

Geography 508
Landscape and Settlement in the North American Past

350 Science Hall, 2:20-5:25 pm Tuesdays

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Course Outline:

Sept 5 American Imprints – Encounters, Culture Hearths, Westward Diffusions

12 American Heartland – Middle Western Identities – Land, Region, Culture

Readings: James R. Shortridge (1989), “America’s Heartland”, Chapter 3 in *The Middle West: Its Meaning in American Culture*, pp. 27-38. Barbara G. Shortridge (2003), ‘Not just jello and hot dishes: representative foods of Minnesota’, *Journal of Cultural Geography* 21(1): 71-94; John A. Cross (2001), ‘Change in America’s Dairyland’, *Geographical Review* 91(4): 702-714.

19 American Heartland – The Immigrant Experience on the Land

Readings: Michael P. Conzen (1990), “Ethnicity on the Land,” Chapter 12 in Michael P. Conzen (ed), *The Making of the American Landscape*, pp. 221-248; Robert C. Ostergren (1997), ‘The Euro-American settlement of Wisconsin, 1830-1920’, chapter 8 in R.C. Ostergren and T.R. Vale (eds.), *Wisconsin Land and Life*, pp. 137-162; Steven Hoelscher (1999), ‘From sedition to patriotism: performance, place, and the reinterpretation of American ethnic identity’, *Journal of Historical Geography*, 25(4): 534-558

26 American Imprints – The Growth and Development of Towns and Cities

Readings: John C. Hudson (1977), ‘Plains Country Town’, in B.W. Blouet and F.C. Luebke (eds), *The Great Plains: Environment and Culture*, pp. 99-118; Mona Domash (1996), ‘Constructing New York’s Skyline’, chapter 3 in *Invented Cities: The Creation of Landscape in Nineteenth Century New York and Boston*, pp. 65-98; Matthew Farish (2003), ‘Disaster and decentralization: American cities and the Cold War’, *Cultural Geographies*, 10: 125-148.

Oct 3 EXAM 1

10 American Heartland – Milwaukee, the ‘Genuine American City’

Readings: Judith T. Kenny (1997), ‘Polish routes to Americanization: house form and landscape on Milwaukee’s Polish South Side’, Chapter 13 in R.C. Ostergren and T.R. Vale (eds.), *Wisconsin Land and Life*, pp. 263-281; Steven Hoelscher, Jeffrey Zimmerman and Timothy Bawden, ‘Milwaukee’s German Renaissance Twice Told: Inventing and Recycling Landscape in America’s German Athens’, chapter 19 in R.C. Ostergren and T.R. Vale (eds.), *Wisconsin Land and Life*, pp. 376-409; Judith T. Kenny and Jeffrey Zimmerman (2003), ‘Constructing the ‘Genuine American City’: neo-traditionalism, new urbanism and neo-liberalism in the remaking of downtown Milwaukee, *Cultural Geographies* 11:74-98.

17 Student projects – preliminary proposals

24 American Regions and Regionalism – New England and the South

Readings: Stephen Nissenbaum (1996), “New England as Region and Nation,” Chapter 2 in E. L. Ayers et al., *All Over the Map: Rethinking American Regions*, pp. 38-61. Edward L. Ayers (1996), “What we Talk About When We Talk about the South,” Chapter 3 in Ayers et al., *All Over the Map: Rethinking American Regions*, pp. 62-82; Sam B. Hilliard, “Plantations and the molding of the Southern landscape,” Chapter 6 in Conzen (ed.) *The Making of the American Landscape* (1990), pp. 104-126;

31 American Regions and Regionalism – Great Plains and the American West

Readings: Walter P. Webb (1931), “Introduction”, Chapter 1 in *The Great Plains*, pp. 3-9; Gareth E. John (2001), ‘Cultural nationalism, westward expansion and the production of imperial landscape: George Catlin’s Native American West’, *Ecumene*, 8(2):175-201; Dianne Meridith (2000), ‘California: Pacific Rim or American West?’, *The North American Geographer*, 2(1); 33-57.

Nov 7 Student projects – interim reports

14 American Imprints – Local Scale and Identity.

Readings: Louise Appleton (2002), ‘Distillations of something larger: the local scale and American national identity’, *Cultural Geographies* 9:421-447; Steven M. Schnell and Joseph F. Reese (2003), ‘Microbreweries as tools of local identity’, *Journal of Cultural Geography* 21(1): 45-69; Joe Weber (2004), ‘Everyday places on the American freeway system’, *Journal of Cultural Geography*, 21(2):1-26; Blake Harrison (2005), ‘Tourism, farm abandonment, and the ‘typical’ Vermonter, 1880-1930’, *Journal of Historical Geography*, 31: 478-495.

21 EXAM 2

28 Student projects – penultimate reports

Dec 5 Student projects – penultimate reports

12 Student projects – penultimate reports

20 Student projects due

Readings: Readings for this course come in the form of journal articles and books, which you may access online through the university library's electronic reserve system (look for this on [Learn@UW](#)). Readings are intended to enrich or supplement class lecture topics. Please read the required readings (usually ca. 3 per week) prior to class, and come to class, if possible, with some reactions or questions about the readings (you might even want to jot some of your reactions or questions down. We will discuss them at some point during the session.

Student projects: Everyone is required to undertake a semester project that explores some aspect of the historical/cultural geography of Madison or nearby parts of southern Wisconsin. These projects should include some primary research, whether archival or field work. Projects should be approved by roughly mid-October. Your project idea will be briefly presented in class on October 17th, with an opportunity for feedback and suggestions from me and others. You will also be required to give a brief progress report at our November 7th meeting; and to prepare a longer presentation of your results at the end of the semester. Completed projects are due December 20th.

Exams: Students will write two exams (one on Oct 3rd, the other on November 21st). Exams will be of mixed format, and will cover materials from lecture, discussion and readings.

Evaluation: The two exams will count for 60% of your final grade; the student project will count for 40%. Although a specific letter grade is not assigned for attendance and participation, both are expected. Since this class meets only once a week, attendance is important. It is also important to attend when classmates are presenting during the final weeks of the semester. To not do so is discourteous.