WORLDINGS: REGIONS, PEOPLES AND STATES

Geography 10
Professor Jake Kosek
Meeting Time: Tues & Thurs 6:30-8pm
Room: Pimentel 1

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course is designed to transform how you think about, understand and engage in the making and remaking of the worlds we inhabit. Concepts central to Geography pepper the pages of newspapers almost every day – in stories of immigration policies, international finance capital, the military industry, genetic engineering, global warming, surveillance, racial profiling, poverty and terrorism. Ideas central to the field of geography such as space, nature, empire and globalization animate the histories and politics of their contemporary manifestation in the U.S. and the world. Our approach will not be to simply learn about the regions of the world, but to think critically and geographically about how regions, peoples, and states and other foundational concepts have come into being, the consequences of their formations, and how they might be otherwise. The unifying theme of the class is the contested relationships, practices, and processes in the making of these central geographic concepts (space, nature, empire and globalization) that often go unexamined.

Starting with the concept of space, such as the world, the region, and the nation-state, we will examine the politics and power of space not as an empty stage upon which events happen but as a deeply contested field with specific histories and profound consequences. This course will take the map seriously by learning the empirical order of our day via map quizzes throughout the semester; however, we will also seek to disrupt the map’s authority at objectively representing space and to disrespect its seeming fixity by exploring some of the politics of the broader concepts of spatial production and representation. Second, we will examine the idea of nature, both as a concept of the external environment and also as an internal essence such as human nature. We will look at the work that ideas of nature have in our lives from our understandings of the global environment, to our most
intimate formations of race, culture and ethnicity. Ultimately, we hope to demonstrate how the
caption of nature, that is often presented as the opposite of that which is social and political, is
anything but. The third section of the class deals with empire and global inequalities related to
globalization. Here we will discuss modern disparities between and within regions, nations, states
and communities. We will begin this section by studying economic globalization starting with its
imperial histories and component parts such as property, the commodity, and labor; and then
explore the processes and institutions that have shaped the modern form of global production and
exchange and the contemporary consequences of these formations. We will then raise key
geographical questions about the politics of indigeneity, race and sexuality and how political economy
and identity become intertwined as people make claims to rights, resources and redistribution in
powerful and significant ways.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Class/section participation: 40% of final course grade
Map Quizzes: 10% “
Assignments (x2): 20% “
Final exam: 30% “

Course grades will be based on a curve using the total points earned on all assignments,
participation and exams.

**CLASS ASSIGNMENTS AND PARTICIPATION**

Lectures will be complemented by review sections devoted to fuller discussion of the readings and
lecture material. Class assignments on topics related to the class lectures will be given two weeks in
advance of their due dates. Attendance in lecture and discussion sections is mandatory and will be
factored into your grade. Sections will begin on Monday, September 2nd, the last day of sections
will be Friday, December 6th. If you miss a class you are responsible to find out what
material you missed and what announcements were made during your absence.

**PLAN FOR LECTURES AND READINGS**

Readings are listed in italics under each lecture. You are expected to complete all of the readings
**before** the lecture for which they are assigned.

**FINAL EXAM**

Questions, including ones on the final exam, will be handed out by December 3rd to allow you
to prepare for the proctored final exam on December 17th 11:30-2 pm. The final exam will consist of
some of these questions, other short-answer questions, and key terms. The final exam will
comprise 30% of the course grade.

**COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES**

• Understand the expansive complexities of different racial/ethnic groups and their role in the making
  through comparative study in their global context.

• Examine how some of the most consequential forces of modernity have organized people into racial and
  ethnic populations; lands into territory; and nations into states.

• Discuss the violent and contested history of regions, cities, and neighborhoods whose enduring material
  structures produce and reproduce inequalities in spatial form.
• Explain the processes through which environmental changes are remaking the world and creating new vastly uneven social vulnerabilities.

• Explain how concepts of nature have been a means for making and fixing of ethnic and racial difference in America and beyond.

• Explain how global uneven development and economic inequities are connected to contemporary political debates around immigration, citizenship and wealth/poverty in America.

• Articulate a critical understanding of the core themes in human geography (Space, Nature, Empire, and Globalization) and explain their role in constituting forms of difference (race, class, gender, sexuality) in the contemporary world.

