

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

Department of Earth Sciences

Geography 503
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 Fall 2004

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Settlement Geography: The American West

Settlement Geography: The American West is a graduate seminar that explores the historical and contemporary nature of an important subregion of America. 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 topic under discussion will be:

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

As historical and cultural geographers, we will 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, and perceptions 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 their associated institutions in western settings.

Text and Readings: Wyckoff and Dilsaver, eds., THE MOUNTAINOUS WEST (1995) will include a number of useful assigned readings and should be purchased from the bookstore. In addition, I will place three large collections of readings on reserve in the Library. You may read or copy the readings as you wish. Additionally, individual readings will be passed out in class.

Course Grade: Grades will be assigned through weekly class participation (25%), 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 two 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** with an additional 10 minutes reserved for questions from the group.

Your written research papers are due **December 10 (Friday)** and should be 12-18 pages long plus illustrations. Reference style is up to you BUT be consistent, follow one of the standard methods (CHICAGO MANUAL OF STYLE is a good guide), and use a style so that the reader can easily find the source.

Course Schedule and Reading List

August 31 Introduction to the American West
 Course Overview and Class Expectations
 Themes in Settlement/Historical Geography
 Defining the West

September 7 Defining the West: Geographical Perspectives
 Spatial Systems
 Cultural Landscapes
 Regional Identities

Group Readings:

1. D.W. Meinig, "American Wests: Preface to a Geographical Interpretation," Annals of the Association of American Geographers 62 (1972): 159-184.
2. Thomas R. and Geraldine Vale, Western Images, Western Landscapes: Travels Along US 89 (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1989): 1-14, 103-26, and 153-69.
3. William Wyckoff and Lary Dilsaver, "Defining the Mountainous West" in The Mountainous West (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995), 1-59.
4. Alan Baker, "Reflections," in Geography and History: Bridging the Divide (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 206-27.

Individual Readings:

1. Alan Baker, "On the Relations of Geography and History," in Geography and History: Bridging the Divide (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 1-36.
2. Thomas T. Veblen and Diane C. Lorenz, The Colorado Front Range: A Century of Ecological Change (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1991).
3. Ethan Yorgason, Transformation of the Mormon Culture Region (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003).
4. Gary Hausladen, "Where the Cowboy Rides Away: Mythic Places for Western Film," in G. J. Hausladen, ed., Western Places, American Myths: How We Think About the West (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2003), 296-318.
5. Lary Dilsaver, William Wyckoff, and William Preston, "Fifteen Events That Have Shaped California's Human Landscape," California Geographer 40 (2000): 3-78.

September 14 Defining the West: Historical Perspectives
 Themes of Western Unity
 Research Trends in the Field
 The "New Western History"

Group Readings:

1. Donald Worster and Patricia Limerick, selections from Trails: Toward a New Western History, eds. Limerick, Milner, and Rankin (Lawrence: UP of Kansas, 1991), 3-25, 81-88.
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.
3. James Ronda, Finding the West: Explorations with Lewis and Clark (New Mexico Press, 2001), 17-95.

Individual Readings:

1. Anne F. Hyde, "Cultural Filters: The Significance of Perception in the History of the American West," Western Historical Quarterly 24 (1993): 351-74.
2. Susan Neel, "A Place of Extremes: Nature, History, and the American West," Western Historical Quarterly 25 (1994): 489-505.
3. Clyde Milner II, A Historian Who Has Changed Our Thinking: A Roundtable on the Work of

Richard White, Western Historical Quarterly 33 (Summer 2002): 137-57.

4. David Wrobel, Promised Lands: Promotion, Memory, and the Creation of the American West (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002).

September 21

Environmental History and the West
Major themes
Links between History and Geography
Recent Case Studies

Group Readings:

1. Michael Williams, "The Relations of Environmental History and Historical Geography," Journal of Historical Geography 20 (1994): 3-21.
2. Dan Flores, "Place: An Argument for Bioregional History," Environmental History Review 18 (1994): 1-18.
3. Alan Baker, "Environmental Geographies and Histories," in Geography and History: Bridging the Divide (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 72-108.

Individual Readings:

1. Blake Gumprecht, The Los Angeles River (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999).
2. Dan Flores, Horizontal Yellow: Nature and History in the Near Southwest (Albuquerque: New Mexico, 1999).
3. William Cronon, "The Trouble with Wilderness, Or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature," in William Cronon, ed., Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature (New York: W.W. Norton, 1995), 69-90.
4. Ellen Wohl, Virtual Rivers: Lessons From Mountain Rivers of the Colorado Front Range (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001).

