

# Geography 607, Spring 2009

## Geography, Space, and Social Theory

### Course Description

A wide range of social science disciplines as well as the humanities (e.g. anthropology, sociology, political science, economics, and history) have turned to the importance and relevance of space (and geography) as constitutive of society, economy, ideologies, cultures, knowledge, and identity. This is clear in the use of spatial and cartographic metaphors in a wide range of social theorizations as well as in the work of researchers that focus on the materiality of spatializations, distributions, flows, borders, migrations, etc. This “spatial turn” in social theory provides new opportunities for understanding and interpreting the variety of processes that produce contemporary spatial imaginaries and space itself.

*Geography, Space, and Social Theory* will focus on social theories that both inform and have been informed by geography. It will emphasize the meanings and productions of space, its contextualization in society and science, its fixing and alignment with hegemonic social and economic structures, and the many potentials that exist for its disruption and reconstitution as a site of difference and alterity. The course will be of interest to students across the social sciences where theoretical understandings are increasingly intertwined with cartographic and spatial concerns, metaphors, and metrics.

The course is structured around several interrelated themes that emerge from the many intersections of geography and social theory. These include but are not limited to:

- The production of space (and scale)
- Geographies of difference: race and gender
- Subjectivity and space
- Knowledge spaces
- Postcolonial geographies of empire
- Critical cartographies
- Spaces/subjects of the economy

### Course Format

The course will be a readings seminar. Core readings for this year will include, but are not limited to, the following book and/or selections from them. These will be supplemented with articles and other readings (see the tentative course schedule).

- Warf, B. *The Spatial Turn: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*.
- Lefebvre, H. *The Production of Space*.
- Harvey, D. *The Condition of Postmodernity*.
- Crampton, J. and S. Elden *Space, Knowledge, and Power*.
- Brown, J.N. *Dropping Anchor, Setting Sail: Geographies of Race in Black Liverpool*.
- Rose, G. *Feminism and Geography*.
- Craib, R.B. *Cartographic Mexico: A History of State Fixations and Fugitive Landscapes*.
- Latour, B. *Reassembling the Social*.
- Massey, D. *For Space*.

*Course Requirements:*

Students are expected to fully engage with the readings, enthusiastically participate in class discussion, and work toward integrating the material into their own research interests.

Students will be expected to write brief (1-2 page) reaction papers each week, lead discussion, and make presentations. Weekly papers should reflect upon the readings and their usefulness or relevance to each student’s own work or interests. There will be a written (take-home) mid-term exam and a final project. The final project will be one of the following:

- Standard term paper (15-20 pages).
- Paper and presentation (departmental speaker series or conference).
- Research proposal.
- Paper for publication based on own research.

All students will be required to give at least one brief presentation of their reaction to the readings and will, each week, develop questions for discussion.

Students will be assessed according to the following scheme:

Reaction papers/ presentations/midterm	40%
Final project	30%
Classroom participation	30%
Total	100%

**Tentative Course Schedule:**

WEEKS	CLASS CONTENT	READINGS (TENTATIVE)	ASSIGNMENTS
1	<b>Course Introduction</b> Selections from Warf, B. (ed.) 2008. <i>The Spatial Turn: An Interdisciplinary Perspective</i> .		
2	<b>The Production of Space I</b>	Lefebvre, H. 1991. <i>The Production of Space</i> Chapters 1-4 (pp. 1-291).	
3	<b>The Production of Space II</b>	Lefebvre, H. 1991. <i>The Production of Space</i> Chapter 4-Afterward (pp. 292-434). Harvey, D. 2006. “Space as a Key Word,” in <i>Spaces of Global Capitalism</i> . Verso: New York.	

