

**STRS-4237 Rethinking Holy Land(s)**  
**Fall 2010**  
**Meets : Tuesdays 9:40am – 12:30pm**  
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### **SYLLABUS (Provisional – July 2010)**

*The question that is finally important is not “who are these exotic creatures who are so different from yourselves?” but rather, “how will we together (Indian and non-Indian) build the future differently than we have built the colonial past?”...*

Tink Tinker

Traditionally in the academy, theological inquiry has followed the western hegemonic pattern of empirical inquiry based on a temporal worldview – one that sees the world in terms of ‘historical progression’ and ‘development.’ Tied to a worldview based on ‘time’ and ‘progress’ is what can be seen as a distancing from ‘place’ or ‘land.’ Peoples who have been traditionally concerned with progress through time have tended to be the peoples who have reached out in the world, intent on conquest, domination and ownership of lands and other peoples. But there are also other cultures based on an epistemology that cannot understand itself separate from where they are as a people. “Home” is not where one *lives* but where one is *from*, in a sense. This course will attempt to look at theologies of ‘sacred places’ at the intersection of faith, politics and place in a way that fosters development of vocations in ministry to look at the world from a spatial as well as temporal perspective.

This course will be designed primarily to contrast different ways of thinking about ‘land’ and ‘space.’ Different worldviews and cultures will necessarily inform the way our theologies guide us in thinking about the places where we live, the places we are from, the places where we conquer or try to control. From the perspective of the marginalized, it is important to learn to deconstruct the way worldviews on time and space influence political and theological interpretations of the earth and land and the ways we relate to it.

The course will be designed as a research seminar, with some lecture on a weekly basis but mainly group discussion based on indigenous pedagogical models developed by Native American educator Greg Cajete, where half of the class is in a listening role and half in a speaking role each week, reversing the subsequent week. A major paper or project will be assigned as the main method of evaluation in the course, but students will also be evaluated based on participation and attendance and weekly one page theological reflections.

## **Student Learning Outcomes**

The learning outcomes for this course will include:

- ❖ Learning to deconstruct systems of power in terms of land issues and indigenous peoples
- ❖ Theological reflection on issues of land and ‘land ownership’
- ❖ Questioning epistemological premises of space & time and their effects on theologies

Competencies for ministry and leadership will meet the following Starr King threshold areas of study:

- ❖ Prophetic Witness and Work;
- ❖ Thea/ology in Culture and Context
- ❖ History of Dissenting Traditions and the Thea/ological Quest

## **Course Evaluation:**

As is the general methodology at Starr King School for the Ministry, narrative comments will be given as the primary form of evaluation. Students in M.A. programs will also be given letter grades. Students in other degree programs may seek special permission to receive letter grades if the reason is consistent with Starr King’s educational philosophy.

The weighting of course evaluation breakdown will be as follows:

Introductory Essay	5%
Attendance & Participation	15%
Theological Reflections	25%
Major Paper / Project	55%

***A Note on Printing:*** *To minimize environmental impact, students are encouraged to submit papers and proposals electronically. If you prefer to hand in a printed copy, you are encouraged to reuse paper or to hand in double sided assignments. All emailed submissions must be sent prior to the beginning of class the day it is due. This includes weekly theological reflections. The introductory essay may be written on your computer in class if you brought it the first week, but must be transferred onto my memory stick at the end of the allotted time.*

## **Introductory Essay**

The second half of the first session of class you will be given 60 minutes to write in class an ‘introductory essay.’ *There is no page limit – only a time limit.* You may not complete the essay at home. The essay will allow you to introduce yourself to me, as well as give you the opportunity to reflect on what drew you to this course, what you hope to learn, and any expectations or hesitations you might hold regarding course content or assignments. There will be no ‘evaluation’ of the content of this essay, although I may return it to you with comments; the completion of the exercise itself is the only requirement in terms of final course evaluation.

