

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

Department of Earth Sciences

Geography 503
 Dr. Bill Wyckoff
 Fall 2016
 Class meets: T 6:10-9:00PM

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Settlement Geography: The American West

Settlement Geography: The American West is a graduate seminar that explores the historical and contemporary geography of an important, diverse American region. Using an assortment of weekly readings in cultural and historical geography as well as history, the seminar will explore the character and changing human geography of the American West. The class will assess this regional entity through the readings and discussions and individual student research projects will enable class participants to develop their own topics of interest for more detailed research.

The central topics under discussion will be:

"What are the key cultural, environmental, economic, and political impulses that have shaped the settlement geography of the American West?"

“How do historians and historical geographers frame questions about the West?”

As historical and cultural geographers, we can define "settlement geography" as including:

1. the distinctive **spatial patterns of areal organization** and settlement associated with occupance of the West
2. the evolution, appearance, representations (maps, images, etc) and meanings of the region's distinctive **cultural landscapes**
3. the ongoing dynamic **interrelationships between people and the environment** in the West
4. the creation of **distinctive communities** and **place identities** and their associated institutions in western settings.

Text and Readings: REQUIRED: Wyckoff, HOW TO READ THE AMERICAN WEST: A FIELD GUIDE (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2014) offers some general regional examples of many of the landscape features and settlement patterns we explore in the course. All students should also purchase Robin Grossinger's NAPA VALLEY HISTORICAL ECOLOGY ATLAS (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), Carl Abbott's HOW CITIES WON THE WEST: FOUR CENTURIES OF URBAN CHANGE IN WESTERN NORTH AMERICA (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2008), and Lincoln Bramwell's WILDERBURBS:

COMMUNITIES ON NATURE'S EDGE (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2014). In addition, I will place collections of readings on electronic reserve (e-reserve) in the Library. Other articles in journals can be accessed electronically (online e-journal) at the Library. You may read or copy the readings as you wish. Additionally, some assigned individual readings will be passed out in class (prof) or put on D2L (as indicated in syllabus)

Course Grade: Grades will be assigned through weekly class participation (25%), short weekly presentations (25%), and student research projects (20% oral presentation, 30% written paper).

Weekly Activities: Each week the class will share responsibility for several group readings. For each reading, I will call on one of you to summarize its contents/themes and its relation to the evening's topic and then open the discussion to the rest of the class. Be prepared to lead these opening discussions for each assigned group reading!

In addition, I will assign individual readings to be reported on by seminar participants. Plan on a 10-minute summation and assessment/review of your assigned reading, no more, no less! These will also be open for more general discussion/questions by the group once you have completed your initial report.

The final three weeks of the semester will be reserved for your own oral research reports, based on a research project pertinent to the course and your own interests. Plan on a **20 minute presentation** (Powerpoint, overheads, etc. are great) with an additional 10 minutes reserved for questions from the group.

Your written research papers are due **December 9 (Friday)** and should be 15-18 pages long plus illustrations. Reference style is up to you BUT be consistent, follow one of the standard methods (the ANNALS OF THE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN GEOGRAPHERS and the CHICAGO MANUAL OF STYLE are good guides), and use a style so that the reader can easily find the source.

LEARNING OUTCOMES: GPHY 503

As a graduate seminar, GPHY 503 has several specific learning outcomes:

1. Describing the separate but interrelated intellectual traditions of historical/cultural geography, western American history, and environmental history in understanding the evolution of the American West.
2. Integrating our knowledge of Native Americans in the American West with broader themes in the settlement geography of the region. Including both historical and contemporary examples.
3. Examining a wide variety of recent literature and research on the West that generally falls into a focus on 1) mining, 2) ranching/farming, 3) tourism, 4) public lands, 5) cultural diversity, and 6) urban topics. Emphasis given to how these activities are manifest on the cultural landscape and how they shape human-environment interaction in the region. Including both historical and contemporary examples.
4. Develop a student awareness of and participation in a seminar-style class based on discussion

and extensive weekly presentations.

5. Foster an understanding of taking an independent research project from an initial idea/proposal through the mechanics of primary data research, writing, and oral presentation.

