



Cities of Imagination URBN 1600

Fulfills CA2 (Social Science) requirement

Mary Donegan, MRP, PhD mary.donegan@uconn.edu

MWF in Storrs, 10:10-11:00 (hybrid; Friday is asynchronous)

bit.ly/URBN1600



Course Description:

The city is a physical place of our own (and nature's) creation. While many of us imagine physical places where we could live "perfect" lives, some ambitious visionaries sketch these built environments onto paper, dirt, or computer—and occasionally, build them. This course examines past and present examples of utopian "cities of the future" and other spatial imaginaries. We'll discuss how these planned built environments address contemporaneous concerns, yearnings, and events. We'll analyze successes and limitations in their implementations and assess how well (if at all) these cities create inclusive places. By definition, utopia is not attainable. Still, imagining a perfect city or place can be a liberating ideal, both for individuals and for oppressed or marginalized communities. We'll conclude by asking questions such as: what are the benefits to this type of visioning? What drawbacks are there, either in the plans and cities themselves or in the processes used to develop them? How can we push imaginative, radical, liberating ideals into current policy and plans while avoiding common pitfalls? And how do we ensure everyone's imagination is captured—and that incorporating diverse visions can lead to inclusive places?

Picture of a sign near Soul City Boulevard by [w:Soul City, North Carolina](#). Taken in Spring 2006 by [w>User:Tijuana Brass](#).