THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

*Cultural Ecology (GEOG 333S) (New Number 433)*

**General Information**

**Time**
Spring Semester, 2009 TR, 11:10-12:30

**Place**
Jeannette Rankin Hall, Room 204

**Instructor**
Jeffrey A. Gritzner

**Office**
Old Journalism Building, Room 210

**Office Hours**
TR, 10:00-11:00, 4:00-5:00; W, 10:00-11:00; or by appointment

**Telephone**
243-5626 (office); 273-0665 (home)

**Teaching Assistant**
Eric Hull

**Office**
Old Journalism Building, Room 304A

**Required Textbooks**

Terry Jordan-Bychkov (1938-2003) occupied the Walter Prescott Webb Chair in History and Ideas at The University of Texas at Austin. He received his *A.B.* from Southern Methodist University in 1960; his *A.M.* from The University of Texas at Austin in 1961. His *Ph.D.* was conferred by the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1965. His areas of academic specialization included cultural and historical geography, the American frontier, Texas, and Europe.

Mona Domosh is a professor of geography at Dartmouth College. Her *A.B.* (1979), *A.M.* (1983), and *Ph.D.* (1985) were all conferred by Clark University. Her areas of specialization include cultural, historical, and urban geography. Professor Domosh is also well known for her work concerning issues of gender.

Roderick Neumann is an associate professor of geography in the Department of International Relations at Florida International University. His B.S. was conferred by California Polytechnic State University in
1982; his M.S. by the University of Idaho in 1986; his Ph.D. by the University of California at Berkeley. His areas of academic specialization are cultural ecology, international development, rural development, and Africa.

**Patricia Price** is an associate professor of geography at Florida International University. Her A.B. (1987), A.M. (1990), and Ph.D. (1997) were all conferred by the University of Washington. Her areas of specialization include cultural geography, political geography, urbanization, social theory, gender, and Latin America.

Additional biographical information regarding the authors can be found on page xxv of *The Human Mosaic*.


**Kate Turabian** (1893-1987), formerly the Dissertation Secretary at The University of Chicago, established this publication during the Depression of 1930-1935 as an inexpensive companion to *The Chicago Manual of Style*. It is designed as a guide to suitable style in the presentation of term papers, theses, and dissertations in both scientific and non-scientific disciplines. It remains the most widely used manual for writers in the United States.

**The Context of Cultural Ecology within the Discipline of Geography**

Geography comprises a bewildering number of facets. Because there is no generally accepted classification of the subdivisions of the discipline, the following is more indicative than definitive:

A main division is that between regional and topical (also referred to as systematic) geography, distinguishing the study of areas in the fullness of their interrelated characteristics from the study of single features (topics). This distinction is a matter of emphasis: Regional synthesis draws upon knowledge of particular features present in the area, while the analysis of one topic necessarily includes delineation of the area (region) in which it occurs.

Topical geography also has a broad twofold division: Biophysical geography (sometimes termed physical or natural geography) examines characteristics of the atmosphere, land, water, and soils, as well as the distribution and interrelationships of plants and animals. Human geography (or anthropogeography) deals with geographical aspects of humanity. Again the distinction is artificial: Natural systems are increasingly modified by human
activity. At the same time, the biophysical environment influences the biological and social characteristics of humanity.

Like biophysical geography, human geography is composed of many specialties. For example, economic geography considers how mankind makes a living. The topic can be subdivided further, variously focussing upon agriculture, manufacturing, trade, transportation, or other areas of economic activity. Cultural geography, from which cultural ecology emerged, is another broad subfield of human geography. The term, when introduced into the United States from Germany some seventy-five years ago, referred to the study of how culturally diverse societies adapted to, and modified, the earth’s surface—creating “cultural landscapes” which contrast with pristine “natural landscapes.” The subject has now come to include all applications of the idea of culture to geographical problems. It analyzes the spatial variations of material traits, such as house types, as well as cultural traits, such as religion. Cultural ecology is simply a more dynamic, interactive variant of cultural geography.

Each human group—community, society, or nation—has its distinctive culture. The investigation of such collective groups in their areal differentiation and interrelations is termed social geography. This term, long applied in Europe, is increasingly being applied in the United States as well. Inevitably, it overlaps cultural ecology. It would be difficult to consider a cultural trait without consideration of those who invented, distributed, received, or modified it—and one cannot imagine a society without its cultural attributes.

Political geography examines political phenomena in their areal context. In dealing with the territorial manifestations of economic, social, and cultural forces and patterns, political geography relies heavily upon the other subfields of human geography.

An understanding of the present usually requires knowledge of how it came into being—in other words, genetic analysis. Thus, geography has an historical component. However, when we speak of historical geography, we generally mean geography of the past for its own sake. Apart from its focus upon some former era, historical geography employs the same concepts and asks the same questions as do other branches of the discipline. Traditionally, historical geography has been closely allied to cultural geography and cultural ecology.

