

Fall 2007
GEOG 121: People and Places

An example of Benetton collection. In this class, we will see that geography today studies also the fashion industry, together with many other phenomena. Geography shows that 'location' does have an impact on how fashion is produced and consumed. Fashion changes people livelihood and self-perception in different ways in different places



Tuesday-Thursday, 6.00-7.15, Saunders Hall 220

Instructor

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What is Human Geography?

Human geography is the study of the interactions between humans and their environment. It is also an ancient discipline. The Greeks invented the word 'geography', it meant 'to write the earth.' In the West, contemporary geography is rooted in the European explorations. Explorers and navigators mapped uncharted land brought home notes and artefacts; geographers systematized this knowledge and made it available to the public. Because it is so old, the meaning of geography and what geographers do shifted over time. Also, because all social life is rooted on Earth and influenced by places, human geographers can study almost everything. Thirty or forty years ago, human geographers privileged to study tangible patterns of human activity in space; they developed statistical models attempting to explain the rules that determined, for example, the location of cities, or certain industries, or specific agricultural productions. Today, thinking geographically means examining how differences

between people and places get constructed and how some places end up “meaning” a whole lot more to us than other places. For example, when human geographers look at a state capitol they do more than memorize its name and position on the map: they think about the political and economic discussions that went into deciding where the state capitol would be located, who paid for it, and how effective a political space it is (and for whom).

When?

Geographers focus on the contemporary world. However, because social life is shaped by the various histories of each social group, a certain historical perspective is necessary. In this class, ‘contemporary world’ is considered to be the world after 1989. In 1989, the Soviet Union began to collapse, and since then socialist planned economies began to be dismantled. This meant that the economies of the whole world became progressively more capitalist and interconnected, and this reflected on changes in politics, societies and cultures. These inter-related changes, or ‘globalization’ will be the focus of this class

Who?

Any science needs units of analysis, i.e. ‘building blocs’ that allow separating the object of study into small and manageable parts, upon which to build the analysis. Given the broad scope of this class, three basic units of analysis will be considered. 1) The single person: human beings will be the units of analysis in studying population trends, urban change, cultural change; 2) the capitalist firm will be the unit of analysis of economic change, and economic globalization; 3) state institutions will be the units of analysis of political change

Why?

A key concept in geography is ‘interconnectedness’ and ‘scale.’ What happens globally has an impact locally; changes in local places may affect the whole world. Events in far away places have an impact on everyday lives in North Carolina. Social and political upheavals in the Middle East led to September 11 and afterwards to changes in North Carolina. Global communications, trade, travel, financial flows, environmental concerns – and more - are changing the way that people around the world relate to each other and to their environment. Because of this, a key element of this class is the research paper, in which you will be encouraged to use the concepts and notions we will learn drawing from examples from all over the world to the local condition of North Carolina.

How?

This class is divided in six sections. The first describes the basic tools and concepts of geography, such as maps, scale, and region. The second analyzes the history of the Twentieth Century, looking at the ways in which contemporary human geographies came into being. The four following sections discuss the main aspects studied in human geography: spatial aspects of the economy, society and culture; population and development; and politics. In so doing, each section provides an overview of some of the key subfields in human geography: economic geography, social/cultural geography, population geography and demography, political geography. For those of you interested in further studying this discipline, this will provide a synopsis of the more advanced courses in human geography. At the beginning of every section a list of objectives will be presented. Keep them in mind, they will provide

you with a study guide, helpful to prepare for the exams. Most lectures will be supported by a PowerPoint or other visuals. I will make them available AFTER the class.

STRUCTURE OF THIS CLASS

This class is centered upon four key elements: lecturing, reading, discussing, conducting independent research. READ the following overview; it will help you in addressing each element:

Lectures are a key part of class. I will often refer to the textbook and other readings as I lecture, but I will not follow the same outline. Often I will expand on a particular case study relevant to the material presented in the reading, or I will even argue against it. So come to class! Feel free to ask questions, disagree, or make a point. Please do not use your computers or cell phones for anything other than note-taking. If you are going to miss a class, there is no need to tell me, but do your best to find someone in class who will lend you their notes.

