**GEOG N4: WORLD PEOPLES AND CULTURAL ENVIRONMENTS**

Andrea Marston

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Summer Session 2 (July 2 – August 10, 2018), 3 Units

Class: Tu/Wed/Th 10:30am-1:00pm, 575 McCone Hall

Office Hours: Tu/Wed 1:00pm-2:00pm, 199 McCone Hall

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course engages the question of how human societies have developed in relation to their natural environments, including earth, water, flora, and fauna. In particular, we will focus on the ways that *nature* has always been inseparable from the development of complicated and unequal *social* worlds, with an emphasis on historical and contemporary processes of colonialism, racism, and capitalism. These socio-natural processes have local and global dimensions, and we will thus be exploring across multiple spatial scales, asking how cultural environments have come into being and what roles they play in environmental conflicts today.

Throughout the semester, we will return to several guiding questions: What are the relationships between nature, culture, and power? How has the fraught history of global development been connected to nature and natural resources? What kinds of cultural environments are we making (and threatening) today?

Our approaches to these questions will be guided by four key analytical concepts: **1) place/scale, 2) power/property, 3) history,** and **4) materiality** (the “stuff” of nature and culture). All of these will become clear as we move along!

To help us think materially about nature and culture, the majority of the course is organized in terms of the “natural” world. Weeks 1 & 2 will focus on defining our key analytical concepts, but subsequent weeks are structured in relation to natural biomes: Week 3 focuses on flora and fauna, Week 4 focuses on water, air, and soil, and Week 5 focuses on subsoils. In Week 6 will be devoted to student presentations, review, and the final exam.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

**KNOWLEDGE:** By the time you complete this course, you should: Understand how cultural environments are shaped by interacting biophysical and social processes that occur at different rates, on different scales, and create spatial variations; Understand how people’s interactions with and perceptions of nature differ and have changed over time and space; Be able to use our key analytical concepts to describe the processes through which *specific* “cultural environments” have emerged.

**SKILLS:** This is an introductory level class designed to cultivate skills essential for further university coursework, including **close reading, analytical writing, research,** and **oral presentation abilities**. These skills are so important that I will be taking time throughout the course to discuss strategies and tools for active reading, note-taking, public speaking, using the library, and so on.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Class participation 20%

Reading Reflections 15%

Quizzes 15%

Cultural Environment Paper 15%

Group Presentation 15%

Final Exam 20%

***Class Participation:***You are expected to attend all scheduled classes having thoughtfully completed each day's assigned readings. Participation includes responding to instructor questions, participating in large and small group conversations and activities, and listening respectfully to other members of the class. Challenge yourself to speak if you have a tendency to stay silent and make space for others if you have a tendency to dominate discussion.

Attendance and punctuality are factored into your participation grade, with 5% docked for every unexplained absence. Class will begin at exactly 10:40 a.m. (Berkeley time) and showing up late will affect your participation points. More than 20 minutes late counts as an absence. In the case of absence due to medical or family emergency, a doctor's note or other reasonable documentation is required.

***Reading Reflections:***With the exception of the first class and the entire last week, you will submit one reading reflection for every day of class (13 total). Reading reflections are based on the readings for that day; if there is more than one reading, both should be addressed. The reflection should be approximately 300 words long and is due on the bcourses discussion board by 9:00 a.m. the morning of class. After you have posted your reflection, you will be able to see your peers’ reflections, and you should read these before coming to class. Reading reflections should address the following questions:

1. What is this text about?
2. What is the mainargument of the text?
3. What does the author use to support their claims?
4. Provide two open questions related to the reading.

I will not grade all of these reflections, and when they are not graded you will get points just for having done the work. However, I will grade randomly at least five times over the six weeks. In these cases, you will receive full grades for thoughtfully and accurately completing the questions above, and you can get bonus points for incorporating your own thoughts or opinions and/or making relevant links to readings and discussions from previous weeks.

***Quizzes:***Each week there will be at least one unannounced reading quiz (sometimes more than one!) You should come to class prepared accordingly.

***Cultural Environment Paper:*** This short paper will draw on your personal experiences to describe a familiar place interms of the key analytical concepts of the course. You will choose a place with which you are personallyfamiliar, give a description of the place and an explanation of its meaning to them, then give ananalysis of the place **using at least three of our four key analytics** (place/scale, power/property, history, and materiality). The paper should be 3-4 pages long (double-spaced, 12pt Times New Roman font, 1” margins).

The first draft of this paper is due before class on **Tuesday, July 17.** Please submit this draft on bcourses AND **bring a hard copy to class** to use for an in-class peer review session. The final paper will then be due on bcourses before class on **Tuesday, July 24**. I will share a rubric for grading this paper, but part of the assessment will be based on your efforts to improve between drafts by incorporating feedback from your peers.

