

DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

SPACE AND PLACE

GEOG501
SPRING 201X
TR 1:00-2:15 PM, SCIENCE HALL 350
3 CREDITS
PREREQ: JR STANDING

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“A city is a particular kind of place, perhaps best described as many worlds in one place; it compounds many versions without quite reconciling them, though some cross over to live in multiple worlds ... An atlas is a collection of versions of a place, a compendium of perspectives, a snatching out of the infinite ether of potential versions a few that will be made concrete and visible. Every place deserves an atlas...”

— Rebecca Solnit, *Infinite City: A San Francisco Atlas*

This Spring, members of GEOG501 will constitute the ‘editorial collective’ of the *Madison Atlas Project*. The fruit of our efforts will be the second installment of what will be an ongoing, evolving atlas of Madison. Taking our inspiration from Rebecca Solnit’s experimental atlases of San Francisco and New Orleans, we will experiment with methods and strategies for discovering, mapping, and narrating the spaces and places of Madison. To this end, we will collectively determine a set of topics and spaces we would like to research as our contribution to the atlas. The sky is the limit here: Solnit’s atlases completely reimagine their cities, mapping them according to, for example, blues clubs and Zen Buddhist centers, spaces of contemplation and delight, and prisons and levees. We will also invent our methodologies; Solnit’s writers blend several conventional methods (historical, scientific) with more experimental methods, such as wandering, following the senses, and so on). To be successful, we need all kinds of individuals interested in mapping and the human and physical sciences, as well as artists, historians, ecologists, architects, students of critical studies of race, gender, class, sexuality, planners, creative writers, geologists, etc. We will also need to enrich our approaches to understanding space and place.

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. 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.

In addition to Solnit's atlases, we will read a diverse set of grounded, 'empirical' studies to help us ponder how we might square the circle between 'theory and practice.' Our progress in this direction will be aided by a selection of works from a variety of geographers. Neil Smith's dense, but beautifully written *magnum opus*, *Uneven Development*, for example, provides a theoretical treatment of the social production of space through the politics of scale and uneven geographical development. But Kosek's *Understories* arguably provides a wonderful ethnographic advancement of Smith by merging his observations with 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" that constitute the grounded complexities of a contemporary New Mexico. Bunge's *Fitzgerald* offers another glimpse at such complex relationships, here in the context of social justice in an African-American neighborhood in 1960-'70s Detroit. Through these and other works, we will explore questions of identity and space, the sense of place, nonhuman spatiality, and a host of other wild concepts essential to the human geographer's toolkit. All will prove essential, I think, for our exploration of Madison spaces and places.

WHAT I EXPECT FROM YOU

The success of the project depends upon our collective participation. At the start of each class, I – or a research collective – will briefly introduce discussion with commentary and questions to situate the literature.

I understand that we all have different scholarly backgrounds, embrace different 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. To this end, all course members are asked to please bring the week's material to class and be prepared to discuss it.

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 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.

You will be familiar with strategies of geographic writing and representation for public audiences.

REQUIREMENTS

You will produce one map & chapter of the *Madison Atlas*. (Workshopped, polished and publishable. 5000 words max.) The chapter is worth **50%** of the final grade.

Students will also:

Contribute to the editing and production of the *Atlas* (**20%**); lead one discussion as a member of a research collective (**10%**); participate in weekly discussions and editorial sessions (**20%**).

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

With the exception of the Solnit atlases, all readings will be electronically available via 'Learn@UW'

January	17 th - Wk	COURSE INTRODUCTION
	19 th 1	READ: Solnit 2010, pp. 1-12 for Thurs
	24 th - Wk	Tues: Solnit 2010, pp. 12 -84
	26 th 2	Thurs: Solnit
February	31 st - Wk	Tues: Editorial Meeting: Initial Proposals
	2 nd 3	Thurs: Editorial Meeting: Initial Proposals
	7 th - Wk	Tues: Space/Place Readings: Identity
	9 th 4	Thurs: Solnit 2010, 85-156
	14 th - Wk	Tues: Space/Place Readings: Difference
	16 th 5	Thurs: Solnit
	21 st - Wk	Tues: Space/Place Readings: Complexity
	23 rd 6	Thurs: Editorial Meeting: Research Updates
March	28 th - Wk	Tues: Space/Place Readings
	2 nd 7	Thurs: Solnit
	7 th - Wk	Tues: Solnit
	9 th 8	Thurs: Maps
	14 th - Wk	Tues: Space/Place Readings
	16 th 9	Thurs: Chapter Drafts Due
	21 st - Wk	SPRING RECESS – NO LECTURE
	23 rd 10	
	28 th - Wk	Tues: Workshop Chapter Drafts
	30 th 11	Thurs: Workshop Chapter Drafts
April	4 th - Wk	AAG – NO LECTURE
	6 th 12	
	11 th - Wk	Tues: Visual Production
	13 th 13	Thurs: Chapter Revisions Due
	18 th - Wk	Tues: Visual Production
	20 th 14	Thurs: Production
	25 th - Wk	Tues: <i>Atlas</i> Production
	27 st 15	Thurs: <i>Atlas</i> Production
May	2 nd - Wk	Tues: Volume Finalization
	4 th 16	Thurs: Volume Finalization

COURSE READINGS

REQUIRED BOOKS:

- Order ASAP. Upon request, I can make used copies of these books available at University Bookstore:
- Solnit, R. 2010. *Unfathomable City: A New Orleans Atlas*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Solnit, R. and Snedeker, R. 2013. *Infinite City: A San Francisco Atlas*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Solnit, R. and Jelly-Schapiro, J. 2016. *Nonstop Metropolis: A New York Atlas*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

REQUIRED ARTICLES:

All readings (except Solnit) available via electronic reserve at Learn@UW – listed under the course number/title. These will include selections from:

- 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*.
- 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.
- Mitchell, D. 2003. *The Right to the City*. New York: Guilford.

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*, 5th 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