

## Syllabus and Calendar – Cultural Geography of the US (2nd semester 2021/22)

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Office hours (Instituto de Cultura Americana): Tue. and Thu: 14-15h15 (make sure to book, these hours are shared with other classes' students; I will also be available in other time-slots by previous arrangement).

The main purpose of this curricular unit is to master and develop critical concepts of US cultural, human and culturally construed environment(s). Combining these concepts with practical examples will contribute to a better understanding of the positions of "America" as nation and imagination: its human and cultural diversity, its interdependence with bio-regional non-human species, its geopolitical ambitions, its negotiations with the border/lands, and its responsibilities in the Anthropocene.

A first part of the program is divided into key notions of American Studies, the environmental humanities, and the historical and political background for regional divisions of landscapes and human-(es)scapes in the US. A second part addresses key historic moments, as well as contemporary instances and discussions of environmental awareness and justice(s), following loosely the bio-regional marks addressed in the first part. Students will study the semiotic construal of endemic and transitory identities, of inter-species divisions and dynamics, and of permeable and overdetermined keywords such as "border(s)", "frontier(s)", "nature," "bioregionalism," "green economy" or "environmental histories".

Week	Date	Topics and Readings	Anthology pages and assignments due
		<b>I. Introduction: around the scope of cultural geography, American Studies, Nature and bioculture(s) in the US, ecopoetics</b>	
1	Tue Jan. 25	Presentation. Program and Assessment Criteria. Writing the Place HW: "Cultural Geography"	
2	Thu. Jan. 27	Around the notions of culture and geography HW: "American Studies: an Introduction"	
3	Tue Feb 1	Around the notions of American Studies and American Values American values (focus groups) HW: The Human and Natural Environments	
4	Thu Feb. 3	American Values (conclusion) "The Human and Natural Environments". HW: "Nature", [complemented by Joseph Bruchac, "The Circle is the way to see"]	
5	Tue Feb. 8	Establishing groups for oral presentations Emerson, "Nature" HW: Gary Snyder + Gudding + Jetñil- Kijiner	
6	Thu Feb 10	Invited lecturer. Nuno Marques, "Ecopoetics" HW "Mappings" + The Ecology Symbol + Garreau, "The Nine Nations"	
7	Tue Feb 15	The Ecology Symbol Mapping notions and mapping nations. HW Luther Standing Bear, "Nature" + Louis Owens, "The American Indian Wilderness"	Deadline for signing up for oral presentations
		<b>Part II: Biocultural mindsets</b>	

8	Thu. Feb. 17	[First Nations] Nature and Natives HW: "Young Goodman, Brown"	Suggested presentation 1: metaphors of the Anthropocene
9	Tue Feb 22	Commentary Practice: Contrasting Texts [Yankeedom] New England, Nature and the Puritans	
10	Thu Feb 29	[Yankeedom] Thoreau, "Walking" [HW: W. Faulkner, "Mississippi" + bell hook]	Suggested presentation 2. Imagining north America / The 11 Nations
11	Thu. Mar 3	[From the Tidewater to the South]: William Faulkner, Mississippi hw: "Black Woman's Labor" with intro to "Community history" + E. O. Wilson, "Denial and Its Risks"	Suggested presentation 3: Katrina
12	Tue Mar 8	[Deep South] – African America, Plantation Rule(r)s; E. O. Wilson; Bell Hooks The Great Migration [complementary reading: Margaret Walker, "Sorrow Home"] HW: Rebecca Solnit, "The Walmart Biennial"	Suggested presentation 4: Vessel containers, graves
13	Thu March 10	[The Urban East, or the Foundry, frontdoor for [im]migrants]: "The Walmart Biennale", Rebecca Solnit Midterm paper HW: Steve Mentz. "Interlude: Port of New York"	
14	Tue Mar 15	The Urban East, or the Foundry, frontdoor for [im]migrants: the ports HW: Robert Frost, "A Brook in the City"	
15	Thu Mar 17	eLibrary America Ação de Formação HW: "Literary Recipes from the Lewis and Clark Journals"	
16	Tue. Mar 22	the city and the river (Robert Frost) River crossings to the West; [The Midlands]: The Bread Basket HW: Rachel Carson + Linda Hogan	
17	Thu Mar 25	Rachel Carson, "Surface Waters and Underground Seas". Delivery of midterm papers. Guidelines for final projects. Intro to Linda Hogan's text HW: D. Chavez + Terry Tempest Williams	
18	Tue March 29	[Mexicamerica]: Linda Hogan, "What Holds the Water what Holds the Light", + Denise Chávez, "Crossing Bitter Creek"; borderlands, intro to Terry Tempest Williams HW: L. Marx, "The Machine in the Garden"	Suggested oral presentation 5: O on Water
19	Thu. March 31	[Mexicanamaerica]: Terry Tempest Williams: o Golfo do México <a href="https://orionmagazine.org/article/the-gulf-between-us/">https://orionmagazine.org/article/the-gulf-between-us/</a> Leo Marx, "The Machine in the Garden." Crossing the Appalachians and the Transcontinental Railroad. HW: Fredrick Jackson Turner	
20	April 5	[The Far West]: Fredrick Jackson Turner: The Significance of the American Frontier HW: Jack London, "To Build a Fire"	Suggested oral presentation 6: H on Wheels
21	Apr. 7	[The Far West]: Yúcon and Jack London. Deadline for abstracts of final papers Apr. 9 HW: Harriette Harnow, chapter 2 of "Hunter's Horn" + Aldo	Suggested oral presentation 7: Uranium Mining

