

HUMANITIES 101
WINTER 2010

FINDING ONE'S PLACE:
MAPPING COMMUNITY AND CITY IN TIMES OF CHANGE

TUESDAYS, 5:30-8PM
THE LEARNING CENTRE @ BOYLE STREET

COURSE INSTRUCTORS AND ASSISTANTS

Christopher Fletcher – Department of Anthropology (christopher.fletcher@ualberta.ca)

Joanne Muzak – Hum101 Coordinator, Community Service-Learning Program,
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INTRODUCTION

Cities are complicated. They are home to huge numbers of people who organize themselves in different ways to gather the things they need to survive. Some are rich, some are poor, most are somewhere in between. We love cities and we hate them. Some are stunningly beautiful, but most aren't terribly remarkable. Edmonton is a solid Canadian city. It is growing rapidly and is very sparsely settled. How does this affect the way we move through the city and how we experience it? Who lives here and why? Cities are coordinated and chaotic, welcoming and frightening, warm and cold all at the same time. Every day brings something new, but there are routines we live by that anchor us. We all live here and coexist. Each of us moves through the city with different goals, histories, perspectives and experiences. Cities are made up of the webs of human movement through the streets, buildings and public places. They are often compared to bodies with different organs, arteries and veins connecting the parts. What holds the city together? And, how do people of different means find their way? Drawing on the lessons in other Humanities 101 courses we will focus on narratives of living in the city, the city as a place that we all live in. Ultimately, this course will examine how we find our place in the city. Students will be working with and creating maps as a way to organize the information we gather. Together we will try to draw a portrait of the geographies of everyday life from our own perspectives.

SCHEDULE

Please note, there may be some changes to the schedule. All changes will be announced in class.

Week 1 Jan 26

Instructor: Christopher Fletcher

Activities & Themes

Introduction to anthropological concepts, different kinds of mapping and urban experience

Some ideas we will work on:

The organization of wealth and poverty
 Coming and going – new arrivals and old-timers
 Finding a bed. Finding a home. Finding a community.

And some questions we will explore:

What do you need to know to be living in the city?
 What is a neighborhood?
 What do we take for granted when moving around the city?
 What do we keep an eye out for?

Goals:

Basic familiarity with Google Earth.
 Familiarity with community mapping projects.
 Preliminary locations of interest/significance are identified.

Preparation for Next Class (Week 2)/Your Assignment for the Week:

Walking Diary Entry 1 (See handout for Walking Diary)
 Suggested Topics: A description of an important spot in the city (“Important” is open to interpretation. What’s an “important” spot to you? Or, what spot do you think other people consider “important”?)

Week 2 Feb 2 Continued Introduction to Community Mapping

Instructor: Christopher Fletcher

Activities & Themes

Discussion and mapping of places/diaries.
 Elaboration of kinds of geographic data that could be collected.
 Collaborative design approach to a course map (Victoria?)

Week 3 Feb 9 Photographing Our Community

Instructors: Christal Ramanauskas, Joanne Muzak

Activities & Themes

A brief introduction to taking photos
 How do we know what we’re looking for?
 Introduce photoessays
 Developing the substance of the story
 What kinds of pictures will work?
 How will the pictures and the narrative connect?

Weather- and Time-permitting: A short walking tour of the neighbourhood to take photos

Preparation for Next Class (on Feb. 23): Take more pictures during the day
→ Please drop your camera off at The Learning Centre NO LATER THAN MONDAY,
FEBRUARY 15, 4pm. ←

Week 4 Feb 23 Analyzing Our Photos & Thinking about How They Map

Instructors: Joanne Muzak, Christal Ramanauskas

Activities

Analyzing our photos

What do our photos say about our communities? about community?

What do our photos tell us about Edmonton?

How can we use our photos on our map(s)?

Week 5 March 2 Telling Stories of Our Community: Interviewing

Instructors: Dustin, Natalia, Oumar, Christopher Fletcher

Activities

Discussion of interviews: Why do interviews? What issues do we need to consider when doing interviews? How do we do interviews well?

What is the purpose of these interviews? How do they relate to community mapping?

Writing Interview Questions

Practice Interviewing

Week 6 March 9 Interviewing continued

Instructors: Dustin, Natalia, Oumar, Joanne Muzak

Activities

Finalizing our interview questions

Class time for interviewing each other

Week 7 March 16 Interviewing continued: Sharing & Mapping Stories

Instructors: Christopher Fletcher, Dustin, Natalia, Oumar

Activities

Sharing interviews/stories
Discussion of how they map/connect to community

Week 8 March 23 Have We Found Our Place?

Instructors: Joanne Muzak +

Activities

Finish up interviews if necessary
Reflect on research processes that we've undertaken – photos, interviews, narratives
Analyze the map so far

Week 9 March 30 Showcasing Our Community Map

Instructors: Christopher Fletcher, Joanne Muzak

Activities

Possibly public exhibition of our community map, location TBA
Course evaluations