September 28

The Early West
Native American Perspectives
European Exploration
Themes of Contact and Conquest

Group Readings:

1. Walter Nugent, "From Time Immemorial to 1848," in Into the West: The Story of Its People (New York: Vintage Books, 1999), 18-53.
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
3. John Allen, "Maps and the Mountain Men: The Cartography of the Rocky Mountain Fur Trade," Mountainous West.
4. 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.

Individual Readings:

1. Elliott West, Contested Plains: Indians, Goldseekers, and the Rush to Colorado (University of Kansas, 1999).
2. Patricia Limerick, "Haunted America," in Something in the Soil (New York: Norton, 2000), 33-73.
3. Theodore Binnema, Common and Contested Ground: A Human and Environmental History of the Northwestern Plains (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2001).
4. Dan Flores, "Bison Ecology and Bison Diplomacy: The Southern Plains from 1800 to 1850," in A Sense of the American West, ed. James Sherow (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1998), 65-90.

October 5

Signatures of Mining in the West
 Spatial Systems
 Landscape Impacts
 Boom-Bust Economies
 Social Geographies

Group Readings:

1. Richard Francaviglia, "Mining and Landscape Transformation," in The American Environment, eds. Lary Dilsaver and Craig Colten (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 1992), 89-114.
2. Randall Rohe, "The Interplay of Environment and Mining in the Mountainous West," in The Mountainous West, 169-193.
3. Michael Amundson, "Home on the Range No More: The Boom and Bust of a Wyoming Uranium Mining Town, 1957-1988," Western Historical Quarterly 26

(Winter 95): 483-505.

Individual Readings:

1. Kent C. Ryden, Mapping the Invisible Landscape: Folklore, Writing, and the Sense of Place (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1993).
2. Michael Amundson, Yellowcake Towns: Uranium Mining Communities in the American West (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2002).
3. David Stiller, Wounding the West: Montana, Mining, and the Environment (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000)
4. Don Mitchell, "Writing the Western: New Western History's Encounter with Landscape," Ecumene 5 (1998): 7-29.

October 12

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. Robert Sauder, "Mountains and Lowlands: Human Adaptation in the Owens Valley," Mountainous West, 305-30.
2. Mark Fiege, "Creating a Hybrid Landscape: Irrigated Agriculture in Idaho," in Northwest Lands, Northwest Peoples: Readings in Environmental History, edited by Dale Goble and Paul Hirt (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999), 362-388.
3. Thomas Vale, "Mountains and Moisture in the West," in The Mountainous West, 141-165.
4. Paul Starrs, "An Inescapable Range, Or, the Ranch as Everywhere," in Hausladen, ed., Western Places, American Myths (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2003), 57-84.

Individual Readings:

1. William Wyckoff and Katherine Hansen, "Environmental Change in the Northern Rockies: Settlement and Livestock Grazing in Southwestern Montana, 1860-1995," in Northwest Lands, Northwest Peoples (1999), 336-361.

2. Richard L. Knight, Wendell C. Gilgert, and Ed Marston, eds., Ranching West of the 100th Meridian: Culture, Ecology, and Economics (Covelo: Island Press, 2002).
3. John Alwin, "Jordan Country: A Golden Anniversary Look," Annals of the Association of American Geographers 71 (1981): 479-98.
4. Donald Worster, Rivers of Empire: Water, Aridity and the Growth of the American West (New York: Oxford, 1985).

October 19

Tourism Signatures in the West
 Railroads and Tourism
 The impact of the automobile in the West
 Tourism and Images of the West
 Impacts of Tourism

Group Readings:

1. William Wyckoff and Lary Dilsaver, "Promotional Imagery of Glacier National Park," Geographical Review 87 (1997), 1-26.
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.
3. Patricia Limerick, "Seeing and Being Seen: Tourism in the American West," in Seeing and Being Seen: Tourism in the American West, eds., Wrobel and Long (2001), 39-58.
4. Dydia Delyser, "Ramona Memories: Fiction, Tourist Practices. And Placing the Past in Southern California," Annals of the Association of American Geographers 93 (2003): 886-908.

Individual Readings:

1. George Crofutt, Crofutt's Grip-Sack Guide of Colorado (1885).
2. Marta Weigle and Barbara Babcock, eds., The Great Southwest of the Fred Harvey Company and the Santa Fe Railway (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1996).
3. Mark Barringer, Selling Yellowstone: Capitalism and the Construction of Nature (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002).
4. David Louter, "Glaciers and Gasoline: The Making of a Windshield Wilderness, 1900-1915," in Seeing and Being Seen: Tourism and the American West, edited by Wrobel and Long (2001), 248-270.