Course Schedule and Reading List

August 30

Introduction to the American West
 Course Overview and Class Expectations
 Themes in Settlement/Historical Geography
 Defining and Experiencing the West

September 6 Defining the West: Geographical Perspectives

The “West”: a new way of organizing space
 Cultural landscapes and settlement patterns
 Regional place identities
 Themes in historical geography

Group Readings:

1. D.W. Meinig, "American Wests: Preface to a Geographical Interpretation," Annals of the Association of American Geographers 62 (1972): 159-184. (online e-journal)
2. William Wyckoff, How to Read the American West, pp. 3-87. (text)
3. Robin Grossinger, Napa Valley Historical Ecology Atlas (text)
4. John Wright, “Four Symbolic Boundaries of the American West,” Geographical Review 104 (2014): 229-41 (online e-journal)

Individual Readings:

1. Joy Fritschle, “Reconstructing Historic Ecotones Using the Public Land Survey: The Lost Prairies of Redwood National Park,” Annals of the AAG 98 (2008): 24-39. (online e-journal)
2. William Wyckoff, Cartography and Capitalism: George Clason and the Mapping of Western American Development, 1903-1931,” Journal of Historical Geography 52 (2016): 48-60. (online e-journal)
3. Peter Goin and Paul Starrs, Black Rock (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2005) (prof)
4. Paul Robbins, Katherine Meehan, Hannah Gosnell, and Susan Gilbertz, “Writing the New West: A Critical Review,” Rural Sociology 74 (2009): 356-382. (online e-journal)

September 13 Defining the West: Historical Perspectives
 Themes of Western Unity
 Research Trends in the Field
 The "New Western History"
 "Environmental History" in the West

Group Readings:

1. Anne Hyde, Empires, Nations, and Families (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011), pp. 1-24 (Introduction) (e-reserve)
2. William Robbins, "In Pursuit of Historical Explanation: Capitalism as a Conceptual Tool for Knowing the American West," Western Historical Quarterly 30 (1999): 277-94. (online e-journal)
3. Mark Fiege, "Iron Horses," in The Republic of Nature (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2012), 228-64 (e-reserve)
4. William Cronon, "A Place for Stories: Nature, History, and Narrative," Journal of American History 78 (March, 1992): 1347-76. (online e-journal)

Individual Readings:

1. Carlos Schwantes and James Ronda, The West the Railroads Made (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008). (prof)
2. Martha Sandweiss, Print the Legend: Photography and the American West (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002). (prof)
3. Lawrence Culver, The Frontier of Leisure: Southern California and the Shaping of Modern America (New York: Oxford UP, 2010) (prof)
4. Derek Everett, Creating the American West: Boundaries and Borderlands (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2014) (prof)

September 20 Native American Perspectives
 Demographic and Ecological Impacts
 European Conflicts
 Themes of Contact and Conquest

Group Readings:

1. Steven Hackel, Children of Coyote, Missionaries of Saint Francis: Indian-Spanish Relations in Colonial California, 1769-1850 (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2005), 15-123. (posted on D2L)
2. James Ronda, "Coboway's Tale: A Story of Power and Places along the Columbia," in Finding the West (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2001), 97-116. (e reserve)
3. Thomas Vale, "The Pre-European Landscape of the United States: Pristine or Humanized?" In T. Vale, ed., Fire, Native Peoples and the Natural Landscape (Covelo: Island Press, 2002), 1-39. (e reserve)
4. Daniel D. Arreola, "*Chiricahua* Apache Homeland in the Borderland Southwest," Geographical Review 102 (2002): 111-131. (online e-journal)
5. Wyckoff, How to Read, 168-73 (text)

Individual Readings:

1. Marsha Weisiger, Dreaming of Sheep in Navajo Country (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2009). (prof)
2. Patricia Limerick, "Haunted America," in Something in the Soil (New York: Norton, 2000), 33-73.(prof)
3. Robert Sauder, The Yuma Reclamation Project: Irrigation, Irrigation Allotment, and Settlement Along the Lower Colorado River (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2009). (prof)
4. Pekka Hamalainen, Comanche Empire (New Haven: Yale Press, 2009) (prof)

September 27 The Mining West
 Spatial Systems
 Landscape Impacts
 Boom-Bust Economies
 Social Geographies

Group Readings:

1. Wyckoff, How to Read, 124-59 (text)
2. Gareth Hoskins, "People Like Us: Historical Geographies of Industrial-Environmental Crisis at Malakoff Diggins State Historic Park," Journal of Historical Geography 50 (2015): 14-24. (online e-journal)

