

GPHY 870: Historical and Cultural Issues in Fieldwork: Fall 2011

Instructor: Dr. Laura Cameron, Mac-Corry Hall Rm. E303

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Classroom: The Rutherford Room: M-C E303

Class Times: Wednesday mornings, 8:30 to 11:30; note the workshop on the Sunday 30th October and proposed fieldtrip to Ottawa on the Tuesday 8th November.

Objectives: This course actively explores the histories, practises and cultural meanings of fieldwork. Geographical fieldwork is considered along with conceptions of the 'field' in allied disciplines such as ecology and anthropology. Constructions of the 'field' are addressed in terms of empire, nationalism, 'nature', pedagogy, translocalism, the lab-field border, performativity and in relation to its role as a gendered, ethical, imaginative, sensory and affective space of knowledge and activity.

Fieldwork has long had a key role in the making of knowledge in both social and natural sciences. Recent work in geography, sociology and the history of science has begun to explore diverse cultures of the field, raising a range of questions about the nature of field knowledge. Where is the field and for whom? The course focuses on case studies and currents pertinent to the study of field cultures within North America and elsewhere. The primary objective is to provide opportunities for in-depth discussion and activities to help understand and reassess the motives, practises and status of fieldwork. Both 'human' and 'physical' geography students are most welcome.

Weekly seminars will involve excursions, discussion of the course readings, films, field exercises as well as presentations integrating course themes and reflections upon the students' past and future fieldwork activities. The readings, including relevant journal articles and book chapters, will be made available. Class members will be invited to "Water, Fish & Fowl: The Translocal Ecologies Mobile Workshop" to be held aboard the Island Star cruise boat on the 30th of October.

Evaluation: Students will be responsible for leading the discussion of particular readings, engaging in weekly activities and discussions, offering a seminar presentation, keeping a 'field' journal and writing a research paper. The tentative mark breakdown is as follows:

Participation & Presentations.....	25%
'Field Journal' Assignment.....	35%
'Field Exercises' (4).....	40%

A key theme for this course is “walking.” For the ‘Journal Assignment’, I would ask each of you to make weekly entries in a journal based upon the assigned readings, our discussions, your presentations and any “outside” material including films, radio programs, newspaper articles, found objects, etc. that seem relevant to the week’s topic. As frequently as possible, I would ask that you make a habit of doing the week’s reading and then going for a walk before writing your entry. A record of the walks themselves may be incorporated into your entries in various ways. The average individual average length of each entry should be 400 words minimum. Illustrations, mappings and diagrams are also encouraged. The journals may act as forums to focus and synthesize concepts concerning fieldwork considered in class but please feel free to reflect on how the readings are connected to other things you are interested in. A hand-written exercise book may be the most convenient format but bound, typed pages also are fine. Towards the end of term, you will submit the whole journal and select your **three** “best” entries for evaluation. In terms of evaluation I am looking for (1) diligence = keeping at it each week) (2) reflection (extension of self to readings and discussions through engagement, thought, self-reflexiveness and creativity) and (3) synthesis. By synthesis I am referring to the demonstrated ability to critically analyze course concepts and bring them into meaningful relation with each other (as well as with your own fieldwork interests/experience if possible). Please come see me with an entry if you would like early feedback on this assignment.

There are four *short* ‘field exercises’ in total, each worth 10% of the overall grade. Details and deadlines will be provided in class. In general terms, these exercises provide opportunities to stretch your imagination, try new skills and explore and reassess fieldwork (yours or the work of others) with the aid of the critical readings/discussions provided in the course (as well as relevant materials you encounter on your own steam).

- 1. Soundwalking
- 2. Archives & ‘deep topographies’ of Macintosh-Corry Hall
- 3. Documenting the ‘workshop’
- 4. Your field imagination

Participants will help to introduce the reading materials each week and responsibilities will be shared as equally as possible.

Late Policy: If special circumstances make a deadline extension necessary, it must be arranged in advance. Without prearranged permission, late assignments will lose 5% per day.

Course Schedule: Tentative ONLY

Sept 14th. Week 1 *Introduction: Where is the Field?*

Crang, P et al (2003) *Cultural Geographies* 10:3. “Introduction”
Driver, F (2000) “Field-work in geography,” editorial in *Transactions of the*

Institute of British Geographers 25: 267-8.

Kohler, R and Kuklick, H (1996) *Science in the field*. Introduction, 1-16.

Pinder, D (2001) "Ghostly footsteps: voices, memories and walks in the city," *Ecumene* 8, no. 1: 1-19.

Rogers, J (2009) Documentary: 'The London Perambulator'

Note: Annie Pootoogook, Reception and Publication Launch Sept. 16, 5 pm
Agnes Etherington Art Centre, Kingston

Sept 21th. Week 2 *Senses in Fieldwork: Soundwalking*

Feld, S and K Basso (1996) Feld, Chapter 3. Waterfalls of Song. *Senses of Place*. Sante Fe, NM: School of American Research

Matless, D (2004) "Sonic Geography in a Nature Region"

Please check out these soundscape/soundwalking links:

<http://mrogalsky.net/soundscape>

Exercise 1 distributed.

Note: Kingston WritersFest: <http://www.kingstonwritersfest.ca/>
September 22-25

Sept 28th. Week 3 *Identity Formation and Fieldwork Practices*

*Anderson, K (1998) "Science and the savage: The Linnean Society of New South Wales, 1874-1900," *Ecumene*, 5(2): 125-43.

