

GEOG/GPE 1700 Social Justice in the 21st Century: Global Political Economy and Environmental Change

M/W/F 1:30-2:20 Wallace 218

Instructor: Jonathan Peyton

Office: Sinnott Bldg., 305

Phone Number: 204-474-9089

Email: jonathan.peyton@umanitoba.ca

Office Hours: Mon/Wed 12:30-1:30 (or by appointment)

Course Outline – This course is designed to help students think critically about the modern world. The course does not suggest solutions to the complex geopolitical and environmental problems that frame our period, an era that has recently been termed ‘the Anthropocene’, or the age of humans. Instead, this course will touch on different ways to ask important questions about the spatial inequalities that keep us apart while tying us together, the economic disparities across space, class and gender, environmental justice concerns that affect public health and ecological integrity, and geopolitical concerns that threaten safety and wellbeing of individuals, communities and nation-states. These are profoundly distressing and seemingly insurmountable obstacles, yet we also highlight ways that groups have mobilized to act against injustice. We test global perils and potential through five interlocked units: Colonialism; Capitalism and Neoliberalism; Geopolitics; Social Movements and; The Anthropocene.

Course Objectives

- To engage with multiple theories, methods and modes of analysis at the intersection of human society, politics, economics and the environment.
- To test these theories, methods and analyses through a series of timely case studies into the complex lives of the everyday things and commonplace events that make up the modern world and shape our relationships to it.
- To build an understanding of global citizenship by testing theoretical and empirical cases through the interrogation of five social and economic formations that frame our engagement with the modern world.

Learning Outcomes – Students will...

- Learn key concepts that are important for building an understanding of the central global social, cultural and economic geography
- Understand the overlapping dimensions of some of the 21st century’s most pressing environmental, social, economic and political problems.
- Learn analytical tools for disaggregating and thinking critically about the causes and effects of environmental problems.

Course Etiquette

What to expect from your professor: provocative, challenging and informative lectures; wrapping up lectures/discussions on time; a willingness to listen to and learn from you; prompt and fair grading of your assignments; timely responses to your questions and comments.

What I expect from you: being prepared for class, arriving on time, and not engaging in disruptive behaviour (you can sleep, browse Instagram, talk to friends, and send texts in the many hours when you are not in this class); completing the readings and preparing questions and comments for class discussions; a willingness to listen and learn from your instructors *and* your classmates.

Textbooks, Readings, Materials

There is no required textbook for this course. All of the readings for the course are available in one of two places: 1) online (in this case, links will be provided on the syllabus and on lecture slides), and 2) through the UofM Library e-journals search tool (in this case students will be responsible for downloading the articles directly through the library)

Any other material will be available through the UofM's course management interface Desire2Learn. Relevant articles and links will be posted weekly. Locating scholarly and research materials is the responsibility of the student; students will need to access some course materials/academic articles) through the UofM Library e-journal service.

Lecture and Assignment Schedule

INTRO UNIT: FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

September 5 – Intro and Syllabus

September 7 – Canada 150 (ish)

September 10 – How we got here – The view from the North

September 12 – How we got here – The view from the South

September 14 – How we got here – The view from “the Centre”

UNIT 1 - COLONIALISM

September 17 – “The White Man’s Burden”? – Foundations, Ideology, Resources

September 19 – The Scramble for Africa

September 21 – Terra Nullius? The Conditions of Colonialism in Canada

September 24 – “The open veins of Latin America” and the new extractivismo

September 26 – Africa in the 1960s: Decolonization

September 28 – Post-Colonial Canada?

UNIT 2 – CAPITALISM AND NEOLIBERALISM

October 1 – The Industrial Revolution, Fordism and the Rust Belt

October 3 – Marx and the Critique of Capitalism

October 5 – A New World Order? Bretton Woods and the Washington Consensus

October 8 – Thanksgiving: No Classes

October 10 – Bubbles and the Contradictions of Capitalism (Post-Capitalism?)

October 12 – Special Economic Zones/The Neoliberal City

MIDTERM WEEK

October 15 – Free Day (I’ll be in class to discuss topics before the midterm)

October 17 – Midterm Short Answer

October 19 – Midterm Essay Question

UNIT 3 – GLOBAL GEOPOLITICS

October 22 – Ideology on the Move: The Cold War, Proxy Wars and 1989
October 24 – The Arctic: Climate, Resources, and Sovereignty
October 26 – The Horn of Africa: Nationalism, Ethnicity, Arms, and Pirates
October 29 – Syria: Tyranny, Terrorism and Refugees
October 31 – The End of History? Russia, oil, oligarchs and “the cyber”
November 2 – Whither Europe? Brexit, the EU, and the rise of populism

