

USC Annenberg School of Journalism

JOUR476 – Reporting Urban Affairs

Spring 2010

Course: JOUR 476

Day & Time: Wednesdays, 2 – 5.20 p.m.

Classroom: ASC 232

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Office hours: Tuesdays-Wednesdays 5-6.30 p.m. or by appointment.

I am also reachable by email.

About the course

Sixty years after the New Deal introduced federal programs to help Americans, and forty years after the Great Society offered more assistance, the challenges facing poor and working-class urban neighborhoods has never been greater. In a multi-layered course that looks at contemporary urban problems [and solutions] and their historical roots, we will chronicle the life of 21st century urban America by reporting from the richly-textured and rapidly-changing neighborhoods of Los Angeles' urban communities through the notebook, camera lens and tape recorder of a multimedia journalist.

By enrolling in this class, you will become part of a multicultural, multimedia, community-based urban affairs reporting initiative at the USC Annenberg School of Journalism. This Annenberg journalism initiative includes this class's blog site, *Watt Way*, <http://wattway.org/blog/>. Students produce analysis from neighborhoods of their choosing on urban issues that speak to their interests. We will be assisted in our reporting by research conducted by Metamorphosis, an Annenberg School of Communication research project that studies urban issues from a variety of perspectives. Working with Metamorphosis research will provide the class with demographic and analytical tools to produce stronger, inclusive and more sophisticated journalism.

Just as important is producing journalism that offers solutions. Our pursuit of meaningful journalism also will be anchored by a heavy dose of history to give context to our class conversations and reporting. Among the questions we will explore: Why do pockets of poverty persist, despite repeated efforts to transform them? Why is it expensive to be poor? Why are the poorest schools always found in poor neighborhoods, despite massive infusions of cash over the years by both federal and state governments? And

what do the city's urban residents think about their neighborhoods, which offer public services that are often below that of white neighborhoods?

Reporting about these reforms will also transform you as a journalist. Navigating the working-class, poor, minority and immigrant communities of urban Los Angeles will give you a skill set that many working journalists today don't possess. You will acquire greater skill in perception and analysis and more confidence moving through communities that may challenge your comfort zone. You also will gain a deeper appreciation for and an understanding of a largely forgotten segment of the U.S. population that many mainstream media have long ignored.

Textbooks

The Coming White Minority: California, Multiculturalism, and America's Future
By Dale Maharidge, 329 pages, [1999, Vintage Books]

Nickel and Dimed, by Barbara Ehrenreich, 244 pages, [Metropolitan Books, 2001]. An examination by social critic Ehrenreich about how America's working poor are getting by.

Other readings: Please read the *Los Angeles Times* regularly, paying particular attention to its coverage of East Los Angeles, South Los Angeles, Compton, Watts and other urban communities in greater Los Angeles. Also read the *Los Angeles Sentinel*, www.sentinel.org and coverage from New America Media, <http://news.newamericamedia.org/news/>, a consortium of 700 ethnic media outlets whose aim is to produce more inclusive news coverage, one of the aims of our class.

From time to time, I will also distribute packets of readings from newspapers, magazines and web sites to supplement the readings from our text.

Course objectives

Upon completion of this class, you will possess a deeper appreciation for the complexities of urban issues in 21st century America. You will understand the impact of laws and social mores on urban neighborhoods and their institutions, and you will learn how to navigate with more sophistication communities of color, working class and immigrant neighborhoods to produce thoughtful, analytical journalism.

Assignments and grading

Each student will produce a weekly blog and three multimedia packages [see details below] and you will be required as part of your longer articles to produce a multimedia component, including a slideshow, video, audio or a chart or time line. Your work will

appear in *Watt Way* digital magazine first created in spring 2006 by the advanced magazine writing class. Please see archived issues at <http://wattway.uscannenberg.org/>. The strongest pieces will also appear in *Intersections: The South Los Angeles Reporting Project*, a web site intended to serve the South Los Angeles community.