Bravo, M (1999) "Ethnographic navigation and the geographical gift," in DN Livingstone and CWJ Withers, (eds) *Geography and enlightenment*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Ploszajka, T (1999) *Geographical Education, Empire and Citizenship: geographical teaching and learning in English schools, 1870-1944*

*Secord, A (1996) "Artisan Botany" in N Jardine, JA Secord and E Spary, (eds) *Cultures of Natural History*. Cambridge: CUP, 378-93.

O'Rourke, D. (1999) Documentary: 'Cannibal Tours'

October 5th. Week 4 *Natural History in the Field I*

*Braun, B (2000) "Producing vertical territory: geology and governmentality in late Victorian Canada," *Ecumene* 7 (1) 7-46.

Drayton, R (2000) *Nature's government: science, imperial Britain, and the "improvement" of the world*. New Haven, Yale University Press.

Golinski, J (1998) "The place of production," in *Making natural knowledge: constructivism and the history of science*. Cambridge: CUP.

- *Outram, D (1996) "New spaces in natural history," in *Cultures of Natural History*.
- *Shapin, S. (1998) "Placing the view from nowhere: historical and sociological problems in the location of science," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 23: 5-12.
- Withers, C (1999) "Reporting, mapping, trusting: making geographical knowledge in the late seventeenth century," *Isis*, 90 (1999): 497-521.

Guest speaker: Dr. Kirsten Greer
 Archive Visit & Exercise 2 distributed.

October 12th. Week 5 *Natural History in the Field II*

- Anker, P (2001) *Imperial ecology: environmental order in the British Empire, 1895-1945*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- *Kohler, RE (2002) *Landscapes and labscapes: exploring the lab-field border in biology*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2002.
- Cameron L and Matless D (2003) "Benign ecology: Marietta Pallis and the floating fen of the delta of the Danube," *Cultural Geography* 10: 253-277.
- *Gieryn, T (1999) "Hybridizing credibilities: Albert and Gabrielle Howard compost organic waste, science and the rest of society," in *Cultural boundaries of science: credibility on the line*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Curtis, A. (2011) Documentary: 'All Watched Over By Machines of Loving Grace; Part II: The Use and Abuse of Vegetational Concepts'

October 19th. Week 6 *Gender and Fieldwork*

- Guelke, JK and Morin, K, (2001) "Gender, nature, empire: women naturalists in 19th century British travel literature," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geography* 26: 306-26.
- *Kearns, G (1997) "The imperial subject: geography and travel in the work of Mary Kingsley and Halford Mackinder," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geography* 22.
- Hevly, B (1996) "The heroic science of glacier motion," in *Science in the field*.
- *Oreskes, N (1996) "Objectivity or heroism? On the invisibility of women in science," in *Science in the field*.
- Pang, A (1996) "Gender, culture and astrophysical fieldwork," in *Science in the field*.
- *Sparke, M (1996) "Displacing the field in fieldwork: masculinity, metaphor and space," in Nancy Duncan ed. *Bodyspace: destabilizing geographies of gender and sexuality*. London: Routledge.

October 26th. Week 7 *Story-telling and the Field: Technologies of Place*

Cruikshank, J (1998) *The Social Life of Stories: Narrative and Knowledge in the Yukon Territory*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.

Basso, K (1996) *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language Among the Western Apache*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996.

Exercise 3 distributed.

***October 30th. Sunday event: Transnational Ecologies Mobile Workshop**

November 2nd. Week 8 Professor David Lambert, *International Visiting Scholar*, "Presence/Absence in the Archives" followed by lunch with graduate students

Lambert, D. (2009) "'Taken captive by the mystery of the Great River': Towards an historical geography of British geography and Atlantic slavery' *Journal of Historical Geography* 35 (2009), pp. 44-65. doi:10.1016/j.jhg.2008.05.017

Lambert, D. (2008) 'The "Glasgow King of Billingsgate": James MacQueen and an Atlantic proslavery network' *Slavery and Abolition* 29, pp. 1-25. doi: 10.1080/01440390802267816

***November 8th, Tuesday: Week 9 Field trip to The Museum of Civilization**

November 16th. Week 10 *The Field and the City*

Gupta, A and Ferguson, J (1997) "Discipline and practice: the field as site, method, and location in Anthropology," in Gupta and Ferguson (eds) *Anthropological Locations: Boundaries and Grounds of a Field Science*, 1-46.
Passaro, J (1997) "You Can't Take the Subway to the Field!": "Village" Epistemologies in the Global Village" in Gupta and Ferguson (eds) *Anthropological Locations: Boundaries and Grounds of a Field Science*.
Meth, P "Doing violence/violent research: the ethics and practice of research with women in South Africa", *Ethics, Place and Environment* (in press)

Guest speaker: Ron Roy

Exercise 4 distributed.

November 23rd. Week 11 *Fieldwork Diaries & Participant Observation*

*Driver, F (2001) "Hints to travellers: observation in the field," in *Geography Militant: cultures of exploration and empire*. London: Blackwells.

Geertz, C (1993) *The interpretation of cultures: selected essays*. London: Fontana Press.

*Malinowski, B (1989) *A diary in the strict sense of the term*. London: Athlone.

*Pratt, ML (1992) Chapter 9. From the Victoria N'yanza to the Sheraton San Salvador, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*. London: Routledge.

November 30th. Week 12 *Sampling the Field*

Hannah, M (2001) "Sampling and the politics of representation in US Census 2000" *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 19, 515-534.

Latour, B (1999) Chapter 2. Circulating Reference: Sampling the Soil in the Amazon Forest. in *Pandora's Hope: Essays on the Reality of Science Studies*. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.