



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1981 Volume I: The "City" in American Literature and Culture

The Janus—Faced Phenomenon of the City

Curriculum Unit 81.01.01
by Carol Leavitt Altieri

Newspaper articles tell us that cities are in serious trouble. Recently, Lee Mitgang wrote in a local newspaper that “cities are failing in the fight to regain grandeur.” Although Brooklyn has renovated many brownstones, Washington D.C. has revitalized Capital Hill Row, Baltimore has renewed its waterfront, Atlanta has developed Peachtree Plaza, and Pittsburg has made “Renaissance II”, American cities are still drained and ravaged by inflation, pollution, violence, a “shrinking tax base”, high energy costs and high interest rates. ¹ Also, many of the large cities are losing younger and middle-aged, married people to the suburbs. Unfortunately, they are the people who must be counted on to pay the largest share of the tax load for financing city services. ² Nevertheless, many suburban people earn their living from the city and new immigrants, rural people, the poor, the handicapped and the elderly still have to live there. At the same time, cities are still places of opportunity and a better economic life for many people. Thus, it is imperative for all of us to try to solve some of the urban problems and reverse the deterioration.

The unit on “Art and Literature of the City” would be most appropriately taught to an advanced sophomore class, or as part of the junior course of American literature (to all levels), or to a basic senior class. The literature of the city naturally elaborates on and exemplifies major themes of American literature such as: The Individual in the City, Displaced Persons, The American Dream, Ethnic Diversity, Grandeur of the City, The Beleaguered City and Visions of Future Cities. The most effective way of organizing the literature is by various themes when the literary genres reinforce and illuminate each other. Moreover, the teacher should explain the connections among different themes or concepts and the way they develop week by week over a period of at least eight weeks. Poems, short stories, novels and plays illustrating how various poets, novelists and dramatists use or view similar subjects should be appealing to students if carefully chosen for literary quality and of relevance to overall theme of urban life.

My objectives for this unit:

To provide experiences for sophomores, juniors and seniors to write many different kinds of compositions which strive for vividness, coherence and precision of expression. Included will be required original essays developing a contrast of two different characters or two different places. Also students will learn to do extended comparison and contrast papers of two stories, a story and a poem or a story and a play. In addition, students will learn to write a descriptive paper in which they describe in depth a building or a place that they are familiar with in the city. Next, they will describe an imaginary city of the future in an extended essay. Finally, students will learn to do or gain experience in doing a research paper focusing on a list of city

problems.

To introduce students to the great cities of the United States such as: New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Houston, Baltimore, Washington D.C., San Francisco, Dallas, Boston, New Orleans, San Diego, Phoenix and Seattle. Also, to help students learn what each city is noted for, what memories each one calls to mind and what some of their problems and successes are. Furthermore, I would like to instill in students a sense of hope that cities can be made pleasant, enriching and humane environments for people by presenting them with possible solutions to some of the problems of urban life.

To increase students' vocabulary of urban civilization such as megalopolis, metropolis, gateway, modernistic, monumental, architecture, classical, grandeur, labyrinth, mausoleum, aqueduct, brownstone, technology, industrial, subterranean, automated, prophecy, vision and utopia. Also, to increase students' vocabulary of literary terms such as: aphorism, understatement, euphemism, theme, motive, personification, figurative language, metaphor, simile, analogy, conflict, climax, resolution, flashback, atmosphere, mood, tone, imagery, symbolism, irony, paradox, ambiguity and point of view.

To emphasize the "Janus-Faced" nature of city life by exploring in depth various genres of contemporary literature. I hope to help students understand the contradictions and paradoxes that are prevalent in urban life and why they exist. Perhaps we can learn ourselves and help students realize a vision of what the city can be—a humane, pleasant, enriching environment—and work toward that goal.

