

GGR240H1S – Historical Geography of North America

University of Toronto, Winter 2015
Tuesdays, 1:00-3:00pm
Lash Miller 162

Instructor: Dr. Matthew Farish, Department of Geography

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Office Hours: Mondays, 12:30-1:30pm; Tuesdays, 10am-noon

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Course Website: Accessible through <http://portal.utoronto.ca> (see below)

TAs: Travis Bost and Robert Kopack (contact details and office hours to follow)

Course Description:

Focusing on the period from the 15th century to the early 20th century, in this course we will map North America's past – a necessarily selective exercise that allows us to draw on some fascinating and influential literature in both history and geography. We will address key topics such as imperialism and the establishment of colonies; environmental history; migration and resettlement; frontiers and borders; modernist urbanism; the beginnings of the military-industrial complex; and long-standing social struggles over territory. These broad themes will be given context in the form of place-specific cases. And we will attempt, as much as is possible in one term, to travel across the continent, from the high Arctic to the United States-Mexico borderlands, and from British Columbia to the American South.

GGR240, a humanities course, is also effectively an introduction to historical geography, a sub-field that has, like the rest of the discipline, changed substantially in the last quarter-century, and both the lectures and readings reflect this turn toward an interdisciplinary form of scholarship. Some recent historical geography has addressed the geographical premises of *modernity* – a constellation of ideas about the world that dates roughly to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. From this perspective, historical geographers have turned with a new, critical energy to the history of geographical thought, questions of culture and identity, and human-environment relationships. All three of these themes will be central to this course.

Evaluation:

Assignment One:	15%
Assignment Two:	20%
Assignment Three:	30%
Final Exam:	35%

Key Dates:

Tutorial 1:	Week of January 20
Assignment 1 due:	January 27
Tutorial 2:	Week of February 10
Assignment 2 due:	February 24
Tutorial 3:	Week of March 17
Assignment 3 due:	March 31
Final Exam:	TBA (Exams will be held April 8-30)

The Readings:

There is no textbook that adequately addresses the range of topics covered in this course. Instead, the reading list is drawn from two sources:

1. Material posted to the course Blackboard site **(B)**
2. Journal articles accessed through the U of T Library E-Journals portal **(E)**
3. Web-based media **(W)**

If you are unable to access any source, please e-mail me.

While the benefits of 'free' readings are clear, you will consume a significant amount of paper if you print all of the sources listed below. I encourage you to work with PDFs online or print creatively (two pages per page, double-sided, on recycled paper...).

Class Schedule and Required Readings:

You are expected to come to class with questions based on the readings and prepared to address the questions of others in the class. Lectures will parallel and address the readings, but will also include many additional cases and details. For the final exam, you should be familiar with both lectures and readings. For this reason, regular attendance is essential. Slides from the lectures will be posted on the course website before lectures, but *they are not a substitute for attending lectures*. (Unless you have been granted an exception, audio or video recording of lectures is not permitted.)

Week 1 (January 6): Introduction

(No reading)

Week 2 (January 13): History, Geography, and Modernity

- J. Brian Harley, "[Rereading the Maps of the Columbian Encounter](#)," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 82.3 (1992), 522-542 **(E)**

- Michael Heffernan, "Historical Geography," in the *Dictionary of Human Geography*, 5th Edition (2009), 332-335 (B)

Week 3 (January 20): Peoples of a Continent

TUTORIAL #1 THIS WEEK

- Alex Ewen, "How Linguists Are Pulling Apart the Bering Strait Theory," *Indian Country Today* 19 March 2014 (<http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2014/03/19/how-linguists-are-pulling-apart-bering-strait-theory-154063>) (W)
- Scott L. Malcomson, "The Color of Bones," *The New York Times Magazine* 2 April 2000 (www.nytimes.com/2000/04/02/magazine/the-color-of-bones.html) (W)
- Simon Romero, "Discoveries Challenge Beliefs on Humans' Arrival in the Americas," *New York Times* 27 March 2014 (<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/28/world/americas/discoveries-challenge-beliefs-on-humans-arrival-in-the-americas.html>) (W)