October 26 Public Signatures in the West
 Evolving Historical Perceptions
 National Parkscapes
 Evolution of Wilderness
 Public vs. Private Control

Group Readings:

1. Craig Allin, The Politics of Wilderness Preservation (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1982), 18-101.
2. Lary Dilsaver, "Resource Conflict in the High Sierra," in The Mountainous West, 281-302.
3. Richard Jackson, "Federal Lands in the Mountainous West," in The Mountainous West, 253-77.
4. Karen Merrill, "In Search of the Federal Presence in the American West," Western Historical Quarterly 30 (1999): 449-73.

Individual Readings:

1. Linda McClelland, Building the National Parks.(Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1998).
2. Lary Dilsaver and William Wyckoff, Agency Culture, Cumulative Causation and Development in Glacier National Park, Montana, Journal of Historical Geography 25 (1999): 75-92.
3. Paul Hirt, "Getting Out the Cut: A History of National Forest Management in the Northern Rockies," in Northwest Lands, Northwest Peoples (1999), 437-461.
4. Terry Anderson and Peter Hill, The Not So Wild West: Property Rights on the Frontier (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004).

November 2 NO CLASS: ELECTION NIGHT!

November 9 Signatures of Ethnicity and Gender
 Male and Female perceptions/impacts in the West
 Traditional ethnic islands and provinces
 Modern ethnicity in the West

Group Readings:

1. Jeanne Kay, "Landscapes of Women and Men: Rethinking the Regional Historical Geography of the US and Canada," Journal of Historical Geography 17 (1991): 435-52.
2. Richard L. Nostrand, The Highland-Hispano Homeland in Homelands: A Geography of Culture and Place Across America (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), edited by Richard Nostrand and Lawrence Estaville, 155-67.
3. Jeanne Kay, Mormons and Mountains, in The Mountainous West, 368-95.
4. Terrence Haverluk, "Mex-America: From Margin to Mainstream," in Hausladen, ed., Western Places, American Myths (2003), 166-183.

Individual Readings:

1. David Rich Lewis, "Native Americans: The Original Rural Westerners," in R. Hurt, ed., The Rural West Since World War II (Kansas Press, 1998), 12-37.
2. William Deverell, "Privileging the Mission over the Mexican: The Rise of Regional Identity in Southern California," in Many Wests: Place, Culture, and Regional Identity, edited by David Wrobel and Michael Steiner (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1997), 235-258.
3. Karen Morin, "Peak Practices: Englishwomen's Heroic Adventures in the 19th Century West," Annals of the AAG 89 (1999): 489-514.
4. Gail Nomura, "Significant Lives: Asia and Asian Americans in the History of the US West," Western Historical Quarterly 25 (1994): 69-88.

November 16

The Urban West
 Evolving Urban Landscapes and Communities
 Twentieth Century Modifications

Group Readings:

1. Wyckoff, "Denver's Landscape," in Creating Colorado (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 108-124.
2. Larry Ford, America's New Downtowns: Revitalization or Reinvention? (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 22-64.
3. William Wyckoff, "Cities of the Mountain West: Twentieth-Century Transformations," Journal of the West 41, 2 (Spring 2002), 30-40.

Individual Readings:

1. Mike Davis, Ecology of Fear: Los Angeles and the Imagination of Disaster (New York: Vintage Books, 1998)
2. John Mack Faragher, "Bungalow and Ranch House: The Architectural Backwash of California," Western Historical Quarterly 32 (2001): 149-74.
3. Carl Abbott, The Metropolitan Frontier (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1993).
4. Gray Brechin, Imperial San Francisco: Urban Power, Earthly Ruin (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).

November 23

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

Group Readings:

1. Meredith Wiltsie and William Wyckoff, "Reinventing Red Lodge: The Making of a New Western Landscape," in Liza Nicholas, Elaine Bapis, and Thomas Harvey, eds., Imagining the Big Open: Nature, Identity, and Play in the New West (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2003), 124-150.
2. Richard White, It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own: A New History of the American West (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), 541-73 and 613-34.
3. William Wyckoff, "Life on the Margin: The Evolution of the Waning West," Montana: The Magazine of Western History 52, 3 (Autumn 2002): 30-43.
4. W. E. Riebsame, H. Gosnell, and D.M. Theobald, Land Use and Landscape Change in the Colorado Mountains, Parts 1 and 2, Mountain Research and Development 16 (1996): 395-418

Individual Readings:

1. John Wright, Rocky Mountain Divide: Selling and Saving the West (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993).
2. Bruce Hevly and John Findlay, eds., The Atomic West (Seattle: University of Washington Press,

1998).

3. William Riebsame, ed. Atlas of the New West (New York: Norton, 1997).
4. Jeremy Maestas et al, "Biodiversity and Land-Use Change in the American Mountain West," Geographical Review 91 (2001): 509-24.

November 30

STUDENT PRESENTATIONS!!

December 7

STUDENT PRESENTATIONS!!

DECEMBER 10 (FRIDAY) at 5:00 PM: Seminar Research Papers are due!!