**Reading:** New cultural geography – an unfinished project (Cresswell 2010)

**(i) Author:** Tim Cresswell is the Ogilvie Professor of Geography at the University of Edinburgh and a cultural geographer specializing in space, place, and mobility. He holds PhDs in both Geography and Creative Writing and is also a published poet with three collections, including Plastiglomerate (2020).

**(ii) Purpose & importance:** The purpose of this article seems to be a reflection of the field of Cultural Geography’s history (with Cresswell’s own experiences woven into the piece) and how it has evolved to the point it was at the time of this article’s publication. This article's importance comes from the fact that it has detailed the field’s evolution and Cresswell’s own thoughts as to how things are in its present state.

**Key points include:**

1. The overarching theme of this article is mainly how New Cultural Geography started to emerge in the 1980s as a response to (Old) Cultural Geography’s traditional approach to things. New Cultural Geography tries to integrate social concern into cultural geography and has led to a broader understanding of how culture and society interact since its establishment.
2. Another key point in this article is Cresswell’s belief that the field has started to stagnate since its formation many years ago *and* that the fields of Cultural and Social Geography have been at odds with each other because some feel that Cultural has overshadowed Social and Social has become “too fixed on making a cultural world something that is explained by recourse to the social world.” (Cresswell 171).
3. Another key point is the importance of the “social” in Cultural Geography. In this article, Cresswell argues for continued social analysis within cultural geography and that the study of things like place, landscape, and mobility is crucial to understanding both culture and society.

**(iii) Connections to broader ideas:** While no one in class has mentioned any interest in Cultural Geography just yet, there is no doubt that this is an important subdiscipline in Human Geography and is likely of interest to some of the Human Geographers that will come to speak to us during. Thus, while this article doesn’t currently have any direct connections to broader ideas within the class, it sets up a good foundation for what we will likely learn about and discuss in future classes.

**(iv) Discussion question:** In what ways can New Cultural Geography balance its focus on representation with its need to engage more with the material and the everyday, lived experience of its subjects?

**Reading:** Fatal Couplings of Power and Difference Notes on Racism and Geography (Gilmore 2002)

**(i) Author:** Ruth Gilmore is the current Director of the Center for Place, Culture, and Politics and a professor of geography at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. She is widely recognized for pioneering the field of carceral geography, which explores how space, institutions, and political economy shape modern incarceration. In 2020, she received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Association of Geographers and was elected as a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2021.

**(ii) Purpose & importance:** The purpose of Gilmore's writing this article is to write a critical examination of how racism operates as a spatial and geographical phenomenon (rather than just some static or individual example of prejudice or identity). The importance of this article likely comes from its emphasis on the intersection of racism and power, as it lays crucial groundwork for understanding the dynamics of race, power, and its spatial properties within the field of Geography.

**Key points include:**

1. The overarching theme of this article is that (according to Gilmore) racism operates as a “fatal coupling of power and difference” as racism is not just a social construct but a spatial practice that appears in the form of uneven development. As such, the cost of racism is disproportionately imposed on marginalized communities, which, in turn, shapes access to resources and power.
2. Another key point is that during times of crisis and power redistribution, structural inequalities become more visible and can allow for opportunities for radical activism and for others to challenge oppressive systems (and that understanding this is an important part of understanding the intersection of race and power).

**(iii) Connections to broader ideas:** While this article covers similar material while going in a different direction, this piece is reminiscent of Peet’s “Inequality and Poverty: A Marxist-Geographic Theory” article, as they both grapple with ideas of power, who yields it, and how it can be redistributed.

**(iv) Discussion question:** How does understanding racism as both a spatial and structural process (rather than an individual prejudice) change the way we analyze social injustices and power dynamics?

**Reading:** An Other Geography (Oswin 2020)

**(i) Author:** Natalie Oswin is an Associate Professor and the Associate Graduate Chair of the Department of Geography and Planning at the University of Toronto. Her research focuses on queer and trans politics in neoliberal, (post)colonial cities, and how heteronormativity operates through intersecting social hierarchies. She also studies how urban development ideas circulate globally, reinforcing economic inequalities between leading and aspiring global cities, with research sites in South Africa, Vietnam, Canada, and Singapore (where she previously worked at the National University of Singapore).

**(ii) Purpose & importance:** Its importance comes from the fact that it challenges the field and its exclusionary views of space by highlighting how identity can have a major impact on shaping the diverse experiences of place. It’s one of many important pieces to try to push the field towards a more socially aware and inclusive field that seeks to recognize and uplift marginalized groups and voices within Geography as a whole.

**Key points include:**

1. One of the main points of this article is the role of identity (things like gender, race, and sexuality) in shaping how people’s experience produces the spaces they exist in and the meanings that they attach to those places.
2. Another key point of the articles is the idea of challenging dominant, pre-established (often Western-centric) perspectives as they have historically contributed to the marginalization of current “othered” groups.

**(iii) Connections to broader ideas:** The idea of space being socially constructed is a very familiar one in the field of Geography. The discussion of “otherness” and marginalized groups in this article is also very reminiscent of Laura Pulido’s “Reflections on a White Race” and Gilmore’s “Fatal Couplings of Power and Difference Notes on Racism and Geography” and they both sort of adovcate for those who are othered and call for more inclusivity in the field to ensure that this phenomenon is properly studied and its importance is known.

**(iv) Discussion question:** Does Oswin’s concept of “Other Geographies” challenge traditional ideas of space and place (And if so, how)?