• Imagine new possibilities of engaging in and critically thinking about key geopolitical, racial, ethnic, and environmental issues that shape America in relationship to the modern world.

COURSE INFORMATION

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professor</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
<th>Office Hours</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jake Kosek</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jake@berkeley.edu">jake@berkeley.edu</a></td>
<td>Wednesday 2:00-4:00</td>
<td>585 McCone Hall</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jeff Martin</td>
<td><a href="mailto:j.vance.martin@berkeley.edu">j.vance.martin@berkeley.edu</a></td>
<td>Mondays 2:30-3:30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leonora Zoninsein</td>
<td><a href="mailto:leonoraz@berkeley.edu">leonoraz@berkeley.edu</a></td>
<td>Thursday 11:00-12:00</td>
<td>583 McCone Hall</td>
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Course Website

We will use bcourses for posting announcements, distributing readings, maps and list items for map quizzes, and for other purposes. Please go to bcourses and log on using your CalNet ID and passphrase. If you are registered (or waitlisted) for the course, a tab should appear automatically for Geography 10.

Academic Integrity

Any test, paper, report or homework submitted under your name is presumed to be your own original work that has not previously been submitted for credit in another course. All words and ideas written by other people must be properly attributed: fully identified as to source and the extent of your use of their work. Cheating, plagiarism and other academic misconduct will result in a failing grade on the assignment, paper, quiz or exam in question and will be reported to Student Judicial Affairs.
INTRODUCTION

August 29th:

Introduction to Geography and this Course.

I. SPACE

Starting with the concept of space, we will examine its politics and power, not as an empty stage on which events happen but as a deeply contested field with specific histories and profound consequences for our everyday lives. We start this section by reviewing maps as political tools that can be both accurate and deceptive at the same time. We will then explore the power of the map in modern history and the consequences that are associated with this power. More specifically, we demonstrate how these technologies of spatial representation were central to the making of modern nations states, the processes of imperial expansion, the constitution of regions all as a means to think about the politics of space and the politics of representation together.

We will then look at more quotidian examples of the organization of space and think both about the world around us paying particular attention to questions of race and ethnicity. We explore the making of spaces from bathrooms to classrooms, the city and the country, homelessness and gated communities—to make visible the politics of the organization of space and the profound effects of it making on all of our lives. At the end of this module, we will we return to particular spatial histories using examples of the Jim Crow South; apartheid South Africa; Guantanamo Bay; the Jewish Ghettos of Germany; redlining in New York; the middle-class household and the workplace—all to better understand the different ways that space is a means of forming and reproducing social orders of race, ethnicity, class, gender and sexuality. We end the section by thinking deeply about histories of spatial remaking from effort to re-organize colonial spaces in Africa, Latin America and China to the civil right strategies on buses and soda fountain to more contemporary efforts such as Occupy, Standing Rock and Black Lives Matter.

The readings are chosen to give depth and grounding to the politics of the representation and production of space. The readings draw from specific cases of the lived histories of the homeless in Berkeley (Mitchell), African Americans in the carceral system (Alexander, Wang), Mexican immigrants in California industrial agriculture (Ngai, De Leon, Mitchell), members of the trans-community in San Francisco (Solnit), and Muslim American in a post 911 America (Mamdani, Said), and the gendered links between the household and empire, among others. The readings individually and collectively link the intimate social relationships to the representation and production of space (Pickles, Turnbull, Carter). The argument is that difference is lived spatially and these representations of space and the attendant productions of space are intimately connected to the reproduction and effects of the difference (McClintock, Hall, Said). These places such as people’s park, trans bars in San Francisco, the drawing of imperial maps of Africa in Berlin, the nation-state’s organizing of people and nature into discernable and interchangeable units in Germany and rise and fortification of specific walls, fences and boarders (Scott, Brown, De Leon, Weizman) in places as disparate and North Korea/South Korea, Israel/Palestine, US/Mexico are used to emphasize space in its material and embodied forms. Ultimately they work with other examples from lectures to show how space materializes the reproduction of forms of difference and their often brutal lived daily effects.
Week 1: The Politics of Space
September 3rd: Making Maps


Optional:

September 5th: Producing Spaces


Optional:

Week 2: State e3 Territory
September 10th: The Spaces of Sovereignty

Map Quiz #1


**September 12th: Walls, Borders and Flows**


*Optional:*


**Week 3 Nationalism e Segregation:**

**September 17th: Imagined Communities**


*Optional:*

Mullaney, T. 2010. The Consent of the Categorized, in *Coming to Terms with the Nation*. Berkeley, UC Press pages 92-117.