One 800-1,000 word story and rewrite/multimedia package about an issue of your choice. Multimedia component required. [slide show, with text or narration, or video, or a graphic, including maps for purposes of location.]

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Please use the digital lab in the USC Annenberg School so that all multimedia projects are uniform.

Given the demands you will face in this and other classes, I strongly advise you to explore story ideas that **[a]** are related and **[b]** can be sustained over three multimedia projects. When you have conducted a critical mass of reporting, I will meet with each of you to determine the most effective use of technology, and supporting documents. For example, one student produced a package about Head Start and included a link to both the text and audio of President Johnson's 1964 "Great Society" speech in which he mentions education as an underpinning for his domestic programs. The speech – which falls under "supporting documents" – provided wonderful context beyond the student's short discussion of the "Great Society" in her well-crafted story.

Finally, it is no longer enough to simply report about an issue; you must find sources (in whatever form they take: people, officials, teachers, academic studies, etc.) that speak to solutions for the particular issue you are writing about. These solutions, whatever they might be, may take the form of a Q&A with a community leader, in video or audio, with accompanying text.

You will have up to three weeks to produce each story. I will take one week to edit, and return your work for final revisions. I have built in some flexibility around deadlines to accommodate the challenges of scheduling interviews, which always seem to slow down one or two projects every semester, despite our best efforts. Finally, one of the goals of the *Intersections: The South Los Angeles Report* is to produce multimedia journalists, giving traditional print students opportunities to gain more confidence in broadcast journalism, while giving broadcast students more opportunities to produce longer narratives, all anchored by multimedia components that will add another dimension to your primary skills.

Weekly blog submissions. These contributions may range from reaction to a survey or report on the state of education, health care, crime and safety, or wider observations about the neighborhoods you are reporting from. The idea is to begin collecting data in its many forms that will ultimately feed into your two articles. Your blog will serve as a “digital” notebook, a repository for your reporting and observations and/or studies you glean for your reporting. Collecting your work on a weekly basis will also help you organize your thoughts and assist you in producing a rough outline for your stories.

Grades

25 percent: First story with multimedia component/s.

25 percent: Second story with multimedia component/s.

25 percent: Third story with multimedia component/s.

Rewrites may be necessary; when they are, I will assign a second set of grades to the final version and average the two sets of grades for the final grade on the assignment.

15 percent: your weekly blog.

10 percent: class participation, *which includes student-led conversations of the assigned readings.*

Each story will receive three grades

The first grade reflects the depth of your content, including accuracy, context and breadth.

The second grade addresses the quality of writing, including precision of language, the appropriate print and broadcast styles, spelling and grammar.

The third grade reflects organization and flow. Pieces will be rewritten until they are strong enough to appear on the class web site.

Each grade, including a second set of grades for rewrites, carries the same weight.

A minimum grade of C (2.0) is required in a course to receive graduate credit. Work graded C- or below is not acceptable for subject or unit credit toward any master's or doctoral program. A grade point average of at least 3.0 (B) on all units attempted at USC toward a graduate degree is required for graduation. In addition, a grade point average of at least 3.0 on all graduate work attempted at USC, whether or not all such units are applied toward the degree, is required.

Participation

Class sessions will depend heavily on each student's participation. Hence, any unexcused absence or regular tardiness will affect this portion of your grade. If you

must miss a class because of an emergency – illness – please call or e-mail me BEFORE class begins. Late papers are not accepted, unless there is a death in the family or serious health issue.

Plagiarism/School of Journalism Academic Integrity Policy

A word about professional integrity: Plagiarism is defined as taking ideas or writings from another and passing them off as one's own; in journalism, this includes appropriating the reporting of another without clear attribution. Plagiarism is not tolerated, and the School's policy on academic integrity follows: "Since its founding, the USC School of Journalism has maintained a commitment to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found guilty of plagiarism, fabrication, cheating on examinations, or purchasing papers or other assignments will receive a failing grade in the course and will be dismissed as a major from the School of Journalism. There are no exceptions to the school's policy."