## Attendance & Participation

Regular attendance in class will be required. Although the course is designed as a research-based seminar, your engagement with the material through your research project will be influenced profoundly by your interactions with the materials and with each other in the class. Of course “life happens” and so if you are unable to attend class, please make sure you contact me (email and phone number noted at the top of this syllabus) – you will be permitted 2 absences with no impact on your final grade. This may be re-negotiated with the instructor if there are extenuating circumstances.

Participation in the class discussions is highly encouraged. However, each person has her/his own learning style and speaking in front of groups, no matter how large or small, is a challenge for some. Likewise, self-monitoring to ensure leaving adequate space for everyone to speak is a challenge for many extroverts who need to process their thoughts externally in order to make sense of information they are learning. It is my hope that the pedagogical method of ‘presenting circle’ / ‘listening circle’ will help us to find a balance in this respect. During the first class session, we will also make a covenant as a seminar group to set guidelines and boundaries for how we interact as a group to make sure that the educational philosophy of Starr King School for the Ministry is respected and that we are able to be a manifestation of that philosophy in our journey together.

**Note:** The ‘presenting circle’ / ‘listening circle’ will be introduced and organized the first session of class. Please remember that ‘presentations’ during feedback at the beginning of class can be creative interpretations based on art, music, or other media, not only a summary of notes taken the previous week.

## Theological Reflections

Every week by the beginning of class, students are required to submit a one page, single spaced reflection; reflections should cover both thoughts on the class discussion the previous week as well as engagement with the readings for the current week. For example, the reflection paper for Week 3 should cover the discussion and interaction in class for Week 2, as well as reflection on the readings for Week 3.

**NOTE:** The reflections are to be *theological* in nature – *not* summaries of the readings or discussions. For example, you can name ways in which what you are learning influences or challenges your theological position, as well as questions upon which you might like to do further reflection and research. The purpose of the reflections is to help you to engage with the materials in a way that will facilitate your final project as well as to give me further insight into your learning processes to facilitate my evaluation of your participation in the class.

## Major Paper / Project

The week prior to Reading Week, you will have the opportunity to propose either a final paper or final project.

Paper and project proposals should be no more than 2 pages typed, double-spaced. They should address the theological question or issue you would like to research and present in your final work.

### ***Major Paper (20-25 pages)***

The major paper will be a well thought out, researched and argued position on the themes of the course. The paper should be no less than 20 pages and no more than 25 pages, double spaced, 12-point font. Your bibliography should include a minimum of 8 sources outside of materials presented on the syllabus, although some may be drawn from the bibliography of suggested reading handed out the first day of class.

### ***Major Project (accompanied by 10-12 page theological rationale)***

For students who prefer to do their primary research reflection through some other media, proposing a final project is an alternative to writing a research paper. Students must offer a concrete, 'do-able' project that will offer either pedagogical or artistic reflections based on their research for the course. The project must be completed along with a 10 to 12 page summary of their work (double spaced, 12-point font), as well as a bibliography that meets the requirements of the research paper (minimum 8 sources outside of class materials). The rationale that accompanies the research project should properly cite references and how those materials influenced your work in the project, as well as give a concise overview of how your constructive theological endeavour is expressed in your work. If you prefer to do some type of public presentation, there will be time available the last two weeks of class, upon negotiation with the instructor.

## Required Texts:

Brueggemann, Walter. *The Land: Place as Gift, Promise and Challenge in Biblical Faith*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002)  
(Suggested Retail Price: \$20.00. **ISBN-13:** 9780800634629; **ISBN:** 0800634624)

Carter, Jimmy. *Palestine: Peace, Not Apartheid* (New York: Simon & Shuster, 2006)  
(Suggested Retail Price: \$15.00. **ISBN-10:** 0743285034; **ASIN:** B001SARCHA)

Cordova, V.F. *How It Is: The Native American Philosophy of V.F. Cordova*. Kathleen Dean Moore and others, editors. (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2007)  
(Suggested Retail Price: \$19.95. **ISBN-10:** 0816526494; **ISBN-13:** 978-0816526499)