Readings have been assigned for each class and should be read for the day on which they are listed. One of the most important things to think about as you sit down to read is *how to read*. When you read, you need to do three things: understand the author(s)' main point; critically analyze the main point against the evidence marshaled by the author(s) to support their point – in other words, is the argument internally consistent?; decide whether you agree with the points, and explain (or at least understand) why or why not – this is where you deconstruct the reading and assess it with the information you have picked up in class, in your own reading, and in life.

Discussion. At the end of each section, one class will be dedicated to discussion. We will be dealing with controversial material sometimes, and everyone needs to be able to simultaneously keep an open mind and defend their positions. Note: positions should be defended with well-constructed arguments, not simply opinions! This means that if we are debating an issue, the answer “North Carolina is becoming poorer/richer” will not be accepted. The answer “North Carolina is losing (gaining) jobs because outward investments and plants closure has led in the past ten years to more job losses than job creation by new firms and inward investments” will be. In other words, there are no wrong answers, just poorly formulated ones.

Independent research. You will be asked to produce a research paper, choosing among the issues and topics discussed in the class (population trends, social/cultural geography and the city, economic change, geopolitical change) and applying it to the local conditions of North Carolina. I encourage working adults to link the project with their profession/experience. The paper will be done in three steps. 1) an informal discussion with me, in which you will propose me the topic and why you consider it relevant; 2) a one or two pages, double space, proposal in which you outline the topic, what is your argument, what are the sources of information; 3) the final paper: eight to ten pages, double space, plus references and – if needed – tables and graphs. A paper without references and citations will not be accepted. Only the final paper will be graded.

Assignments:

In-class mid-term: 20%

Participation during discussion sections: 10%

Project: 40%

Final Exam: 30%

Human Geography: Course Readings and Lecture Outline

Required text:

Human Geography. Issues for the 21st Century (second edition). Daniels, Bradshaw et al. 2004. This textbook is available at the UNC bookstore.

*** All additional readings will be available on the course web site.

Lecture 1, August 21 (Tue). What is human geography? Introduction to course

Reading: "[1492: The Prequel](#)" by Nicholas D. Kristoff in the New York Times Magazine (1999).

Textbook: *Introduction*, pp. 1-8

Section 1: Basic concepts and tools of human geography

Lecture 2, August 23 (Thu): on maps and mapping

Readings: Crampton, "Maps as social constructions: power, communication and visualization"

Progress in Human Geography 25 (2): 235-252 June 2001

Case Studies: Visualizing the Globe (explore these sites)

Tom van Sant's Geosphere Project: <http://www.geosphere.com/home4.htm>

Atlas of Cyberspaces <http://www.cybergeography.org/atlas/geographic.html>

Counter cartographies <http://criticalspatialpractice.blogspot.com/>

Facultative readings

"Maps for Political Propaganda," in *How to Lie with Maps*, by Mark Monmonier. University of Chicago Press, 1996 second edition, pp. 87-112;

Pickles, J. *A history of spaces : cartographic reason, mapping, and the geo-coded world*. Introduction. London, Routledge: 2004

Lecture 3, August 28 (Tue): on place and scale

Reading: Massey, D. "[A Global Sense of Place](#)" (from, *Space, Place and Gender*, 1984)

Facultative readings

Massey, D. *For Space* London Sage, 2005, Chapter 2, pp. 20-35

Lecture 4, August 30 (Thu) on regions

Readings: D. N. Livingstone, *The Geographical Tradition*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1992: Chapter 8, the regionalizing ritual, pp. 260-304

Facultative readings

“Regional Geography” in *Wikipedia* http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Regional_geography

Storper, M. *The Regional World* 1997, Selection from Chapter 2: pp. 26-28; 47-51

Lecture 5, September 4 (Tue) Discussion 1: Understanding Geography through a walk around town