Internships

The value of professional internships as part of the overall educational experience of our students has long been recognized by the School of Journalism. Accordingly, while internships are not required for successful completion of this course, any student enrolled in this course who undertakes and completes an approved, non-paid internship during this semester shall earn academic extra credit herein of an amount equal to one percent of the total available semester points for this course.

To receive instructor approval, a student must request an internship letter from the Annenberg Career Development Office and bring it to the instructor to sign by the end of the third week of classes. The student must submit the signed letter to the media organization, along with the evaluation form provided by the Career Development Office. The form should be filled out by the intern supervisor and returned to the instructor at the end of the semester. No credit will be given if an evaluation form is not turned in to the instructor by the last day of class.

Note: The internship must be unpaid and can only be applied to one journalism class.

Statement for Students with Disabilities

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DPS) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DPS is located in STU

301 and is open 8.30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. The DSP phone number is 213.740.0776.

Finally, students are under a lot of pressure. If you start to feel overwhelmed, contact the USC Student Counseling Services office at 213-740-7711. The free service is confidential.

About your Professor

For nearly three decades, I have chronicled the ebb and flow of life in urban America through journalism about education, housing, employment and economic development. As an education correspondent for *The New York Times* in the 1990s, I traveled to dozens of states to cover a variety of school reform movements intended to close the gap between white and minority schools. As a correspondent in the 1980s for *The Wall Street Journal*, I produced narratives about housing discrimination in the U.S., continuing issues over access to public schools by minorities and handicapped children, and the impact of poverty on schools and the neighborhoods they serve. In the last decade, my work has appeared in a variety of venues, including *The Boston Globe*, *Education Week*, Columbia University's *Teachers College Record*, *USA Today* and dozens of other newspapers and magazines. I am the author of *Battle Rock: The Struggle Over A One-Room School in America's Vanishing West*, and of the forthcoming *Remembering Richard: Immigrants and Their Quest for the American Dream*, a book project that covers every issue we will discuss in this class. I live in South Los Angeles and have taught at USC since 2000.

The Semester

Week 1/ Jan. 13: *The new urban America: The conundrum over race and class.*

Course overview and expectations for the class. Conversation about the 1960s riots that occurred in many cities over unemployment, deficient housing and poor access to quality education. We look at some of the history in the development of the American city and how that history has both hindered progress and helped frame solutions for improvements, however uneven.

Readings: The National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, more commonly known as the Kerner Commission, released a February 1968 report that examined the causes of urban riots across the nation. The reasons were still largely in effect some 24 years later, spawning the 1992 Los Angeles riots. Read summary of 513-page Kerner Commission report at <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/6545>, with links to recommendations for action on closing the socio-economic gap between the racial and ethnic groups. [The report largely addresses white-black issues, but its findings can also be applied in this century to Latinos and poor whites.]

How journalists contribute to the uneven coverage and national misperceptions of urban life. *Columbia Journalism Review* article to be distributed in class.

Viewing: Bill Moyers and PBS review the 40 years since the 1968 riots and the Kerner Commission's report that followed.

<http://www.pbs.org/moyers/journal/03282008/profile.html>

Week 2/ Jan. 20: *The new urban America: New hope and solutions?*

The Los Angeles Urban League last year launched an aggressive "Neighborhoods at Work" campaign to rebuild a South Los Angeles neighborhood. We look at how this effort at urban renewal differs from those campaigns of the 20th century. Read an overview of the Urban League's blue print for urban renewal in Park Mesa Heights, a 70-block area of South Los Angeles at: http://www.laul.org/strat_pln_ovw.htm. In a roundtable discussion, we compare and contrast the urban improvement campaigns of the last century to efforts in the early years of the 21st century.

