy makers entitled (English translation):

Walking in Suburbia. Why planning and climate protection need more knowledge gained from practice and experience. Zurich: Verlag Hochparterre (forthcoming, 2026)

Homework assignment

Walk in your neighborhood. Focus on what you realize needs to be improved. Take pictures and post them to the discussion forum. Reflect on how the planning department of your borough (or of the Rutgers Campus) could improve their work by walking through a neighborhood before starting their planning process. Be ready to share your experience in week 12.

Reminder: GROUP WORK READING AND PRESENTING

Jeff Speck, "The Ten Steps of Walkability," in: Speck, *Walkable City. How Downtown Can Save America, One Step at a Time*. North Point Press: New York 2021, pp. 65-253 (all 10).

Please form groups of two choose one chapter (in class of 03/27), read it and prepare it for presentation in class.

WEEK 12, 04/10: LIVING DOWN BELOW: HOW WALKING CAN CHANGE PLANNING II

In the first part of the class please report back from your neighborhood walks and where you found things that your borough can improve (planning commission or other).

Followed by the GROUP PRESENTATION- The Ten Steps of Walkability (Jeff Speck)

Each step is presented by a team of two students.

Discussion and outlook: what can you do in your community to implement walking?

WALKING AS A TOOL FOR SPATIAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC HEALTH

In the second part of the class we learn about **GirlTrek**. Their motto?

“Take a walk. Join a movement!”

GirlTrek - Over one million black women and girls walking. Why?

Watching the **Ted Talk** by Girl Trek founders Morgan Dixon and Vanessa Garrison

GirlTrek is the largest health movement and nonprofit for Black women in the US. Their goal is to activate transformational and radical self-care opportunities for Black Women, to increase their health and to radically augment the presence of women of color in public parks and the “Great Outdoors.”

It has also become a political/policy movement in the sense that the women walking demand improvements of the built environment in their communities, and they organize to vote.

If there is time left reading, watching and discussing in class:

Finney, Carolyn: **“Who gets Left Out of the ‘Great Outdoors’ Story?”**, *The New York Times*, November 4, 2021 (<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/04/style/black-outdoors-wilderness.html>)

Watching excerpts of Carolyn Finney’s online-lecture **Black Faces, White Spaces: Christian Cooper, John Muir and Reclaiming the Green World.**

Carolyn Finney, PhD is a storyteller, author, and a cultural geographer. The aim of her work is to develop greater cultural competency within environmental organizations and institutions, challenge media outlets on their representation of difference, and increase awareness of how privilege shapes who gets to speak to environmental issues and determine policy and action.

Check-in presentations/discussion: Where are you with your Access Rutgers Gardens Ideas?

Group 1-3

WEEK 13, 04/17: CAMPUS WALK

Check-in presentations / discussion: Where are you with your Access Rutgers Gardens Ideas?

Group 2-6

GirlTrek inspired Campus Walk – discussing Campus Improvements – Surprise Stops

(Alternative program in case of rain: Marches in the History of the Civil Rights Movement. Watch Film excerpts of SELMA and GANDHI - discussion)

Reading to be prepared for the next class (three questions):

[Feature on Diane Jones Allen](#) (Harvard GSD, African American Design Nexus)

Jones Allen, Diane: *Lost in the Transit Desert. Race, Transit Access and Suburban Form*. London and New York: Routledge 2017. **Read Foreword, xi-xiv, Introduction, and the first subchapter of Chapter 1** “Theorizing the origin of and defining Transit Deserts; pp 1-19.

WEEK 14, 04/24- WALKING AS A TOOL FOR SPATIAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC HEALTH 2

Discussion: Transit Deserts and Spatial Inequality in the US

Also based on the sessions if the last weeks.

Guest appearance by [Diane Jones Allen](#) (TBC), Professor of Landscape Architecture at The University of Texas at Arlington, discussing on how to improve spatial justice through connectivity and site design.

In class-work on final project

WEEK 15, 05/01: FINAL PROJECT PRESENTATIONS

ACCESS RUTGERS GARDENS – what will you do (on Rutgers Day, April 26? Or others)

Wrap up: Looking back. Looking forward. What did we learn and where do we go from here?

Handing in your notebooks for final grading.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Plagiarism is a major offense at Rutgers University. You are responsible for understanding the academic integrity policy and following these principles. Failure to uphold these principles of academic integrity threatens both the reputation of the University and the value of the degrees awarded to its students. Every member of the University community therefore bears a responsibility for ensuring that the highest standards of academic integrity are upheld. The complete academic integrity policy can be found here: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>.

The principles described on this website forbid plagiarism and require that every Rutgers University student:

- properly acknowledge and cite all use of the ideas, results, or words of others.
- properly acknowledge all contributors to a given piece of work make sure that all work submitted as his or her own in a course or other academic activity is produced without the aid of unsanctioned materials or unsanctioned collaboration.
- treat all other students in an ethical manner, respecting their integrity and right to pursue their educational goals without interference. This requires that a student neither facilitate academic dishonesty by others nor obstruct their academic progress.

Violations of academic integrity will be treated in accordance with university policy, and sanctions for violations may range from no credit for the assignment, to a failing course grade to (for the most severe violations) dismissal from the university.

THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

Classroom Citizenship

All members of the Rutgers University community are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that reflects our shared commitment to the university as a site of learning, open inquiry, and respect for intellectual, cultural, and personal differences. All voices in this classroom are important, and it is incumbent upon all of us to acknowledge and honor the variety of perspectives, experiences, and backgrounds that we bring to our work together. I will do my best to set a positive tone in the classroom, but if you have any concerns or become aware of problems, please don't hesitate to reach out to me. You must also familiarize yourself with—and abide by—the university's Policy on Student Conduct.