UNIT 4 – SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

November 5 – Standing Rock: Rights, Land, Protest
November 7 – Arab Spring and Occupy Wall Street
November 9 – Punk: Protest, Cool and Commodification
November 12-16 – Fall Break... NO Classes!!!
November 19 – Wangari Maathai and the gendered politics of protest
November 21 – Chipko, La Via Campesina and the environmentalism of the poor
November 23 – Slow Violence and Environmental Justice

UNIT 5 – THE ANTHROPOCENE: Human-Environment Relations

November 26 – Film: Guardians of Eternity
November 28 – The “Age of Humans” and the Great Acceleration
November 30 – Hurricane Katrina: Race, Nature, and “Natural” Disasters
December 3 – Malls, Suburbs and the Nature of Cities
December 5 – Utopia/Dystopia: The Once and Future World
December 7 – Review Lecture (and tips for the final)

Midterm and Final

There will be a midterm and a final exam. The midterm exams will take place in class on October 17 and 19. It will be spread over two sessions and each session will last for 50 minutes for a cumulative total of 100 minutes. Each will be worth 10% of your final grade for a cumulative total of 20%.

The final will take place during the UM final exam period (Dec 10-21). It will be worth 30% of your final grade and will be two hours in duration.

Written Assignments

There are three written assignments in the class: There will be two shorter written assignments of about 500 words and a more substantial assignment due in late November (of 1500-2000 words). You will be offered a choice for each assignment – you can choose to tailor your coursework to your own strengths as a learner and social justice/GPE/Human geography thinker.

Assignment 1: Article Analysis (10%)

Students will be given handouts for the first assignment in the second week of class. This assignment will be returned to students within two weeks of submission. Assignment 1

will be worth 10% of your final grade and each option will require some additional academic research to contextualize and substantiate the claims and arguments of the submission. You will be asked to evaluate one of three academic articles (Harris, Mosby, Simpson) according to argument, empirical detail and rigour, and historical or contemporary context. This is a very short assignment – you’ll have to be concise in your narrative, focused in your interpretation, and very thoughtful in how you present your assessment and arguments. Assignment 1 is due on October 2.

Assignment 2: Critical Reflection OR Op-Ed (10%)

The second assignment is a critical reflection on a topic covered in the first half of the class. This is a one-page (single-spaced – approx. 500 words) assignment designed to get you to think critically and argue for/against something from the lectures or reading materials. It will be worth 10% of your final grade. You may write about anything that gets you excited, agitated, upset, concerned, confused, etc. – you might choose to write about an entire lecture topic or you might choose to engage with one particular point from a lecture or reading that has stuck with you. Remember – this is a critical assignment. Do not regurgitate class discussions or lecture materials. Think for yourself and be creative. Assignment 2 is due on November 2.

Assignment 3: Major Research Paper (30%)

Students will receive handouts for the third assignment at least four weeks prior to the submission date – there will be several options for the third assignment as well. It will be worth 30% of your final grade. Assignment 3 is due on November 28.

Participation

There is no mark for participation in this class but there is still an expectation that students will be actively engaged in lectures, discussions and other class materials. It is essential that students come to class having read the materials assigned, while being prepared to discuss the merits of ideas and arguments.

Important Dates and Mark Structure

Assignment #1: October 5 – 10%

Midterm: October 17 & 19 – 20%

Assignment #2: November 2 – 10%

Assignment #3: November 28 – 30%

Final Exam: - December 10-21 (during UM exam period) – 30%

The **Grading Standard** for this course is as follows:

- A+ (90-100%) is Exceptional
- A (80-89%) is Excellent
- B+ (75-79%) is Very Good
- B (70-74%) is Good
- C+ (65-69%) is Satisfactory
- C (60-64%) is Adequate
- D (50-59%) is Marginal

F (0-49%) is Failure

Late Assignments

Students will not be permitted to write make-up tests, except for documented medical or compassionate reasons. Students may hand in assignments late but will be assessed a late penalty if they do so (– 2 marks per day including weekends).

Feedback

Evaluative feedback will be provided several times before the Voluntary Withdrawal date November 19.

Academic Dishonesty

Students should acquaint themselves with the University's policy on plagiarism and cheating and examination impersonation (see University of Manitoba General Calendar). Please submit your own unique work – I take plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty very seriously. Consult the U of M Calendar "academic regulations" for more information on plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. I will talk about proper citation methods when we get closer to assignment due dates. Please see me if you have any questions about sources, citations or academic/research ethics.

Student Accessibility Services

If you are a student with a disability, please contact SAS for academic accommodation supports and services such as note-taking, interpreting, assistive technology and exam accommodations. Students who have, or think they may have, a disability (e.g. mental illness, learning, medical, hearing, injury-related, visual) are invited to contact SAS to arrange a confidential consultation.