**September 19th: Segregation**


*Optional:*


**Week 4: Region e Empire**

**September 24th: The Orient & The Occident**

Optional:


**September 26th: Race, Religion and Regionalisms**


Optional:


II. Nature

One of Geographies most enduring and most important keywords is nature and Geography’s mix of humanities, social science and physical science affords powerful and important insights into political role of nature in making modern worlds. On the one hand, it is related to environment and landscape, and on the other, it is the foundation of many important debates about race, culture and ethnicity through the concept of ‘human nature’. As such, nature is at the heart of the making of the modern world, not just as a story of environmental transformation but through its role in modern definitions and legitimization of racism, sexism and poverty. In this module, we will begin by looking at the political nature of disaster. Arguing that there is ‘no such thing as a natural disaster’ when talking about the politics of climate itself, histories that have produced vulnerability unevenly, and disproportionate attention and forms of response. We will explore these histories by studying the effects of Hurricane Katrina and Maria and then more recent examples such as earthquakes in Mexico and China and wildfires in California.

Next, we will look at the field of political Ecology and discuss methods that geographers have developed to link politics and ecology together. These methods help geographers challenge racist & class arguments around population and demonstrate the limits of environmental politics based on consumption and market based solutions. In reviewing modern ecologies, we try not to think about what has been lost, or the despoliation of pure nature or wilderness, but instead in lectures we try to look at the ways that modern ecologies are created through global histories of nuclear radiation and the ways that all ecologies now bare the traces of political histories. These transformations are so profound that geologists have named a new anthropogenic epoch, based on the fact that humans are now a primary geological force in shaping the planet. But nature, as mentioned above, is far more than the environment for Geographers it is also a primarily means for the making and reproduction of race and ethnicity.

In the final part of this section we explore the ways that racism, sexism and homophobia rely on claims about what is or is not natural. We look at global histories of Eugenics and debates about miscegenation to demonstrate the political stakes and to clarify the broader import of the politics of nature. The readings are chosen to deepen and broaden students understanding of the ways that nature is always infused with power. We start with Williams and develop a method for denaturalizing nature though history, situated knowledge and spatial variation. Then we look at the language, institutions, and individuals use of nature and it’s role in depoliticizing both the form (climate, erosion, drought etc.) and the effects (floods, desertification, poverty etc.). We demonstrate through fires (Davis), floods (Woods) in the US, oil in Nigeria Gulf and the US Gulf (Watts), coal mining in Canada, China, and the US South east (Johnson, Preist) that nature and vulnerability are both produced in deeply political ways and that this manifest in the lived effects of disasters and environmental change especially on black, brown and indigenous peoples (Mitchell, Hubbard, Simmons). Next the readings focus on climate change and the politics of global warming and they collectively take abstract universal concepts central to nature and situate them back within the places and politics of their making. Here climate science and universal claims of becomes implicated in histories of empire, race, capitalism and patriarchy (Haraway, Pararenti and Todd), and how the epoch changing effects of incremental environmental change need to be thought as a form of slow violence for their everyday transformative effects on peoples daily lives (Nixon, Braun). Lastly, we look at the ways the keyword nature works in essentializing and depoliticizing forms of social difference in specific contexts of the science of race in colonial Africa and the US South (Magubane, Braun) and in debates and lived effects of intersex understandings and debates within the US medical and legal community (Butler and Bederman).
Week 5: Purity and Essence

October 1st: Essence

Map Quiz #2


October 3th: Natural Disasters

Assignment #1 due


Optional:


Week 6: Degradation & Transformation

October 8th: The Political Ecology of Oil and Carbon


Optional:


October 10th: Landscapes and Racial and Ethnic Violence


Optional:


**Week 7: The Politics of Climate**

**October 15th**: Global Discourses on Climate Change

**Map Quiz # 3**


Optional:


**October 17th**: Climate Change and The Anthropocene


Optional:


**Week 8: The Politics of Nature and Difference**

**October 22nd**: The Nature and Science of Race


Optional:


October 24th: The Nature and Science of Sex

Map Quiz # 4 Europe


Optional:

III. EMPIRE & GLOBALIZATION

In this last section, we directly engage with some of the most central contemporary debates in Human Geography—the making of inequity in the modern world. How is it that 1/5 of the world’s population uses 4/5 of world’s resources, and how 30% of the world’s population is in poverty when so much wealth and opulence exists at the same time? Relatedly, it explores how the very concepts of the global North and South, First World and Third World, Developing and Developed world come into being. We start by debunking technological, Eurocentric, and racist explanations of these and other global definitions around inequity and link these debates to contemporary debates about U.S exceptionalism.