Strategies for Teaching:

The introduction to the unit on "Art and Literature of the City" will include some historical background information about the origin, development and functions of the American city. Three films will be shown. The first one will be *The City Heaven and Hell*, which emphasizes the creative and destructive forces of the city in history. It includes the reasons that caused the development of the first cities and the causes of the present deterioration. Next, will be *The City as Man's Home*, which outlines how slums, public housing, high-rise apartments and suburbs have grown and suggests different ideas for improving urban life. Finally, *The City—Cars or People* explores the problems of transportation and the solutions of some cities. In introducing the theme of urban life, I will write on the board all of the names of the major cities of the United States listed under the objectives. During a discussion, students will be asked what each city is noted for, what memories each city arouses and what are some of the outstanding aspects of that city's development. Each student will take a city and do research on its origin, history and present highlights.

Selections from *Our Urban Planet* by Ellen Switzer, who examines problems, pleasures and highlights of many cities around the world will be assigned for independent reading to arouse student's interest and give background information. Mrs. Switzer explores the origin of cities, why they exist, why people live in them, why they survive, what their hopes for the future are and how some of their problems can be solved. The chapters that will be assigned are: "Why Cities Grow and Some Grow Old and Die", "Government, Taxation and the Governed," "Education, Welfare, Health and Other Expensive Problems" and "Cities of the Future."

Literature which sheds light positively or negatively on some facet of how American cities are changed by different ethnic cultures and the theme of ethnicity will be read and discussed. I hope that by experiencing the selections in various ways such as by relating the theme to the student's own experiences and bringing the characters or ideas to life, student's interests will be aroused and they will increase their understanding of *American Ethnic Plays* which reveal distinctive traits, motives, behavior and conflicts of Irish-Americans, Italian-Americans and Blacks will be dramatized, compared and contrasted. They are *Hogan's Goat*, a poetic play set

in Brooklyn in 1890; *Dino* a three act stage play taking place in a New York City Settlement House during the present time; and *Simply Heavenly* set in Harlem. ³ Moreover, the ethnic, cultural and economic diversity of the city will be reflected by a broad selection of contemporary short stories and poems that lend themselves to correlation with the plays such as “Ancient Gentility” by William Carlos Williams, a short story which relates the compassion, strength of character and humanity of a doctor and an old man and woman living in poverty in an Italian ghetto in New Jersey. “Down These Mean Streets” expresses the aloneness and bitterness of a recent Puerto Rican immigrant who realizes that he will never have anything unless he “cops” for himself. “Coming to the City” by Ben H. Bagdikian deals with the problems of Chicago’s poor people, such as the Whites coming from the countryside, Blacks coming from the rural South; American Indians flocking from the Dakotas, Utah and Arizona. Not only do they migrate to Chicago, but also New York, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Detroit, Cleveland, Washington and St. Louis. In contrast to the international groups who migrated to metropolis from 1880 to 1920, these are native Americans who have come in the last forty years. ⁴ “Give Me Your Tired . . . ” an ironical poem by Donald Jones is about a Norwegian lady who bravely came to this country, met financial hardships and had to apply for “General Public Assistance”. ⁵ Another story relevant to this group is *A Walker in the City* by Alfred Kazin, who describes in his autobiography many facets of the life of Jewish immigrants and their families in the Brownsville section of Brooklyn. Mr. Kazin expresses what he thinks the good man is, the good life is, and the good society. ⁶ Finally, “A Person As Well As a Female” by Jade Snow Wong is about an American girl of Chinese parents who lived in San Francisco’s Chinatown. Miss Wong describes the differences between Western and Eastern cultures and the struggle for a woman of Chinese background to achieve an education. ⁷ All of the above poems and stories show the theme of ethnicity in its different guises; also, they reflect the two faces—the positive and negative—connected with modern city life.