***Group Presentation:***The third last day of class will be devoted to student-led presentations on the cultural aspects of environmental change in a particular place. I will divide you into groups in the 3rd week of class, and on August 7th each group of students will give a presentation (15-20min) on an issue of their choice. Requirements for this assignment are as follows:

1. **You must discuss the topic you have chosen with me by July 26th, either over email or (preferably) in office hours.** Examples of possible topics include water use in California's Central Valley; fracking in Pennsylvania; eco-tourism in Ecuador's Galapagos Islands; palm oil production in Indonesia, etc.
2. Presentations should involve all group members. Everyone should speak during presentation, and everyone should be involved in some aspect of research and/or presentation preparation.
3. Presentations must include some kind of visual and/or auditory media. This can include handouts, PowerPoint slides, writing on the board, showing a (very brief!) video clip, playing a song, etc. You can get creative here!
4. Presentations should describe the place in question; provide relevant historical context; explain the issues, different opinions, and challenges connected to a particular aspect of human-environment relations in that place; and connect the topic to key ideas in prior course readings and discussions, including our four analytical concepts.
5. During the presentation, other students should prepare questions for the presenters. We will have 2-3 questions at the end of each presentation.
6. Bibliography and Labor Report: Each group must submit give me brief typed document (no more than 2 pages) explaining the division of labor among group members and giving an annotated bibliographic list of consulted sources. Annotated bibliographies should contain a minimum of 10 sources and should briefly explain what you learned from each source. These are due in class on August 7th.

***Final Exam:*** The final exam is scheduled for August 9, the last day of class, and will be inclusive of all course content. I will discuss this exam in more detail in the last two weeks of the course, but it will involve in-class essays and short answer questions.

**CLASSROOM POLICIES, MECHANICS, AND SUPPORT**

***Safe Space***: I am committed to creating a safe space for everyone to discuss, debate and grapple with the complex and potentially sensitive ideas and issues presented in this class. I expect you to respect each other and the diversity of opinions in the classroom. Disruptive behavior, offensive comments, and personal attacks will not be tolerated.

***Academic Honesty****:* This course has a zero-tolerance policy for cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty. Any evidence of academic dishonesty will be grounds for failing the assignment and, under certain conditions, the course. **If you have any question about what constitutes academic dishonesty or how to correctly cite your sources, please contact me for clarification.** You can also visit the UC Berkeley Library’s citation guide for more information: <http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/research-support/cite-sources>.

Generally, please follow these rules:

1. If the ideas are not yours, CITE them.
2. If the words are not yours, QUOTE and CITE them.
3. When in doubt, QUOTE and CITE.

***Bcourses:***You will submit your daily writing reflection and your cultural environment paper (first and second drafts) through bcourses. I will also post some (not all!) of my powerpoint slides online for you to review. Keep in mind that my slides do not have a lot of information on them; they are “memory cues” rather than information dumps, so I also recommend taking notes in class. Speaking of which…

***Technology and Note-taking:***I have a no laptops, tablets, or cell phones policy in class. Unless you have magical memory powers, I suggest you buy a notebook and take notes the old-fashioned way.

***Breaks:***We will take a 10-minute break at approximately 11:50 a.m. every day. I recommend bringing a snack to eat during this time. Please respect the time limit.

***Disabled Students’ Program (DSP)***: If you are a member of DSP and require any special accommodation, please talk to me in the first week of the semester. <https://dsp.berkeley.edu/>

***Writing Support:***The SLC Writing Program is designed to support all undergraduate student writing. They have specialized support for students whose first language is not English. <https://slc.berkeley.edu/writing>

***Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS):***Accelerated summer courses can be very stressful, especially given the high costs of living in the bay area, and CAPS can help support your academic success. <https://uhs.berkeley.edu/counseling>

***Special Accommodations***: If you have any other special circumstances that may affect with your work in this course, please come see me as soon as possible. If something unforeseen happens during the semester, let me know right away. I can be much more helpful if you don’t wait until assignments are due to talk to me.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

Please complete the readings *BEFORE* the lecture for which they are assigned. Course readings have been compiled into a reader which is available for purchase at Copy Central (2411 Telegraph Ave).

WEEK 1: CONCEPTS

**Day 1 - Tuesday, July 3: Course Introduction**

**Wednesday, July 4 – NO CLASS**

**Day 2 - Thursday, July 5: Introduction to Key Analytics**

* Massey, D. (1994). “Global sense of place.” Chapter 6 in *Space, place, and gender* (pp. 146-156). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
* Whyte, K. (2017). The Dakota Access Pipeline, Environmental Injustice, and U.S. Colonialism. *Red Ink: An International Journal of Indigenous Literature, Arts, & Humanities*, 19(1), 154-169.