4	<p><b>The Production of Space III</b></p> <p>Harvey, D. 1992. <i>The Condition of Postmodernity</i>.</p> <p><b>Critical Responses:</b></p> <p>Deutsche, R. 1991. "Boys Town," <i>Environment and Planning D: Society and Space</i> 9:5–30.</p> <p>Massey, D. 1991. "Flexible Sexism," <i>Environment and Planning D: Society and Space</i> 9:31–57.</p>	
5	<p><b>Spaces of Difference: Postmodern Spatiality</b></p> <p>Selections from Soja, E. <i>Postmodern Geography</i>.</p> <p>Jameson, F. "Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism," <i>New Left Review</i> 146:59-92.</p> <p>Selections from Benko, G. and U. Strohmayr, eds. 1997. <i>Space and Social Theory</i>. Blackwell: Oxford.</p> <p>Castree, Noel. 2004. "Differential geographies: Place, indigenous rights and 'local' resources," <i>Political Geography</i> 23, (2): 133-167.</p> <p>Selections from Castree, N. and D. Gregory eds. <i>David Harvey: A Critical Reader</i>.</p> <p>Callari, A. and D.F. Ruccio. 1996. "Introduction: Postmodern Materialism and the Future of Marxist Theory" in <i>Postmodern Materialism and the Future of Marxist Theory</i>. Wesleyan University Press.</p>	
6	<p><b>Spaces of Difference: Race and Gender</b></p> <p>Rose, G. <i>Feminism and Geography: The Limits of Geographical Knowledge</i>.</p>	
7	<p><b>Spaces of Difference: Race and Gender</b></p> <p>Brown, J.N. <i>Dropping Anchor, Setting Sail: Geographies of Race in Black Liverpool</i>.</p>	
8	<p><b>Subjectivity and Space I</b></p> <p>Foucault, M. <i>Discipline and Punish</i>.</p> <p>Selections from Crampton, J. and S. Elden <i>Space, Knowledge, and Power</i>.</p> <p>Amariglio, J.L. 1988. "The Body, Economic Discourse, and Power: An Economist's Introduction to Foucault" <i>History of Political Economy</i> 20(4): 583-613.</p>	
9	<p><b>Spring Recess</b></p>	
10	<p><b>Subjectivity and Space II</b></p> <p>Selections from Crampton, J. and S. Elden <i>Space, Knowledge, and Power</i>.</p>	
11	<p><b>The Metrics of Empire I</b></p> <p>Latour, B. <i>Reassembling the Social</i>.</p> <p>Selections from Lynch, M. and S. Woolgar <i>Representation in Scientific Practice</i>.</p>	

12	<p><b>The Metrics of Empire II</b></p> <p>Craib, R.B. <i>Cartographic Mexico: A History of State Fixations and Fugitive Landscapes</i>.</p> <p>Turnbull, D. <i>Maps are Territories, Science is an Atlas</i>.</p>	
13	<p><b>Interventions: Constituting Alternative Economic Spaces</b></p> <p>Gibson-Graham, J. K. 2000. Poststructuralist Interventions. Chapter 7 in <i>A companion to economic geography</i>. Eds Eric S. Sheppard, and Trevor J. Barnes, 95-110. Blackwell.</p> <p>Escobar, A. 2004. "Other Worlds are (Already) Possible." in J.Sen, A. Anand, A. Escobar &amp; P. Waterman(eds.), <i>World Social Forum: Challenging Empires</i>, New Delhi: The Viveka Foundation, 349-358.</p> <p>Santos, B. de Sousa 2006. "Globalizations." <i>Theory, Culture &amp; Society</i> 23(2-3): 393-399.</p> <p>Gibson-Graham, J.K. 2003 "An ethics of the local," <i>Rethinking Marxism</i> 15 (2): 49-74.</p> <p>Selections from: Lee, R., A. Leyshon, and C. Williams, Editors. 2003. <i>Alternative Economic Spaces: Rethinking the 'Economic' in Economic Geography</i>. London: Routledge.</p> <p>Selections from: De Sousa Santos, B. 2006. <i>Another Production is Possible: Beyond the Capitalist Canon</i>. Verso.</p> <p>Film: Naomi Kline's <i>The Take</i></p>	
14	<p><b>Interventions: Constituting Alternative Economic Subjects</b></p> <p>Community Economies Collective 2001 "Imagining and Enacting Noncapitalist Futures," <i>Socialist Review</i> Vol. 28, Nos. 3+4: 93-135.</p> <p>Gibson-Graham, J.K. 2003 "Enabling ethical economies: cooperativism and class." <i>Critical Sociology</i> 29(2): 1-39.</p> <p>Larner, W. and LeHeron, R. 2003 "The Spaces and Subjects of a Globalizing Economy: Towards a Situated Method," <i>Society and Space</i></p> <p>Mutersbaugh, T. 2002 "Building Co-ops, Constructing Cooperation: Spatial Strategies and Development Politics in a Mexican Village" <i>Annals of the Association of American Geographers</i> 92, 4: 756-76.</p> <p>Kayatekin, S.A. and Ruccio, D.F. 1998 "Global Fragments: subjectivity and class politics in discourses of globalization." <i>Economy and Society</i> 27 (1): 74-96.</p> <p>Gibson, K. 2001. "Regional Subjection and Becoming" <i>Environment and Planning D: Society and Space</i>, 19: 639-667.</p> <p>Selections from: Gibson-Graham, J. K. 2006. <i>A Post-Capitalist Politics</i>. University of Minnesota Press.</p> <p>Film: Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck's <i>The Lives of Others</i></p>	
15	<p><b>Conclusion: For Space</b></p> <p>Massey, D. <i>For Space</i>.</p>	