

Practicing Culture and Community in the City: Third Places in Berlin

Fall term 2022: 5 September – 9 December 2022

CATEGORY

Urban Studies and Sociology

COURSE STRUCTURE

3 contact hours à 45 min per week (14 weeks)

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Time

Monday, 9.00 am – 11:30 am

Place

t.b.a.

COURSE LANGUAGE

English

Language requirements (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages)
English B2

TARGET GROUP

International exchange students of all subjects with a strong interest in the course topic. Humboldt Perspectives Study Abroad courses are designed for undergraduate students. Master students may participate if their home university agrees. Participant students are expected to have an enthusiasm towards designing and conducting a research in the city. It is an advantage to be familiar with sociological methods but there is no such prerequisite. Similarly, there is no obligatory requirement of having a sociology background. All the readings are easy to follow, and the classroom discussions will facilitate an interdisciplinary environment.

CREDITS = 6 ECTS

All courses are accredited according to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS).

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Registration on Moodle (HU's e-learning platform)

in case of online classes

- Fully functional device (laptop, tablet, PC)
- Stable internet connection
- Software: Zoom (video/audio)
- *Recommended* hardware: external headset for better sound quality

EXPECTATIONS & POLICIES

Preparation for lively discussions: be on time, have at least the required readings completed, and points in mind for discussion or clarification.

Assignments: complete all assignments according to the specified requirements on the schedule including handing them over to the lecturer.

Commitment: pay particular attention to the lecturer and respect differences of opinions (classmates', lecturers).

Academic guidelines: Comply with academic integrity policies (such as no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical) especially the academic honor code and the student code of conduct.

Attendance policy: Students must contact their class teachers to catch up on missed work – to excuse absence please contact the lecturer.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

For many decades, urban and community studies have analyzed the relevance of space for social diversity and integration. What does social diversity induce (in terms of social networks, belonging, everyday life practices)? How can we understand the role of public places (space) in creating new opportunities of meeting un/familiar others? How can we approach space as an active participant of sociability as well as community building?

In order to answer these questions, an influential tool was introduced to literature in 1980s and it is still valued by many sociologists to understand social mix and appropriation of space: 'third place'. The concept has been firstly conceptualized as a mechanism of sociability between home and work (Oldenburg, 1982, 1989). Its initial definition suggested that it is a public place which is less identifiable by the outsiders while being actively used and appropriated by its inhabitants on a daily basis.

It is possible (and necessary) to expand the definition of third place in between home and work. Today, we talk about how third places open space for women, LGBTI+, immigrants, ethnic minorities, and subculture groups. Instead of investigating German Biergartens, French Cafés or English Pubs (Oldenburg, 1997); today we also have book clubs, parks, skateparks, mosques, shisha bars etc.

In this course, we will use the concept of third places to address urban complexities in community construction while learning how to do research on these sites. Students will develop their own research project and work on it during the course, for example answering questions about the role of their selected third places on the ways in which people develop a sense of belonging to a group, share, help and seek support from its inhabitants. Overall, they would ask how place itself has a direct impact on their daily practices and networks. We will go on excursion to study and understand how we would use third places to find innovative ways of doing research on social integration or community construction. Additionally, we experience and understand Berlin as a sum of various third places.

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

The objective of this interdisciplinary Bachelor-level research based learning course is to equip students with an in-depth understanding of "third places" as a sociological concept and enable them to critically reflect on the literature while giving them the opportunity to conduct research on the topic and thus to better understand its empirical reflections. By the end of the course, students will be able to:

Knowledge

- Identify and describe the core literature of "third places"
- Understand and define the basics of qualitative sociological research method

Academic/Transferable Skills

- Explain the aims, possibilities, and limitations of qualitative research methods within different fields of social sciences
- Analyze and critically reflect on various innovative research techniques in the framework of qualitative research
- Communicate and discuss core theories and key concepts of "third places"

Competencies

- Read and discuss the most recent theoretical and empirical research about "third

places”

- Design an independent, original research project that uses qualitative research techniques appropriate to the field of urban social life, organization of social spaces and of community studies.

READINGS

Cheang, M. (2002). Older adults' frequent visits to a fast-food restaurant. *Journal of Aging Studies*, 16, 303-321.

Ernst, O. & Doucet, B. (2014). The Role of Pubs in the Contested Spaces of Gentrification. *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie*, 105, 189-205.

Gold, R. (1958). Roles in sociological field observation. *Social Forces*, 36, 217-223.

Kvale, S. (2009). "Interviewing as a Craft", In: *InterViews: learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing*, 2nd edition, Sage, London, pp. 20-24.

Laing, A. & Royle, J. (2013). Examining chain bookshops in the context of "third place". *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 41(1), 27-44.

Low, S., & Smart, A. (2020). Thoughts about Public Space During Covid-19 Pandemic. *City & Society*, 32(1).