Week 4 (January 27): Exploration, Empire, and Ecology

ASSIGNMENT #1 DUE

- William M. Denevan, "[The Pristine Myth: The Landscape of the Americas in 1492](#)," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 82.3 (1992), 369-385 (E)
- Browse the "Exploration" pages at the *Historical Atlas of Canada Online Learning Project* (www.historicalatlas.ca/website/hacolp/national_perspectives/exploration/index.htm), particularly the maps and notes on the Atlantic Coast, French Exploration, and Hudson Bay (W)

Week 5 (February 3): Constructing Colonies

- Cole Harris, "The Northwestern Atlantic, 1497-1632," in his *The Reluctant Land: Society, Space and Environment in Canada Before Confederation* (2008), 20-51 (www.ubcpublishing.ca/books/pdf/chapters/2008/ReluctantLand.pdf; the chapter is pp. 24-55 of the PDF) (W)
- Daniel K. Richter, "Native Voices in a Colonial World," in his [Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America](#) (2003), 110-150 (E) [access the book through the Library site]

Week 6 (February 10): Slavery and the Black Atlantic

TUTORIAL #2 THIS WEEK

- *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, Or Gustavus Vassa, The African, Written by Himself* (1789), Chapter II (http://www.gutenberg.org/files/15399/15399-h/15399-h.htm#CHAP_II) (W)
- Walter Johnson, "Introduction: Boom," in his *River of Dark Dreams: Slavery and Empire in the Cotton Kingdom* (2013), 1-17 (B)

Week 7 (February 17): NO CLASS (Reading Week)

Week 8 (February 24): Railroads and the Resettlement of the West

ASSIGNMENT #2 DUE

- Cole Harris, "[How Did Colonialism Dispossess? Comments from an Edge of Empire](#)," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 94.1 (2004), 165-182 (E)
- Rebecca Solnit, "[The Annihilation of Time and Space](#)," *New England Review* 24.1 (2003), 5-19 (E)

Week 9 (March 3): Frontiers and Borders: Southern and Northern

- Julie Cruikshank, "[Images of Society in Klondike Gold Rush Narratives: Skookum Jim and the Discovery of Gold](#)," *Ethnohistory* 39.1 (1992), 20-41 (E)
- Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History" (1893) (www.wwnorton.com/college/history/america9/brief/docs/FJTurner-Frontier_Significance-1893.pdf and other sites) (W)

Week 10 (March 10): Industrialization and Urbanization

- Herman Melville, "Bartleby, the Scrivener: A Story of Wall Street" (1853) (www.chss.montclair.edu/english/furr/i2l/bartleby.pdf) (W)
- Herman Melville, "The Tartarus of Maids" (1855) (<http://42opus.com/v6n4/thetartarusofmaids>) (W)

Week 11 (March 17): Culture, Commerce, and War

TUTORIAL #3 THIS WEEK

- Mona Domosh, "[A 'Civilized' Commerce: Gender, 'Race', and Empire at the 1893 Chicago Exposition](#)," *Cultural Geographies* 9.2 (2002), 181-201 (E)
- Paul Kramer, "A Useful Corner of the World: Guantánamo," *The New Yorker* 31 July 2013 (www.newyorker.com/online/blogs/newsdesk/2013/07/a-useful-corner-of-the-world-a-history-of-guantanamo-base.html) [see the Slide Show] (W)

Week 12 (March 24): Migration and Modernism

- Ann Douglas, "Taking Harlem," in her *Terrible Honesty: Mongrel Manhattan in the 1920s* (1995), 303-324 (B)
- Jill Lepore, "The Uprooted: Chronicling the Great Migration," *The New Yorker* 6 September 2010 (<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2010/09/06/the-uprooted>) (W)
- Sharifa Rhodes-Pitts, excerpt from *Harlem is Nowhere* (2011) (www.nytimes.com/2011/01/26/books/excerpt-harlem-is-nowhere.html) (W)

