

GGR240H1S – Geographies of Colonialism in North America

University of Toronto, Winter 2018

Wednesdays, 2:00-4:00pm

Bissell 205

Instructor: Dr. Matthew Farish
Office: Sidney Smith 5040
Phone: 416-978-6671
Email: farish@geog.utoronto.ca (*basic questions only; please use office hours for other inquiries*)
Office Hours: Wednesdays, 11:30am-1:00pm; Thursdays, 2:30-4:00pm (or by appointment)
Course Website: Accessible through <http://portal.utoronto.ca> (see below)
TAs: Mitra Fakhrashrafi & Kiley Goyette (contact details TBA)

Course Description

In this course, we will consider the creation and consolidation of *settler colonies* in the region known to many (but not all) as North America. This is a necessarily selective exercise, particularly over one term. Contemporary struggles over land and identity have deep historical roots. But while the ‘colonial present’ will shadow our discussions, the course covers the period from the 15th century to the early 20th century.

Working in roughly chronological (but hardly linear) fashion, we will address a number of key themes – themes that also bear on the wider field of historical geography. They include: narratives of exploration, ‘discovery’ and possession; ecological imperialism and environmental transformation; the (re)settlement of land and the construction of colonial rule; enslavement and industrialization; technology and ‘time-space compression’; frontiers, borders, and resource extraction; U.S. empire-building in the Caribbean and the Pacific; and some of the many Indigenous geographies that preceded, were transformed by and transformed, and exceeded the reach of colonial power. Forms of anti-colonialism and decolonization are not new phenomena.

We will ground these broad themes in both cultural texts and place-specific cases. We will move selectively across the continent, from the high Arctic to the United States-Mexico borderlands, and from Alaska and British Columbia to the Caribbean Sea.

GGR240 is also something of an introduction to historical geography, a field that has changed substantially over the last quarter-century. Both the lectures and the readings reflect this shift to a more interdisciplinary and critical approach. Historical geographers have turned with new energy to the history of geographical thought, questions of culture and difference, and human-environment relationships. All three of these areas of study are central to this course.

Evaluation:

Attendance and Participation (Tutorials):	5%
Assignment One:	15%
Assignment Two:	20%
Assignment Three:	25%
Final Exam:	35%

Key Dates:

Tutorial 1:	Week of January 31 class
Tutorial 2:	Week of February 14 class
Tutorial 3:	Week of February 28 class
Tutorial 4:	Week of March 14 class
Tutorial 5:	Week of March 28 class

Assignment 1 due:	February 7
Assignment 2 due:	March 7
Assignment 3 due:	April 4

Final Exam:	TBA (April 9-30)
-------------	------------------

The Course Environment

Your primary obligations are: to complete readings; to come to class ready to ask questions and foster conversations about those readings and related lecture material; and to contribute to a respectful classroom space. I am responsible for facilitating an enjoyable, accessible, and safe environment, but that obligation is ultimately a collective one. Our subject material can be distressing, but it is also tremendously important that we confront it through evidence, analysis and discussion. Please do not hesitate to speak to me after class or during office hours if you have concerns about the course environment.

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. Journal articles, book chapters, and popular writing posted to the course Blackboard site (see the 'Course Reserves' tab on your Portal home page)
2. Web-based media

If you are unable to access any source, please notify me. And 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

Readings will parallel and be folded into lectures, but lectures will include additional cases and details. For the final exam, you should be familiar with both lectures and readings. As a result, regular attendance is essential. Slides from the lectures will be posted on Blackboard before class, but *they will not be a substitute for attendance*.

Week 1 (January 10): Introduction

(No reading)

Week 2 (January 17): Historical Geographies of Colonialism

- Michael Heffernan, "Historical Geography," in the *Dictionary of Human Geography*, 5th Edition (2009), 332-335.
- Edward Said, "Empire, Geography, and Culture," in *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), 3-14.

Week 3 (January 24): Turtle Island, c. 1491

- Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, "Introduction: This Land" and "Follow the Corn," in *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States* (2014), 1-31.
- Leanne Simpson, "Looking after Gdoo-naaganinaa: Precolonial Nishnaabeg Diplomatic and Treaty Relationships," *Wicazo Sa Review* 23.2 (2008), 29-42.

Week 4 (January 31): Narratives of Discovery, Encounter and Possession

TUTORIAL #1 THIS WEEK

- J. Brian Harley, "Rereading the Maps of the Columbian Encounter," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 82.3 (1992), 522-542.
- Robert J. Miller et al, "The Doctrine of Discovery" in *Discovering Indigenous Lands: The Doctrine of Discovery in the English Colonies* (2010), 1-25.

Week 5 (February 7): Ecology and Empire

ASSIGNMENT #1 DUE

- Alfred Crosby, "Ecological Imperialism: The Overseas Migration of Western Europeans as a Biological Phenomenon," in D. Worster, ed., *The Ends of the Earth: Perspectives on Modern Environmental History* (1988), 103-117.

