

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY**Department of Earth Sciences**

Geography 325
Professor Bill Wyckoff
Year: 2015
Semester: Fall

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Cultural Geography of the United States

Required books:

1. Wilson and Groth, eds., *Everyday America* (2003)
2. Solnit, *Infinite City: A San Francisco Atlas* (2010)
3. Schein, ed., *Landscape and Race in the United States* (2006)
4. Zelinsky, *Not Yet a Placeless Land* (2011)

Additional required reading:

Readings on electronic reserve will be available through the Reserves Page for the class on the Library's website and designated: "**Electronic Reserve**" in the syllabus.

Readings directly accessible through the Library's electronic subscriptions to periodicals can be found by accessing the title of the periodical and the appropriate article. They are designated "**Online Journal Access**" in the syllabus. Go to the "Journals by Title" page and find it there.

Geography 325 is an intensive exploration of the ways in which cultural geographers look at America as a distinctive yet internally complex cultural entity. Through weekly readings, class discussions, and projects, the class will sample a rich and growing body of scholarship which represents some of the recent and major research themes in this important subfield. The course explores important aspects of settlement geography, the cultural landscape (both rural and urban), race, ethnicity, folk and popular culture, language, religion, and culture regions to illustrate the major concepts of cultural geography.

Course Requirements: As an upper division course, students are expected to be **active participants** and not passive observers. This means attending class, coming prepared to discuss assigned readings, taking an active role in class projects, and most importantly, cultivating a curiosity about the world around them! Class members will take three exams (two midterms + comprehensive final) and complete several short out-of-class research and writing assignments. **Reading and actively responding to it** are important class responsibilities and we will typically have 2-3 articles or book chapter assignments per class meeting. **COME PREPARED** to lead and contribute to discussions.

Course Grade: Course grades will be assigned by the following point system:

Exams (3)	350
Short Projects (3)	100
Class Participation	<u>50</u>
Total	500

- **Summary of specific learning goals for the class:**
 - 1. Be able to describe and understand the major themes and conceptual/theoretical frameworks defining the field of cultural geography, using the U.S. as an example.**
 - 2. Be able to critically examine the sources and methodologies commonly employed in doing cultural geographic research.**
 - 3. Develop abilities in conducting empirical field-based research in the local community that parallels work done in the field of cultural geography. Also develop the ability to summarize and present these findings in written and visual form.**
 - 4. Develop a broad understanding of American patterns of language, religion, regional ethnic homelands, and race.**
 - 5. Develop a background in reading and interpreting American vernacular landscapes and urban landscapes**
- **Summary of learning activities for reaching these goals:**
 - 1. Weekly in-class lectures/ extensive class discussion**
 - 2. Weekly textbook and outside reading assignments**
 - 3. Three short outside class writing/research projects that examine different aspects of American cultural geography. These also include opportunities to conduct local field work in the Gallatin Valley and Bozeman area.**
 - 4. Assessment also done by three exams, including a comprehensive final.**

CLASS SCHEDULE

<u>MEETING DATE</u>			<u>TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS</u>
Aug	25	T	Introduction to Cultural Geography Course Syllabus and Overview
	27	Th	Themes in Cultural Geography: Part 1 Reading: 1. Jordan-Bychkov “The Human Mosaic” (electronic reserve) 2. Meinig, “The Beholding Eye” (electronic reserve) (ASSIGN PROJECT #1)
Sept	1	T	Themes in Cultural Geography: Part 2 Reading: 1. Norton, “Introducing Cultural Geography” (electronic reserve) 2. Mitchell, “New Axioms for Reading the Landscape” (electronic reserve)
	3	Th	Native American Cultural Geographies Reading: 1. William Denevan, “The Pristine Myth” in the ANNALS OF THE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN GEOGRAPHERS 82 (1992): 369-85 (online journal access)... 2. Thomas Vale, “The Pre-European Landscape of the United States” (electronic reserve)
	8	T	Zelinsky’s “Not Yet a Placeless Land”: Part 1 Reading: 1. Zelinsky text: 1-81 (PROJECT #1 is due today!!)
	10	Th	Zelinsky’s “Not Yet a Placeless Land”: Part 2 Reading: 1. Zelinsky text: 82-163. 2. Blake Gumprecht, “The American College Town,” GEOGRAPHICAL REVIEW 93 (2003): 51-80 (online journal access)

