

ENVS 410/510: Justice, Capitalism, and the Anthropocene Spring 2019

Class schedule: Tuesday/Thursday 12-1:50 PM - Room: 142 COL

Instructor: Barbara Muraca, Ph.D. (bmuraca@uoregon.edu)

Office Hours: Thursday 3:30-5:30 PM & upon appointment - Room: 232 Susan Campbell Hall

GTF: Krysta Best

Office Hours: T-R 10:30-11:30 – UO Annex, Room 120.

Course Description

Geologists are about to name the age in which we live according to its main geological driving factor: human influence - the Anthropocene. This is at the same time a contested and powerful term. Who is meant by the 'anthropos', the human, responsible of the devastating ecological crisis we are facing? According to indigenous scholar Kyle Whyte the Anthropocene is intensified colonialism. For others, Capitalism and its specific relation to Nature should be at the core of the Anthropocene narrative. In this course we will discuss the different perspectives on the Anthropocene and analyze the modes of intensified colonization that started before the industrial revolution, but significantly increased in the last 5 decades, and their implications in terms of global justice. We will critically examine the specificity of a colonization that does not only extend to territories, communities, and natural resources, but also to the way in which people think, dream, shape their lives, and relate to other human and nonhuman others. We will also explore alternatives, breaking points, as well as forms of resistance and subversion.

Learning outcomes

In this class you will learn how to:

- compare, contrast, and critique different perspectives on the Anthropocene and connect them to issues of justice
- interpret, critically analyze, and discuss material from different disciplines, methodological approaches and traditions of thought
- apply the theoretical perspectives discussed in class to a critical analysis of daily life's objects, practices, and tools
- design and conduct collaborative research projects and present them in different forms (as a poster, in written form or through other media)

Besides, **graduate students** will improve their skills in preparing and presenting a topic and in facilitating class discussion by practicing different methods.

Course Requirements

Consistent attendance, a close reading of all the texts, submitting assignments on time, and active participation during class discussions are necessary requirements for a successful completion.

This is an interactive lecture class. This means that we will have ongoing discussions (both online and in class) and exercises during class hours. Therefore, you are expected to attend class regularly, to come prepared in order to be able to accomplish the discussion assignments and the in-class exercises. Regular attendance is not only a form of respect towards your fellow students and your instructors, but also an indispensable condition for success! There is nothing more boring than a group discussion during which half of the discussants have no idea about the topic. Please come to class with the texts ready to hand (hard or electronic copy) and be prepared to ask and answer questions on the assigned material.

The readings will require time and close attention. Plan enough time to dedicate to the class material before each class session and never wait until the very last minute to prepare.

You will find all important information about the class, its structure, the readings, and the assignments on **CANVAS**. Please make sure you know how to work on Canvas and enable receiving notifications in your settings. As a navigation guide, please follow 'Modules' on Canvas: there you will find the class schedule week by week, materials, assignments due dates, and a detailed description of the requirements for each assignments (including the respective grading rubrics if any).

If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing special accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to meet with your GE and with me soon as well with the AEC.

Plagiarism and academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Please make sure that you know and understand exactly what plagiarism is all about BEFORE you start working on your writing assignments. If you are not sure, please contact me or your GE ahead of time.

Land Acknowledgment: <https://library.uoregon.edu/honoring-native-peoples-and-lands>

Schedule and Readings

Schedule of Class	Topics and Readings	Assignments
Week 1 - Tuesday	Introduction to class, reciprocal expectations, structure, & description of assignments (<i>if you cannot attend class, please make sure that you have access to all information</i>)	
- Thursday	Justice, Capitalism, and the Anthropocene: An Overview <u>Readings:</u> 1. Armiero, Marco, De Angelis, Massimo (2017): The South Atlantic Quarterly 116:2 2. Alaimo, Stacy (2010): Bodily Natures : Science, Environment, and the Material Self. Indiana UP, pp. 27-33	Readings response & Discussion 1
Week 2 - Tuesday	Anthropocene - a new narrative for the ecological crisis: <i>What is the Anthropocene and how is it defined and understood?</i> <u>Readings - choose two of the following:</u> 1) Steffen et al. (2011): The Anthropocene: conceptual and historical perspectives. In: Philosophical Transactions, 369(1938) 2) Zalasiewicz et al. (2010): The New World of the Anthropocene. In: Environ. Sci. Technol. 44 3) Steffen et al. (2015): The trajectory of the Anthropocene: The Great Acceleration. In: The Anthropocene Review	Readings response & Discussion 2
- Thursday	Anthropocene as intensified colonialism: <i>tracing the colonial roots of the Anthropocene.</i> <u>Readings:</u> 1) Whyte, Kyle (2017): Indigenous Climate Change Studies: Indigenizing Futures, Decolonizing the Anthropocene. In: English Language Notes 55.1-2, 345-359 2) Gómez-Barris, Macarena (2019): The Colonial Anthropocene: Damage, Remapping, and Resurgent Resources. In: Antipode, 12	

