

Road and Road Publics

ANG 6930 • Sec 4G42

ANT 4930 • Sec 4G43

Wednesdays Period 5-7 (11:45 am – 2:45 pm) on Zoom (100% online)

Office Hours: Tuesday 1-3 pm / Thursday 1-3 pm (or by appt.) via zoom

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The basic topological characteristics common to any road whatsoever lend themselves not merely to telling stories but to sketching the ideational contours of no small number of social, cultural and historical artifacts: from pilgrimage to procession to divination. Yet where roads traverse actual places, to the point of moving into their geographic settings, they take on a different sort of potency: at once obvious and elusive but no less sensorial and affective. Because such potency is always, in some regard, collective, it has a far ranging ethnographic significance, which can be explored by posing a few questions.

What kinds of communities emerge through the material and figural construction of roads as public works?

Which genres of events do such works make possible?

And when do transit infrastructures, more broadly, bring to the fore tensions between physical terrains, projections of state authority and political subjectivities?

This class weighs the aesthetic and topological traits of roads as they intersect with the dense historicities of specific locales—privileging highways and transit mega-projects in the Americas for their profound connections to territorial administration, extractive economies, regimes of property and shifting senses of place. We give especial attention to the apparent power and multiple effects of new roads: how they have reconfigured urban, peri-urban and rural landscapes, impacted indigenous populations, shaped settler ideologies, and bolstered state claims to radical title over frontiers. By asking what binds techniques of transit to assertions of eminent domain, we will stress the political character of roads and their potential to create charged spaces of encounter—as nodal points of governmentality (checkpoints with their various forms of profiling); as sites for popular contentions and counter-publics (demonstrations, strikes, blockages); or as zones of “everyday insecurity” (crime and traffic accidents). Ultimately, we seek to understand how roads become vibrant empirical things in their own right, whether to articulate circulations and orient visibilities, or to sustain rhythms and modes of sociality through shared feelings of intimacy, anonymity and remove.

Overview of Requirements: This class is run as a synchronous online 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.

Texts:

Deleuze, Cinema 1: The Movement-Image (University of Minnesota Press, 1986)

Raffles, *The Book of Unconformities* (Pantheon, 2020)
Schivelbusch, *The Railway Journey* (University of California Press, 2014)
Uribe, *Frontier Road* (Wiley, 2017)

The above e-books have been placed on reserve at Library West. All remaining assigned and supplemental readings can be downloaded from the Canvas course page.

Filmography:

Il deserto rosso / *Red Desert* (dir. Antonioni, 1964)
Cocote (dir. de los Santos Arias, 2017)
Subida al cielo (dir. Buñuel, 1952)
K.h. jik. / *Café Lumière* (Hou Hsiao Hsien, 2003)
En el hoyo / *In the Pit* (Rulfo, 2006)
Iracema, Uma Transa Amaz.nica (Bodansky & Senna, 1974)
Le salaire de la peur / *Wages of Fear* (Clouzot, 1953)
Trans-Europ-Express (dir. Robbe-Grillet, 1966)
li.n li.n fēngch.n / *Dust in the Wind* (Hou Hsiao Hsien, 1986)
Alice in den St.dten / *Alice in the Cities* (dir. Wenders, 1974)
Suspension (dir. Uribe, 2019)

Attendance during the pandemic: So I can keep a record and give you credit for attendance, please write your name in the zoom chat at the beginning of each session and then again at the end of the class. If you must miss a session, please inform me ahead of time (or as soon as possible) and provide appropriate documentation. In such cases you are responsible for contacting a classmate to obtain notes on materials and topics covered while away.

Absences for reasons of religious holiday, illness, and official university business are excused; however, proper notification should still be provided.

Please note: Since participation as well as assimilation of class materials depend upon attendance, multiple absences (4 & above) will undermine academic performance and may even risk failing. Students, however, with perfect or near perfect attendance will receive bonus credit. Click here to read the university attendance policies.

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 (via zoom) 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 should be submitted via Canvas: typed in a common 12pt font and double-spaced with one inch margins and pages numbered.