The drama *Hogan’s Goat* can be taught for several purposes. First it explains the causes for the great migration of the Irish people to America. Secondly, it evokes the hardships, pain and endurance of the people in crossing the Atlantic in “over-crowded, dirty and vermin infested” ships. Finally, it expresses very artistically and powerfully how the Irish people tried to cope with their lives in the city of Brooklyn. In teaching the play, I would have the students draw or paint suitable settings for the scene changes throughout *Hogan’s Goat* . Then it is important to summarize the plot of the play and discuss the character’s conflicts, dilemmas, problems and life-styles. To help stimulate an interest in the play, some background information about the causes of the Irish migration, the discriminating ways they were treated here, the kind of work they did, the distinctive characteristics of the Irish in America and the contributions they have made to American Society will be discussed. At this time an appropriate poem to read is “The Man Moth” by Elizabeth Bishop about a rural person’s feelings of hope for a better life in the city and her fear of the unknown. ⁸ After expressing her ambivalent feelings about the city and meeting the struggle, she feels that she has triumphed over the pitfalls and obstacles. Finally, I think that it would be inspiring to ask the students to imagine that they are coming to the city for the first time and to write a poem, one-act play or essay about how they would react.

Dino by Reginald Rose is an ethnic play dealing with the problems of “a third generation Italian-American family”. The play can be introduced by asking students to discuss any difficulties or problems which Italian-Americans confront in a city. In teaching the play, one strategy is to have the students act it out, then summarize and evaluate the plot, so that they look at the play very closely. After presenting the play, in order to help the students see that the play and its characters have some meaning and relevance to their own lives, I would ask them if they have ever felt the way *Dino* feels or if they know of a friend who is like him, or if they feel that their family life is antagonistic to them. *Dino* is a very angry, young man “who alternates between unpredictable violence and extreme withdrawal”. His family, unlike the stereotyped Italian-American family, is estranged. They do not enjoy doing things together and they do not communicate effectively. After reading

the play, students will be asked to choose one character and write a character sketch. Joan Snyder recommends asking the following questions about certain characters: ⁹

What are the character's goals in life?

How does the character try to achieve his or her goal?

What are the character's beliefs?

What kind of a childhood did the character have?

What changes in the actions of the characters take place in the play?

What kind of work does the character do?

What does the character do during his leisure time?

How does the character like, dislike or feel indifferent about other characters in the play?

Continuing with the multi-ethnic and multi-cultural facets of the literature unit, the third play will be *Simply Heavenly* by Langston Hughes. ¹⁰ The play dramatizes the Black migration to New York City and the people's expectations for a better life. To correlate with the play are two selections, "Lenox Avenue Mural" by Langston Hughes and the short story, "Did you Ever Dream Lucky?" by Ralph Ellison as previously described. To stimulate an interest in the play, *Simply Heavenly*, I would ask students to improvise several key scenes or situations that are similar to ones in the play. For example, you are in a hospital bed with your legs up in traction. A nurse enters, speaks to you and you answer with a groan. Then your girlfriend enters and starts crying when she sees you. Or, the whole class could improvise a scene in a bar on a lively Saturday night. Someone is plunking a guitar. Some teenagers are jitterbugging. A pianist is playing Calypso music while the bartender is beating out a rhythm on the bar. Some patrons start singing and others join in the chorus. This will express how the hard-working Harlemites seek the company of the bar as others would go to another kind of social center for companionship.

The poem "Lenox Avenue Mural" relates to the main theme of the search for a better life and the negative face of the city in that many times opportunities for a better life in the city are very scarce. In teaching the poem, I would discuss with the students, "What happens to a dream deferred?" The poet answers that when the dream is not fulfilled it can dry up, fester, stink, be rationalized, hurt the dreamer, or start a riot or revolution. After analyzing the imagery, meaning and tone of the poem, students will compare and contrast the theme, imagery and tone of the poem with the short story, "Did you Every Dream Lucky?" The students should consider what part of the city the author is telling about, the feelings that the main characters experience and the theme expressed. Then ask the following questions: How does the author express the theme? Do one or more characters express it? Is the theme related to the setting, to the plot, or to the characters? When Portwood, one of the main characters says to Mary, "I just want you to tell us one last thing . . . just tell us if you ever dreamed lucky?" what does he mean? Then finally, what does Mrs. Garfield mean when she asks, "And wouldn't it be a comfort, Miss Mary? Just to know that they can win one, I mean . . ." ¹¹ Both questions and answers reveal the author's theme that Black people are hopeful that they will "hit the numbers." Yet, that is a naive or green hope since they and other unfortunates frequently get a "cold in hand."