Inclusion and Anti-Discrimination

All teachers and guest lecturers in this class strive to foster a safe, secure, and supportive learning environment for all students. To this end, we recognize that the space of inclusion and trust is predicated on a community that is anti-racist, anti-sexist, anti-homophobic, anti-transphobic, non-ableist, non-ageist, and is reverent to different religious beliefs and practices. We strive to establish expectations for care, respect, and compassion in all our activities as a class community. As Rutgers schools with students, faculty, and staff from different states, countries, racial and ethnic backgrounds, religions, and gender identities, as well as first-generation college students, veterans, and those with diverse learning styles, we at SEBS, Mason Gross, and SAS are in a unique and privileged position to be inspired, challenged, and transformed by and through our differences. Your voice, your safety, and your experience both in and out of this classroom matter and are deeply valued.

We all have different experiences and literacies that inform who we are and that contribute to our academic and creative work. We all have room to grow to deepen our commitment to equity and care. Our attitude towards navigating these differences should be one of engagement, curiosity, openness, honesty, and the ability to listen.

Concerning latest tension on campus, there is useful information at the university level ([Reject Hate](#)), from SEBS ([DEI at SEBS/NJAES](#)) and for students ([Diversity Peer Educators](#)). We believe that to be meaningful and specific. In the landscape architecture program, we strive to go beyond that and bring together faculty, the LA undergrad and grad clubs, and students for a series of workshops to develop a common agreement on how to deal with speech at Blake.

Names and Pronouns

If you use a name and/or gender pronoun that is not indicated on the class roster, or if it changes over the course of the semester, please let me know. If I make an error in addressing you, please correct me.

Land Acknowledgment

We acknowledge that the land on which we stand is the ancestral territory of the Lenape People. We pay respect to Indigenous people throughout the Lenape diaspora—past, present, and future—and honor those that have been historically and systemically disenfranchised. We also acknowledge that Rutgers University, like New Jersey and the United States as a nation, was founded upon the exclusions and erasures of Indigenous peoples. (<https://diversity.rutgers.edu/honor-native-land>)

Technology

You may use a laptop or other device that enables you to take efficient notes. However, you may not use that device in a way that distracts either your peers or the instructor. If you are using devices to watch videos, write e-mails, send text messages, or surf the web, you will be asked to leave class.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the foundation of all scholarly inquiry; this means producing our own work independently, honestly, and fairly, and giving credit to others upon whose work we draw. As participants in this learning community, we must all agree to abide by this core principle. All students are responsible for understanding Rutgers University's policy on academic integrity (<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu>), including the range of consequences and disciplinary actions that result from violation of the policy. It is essential that we cite all sources; resources to learn this skill are available through the Purdue OWL website, among many others. If you have questions about when to cite, please ask! And please know that it is always better to provide too many citations rather than too few. I have a zero-tolerance policy for violations of academic integrity and refer all violations to the Office of Student Conduct (<https://studentconduct.rutgers.edu>).

PLEASE ASK FOR HELP IF YOU NEED IT

Contact Us

As your instructors, we are committed to helping you succeed in this course and in your studies at the university. We encourage you to contact us or drop by office hours if you are encountering obstacles to your academic success or personal welfare. In accordance with university policy, please contact us through your Rutgers email account.

We are providing these links in case they are helpful to you:

Covid-19 information: <https://coronavirus.rutgers.edu>

Rutgers Learning Centers: Services include tutoring, assistance with writing, strategizing for schoolwork and stress management, and workshops to prepare for exams, among others. <https://rlc.rutgers.edu>

Rutgers Writing Program: Services, tutoring, and courses to assist with writing. <http://wp.rutgers.edu>.
Assistance for English Language Learners: <https://wp.rutgers.edu/special-programs/reli>.

Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services (CAPS): <http://health.rutgers.edu/medical-counseling-services/counseling/> or (848) 932-7884. CAPS provides counseling, alcohol and other drug assistance, and psychiatric services staffed by a team of professionals within Rutgers Health Services. CAPS services include individual and group therapy, workshops, crisis intervention, referral to specialists, and consultation and collaboration with campus partners.

Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance: www.vpva.rutgers.edu/ or (848) 932-1181. This office provides confidential crisis intervention, counseling, and advocacy for victims of sexual and relationship violence and stalking to students, faculty, and staff.

Reject Hate: <https://diversity.rutgers.edu/reject-hate>

DEI at SEBS/NJAES: <https://execdeanagriculture.rutgers.edu/diversity-equity-inclusion/>

Disability Services: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/> or (848) 445-6800. (See the suggested disability statement above.)

Scarlet Listeners: <https://rutgers.campuslabs.com/engage/organization/scarletlisteners> or (732) 247-5555. Free and confidential peer counseling and referral hotline.

Report a Concern: <http://health.rutgers.edu/do-something-to-help/>

Speak Up Bias Prevention Campaign: <https://diversity.rutgers.edu/speakup>

Report a bias incident: <http://inclusion.rutgers.edu/report-bias-incident/>

Basic Needs Security: Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in this course, is urged to contact the Dean of Students (<http://deanofstudents.rutgers.edu>; deanofstudents@echo.rutgers.edu) for support.

Office of the Dean of Students: <http://deanofstudents.rutgers.edu>; deanofstudents@echo.rutgers.edu. This office provides resources to assist all students at Rutgers in navigating the university.

Rutgers Student Food Pantry: <http://ruoffcampus.rutgers.edu/food/>; ruoffcampus@echo.rutgers.edu.

SEBS General Honors Program: Contact the Director of the SEBS Honors Program Dr. David Tulloch (dtulloch@crssa.rutgers.edu) or SEBS Program Coordinator (position to be filled). They are dedicated to supporting the SEBS Honors student through advising, mentorship, and connections to resources throughout the university.