Unit Convenor: Mark Jackson
Instructors: Mark Jackson (MJ) <m.jackson@bristol.ac.uk>
            Naomi Millner (NM) <naomi.millner@bristol.ac.uk>

Unit Description
Overview
The unit examines how postcolonial and decolonial geographies are renewing themselves to meet the theoretical and empirical demands of a more-than-human world. It will address the continued relevance of postcolonial politics and ethics, but within the decolonial need for new analytical questions, methodologies, and representational strategies that draw from diverse interdisciplinary approaches, including: political ecology; indigenous studies; anthropology; material studies; agro-ecology; social movement studies; cultural and historical geography; and critical political economy.

Expansion

More specifically, the unit will explore contemporary approaches to the critical relationships of materiality, ecology, coloniality, race, and humanism. It invokes the discourses of postcolonial and decolonial thinking and theory, political ecology, indigenous studies, and posthumanism to re-think the theoretical and empirical domains of postcolonial geographies. The need to do this stems from ecological, environmental, and technological questions, which increasingly challenge the anthropocentric analyses that dominate the traditional attention of the social sciences and humanities. Human-centred orthodoxies in postcolonial analysis, whose focus has been on topics like identity, cultural hybridity, and political heterogeneity, are now also being asked to account for how human beings are entangled ontological aspects of wider relational and ecological processes. The criteria for making these relational and material claims about human entanglement also challenge constructionist and textual approaches still taken for granted in postcolonial studies. Postcolonial theory, and postcolonial studies more generally, have struggled to respond effectively to these new conceptual and empirical demands. Some authors have even argued that postcolonialism has run its course, or has entered a contradictory period of decline. Despite this view, global genealogies of ongoing colonial violence, exclusion, and inequality continue to be more relevant than ever. It is clear we still need postcolonial critique, but in a form that is more responsive to contemporary demands about who our 'others' (human and non-human) are, and how research may be done with them.

This unit will:

- Introduce debates over the genealogy of, and possibilities for, postcolonialism, and decolonial and postcolonial geographies, including the challenges contemporary materiality, relationality, and ecological studies have for the ethics and politics of future postcolonial and decolonial geographies.
- Analyse the role and significance of posthumanism, materiality, political ontology, and indigenous studies on the modern and contemporary politics of contemporary colonialisms.
- Demonstrate the interdisciplinary nature of engagement with concepts of postcolonialism, materiality, and ecology.
- Enable students to engage critically with a wide range of theoretically and empirically-focused material.

Intended Learning Outcomes

At the completion of this unit, students will able to:

- Identify key concepts and theories of postcolonialism, materiality, political ontology, political ecology, and critical political economy in geographical and cognate interdisciplinary scholarship.
- Analyse key differences internal to theorizations of postcolonial geographies, materialism, posthumanism, political ecology, and indigenous studies.
• Situate the debates and their cross-overs across different interdisciplinary contexts appreciating both shared conceptual genealogies and research applications.
• Identify the relevance of key concepts and categories of postcolonialism and materiality to their individual research agendas and wider social politics.

Assessment

All assessments will be coursework based. There are no exam assessments for the unit.

Formative: Each student will present in one seminar on that seminar’s assigned readings for about fifteen minutes in length. Each presentation summarizes central themes in the reading for that week and poses issues for discussion. A copy of the presentation will be distributed to the class at the beginning of the two-hour seminar. Feedback will be given to the students within one week of their presentation.

Summative: One 4000-word essay (100%). Students may choose to examine either: an object or text through which engage key topics and concepts within the unit via a creative/productive means; or, examine a self-chosen topic on a subject of their interest arising from the unit. Guidance will be provided on an individual basis for each student, and students will be supported in their development of ideas and design of the research papers.

Seminar Schedule

The unit comprises a total of 10 seminar sessions, each of two hours. The classes are scheduled from JE2 until W21. There is no Reading Week for the unit, and we finish before the Easter break.

Summary

The class timetable is organised as follows:

Part I
1. JE2 - Tues. 17.01.17 - 1400-1600 - SR2 - MJ/NM
2. W13 - Tues. 24.01.17 - 1400-1600 - SR1 - MJ
3. W14 - Tues. 31.01.17 - 1400-1600 - SR1 - MJ
4. W15 - Tues. 07.02.17 - 1400-1600 - SR1 - MJ
Part II

6. W17 - Mon. 20.02.17 - 1500-1700 - SR2 - NM
7. W18 - Mon. 27.02.17 - 1500-1700 - SR2 - NM
8. W19 - Mon. 06.03.17 - 1500-1700 - SR2 - NM
9. W20 - Mon. 13.03.17 - 1500-1700 - SR2 - NM
10. W21 - Mon. 20.03.17 - 1500-1700 - SR1 - NM/MJ

