

TOPOGRAPHIES OF LAW



Spring 2020

ANG 6930 Section 4257 / ANT 4930 Section 4258

Wednesdays | Period 5 - 7 (11:45 AM – 2:45 PM)
CBD 0238

Richard Kernaghan

Grinter 335 | kernaghan@ufl.edu
office hours: Tues 1-3pm / Thurs 1-3pm

In this course we examine how the material specificity of physical terrains affects legal phenomena as they come to be expressed, sensed and practiced. We observe and track how the enforcement of particular laws often varies across distinct topographies and topological formations: for instance, between cities, towns, rural areas or roads; seas with their pirates; forts and fortifications; islands or even island prisons. We pay particular attention to the specific ways controls imposed on circulations of human and non-human beings modify territory, and to how commands, frightening images and other sorts of threat-laden signs alter the public feel of a place. We also ask: what social processes come into play when some areas or zones appear as if they were situated beyond legal protections of any kind at all? Holding fast to the deliberate open-endedness of such questions we will work towards building a semester-long dialogue that is rigorous, energetic and creative. Writings of Michael Taussig, Nancy Munn, Michel Serres, Elizabeth Povinelli, and Franz Kafka, among others, will provide some theoretical support and inspiration. We will weigh their contributions to legal anthropology as we bring them into conversation with recent ethnographies of law, infrastructure and affect. Indeed, one of our guiding objectives will be to explore how ethnographic writing can contribute to documenting the force of law as it inhabits particular landscapes and locales.

Objectives:

1. to acquire an acute familiarity with the thematic concerns of topological and topographic approaches to legal phenomena
2. to demonstrate a critical grasp of contemporary theories of territory and legal relations
3. to hone skills of textual analysis and interpretation
4. to enhance an understanding of ethnographic modes of research and representation
5. to become better writers

Overview of Requirements: This class is run as a seminar with active participation in all discussions expected. Each student will be asked to prepare and present a seminar report on one or more of the assigned readings at least once during the semester. There will be a term paper, with a project abstract, and bibliography due by mid-semester.

Required Texts:

Cache, B. *Earth Moves* (The MIT Press, 1995)
Kafka, F. *The Castle*, trans. Harman (Schocken, 1998)
Netz, R. *Barbed Wire* (Wesleyan University Press, 2010)
Serres, M. *The Birth of Physics*, trans. Webb & Ross (Rowman & Littlefield, 2018)
Virilio, P. *Bunker Archeology* (Princeton Architectural Press, 2008)
Yeh, R. *Passing* (University of Chicago Press, 2017)

Recommended Texts:

Heller-Roazen, D. *The Enemy of All* (Zone Books, 2009)
Schmitt, C. *Land and Sea*, trans. Zeitlin (Telos Press, 2015)

The above titles (some of them as e-books) have been placed on reserve at Library West. All remaining assigned, recommended, or supplementary readings may be downloaded from the Canvas course page.

* * *

Attendance: Please arrive punctually and remain until the end of class. An attendance sign-up sheet will be circulated each session. If you must miss class, please inform me ahead of time (or as soon as possible) and provide appropriate documentation. Don't forget to contact a classmate and obtain notes on materials covered while away.

Absences for reasons of religious holiday, illness, and official university business are excused; however, notification should still be provided. **Please note:** Multiple unexcused absences will undermine performance in the course.

For official UF Policy on attendance and absences please consult:
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Evaluations – Final course grades are calculated according to a combination of three criteria:

Participation (35%): A grade for participation will be assessed at the end of the semester based on the degree to which you have played an active, informed role in class discussions, and in so doing contributed to the course's overall success. So please be prepared at each session to share your impressions, questions and interpretations of all assigned materials. I also encourage you to come to office hours two or three times during the semester to talk about progress in the course and your on-going work on the final project.

Seminar Report/Presentation (25%): You are responsible for the preparation and presentation of one seminar report (length: 5-6 double spaced pages) on the topic of your assigned week. That report should not merely summarize but offer a well-crafted, spirited interpretation, which situates the required readings within the ideas and concepts of the course. It should outline specific concerns as well as hone questions.

On your assigned week, please circulate *via Canvas* a list of discussion points and questions *at least 24 hours* prior to your presentation (in other words: *no later than midday on Tuesday*). The report itself is due at the beginning of class.

Term project essay (40%): The final paper should be an original, persuasive and creative engagement with one or more of the class concepts. Of approximately 5500-7000 words in length for graduate students and approximately 4000 words for undergraduates, the term project should contribute directly towards the development of a research proposal, a conference paper, journal article or thesis chapter. A concise 250-word abstract, outlining the objectives of the project, and a bibliography are due mid-semester.

The term project essay must be handed in no later than the last day of class.

All assignments must be submitted via Canvas. Papers should be typed in a common 12pt font and double-spaced with one-inch margins and pages numbered.

Assignment Deadlines:

- *seminar paper* - TBA
- *final project abstract & bibliography* - February 26
- *term project essay* - April 22

Late policy: Assignments are due at the beginning of class of the calendar deadline. Seminar reports handed in late but still within one week of the original due date will be docked the equivalent of a full letter grade. After that they will no longer be accepted. No extensions will be granted for the term project essay.

