Geographies of Canada
The Region

• Need to think about some basic geographical theory
• What is a region?
Region, Place

• Rich and complex in meaning for geography
• They are conversations, ways of talking
• Places, regions are not static, fixed, but constantly changing
Places, Regions

• Involve relationships
  • Things in relation to others
  • Places and regions in relations with other places
Toronto and Diavik NWT
Fort McMurray AB and the GTA
Place and Region

• Are perspectival, depend upon your perspective or identity
• The betweenness of place (and region)
  • It exists between the observer and the observed
TEL Building becomes Dadaleh Building
Northern Lights

- Parliament Hill sound & light show for Canada 150
DECOLONIZE 150

HONOR THE TREATIES
#RESISTANCE150

THIS IS YOGA

PRACTICE OF NONVIOLENCE

1313 P问 P问
VANCOUVER, CANADA

lululemon
CANADA 15 IS A CELEBRATION OF COLONIAL VIOLENCE
Regions

• Similar texture, complexity to place
• Regions are areas given meaning by common characteristics
• For example:
  • A region in which French is commonly spoken
  • A region which is mountainous
Regions

• Can be defined *functionally*
  • Places sharing the characteristic of working together as a unit

• For example: The Greater Toronto Area
  • Diverse cultural landscapes which work together as an urban economic region
Regions

• Regions are usually part of larger systems
  • And these systems change

• For example:
  • Nova Scotia’s forests and coves ideal for wooden shipbuilding in the C19th Atlantic economy
  • When shipping shifts to steam and iron, Nova Scotia’s shipbuilding declined
Regional Geography

• Makes the region the object of geographical enquiry
• Regional geography is interested in a wide range of aspects of place
  • Physical features, economy, politics ....
  • And how they fit together
Regional Geography

• A traditional, perhaps no-longer fashionable, focus in the discipline of geography
• But continues to be meaningful
Regional Geography of Canada

• Despite what we have said about regions, places
  • Their complexities, dynamism
  • The way they depend on your perspective
• Most regional geographies of Canada treat regions as static
  • Tend to assume everyone must look at them the same way
Regional Geographies of Canada

- Bob Bone: 6 regions which resemble provinces
- John Warkentin: 6 regions which loosely resemble provinces
- Larry McCann: Heartland-Hinterland concept but handled as regions made out of provinces
- Brett McGillivray: 7 regions which resemble provinces
Most Textbooks on the Geography of Canada

• Use physical geography to classify Canada into the same classic regions
• Provinces/Territories or groups of them
• Then they explore the geography of Canada by going through each region
• Boring
• Ignores important stuff
The Regional Geography of Canada

- Canada has many regions
- Five regions
- Patriotic regions
- Macro regions
ABSOLUT CANADA.
Absolut Canada

• Canada iconised in 6 views
  • The arctic (inukshuk)
  • The prairies (heartland)
  • The mountains
  • The multicultural cities
  • Confederation
  • Snowbirds

• Re-uses the classic regions
Regions of Canada

• The culture seems to have well-established ideas about the regions of Canada
  • Part of a symbolic order
• A culturally-mediated way of looking?
Canadian English

• Does it come in regional forms?
Canadian English

• Different from UK and US English
• Possible regional variations
• Some regional distinctiveness
  • Newfoundland 1 and 2
  • The Once
  • Woodbridge dialect
• How regional is Canadian English?
C.R. means Canadian Raising
C.S. means Canadian Shift
C.R.-1, 2 or 3 show the degree of distinction of C.R.
Canadian English

- **Canadian Raising:** tendency to raise vowel sounds
  - Differs from most of the US
  - East-west trend in raising within Canada
- **Canadian Shift:** tendency to shift certain vowel sounds (cot/caught tend to sound the same)
  - Active among the young, AB, Ontario, BC
  - Less common in Maritimes, Prairies, among the old
  - More common in urban than in rural?
Canadian English

• There are some distinctive regional forms
  • Newfoundland, Maritimes,
  • And ethnic forms
• But regional differences are relatively slight
  • Not much regional contrast
• The dominance of the classic regions is exaggerated
Regional Structure

• Canadian English does not really break down regionally along the lines of the classic regions
• Is this true for other aspects of Canadian culture?
  • Music
In This Course

• We escape from the textbook straitjacket (no textbook)
• We look at important topics with traditional textbooks neglect such as
  • Indigenous people
  • Cities
Neglected but Important Topics

• The traditional region-by-region approach makes it difficult to look at important topics such as
  • Indigenous people
  • Cities
  • Fossil fuels and climate change
Three Important Themes

• Theme 1: **The Physical Environment**
• Theme 2: **The Human Response** to the physical environment, ways of living, ways of making a living
• Theme 3: **The Vastness of Canada**.
Theme 1: Physical Environment

• Course begins with this
• Assignment #1 addresses it
• Physical environment is important in shaping Canada
Theme 2: Human Response to Environment

• Humans have responded to the environment in various ways
• Found ways to live, places to live, have created landscapes
• Indigenous people have a long and continuing engagement with the environment here
• Various more recently-arrived settler peoples engaging with the environment now
Theme 3: Vastness

• Canada the second largest country in the world
• A vast extent of land and sea
• The challenge of distance, of remoteness, isolation
• Islands of settlement in the modern landscape with distances between