Readings: "What's So Great About the Great Society?" Cato Institute.

http://www.cato.org/pub_display.php?pub_id=9411

Collection of archival newspaper, magazine and broadcast reports about President Lyndon B. Johnson's 1960s efforts to aid urban neighborhoods, the "Great Society" and the "War on Poverty" initiatives.

Text readings: *The Coming White Minority*, chapters 1-4, pgs. 3-94.

Audio: Listen or read to President Johnson's Great Society speech, March 22, 1964, at the University of Michigan commencement.

<http://millercenter.org/scripps/archive/speeches/detail/3383>

[Miller Center of Public Affairs, University of Virginia.]

Week 3/ Jan. 27: *The new urban America: Changing the conversation about Civil Rights and what that means for urban neighborhoods.*

The civil rights battle in the 21st century is looking altogether different from the campaign of the last century. With hard-fought battles won over access to public accommodations, employment and voting – on paper at least – the nation's civil rights groups, representing all racial and ethnic groups, are reframing legislative battles for Americans of color. We discuss what this means for urban America, for the civil rights organizations themselves and how you report on a movement that is described by many as "fluid."

Readings: "A Hispanic Civil Rights Movement," by Juan Williams, *Washington Post*, Are the massive demonstrations by Hispanics across the country the first indicator of a major new civil rights movement?

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/04/09/AR2006040900515.html?referrer=emailarticle>

"21st century Civil Rights battle begins," Mary Mitchell, *Chicago Sun-Times*.

<http://www.suntimes.com/news/mitchell/1119054,CST-NWS-mitch21.article>

Text readings: *The Coming White Minority*, chapters 5-8, pgs. 95-174.

Teleconference: A conversation with Karen E. DeWitt, a vice president at the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, Washington, D.C.: How civil rights groups are changing the way they frame their messages over civil rights. Among other issues addressed by Ms. DeWitt, a former Washington correspondent for *The New York Times* and a former journalist for the *Washington Post*: How do journalists cover race and class individually and collectively, and as part of 21st century urban renewal and all it encompasses?

Ideas for first story are due; you will have three weeks to produce a draft of your story, accompanied by a multimedia component.

Week 4/ Feb. 3: *Mapping Our Fears: Covering urban communities.*

As journalists, we are expected to move fluidly through communities of every kind in pursuit of news. But if you aren't comfortable reporting in a community in which residents don't look like you, how do you proceed? To help us better bridge and understand the differences between different types of communities, we are visited by a team from the Metamorphosis Project, a research project housed in the Annenberg School of Communication. <http://www.metamorph.org/>

As part of the class, we also explore the Maynard Institute's "Fault Lines" concept, which proposes that news stories break down along five major lines: race, class, gender, age and geography. One of these fault lines often presents challenges to journalists; the intersection of two or more of these faults presents a challenging reporting assignment indeed. We discuss how to be alert to these fault lines so that our journalism is sophisticated. <http://www.mije.org>

Readings: A collection of journalism and academic papers on reporting about race and class to be distributed.

Teleconference: A conversation with Dori Maynard, former reporter with the Detroit Free Press, and president of the Maynard Institute for Journalism Education in Oakland, Calif.

Week 5/ Feb. 10: "Can't we all just get along?" *The tensions between African Americans and Latinos in Los Angeles and beyond.*

When Rodney King asked his now-famous question following the 1992 Los Angeles riots, his plaintive plea became a referendum for American society. Now more than a decade later, with tensions rising between African Americans and Latinos, the question has been reframed by social scientists, "Why can't we all just get along?" We consider the answers and what that means for you as a journalist covering the always challenging topic of race.

Readings: "Boost in efforts to ease racial tensions between blacks, Latinos in Los Angeles," Los Angeles Wave newspapers.