Deloria Jr., Vine. *God Is Red: A Native View of Religion*. 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition. (Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing, 2003)  
(Suggested Retail Price: \$21.95. **ISBN-10:** 1555914985; **ISBN-13:** 978-1555914981)

Quinn, Daniel. *Ishmael: An Adventure of the Mind and Spirit*. (New York: Bantam, 1995)  
(Suggested Retail Price: \$18.00. **ISBN-10:** 0553375407; **ISBN-13:** 978-0553375404)

Salaita, Steven. *The Holy Land in Transit: Colonialism And the Quest for Canaan*. (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2006)  
(Suggested Retail Price: \$16.95. **ISBN-10:** 081563109X; **ISBN-13:** 978-0815631095)

Shenhav, Yehouda. *The Arab Jews: A Postcolonial Reading of Nationalism, Religion and Ethnicity*. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006)  
(Suggested Retail Price: \$65.00. **ISBN-10:** 0804752966; **ISBN-13:** 978-0804752961)

Tinker, George E. "Tink." *American Indian Liberation: A Theology of Sovereignty*. (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2008)  
(Suggested Retail Price: \$22.00. **ISBN-10:** 1570758050; **ISBN-13:** 978-1570758058)

### **Recommended Texts:**

*These texts are not required, but will give further access to some of the issues in class, expanded readings of what will be posted on moodle, or methodological resources.*

Alfred, Taiaiake. *Wasáse: Indigenous Pathways of Action and Freedom*. (Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 2005)  
(Suggested Retail Price: \$29.95. **ISBN-10:** 1551116375; **ISBN-13:** 978-1551116372)

Ellis, Carolyn and Arthur P. Bochner, editors. *Composing Ethnography: Alternative Forms of Qualitative Writing*. (Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press, 1996)  
(Suggested Retail Price: \$39.95. **ISBN-10:** 0761991646; **ISBN-13:** 978-0761991649)

Fanon, Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth*. Richard Philcox, translator. (New York: Grove Press, 2008)  
(Suggested Retail Price: \$14.00. **ISBN-10:** 0802143008; **ISBN-13:** 978-0802143006)

Lipsitz, George. *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness: How White People Profit From Identity Politics*. Revised and Expanded Edition. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006)  
(Suggested Retail Price: \$26.95. **ISBN-10:** 1592134947; **ISBN-13:** 978-1592134946)

Lutz, Charles P. and Robert O. Smith. *Christians in a Land Called Holy: How We Can Foster Justice, Peace and Hope*. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006)  
(Suggested Retail Price: \$16.00. **ISBN-10:** 0800637844; **ISBN-13:** 978-0800637842)

Tuhiwai Smith, Linda. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. (New York: Zed Books, 2006)  
(Suggested Retail Price: \$32.95 USD. **ISBN-10:** 1856496244; **ISBN-13:** 978-1856496247)

Sait, Siraj and Hilary Lim. *Land, Law & Islam: Property & Human Rights in the Muslim World* (London: Zed Books, 2006)  
(Suggested Retail Price: \$38.95. **ISBN-10:** 1842778137; **ISBN-13:** 978-1842778135)

Sandoval, Chela. *Methodology of the Oppressed*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000)  
Suggested Retail Price: \$22.50. **ISBN-10:** 0816627371; **ISBN-13:** 978-0816627370)

Students should investigate multiple online booksellers to find the most competitive prices for texts. Some helpful sights are:

[www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

[www.barnesandnoble.com](http://www.barnesandnoble.com)

[www.abebooks.com](http://www.abebooks.com)

[www.bookfinder.com](http://www.bookfinder.com)

[www.alibris.com](http://www.alibris.com)

*For additional sources, see the bibliography handout from the first session of class.*

## CLASS SCHEDULE

### September 7 – Week 1

- ❖ Introductions
- ❖ Syllabus
- ❖ Assignments
- ❖ In-class “Introductory Essay”