- 15 T Zelinsky's "Not Yet a Placeless Land": Part 3
 Reading: 1. Zelinsky text: 164-205
 2. Carver, "American Regional Dialects" (electronic reserve)
- 17 Th Zelinsky's "Not Yet a Placeless Land": Part 4
 Reading: 1. Zelinsky text: 206-270
- 22 T MIDTERM 1 today!
- 24 Th Geographies of Religion
 Reading: 1. James Shortridge, "Patterns of Religion in the United States," GEOGRAPHICAL REVIEW 66 (1974): 420-34 (online journal access)
 2. Barney Warf and Morton Winsberg, "Geographies of Megachurches in the United States," JOURNAL OF CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY 27:1 (2010): 33-51 (online journal access)
- 29 T Geographies of Food
 Reading: 1. Shortridge and Shortridge, "Food and American Culture" (electronic reserve)
 2. Steven Schnell, "Deliberate Identities: Becoming Local in America in a Global Age," JOURNAL OF CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY 30:1 (2013): 55-89 (online journal access)
- Oct 1 Th No class: Complete assigned readings for next week
- 6 T Geographies of Fiction
 Reading: 1. Shortridge, "The Concept of the Place Defining Novel in American Popular Culture," PROFESSIONAL GEOGRAPHER 43 (1991): 280-91. (online journal access)
 2. Wyckoff, "Ivan Doig's Montana and the Concept of Place-Defining Literature," JOURNAL OF CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY 30: 1 (2013): 90-119. (online journal access)

- 8 Th Geographies of Race I
Reading: 1. Schein text: 1-21, 39-94
- 13 T Geographies of Race II
Reading: 1. Schein text: 95-155
- 15 Th Geographies of Race III
Reading: 1. Schein text: 157-76; 187-236
- 20 T Vernacular Landscapes I
Reading: 1. Wilson and Groth text: 1-22
2. J.B. Jackson, “Westward Moving House” (electronic reserve)
3. J.B. Jackson, “Seeing New Mexico” (electronic reserve)
- 22 Th NO class today—work on assigned readings
- 27 Th Vernacular Landscapes II
Reading: 1. Wilson and Groth text: 85-108; 178-198; and 219-231
- 29 Th Vernacular Landscapes III
Reading: 1. Wilson and Groth text: 62-80
2. Jakle and Sculle, “The Tourist’s Roadside” (electronic reserve)
3. Stephanie Kozak, “Home Away from Home: Meanings of the American Truck Stop,” JOURNAL OF CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY 29:3 (2012): 293-313 (online journal access)
- Nov 3 T MIDTERM 2 today!
- Nov 5 Th Defining Folk and Popular Culture
Reading: 1. Rubenstein, “Folk and Popular Culture,” 78-99. (electronic reserve)

2. Jordan, Kilpenen, and Gritzner, "Log Dwellings" (electronic reserve)

3. Chris Post, "Heritage, amenity, and the changing landscape of the rural West," *JOURNAL OF CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY* 30:3 (2013): 328-55 (online journal access)

PROJECT 2 ASSIGNED!

- 10 T **Cultural Homelands and Regional Place Identity I: Creating Large Regional Homelands in the East**
- Reading:** 1. Nostrand and Estaville, "Introduction," xiii-xxiii. (electronic reserve)
 2. Conforti, "Regional Identity and New England Landscapes" (electronic reserve)
 3. Zelinsky, "The Pennsylvania Town," *THE GEOGRAPHICAL REVIEW* 67 (1977): 127-47 (online journal access)
- 12 Th **Cultural Homelands and Regional Place Identity II: Immigrants and Place-Making**
- Reading:** 1. Kaplan and Chacko, "Placing Immigrant Identities," *JOURNAL OF CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY* 32:1 (2015): 129-38 (online journal access)
 2. Chacko, "Hybrid Sensibilities: Highly Skilled Asian Indians Negotiating Identity in Private and Public Spaces of Washington, D.C.," *JOURNAL OF CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY* 32:1 (2015): 115-28 (online journal access)
 3. Susan Hume, "Two Decades of Bosnian Place-making in St. Louis, Missouri," *JOURNAL OF CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY* 32:1 (2015): 1-22 (online journal access)
- 17 T **Cultural Homelands and Regional Place Identity III: Examples from the West**
- Reading:**
 1. Arreola, "La Tierra Tejana: A South Texas Homeland" (electronic reserve)
 2. Jackson, "Mormon Wests" (electronic reserve)
 3. Toni Alexander, "Welcome to Old Times: Inserting the Okie Past into California's San Joaquin Valley"

**Present,” JOURNAL OF CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY
26, 1 (2009): 71-100 (online journal access)**

- 19 Th Exploring Urban Landscapes I**
- Reading: 1. Hayden, “Urban Landscape History”
(electronic reserve)
2. Wilson and Groth text: 237-307**
- 24 T Exploring Urban Landscapes II**
- Reading: 1. Wilson and Groth text: 109-29**
- 2. Samuel Smith, “The Cities of Zion?”, JOURNAL OF
HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY 50 (2015): 1-13 (online
journal access)**
- 3. Elizabeth Carney, “Suburbanizing Nature and
Naturalizing Suburbanites: Outdoor-Living Culture
and Landscapes of Growth,” WESTERN
HISTORICAL QUARTERLY 38 (2007): 477-500
(online journal access)**
- PROJECT #2 is due today!!
ASSIGN Project #3!!**
- 26 Th Thanksgiving Holiday!**
- Dec 1 T Exploring Urban Landscapes III**
- Reading: Solnit atlas, 1-84**
- 3 Th Exploring Urban Landscapes IV**
- Reading: Solnit atlas, 85-150**
- PROJECT 3 is due today!**
- 7 M FINAL EXAM will be given Monday, December 7, 12-2**