Introduction

Settler colonialism has come into its own as a category of discussion and analysis in just the last two decades or so. Although disagreements persist as to whether it is a variation on a general category of colonialism or a peculiar type of imperial formation with its own dynamics, settler colonialism has a number of features that distinguish its study. Whether these features are economic relations, ideological formations, social order, spatial and territorial power, or even the historiographical position of scholars within settler populations, there is clearly value in engaging this analytical category critically, whether as a phenomenon or as a framework. A progressively growing body of literature involving cases from around the world, along with at least one devoted journal (Settler Colonial Studies, founded in 2010), attest to the field’s growth. At the same time, a variety of works that address settler-colonial dynamics do not think of themselves in this light. What is settler colonialism? Is it special, and if so, what makes it that way? How does it work? Why should we care? These questions lack definitive answers, but in this colloquium we will discuss some of the key recent literature that offers us viewpoints on these questions, starting with global views and progressively moving to more specific themes or regions.

Students successfully completing this colloquium will be able to:

- Identify and discuss the major elements of settler colonialism, including areas of disagreement;
- Articulate the relationship of settler-colonial processes to their own research foci;
- Demonstrate both of the above points through a major historiographical or contextual essay; &
- Develop a stronger sense of intellectual camaraderie in the process of completing the work.

Our process in this colloquium will therefore be critical and rigorous, but it shall remain constructive and focused on collaborative learning in an intellectually safe space where we can all learn from one another. Most of us come from different specializations, and I hope you will bring your own knowledge into our colloquium just as I hope you (and I) will take our shared learning out of it.

Policies on Attendance, Conduct, and Accessibility:

We need all of you at every session, as we are so few! Missing sessions or assigned work will negatively affect your experience (and the grade). That said, flexibility is especially important now, so talk with me. Please also let me know if you encounter difficulties in reading the material or in any part of the writing process. In the classroom, I require that we keep our atmosphere constructive and open to spirited intellectual disagreement. See me about any issues on this front as soon as humanly possible.

The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability-related barriers to your participation. You are also encouraged to contact the Accessible Education Center (AEC) in 155 Oregon Hall at 541-346-1155 or via email at uoaec@uoregon.edu.
Requirements:

1. Every Tuesday evening (by 8pm), you will post one or more questions the readings raised for you, to help launch discussion (including the session leader, see 2.). I’ll create Canvas space for this.

2. Starting in week two, one or two members of the colloquium will lead each session. Leading requires that you complete the readings a bit earlier, pursue a few of the ‘threads’ and questions that you want to raise, and prepare extended thoughts that launch us into the session. The session leader(s) will be responsible for a roughly 10-15-minute introduction of the shared reading, which should both raise questions from that reading and consider how the reading fits (or doesn’t) into a settler-colonial framework as you see it. Feel free to draw on your own disciplines’ insights here.
   a. After the session, each leader must tender a roughly 400-500 word essay (brief!) that distills the essence of that introduction. These need not be formal, beyond any footnotes.

3. You will write a final paper for this course that explores the ideas we raise in this colloquium. The depth or breadth of sources may vary but it should do at least one of the two (a or b):
   a. Outline the historiography of a particular question that you found important relative to settler colonialism (whether or not you felt the scholarship deals with it adequately), or
   b. Elaborate the relationship of settler colonialism and its context relative to your own research interests (or specific era and area fields).
   c. To this end, you will confer with me in weeks 2 or 3, and tender a proposal in week 3.

4. In the last few weeks of the term, each of you will be required (once) to present your ‘work in progress’ for the colloquium, in a roughly 30-minute workshopping-lite model of exchange.

The major paper will be required on Thursday of finals week. For History grads, it must follow the Chicago Manual of Style 16th or 17th editions in format, and be at least 6,000 words in length (including footnotes and required bibliography). In the interests of practicing concision, it is not to exceed 10,000 words. Participants from outside History should follow the style guides prevalent in their disciplines.

Grading:

Grading for this colloquium will turn most heavily on the major paper (about half) together with your active participation in, and exercises for, our sessions. I require active discussion and contribution in learning as well, because your engagement in and preparation for our shared sessions benefits all of us through shared learning. Roughly, the grading is split halfway between your paper and everything else, however a failing paper cannot be rescued by strong class contributions whereas the reverse is possible.

Tech:

If you need to have PDFs to hand, a laptop or tablet is OK. Please don’t let it be a screen between yourself and the rest of us! Keep me informed before class if you need to be reachable via phone—those disruptions can be jarring. AEC-approved and/or ADA-related tech is fine.

Deadlines:

For writing due at particular class sessions, I require they be uploaded to Canvas in .docx or .pdf format (potentially subject to Turnitin processing; enrollment is consent here) before midnight on the day of our session, so that you can make final tweaks to anything you need. The final paper deadline for upload to Canvas (Thursday, 17 March) is meant to be absolute, but in the age of COVID I err on the side of flexibility for grads. Everything must come in via Canvas (for records), even if you also send it via email.
Concepts: What Is (and Isn’t) Settler Colonialism?  
Week 1 (6 Jan 2022)

Common Readings (in chronological order, probably best read this way):


Some Further Resources (in chronological order; this list is of course neither exhaustive nor required, but do read Osterhammel 1997 and Elkins & Pedersen 2005 if basic terms or concepts are unfamiliar):

- Patrick Wolfe, “Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native,” *Journal of Genocide Research* 8 (December 2006): 387-409. This essay is immensely influential, as much of Wolfe’s work is.
- Lorenzo Veracini, “Defending Settler Colonial Studies,” *Australian Historical Studies* 45, no. 3 (2014): 311-316. (This and Rowse above it present a directly opposing pair which is useful, but I find the 2014 essay and Veracini’s refined 2015 concepts to be more comprehensive.)
- Patricia Limerick, “Comments on Settler Colonialism and the American West,” *Journal of the West* 56, no. 4 (2017): 90-96. [This entire issue is a theme issue, and we’ll see more from it.]
- *Settler Colonial Studies* [journal title], 2011-present, many articles; see Veracini’s 2011 intro essay.