Student Accessibility Services <http://umanitoba.ca/student/saa/accessibility/>

520 University Centre

204-474-7423

Student_accessibility@umanitoba.ca

A Note on Email: I will happily answer email queries that you might have about course administration or other housekeeping duties – but I will only be checking email during regular office hours (ie. not on evenings and weekends). I will aim to answer you're emails within 48 hours. If your questions are more substantive (requiring a longer answer or explanation) I will ask you bring them to me before/after class or during office hours. Feel free to stop me in the halls or to make an appointment if you're not able to make it to the regularly scheduled office hours. In general, personal face-to-face communication is much preferred over email.

Here is the U of M blurb about class communication:

The University requires all students to activate an official University email account. For full details of the Electronic Communication with Students please visit:

http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/media/Electronic_Communication_with_Students_Policy_-_2014_06_05.pdf

Please note that all communication between myself and you as a student must comply with the electronic communication with student policy (http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/governing_documents/community/electronic_communication_with_students_policy.html). You are required to obtain and use your U of M email account for all communication between yourself and the university.

A Note on Technology: Many students prefer to take notes on laptops. This is fine as long as you use the computer only for this purpose (ie. not for reading blogs or Tumblr, using Facebook, writing emails, playing games, etc.). This is disruptive for your classmates.

Cell phones should be turned off at the beginning of class... and texting is a big-time breach of classroom etiquette. Please do not text during class.

Unless a specific dispensation has been made, I would prefer students not to record lectures. Posting of class materials or recordings to the internet is prohibited.

A Note on Lectures: I'll be using powerpoint and links to the internet during the lectures to illustrate and supplement the things we talk about in class. I'll post the slides and links so that you can use them as study guides. I tend to use little text on the powerpoints so please don't use them as a substitute for lecture/seminar attendance. The slides should be used as a general outline but not as a comprehensive guide to what we will be talking about. You should *always* take notes.

LECTURE and READINGS SCHEDULE

September 5 – Intro and Syllabus

September 7 – Canada 150 (er, 151)

September 10 – How we got here: The view from the North

- George Monbiot, “Neoliberalism: The ideology at the root of all our problems” *The Guardian* (April 15, 2016)
<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2016/apr/15/neoliberalism-ideology-problem-george-monbiot>

September 12 – How we got here: The view from the South

September 14 – How we got here: The view from “the Centre”

- Nancy MacDonald, “Welcome to Winnipeg: Where Canada’s Racism Problem is at its Worst” *MacLean’s* (January 22, 2015)
<http://www.macleans.ca/news/canada/welcome-to-winnipeg-where-canadas-racism-problem-is-at-its-worst/>
- Nancy MacDonald, “Winnipeg a Leader in fixing Canada’s Racism Problem” *MacLean’s* (January 27, 2016) <http://www.macleans.ca/news/canada/winnipeg-shows-us-how-to-fix-canadas-racism-problem/>

UNIT 1 - COLONIALISM

September 17 – “The White Man’s Burden”? – Foundations, Ideology, Resources

- Rudyard Kipling, 1899, “The White Man’s Burden”
http://www.kiplingsociety.co.uk/poems_burden.htm
- Cole Harris. “How did colonialism dispossess? Comments from an edge of empire.” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 94.1 (2004): 165-182.

September 19 – Africa and the Great Land Rush

- Teju Cole, “The White-Savior Industrial Complex” *The Atlantic* (March 21, 2012)
<http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/03/the-white-savior-industrial-complex/254843/>

September 21 – Terra Nullius? The Conditions of Colonialism in Canada

- Ian Mosby. “Administering Colonial Science: Nutrition Research and Human Biomedical Experimentation in Aboriginal Communities and Residential Schools, 1942-1952, *Histoire Sociale/Social History* 46, 91 (2013): 145-172.

September 24 – “The open veins of Latin America” and the new extractivismo

September 26 – Africa in the 1960s: Decolonization

- C.L.R. James. 1938. “Chapter 1: The Property” in *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L’Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution* (New York: Vintage Books), Note: Online text can be found here: http://www.ouleft.org/wp-content/uploads/CLR_James_The_Black_Jacobins.pdf

September 28 – Post-Colonial Canada?

- Leanne Simpson, “Land as pedagogy: Nishnaabeg intelligence and rebellious transformation.” *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 3.3 (2014).
- The Truth and Reconciliation Report (please browse the TRC Website):
<http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/index.php?p=3>

UNIT 2 – CAPITALISM AND NEOLIBERALISM

October 1 – The Industrial Revolution, Fordism and the Rust Belt

- Greg Grandin, “Introduction: Nothing is Wrong With Anything” in *Fordlandia: The Rise and Fall of Henry Ford’s Forgotten Jungle City* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2009), 1-18.