Academic Honesty: Plagiarism and cheating are serious academic offenses. All work submitted for a grade must be free from unauthorized assistance or deliberate misrepresentations of one's own efforts. The

penalty for plagiarism or cheating is a grade of zero points on the assignment in question. In such cases an incident form will also be sent to the Office of the Dean of Students.

If you have questions about what constitutes academic misconduct, please consult the UF Honor Code as well as the UF Policies on Academic Honesty, Student Rights and Responsibilities. See:

<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>

also <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/quick-links/academic-integrity/>

ADA Statement: “Students with disabilities, who need reasonable modifications to complete assignments successfully and otherwise satisfy course criteria, are encouraged to meet with the instructor as early in the course as possible to identify and plan specific accommodations. Students will be asked to supply a letter from the [Disability Resource Center](#) to assist in planning accommodations.”

Grading: The following scale will be used for grades on all assignments and exams: 94-100=A; 90-93=A-; 87-89=B+; 84-86=B; 80-83=B-; 77-79=C+; 74-76=C; 70-73=C-; 67-69=D+; 64-66=D; 60-63=D-; 59 and below=E (failing).

You may consult current UF policy on how grade point averages are calculated at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx#calculating>.

Course feedback: Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

Additional UF Resources:

Health & Wellness

- *U Matter, We Care:* If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit umatter.ufl.edu/ to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- *Counseling and Wellness Center:* Visit counseling.ufl.edu/ or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.
- *Student Health Care Center:* Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit shcc.ufl.edu/.
- *University Police Department:* Visit police.ufl.edu/ or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
- *UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center:* For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; ufhealth.org/emergency-room-trauma-center.

Academic

- *E-learning technical support*: Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](https://helpdesk.ufl.edu) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.
- *Career Connections Center*: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services career.ufl.edu/.
- *Library Support*: cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.
- *Teaching Center*: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352-392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. teachingcenter.ufl.edu/
- *Writing Studio*: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/
- *Student Complaints On-Campus*: sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/

* * *

Please note: I may make minor adjustments to class readings or assignment requirements during the semester. Any and all modifications will be announced ahead of time.

Course Schedule

week one	law from topology to topography
1/8	introductions Kafka, "The Burrow" Kernaghan, "Furrows and Walls" "Topology as method": "Introduction" & "Enclosure" (CA Fieldsights series)
week two	mountain mud
1/15	<u>interactive documentary</u> : "The River Runs Red" (Carbonell et al.) "Topology as method" (CA Fieldsights series)
week three	a whistling
1/22	Deleuze & Guattari, <i>A Thousand Plateaus</i> : "Of the Refrain" Munn, "Excluded Spaces" Povinelli, "At Home in the Violence of Recognition" <u>supplementary reading</u> : Brighenti, "On Territory as Relationship and Law as Territory" Brighenti, "Of Territorology" Raffestin, "Space, territory and territoriality" Schmitt, "Nomos—Nahme—Name"
week four	islands
1/29	Deleuze, "Desert Islands" Taussig, <i>My Cocaine Museum</i> : "Gorgona"; "Islands"; "Underwater Mountains"; "Sloth"

Panourgia, *Dangerous Citizens* ("Human Islands")

supplementary reading: Greenhough, "Vitalist Geographies"

week five

seas

2/5

Heller-Roazen, *The Enemy of All* (chapters 1, 3-7)

Schmitt, *Nomos of the Earth* (chapters I:5, III:3, IV:7)

Detienne, "Old Man and the Sea"

supplementary reading: Gaynor, "Piracy in the Offing," Cohen, "Fluid States,"
Linebaugh & Rediker, *The Many Headed Hydra* (chapter 5)

week six

cities 1

2/12

Yeh, *Passing* (intro, part I)

week seven

whorl

2/19

Cunningham, "Barb" (CA Fieldsights series: "Theorizing the Contemporary")

Netz, *Barbed Wire*

Silko, "The People and the Land ARE Inseparable"

film: "Suspension" (Uribe)

week eight

cities 2

2/26

Cache, *Earth Moves*

film: *Lettre à Freddy Buache* (dir. Godard)

supplementary reading: Deleuze, *The Fold* (select chapters)

week nine	towers and corridors
3/11	Kafka, <i>The Castle</i> Deleuze & Guattari, <i>Kafka</i> , chapter 8: “Blocks, Series, Intensities”
week ten	cities 3
3/18	Yeh, <i>Passing</i> (part II, conclusion)
week eleven	forts and fortifications
3/25	Virilio, <i>Bunker Archeology</i> Kernaghan, “Between Twilights” <u>supplementary reading</u> : Schmitt, <i>Dictatorship</i> (selected chapters)
week twelve	ethnographic projects
4/1	individual presentations
week thirteen	clouds
4/8	Choi & Zee, “Condition—Suspension” Serres, <i>The Birth of Physics</i> (select chapters) Lucretius, <i>De Rerum Natura</i> (select passages) <u>supplementary reading</u> : Povinelli, “Fires, Fogs, Winds”
week fourteen	eddies
4/15	Serres, <i>The Birth of Physics</i> (select chapters) Lucretius, <i>De Rerum Natura</i> (select passages)

week fifteen

ethnographic projects

4/22

individual presentations