A pictograph of the Treaty 4 negotiations, illustrated by Chief Paskwa. It is considered rare as it is the only depiction of the treaty negotiations from a First Nations perspective. (Royal Saskatchewan Museum)
Seminar Descriptions and Readings

PART I

Seminar 1: Introduction to Unit and Themes
JE2 - Tues. 17.01.17 – 1400 -1600 – Room SR2, SOGS - MJ/NM
Keywords: postcolonial, decolonial, coloniality, planetarity, political ontology

Primary Readings:


Secondary Readings:


Seminar 2: Indigeneity, Decolonization, and Cosmo-politics
W13 - Tues. 24.01.17 - 1400-1600 - SR1 – MJ
Keywords: cosmo-politics, decolonization, ontological turn, politics

Primary Readings:


Secondary Readings:


Seminar 3: Listening to ecologies of thought
W14 - Tues. 31.01.17 - 1400-1600 - SR1 – MJ
Keywords: stories, matter, animism, cosmopolitics, ontology, listening

Primary Readings:


Secondary Readings:


http://artseverywhere.ca/2016/03/23/1218/

Seminar 4: Poesis and the Language of Relation
W15 - Tues. 07.02.17 - 1400-1600 - SR1 – MJ
Keywords: poetics, poesis, poetry, relation, semiosis, sociogeny, politics of being

Primary Readings:


Secondary Readings:


Last, A. 2015. ‘We are the World? Anthropocene Cultural Production between Geopoetics and Geopolitics’ *Theory, Culture and Society*. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/0263276415598626


Seminar 5: Re-thinking Humanism with Sylvia Wynter
W16 - Tues. 14.02.17 - 14:00-16:00 - SR1 – MJ
Keywords: humanism, Man, over-representation, politics of being, sociogeny, autopoiesis

Primary Readings:

Secondary Readings:

Image of Sylvia Wynter


PART II

Session 6: Dispossession and the emergence of multispecies ethnography
W17 - Mon. 20.02.17 - 1500-1700 - SR2 - NM
Keywords: Accumulation by dispossession, enclosure/commons, extinction, ontology, indigeneity, semiosis, interspecies ethnography

Primary Readings:

Secondary Readings:
See also online resources: Multispecies salon: multispecies-salon.org

2011 Culture@Large Session: The Human is More than Human. Cultural Anthropology.
Seminar 7: Decolonising bios? Plant genetic resources and questions of commons
W18 - Mon. 27.02.17 - 1500-1700 - SR2 – NM
Keywords: Biotechnology, seed sovereignty, commons, intellectual property, cosmopolitics, plant agency

Primary Readings:

Secondary Readings:
Gemein, M. (2016) "Seeds Must Be Among the Greatest Travelers of All": Native American Literatures Planting the Seeds for a Cosmopolitical Environmental Justice Discourse. ISLE, 23(3) 485-505.


**Seminar 8: “Earth beings” and hybrid cultures in transnational food movements**

W19 - Mon. 06.03.17 - 1500-1700 - SR2 - NM

Keywords: Hybridity, food justice/sovereignty, transnational agrarian movements, Madre Tierra, cosmovision, Buen Vivir

Primary Readings:


Secondary Readings:


Pappa, E., Naum, M., Loren, D. D. and Cultural Hybridity from Available

Stocker, P. W., Hitchcock, L., Maeir, A., Langin-Hooper, S., ... & (2013). Archaeology Mixture: Creolization, and Mestizaje. *Archaeological Review from Cambridge, 28*(1), online at:

Seminar 9: Decolonising microbiopolitics?
W20 - Mon. 13.03.17 - 1500-1700 - SR2 - NM

Keywords: Microbe, global health, virus & viral becoming, toxicity, epidemics, affect & racial mattering, figuration, ecological aesthetics.

Primary Readings:

Secondary Readings:
Greenhough, B. (2012). Where species meet and mingle: endemic human-virus relations, embodied communication and more-than-human agency at the Common Cold Unit 1946-1990. cultural geographies, online at:
http://cog.sagepub.com/content/early/2012/01/06/1474474011422029.full.pdf+html
Seminar 10: Decolonising the university
W21 - Mon. 20.03.17 - 1500-1700 - SR1 - NM/MJ

Read both:


Plus, pick one from:


Mural by indigenous artists adorned the walls of Warisata. Murals courtesy of Carlos Salazar Mostajo/Gesta Y Fotografía, Historia de Warisata En Imágenes http://revista.dralas.harvard.edu/book/bolivias-indigenous-