Another approach to geographical analysis is to carve out a specific cross-section of the discipline for special examination. Environmental geography might serve as an example. Of course environmental issues have always been considered in geography, but modern trends in environmental change and their accompanying problems enhance the importance of this topic. Although some geographers would suggest that environmental geography is merely an aspect of biophysical geography, its historical, social, cultural, economic, and political components demand almost equal attention.
Another category concerns not the content, but the tools, of geographical investigation and presentation. In the forefront stands cartography. In recent decades, the rapid development of mathematics, statistics, and computerized information has led to the development of geographical information systems (GIS) which complement and expand upon traditional cartography. Finally, there are the techniques of fieldwork, and their extensions into remote sensing—both through aerial photography and through increasingly sensitive infrared sensors, radar, and other scanning devices installed in earth-orbiting satellites.

Research Assignment

On Tuesday, February 3rd, you will be given an assignment designed to familiarize you with resources available for research in cultural ecology in the Mansfield Library and elsewhere in the greater community. The assignment is to be completed and submitted by Thursday, February 12th.

Critical Essay

A critical essay of approximately four double-spaced pages, including footnotes and references, will be due no later than Thursday, March 12th—but may be submitted at any time prior to the 12th. The essay should be related to a topic discussed in class, and should draw upon at least four sources other than the assigned readings. It should strictly follow the standard form described in Kate L. Turabian's A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations (with footnotes and a corresponding bibliography, rather than parenthetical references and a corresponding reference list). Several publications provide useful information regarding grammar, punctuation, mechanics, spelling, and usage—for example, Blanche Ellsworth and John A. Higgins' English Simplified, 7th ed. (New York: HarperCollins College Publishers, 1994).

Term Paper

The term paper should be roughly fifteen double-spaced pages in length. The first draft of the paper will be due no later than Thursday, April 16th. The paper will be evaluated and returned for revision. The revised paper, together with the first draft, is to be submitted by Thursday, April 30th. Research for the paper should draw upon at least five sources other than the assigned readings. The term paper must conform strictly to the conventions contained in Turabian's A Manual for Writers...

Examinations

A mid-term examination is scheduled for Thursday, March 26th. It will cover the readings, films, and class discussion related to the first three units. The final examination is scheduled for 8:00-10:00, Thursday, May 14th, and will cover the readings, films, and discussion related to units IV and V.
Graduate Increment

Graduate students enrolled in *Cultural Ecology* are required to submit a second essay of at least eight pages. It must draw upon six or more refereed publications other than the assigned readings. The topic must be approved by the instructor.

Course Grade

The research assignment and critical essay will account for approximately ten per cent of the course grade. The term paper will account for forty per cent of the grade; the mid-term and final examinations will each account for twenty-five per cent of the grade. While recognizing the broad range of personalities present in any class, attendance and participation in classroom discussions will also be taken into consideration.

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the university. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The code is available for review on-line at [http://www.umt.edu/SA/VPSA/index.cfm/page/1321](http://www.umt.edu/SA/VPSA/index.cfm/page/1321).

Schedule and Readings

Orientation and Introduction

January

27  Orientation
29  Presentation by Kelly Peterson of The Writing Center

Unit I: The Nature of Cultural Ecology

Suggested and Required Readings


*Carl O. Sauer, "Cultural Geography," in Readings in Cultural Geography, 30-34.

*Required Readings (on reserve in the Mansfield Library)*
Maximilien Sorre, "The Role of Historical Explanation in Human Geography," in Readings in Cultural Geography, 44-47.

February

3 Distribution of Research Assignments; The Nature of Cultural Ecology

5 The Nature of Cultural Ecology (Case Study: The Domesticated Horse in Pre-Columbian North America)

Unit II: Cultural Origins

Suggested Reading


10 Cultural Origins

12 Submission of Research Assignment; Culture History (Case Study: Little People and Giants in American Prehistory)

Unit III: Livelihood Systems and Settlement

Suggested and Required Readings


*Jordan-Bychkov et al., The Human Mosaic, chaps. 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11.

*Derwent Whittlesey, “Major Agricultural Regions of the Earth,” in Readings in Cultural Geography, 416-444.

March

3 Cultivators
5 Pastoralists
10 Pastoralists (continued)
12 Submission of Critical Essay; Agricultural Dispersals and Agricultural Regions
17 The Geography of Food and Famine
19 Urban Genesis; The Dispersal of Urban Systems
24 Industries
26 Mid-Term Examination
31 Spring Vacation (no class meeting)

April

2 Spring Vacation (no class meeting)

Unit IV: Culture Areas

Suggested and Required Readings

*C. M. Delgado de Carvalho, “Geography of Languages,” in Readings in Cultural Geography, 75-93.

*Paul Fickeler, “Fundamental Questions in the Geography of Religions,” in Readings in Cultural Geography, 94-117.

*Jordan-Bychkov and Domosh, The Human Mosaic, chaps. 2-6.


*Ivan Lind, “Geography and Place Names,” in Readings in Cultural Geography, 118-128.
Unit V: Landscape, Human Agency, and the Future

Suggested and Required Readings


*Jordan-Bychkov et al., The Human Mosaic, chap. 12.


28 Human Agency and Environmental Change (Case Study: The West African Sahel)
30 Deadline for the Submission of the Revised Term Paper; The Human Rôle in Environmental Change

May

5 Living with Nature
7 Restoring the Earth
14 Final Examination (8:00-10:00)