

DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

SPACE AND PLACE

GEOG501  
FALL 2013  
TIME 4-6PM, SCIENCE HALL 548  
3 CREDITS  
PREREQ: JR STANDING

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DESCRIPTION

Space and place are arguably *the* central concepts of human geography. Whether we are considering public life, globalization, economic unevenness, the questions of difference and identity, or any number of other critical areas, space and place serve as active components in how such problems express and ‘ground’ themselves. By this, human geographers mean that space and place are something more than containers for human activities. Rather, they *produce* elements of social life. As Edward Said put it, “Just as none of us is outside or beyond geography, none of us is completely free from the struggle over geography” (Said 1993: 7). Thus, the past several decades have seen an explosion in the variety of spaces and places that affect our lives and our world, including spaces of everyday life, representation and the politics of space- and place-making, safe spaces and dangerous spaces, place and identity, spaces of difference and oppression, and so on.

This course will explore a variety of grounded, ‘empirical’ studies with theoretical works devoted to the problems of space and place, regularly returning to how we – and our authors – square the circle between ‘theory and practice.’

In seeking to understand the social production of space, we will work carefully through Neil Smith’s *magnum opus*, *Uneven Development*. This is a dense, but beautifully written theoretical text devoted to the politics of scale and uneven geographical development. Kosek’s provides a wonderful ethnographic study of a complex, southwestern space formed through a tangle of relationships and “everyday practices by Chicano activists, white environmentalists, and state officials as well as nuclear scientists, heroin addicts, and health workers.” Bill Bunge’s *Fitzgerald* will give us an early glimpse of the complex relationships that emerge when doing social justice in the city. In addition to these works, we will explore a variety of shorter texts devoted to identity and space, the sense of place, nonhuman spatiality, and a host of other wild concepts essential to the human geographer’s toolkit.

WHAT I EXPECT FROM YOU

The success of this course depends upon our collective participation. While either I or a research collective will lead-off with a short discussion and questions to situate the literature, you should plan to come to each class with the week’s material, having read it and prepared yourself to talk about it.

I understand that we all have different scholarly backgrounds, embrace different scientific and theoretical positions, and entertain different personal interests. However, your participation is crucial

from week to week. Endeavor to actively engage the varying topics throughout the semester – your perspective on these is something that you should craft and nuance through discussion.

Finally, I recognize that jumping into new theoretical and scientific areas can be intimidating and unnerving, particularly in a course containing both undergraduates and graduates with a variety of specialisms, experiences, and ideologies. In light of this, I propose that we approach classroom discussions as a reading ‘collective’, that is, a group that draws upon its members’ diverse backgrounds to collectively develop nuanced understandings of our course texts. Naturally, if we happen to be covering one of your areas of specialization that week, we will no doubt benefit from your expertise. At the same time, when you are less familiar with certain themes and problems, it is just as crucial that you allow yourself to voice questions, complications, uncertainties, and even requests for clarification.

### WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM ME

I will provide a number of introductory lectures on the material that explain its larger contexts and draw out several of its key theoretical contributions and implications.

I will make myself available during office hours for further discussion of the course topics and course assignments.

I will participate as a member of our collective and, recognizing the differences in power relations that inhere in the academic institution and our intellectual relationship, will endeavor to approach our work on as equal a footing as possible.

### BY THE END OF THIS COURSE,

You will be familiar with many of the key figures, debates, concepts, objects and problems surrounding the concepts of space and place in Human Geography.

You will be aware of key debates and discourses that have driven these concepts.

You will be capable of critically engaging several theoretical, practical and scientific perspectives on space and place from the viewpoints of the history of its ideas and their applicability to contemporary geographic problems.

### REQUIREMENTS

GRADUATE STUDENTS will write FIVE papers (FIVE pages each) addressing key themes, topics, and problems from the course readings. I expect these papers to critical assessments (not just reviews or impressions). I will hand out a separate sheet listing several possible discussion topics and paper approaches. Each paper is worth 15% of the final grade. Students will also LEAD one discussion as a member of a research collective (10%), and PARTICIPATE weekly (10%).

Further, as graduate students with an enriched and growing understandings of current practices in the discipline, I expect you to take a guiding role in addressing the readings and topics for each week. This not only helps those who are sometimes less familiar with its assumptions and routine practices, it also helps you become more comfortable with ‘running’ a classroom.

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS will write THREE papers (FIVE pages each) addressing key themes, topics, and problems from the course readings. I expect these papers to critical assessments (not just reviews or impressions). I will hand out a separate sheet listing several possible discussion topics and paper approaches. Each paper is worth 25% of the final grade. Students will also LEAD one discussion as a member of a research collective (10%), and PARTICIPATE weekly (15%).

