

Locational Identities: GECD650, Fall 2013 with Dr. Knopf

Morey248: Mon 1-3:00 by appointment & Tue/Thu 3:30-4:30 (also alternating Thursdays 9-10:30)
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This course is a critical consideration of how ideas of place and space feature into the creation, and maintenance, of individual, collective, and systemic identities - with attention to narrative as social inquiry.

Through this course you will not only learn how ideas of space and place relate to culture and identity, but also how rhetorics of space and place shape narrative. Additionally, you will be exposed to multiple disciplinary approaches to narrative.

Moreover, you will have weekly opportunities to improve your critical thinking and scholarly and analytical writing, while engaging in active peer-to-peer academic dialogue. Hopefully, you will also discover new ideas or approaches for your own areas of research.

Our semester is divided into four primary sub-topics: Narrative Sociology (which will introduce you to the use of narrative as a means of social, rather than literary, inquiry); Location & Culture (which lays the groundwork for our discussion); Boundaries (much about the social significance of place has to do with "here" versus "there"); and, Rhetorics of Space/Place (in which we take a more traditional communication-oriented look at the topic of place and space).

There are three books required for the course:

- Ronald Berger & Richard Quinney's *Storytelling Sociology*.
- Homi Bhabha's *The Location of Culture*
- Doreen Massey's *For Space*
 - Plus, there are 20+ articles and book excerpts posted to Moodle:
- Johnson. "Shaping of Public Space & Cultural Identities."
- Gieryn. "A Space for Place in Sociology"
- Round. "Alternate Worlds and the City as Superhero..."
- Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.
- Blumer. *Symbolic Interactionism*
- Maines. "Social Organization & Social Structure in Symbolic Interactionist Thought"
- Lamont & Fournier. *Cultivating Differences* - #1.
- Bourdieu. *Distinction* - #1.
- Lamont & Fournier. *Cultivating Differences* - #2.
- Bourdieu. *Distinction* - #2.
- Gregory & Pred. *Violent Geographies*
- Baynham. "Narratives in Space and Time."
- Georgakopoulou. "Place & Time as Interactional Resources in Narrative"
- Defina. "Time, Space & Disorientation in Narrative"
- Herman. "Spatial References in Narrative Domains."
- Endres & Senda-Cook. "Rhetoric of Place in Protest"
- Dickinson. "Nostalgia & the Construction of Identity in Old Pasadena"
- Carbaugh. "Listening and Landscape"
- McKerrow. "Space and Time"
- Birmingham. "Reframing the Ruins"
- Simpson. "Recycling Urban Spaces"
- Croft. "Creating Locales through Storytelling"
- Cavell. "McLuhan & Spatial Communication"
- Davis. "Safe Spaces of Resistance"
- Strate. "Varieties of Cyberspace"

All are required readings, averaging 100-200 pages per week. *Additional readings may be added to the list as the semester progresses, to more closely align content with your own interests.*

Your course grade is based on the following components, all of which are described in detail below.

- Weekly reading reactions: 15% (≈1.25 points each)
- Weekly questions: 10% (≈1 point each)
- Weekly thought pieces: 25% (≈2 points each)
- Critical Essay 1: 15%
- Critical Essay 2: 15%
- Critical Essay (& Presentation) 3: 20%

Reading Reactions: By 10am each Thursday, you will email a [100-200 word] critical/thoughtful response to the week's common readings (what you found interesting, controversial, important, relevant, confusing...) to the entire class [the instructor will establish an email list]. Before our class meeting, you are responsible for reading what your classmates had to say. This will give us all a starting place for our evening's discussion. We will adjust the submission time if this does not give everyone ample opportunity to read all the responses.

CREDIT IS EARNED FOR ON TIME RESPONSES THAT DEMONSTRATE EFFORT AND/OR THOUGHT. (IN OTHER WORDS, A REACTION LIKE, "THIS READING WAS KINDA BORING AND I DIDN'T REALLY GET MUCH OUT OF IT," WON'T EARN CREDIT.)