Makris, M. V. (2015). "The Best Place to Get a Mocha": Issues of Access for Youth in Public Housing in a Gentrified Community, In: *Public Housing and School Choice in a Gentrified City Youth Experiences of Uneven Opportunity*. Palgrave Macmillan US, pp. 147-170.

Maxwell, J.A. (2013). "Why are you doing this study?", In: *Qualitative Research Design: An Interactive Approach*. Sage Publications, 2nd edition, pp. 23-37.

Oldenburg, R. (1999). *The great good place: cafés, coffee shops, bookstores, bars, hair salons, and other hangouts at the heart of a community*. Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press.

Oldenburg, R., & Brissett, D. (1982). The third place. *Qualitative Sociology*, 5, 265-284.

Pachenkov, O. (2011). *Flea market in the city context: for geography matters -the case of Berlin*. Working paper.

Parham, S. (2005). Designing the Gastronomic Quarter. *Architectural Design*, 75(3), 86-95.

Roulston, K., deMarrals, K., & Lewis, J.B. (2003). Learning to interview in the social sciences. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 9, 643-668.

Slater, A. & Koo, H.J. (2010). A new type of "Third Place? *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 3(2), 99-112.

Zukin, S. (2008). Consuming Authenticity. *Cultural Studies*, 22(5), 724-748.

Further Readings

Ducheneaut, N., Moore, R. & Nickell, E. (2007), "Virtual "Third Places": A Case Study of Sociability in Massively Multiplayer Games", *Computer Supported Cooperative Work (CSCW)*, 16(1-2), 129-166.

Miles, M.B. & Huberman, A.M. (1994), *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook*. 2nd edition, Sage, London.

Miller, R.L. & Brewer, J.D. (2003), *The A-Z of Social Research*. Sage, London.

Nguyen, T. V. T., Han, H., Sahito, N., & Lam, T. N. (2019). The Bookstore-Café: Emergence of a New Lifestyle as a "Third Place" in Hangzhou, China. *Space and Culture*, 22(2), 216–233.

ASSIGNMENT INFO

Workload and assignments

In order to be granted 6 ECTS, participants will be asked to

- actively attend all sessions (a minimum of 75% attendance is required for classroom and online sessions)
- prepare and revise the classroom/online sessions
- hand in the following **assignments**:
 - Mind-map proposals: Each student/pair of students will choose a subfield (e.g., a pub, a coffeehouse, a skateboard park) and design a brief research proposal in a mind-map format. They will be expected to be specific about the “place” of fieldwork and research techniques that will be used (e.g., in-depth interviews, participant observation, focus groups). After their submission, they will receive feedback from the instructor as well as their peers. In the following weeks, they will conduct a small-scale research (e.g., 5-6 interviews) according to their mind-map research design.
 - Oral presentation: At the end of the semester, each student/pair of students will share their work in a 10-15 minutes oral presentation. They will provide a brief introduction regarding the “third place” literature, share their research project, fieldwork experiences and (if available) preliminary insights on the findings.
 - Final product (e.g., poster, audio or video): Each student/pair of students are expected to prepare an end product about their research projects. It is highly recommended and welcomed to prepare fun and interesting end products such as posters, videos, short movies and/or photograph shows. However, it is also possible to prepare old-school research papers.

Failure to fulfil one of the mentioned components results in failure of the class.

Assessment Components

The final grade will be composed of the above-mentioned assignments.

YOUR INSTRUCTOR

Ceren Kulkul is a prospective postdoc fellow in the field of Urban Sociology. She is graduated from Middle East Technical University in Ankara, Turkey. She completed her PhD at Berlin Graduate School of Social Sciences, Humboldt University of Berlin. Her research interests are international urban migration, gender, and community studies. She is also currently working on trust in communities and institutions, and construction of third places among migrant women.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1: Introduction to the Topic

This introductory session will be a preparation of the following weeks where we will discuss the core readings on the concept of "Third Places".

Oldenburg, R., & Brissett, D. (1982). The third place. *Qualitative Sociology*, 5, 265-284.

Oldenburg, R. (1999). "Preface", In: *The great good place: cafés, coffee shops, bookstores, bars, hair salons, and other hangouts at the heart of a community*. Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, pp. ix-xii.

Exercise: In this session, we will 'play a game' about finding our own frequently used places in Berlin.

Week 2: "Place": An anchor of community life

In this first literature session, we will explore the approaches to 'place' in urban sociology and geography. We will discuss how meaningful places are corresponded to human social life in the cities.

Zukin, S. (2008). Consuming Authenticity. *Cultural Studies*, 22(5), 724-748.

Exercise: In this session, we will play the same game of finding our third places in the city, but this time everybody will tell about their home cities.