Or, STUDENTS may opt to write ONE RESEARCH PAPER (Undergraduates: 15 pages, Graduates: 25 pages) addressing the a major space and/or place-based theme or area, due at the end of the semester. These papers will be well-researched, critical engagements. I will hand out a separate sheet listing several possible discussion topics and paper approaches. This paper is worth 70% of the final grade. Students will also submit a paper PROPOSAL (5%), LEAD one discussion as a member of a research collective (10%), and PARTICIPATE weekly (15%).

ALL STUDENTS will take turns introducing the material with a short summary discussion and key questions at the beginning of class. This will be done as ‘research collectives’ containing undergraduate and graduate students. Participation in the collectives is required, failure to do so will negatively impact your final course grade by 10%. We will determine collectives, and the graduate and undergraduate roles, in the coming weeks.

I expect everyone to come to class having read all the assigned material and ready to discuss it.

Any more than two absences will result in a failing grade.

## SCHEDULE

Generally, the assigned readings for each week will consist of primary sources. These will be on electronic library reserve at ‘MyUW’ and ‘Learn@UW’. The weekly readings will correspond to the week by week topics shown below and are listed bibliographically immediately below the schedule.

September	5th	Wk 1	Course Introduction: Space and Place
	12th	Wk 2	The Sense of Place: (Relph, Tuan, etc.)
	19th	Wk 3	Cartographic Anxiety (Gregory)
	26th	Wk 4	Rose, <i>Feminism and Geography – Selections</i>
October	3rd	Wk 5	Bunge, <i>Fitzgerald</i>
	10th	Wk 6	Bunge, <i>Fitzgerald</i>
	17th	Wk 7	Race, Place and History (McKittrick, Schein, Heynen)
	24th	Wk 8	Smith, <i>Uneven Development</i>
	31st	Wk 9	Smith, <i>Uneven Development</i>
November	7th	Wk 10	Spaces of Resistance, Revolt, and Community (Harvey)
	14th	Wk 11	Ware, <i>Building Stories</i>
	21st	Wk 12	Kosek, <i>Understories</i>
	28th	Wk 13	Kosek, <i>Understories</i>
December	5th	Wk 14	Spaces of Affect (Wylie, etc)

12th Wk15	Nonhuman Spaces (Whatmore, Kosek, etc.)
TBD	Final Papers Due

## COURSE READINGS

### REQUIRED BOOKS:

*Used copies of these books are available at Rainbow Bookstore at:  
426 W. Gilman St., just off State Street (Tel: 257-6050).*

Bunge, W. 1971. *Fitzgerald: Geography of a Revolution*. Multiple editions.

Smith, N. 1984. *Uneven Development*. Multiple editions.

Kosek, J. 2006. *Understories*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Ware, C. 2012. *Building Stories*. New York: Pantheon.

REQUIRED ARTICLES: All other chapters and articles will be available to you via electronic reserve at Learn@UW and MyUW. Readings are listed under the course number/title.

Tuan, Y-F. 1977. *Space and Place*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Gregory, D. 1994. *Geographical Imaginations*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.

Rose, G. 1993. *Feminism and Geography*. Polity Press.

McKittrick, K. 2006. *Demonic Grounds: Black Women and the Cartographies of Struggle*.  
Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Soja, E. 1989. *Postmodern Geographies*. Multiple editions.

Elden, S. 2013. *The Birth of Territory*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Whatmore, S. *Hybrid Geographies*.

Massey, D. *For Space*.

Braun, B. *Intemperate Rainforest*.

Robbins, P. *Lawn People*.

### BACKGROUND READING

*Below is a list of resources for background reading. For those with limited background in geography and those preparing a classroom presentation, I suggest reading one or another of the following books alongside our required readings. All should be available in the Geography Library.*

Johnston, R.J., Gregory, D., Pratt, G., Watts, M.J. and Whatmore, S., eds. (2009) *The Dictionary of Human Geography*, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition. Oxford: Blackwell. (*Digitally available via MADCAT*)

Livingstone, D. (1993) *The Geographical Tradition*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Cloke, P., Philo, C. and Sadler, D. (1991) *Approaching Human Geography*. New York: Guilford.

Earle, C., Mathewson, K. and Kenzer, M.S., eds. (1996) *Concepts in Human Geography*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.

Clifford, N.J., and Valentine, G. (2003) *Key Methods in Geography*. London: Sage.

Gregory, D., Martin, R., and Smith, G., eds. (1994) *Human Geography: Society, Space, and Social Science*.  
Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Hubbard, P., Kitchin, R. and Valentine, G., eds. (2008) *Key Texts in Human Geography*. London: Sage.

Johnston, R.J. (1991) *Geography and Geographers*, 4th Edition. London: Edward Arnold.

Peet, R. (1998) *Modern Geographical Thought*. Oxford: Blackwell