Overview of the key readings: “[A Global Sense of Place](#),” by Doreen Massey (from, *Space, Place and Gender*, 1984); Crampton, “Maps as social constructions: power, communication and visualization” *Progress in Human Geography* 25 (2): 235-252 June 2001

Section 2: How did contemporary geographies come into being? The Twentieth Century

Lecture 6, September 6 (Thu) The emergence of globalized capitalism

Readings: Textbook, Chapter 2 (The rise and spread of capitalism)

Facultative readings

Wallerstein *The Modern World System*

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/wallerstein.html>

Browse the website of the Institute for Research on World Systems: <http://irows.ucr.edu/>

Lecture 7, September 11 (Tue) Special class: readings and discussion on September 11

Reading: Brunn (ed.) *11 September and its aftermath : the geopolitics of terror* London Frank Cass, 2004: Introduction, pp. 1-16 and ‘The naming of terrorism’ pp. 87-104

Lecture 8, September 13 (Thu) The making of the Twentieth Century world 1

Readings: Chapter 3, “The Making of the Twentieth Century World,” in Textbook

Facultative readings

Hayek, *The road to serfdom* (cartoon) <http://www.mises.org/TRTS.htm>

Mussolini, *The Doctrine of Fascism* 1932 <http://www.constitution.org/tyr/mussolini.htm>

Lecture 9, September 18 (Tue) The making of the Twentieth Century world 2

Reading: Verdery, K. (1993) "[What was Socialism and Why Did it Fall?](#)" first chapter of the book by the same name (just read the first 20 pages of this).

Pickles, Smith (eds) 1999 *Theorising transition : the political economy of post-Communist transformations* Introduction, pp. 1-24

Lecture 10, September 20 (Thu) Discussion 2: argue for the best system

Review Chapter 3, Hayek, Verdery

Section 3: geographies of the economy

Lecture 11, September 25 (Tue) a global economy?

Reading: Chapter 11, "The Geography of the Economy," in Textbook
A Reality- Based Economy *New York Times*, July 24, 2007

A New Populism Spurs Democrats on the Economy. *New York Times*, July 16, 2007

Lecture 12, September 27 (Thu) the global production system

Reading Chapter 12 "The Global Production System" in textbook

Facultative readings

Browse the 'global value chains initiative' website <http://www.globalvaluechains.org/> and especially 'concepts and tools' <http://www.globalvaluechains.org/concepts.html>

Lecture 13, October 2 (Tue) the global financial system

Reading: Chapter 13, "The Global Financial System, worlds of monies," in textbook

FUNDAMENTALLY; Around the World, With Borderless Investing *New York Times* July 22, 2007

Facultative readings

Browse the following: The economic geography of money
<http://www.geog.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/moneyfinance/>

Lecture 14, October 4 (Thu) Industry case study: the clothing industry

Readings: Bair, Gereffi “Upgrading, uneven development, and jobs in the North American apparel industry” *Global Networks*, Vol. 3, Num. 2, 2003, Pages: pp. 143-169

Facultative readings

Pickles et al. “Upgrading, changing competitive pressures, and diverse practices in the East and Central European apparel industry” *Environment and Planning A* 38, 2006, pp. 2305-2324

Hassler “The global clothing production system: commodity chains and business networks” *Global Networks*, Vol. 3, Num. 4, 2003, Pages: pp. 513-531

Browse the ‘Global Apparel Project’ website <http://www.unc.edu/depts/geog/garp/>

Lecture 15, October 9 (Tue) Discussion: plan the international strategy of a North Carolinian firm

Browse North Carolina in the global economy project http://www.soc.duke.edu/NC_GlobalEconomy/

Section 4 Geographies of culture and society

Lecture 16, October 11 (Thu) consumption, between economy and culture

Reading: Chapter 14, “World of consumption,” in Textbook;

Facultative readings

China's Big Mac Attack" in *Foreign Affairs* (May/June 2000)

