

Geography 218—A01
Social & Cultural Geography
University of Victoria
Spring 2016

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Office hours:	Mondays, 10:50am—12:50pm, or by appointment
Course time:	Mondays & Thursdays, 1:00pm—2:20pm
Course location:	MacLaurin Building, Room D288

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Welcome to Geography 218! The aim of this course is to provide an introduction to the fields of social and cultural geography. Over the course of the semester, we will examine the major themes of social and cultural geographic scholarship, with a particular focus on the interpretation of cultural landscapes, place-making, and the contested nature of social identities. The study of social and cultural geography entails more than simply exploring the “exotic” and “far-away” as cultural curiosities. Rather, it calls upon us to rethink the everyday spaces within which we construct our own geographical imaginations as well as how cultural practices intersect with the broader structures of social power. By focusing on the key concepts of “cultural landscape,” “social space,” and “sense of place,” human geographers explore how such spaces often become the site of social struggles over meaning, memory, identity, embodied practices, and the very formation of our geographical imaginations. In this class, we shall therefore explore the cultural politics of landscape and the spatial struggles over social space.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Provide a broad overview of the key concepts and approaches in social and cultural geography.
- Examine the contested politics of place-making as a social and cultural practice.
- Explore the relations between social identity and the production of geographical space.
- Critically analyze and contribute to contemporary scholarship in social and cultural geography.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Acquire a general understanding of the major concepts and approaches in the fields of social and cultural geography.
- Gain an appreciation for the role that social power plays in the formation of socio-spatial identities and the processes of place-making.
- Develop the ability to critically assess the material and symbolic aspects of cultural landscapes.

- Improve competency in interpreting scholarly literature in social and cultural geography and enhance research skills by writing an academic paper.

COURSE FORMAT

The course format consists of lecture sessions during the regularly scheduled meeting time for this class (M/R, 1:00pm—2:20pm) as well as lab sessions that meet on different days depending on the course section number. For the most part, lab sessions will be held at two-week intervals, with the first lab meeting during Week 2 (see Course Schedule below for a full listing of the weeks that labs will meet). The material covered in the labs is meant to complement the lectures and to provide a setting for more in-depth engagement with the major themes of the course.

READINGS

Required Course Texts

- All other reading materials will be available on the CourseSpaces page for this class (<http://coursespaces.uvic.ca>).

ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING SCHEME

Your final grade will be based on the following calculation:

Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	25%
Place-Making Research Paper	25%
Lab Assignments	20%
Lab Attendance & Participation	5%
Class Attendance	5%
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Total:	100%

Grading Scale

A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	D	F
90-100%	85-89%	80-84%	77-79%	73-76%	70-72%	65-69%	60-64%	50-59%	49% or Less

COURSE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM: COURSESPACES

We will be using the CourseSpaces management system as a medium for the posting of relevant course materials and related course information (<http://coursespaces.uvic.ca>).

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Midterm Exam (20%) and Final Exam (25%)

The course will have one midterm exam and a final exam. Each exam will consist of a combination of multiple-choice and short-answer/mini-essay questions. The final exam will be cumulative and held during the regular final exam period.

Place-Making Research Paper (25%)

In this class, we will be exploring how “places” are socially produced and performatively enacted through a variety of place-making practices. The making of “place” is often a highly contested process, especially when there are competing visions and claims over space. The aim of the Place-Making Research Paper is to provide the opportunity for each student to examine a particular case study of place-making from anywhere around the world that involves two or more conflicting social uses or cultural practices associated with a given “place.” Topics will vary from one student to another, but the overall themes to be considered should relate in some fashion to the broad thematic areas of this course (Note: since this is a course on social and cultural geography, paper topics should focus on these aspects of the place-making process in particular). Below are step-by-step instructions for completing this assignment:

- 1) **Selecting a topic:** Get an early start on the first few weeks’ assigned readings for the course to get a sense of what the notion of “place” is all about. Then, begin to think of any examples you are aware of that involve an attempt to actively construct a “place” which involves a conflict between two or more social groups. This could be anything from a conflict over the naming of a street to a struggle over whether particular types of religious architecture are permissible in a given area, to name just two among the many potential topics. Students should consult their lab instructor about selecting a relevant topic. *Note:* students may either work individually or in pairs of two on this assignment, although partners should be from the same lab section.
- 2) **Submitting a proposal:** During Week 4, submit a 1-page proposal to your lab instructor at the start of the lab session including: your name, preliminary paper title, a purpose statement paragraph explaining the topic and case study to be investigated, and a preliminary bibliography listing between 5-10 relevant citations.
- 3) **Conducting the research:** Once you have selected a research topic and it has been approved by your lab instructor, you should continue to collect popular media sources (newspaper or magazine articles) as well as academic sources (geography journal articles, scholarly books, etc.) related to the general topic. Keep in mind that the media sources you find will likely deal with the details of a particular event, whereas the scholarly literature may address a more general theme of relevance to your topic.
- 4) **Writing your research paper:** After the initial groundwork is completed for conducting your research, you should begin writing a draft of your paper. The paper should be 8-10 pages, double-spaced, 12-pt font size, 2.54 cm margins, not counting any other accompanying materials such as photographs, maps, etc., all of which should be included in an appendix at the end of the document. Also, please do not include large spaces between paragraphs to increase the page count! The paper should draw upon a combination of popular media, academic geography journal articles/books, and a

selection of the assigned readings for this course. It should be divided into different sections with bold headings, and below is a guide to help you format the paper:

1. Introduction (approx. 1 page)

Introduce the goal and objectives of the paper in this short section.

2. Section that reviews academic geography literature on broad theme of relevance to your research topic (approx. 3 pages)

For instance, if you were to write a paper on a particular case study of a dispute over a street name in New York City, this section would review the geographic literature on the cultural politics of street naming more generally without necessarily getting into the details of the New York case study.

3. Section that examines the details of the case study topic itself drawing upon popular media sources and relevant academic literature (approx. 5 pages)

In this section, provide a descriptive account and critical analysis of the case study you have chosen to investigate drawing upon relevant media sources, etc.

4. Conclusion (approx. 1 page)

In this concluding section, provide a summary of your main arguments and discuss how your analysis of the case study contributes to the broader literature in social and cultural geography.

For both in-text citations and your bibliography, please use the instructions on the following website to follow proper APA citation format:

<http://www.library.mun.ca/guides/howto/apa.php>

Note: all images, maps, photographs, etc., should be listed with appropriate reference numbers (e.g., Figure 1, Figure 2, etc.) in an appendix at the end of the paper, not within the text itself, although you should make direct reference to each figure in the body of the essay, by saying “(Figure 1),” etc., at the end of a sentence just as you would for in-text citations. Make sure to also include a “figure caption” that describes the content of each figure that is placed directly below the image.

- 5) ***Deadline for submitting the paper:*** The paper should be submitted at the start of class on Monday, April 4. Please note that absolutely no late papers will be accepted. Exceptions will be made only if the student and course instructor have made special arrangements prior to the due date to accommodate any legitimate university-excused absences or for a medical emergency. [***Note: Make absolutely sure to include your name, lab instructor’s name, and lab section on the first page of your paper.***]

Lab Assignments (20%)

There will be a total of 6 labs over the course of the semester. Students will be evaluated based upon lab assignments. For further details, see the GEOG 218 Lab Manual, which is accessible on

CourseSpaces. (*Note:* In order to get a passing grade in the course as a whole, each student must have a passing grade in the Lab component of the course.)

Class Attendance (5%) & Lab Attendance/Participation (5%)

Attendance will be taken during each lab session as well as periodically during lectures throughout the semester, so it is expected that students will attend lectures and labs on a regular basis. Each student will also be evaluated based on their level of active participation in group discussions.

OFFICE HOURS

I strongly encourage you to come to my office hours. As the course instructor, my main goal is to help you learn, so if you have any questions about the material, or the class in general, you are more than welcome to come speak with me during office hours. If you are not available during that time, email me to set up an appointment.

