

**Political Geography
Geography 450:405
Fall 2009**

Instructor: Trevor Birkenholtz
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Office Hours: By appointment only

Class Time: M-W: 5:00 – 6:20 pm
Location: M – LSH A143 (Lucy Stone Hall, A-wing)
W – LCB 103 (Livingston Classroom Building)

Required Materials (available at Livingston Campus Bookstore and on reserve at Kilmer Library)

- ❖ Agnew, John A. 2005. *Hegemony: The New Shape of Global Power*. Temple University Press.
- ❖ Jones, Martin, Rhys Jones and Michael Woods. 2004. *An Introduction to Political Geography: Space, Place and Politics*. London & New York: Routledge Press.
- ❖ Rajan, Kaushik Sunder. 2006. *Biocapital: The Constitution of Postgenomic Life*. Chapel Hill, NC: Duke University Press.

*****Additional readings will be available on Sakai*****

Course Description

This course examines how political struggles over material well-being and questions of identity manifest themselves in the landscape and over space. Drawing on the political concepts of power, politics and policy and the fundamental geographical concepts of space, place and territory, we will examine and try to understand the current map of the world and the conflicts that continue to challenge and question this map. We will place particular emphasis on uneven development, public space, biological entities and issues of race and identity (e.g. class, gender, and locality).

Course Organization

The course is divided into two main parts:

Part I. This part will draw on the textbook *An Introduction to Political Geography*. On Mondays we will read and discuss one of nine chapters from this book. On Thursdays we will read and discuss one or more case studies based on the previous reading from the book chapter. Read the papers in the order in which they are listed in this syllabus. Evaluation for this part of the course will consist of three in-class quizzes.

Part II. In this part, we will delve into some leading issues in Political Geography: 1) Hegemony and Global Power; and the 2) Political Geography of Biotechnology. This part of the course will proceed in a seminar fashion with increased reading, in-class discussion and out of class writing assignments. For both of these books you will write an analytical essay (4-5 pages) in response to questions that I will provide to you in advance of reading the book. The book analyses will be due in class on the following days:

Rajan: November 23
Mitchell: December 9

Parts I & II. Students will partly organize and be the *Experts* for most Thursday classes. Our class has roughly 40 students in it. On September 8, students will be placed into 9 groups of 4 to 5 people. Groups will be numbered 1 through 9 (see below). On these days, student groups will begin class with a 30-minute presentation of the reading. This presentation will highlight the key points of the reading, relate it to the book chapter that it complements (for Groups 1 to 7), and raise any questions that the work leaves unanswered. In order for this to go well, groups will need to meet before their designated day as *Experts* to prepare. This is a very important part of the course and will form a major component of your Attendance and Participation grade.

Student Evaluation

Attendance and Participation	15%
Quizzes (3 @ 15%)	45%
Book Analyses (2 @ 20%)	40%

Attendance and Participation evaluation will include: 1) *Expert* Presentations; 2) in-class/small group work; 3) handouts on videos; and 4) actual attendance.

Late papers will be penalized by one letter grade during the first week past the due date. For instance, an "A" paper would become a "B" paper. Thereafter, the paper will revert to a zero.

Throughout the course, there may be special events related to Political Geography. You may earn an additional 1-3% (total) by attending these extra-curricular activities and writing a short summary of your experience(s). We will announce these as they come up; they must be pre-approved.

There is no final exam for this course.

Special Needs

All efforts will be made to accommodate students with special needs. However, students are responsible for making their needs known to us and for seeking assistance in a timely manner. Please contact us privately to discuss your personal requirements.