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<p>Week 3 - Tuesday</p>	<p>Anthropocene or Capitalocene? <i>Are we not in the Age of Capitalism, a global system of framing social relationships to nature and to otherized human and nonhuman others? What is Racial Capitalism?</i> <u>Readings - Choose two from the following list:</u> 1. Moore, Jason (2015): Capitalism in the Web of Life. Chapter 7. 2. Moore, Jason (2016): The Rise of Cheap Nature. In: Anthropocene or Capitalocene. PM Press, 78-115. 3. Johnson, Walter: To Remake the World: Slavery, Racial Capitalism, and Justice - Introduction in Memory of Cedric Robinson (1940–2016): https://bostonreview.net/forum/walter-johnson-to-remake-the-world</p>	<p>Readings response & Discussion 3</p>
<p>- Thursday</p>	<p>Ecology and Capitalism <u>Readings:</u> 1) Gorz, André (1980): Ecology and Freedom. In: Ecology and Politics, Southend Press 2) Castoriadis, Cornelius (2010): Ecology against the Merchants & The Revolutionary Potential of Ecology. In: Society Adrift. Fordham UP, 194-205</p>	
<p>Week 4 - Tuesday</p>	<p>Capitalism and Social-Ecological Reproduction: <i>How is the hyper-exploitation of 'nature' and of so-called reproductive activities (care) linked in the Anthropocene?</i> <u>Readings:</u> 1. Oksala, Johanna (2018): Feminism, Capitalism, and Ecology. Hypatia vol. 33, no. 2, 216-234 <u>Additionally, choose one from the following list:</u> 2. Federici, Silvia (2018): Witches, Witch-Hunting, and Women. PM Press. Part One 3. Federici, Silvia (2004): Caliban and the Witch. Introduction, 11-20 4. Federici, Silvia (2004): Caliban and the Witsch - The Accumulation of Labor and the Degradation of Women, 61-132</p>	<p>Readings response & Discussion 4</p>
<p>- Thursday</p>	<p>Anthropocene reconsidered: <i>is this really all about Capitalism? What does the concept of the Anthropocene entails in terms of political action and representation? What alternative ideas can ignite transformation?</i> <u>Readings - choose two of the following:</u> 1. Chakrabarty: The Politics of Climate Change Is More Than the Politics of Capitalism 2. Swyngedouw Interrupting the Anthro-obScene: Immuno-biopolitics and Depoliticising Ontologies in the Anthropocene 3. Haraway, Donna (2015): Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Plantationocene, Chthulucene: Making Kin. <i>Environmental Humanities</i>, 6, 159-165</p>	