The short story *Bartleby The Scrivener* by Herman Melville illustrates the theme of a displaced and alienated person who passively resists the values of a competitive, industrial society. "Pigeon Woman" by May Swenson evokes the pain of loneliness and alienation of modern urban life when an old woman seeking companionship treks out every day to feed the pigeons in front of the "42nd Street New York Public Library." After reading the poem out loud and silently, I will discuss with the students the pattern of imagery, meaning and tone by including the following questions:

What are the different images of sound, smell and sight used by the poet to depict the old woman and the pigeons?

What are pleasant and unpleasant images?

What is your impression of the "Pigeon Woman"?

How does the statement: "A make-believe trade she has come to; in her lostness or illness or age to treat the motley city pigeons at 1:30 every day, in all weather" express the poet's feelings about the old woman's personality? ¹²

The story, "Only the Dead Know Brooklyn" by Thomas Wolfe effectively compliments and logically follows "Pigeon Woman". It is written in a parody of the Brooklynese dialect; about a time a native "Brooklynite" getting on a train meets a weird traveler who is fascinated with his map and by fantasies of drowning in Brooklyn. ¹³ After reading this story and Stephen Crane's, "An Experiment in Misery" ¹⁴ which describes a young man who experiments with and investigates the life of a tramp and wanderer, we will take a walk to the New Haven Green where students will be encouraged to imagine that they are a similar person who is lonely, displaced and alienated. They will have to tell about their needs, desires, interests and feelings in either a poem or short story.

Other short stories, essays or poetry that focus on what is degrading or hostile, such as slums, poverty, overcrowded conditions, violence, pollution, fear and suffering will be introduced. Some appropriate selections are: "The Mouth of the Hudson" by Robert Lowell, which illustrates how indifferent people can destroy a picturesque natural environment. ¹⁵ "By Air Albany—Baltimore, to Poe" by Allen Ginsberg describes an "aerial view of snow covered megalopolis", the long corridor of cities and suburbs from the eastern coast of Boston to Washington D.C.; ¹⁶ "Stories of the Street" by Leonard Cohen, which describes the sensations and drama which the poet observes as he leans out of the window of an old hotel room; ¹⁷ "Clark Street" by Barbara Harr, a description of a dilapidated abandoned "derelict building" waiting to be destroyed by the wrecker; ¹⁸ and "The Holdup Men" by Jorge Guillen, who violate the rules of the city. ¹⁹ The themes illustrated by these poems make them appropriate to be discussed and treated together. They evoke the negative face of modern urban scenes in the deterioration, pollution, violence, fear and suffering of "our endangered planet". Students will be asked to write a statement about what is to be learned from each poem, why this face of the city exists and what can be done to improve it, in order to make the city more pleasant and healthy.

The final part of the unit will include two short stories, that project visions of future cities in American. "A Day in Megalopolis" by Zenna Henderson ²⁰ imagines how people will live in a city abounding in technology. Ray Bradbury in "The Pedestrian" ²¹ prophesizes despair, silence and total conformity for the future in the year 2131. These will serve as springboards for students to imagine and write about their visions of future cities and how highly developed technology will shape the future. Finally students should discuss the disadvantages or negative aspects of a highly developed technological society and understand how people can be

manipulated in this future society.