<http://www.frostillustrated.com/atf.php?sid=3571>

"Ethnic Media Try To Diffuse Black-Latino Tensions in L.A.," *La Prensa, San Diego*.

<http://www.laprensa-sandiego.org/archieve/september02-05/media.htm>

A UCLA report finds sweeping demographic changes since the 1992 riots. But one constant remains: poverty. The complete article can be viewed at:

<http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-southla14-2008sep14,0,1142833.story>

Rising black-Latino clash on jobs, *The Christian Science Monitor*.

<http://www.csmonitor.com/2006/0525/p01s03-ussc.html>

About Rodney King:

http://www.time.com/time/specials/2007/la_riot/article/0,28804,1614117_1614084,00.html

Text readings: *The Coming White Minority*, chapters 9-12, pgs. 176-231.

Week 6/ Feb. 17: *Can't we all just get along?" The tensions between African Americans and Latinos in Los Angeles and beyond.*

We meet at the offices of the Community Coalition, 8101 S. Vernon St., a South Los Angeles community-based nonprofit that works to improve public services and access to public services for residents of South Los Angeles. We hear community organizers talk about the challenges and triumphs of organizing broad coalitions, including African-Americans and Latinos, and some of the myths and realities of bringing the two communities together.

Drafts of first multimedia packages due.

Week 7/ Feb. 24: *The High Cost of Being Poor.*

A variety of studies over the years have supported the idea that being poor is expensive. Without health care, for example, poor and working class Americans pay more when they go to the hospital, if they can afford to go at all. Poorer Americans also tend not to have bank accounts, forcing them use check-cashing services that take a certain percentage of their pay. It's even more expensive to keep your house clean; lease-to-buy companies that hawk appliances of every kind charge interest rates higher than regular department stores. We discuss the high cost of being poor, as well as solutions offered by a variety of organizations.

Readings: Read Brookings Institution reports about how communities and states are attempting to improve wealth-building in poor and working-class communities by bringing down the cost of basic goods.

http://www.brookings.edu/reports/2006/07poverty_fellowes.aspx

"Poor Should Get More for their Money, Brookings Institution op-ed piece by Matt Fellowes.

http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2006/0807metropolitanpolicy_fellowes.aspx

"The Power of Measuring Social Benefits," position paper, MacArthur Foundation.

http://www.macfound.org/site/apps/nlnet/content2.aspx?c=IkLXJ8MQKrH&b=2024163&content_id={C7A69E72-5829-458E-92A5-1CCD34ACBBE5}¬oc=1&tr=y&auid=3772776

Audio: We listen to an hour-long National Public Radio interview with Barbara Ehrenreich, author of *Nickel and Dimed*, an investigative book that explores all the ways it costs more to be poor.

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1122973>

Drafts of first multimedia projects returned.

Week 8/ March 3: *The High Cost of Being Poor.*

In the current recession, being poor is even more difficult. We look at the role of South LA's based-initiatives, a water-front of organizations that provide food, clothing, shelter, medical care and housing to less fortunate citizens. The role of faith-based services in the U.S. is steeped in history, beginning with the Salvation Army a century ago; the role of faith-based initiatives was formally introduced by the George W. Bush administration in 2001 and expanded by the Obama administration through the White House's \$750 million faith-based initiative through its Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships in the U.S. Department of Education.

Readings:

A primer on contemporary faith-based initiatives

<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2008/07/05/INHM11JJET.DTL>

The controversy over faith-based initiatives

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/jesus/president/faithbasedhtml>

Teleconference: A conversation with Michael Robbins, special assistant, Center for Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships, U.S. Department of Education

Revisions of first multimedia packages due.

Week 9/ March 10: *Gimme Shelter! Housing discrimination and its enduring impact on urban neighborhoods.*

The Fair Housing Act was signed into law in 1968 by President Johnson as a way to protect minorities from discrimination in either buying or leasing housing. In the last four decades, the law – supported by a 1948 U.S. Supreme Court ruling that banned covenant restrictions – has helped opened more housing options for protected classes of Americans. But problems persist and we explore them, as well as solutions to make the pursuit of housing a color-blind proposition.