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Week 5 - Tuesday	Neoliberalism or putting Life to work - Biocapitalism and Biopolitics: <i>Neoliberalism as an answer to the ecological crisis - The Life Turn in Capitalism</i> <u>Readings - Choose two from the following list:</u> 1) Morini/ Fumagalli (2010): Life put to work: Towards a life theory of value. <i>Ephemera</i> 2) Lazzarato, Maurizio (2004): From Capital-Labour to Capital-Life. In: <i>Ephemera</i> 4(3) 3) Peters, M. A., & Venkatesan, P. (2010): Biocapitalism and the politics of life." <i>Geopolitics, History, and International Relations</i> 2.2 4) Leonardi, Emanuele (2017): In: <i>Soft Power</i> 5(1): For a Critique of Neoliberal Green Economy	Readings response & Discussion 5
- Thursday	Neoliberalism or putting life to work - Biocapitalism and Biopolitics: <i>discussion continued</i> <u>Readings - Choose two from the following list:</u> 1) Mezzadra/Neilson (2017): On the multiple frontiers of extraction: excavating contemporary capitalism. In: <i>Cultural Studies</i> 2) Goldstein and Johnson (2015): Biomimicry: New Natures, New Enclosures 3) Braun, B. (2014): New Materialisms and Neoliberal Natures. <i>Antipode</i> 4) Cooper, Melinda (2008): <i>Life as Surplus : Biotechnology and Capitalism in the Neoliberal Era</i> , University of Washington Press	
Week 6 - Tuesday	Poster Session and discussion in class	Poster in class (submission of posters with comments by Friday)
- Thursday	Extractivism under Neoliberalism: <i>resource extraction under neoliberalism</i> <u>Readings:</u> 1) Brand, Ulrich: Environmental crises and the ambiguous postneoliberalising of nature 2) Swampa, Maristella: Resource Extractivism and Alternatives: Latin American Perspectives on Development. In: Lang, Miriam and Dunia Mokrani: <i>Beyond Development. Alternative Visions from Latin America</i>	Readings response & Discussion 6
Week 7 - Tuesday	Imperial Way of Living: <i>What does it mean to live at others' expense? What can we do to understand and address it?</i> <u>Readings:</u> 1) Brand/Wissen (2016): Green Economy, Green Capitalism and the Imperial Mode of Living: Limits to a Prominent Strategy. <i>Fudan Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences</i> 9(1), 107–121 2) ILA Werkstatt: https://aufkostenanderer.org/publication-in-english-language/	Readings response & Discussion 7
- Thursday	FILM: Sand Wars: <i>Sand is one of the most scarce materials on Earth. Who knew? To secure nice beaches, roads, buildings, the effects of climate change for people, especially in the Global South, are worsened.</i>	

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<p>Week 8 - Tuesday</p>	<p>Resistance, Social Movements and Radical Alternatives: Global Environmental Justice <u>Readings - Choose one reading from the first list and a case study (you can pick one of the proposed case studies or bring to class another one based on your research for discussion):</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Martinez-Alier, Joan et al. (2016): Is there a global environmental justice movement? In: <i>The Journal of Peasant Studies</i>, 43(3), 731–755 2) Martinez-Alier et al. (2014) Between activism and science: grassroots concepts for sustainability coined by Environmental Justice Organizations. <i>Journal of Political Ecology</i>, 21, 19-60. <p><u>Examples of Case Studies (See for more examples: ejolt.org):</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) Barca, Stefania/ Leonardi, Emanuele (2016): Working Class Community and Ecology: Reframing Environmental Justice around the Ilva steel plant in Taranto (Apulia, Italy). In: M. Mayo and M. Shaw, <i>Class, Inequality and Community Development</i>, The Policy Press 4) Pulido, Laura/De Lara, Juan (2018): Reimagining ‘justice’ in environmental justice: Radical ecologies, decolonial thought, and the Black Radical Tradition. In: <i>Environment and Planning</i>, 1(1–2), 76–98 5) Leonardi, Emanuele (2013): Foucault in the Susa Valley: The No TAV Movement and Struggles for Subjectification. <i>Capitalism Nature Socialism</i>, 24:2, 27-40, 6) De Lara, Juan (2018): “This Port Is Killing People”: Sustainability without Justice in the Neo-Keynesian Green City. <i>Annals of the American Association of Geographers</i>, 108:2, 538-548 	<p>Readings response & Discussion 8</p>
<p>- Thursday</p>	<p>Resistance, Social Movements and Radical Alternatives: Alter-Globalization <u>Readings:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pleyers. Geoffrey (2010): <i>Alter-Globalization</i>. Polity Press Chapter 2 and/or 3. 2. Gibson-Graham et al. (2013): <i>Take Back the Economy</i>. UM Press. Choose any chapter 	
<p>Week 9 - Tuesday</p>	<p>Resistance, Social Movements and Radical Alternatives: Degrowth <u>Read two of the following:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Kallis, Giorgos et al. (2018): Research on Degrowth. <i>Annu. Rev. Environ. Resour.</i> 2018. 43:4.1–4.26 2. Muraca, Barbara (forthcoming): Possibilities for Degrowth. 3. Paulson, Susan (2017): Degrowth: culture, power and change. In: <i>Journal of Political Ecology</i>, 24: 425-666 	<p>Readings response & Discussion 9</p>
<p>- Thursday</p>	<p>Resistance, Social Movements and Radical Alternatives: <u>Readings:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Samudzi, Zoé/ Anderson, William (2018): <i>As Black as Resistance</i>, PM Press, Chapters 2 & 4. 2. Brown, Adrienne M. (2017): <i>Emergent Strategies</i>. AK Press, Introduction 	<p>Submission of Report on Social-Ecological Rucksack</p>