Questions: In addition, when you come to class you will hand me 1 written question based on the common readings; this question can be something you were unclear on or something that you think would get a good discussion going.

CREDIT IS EARNED FOR TIMELY COMPLETION.

Thought Pieces: To make sure you have thoughts to share each week, and also have some notes available as you prepare for your thesis and your essay papers in this class, you will write **one single** 500-750 word commentary each week, focusing on the assigned readings.

A commentary should give a brief informal abstract of each and every reading assigned for the week (a few sentences on what it is about, what the author argued, what it speaks to, etc – consider each title a separate reading, rather than each chapter to make this simpler on you), plus some thoughts and/or criticisms on whatever you found striking in the readings: maybe how they connected together (or diverged), or maybe a way a particular theory or method was used, or maybe a novel interpretation, or maybe a way you could apply the knowledge/approach/questions to your own scholastic inquiries (like a thesis, conference paper, or article).

~Your comments that you email to the class can be similar to, part of, or entirely different/separate from, what you write in these papers.~

You have to turn in your thought pieces to me in hard copy (typed, double-spaced) form *at the start of* every class session. Try your best to be grammatically correct, analytical (make informed, literature/research based arguments, not just unsubstantiated claims or personal opinions), and to not just babble on with no structure. Continually sub-par work will be rewarded as such (you will be cut some slack with the first two weeks, giving you a chance to improve your writing if needed).

IN GENERAL: PAPERS SUBMITTED COMPLETELY, ON TIME, AND WITH GOOD GRAMMAR AND SPELLING WILL EARN AT LEAST A LOW C. PAPERS THAT ALSO DEMONSTRATE ACADEMIC WRITING APPROPRIATE TO PERSON WITH SOME GRADUATE EDUCATION WILL EARN A HIGH C TO A B. PAPERS THAT ALSO DEMONSTRATE INSIGHT AND/OR CREATIVITY &/OR THOUGHTFUL ANALYSIS WILL EARN A HIGH B TO AN A.

Weeks Dr. K is at a Conference:

Up to three times during the semester, Dr. Knopf has to be away for a conference when we are supposed to have class. For those weeks:

1. Email your comments to the class by 11am as always. In addition, include the question you would normally turn in to Dr. Knopf at class.
2. Email your thought piece to Dr. Knopf by the 5pm class time.
3. Engage each other via the email list with responses and answers (Dr. K will chime in, too) or feel free, *and be encouraged*, to meet on your own (even if you don't meet for the full class period).

Critical Essays: Because the various weeks' readings all focus on issues of space, place and identity, but do so in fairly diverse contexts, I will not make you go through the whiplash-inducing process of connecting them all together. Instead, what I am asking for are three 1750-2000 word essays, the best of which will be presented to the group at the end of the semester. Ideally they will be expansions of your weekly thought pieces and not just summaries of what the articles were about. (So not only do those weekly pieces help you with class discussion, and possibly your scholastic work outside of class, but also with the major papers in the course!) **In other words, this is your chance for bold critical thinking.** And by critical thinking, I don't mean just looking at an article and declaring "It Stinks." It means that you engage the readings, appreciating the context in which they were written and being humbly aware of the context from which you, as a situated reader, approach the readings. This is a chance to push your boundaries as a thinker and writer.

As for how to structure the essays, I hope you vary the approaches you take in the papers.

1. One approach is to vary the scale of your analysis. For example, if one particular passage or sub-section really grabs you, you can write an in-depth analysis of it. Maybe it will be one paper, or a few of the papers from a giving week. Or maybe you have made some surprising observations/connections across papers from different weeks.
2. Another approach is to vary the focus of the essay – for example (and please don't limit yourselves to these), one time discuss what type of intellectual inquiry a group of readings make possible and what they ignore, another time discuss how theory is translated into empirically enquiry, or maybe how those people working as professionals or activists might be able to apply lessons from the readings to transform society.
3. Yet another approach – and one I hope you all take in one of the essays – is to espouse on how some of the readings might enrich research you hope to undertake, or – if you don't yet have a clue what you want to research – how these readings inform, or maybe transform narrative theory.