Week 13 (March 31): Struggles over Land / Final Exam Review

ASSIGNMENT #3 DUE

- Elinor Langer, "Famous are the Flowers: Hawaiian Resistance Then – and Now," *The Nation* 28 April 2008 (www.thenation.com/article/famous-are-flowers-hawaiian-resistance-then-and-now) **(W)**
- Sarah de Leeuw, "Columbus Burning," 2009 CBC Literary Award for creative non-fiction, *En Route* (retrieved 9/10/2009) **(B)**

The Assignments:

1. **Due January 27**; details will be discussed on January 6 and 13 and posted on the course website.
2. **Due February 24**; details will be discussed on January 27 and posted on the course website.
3. **Due March 31**; details will be discussed on February 24 and posted on the course website.

Please submit a paper copy of each assignment at the beginning of the relevant class, and maintain an electronic copy. **Please print double-sided or on recycled paper.**

The penalty for late submission of all assignments will be **5%/day**, or the closest number value to that percentage, *including weekend days*. Late assignments can be placed in the drop-box outside the Geography Department office on the 5th floor of Sidney Smith (during regular office hours). If you wish to submit a late assignment on a weekend day, e-mail it to me. Legitimate excuses aside, assignments submitted more than a week after the due date will not be accepted.

University policy specifies that requests for re-marking assignments should be submitted to the instructor no later than two weeks after the work has been returned.

For more information on U of T writing resources and support, see www.writing.utoronto.ca and www.geog.utoronto.ca/resources/wit-program.

The Tutorials:

For several years GGR240 has been allotted TA hours to help you prepare assignments and to provide you with thorough feedback on those assignments. This year, along with additional time given over to marking, these TA hours will be used to hold three tutorials during the term – in the weeks of the **January 20** class, the **February 10** class, and the **March 17** class – before Assignments 1, 2 and 3 are due. These tutorials will provide you with extra advice and support as you prepare the assignments.

Although you must register for a tutorial time on ROSI, attendance is optional. That said, the teaching assistants who lead tutorials will keep an attendance sheet, and **you will receive an extra half-mark on the corresponding assignment if you attend a tutorial**. Your assignments will be marked by the TA who leads the tutorial. Your TA will provide you with her/his e-mail address at the first

tutorial, and will also hold office hours in the weeks after each tutorial. And you are always free to e-mail me – or better yet, visit during my office hours.

The Final Exam

The final exam will cover the entire term, and will feature both short-answer and essay-form questions. The absence of a mid-term exam means that you must review a great deal of material for the final. In recognition of this fact, we will devote the second half of the last class to review. During that class, I will distribute a sheet with a list of terms and topics. I will draw from this list to create the exam. In other words, there will be no surprises.

Course Administration:

Extensions will be granted only in the case of illness, and only on the prompt receipt of a completed University of Toronto medical certificate (copies are at <http://illnessverification.utoronto.ca>). Please consult your college registrar should you be having difficulties during term that prevent you from completing your course work due to extenuating circumstances.

You are certainly encouraged to discuss lecture content and readings with each other. However, plagiarism and submitting an assignment under your name that you have not completed are offences under university policy. Plagiarism is quoting (or paraphrasing!) the work of an author, including fellow students, without a proper citation. Quotation marks are required for any word-for-word copy of a source text. Please consult section B.i. of the University's "Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters" (www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm) for further information, along with the useful resource at www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize.

If you require accommodations for a disability, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom or course materials, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible: accessibility.services@utoronto.ca or www.accessibility.utoronto.ca.

The Course Website:

Once you have logged in to the "Learning Portal" (portal.utoronto.ca) using your UTOrid and password (see www.utorid.utoronto.ca), look for your **Courses**, where you'll find the link to the GGR240 website along with all of your other Blackboard-based courses. The GGR 240 site will contain copies of the syllabus, some readings, lecture slides, and handouts related to assignments.

All students should have a valid UofT email address, and you should also ensure that this address is properly entered in the ROSI system. Forwarding your utoronto.ca e-mail to an external account (Gmail, Hotmail, etc.) is not recommended.