Assignment Deadlines:

- seminar paper - TBA
- term project abstract & bibliography – October 14
- term project essay – December 8

Class Comportment: You will find an overview of recommended best practices for online courses (i.e. security, email, discussion boards and zoom) in the Netiquette document, which is stored on our Canvas course page under “Files” in a folder called “class etiquette.” Beyond that I would simply say that my expectations for when we meet as a group, largely echo those I would have for any face-to-face class. Namely, I request that you please join each session punctually, prepared to share your informed questions, impressions and interpretations of the current week’s materials. Also, kindly turn cell phones to silent for the duration of our class meetings. You are welcome to use laptops or tablets to take notes but not to reference or take part in activities unrelated to the course. If at all possible, please do not leave the zoom room before the session’s scheduled end time. But if you must leave early, simply send me a private note in the zoom chat.

Academic Honesty: As you are aware, 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 effort. 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.

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. [Click here to read the Honor Code](#). Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor.

Accommodations for students with disabilities: Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center. [Click here to get started with the Disability Resource Center](#). It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

Grading: The following scale will be used for grades on all assignments: 94-100=A; 90-93=A-; 87-89=B+; 83-

86=B; 79-82=B-; 76-78=C+; 72-75=C; 69-71=C-; 66-68=D+; 62-65=D; 59-61=D-; 58 and below=E (failing). Click [this link to consult current UF policies for grades and grading](#).

Course feedback: Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. [Click here for guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner](#). Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. [Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students here](#).

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 [U Matter, We Care website](#) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- Counseling and Wellness Center: [Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website](#) 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 the Student Health Care Center website](#).
- University Police Department: [Visit UF Police Department website](#) 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; [Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website](#)

Academic

- E-learning technical support: Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](#) 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.
- [Library Support](#): 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.
- [Writing Studio](#): 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.
- Student Complaints On-Campus: [Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information](#).
- On-Line Students Complaints: [View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process](#).
- Anthropology Library Guide: <http://guides.uflib.ufl.edu/c.php?g=147739&p=969917>

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.

Weekly Course Schedule

week 1 on the vitality of roads

9/2 Stewart, "Road Registers"

Kafka, "The Great Wall of China"

film: Cocote (dir. de los Santos Arias)

supplementary: Dalakoglou, "Towards an anthropology of the road"

week 2 semblance in terrain

9/9 Kernaghan, "Precipitating Surfaces"

film: En el hoyo / In the Pit (dir. Rulfo)

supplementary: video footage (semblance in terrain project)

week 3 matter, expression, relation

9/16 Deleuze, Cinema 1: chapters 1 & 2

Harvey, "Cementing Relations"

Althusser, "Cremonini, Painter of the Abstract"

Schivelbusch, Preface to the 2014 edition of Railway Journey, plus Chapter 1

Joniak-Lüthi, "A road, a disappearing river and fragile connectivity in Sino-Inner Asian borderlands"

film: Alice in den St.dten / Alice in the Cities (dir. Wenders)

supplementary: Toscano, "Materialism without matter"

week 4 technics & the archaic

9/23 Stengers, "Ecology of Practices & Technology of Belonging"

Leroi-Gourhan, "Les transports" in L'homme et la mati.re

Latour, "About Aramis"

Simondon, "Technical Mentality"

Deleuze, The Fold: chapter 2

Deleuze, Cinema 1: chapter 3

film: Turumba (dir. Tahimik)

supplementary: Mauss, "Bodily Techniques"

week 5 road events: redirection and the cut

9/30 Kosok, "Transit in Peru"

Bergson, "The perception of change"

Kernaghan, "The Trench"

Deleuze, Cinema 1: chapter 4

film: Iracema: Uma Transa Amaz.nica (dir. Bodanzky & Gauer)

supplementary: Cultural Anthropology Fieldsights – The Infrastructure Toolkit

<https://culanth.org/fieldsights/introduction-the-infrastructure-toolbox>

week 6 between things and their publics

10/7 Kharkhordin, "Things as res publicae"