Plagiarism or other academically inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated

Topic and Reading Schedule:

First Class & Introduction: September 2

Topic 1: What is Political Geography?, September 8 & 9

(M) Chapter 1: *Power, Space and 'Political Geography'*

(TH) Group 1: (Foucault 1995) & (Herbert 1996)

Topic 2: The State I, September 14 & 16

(M) Chapter 2: *States and Territory*

(TH) Group 2: (Foucault 1991) & (Murdoch and Ward 1997)

Topic 3: The State II, September 21 & 23

(M) Chapter 3: *The State in Global Perspective*

(TH) Group 3: (Dalby 2007) & (Dittmer 2005)

Topic 4: The State III, September 28 & September 30

(M) Chapter 4: *The State's Changing Forms and Functions*

(TH) Group 4: (Smith 2002) & (Prudham 2004)

Quiz: October 5 & 7 quiz and video

(M) Quiz

(TH) Topic 4a: Black Markets & Smuggling (Nordstrom 2000) & Video: *Dying to Leave*

Topic 5: Political Geography of the Nation, October 12 & 14

(M) Chapter 5: *The Political Geographies of the Nation*

(TH) Group 5: (Sidorov 2000) & (Jones 2008)

Topic 6: Politics, Power and Place October 19, 21

(M) Chapter 6: *Politics, Power and Place*

(TH) Group 6: (Kohler and Wissen 2003) & (Harrison 2006)

Topic 7: Contesting Place & Quiz, October 26, 28

(M) Chapter 7: *Contesting Place*

(TH) Quiz

Topic 8: Democracy and Representation I, November 2 & 4

(M) Chapter 8: *Democracy, Participation, and Citizenship* & (Young 2000)

(TH) Group 7: (Martin 2003)

Topic 9: Democracy and Representation II, November 9 & 11

(M) Chapter 9 & Postscript: *Public Policy and Political Geography*

(TH) Quiz

Topic 10: The Political Geography of Biotech, November 16, 18 & 23

Rajan, Kaushik Sunder. 2006. *Biocapital: The Constitution of Postgenomic Life*.
Chapel Hill, NC: Duke University Press.
Group 8: November 18

THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY: NO CLASS NOVEMBER 25

Topic 11: Geography of Global Power, November 30 & December 2, 7

Agnew, John A. 2005. *Hegemony: The New Shape of Global Power*. Temple University Press.
Group 9: December 2

Course Wrap-up: December 9

Bibliography

- Dalby, S. (2007). The Pentagon's New Imperial Geography. *Violent Geographies: Fear, Terror, and Political Violence*. D. Gregory and A. Pred. New York, Routledge: 295-308.
- Dittmer, J. (2005). "Captain America's empire: Reflections on identity, popular culture, and post-9/11 geopolitics." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* **95**(3): 626-643.
- Foucault, M. (1991). Governmentality. *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*. Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon and Peter Miller. Chicago, University of Chicago Press: 87-104.
- Foucault, M. (1995). Panopticism. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. New York, Vintage Books: 195-228.
- Harrison, J. L. (2006). "'Accidents' and invisibilities: Scaled discourse and the naturalization of regulatory neglect in California's pesticide drift conflict." *Political Geography* **25**(5): 506-529.
- Herbert, S. (1996). "The geopolitics of the police: Foucault, disciplinary power and the tactics of the Los Angeles Police Department." *Political Geography* **15**(1): 47-57.
- Jones, R. (2008). "Relocating nationalism: on the geographies of reproducing nations." *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* **33**(3): 319-334.
- Kohler, B. and M. Wissen (2003). "Glocalizing protest: Urban conflicts and the global social movements." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* **27**(4): 942-+.
- Martin, D. G. (2003). "'Place-framing' as place-making: Constituting a neighborhood for organizing and activism." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* **93**(3): 730-750.
- Murdoch, J. and N. Ward (1997). "Governmentality and territoriality: The statistical manufacture of Britain's 'national farm'." *Political Geography* **16**(4): 307-324.
- Nordstrom, C. (2000). "Shadows and sovereigns." *Theory Culture & Society* **17**(4): 35-+.
- Prudham, S. (2004). "Poisoning the well: neoliberalism and the contamination of municipal water in Walkerton, Ontario." *Geoforum* **35**(3): 343-360.

- Sidorov, D. (2000). "National monumentalization and the politics of scale: The resurrections of the Cathedral of Christ the Savior in Moscow." Annals of the Association of American Geographers **90**(3): 548-572.
- Smith, N. (2002). "New globalism, new urbanism: Gentrification as global urban strategy." Antipode **34**(3): 427-450.
- Young, I. M. (2000). Introduction. Inclusion and Democracy. Oxford, Oxford University Press: 1-15.