Sample lesson Plan

for “A Day in Megalopolis” by Zenna Henderson

Objectives

1. To further students understanding of theme, setting, plot, conflict, climax and resolution.
2. To help students imagine the effects of a highly developed technological society and how it will shape the future.
3. To improve students ability for writing an extended comparison.
4. To increase understanding of technical terms and student slang of the future society in the story.

Introducing the story

Twixt, the main character, is a teenager who lives in a unit of an “advanced society of the future.” In this society people do not touch the green natural world or one another. There are many “eyeless towering buildings” joined together and enclosed so the people inside can not see the sun, sky or the natural world, or feel the air or touch the earth. Have you ever been in this kind of an environment? Have you ever visited an enclosed mall or underground center?

From: Hans P. Guth ed., *Our World Today* .

Lexington, Mass: D.C.Heath Co., 1981 pp. 179-186.

Vocabulary development

What do the following technical terms, student slang or informal expressions mean? Try to figure out the meanings from the context and explain them to the class.

megalopolis	Gonky slot	grimaced
hydroponics	study carrel	glide-hops
crumpling	simultaneously	left-footed
crazed across	chartreuse	double-dump stuff
First Level	adjunct	eddy
mythology	compensating	Immortality
info switch	cavern tours	destination
lavcube	immunispray	installation

Discussion questions:

1. What is theme or unifying idea of the story? Is it important to you?
2. Where is the setting? Is the setting important to plot, character and theme?
3. What are some of the problems in this future society?
4. Why is Twixt so depressed and disturbed about her life?
5. How does one know the time, when one can never see the sun?
6. What do the people do for entertainment?
7. How do the plants grow in Megalopolis?
8. What is likely to happen in the future as portrayed in “A Day in Megalopolis?”
9. Similes and metaphors are used more often in Science Fiction stories because the authors are writing about the unknown. Find descriptions in the story that use metaphors and similes. Do they give a mental image of what is described?
10. What face of the city—the brighter or darker side is—reflected here?

Enrichment and writing activities:

See activities listed under “The Pedestrian”.

Sample Lesson Plan

for “The Pedestrian” by Ray Bradbury

Objectives

1. To help students understand how a highly developed technological society will shape people’s lives.
2. To give students experience in writing an original essay about an imaginary society and a comparison and contrast essay.
3. To increase student’s understanding of technical terms.

4. To assist students in gaining experience in critical reading.

Introducing the story

“The Pedestrian” takes place in the year A.D. 2131 “in a city of three million,” when Mr. Leonard Mead decides to take a walk alone on a “misty evening in November”. Often he would walk for miles comparing the scenes he passed to a graveyard. The streets were empty and silent as all the people were in their airconditioned, tomblike houses watching T.V. Returning, only a block from his house, he was accosted by a lone police car with a radio voice that questioned him; then peremptorily told him to get inside. The radio computer directed the car “To the Psychiatric Center for Research on Regressive Tendencies”.

Suggestion: Ask students what this brief synopsis arouses in their minds. Ask students to list many highly automated machines or things that would have seemed very futuristic seventy-five years ago such as colored television, computers, cassettes, air-conditioning, automatic doors and climate control.

Vocabulary development

What do the following terms mean? Try to figure out their meanings from their context in the story and explain them to the class:

intersection	scarab beetles
intermittent	entranced
phantoms	illumination
manifest	accusation
United States Cavalry	antiseptic
Regressive Tendencies	

Discussion questions

1. What do people do in this advanced society for entertainment?
2. Find descriptions in the story that use metaphors and similes. Do they give a mental image of what is described?
3. What is the theme or the answer that the story suggests to the main question that it raises in your mind?
4. What face of the city—the brighter or darker side—is mirrored here? Why?
5. What complications make things difficult for Mr. Leonard Mead?