Questions for week 1: What is ‘settler colonialism’ as phenomenon, and as theoretical construct? What historical phenomena, in turn, does that label contain? Is it meaningful to break ‘settlers’ out, is it analytically sound to do so, and what are the various implications of considering (or not considering) it to be special? These readings’ themes will recur and overlap, as will many further themes yet to appear.
**Expansion: Growth and Acquisition as Global Process**

Week 2 (13 Jan 2022)

**Plan to meet with me this week, or early in Week 3, to talk about your project for the colloquium.**

Common Readings (in best reading order):


Some Further Resources (none required; just for reference):

- Lindsay Frederick Braun, *Colonial Survey and Native Landscapes in Rural South Africa 1850-1913* (Leiden: Brill, 2015). [Title is available online via Open Access.]
- Lisa Ford and Tim Rowse, ed., *Between Indigenous and Settler Governance* (London: Routledge, 2010). [This has a variety of areas and subjects by key authors, focused on Indigenous action.]
- Gareth Griffiths and David Trigger, ed., *Disputed Territories: Land, Culture and Identity in Settler Societies* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2003).

**Inventions: Appropriations, Depictions, and Subjections**

Week 3 (20 Jan 2022)

DUE: A short proposal (two pages or so, double-spaced) with preliminary bibliography for your paper. Be sure to provide a research question or thesis to define it, and a good sense of what you currently know.

- **RECOMMENDED/OPTIONAL** Fiona Barclay, Charlotte Anne Chopin, and Martin Evans, “Introduction: Settler Colonialism and French Algeria,” *Settler Colonial Studies* 8, no. 2 (2018): 115-130. As an introduction to Algeria, read this before Cummings if you need background.
Some Further Resources (not required, etc etc):

- David McDermott Hughes, *Whiteness in Zimbabwe: Race, Landscape, and the Problem of Belonging* (New York: Palgrave, 2015), esp. ch. 1. [David is not a historian, so it’s a novel view.]
- Patrick Wolfe, ed., *The Settler Complex: Recuperating Binarism in Colonial Studies* (Los Angeles: UCLA, 2016). [Many chapters touch on this, and his introduction is important relative to week 1 and potentially weeks 9 and 10.]

**Societies: The Colonizers, the Colonized, and Unsettled Settlers Week 4 (27 Jan 2022)**


Some Further Resources:

- James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven: Yale, 1997). [This is a classic work in thinking about modern states and social control, and is a useful work to know far beyond this course.]

**Bodies: Slavery, Indenture, Migration, and Labor Regimes Week 5 (3 Feb 2022)**

Some Further Resources:


Midways: Plural Dynamics and ‘Secondary Settlers’?  
**Week 6 (10 Feb 2022)**


Some Further Resources:


Environments: Creating the New, Controlling the Old  
**Week 7 (17 Feb 2022)**

- Andrew Isenberg and Lawrence Kessler, “Settler Colonialism and the Environmental History of the North American West,” *Journal of the West* 56, no. 4 (2017): 57-66. [This is a short but interestingly complicating piece for thinking about the ‘fit’ of settler colonialism’s concepts.]
**RECOMMENDED/OPTIONAL** William Beinart and Peter Coates, *Environment and History: The Taming of Nature in the USA and South Africa* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 1-33. [This is two chapters: an introduction of comparative environmental history, and one on conservation.]

Some Further Resources:


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**Intimacies: Settler Colonialism in Gender, Sex, and Family**

**Week 8 (24 Feb 2022)**


Some Further Resources (bearing in mind that Tallie and others have touched on a lot of this too, and that this week inevitably deals with some themes of genocide that will come up again next week):


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**Devastation: Genocide and Its (Other) Forms**

**Week 9 (3 Mar 2022)**


Some Further Resources:


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**Legacies: Memories, Monuments, Justice, and Reconciliation**

**Week 10 (10 Mar 2022)**

**NOTE:** No normal office hours will be held this week, owing to medical procedure.

• Penelope Edmonds, *Settler Colonialism and (Re)Conciliation: Frontier Violence, Affective Performances, and Imaginative Refoundings* (New York: Palgrave, 2019), intro., chs. 3 & 5.

Some Further Resources:

• Natchee Blu Barnd, *Native Space: Geographic Strategies to Unsettle Settler Colonialism* (Corvallis: Oregon State University, 2017).
• Annie E. Coombes, ed., *Rethinking Settler Colonialism: History and Memory in Australia, Canada, Aotearoa New Zealand and South Africa* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006).
• [A vast literature, ever-changing, exists on land reform and colonial legacy in Africa, and landback movements elsewhere; if studying this, come see me—it may well change again before the term is out!]

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**FINAL PAPER DUE: 17 March 2022, before midnight.**