Week 3: Literature on "Third places"

This session will be assigned to the origins of the concept "Third place", thus we will discuss the conceptualization of Oldenburg (1997, 1982, 1999). It will be a theoretical introduction to our course topic.

Oldenburg, R. (1999). "The Character of Third Places", In: *The great good place: cafés, coffee shops, bookstores, bars, hair salons, and other hangouts at the heart of a community*. Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, pp. 20-42.

Week 4: Literature on "Third places"

This session will integrate art venues and neighborhoods into the discussion on third places. It will provide conceptual and empirical perspectives from the fields of arts, architecture, and urban design.

Slater, A. & Koo, H.J. (2010). A new type of "Third Place? *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 3(2), 99-112.

Parham, S. (2005). Designing the Gastronomic Quarter. *Architectural Design*, 75(3), 86-95.

Week 5: Qualitative Research I: Introduction

In this session, we will start to discuss what qualitative research is, how it is done, what are the basic premises and offerings of this method and so on.

Maxwell, J.A. (2013). "Why are you doing this study?", In: *Qualitative Research Design: An Interactive Approach*. Sage Publications, 2nd edition, pp. 23-37.

Week 6: Qualitative Research II: Interviews, Observation & Focus Groups

In this session, we will continue to reflect on qualitative research methods by specifically focusing on its main techniques: interviews, participant observation and focus groups. We will learn how these techniques are used and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of these techniques.

Kvale, S. (2009). "Interviewing as a Craft", In: *InterViews: learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing*, 2nd edition, Sage, London, pp. 20-24.

Roulston, K., deMarrals, K., & Lewis, J.B. (2003). Learning to interview in the social sciences. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 9, 643-668.

Week 7: Qualitative Research III: Field, Ethics, Analysis

In this last session on qualitative research methods, we will critically reflect on the field experiences, importance of keeping a field diary and ethics by focusing on the position of the researcher in the field, insider- and outsider/ness, ethical dilemmas and so on. In addition to the reading, some cases from social research literature will be provided by the instructor for discussion about ethical dilemmas.

Gold, R. (1958). Roles in sociological field observation. *Social Forces*, 36, 217-223.

Week 8: Feedback Session I: Mind-map proposals

This session is where students officially start their own individual/pair work. Students are expected to be prepared for this session as they will share their mind-maps with their peers in the class to get feedback.

Week 9: Empirical Studies on "Third Places"

In the light of previous weeks on theoretical approaches on "third places" and research methods, in this session, we will discuss empirical studies on "Third Places".

Laing, A. & Royle, J. (2013). Examining chain bookshops in the context of "third place". *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 41(1), 27-44.

Cheang, M. (2002). Older adults' frequent visits to a fast-food restaurant. *Journal of Aging Studies*, 16, 303-321.

Week 10: Empirical Studies on "Third Places"

Continuation of empirical studies on Third Places. This week, we will concentrate on Berlin.

Pachenkov, O. (2011). *Flea market in the city context: for geography matters -the case of Berlin*. Working paper.

Week 11: Feedback Session II: Q&A and Update

In this session, students will be able to ask their questions emerged on site, to share their preliminary experiences in the field and to discuss updates about their ongoing fieldwork.

Week 12: Gentrification and “Third Places” in Berlin neighborhoods

In this session, we will discuss how gentrification and urban renewal projects influenced the ways in which third places are used and function. This literature-based session is to encourage students to discuss about further relevance of third places in the urban life.

Ernst, O. & Doucet, B. (2014). The Role of Pubs in the Contested Spaces of Gentrification. *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie*, 105, 189-205.

Makris, M. V. (2015). “The Best Place to Get a Mocha”: Issues of Access for Youth in Public Housing in a Gentrified Community, In: *Public Housing and School Choice in a Gentrified City Youth Experiences of Uneven Opportunity*. Palgrave Macmillan US, pp. 147-170.

Exercise: Working on a Berlin map, students will draw a ‘third-place map’ of themselves by marking their most frequently visited places in the Berlin neighborhoods.

Week 13: “Third Places” after Covid-19

In this session, we will discuss how Covid-19 Pandemic disrupted the “Third Places” and defunctionalized it as a mechanism of community construction, as a means of support, or as a tool to networking.

Low, S., & Smart, A. (2020). Thoughts about Public Space During Covid-19 Pandemic. *City & Society*, 32(1).

Exercise: Exchange of Covid-19 pandemic experiences in the class.

Week 14: Individual Meetings / Feedback & Questions

This week, we will not meet altogether. Students will have time slots during the scheduled time of the class, and each will have the time to share their thoughts or concerns, to ask their questions, or to get feedback by the instructor individually.

Week 15: Presentations

Students will share their research projects in the class.

Week 16: Presentations & Closing

Continuation of presentations and closing of the course.

The course and its syllabus are subject to change. Last update: 26 October 2021.