Warner, "Publics & Counterpublics (abbreviated version)"

Caillois, "The Great Bridgemaker"

Augé, In the Metro: "Memories"

Deleuze, Cinema 1: chapter 5

Zeiderman, "Concrete Peace"

film: Suspension (dir. Uribe)

supplementary:

Unesco World Heritage Site - Qhapaq Ñan, Andean Road System:

<https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1459>

week 7 frame, genre, montage

10/14 Schivelbusch, Railway Journey, chapters 4 & 5

Bazin, "Painting and Cinema"

Bakhtin, "On the Problem of Speech Genres"

Bonitzer, "Deframings"

Deleuze, Cinema 1: chapter 6

film: Trans-Europ-Express (dir. Robbe-Grillet)

supplementary: Heidegger, "Origin of the Work of Art"

week 8 political materials

10/21 Gordillo, Rubble (excerpt)

Bonelli & Galvez, "The roads of immanence: infrastructural change in southern Chile"

Jensen, "Experimenting with Political Materials"

Cache, "Vitruvius Machinator Terminator"

Bennett, "The Agency of Assemblages"

Deleuze, Cinema 1: chapter 7

film: Le salaire de la peur / The Wages of Fear (dir. Henri-Georges Clouzot)

supplementary: de la Cadena, "Indigenous Cosmopolitics in the Andes"

Harvey & Knox, "Enchantments of Infrastructure"

week 9 note and notation

10/28 Kittler, "Gramophone, Film, Typewriter"

Freud, "A note upon the mystic writing pad"

Kittler, "City is a medium"

Khan, "Flaws in the flow"

Uribe, "Illegible Infrastructures"

Deleuze, Cinema 1: chapter 8

film: Subida al cielo (dir. Buñuel)

week 10 chronotopes

11/4 Uribe, Frontier Road (excerpts)

Deleuze, Cinema 1: chapter 9

film: li.n li.n fēngch.n / Dust in the Wind (dir. Hao Hsiao Hsien)

supplementary: Bakhtin, "Forms of Time & of the Chronotope in the Novel" (select passages)

week 11 sense and surface

11/11 **NO CLASS** (university holiday)

Mrazek, "Asphalt as Language"

Raffles, The Book of Unconformities (excerpt)

Serres, "Epistemological Conditions: Observation & Simulacra"

Cache, "Plea for Euclid"

Deleuze, Cinema 1: chapter 10

film: Il deserto rosso / Red Desert (dir. Antonioni)

supplementary: Schnapp, "Three Pieces of Asphalt"

week 12 vibration

11/18 Schivelbusch, Railway Journey – Excursus: Industrial Fatigue
Messiaen, “Conversation 3”
Boulez, “On Musical Space”
Boulez, “Stravinsky: Style or Idea?”
Deleuze, “Boulez, Proust and Time”
Deleuze, Cinema 1: chapter 11
film: Caf. Lumi.re (dir. Hou Hsiao-Hsien)
supplementary: Henriques et. al., “Rhythm Returns”
Benveniste, “The Notion of ‘Rhythm’”
Lefebvre, Rhythmanalysis (select chapters)
Vannini, “In time, out of time: Rhythmanalyzing ferry mobilities”

week 13 artifice / artwork (crash, blockage, repair) –

11/25 [NO CLASS \(Thanksgiving holiday\)](#)
Benjamin, “The Railway Disaster at the Firth of Tay”
Schivelbusch, Railway Journey, Chapter 8: The Accident
Graham & Thrift, “Out of Order: Understanding Repair and Maintenance”
Knox & Harvey, “Anticipating Harm”
Berlant, “The Uncommons”
Raffles, The Book of Unconformities (excerpt)
film: Ya no estoy aquí. (dir. Frías de la Parra)

week 14 presentations

12/2 reports on individual research
Deleuze, Cinema 1: chapter 12
film: Kumiko, The Treasure Hunter (dir. Zellner)

week 15 presentations

12/8 reports on individual research