Readings: "Closed doors: Housing discrimination complaints on rise across country," 2007 Gannet News Service series.

<http://gns.gannetonline.com/apps/pbcs.dll/section?Category=HOUSING>,

Los Angeles Times article about tensions in San Paula, Calif., between whites and minorities over low-income housing.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-outthere22-2008aug22,0,3664272.story>

U.S. Fair Housing Act, A Q&A about the federal legislation that outlaws housing discrimination.

<http://gns.gannettonline.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20070927/HOUSING/709200304>

Text readings: *Nickel and Dimed*, introduction and chapters 1-2, pgs. 1-120.

Audio: Shelly v. Kramer, 1948 U.S. Supreme Court case that declared illegal the use of restrictive covenants to bar black Americans from moving into white neighborhoods.

http://www.oyez.org/cases/1940-1949/1947/1947_72/

Audio: "How has the Fair Housing Act fared?" A report by National Public Radio.
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=89570078>

Week 10: March 13-17 Spring Break

Week 11/ March 24 *Gimme Shelter! The impact of the 2007-2008 sub-prime mortgage debacle and other lending practices on urban communities.*

Unfair and questionable lending practices have undermined minority communities, from higher interest rates and closing costs on mortgages for minority homebuyers [resulting in a class action lawsuit against Countrywide Home Loans] to what some critics call predatory lending policies, low down payments and artificially low mortgage rates [leading to the subprime mortgage meltdown.] We discuss the faltering mortgage industry and its impact on urban neighborhoods, particularly schools.

Readings: Subprime mortgage debacle roils rental market, Joint Center for Housing Studies, Harvard University.

http://www.jchs.harvard.edu/publications/rental/rh08_americas_rental_housing/index.html?tr=y&auid=3623984

Text readings: *Nickel and Dimed*, chapter 3, plus evaluation, pgs. 121-197.

Associated Press analysis of subprime issues show that the 90043 area code just south of USC is one of the hardest-hit neighborhoods by foreclosure. Story to be distributed.

Week 12/ March 31 *How immigrants are changing America's urban economy.*

USC professor Dowell Myers argues in his 2007 book, *Immigrants and Boomers: Forging a New Social Contract for the Future of America*, that the U.S. has benefited enormously from immigration. But his centrist view is lost in the polarizing debates over immigration, what to do about it, and what its impact is on the American economy. We consider both sides of the debate in a roundtable discussion based on our readings.

A Q&A with Dowell Myers, *Los Angeles Times*.
http://www-rcf.usc.edu/~dowell/pdf/Rabin_latimes.pdf

Rising black-Latino clash on jobs, *The Christian Science Monitor*.
<http://www.csmonitor.com/2006/0525/p01s03-ussc.html>

“Examining the Economic Impacts of Immigration,” *Analysis Online*.
http://www.analysisonline.org/site/aoarticle_display.asp?issue_id=1&news_id=14001400&sec_id=140002434

“The High Cost of Cheap Labor,” *Center for Immigration Studies*.
<http://www.cis.org/articles/2004/fiscalcoverage.html>

Drafts of second multimedia package due.

Week 13/ April 7 *Equal schools, equal access and the immigrant student.*

Is access to quality public schools the social justice issue of the 21st century? More and more mainstream civil rights groups believe schools represent the last unconquered realm of the 1960s civil rights movement. We discuss historical court rulings that were intended to level the playing field, but by all accounts have done little to close the disparities.