Enrichment and writing activities

1. Compare and contrast “The Pedestrian” by Ray Bradbury and “A Day in Megalopolis” by Zenna Henderson. Show what the important similarities and differences are. Which do you think is the most believable story? the most effective story?
2. Write a story of a future society where all the open spaces and natural places have disappeared.
3. How is technology and increased population changing your city? Write a future story that envisions what your city will be like in the year 2000. Include the following:
 - a. men and woman work a shortened day
 - b. poverty, war and reduced resources have forced people to make everything they need
 - c. housing, transportation, schools, shopping, medicine and government
4. Write a three paragraph essay comparing and contrasting the society in “A Day in Megalopolis” with our present one.
5. Write about a future society in a stream-of-consciousness style. Let your mind brainstorm and write your thoughts down as they come to you.

From: *The Urban Reader* pp. 370-374.

Sample Lesson Plan

for Poetry

Objectives

1. To understand the meanings of similes, metaphors, alliteration, personification and apostrophe used in selected poems.
2. To be aware of what part of the city the poet is describing.
3. To understand the feelings and emotions that the poet is experiencing.
4. To understand and explain the theme or underlying idea that the poem suggests.
5. To be able to discuss the negative or affirmative face of the city that the poet is expressing.

Assignment

1. Choose a city poem that we have read in class from the following list:

- “Lenox Avenue Mural” Langston Hughes
- “Pennsylvania Station” Langston Hughes
- “Clark Street” Barbara Harr
- “Stories of the Street” Leonard Cohen
- “By Air: Albany-Baltimore” Allen Ginsberg
- “The War Against the Trees” Stanley Kunitz
- “The Mouth of the Hudson” Robert Lowell
- “Prayers of Steel” Carl Sandburg
- “Chicago” Carl Sandburg
- “Down These Mean Streets” Piri Thomas
- “Crossing Brooklyn Ferry” Walt Whitman
- “Manahatta” Walt Whitman
- “The Holdup Men” Jorge Guillen
- “Give Me Your Tired . . .” Donald Jones
- “Pigeon Woman” May Swenson
- “Doors” David Wagoner
- “Harlem” Jean Brierre
- “The Man-Moth” Elizabeth Bishop
- “London” William Blake
- “To a Tidelands Oil Pump” Beatrice Janosco

2. Write an explication of the poem in this form: (rough draft first)

- a. write a synopsis of the poem—what it’s about.
- b. find groups of words forming a single image in the poem and list them, explaining how they contribute to the poem.
- c. describe the rhyme scheme of the poem
- d. how many examples of literary devices can you find? simili, metaphor, alliteration, onomatopoeia, personification and apostrophe.
- e. summarize your writing with a statement of what you think the theme or underlying idea of the poem is what its main point or purpose is.

Then Proofread

3. Copy the explication neatly onto the page you wrote the poem on

4. Your work should include:

1. poem
2. proofread paper
3. final draft

Notes

1. Lee Mitgang, "Cities failing in flight to regain grandeur". *New Haven Register* . (New Haven: May 7, 1981), p.1 .
2. Ellen Switzer, *Our Urban Planet* (New York: Altheneum, 1980), p. 64.
3. Francis Griffith and Joseph Mersand., *Eight American Ethnic Plays*, (New York: Charles Scribners, 1974) p. VII.
4. Susan Cahill and Michelle F. Cooper, *The Urban Reader* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc., 1971) p. 205.
5. Hannah Beate Haupt, Lilla Heston, Joy Littell and Sarah Solotaroff ed., *Brotherhood* : (Evanston, Ill." McDougal, Littell, 1972) pp. 70-71.
6. Alfred Kazin, *A Walker in the City* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1951).
7. Ruth T. Sheffey and Eugenia Collier, *Impressions in Asphalt* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1969) pp. 49-59.
8. Laurence Perrine and James Reid, ed. *100 American Poems* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1966) p. 213.
9. Joan Snyder, *The Dynamics of Acting* (Skokie, Illinois: National Textbook Co., 1972), p. 97.
10. Langston Hughes, *The Langston Hughes Reader* (New York: George Braziller, 1958) pp. 244-313.
11. Hughes, pp. 123-126.
12. Hans P. Guth ed., *Our World Today* (Lexington, Mass: D.C. Heath Co., 1981) p. 128.
13. Thomas Wolfe, *From Death to Morning* .
14. Robert Wooster Stallman ed. *Stephen Crane: Stories and Tales* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1955) pp. 27-38.
15. *Our World Today* , p. 170.
- 16, 17, 18. *The Urban Reader* , pp. 87-91.
19. Jay Zweigler, *Man in the Poetic Mode* (Evanston, Illinois: McDougal, Littell Co., 1970) p. 27.
20. *Our World Today*, pp. 179-186.
21. *The Urban Reader* , pp. 370-374.