Schedule of Class	Topics and Readings	Assignments
Week 10 - Tuesday	Resistance, Social Movements and Radical Alternatives: Pluriverse of Alternatives <u>Readings:</u> 1. Kothari, Ashish (2014): India 2100: Towards Radical Ecological Democracy. <i>Futures</i> 56, 62-72. 2. Gibson-Graham (2011): A feminist project of belonging for the Anthropocene, <i>Gender, Place and Culture</i> , 18:01, 1-21.	Readings response & Discussion 10
- Thursday	Final Discussion, presentation of Report on Social-Ecological Rucksack and Evaluation of Class	
FINAL Project		DEADLINE: Wed, June 12

Assignments and Grades:

Assignments include *(Detailed instructions about the form and structure of the assignments will be given during class & on Canvas in due course):*

- 1) **Reading Responses and Discussion Post on Canvas:** 10 times over term, to be posted before class meeting: 5 pt. each, **max. 50 points**
- 2) **Social-Ecological Rucksack:** during the whole term you are required to choose a product/ service/ tool/ practice and identify, analyze, and critically discuss its social-ecological burdens. To be submitted by the end of week 9: **10 points**
- 3) **Mid-Term Assignment: Poster** to be discussed during the in-class poster sessions (this is a group assignment) - see below for details: **15 pt.**
- 4) **Final Project/ Paper:** (max 3000 words) - see below for details. **Max. 25 points**
- 5) **Only for graduate students** (PHL 510): one in class **presentation** and attendance to additional meetings: **max. 15 points.**

Reading Responses and Discussion Post on Canvas: each week you have the chance to post a brief response to one or more of the readings assigned for that date. The response should briefly address the reading(s) (by offering a brief summary or a brief list of key messages) and add a personal, well substantiated comment (something more than just whether you like it or not!). You are welcome to add additional material (including multimedia) to the post to contribute to the discussion in class. You have to post 10 responses to earn the full points and it is your choice which class meeting in each week you want to contribute to by your posting. To earn the full points, after having posted your contribution, add a brief (but substantial) comment to someone else's contribution. Responses should be posted no later than 6pm of the day before the class meeting you are contributing to.

Poster: the poster session is scheduled at the beginning of week 6, during which we will have an extended in-class discussion of the topics addressed in the posters. The poster is a **group assignment**. Each group should have between 3 and max. 6 members. Groups will be set up on Canvas under 'People'.

It is an essential requirements that each member actively participates in the group work. It is your responsibility to make sure that you find a group and communicate timely with the other groups members.

The poster will be discussed and commented in class by all students according to the method of a 'poster walk'. After the discussion, by Friday of Week 6, the poster should be submitted on CANVAS, including the following: 1) picture or slides of the whole poster; 2) brief response to at least three

comments on the posters collected during the in-class discussion, and 3) a brief annotated bibliography including at least three of the readings from class plus additional material.

Final project/paper: (for papers max. 3000 words): based on the class material or on additional research documents related to the class topic. Topics have to be discussed timely with me. Alternatives formats to a paper (poster, web-based outcome, multimedia product, etc.) are welcome. In this case, you will have to include a brief introduction to the project (what, why, how) and an annotated bibliography, listing at least 3 readings from class and 3 additional readings that you used for your project. You are encouraged to make the final project/ paper into a collaborative work experience and a group assignment.

Graduate Students (PHL 510): One or more additional meeting(s) with graduate students will be scheduled throughout the term, in which the presentation will be prepared and discussed together. Additionally to the standard assignments, graduate students are required to give one brief presentation in class on the topic they are interested in and to organize the discussion afterwards together with the instructor. The presentation slides (or manuscript) will have to be discussed with me in advance and sent to me after the class session.

Late Assignments policy: if, *in exceptional cases that you have discussed with your GE and with me*, an assignment is posted moderately late, it will be accepted, but penalized by one point down per each full day. This does not work for the reading responses!

Extra credits include summaries of public talks on Campus related to the class topics on the ground of a template/worksheet that will be posted on Canvas. **2 points each for a maximum of 6 points. To be submitted at the very latest by the last day of class of week 10. No later submission will be considered.**

All the assignments add up to a score of max. 100 points – *115 points for graduate students*. Points roughly translate into letters according to the following table that serves as a general (not strictly mathematical) guidance:

Points	Grades
Exceptional additional performance	A+
100-95	A
94-90	A-
89-86	B+
85-82	B
81-76	B-
75-73	C+
72-70	C
69-66	C-
65-63	D+
62-59	D
58-56	D-
55-0	F