*FILM: Awake: A Dream from Standing Rock (2017, clips)*

WEEK 2: HISTORICAL GROUNDS

**Day 3 - Tuesday, July 10: Extracting and Enclosing Nature**

* Galeano, E. (1971) *Open Veins of Latin America: Five Centuries of Pillage.* New York: Monthly Review Press. Chapter 1: Lust for Silver, Lust for Gold (pp. 11-50)

**Day 4 - Wednesday, July 11: Cultivating Culture**

* Mintz, S. W. (1985) Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History. New York: Penguin. Chapter 3: Consumption (pp. 74-150)

*FILM: Big Sugar, Part 1 (2005, 45 min)*

**Day 5 - Thursday, July 12: Roots and Routes**

* Carney, J. A. (2001). *Black Rice: The African Origins of Rice Cultivation in the Americas*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Chapters 1 & 4 (pp. 9-30, 108-141)

*FILM: Family Across the Sea (1990, 57 min)*

WEEK 3: FLORA AND FAUNA

**Day 6 - Tuesday, July 17: Plants**

* Robbins, P. (2012). *Lawn people: How grasses, weeds, and chemicals make us who we are*. Temple University Press. Chapters 1 & 2 (pp. 1-32)

*\*\*\*DRAFT OF CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT PAPER DUE ON BCOURSES AND IN CLASS\*\*\**

**Day 7 - Wednesday, July 18: Animals**

* Ferguson, J. (1985). The Bovine Mystique: Power, Property and Livestock in Rural Lesotho. *Man*, *20*(4), 647–674.
* Berger, John (1980) Why Look at Animals? New York: Penguin. Chapter 3 (pp. 12-38).

GUEST SPEAKER: Jeff Martin

**Day 8 - Thursday, July 19: Fungi?!**

* Tsing, A. L. (2015). The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. Chapters 4-7 (pp. 57-106)

WEEK 4: WATER, AIR, AND SOIL

**Day 9 - Tuesday, July 24: Water Worlds**

* Worster, D. (1982). Hydraulic society in California: An ecological interpretation. *Agricultural History*, *56*(3), 503–515.
* Boelens, R. (2014). Cultural politics and the hydrosocial cycle: Water, power and identity in the Andean highlands. *Geoforum*, *57*, 234–247.

GUEST SPEAKER: Ashton Wesner

*\*\*\*FINAL CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT PAPER DUE ON BCOURSES BEFORE CLASS\*\*\**

**Day 10 - Wednesday, July 25: Water Wars**

* Assies, W. (2003). David versus Goliath in Cochabamba: Water rights, neoliberalism, and the revival of social protest in Bolivia. *Latin American Perspectives*, *30*(3), 14–36.
* Ranganathan, M. (2016). Thinking with Flint: Racial Liberalism and the Roots of an American Water Tragedy. *Capitalism, Nature, Socialism*, *27*(3), 17–33.

*FILM: También la Lluvia (2010, 102 min)*

**Day 11 - Thursday, July 26: Toxic Legacies**

* Pulido, L. (2000). Rethinking Environmental Racism: White Privilege and Urban Development in Southern California. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, *90*(1), 12–40.
* Dillon, L. (2014). Race, waste, and space: Brownfield redevelopment and environmental justice at the Hunters Point Shipyard. *Antipode*, *46*(5), 1205-1221.

*\*\*\*DEADLINE TO DISCUSS PRESENTATION TOPICS WITH ME\*\*\**

WEEK 5: SUBSOILS

**Day 12 - Tuesday, July 31: Minerals**

* de la Cadena, M. (2010). Indigenous cosmopolitics in the Andes: conceptual reflections beyond “politics.” *Cultural Anthropology*, *25*(2), 334–370.

*FILM: The Devil’s Miner (2005, 82 min)*

**Day 13 - Wednesday, August 1: Fossil Fuels**

* Watts, M. (2001) "Petro-violence: Community, extraction, and political ecology of a mythic commodity." *Violent environments* pp. 189-212.

GUEST SPEAKER: Sherine Ebadi

**Day 14 - Thursday, August 2: Geological Worlds**

* Crutzen, P J. (2006) "The “Anthropocene”." *Earth system science in the anthropocene*. Springer Berlin Heidelberg, pp. 13-18.
* Todd, Z. (2015). Indigenizing the Anthropocene. *Art in the Anthropocene: Encounters Among Aesthetics, Politics, Environment and Epistemology*, 241-254.
* Vergès, F. (2017). Racial Capitalocene. In: Johnson, G. T. and A. Lubin (eds.) *Futures of Black Radicalism.* New York: Verso. Available online: https://www.versobooks.com/blogs/3376-racial-capitalocene

WEEK 6: APPLYING THE CONCEPTS

**Day 15 - Tuesday, August 7: Student Presentations**

**Day 16 - Wednesday, August 8: Exam Review & Wrap-Up**

**Day 17 - Thursday, August 9: FINAL EXAM**