Teacher Bibliography

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Bennett, Robert A., Sen. ed. *American Literature*. Lexington, Mass.: Ginn and Company, 1981. A wonderful collection of all genres of literature, appropriate for the 10th or 11th grades focusing on "Major Themes in American Literature."

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Cahill, Susan and Michele F. Cooper. *The Urban Reader*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1971. An excellent source book.

Doezema, Marianne. *American Realism and the Industrial Age*. Ohio: Cleveland Museum of Art, 1980. Includes works of art from many different parts of the country related to the industrial and technological themes. A good resource book.

Dunning, Stephen. *Teaching Literature to Adolescents: Poetry, Short Stories*. Illinois: Scott Foresman and Co., 1966. Two very stimulating guide books to help teachers teach short stories and poetry more effectively.

Guth, Hans P. ed. *Our World Today*. Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath and Co., 1981. An excellent source book for "These City Streets" and "Future City".

Griffith Francis and Joseph Mersand. *Eight American Ethnic Plays*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1974. A good textbook for two of the ethnic plays used in this unit: *Dino and Hogan's Goat*.

Haupt, Hannah Beate ed. *Man Threatened*. Illinois: McDougal, Littell Company, 1972. This book contains an excellent selection of contemporary poem related to the urban theme.

Howes, Alan B. *Teaching Literature to Adolescents: Plays*. Illinois: Scott, Foresman and Co., 1968. A very good guide book to help teachers increase student's understanding and appreciation of drama.

Hughes, Langston. *The Langston Hughes Reader*. New York: George Braziller, Inc., 1958. This anthology contains the play, *Simple Heavenly* and the poem "Lenox Avenue Mural" used in this unit.

Moss, Howard ed. *New York Poems*. New York: Avon Books, 1980. A good source book for many contemporary poems about city life.

Sheffey T. Ruth and Eugenia Collier. *Impressions in Asphalt: Images of Urban American in Literature*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1969. An excellent collection of short stories, essays and poems about urban life to be used with a 10th or 11th grade class.

Rodrigues, Raymond J. and Dennis Badazewski. *A Guidebook for Teaching Literature*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1978. This guidebook gives much inspiration for teaching literary genres.

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Spring, Michael ed. *How We Live*. New York: Scholastic Book Services, 1977. This volume examines contemporary literature showing Americans "At Work", "At Home" and "At War". There are some very stimulating writing ideas and projects at the end of the book.

Stallman Robert Wooster ed. *Stephen Crane: Stories and Tales*. New York: Vintage Books, 1955. This collection contains many well-written stories about city life. I used this anthology for *Maggie, A Girl of the Streets* and "The Man of the Crowd."

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Swenson, May. *New and Selected Things Taking Place*. New York: Little, Brown and Co., 1958.

Half Sun, Half Sleep. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1966. Two delightfully creative books of May Swenson's poetry.

Switzer, Ellen. *Our Urban Planet*. New York: Atheneum, 1980. This comprehensive book examines: why cities exist, why people live in them, why they have flourished, what future they have and what today's most urgent problems of cities are. I would suggest that *Our Urban Planet* be required reading for all students.