EMAIL

Send all email to me or your lab instructor using the email address listed on the first page of the syllabus or that provided by your lab instructor. Please include the course number (GEOG 218) in the email subject title. We will do our best to respond promptly to your questions. If you have a question concerning your course grade, please speak with your lab instructor during office hours rather than via email.

PLAGIARISM

All writing assignments should be written by the student(s) submitting the assignment. Plagiarism, or any other form of academic dishonesty, will not be tolerated in this course. Plagiarism consists of: (a) submitting someone else's work as your own without the use of proper quotation and citation or (b) paraphrasing another's ideas without acknowledging the author's work through citation. If you have any questions concerning matters of plagiarism, please discuss these matters with your lab instructor prior to submitting any assignments.

UVIC'S ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT FOR STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the Resource Centre for Students with a Disability (RCSd) as soon as possible. The RCSd staff are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations (<http://rcsd.uvic.ca>). The sooner you let us know your needs the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

COURSE EXPERIENCE SURVEYS (CES)

I value your feedback on this course. Towards the end of term, as in all other courses at UVic, you will have the opportunity to complete an anonymous survey regarding your learning experience (CES). The survey is vital to providing feedback to me regarding the course and my teaching, as well as to help the department improve the overall program for students in the future. The survey is accessed via MyPage and can be done on your laptop, tablet, or mobile device. I will remind you and provide you with more detailed information nearer the time but please be thinking about this important activity during the course.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Below is the course schedule of readings and assignments for the entire semester. I will do my best to stick to this schedule, although I do reserve the right to make changes if necessary.

Course Schedule

Week 1

Monday, January 4: Introduction to social & cultural geography

No readings assigned

Thursday, January 7: Place-making, culture, and the social production of landscape I

Readings

Cresswell, T. (2009), "Place," in N. Thrift and R. Kitchin (Eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography*, Oxford: Elsevier, p. 169-177.

Staeheli, L. and D. Mitchell (2009), "Place, Politics of," in N. Thrift and R. Kitchin (Eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography*, Oxford: Elsevier, p. 185-192.

Week 2 (LAB 1: Reimagining 'place' in UVic's cultural landscape)

Monday, January 11: Place-making, culture, and the social production of landscape II

Readings

Howitt, R., S. Muller, and S. Suchet-Pearson (2009), "Indigenous Geographies," in N. Thrift and R. Kitchin (Eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography*, Oxford: Elsevier, p. 358-364.

Tucker, B. and R. Rose-Redwood (2015), "Decolonizing the Map? Toponymic Politics and the Rescaling of the Salish Sea," *The Canadian Geographer* 59(2): 194-206.

Thursday, January 14: Geographical approaches to reading the cultural landscape

Readings

Gibson, C. and G. Waitt (2009), "Cultural Geography," in N. Thrift and R. Kitchin (Eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography*, Oxford: Elsevier, p. 411-424.

*** Note: Make sure to read Mitchell's "New Axioms for Reading the Landscape" before the next class on Monday, January 18.**

Week 3

Monday, January 18: In-class activity—discussion of Mitchell's "New Axioms for Reading the Landscape"

Readings

Mitchell, D. (2008), "New Axioms for Reading the Landscape: Paying Attention to Political Economy and Social Justice," in J. Westcoat Jr. and D. Johnson (Eds.), *Political Economies of Landscape Change: Places of Integrative Power*, Dordrecht: Springer, p. 29-50.

Thursday, January 21: Geographies of public art and architecture

Readings

Lees, L. (2001), "Towards a Critical Geography of Architecture: The Case of an Ersatz Colosseum," *Ecumene*, 8(1): 51-86.

Week 4 (LAB 2: Fieldtrip: Street art at the Wildfire Bakery)

Note: 1-page research proposal due in lab this week.

Monday, January 25: Rewriting the landscape: culture jamming and graffiti as spatial inscription

Readings

McAuliffe, C. and K. Iveson (2011), "Art and Crime (and Other Things Besides ...): Conceptualising Graffiti in the City," *Geography Compass*, 5(3): 128-143.

