

Endgame

UO Morse Chair Neil Smith to speak on globalization and activism.

Neil Smith is a new breed of geographer. The current holder of the 2004 UO Wayne Morse Chair of Law and Politics has a scholar's eye view of the planet. He sees not a patchwork of nations and cultures, but rather the border-transcending, carefully woven threads of financial capital, environmental concerns and immigration patterns.

In Eugene to teach and lecture, Smith will speak on globalization and the history and context of the American empire. He will lecture publicly at 7:30 pm Thursday, Jan. 15 at the Hilton and lead a roundtable discussion for activists at 7 pm on Thursday, Jan. 22 at the United Methodist Church.

A distinguished professor of anthropology and geography at the City University of New York Graduate Center, Smith also serves as director of the Center for Place, Culture and Politics.

The author of numerous articles and books, including *American Empire: Roosevelt's Geographer and the Prelude to Globalization* and *Uneven Development: Nature, Capital and the Production of Space*, Smith has also been a Guggenheim Fellow and has received distinguished honors from the Association of American Geographers.

Smith's lecture is part of a two-year series of events on "The Changing Geopolitical Order" sponsored by the UO Wayne Morse Center for Law and Politics. In his roundtable discussion, he'll focus on labor and class issues and opportunities to organize transnationally, even as he links this to broader questions of peace and justice in the current economic and geopolitical context.

Smith asserts that in the 20th century, geography as a discipline became submerged and a sense of geographic sensibility was lost as it was no longer taught in schools.

"FDR told people to look at their atlases to understand what was going on," he says. After WWII, Americans became immersed in family life and the consumer culture. Despite the Vietnam War, when maps of Southeast Asia were presented on the evening news, it wasn't until the 1980s, he says, that people generally became interested in geography again.

That interest was aroused by "the whole language of globalization in response to the crisis of the post Second World War," he says. As more citizens became concerned with U.S. economic practices abroad, and as the recession of the early '90s began to affect the economy, the public's attention turned toward the practices of corporations in the global market.

"As long as the U.S. has the power to dominate through the world's financial market, it's true that a knowledge of geography is less important," he says, but "when the world becomes fragmented, it's important to understand geography again."

Today, Smith sees the war against Afghanistan and Iraq as "entirely opportunistic and not defeating terrorism" but instead having to do with "completing a vision of some U.S. global geo-economic control." He points out "the left also gets it a bit wrong when they think it's a war to control the oil." Instead, he sees the U.S. moving to control the institutions that govern the world market, and the current aggressions an "attempt to put U.S. accounting practices in the center of global accounting practices." For this reason, Smith calls U.S. interna-

tional policies not "geo-political" but "geo-economic."

The U.S., however, does not wage this war alone. The Bush administration has its allies, such as British Prime Minister Tony Blair and Spanish Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar. Both, says Smith, are members of the ruling class. "It really is a class connection," he says.

Left unchecked, the class wars would mean an even greater global stratification where the rich get richer, the poor get poorer. That is where the role of the individual comes in — to roll up sleeves, make connections, and get to work fixing the problem.

"I'm an intellectual and an academic, but I'm also an activist, and I think that's important," says Smith. "We have to be clear that ... globalization is the endgame and that takes away the ideological power of a 'war on terror.' So the anti-war effort must be clear that it's also anti-globalization."

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Organizing is the key. "I'm optimistic. It's true anti-war movements don't stop wars before they start, but they do stop them after they start; they slow them down and change their movement. And eventually they do stop."

Smith and his co-workers calculated that on March 22 of last year, at least 23 million people around the world participated in anti-war demonstrations. He says that put pressure on Tony Blair to say "no" to invading Syria. "He was under pressure from Britain's anti-war movement. He knew he was on thin ice and would have been booted out if they'd gone into Syria."

Smith says the anti-war movement can take credit for stopping an attack on Syria and for stalling the war now. "Rumsfeld and his people are increasingly bogged down. We're seeing this now when they talk about Iran." Smith adds the administration has not had a clear opening to expand its aggression. The anti-war movement has "closed off a lot of the openings."

Keeping peace efforts as broad-based as possible is important, says Smith. "I don't buy 'think globally and act locally.' You have to act both at the same time."

He also points to the relatively new power in the combined efforts of groups including labor, environmentalists and feminists coming together with the peace movement to effect positive change. Those groups added numbers and strength to the anti-WTO protests, and such connections can influence both local and global decisionmaking, he says.

Others will be joining Smith at the Jan. 22 activist workshop to lead a "where do we go from here" discussion. Bob Bussel of the Labor Education and Research Center (LERC) will discuss organizing in opposition to Wal-Mart and Jennifer Webster, a global justice activist who works locally with Eugene PeaceWorks, will talk about her recent experiences at the Free Trade of the Americas (FTAA) protest in Miami. **EW**

Neil Smith will discuss "Lost Geographies and Failed Globalizations: From Versailles to Iraq," at 7:30 pm Thursday, Jan. 15 at the Hilton. He will lead a roundtable discussion on "Organizing against the end-game of globalization," at 7 pm on Thursday Jan. 22 at the United Methodist Church, 1376 Olive.

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You can enroll in your neighborhood school at any time. To enroll in another district school, the open enrollment period is from Jan. 6 to March 5 for the 2004-05 school year. The 4J Schools Guide — available at any school, at the 4J Education Center or at www.4j.lane.edu — offers an overview of each school.

Schools throughout the district will be open for visits:

Mon. Jan. 12 - Fri. Jan. 17 and
Tues. Feb. 17 - Fri. Feb. 20

Please phone ahead or visit www.4j.lane.edu, as each school offers different activities and times when parents can visit.

School's open — and you're welcome to visit.



More information is available at
Eugene School District 4J
200 N. Monroe Street Eugene, Oregon 97402
687.3481 TDD: 687.3447 www.4j.lane.edu



District-wide Information Meetings

Meetings at the 4J Education Center, 200 N. Monroe, will provide general information about the school application and enrollment process. Spanish translation will be provided at both meetings:

Thurs. Jan. 8: 7 — 8 pm
Sat. Jan. 10: 9 — 10 am

The Application Process

To enroll your child in a school other than your neighborhood school, follow this process:

- Pick up an application at any school, at the 4J Education Center, 200 N. Monroe, or at www.4j.lane.edu.
- Return the application no later than March 5 to the 4J Education Center.

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