Lecture 17, October 16 (Tue) Global Cultures: Definitions and Dilemmas

Readings: Chapter 16, “Geography, Culture, and Global Exchange,” in Textbook;
"[Reciprocal Bases of National Culture and the Fight for Freedom](#)," by Franz Fanon

October 18 No classes – Fall Break – work on your research proposal

Lecture 18, October 23 (Tue) Geography and the city – Guest Lecture: Jon Lepofsky

Readings: Chapter 4, “Cities,” in textbook

- Research Proposal Due

Lecture 19, October 25 (Thu) Discussion – preparation for midterm

Lecture 20, October 30 (Tue) In class midterm

Section 5 Population and development

Lecture 21, November 1 (Thu) Is there a population problem?

Reading: Chapter 7 “Demographic transformations” in textbook

Facultative readings

“[There is No Global Population Problem,](#)” by Garrett Hardin, 1989; “[Don't Fund UNFPA Population Control](#)” by Stephen Moore, Cato Institute (May 15, 1999).

Lecture 22, November 6 (Tue) Natural Resources: State of the World

Readings: Chapter 8, “Resources and Development,” in textbook

Klare “The New Geography of Conflict” *Foreign Affairs*, 3, May/June 2001, pp. 49-61

Lecture 23, November 8 (Thu) International Food Regimes and the Green Revolution

Readings: Chapter 9, “Changing Geographies of Global Food Production,” in textbook (this material will not be on the mid-term); “[The Green Revolution Yields to the Bottom Line,](#)” by Andrew Pollock

Lecture 24, November 13 (Tue) Concepts of development. Guest Lecturer: Murat Es

Readings: Chapter 10 “alternative geographies of global development and inequality” in textbook

Section 6 Political geographies: citizens, states, regions and super-states

Lecture 25, November 15 (Thu) States, Citizenship and Social Movements:

Reading: Chapter 20, “States Citizenship, and Collective Action,” in textbook.

Reading: “[Confronting Empire,](#)” by Arundhati Roy (January 2003); Philip McMichael, “[Sleepless since Seattle: what is the WTO about?](#)” *Review of International Political Economy* 7(3).

Lecture 26, November 20 (Tue) Geopolitical traditions

Readings Chapter 15 “geopolitical traditions” in textbook

Contemporary geopolitics: browse the US Department of State website

<http://www.state.gov/www/regions.html> and the European Union Foreign and Security Policy
http://europa.eu/pol/cfsp/index_en.htm

November 22 No classes – Thanksgiving

Lecture 27, November 27 (Tue) The Nation State

Readings Chapter 16 “The place of the nation state” in textbook

Strange *The Retreat of the State* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, Chapter 1: the declining authority of the state

Research paper due

Lecture 28, November 29 (Thu) The resurgence of regions

Readings Barber “Jihad vs. McWorld” *Athlantic Monthly* March 1992 http://www.marion.ohio-state.edu/fac/vsteffel/web597/Barber_jihad.pdf

Facultative readings

Lovering “Theory led by policy: the inadequacies of new regionalism (illustrated from the case of Wales)” *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* (23), 1999, pp. 379-395.

Lecture 29, December 4 (Tue) Supranational entities: the case of the EU

Readings Glyn Morgan. The Idea of a European Superstate: Public Justification and European Integration. <http://www.pupress.princeton.edu/chapters/i8082.html> or
<http://www.pupress.princeton.edu/chapters/i8082.pdf>

Commission of the European Communities. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament. The Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. Strategic Objectives 2000-2005: *Shaping the New Europe*. COM 2004. 154 (final)
http://ec.europa.eu/comm/off/work/2000-2005/com154_en.pdf

EU Timeline: <http://www.evropa.bg/en/del/europe-a-to-z/eu-timeline.html>

Facultative readings

Milada Vachudova. EU Enlargement: An Overview. *East European Constitutional Review* 9, 4 (Fall 2000): 64-69. www.law.nyu.edu/eecr/vol9num4/features/EUarticle1.html

Lecture 30, December 6 (Thu) review for the exam

EXAM: Monday, December 10, class time