Thursday, January 28: Film—Graffiti Wars

No readings assigned.

Week 5

Monday, February 1: Guest lecture & midterm exam review

No readings assigned.

Thursday, February 4: Midterm

No readings assigned.

Week 6

Monday, February 8: Class cancelled, reading break

No readings assigned.

Thursday, February 11: Class cancelled, reading break

No readings assigned.

Week 7 (LAB 3: Race, space, and the cultural politics of social identity)

Monday, February 15: Film—Between: Living in the Hyphen

Readings

Johnston, L. (2009), "Body, The," in N. Thrift and R. Kitchin (Eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography*, Oxford: Elsevier, p. 326-331.

Thursday, February 18: Race, space, and the cultural politics of social identity

Readings

Grek-Martin, J. (2007), "Vanishing the Haida: George Dawson's Ethnographic Vision and the Making of Settler Space on the Queen Charlotte Islands in the Late Nineteenth Century," *The Canadian Geographer* 51(3): 373-398.

Week 8

Monday, February 22: Gender, place, and culture

Readings

Pratt, G. (2005), "Abandoned Women and Spaces of Exception," *Antipode* 37(5): 1052-1078.

Thursday, February 25: Guest lecture

No readings assigned.

Week 9 (LAB 4: Gendered spaces in Victoria)

Monday, February 29: Geographies of sex and sexuality

Readings

Catungal, J.P. and E. McCann (2010), "Governing Sexuality and Park Space: Acts of Regulation in Vancouver, BC," *Social & Cultural Geography* 11(1): 75-94.

Thursday, March 3: Social geographies of the lifecourse I

Readings

Nemeth, J. (2006), "Conflict, Exclusion, Relocation: Skateboarding and Public Space," *Journal of Urban Design*, 11(3): 297-318.

Week 10

Monday, March 7: Social geographies of the lifecourse II: in-class activity

No readings assigned.

Thursday, March 10: Social geographies of religion

Readings

Howe, N. (2008), "Thou Shalt Not Misinterpret: Landscape as Legal Performance," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 98(2): 435-460.

Week 11 (LAB 5: Contested landscapes of cultural heritage)

Monday, March 14: *Film—Totem: The Return of the G'psgolox Pole*

No readings assigned.

Thursday, March 17: Cultural heritage and the politics of collective memory

Readings

Bosco, F. (2004), "Human Rights Politics and Scaled Performances of Memory: Conflicts Among the Madres de Plaza de Mayo in Argentina," *Social & Cultural Geography* 5(3): 381-402.

Week 12

Monday, March 21: Tourism, culture, and the geographical imagination

Readings

Jenkins, O. (2003), "Photography and Travel Brochures: The Circle of Representation," *Tourism Geographies* 5(3): 305-328.

Thursday, March 24: Doing social & cultural geography: methods, ethics, politics

Readings

Longhurst, R. (2009), "Interviews: In-Depth, Semi-Structured," in N. Thrift and R. Kitchin (Eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography*, Oxford: Elsevier, p. 580-584.

Dowling, R. (2009), "Ethical Issues in Research," in N. Thrift and R. Kitchin (Eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography*, Oxford: Elsevier, p. 595-600.

Week 13 (LAB 6: Place-making research paper presentations)

Monday, March 28: *Class cancelled, Easter holiday*

No readings assigned.

Thursday, March 31: Class cancelled (additional office hours instead)

No readings assigned.

** **Note:** Use this time to focus on writing your Place-Making Research Paper. I will be in my office during the regularly scheduled class time for additional office hours to provide assistance to students on the paper.*

Monday, April 4: Final exam review session and course wrap-up

No readings assigned.

** **Note:** Submit Place-Making Research Paper at the start of class on April 4.*

** **The final exam will be scheduled during final's week: time and location to be announced.***

The University of Victoria is committed to promoting, providing and protecting a positive and safe learning and working environment for all its members.