Readings: “Education Equity and Quality: Brown and Rodriguez and their Aftermath.” Speech about the legacies of the Rodriguez and Brown decisions, by Columbia University President Lee Bollinger, 2003.
<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/president/communications%20files/collegeboard.htm>

San Antonio Independent School District v Rodriguez [read U.S. Supreme Court decision, and listen to oral arguments.] The Oyez Project: <http://www.oyez.org/>

Readings: *Plyler v. Doe*. U.S. Supreme Court rules 5-4 in a Texas case that children of immigrants, regardless of immigration status, are entitled to free public school educations. Oyez Project:
http://www.oyez.org/cases/1980-1989/1981/1981_80_1538/

“Newcomers face poverty, hostility. Please read package of stories produced by Gloria Angelina Castilla for *Watt Way* digital magazine, spring 2008.
<http://wattway.uscannenberg.org/vol3/>

“Media Coverage Of Immigrants and Schools is Uneven, and Journalists, Scholars Share the Blame.” *Teachers College Record*, Columbia University. [Article to be distributed in class.]

“The Forgotten History of Immigrants,” *Education Week* opinion piece traces contributions immigrants have made in shaping contemporary public schools.

Southern Poverty Law Center’s anti-immigrant study and examples of erroneous or poorly framed coverage about immigrants:

<http://www.splcenter.org/intel/immigrant.jsp>

Drafts of second multimedia projects returned.

Week 14/ April 14 *Urban schools and the renewed campaign to improve*

We also discuss new, promising efforts in a new century to fix schools, like the Greater Crenshaw Educational Project, a new nonprofit whose members include the USC Rossier School of Education, the Los Angeles Urban League and the Tom and Ethel Bradley Foundation. The use of nonprofits is increasingly seen as one way to better the fortunes of failing urban schools.

We explore other solutions to improving urban schools, chronic underachievers for a host of reasons, including underfunding, poor curriculum and other deficiencies.

Viewing: “It’s Your Money.” PBS *Frontline* report about school finance and the growing disparity between rich and poor schools.

Week 15/ April 21: *Call the doctor! Health in urban America.*

A variety of studies maintain that if you live in the innercity, chances are very high that you will suffer more often from disease and poor health and live a shorter life than more affluent Americans. We look at the underlying issues affecting chronic health issues in urban neighborhoods, beginning with the high rate of uninsured Americans, and the higher-than-average infant mortality rate in one of the wealthiest nations on the planet. We also explore solutions to improve health care for the nation’s poorest citizens. Is a national health care plan the answer?

Readings: “Minorities, poor, uneducated bear the burden,” *Medical News Today*.

<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/21252.php>

“Enough to Make You Sick: Something is Killing America’s Urban Poor,”
The New York Times.

<http://www.mindfully.org/Health/2003/Urban-Poor-Sick12oct03.htm>

Other news articles and studies about health care in urban America to be distributed.

Revisions of second multimedia packages due.

Week 16/ April 28: *Bars on the Windows: Crime in urban America.*

For much of the 1990s, serious crime was on the decline in many U.S. cities and urban neighborhoods. At the turn of this century, however, crime has started to increase again, particularly in minority neighborhoods. At this point in the semester, we've examined many of the reasons for this – lack of education, employment, etc. – and we take time here to review some of those underlying reasons. We also explore solutions advanced by a variety of organizations, from nonprofits to foundations to the media.

Readings: “Urban America: Policy Choices for Los Angeles and the Nation.” Please follow the link I have provided to the Rand Corp monograph and read Chapter 7, “Crime and Punishment in California: Full Cells, Empty Pockets, and Questionable Benefits,” by Joan Petersilia.
http://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph_reports/MR100/

“New strategies to fight crime go far beyond stiffer terms and more cells,” *The New York Times*,
<http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9C0CEFD9143AF933A25753C1A966958260&n=Top/Reference/Times%20Topics/People/M/Malcolm,%20Andre%20H.>

Viewing: “Caught in the Crossfire.” PBS documentary about juvenile crime.

Drafts of third multimedia packages due., returned a week later, on May 5, and due on May 12, or during final exam period, whichever is later.