

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

Department of Earth Sciences

Geography 315
Professor Bill Wyckoff
Year: 2007
Semester: Fall

Office: Traphagen Hall 213
Telephone: 994-6914
Office Hours: T/Th 10-11:30
E-mail: bwyckoff@montana.edu

Cultural Geography of the United States

Required books:

1. Wilson and Groth, eds.: Everyday America
2. Zelinsky: Cultural Geography of the US
3. Nostrand and Estaville, eds., Homelands
4. Schein, ed., Landscape and Race in the United States

Additional required reading (noted with * in the syllabus): Copies of all additional readings will be on electronic reserve at the Renne Library.

Geography 315 is an intensive exploration of the ways in which cultural geographers look at America as a distinctive yet internally complex cultural entity. Through daily 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 several articles or book chapter assignments per weekly class meeting. **COME PREPARED** to lead and contribute to discussions (and to answer pop quiz questions!).

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

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|---------------------------------|------------|
| Exams (3) | 350 |
| Short Projects (3) | 150 |
| Class Participation/Pop Quizzes | <u>100</u> |
| Total | 600 |

Note: Important! All students will take the cumulative Final at the scheduled time Monday 12/10: 12:00-1:50). Make your winter break travel plans accordingly!

CLASS SCHEDULE

| <u>MEETING DATE</u> | <u>TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS</u> |
|---------------------|---|
| Aug 30 Th | <p><i>CONCEPTS IN CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY</i></p> <p>* Reserve Readings: 1. JORDAN; Nature of Cultural Geography</p> <p>ASSIGN PROJECT #1</p> |
| Sept 6 Th | <p><i>DEFINING CULTURE AND CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY</i></p> <p><i>NATIVE AND EUROPEAN WORLDS</i></p> <p><i>ORIGINS AND IDENTITY OF AMERICAN CULTURE</i></p> <p>*Reserve Reading: 1. SALTER, "Cultural Geography as Discovery" 2. MITCHELL, "Call to Arms" 3. DENEVAN, "Pristine Myth"</p> <p>TEXT Reading: ZELINSKY: 3-88</p> |
| Sept 13 Th | <p><i>STRUCTURE AND REGIONAL GEOGRAPHIES OF AMERICAN CULTURE</i></p> <p><i>RECENT NATIONAL TRENDS: "America in Flux"</i></p> <p>* Reserve Reading: 1. RILEY, "The New American Landscape"</p> <p>TEXT Reading: ZELINSKY: 109-185</p> <p>PROJECT 1 IS DUE</p> |
| 20 Th | <p><i>RACE AND THE AMERICAN LANDSCAPE I</i></p> <p>TEXT Reading: SCHEIN: 1-111</p> <p>EVERYDAY AMERICA: 199-218</p> |

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| | 27 | Th | <i>RACE AND THE AMERICAN LANDSCAPE II</i> TEXT Reading: SCHEIN: 113-236 EVERYDAY AMERICA: 275-292 |
| Oct | 4 | Th | MIDTERM EXAM #1 (Hour #1 only) |
| | 11 | Th | <i>FOLK AND POPULAR CULTURE I</i> * Reserve Reading: 1. RUBENSTEIN, “Folk and Popular Culture” TEXT Reading: HOMELANDS: xiii-xxiii; 1-43 ASSIGN PROJECT #2 |
| | 18 | Th | Out-of-class work on Project #2 |
| | 25 | Th | <i>FOLK AND POPULAR CULTURE II</i> TEXT Reading: HOMELANDS: 44-82; 101-24; 155-209 |
| Nov | 1 | Th | <i>FOLK AND POPULAR CULTURE III</i> * Reserve Reading: 1. JAKLE, “Landscapes Redesigned for the Automobile” 2. GUMPRECT, “Evocation of Place in Popular Music” 3. ZELINSKY, “Globalization Reconsidered” TEXT Reading: HOMELANDS: 225-71 |
| | 8 | Th | <i>WORDS, GOD, AND FOOD</i> *Reserve Reading: 1. CARVER, “American Regional Dialects” 2. WEIGHTMAN, “Changing Religious Landscapes” 3. SHORTRIDGE AND SHORTRIDGE: “Food and American Culture” TEXT Reading: ZELINSKY: 94-108 PROJECT #2 DUE TODAY! |

- 15 Th MIDTERM EXAM #2 (Hour #1)
THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE I (Hours #2-3)
TEXT Reading: EVERYDAY AMERICA: 1-22; 85-129
PROJECT #3 IS ASSIGNED
- 22 Th THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY
- 29 Th *THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE II*
* Reserve Reading: 1. MEINIG: “Beholding Eye”
2. JACKSON, “Westward Moving House”
3. BROOKS, “Out for a Drive”
TEXT Reading: EVERYDAY AMERICA: 219-231;
237-54; 293-307
- Dec 6 Th *THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE III*
*Reserve Reading: 1. DOMOSH, “Constructing New York’s Skyline”
2. TUAN, “Topophilia selections”
TEXT READING: EVERYDAY AMERICA: 178-98
PROJECT #3 IS DUE TODAY!
- 10 M FINAL EXAM 12:00-1:50!