Films:

Cities of the Future (25 min; color CBS News for the "21st Century" Series, dist. McGraw-Hill Films). Deals with the planning now taking place to solve current problems.

The City and the Future (28 min; B/W dist. Sterling Educational Films). Examines how cities must choose between urban sprawl or another kind of regional city.

The City as Man's Home (28 min; B/W dist. Sterling Educational Films). Explains how slums, public housing, suburbs and apts. developed. Gives ways to improve city life.

The City—Heaven and Hell (28 min; B/W dist. Sterling Educational Films). Explains the pleasant and uninhabitable natures of the city in the past. It includes the reasons that caused the development of the first cities and the elements that now might destroy the city.

City Under Pressure (17 min; McGraw-Hill) Explains the problem of urban renewal versus preserving natural resources.

From the Inside Out (24 min; McGraw-Hill) Teenagers in a Black ghetto tell about their plans, hopes and goals for their future. Written and directed by Black teenagers from North Richmond, California.

Harlem Wednesday (10 min; McGraw-Hill). Painting by Gregorio Prestopino to evoke activities of a day in Harlem, 1959.

Midwest Literature (Coronet Films) Explains the influence of the city background in Midwest Literature.

Filmstrips :

American Experience in Literature: Poets of the Twentieth Century (Encyclopedia Britannica Educational Corporation). Five sound filmstrips on Frost, Moore, Comings, Hughes and Sandburg.

Poetry: Commitment and Alienation (Schloat Productions) This filmstrip tries to stimulate students to respond to poetry through pictures related to the poem. The concepts stressed are identity, commitment and personal values.

Understanding and Appreciating Poetry (Educational Dimensions; Two sound/color filmstrips).

Recordings/Cassettes :

Immigrants: The American Dream (Caedmon; two cassettes). Told by the men and women who lived it.

Walt Whitman: *Crossing Brooklyn Ferry and Other Poems* (Caedmon Records, Inc., 1995 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023).

What is Science Fiction ? (Guidance Associates; two filmstrips and two cassettes) Part I looks at the use of scientific fact and description in plot, character and setting. Part II explores the future of science and technology, of society and the universe.

Reading List for Students

Baldwin, James. *Go Tell It On the Mountain*. New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1953.

Bellow, Saul. *Seize the Day*. New York: The Viking Press, Inc., 1956.

Bennett, Robert. *American Literature*. Lexington, Mass.: Ginn and Co., 1981.

Cahn, Leonard. *San Francisco: The Cool, Gray City of Love*. New York: E.P. Dutton, 1981.

Fenton, Edwin and John M. Good. *The Humanities in Three Cities*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc. 1969.

Fitzgerald, F. Scott. *The Great Gatsby*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925.

Goodman, Paul and Percival. *Communitas: Means of Livelihood and Ways of Life* . New York: Random House, 1947.

Guth, Hans P. *Our World Today* . Lexington Mass.: D.C. Heath and Co., 1981.

Hine, Lewis W. *Men at Work*. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1977.

Jones, LeRoi. *Blues People*. New York: Morrow Quill Paperbacks, 1963.

Kazin, Alfred. *A Walker in the City* . New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1951.

Malamud, Bernard. *The Magic Barrel*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1953.

Malcolm X. *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1964.

Olsen, Tillie. *Tell Me a Riddle*. New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1956.

Redstone, Louis G. and Ruth. *Public Art: New Directions*. New York: McGraw-Hill Co., 1981.

Switzer, Ellen. *Our Urban Planet* . New York: Atheneum, 1980.

Tretten, Rudie W. *Cities in Crisis: Decay or Renewal ?* Englewood Cliffs, N.J. Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1970.

Zevin, Jack. *Violence in America: What is the Alternative?* PrenticeHall, Inc., 1970.

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