Week 6 (February 14): Constructing Colonies

TUTORIAL #2 THIS WEEK

- Cole Harris, "How Did Colonialism Dispossess? Comments from an Edge of Empire," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 94.1 (2004), 165-182.
- Michael Witgen, "Place and Belonging in Native North America," in *An Infinity of Nations: How the Native New World Shaped Early North America* (2012), 29-68.

NO CLASS FEBRUARY 21: READING WEEK

Week 7 (February 28): The Black Atlantic
TUTORIAL #3 THIS WEEK

- C.L.R. James, "Prologue," "The Property" and "The Owners" in *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution*, 2nd ed. (1963 [1938]), 3-61.

Week 8 (March 7): Railroads and the Resettlement of the West
ASIGNMENT #2 DUE

- Rebecca Solnit, "The Annihilation of Time and Space," *New England Review* 24.1 (2003), 5-19.

Week 9 (March 14): Frontiers and Borders, Southern and Northern
TUTORIAL #4 THIS WEEK

- Ned Blackhawk, "Introduction: The Indigenous Body in Pain," in *Violence over the Land: Indians and Empires in the Early American West* (2006), 1-15.
- Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History" (1893) (Online in many places, including: <https://archive.org/details/significanceoffr00turnuoft>)

Week 10 (March 21): Spectacles of Commerce and War

- Mona Domosh, "A 'Civilized' Commerce: Gender, 'Race', and Empire at the 1893 Chicago Exposition," *Cultural Geographies* 9.2 (2002), 181-201.
- 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) [and the accompanying Slide Show].

Week 11 (March 28): Migration and Urbanization
TUTORIAL #5 THIS WEEK

- Kay J. Anderson, "The Idea of Chinatown: The Power of Place and Institutional Practice in the Making of a Racial Category," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 77.4 (1987), 580-598.
- Isabel Wilkerson, "Part One: In the Land of the Forefathers," in *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration* (2010), 1-15.

Week 12 (April 4): Struggles over Land / Final Exam Review
ASSIGNMENT #3 DUE

- Thomas King, "As Long as the Grass is Green," in *The Inconvenient Indian: A Curious Account of Native People in North America* (2012), 215-247.

The Assignments

1. Due February 7; details will be discussed on January 17 and 24 and posted on the course website.
2. Due March 7; details will be discussed on February 7 and posted on the course website.
3. Due April 4; details will be discussed on February 28 and posted on the course website.

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

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 & Planning office on the 5th floor of the Sidney Smith building. 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.

The Tutorials

For several years, TA hours in GGR 240 have been allotted to help you to prepare assignments, provide you with feedback on those assignments, and discuss course content. This year, along with time given over to marking, these hours will be used to hold **five one-hour tutorials** during the term (see the dates above). Three tutorials (scheduled in the week before each due date) will help you prepare your assignments.

Although you must register for a tutorial time, attendance is optional. That said, your attendance will be noted, and **you will receive 1 mark (1%) for each tutorial you attend**. The TA who leads your tutorial will mark your assignments. Your TA will also hold office hours in advance of assignment due dates. And you are always free to e-mail me about assignments – 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 fair amount 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 should be no surprises!

Course Administration

I will reply to e-mail messages within 24 hours, excluding weekends and holidays. Messages sent after 5pm will likely receive a reply the following day.

Taking photos or filming during class is not permitted. Please ask me for permission if you wish to audio-record lectures. Turn off your cell phones during class, or place them in silent mode; if you need to answer your phone or send a text, step outside. And if you are using a laptop in class, I expect that you will only employ it for course-related purposes; other uses can be very distracting for other students, not to mention the instructor!

Extensions will be granted only in cases of illness or injury, and only after receipt of paper documentation (a completed University of Toronto “Verification of Student Illness or Injury” form, available online, or a letter from your Registrar’s office). Please consult your college Registrar if you are having difficulties that prevent you from completing course work due to extenuating circumstances.

You are certainly encouraged to discuss lecture content and readings with classmates. 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 without a proper citation, or citing an author without enclosing copied words in quotation marks. It is also an offense to submit academic work for which you have already obtained (or are concurrently seeking) credit. Please consult the “Rules and Regulations” section of the FAS Calendar (<https://fas.calendar.utoronto.ca/rules-regulations>) for further information, and have a look at <http://advice.writing.utoronto.ca/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize/>.

For more material on academic writing, consult <http://advice.writing.utoronto.ca>. Go to <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres/arts-and-science> to book an appointment at one of the writing centres on campus. Material on the English Language Learning program (ELL) is at <http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/advising/ell>.

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 <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/as>.

For matters related to mental health, please contact the Health and Wellness Centre: <https://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/hwc>.

The Course Website:

Once you have logged in to the portal using your UTORid and password (see www.utorid.utoronto.ca for more information), look for the My Courses module, where you’ll find the link to the GGR240 course website along with all of your Blackboard-based courses. The course website will contain copies of the syllabus, lecture slides, and other handouts.

All students should have a valid UofT email address, and you should also ensure that this address is properly entered in the ROSI system. Course announcements will be sent through Blackboard to this address. Forwarding your utoronto.ca e-mail to an external account (Gmail, Outlook, etc.) is not recommended, since in some cases messages sent to these accounts are filtered as junk mail.