Importantly we start with Imperialism and Colonialism to set the stage for our discussion, we focus on racial and economic histories of industrialization and capitalism to look at these not as separate histories but deeply intertwined formations. We explore economic models of Adam Smith, Ricardo, and John Locke in lecture and by looking at some of their claims and promises of capitalsims. Then we will explore the limitation and critiques of these theories not only by Karl Marx but also by Frantz Fanon and Cedric Robinson by looking at alternative explanations of world making using the labor theory of value, relational understanding of wealth and poverty, and geographic theories of underdevelopment. We do this by exploring grounded examples such as the Black and Latinx factory farm labor exploitation and class politics of industrial agriculture and the garment industry and the racial and economic history of the rise of the urban slum, in ways that make clear the global colonialism and race are constitutive features of modern capitalism in the US.

Finally, we broaden the discussion to related questions of debt and finance capital and militarism as economic, colonial and racialized formations that tells us about the conditions that reorganize the world and transform the U.S. The readings follow this same structure within the section but are the means of both deepening the racial, economic and political arguments about the making of global inequities and the brutal lived consequences along lines of race and ethnicity of these formations. First, the readings situate the rise of modern economics with the concept of race and empire through a detail account of two of the largest genocides in world history that of the Belgian Congo (Hochschild) and US slavery (Hudson and Dawson). We take key dimensions of that reading and trace them through the differences and similitudes with contemporary race and economic relationships in the US/Caribbean sex tourism (Gregory) and with Black and Latinx workers in the US industrial food production (Harvey, Bowen, Pollan). We then shift to working through, ethnic and economic arguments about exchange and production (Smith, Coulthard); and race, property, labor and value (Brewer, Dawson, Verdery). These articles take these conceptual foundational economic keywords but explore them through specific places such as Urban China (Arrighi) and Romania Rural (Verdery) and global racialized Urban Slums (Davis) and as contested formations in ways that make visible the politics and violence of debt in the US (Wang, Connelly, Bouie and Graeber). Finally we end by exploring some of the inherent contradictions of liberalism (Simpson, Conolley and Bouie) and the profound racial costs for Native, Black and Latinx of US surveillance and militarism (King, Heller, Gregory).
**Week 9: Colonialism & Globalization**

**October 29th: Making Markets**


*Optional:*


**October 31st: Neoliberal Intimacies**


*Optional:*


**Week 10: The Commodity and Property**

**November 5th: On Commodities, Labor and Other Objects**

**Map Quiz # 5**


*Optional:*


**November 7th: The Political Lives of Property & Labor**

Hong, G K 2014. *Property: in Keywords for American Cultural Studies*. Edited by Bruce Burgett & Glen Hendler, New York, NYU Press.


Optional:


**Week 11: Labor, Value e3 Uneven Development**

**November 12th: What Makes Wealth?**

Map Quiz # 6


Optional:


**November 14th: What Makes Poverty?**

**Assignment # 2 due**


**Week 12: Debt, Democracy and Capitalism**

**November 19th: Debt**


**Optional:**


**November 21st: The Limits of Liberalism**


**Optional:**


**Week 13: Violence and Security**

**November 25th: War, Poverty and Racism**


Giangrande, N. 2018. The Assassination of Marielle Franco is as Much About Brazil’s Past as its Future. *Equal Times*, pages 1-5.

**Optional:**


**November 26th: The Geographies of Security**

**Map Quiz # 7**


Optional:


Week 14: What is a World?
November 28th: Thanksgiving

NO CLASS

December 3rd: Worldings


Week 15: Catch-up & Review

December 5th Final Lecture/ Exam Review.

Final Exam Review TBA

Final Exam: Thursday, December 19th 11:30-2:30
## IMPORTANT DATES

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