3. Dydia Delyser, "Authenticity on the Ground: Engaging the Past in a California Ghost Town," Annals of the Association of American Geographers 89 (1999): 602-632 (online e-journal)
4. Jeremy Bryson, "Smoke space: material and imagined nature in the smelter city of Anaconda, Montana," Journal of Historical Geography 40 (2013): 16-23. (online e-journal)

Individual Readings:

1. Kent C. Ryden, Mapping the Invisible Landscape: Folklore, Writing, and the Sense of Place (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1993).(prof)
2. Michael Amundson, Yellowcake Towns: Uranium Mining Communities in the American West (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2002).(prof)
3. Eric Clements, After the Boom in Tombstone and Tombstone, Arizona: Decline in Western Resource Towns (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2003) (prof)
4. Timothy LeCain, Mass Destruction: The Men and Giant Mines that Wired America and Scarred the Planet (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2009). (prof)

October 4 Signatures of Ranching and Farming in the West
 Local patterns of settlement in ranching zones
 Spatial networks and commercial markets
 Ranching Ecology-impacts on the land
 Consequences of Aridity
 Agricultural Settlement Patterns/Communities

Group Readings:

1. Don Mitchell, "Battle/fields: Braceros, Agribusiness, and the Violent Reproduction of the California agricultural landscape during World War II," Journal of Historical Geography 36 (2010): 143-56 (online e-journal)
2. Wyckoff, How to Read, 88-123 (text)
3. Paul Starrs and Peter Goin, "California Agriculture: A Panoramic Glimpse," In Field Guide to California Agriculture, by Paul Starrs and Peter Goin (Berkeley: UC Press, 2010): 3-71 (e-reserve).
4. Travis, "The Gentrified Range: New Owners of the Purple Sage," in New Geographies of the American West (Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 2007), pp. 155-76. (e-reserve).

Individual Readings:

1. Victor Konrad, "Homesteading the Pryor Mountains of Montana," in Mountainous West, 194-223.(prof)
2. Mark Fiege, Irrigated Eden: The Making of an Agricultural Landscape in the American West (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999) (prof)
3. David Wishart, The Last Days of the Rainbelt (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2013) (prof)
4. Donald Worster, Rivers of Empire: Water, Aridity and the Growth of the American West (New York: Oxford, 1985). (prof)

October 11 Public Signatures in the West
 Evolving Historical Perceptions
 National Parkscapes
 Evolution of Wilderness
 Public vs. Private Control

BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS RESEARCH TOPICS!

Group Readings:

1. Craig Allin, Politics of Wilderness Preservation (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1982), 18-101.(prof)
2. John Wright, "Land Tenure: The Spatial Musclature of the American West," in Hausladen, Western Places, American Myths, 85-110 (e-reserve)
3. Wyckoff, How to Read, 238-83 (text)
4. Lary Dilsaver and William Wyckoff, "Failed National Parks in the Last Best Place," Montana: The Magazine of Western History (Autumn, 2010): 3-24. (e-reserve)

Individual Readings:

1. Linda McClelland, Building the National Parks (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1998).(prof)
2. Anthony Arrigo, Imaging Hoover Dam: The Making of a Cultural Icon (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2014) (prof)
3. Ethan Carr, Mission 66: Modernism and the National Park Dilemma (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2007). (prof)

4. Randall Wilson, America's Public Lands: From Yellowstone to Smokey Bear and Beyond (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2014) (prof)

October 18 Signatures of Ethnicity and Gender
 Gendered perceptions/impacts in the West
 Traditional ethnic islands and provinces
 Modern ethnicity in the West

Group Readings:

1. Wyckoff, How to Read, 160-67; 174-203 (text)
2. Elizabeth Jameson, "Halfway Across That Line: Gender at the Threshold of History in the North American West," Western Historical Quarterly 47 (Spring 2016): 1-26 (online e-journal)
3. Alex Aberle and Daniel Arreola, "Resurgent Mexican Phoenix," Geographical Review 98 (2008): 171-196.(online e-journal)
4. Robert Wilson, "Landscapes of Promise and Betrayal: Reclamation, Homesteading, and Japanese American Incarceration," Annals of the Association of American Geographers 101 (2011): 424-444. (online e-journal)

Individual Readings:

1. James Rojas, "The Enacted Environment: Examining the Streets and Yards of East Los Angeles," in Chris Wilson and Paul Groth, eds., Everyday America: Cultural Landscape Studies After J.B. Jackson (Berkeley: UC Press, 2003), pp. 275-292. (prof)
2. Quintard Taylor, "Facing the Urban Frontier: African-American History in the Reshaping of the Twentieth-Century American West," Western Historical Quarterly 43 (2012): 4-27. (online e-journal)
3. Jessica Sewell, "Gender, Imagination, and Experience in the Early Twentieth-Century American Downtown," in Wilson and Groth, eds., Everyday America, 237-54.(prof)
4. Hillary Jenks, "The Politics of Preservation: Power, Memory, and Identity in Los Angeles's Little Tokyo," in Richard Longstreth, ed., Cultural Landscapes: Balancing Nature and Heritage in Preservation Practice (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008): 35-54 (prof)

October 25

Tourism Signatures in the West
 Leisure landscapes in the West
 The impact of the automobile in the West
 Tourism, place identity, and images of the West

Group Readings:

1. William Wyckoff, How to Read, 336-389 (text)
2. Hal Rothman, "Shedding Skin and Shifting Shape: Tourism in the Modern West," in Seeing and Being Seen: Tourism in the American West, edited by David Wrobel and Patrick Long (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2001), 100-120.(e reserve)
3. Travis, "Resort Geographies: Building a Better Mountain?" New Geographies of the American West, 131-54.(e-reserve)
4. Yolonda Youngs, "Editing Nature in Grand Canyon National Park Postcards," Geographical Review 102 (2012): 486-509 (online e-journal)

Individual Readings:

1. Dydia Delyser, Ramona Memories: Tourism and the Shaping of Southern California (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005). (prof)
2. Bonnie Christensen, Red Lodge and the Mythic West: Coal Miners to Cowboys (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002) (prof)
3. Arthur Krim, Route 66: Iconography of an American Highway (Santa Fe: Center for American Places, 2005).(prof)
4. William Philpott, Vacationland: Tourism and Environment in the Colorado High Country (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2013) (prof)

November 1

The Urban West
 Evolving Urban Landscapes and Communities
 Twentieth Century Modifications

Group Readings:

1. Wyckoff, How to Read, 284-335 (text)
2. Carl Abbott, How Cities Won the West: Four Centuries of Urban Change in Western North America (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2008). (text)

Individual Readings:

1. Rebecca Solnit, Infinite City: A San Francisco Atlas (Berkeley: UC Press, 2011) (prof)
2. Laura Barraclough, Making the San Fernando Valley: Rural Landscapes, Urban Development, and White Privilege (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011).(prof)
3. David Williams, Too High and Too Steep: Reshaping Seattle's Topography (Seattle: University of Washington press, 2015) (prof)
4. Elizabeth Carney, "Suburbanizing Nature and Naturalizing Suburbanites: Outdoor-Living Culture and Landscapes of Growth," Western Historical Quarterly 38 (2007): 477-500. (online e-journal)

November 8

ELECTION DAY HOLIDAY: NO CLASS!

November 15

The Modern Rural West

Twentieth Century Evolution
Major Regional Issues/Tensions
Rural and Urban Contrasts
Images of the Modern West
New Approaches and Themes

Group Readings:

1. Lincoln Bramwell, Wilderburbs (text)
2. Donald Worster, "The American West in an Age of Vulnerability," Western Historical Quarterly 45 (Spring 2014): 5-16. (online e-journal)

Individual Readings:

1. Chris Post, "Heritage, Amenity, and the Changing Landscape of the Rural West," Journal of Cultural Geography 30, 3 (2013): 328-55 (online e-journal)
2. Teresa Cohn, et al., "Seems Like I Hardly See Them Around Anymore: Historical Geographies of Riparian Change along the Wind River," Water History (2016), forthcoming (prof)
3. Thomas R. Vale and Geraldine R. Vale, Western Images, Western Landscapes: Travels Along

U.S. 89 (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1989). (prof)

4. Ellen Wohl, Virtual Rivers: Lessons From Mountain Rivers of the Colorado Front Range (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001). (prof)

November 22

THANKSGIVING POTLUCK! (bring a dish, goodies)

STUDENT PRESENTATIONS!!

November 29

STUDENT PRESENTATIONS!!

December 6

STUDENT PRESENTATIONS!!

DECEMBER 9 (FRIDAY) at 5:00 PM: Seminar Research Papers are due!!