		Leopold, "Thinking Like a Mountain"	
		Easter Break	
22	Apr. 19 Tue	Aldo Leopold. Crossing the Appalachians and the Land Before Her (invited lecturer Mandala de la rivière) HW: Excerpts from "Dwelling: An Ecopoem"	
	Apr. 21 Thu	Teacher is away / Zoom Class with Scott Edward Anderson HW: Simon Schama + John Muir	
	Apr. 26 Tue	[The Pacific Rim] Yosemite Park [John Muir]; Snyder and Kerouac at Matterhorn <a href="https://sites.google.com/a/jhaut.com/www/adventures/jack-kerouac-s-matterhorn">https://sites.google.com/a/jhaut.com/www/adventures/jack-kerouac-s-matterhorn</a> HW: Ginsberg + Walt Whitman + Derek Walcott	Suggested oral presentation 8: Photography and the Imagination of Place
	Apr. 28 thu	Discussion of Final Papers	Suggested presentation 9: The Beat Generation and the Pacific Rim
18	May 3	From West to East: Civilization and the Sea – Supermarket in California and Walt Whitman HW: Mentz, "Deterritorializing Preface"	Suggested presentation 10: racism and the urban geography of San Francisco
19	May 5	The Isles and our Postcolonial Oceans. Revisions for final test	Suggested presentation 11: Emily Dickinson and the sea
20	May 10	Test	
21	May 12	Wrapping up – further readings [deadline for final papers May 16]	

### ASSIGNMENTS / ASSESSMENT

**Class participation. 15%:** If you do not participate in class so often, be sure to reinforce the participation in the blog: <http://USculturalgeography.blogspot.pt>

**Midterm paper: 15%.** Commentary on contrasting/actualized views of nature, landscape, place and culture, regions, borders. ***It will be on March, 10 (duration: 1h)***

**Oral presentation: 15%.** You will work in pairs in order to deliver an original presentation on topics complementary to the subjects addressed in class. You are welcome to drop by my office to leaf through bibliography on suggested presentations, or to suggest one yourselves. The presentation will be preceded by a tutorial with the teacher, by appointment.

**Final Project: 25 %** (5% plan; non.attendance to the ***peer-revision class on April 28*** = - 10 %). [Field / textual] research on environmental organizations in the US, or other groups working for environmental justice (thinking race, gender, class – ex. Climate jobs). Or creative/artivism work [with context and rationale]. *Note that you have to deliver, by email, an abstract + commented bibliography for your work by April 9. Deadline for delivery of final papers is **May 16 by noon 12:00 a. m***

**Test: 30%. On May 10**

*Plagiarism notice:* No unquoted and/or uncontextualized material from alien sources can be used in your papers, as this constitutes an infringement to copyright. More than 20% of non-justified textual similarity (verified through Urkund or otherwise proven) will invalidate your work and may be reported to the university authorities.

### **Selected Bibliography**

ANDERSON, Jon. *Understanding Cultural Geography: Places and Traces*. Routledge, 2015.

ANDERSON, Lorraine. *Literature and the Environment: a Reader on Nature and Culture*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Pearson Education, 2012.

BURGETT, Bruce, and Glenn Handler, eds. *Keywords for American Cultural Studies*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. New York UP, 2020.

GILLIAN, Carol A. and Gregory J. Segreti, *American Studies: an Introductory Reader*. Kendall Hunt, 2010.

JOHNSON, Nuala C, R. H. Schein, and J. Winders, eds. *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Cultural Geography*. John Wiley & Sons, 2013.

MENTZ, Steve. *Ocean*. Bloomsbury, 2020.

SNYDER, Gary. *A Place in space, Ethics, Aesthetics and Watersheds*. Counterpoint, 1996.