*Read for next week: Ishmael by Daniel Quinn*

### September 14 – Week 2

- ❖ Lecture: Possessive Investment in Whiteness - Why does the difference between Takers and Leavers Matter?
- ❖ Discussion Circle: Ishmael, lecture

*Read for next week: American Indian Liberation: A Theology of Sovereignty by Tinker*

### September 21 – Week 3

- ❖ Questions about the reading
- ❖ Lecture on Worldviews
- ❖ Discussion Circle: Tinker, lecture

*Read for next week: How It Is: The Native American Philosophy of V.F. Cordova*

### September 28 – Week 4

- ❖ Questions about the reading
- ❖ DVD Excerpt: *The New World*
- ❖ Discussion Circle

*Read for next week: God Is Red: A Native View of Religion by Vine Deloria Jr.  
Chapters 1-7; 13-17*

### October 5 – Week 5

- ❖ Lecture: One of these things is not like the other... Deconstructing what I learned in school
- ❖ Lecture on contemporary Indian experiences
- ❖ Discussion Circle

*Read for next week: Brueggemann: Preface to 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed., Chapters 1, 4, 11, 12  
Carolyn Merchant *Reinventing Eden: The Fate of Nature in  
Western Culture*, Chapters 7 & 8 (posted on Moodle)*

### October 12 – Week 6

- ❖ DVD: *Black Robe*
- ❖ Discussion Circle
- ❖ *Make an appointment to discuss your paper/project*

*Read for next week: Carter: Palestine: Peace not Apartheid*

### October 19 – Week 7

- ❖ **PAPER/PROJECT PROPOSALS DUE**
- ❖ Questions about the reading
- ❖ Lecture on current status of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict
- ❖ Discussion Circle

*Read for next week: Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth, “On Violence” (posted on Moodle)*  
*Salaita: Chapters 1, 2, 3*

### Week 8 (READING WEEK – NO CLASS)

### November 2 – Week 9

- ❖ Video: **Peace, Propaganda and the Promised Land: Media & the Israel-Palestine Conflict** (Google Videos)
- ❖ Guest Participant: Dr. Santiago Slabodsky, Professor, Claremont School of Theology

*Read for next week: Mamdani, When Victims Become Killers, Chapter 1 (posted on Moodle)*  
*Exile & Return: Predicaments of Palestinians and Jews* ed. by Lesch and Lustick. Chapters 3, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 (posted on Moodle)

### November 9 – Week 10

- ❖ Lecture: Arab or Jew? Why the binary opposition?
- ❖ Discussion Circle: Nationalist constructions of identity

*Read for next week: Shenhav, The Arab Jews, Chapters 1, 2, 5*  
*Trouillot, Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History, Chapter 1 “The Power in the Story” (posted on Moodle)*

### November 16 – Week 11

- ❖ DVD: **Salt of This Sea**  
*Born in Brooklyn to Palestinian refugee parents, Soraya (Suheir Hammad) decides to*

*journey to the country of her ancestry when she discovers that her grandfather's savings have been frozen in a Jaffa bank account since his 1948 exile. She soon finds, however, that her simple plan is a complicated undertaking -- and one that takes her farther from her comfort zone (both geographically and emotionally) than she'd imagined in this romantic drama.*

- ❖ Discussion Circle

*Read for next week:* Salaita, Chapters 4-7

### **November 23 – Week 12**

- ❖ Discussion Circle: Comparing Contexts
- ❖ Praxis & Worldviews: Strategies for advocacy in Native American and Palestinian struggles

### **November 30 – Week 13**

- ❖ Wildcard Session (Time for student presentations, if needed. If not, I will arrange a guest presentation. No readings due past Nov. 22 so you can work on your final projects and papers)

### **December 7 – Week 14**

- ❖ Wildcard Session (Advocacy Fair, unless students need this time for presentations)

### **December 14 – Week 15**

- ❖ **FINAL PAPERS/PROJECTS DUE**
- ❖ Class Party