October 3 – Marx and the Critique of Capitalism

- Karl Marx, “Theses on Feuerbach” *Marx/Engels Selected Works, Volume 1* (Progress Publisher, Moscow, 1969), 13-15.
<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/theses/theses.htm>

October 5 – New World Order?: Bretton Woods and the Washington Consensus

October 8 – Thanksgiving: No Class!

October 10 – Bubbles and the Contradictions of Capitalism

- Paul Mason, ‘Introduction’ In *Post-Capitalism: A Guide to Our Future* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2015), ix-xxi.

October 12 – Special Economic Zones/Neoliberalism and Cities

- David Harvey. 2008. “The Right to the City” *New Left Review* 53 (Available online here <https://newleftreview.org/II/53/david-harvey-the-right-to-the-city>)

MIDTERM WEEK

October 15 – Free Day!

October 17 – Midterm Short Answer

October 19 – Midterm Essay Question

UNIT 3 – GLOBAL GEOPOLITICS

October 22 – Ideology on the Move: The Cold War, Proxy Wars and 1989

- George Kennan, “Long Telegram”
<http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/coldwar/documents/episode-1/kennan.htm>
- OPTIONAL – George Saunders, “Who are all these Trump Supporters” *The New Yorker* (July 2016) <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2016/07/11/george-saunders-goes-to-trump-rallies>

October 24 – The Arctic: Climate, Resources, and Sovereignty

- Klaus Dodds, “Icy Geopolitics” *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 26 (2008), 1-6
- Klaus Dodds, “We are a northern country: Stephen Harper and the Arctic” *Polar Record* 47.4 (October 2011), 371-374.

October 26 – The Horn of Africa: Nationalism, Ethnicity, Arms, and Pirates

October 29 – Syria: Tyranny, Terrorism and Refugees

- OPTIONAL – Edward Said, “Introduction - Excerpts” in *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon, 1978). http://ieas.unideb.hu/admin/file_2978.pdf

October 31 – The End of History? Russia, oil, oligarchs and “the cyber”

- Micha Gessen, “Autocracy: Rules for Survival” *The New York Review of Books* (November 9, 2016) <http://www.nybooks.com/daily/2016/11/10/trump-election-autocracy-rules-for-survival/?src=longreads>

November 2 – Whither Europe? Brexit, the EU, and the rise of populism

UNIT 4 – SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

November 5 – Standing Rock: Rights, Land, Protest

- Kate Harris and Michael Gonchar, “Battle Over and Oil Pipeline: Teaching about the Standing Rock Sioux Protests” *The New York Times* (November 30, 2016) https://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/30/learning/lesson-plans/battle-over-an-oil-pipeline-teaching-about-the-standing-rock-sioux-protests.html?_r=0

November 7 – Arab Spring and Occupy Wall Street

- David Graeber, “Occupy Wall Street's anarchist roots” *AlJazeera English* (November 30, 2011) <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2011/11/2011112872835904508.html>
- Slavoj Zizek, “Speech at Occupy Wall Street” *Impose Magazine* (November 17, 2013) <http://www.imposemagazine.com/bytes/slavoj-zizek-at-occupy-wall-street-transcript>

November 9 – Punk: Protest, Cool and Commodification

November 12-16 – Fall Break: NO CLASSES!!!

November 19 – Wangari Maathai and the gendered politics of protest

- Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, “We should all be feminists” *TEDxEuston* (April 2013) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hg3umXU_qWc

November 21 – Chipko, La Via Campesina and the environmentalism of the poor

November 23 – Slow violence and Environmental Justice

- Julie Sze. 2006. “Toxic Soup Redux: Why Environmental Racism and Environmental Justice Matter after Katrina” <http://understandingkatrina.ssrc.org/Sze/>

UNIT 5 – THE ANTHROPOCENE: Human-Environment Relations

November 26 – Film: Guardians of Eternity

November 28 – The “Age of Humans” and the Great Acceleration

- Will Steffen, Paul J. Crutzen, and John R. McNeill. “The Anthropocene: are humans now overwhelming the great forces of nature” *AMBIO: A Journal of the Human Environment* 36.8 (2007): 614-621.

November 30 – Hurricane Katrina: Race, Nature, and “Natural” Disasters

- Neil Smith. 2006. “There’s No Such Thing as a Natural Disaster” <http://understandingkatrina.ssrc.org/Smith/>

December 3 – Malls, Suburbs and the Nature of Cities

- Jane Jacobs, “The Uses of Sidewalks” in *The Death and Life of the Great American Cities* (New York: Random House, 1961) http://www.miguelangelmartinez.net/IMG/pdf/1961_Jacobs_TheUsesofSidewalks_by_excerpt.pdf

December 5 – Utopia/Dystopia: The Once and Future World

- J. B. MacKinnon, “The Illusions of Nature” in *The Once and Future World: Nature as it was, as it is, and as it could be* (Toronto: Vintage Canada, 2013)

December 7 – Review Lecture (and tips for the final)