Basically, I don't want to see the same paper from you three times but focusing on different articles. I want to see three different papers all engaging the ideas of space, place, and identity. I want to see a much higher level of polish on these in terms of structure, grammar, and analysis than in the weekly thought pieces. Papers that score well will show rigorous, internally consistent thought that engages the readings in their context. *Please note: these are not research papers, these are analysis papers. You do not need to collect a bunch of outside sources.*

IN GENERAL: PAPERS SUBMITTED COMPLETELY, ON TIME, AND WITH GOOD GRAMMAR AND SPELLING WILL EARN AT LEAST A LOW C. PAPERS THAT PROVIDE READING SUMMARIES, IF COHESIVELY TIED TOGETHER, AND DEMONSTRATE ACADEMIC WRITING APPROPRIATE TO PERSON WITH SOME GRADUATE EDUCATION WILL EARN A C TO A LOW B. PAPERS DEMONSTRATE INSIGHT AND/OR CREATIVITY &/OR THOUGHTFUL ANALYSIS WILL EARN A B TO AN A, DEPENDING ON THE LEVEL OF SCHOLASTIC ABILITY SHOWCASED.

Presentation: Also, so everyone in the class knows what you are thinking, you are going to choose your best paper to present in class (this is marked as Critical Essay #3 in the grading schemata above, but does not necessarily have to be the third one). This will be done during the Finals Week class meeting and will take the form of a poster presentation as would be found at an academic conference. Because space and place is often a visual construct, you need to incorporate one or more visual components into your presentation. (You might also opt to have your presentation reflect any additional materials covered since the original essay was completed.)

THE FINAL GRADE FOR THE PAPER YOU CHOOSE TO PRESENT WILL BE WEIGHTED AN ADDITIONAL 5%. THE QUALITY OF YOUR PRESENTATION (WAS IT ORGANIZED, WAS IT CLEAR, WAS IT WELL PREPARED, WERE THE VISUALS WELL CHOSEN) WILL DETERMINE IF THAT PAPER ALSO EARNS ANY "BONUS" POINTS BEFORE BEING FACTORED INTO THE COURSE AVERAGE.)

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Wk1	Th 8/29: In class – Tally, Jr.
Wk2	Th 9/5: ♦Berger & Quinney, pp 1-166.
Wk3	Th 9/12 ♦Berger & Quinney, pp 167-282.
Wk4	Th 9/19: <u>Critical Essay 1 due</u> ♦Johnson; ♦Bhabha , pp 1-93
Wk5	Th 9/26 ♦Bhabha, pp 94-198; ♦Gieryn
Wk6	Th 10/3 ♦Bhabha, pp 199-302;
Wk7	Th 10/10 ♦Bhabha, pp 303-367; ♦Round.
Wk8	Th 10/17: <u>Critical Essay 2 due</u> ♦Anderson; ♦Blumer; ♦Maines;♦Lamont & Fournier #1; ♦Bourdieu #1; ♦Douglas
Wk9	Th 10/24 – Dr. Knopf @ conference (GIC): Discussion online ♦Lamont & Fournier #2; ♦Bourdieu #2
Wk10	Th 10/31 ♦Massey, pp. 1-104; ♦Gregory & Pred
Wk11	Th 11/7 – Dr. Knopf @ conference (ISA-NE): Discussion online ♦Massey, pp 105-195; ♦De Fina
Wk12	Th 11/14: <u>Critical Essay 3 due</u> ♦Herman; ♦Baynham; ♦Georgakopoulou; ♦Endres & Senda-Cook; ♦Dickinson
Wk13	Th 11/21 – Dr. Knopf @ conference (NCA): Discussion online ♦Carbaugh; ♦McKerrow; ♦Birmingham; ♦Simpson
Wk14	Th 11/28 – Thanksgiving
Wk15	Th 12/5 ♦Croft; ♦Cavell; ♦Davis; ♦Strate
Finals	Thur 12/12, 5-7 Poster presentation of your personal best or favorite critical essay.

And don't forget your weekly reading reactions via email, question on note card, and thought pieces in essay form!