

# GEOGRAPHY AND PLANNING

## GPHY 870: Historical and Cultural Issues in Fieldwork



<b>Contact Time</b>	One 3 hour session per week
<b>Format</b>	Seminar-style discussions and experiential learning based on key texts, case studies and field activities
<b>Class Assessment (potential)</b>	Students will be responsible for leading discussions based on readings, engaging in weekly activities, keeping a 'field' journal and completing four "field exercises". Participation and Presentations.....25% Field Journal Assignment.....30% Field Exercises.....45%

### COURSE OVERVIEW

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, racialized, imaginative, biopoliticized, 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 (and students from other disciplines) are most welcome.

Cross-listed with GPHY 402: Honours Seminar in Human Geography

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Critically evaluate complex social issues using spatial and geographical analysis drawing on concepts such as place, space and scale.
2. Integrate theoretical and methodological approaches from various subfields of geography to analyze and explain social and environmental issues widely considered important.
3. Apply advanced geographical methods to explore complex questions in human geography.
4. Research and communicate complex geographical ideas and concepts in written and verbal forms through written assignments and classroom participation.
5. Communicate key concepts from the course in plain language format to a non-academic audience to practice transferable skills beyond the class.

### COURSE TOPICS

Potential topics include: Walking; *Where* is the field?; Senses in Fieldwork; Identity Formation and Fieldwork Practice; Trust in Fieldwork; Animals in the Archives, The Field and the City; Ethics in Fieldwork; Storytelling and the Field; Writing the Field; Sharing our Walks; Gender and the Field; Fieldwork Diaries; Historical Geographies of Participant Observation

### COURSE READINGS (sample, will change from year to year)

Abbott, D., 'Disrupting the 'whiteness' of fieldwork in geography', *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography* 27 (2006): 326–341.  
 Cameron, E., *Far Off Metal River: Inuit Lands, Settler Stories, and the Making of the Contemporary Arctic*. UBC, 2015.  
 Cameron, L. and Forrester, J., 'Freud in the Field' in Kingsbury and Pile (eds), *Psychoanalytic Geographies*, 2014.  
 Driver, F. 'Field-work in geography', editorial in *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 25 (2000): 267-8.  
 Edwards, S. *Conversations with the Kagawong River*. Talonbooks, 2024.  
 Fisher, A., *Radical Ecopsychology*, 2nd Edition. SUNY Press, 2013.  
 Gupta, A. and Ferguson, J. (eds) *Anthropological Locations: Boundaries and Grounds of a Field Science*, 1997.  
 Kimmerer, R., *Braiding Sweetgrass*. Milkweed Editions, 2014.  
 Kohler, H. & Kuklick, R., *Science in the Field, Osiris*, Vol. 11, 1996.  
 Maynard, R. & Simpson, L.B., *Rehearsals for Living*, Knopf, 2022.  
 Pinder, D. "Ghostly footsteps: voices, memories and walks in the city," *Ecumene* 8, no. 1 (2001): 1-19.  
 Ritts, M. *A Resonant Ecology*. Duke University Press, 2024.  
 Shapin, S. "Placing the view from nowhere: historical and sociological problems in the location of science," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 23 (1998): 5-12.  
 Taylor, S., *Disabled Ecologies: Lessons from a Wounded Desert*. University of California Press, 2024.