

**Shared by Nick Blomley, Professor of Geography
Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, Canada**
<http://www.sfu.ca/people/blomley.html>

Geography 440: Law and Geography

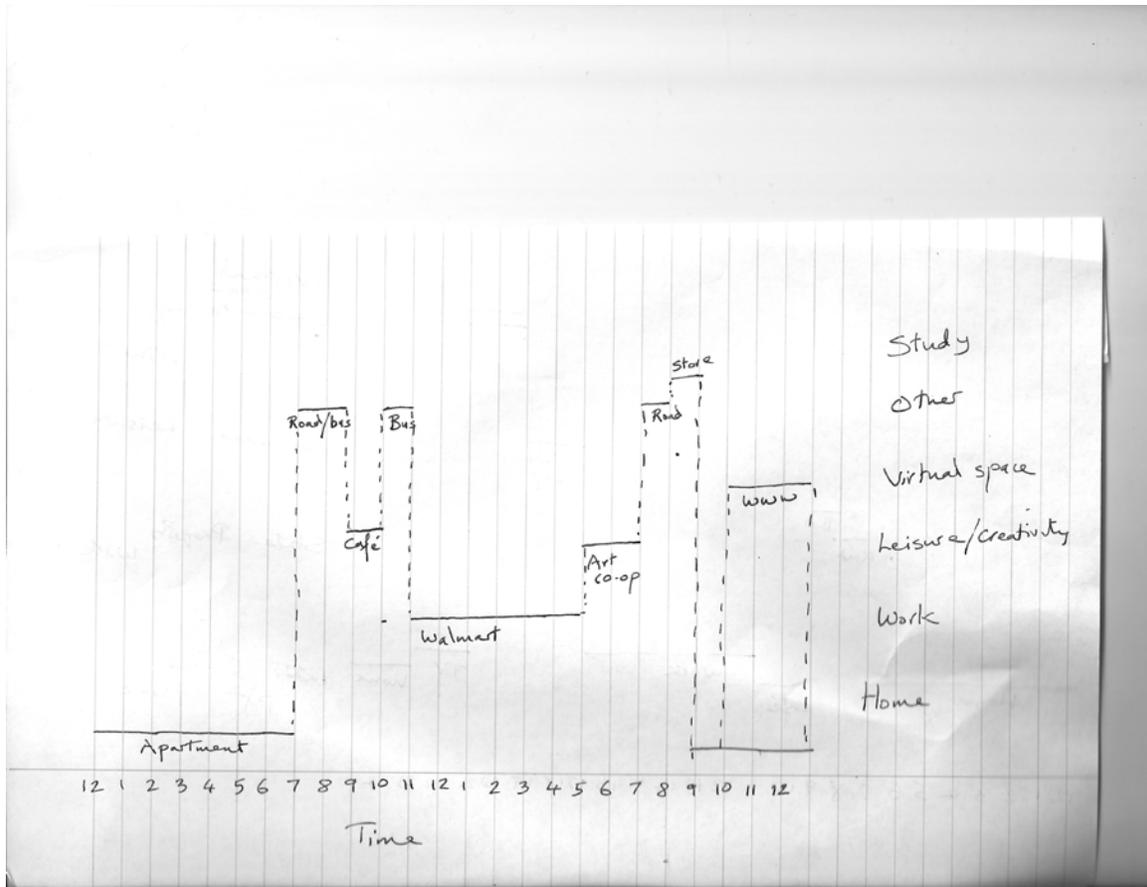
Time-Space Exercise:

Property comes in multiple forms, including through visual markers, and is associated with multiple rights, obligations, and forms of governance. As we move through time and space, we navigate different forms of property. The goal of this exercise is for you to record and reflect upon the spaces of property you move through over the day, according to some preset property criteria.

In so doing, hopefully you begin to reflect on: a) the significance of the spaces in which you encounter property to your everyday life; b) the diversity of forms that they take; and c) the active quality of such spaces and the multiple practices that they foster. Property appears simple and straightforward. This exercise hopefully gets you thinking about its complexity in both space and time.

1. Construct a time-property geography diagram for two 24-hour periods in your work/study/leisure life. Choose days that have you doing different things. These can be hand drawn, as long as they are legible. Examples of spaces to consider: home (rental, family home, basement flat in a house owned by your grandmother, limited equity apartment, social housing, co-op, condo etc.); municipal space (sidewalks, roads); transportation spaces (private car, bike, bus); commercial space (café, store, mall); community space (library, community centre); work spaces; study space (SFU Burnaby, Vancouver); virtual/electronic space (Wikipedia; Facebook; online computer game); other (First Nations reserves, co-ops, community gardens, unceded indigenous land etc); leisure/creative spaces (hiking in a park, attending poetry readings etc).

For example: For example: Jane is a young struggling artist. She shares an apartment with two room-mates. At 7 a.m. she walks to the bus, and stops at a café for a quick breakfast. After another short bus ride she starts her 11 a.m. shift at Walmart, where she works until 5. She squeezes in two hours at an art co-op she set up with some friends, before walking to a store at 8 p.m., which is next to her apartment. She gets home at nine, and spends three hours online, posting material to an open-access art resource.



2. Choose four spaces (e.g. where you sleep, where you study):

a) Conventionally, property is broken down into the following categories: private, state-owned, open access, and commons? Note, for each space, which category it best aligns with, and why (note, there **may be more than one form of property** at work in any one space).

b) For each space, answer each of these property questions (some digging may be required):

Access: who can physically access this space/resource?

Use: who is permitted to use this space/resource?

Benefit: who derives what benefits from a space?

Care: who looks after and maintains these spaces, and how?

Governance: who sets the rules and decides how this space will be organized?

c) Property is often highly visual. A barbed wire fence, for example, sends a visual message about exclusion. Include a photo, sketch or other visual representation for each space that visually portrays one or more of the property questions above in relation to one of your chosen spaces. For example, this image symbolizes the

'free-content' philosophy of Wikipedia, that relates to who is permitted to 'care' for online content. Explain in words your choice of the image, and the property message it communicates.



3. Write a paragraph of reflection on what you have learned from this exercise. Some questions to consider (choose one, not all of them, or come up with something else): Do your rights and responsibilities change over time and space? How did the geographies of property you encounter come to be? How does your status change? Do you experience these spaces differently? How do your relations to others as mediated by property change? What are the spatial markers of property?

You will engage in a preliminary peer review of your thoughts in tutorial.

In total, your final project should be no more than 1000 words. It should include, as noted, two time-property geography diagrams, and five photos, as well as the text noted above. No references are required. Turn it in on **FEBRUARY 18, in class**.

There is no right or wrong answer here. I will be looking for evidence that you have tried to figure out the property dimensions of the various spaces that you occupy, and some creative thought on the implications of such spaces. Think about the aims of the exercise noted in the second paragraph above. Surprise me!

P.S. This exercise is adapted from one in Take Back the Economy (J K Gibson-Graham, Jenny Cameron and Steven Healy). There are some other great resources at www.takebackeconomy.net.