“For we must consider that we shall be as a city upon a hill. The eyes of all people are upon us. So that if we shall deal falsely with our God in this work we have undertaken, and so cause him to withdraw his present help from us, we shall be made a story and a by-word through the world.” John Winthrop, “A Model of Christian Charity”

“Here man is free; as he ought to be; nor is this pleasing equality so transitory as many others are.” Hector St. John de Crevecoeur, “Letters From An American Farmer”

“I like to see a man proud of the place in which he lives. I like to see a man live so that his place will be proud of him.” Abraham Lincoln

“If the effort to describe the United States as homogeneous was unavailing, our predecessors could and did succeed in defining what they called the American Character. They constructed images of national identity with such concepts as individualism, pragmatism, optimism, ambition, idealism, and progress and attributed them variously to the influence of the frontier, affluence, and a classless and nonhierarchical society. ... As Americans, we celebrated an aggressive individualism, nurtured by political democracy and producing economic prosperity as its much desired offspring. But this interpretation of our past was built on silences…” Alice Kessler-Harris

**Required Materials:**

1. Texts available at bookstore:
   - All purchase: Cresswell, Tim. *Place: A Short Introduction*

2. Packet, available at University Copy and Print. Materials from packet also on reserve
3. SacCT materials
4. Materials presented in class

**Available Reserve Materials:** Texts on Reserve: (alternative to buying course pack and/or textbooks)

a. Books:
   1) Anzaldua, Gloria. *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*
   2) Zukin, Sharon. (4) *Whose Culture, Whose City? And After the World Trade Center* (required); *Point of Purchase, Landscapes of Power* (recommended)
   3) Cresswell, Tim. *Place* (if I am able to get another copy to put on reserve)
   4) one copy of each book listed above

b. Chapters/Articles:
   1) Jackson, John Brinckerhoff. Pages 1-67 from *A Sense of Place, A Sense of Time*
   2) Zukin, Sharon. *The Cultures of Cities*, pgs. 1-46

**Catalog Description:** Examination of the ways in which physical spaces and places within America contribute to the formation of American identities and vice versa. Interdisciplinary and topically organized, analyzes both exterior and interior spaces: city, suburb, regions, body, mind, and the borderlands, to name a few. Also studies the interaction of race, class, gender, and sexuality with space and identity.
Course Description: Fundamental to this course is the way in which physical spaces within America contribute to the formation of American identities and vice versa. Both historical and contemporary interactions between Americans and their environment will be examined. Topically, we will be exploring exterior spaces, including those of the city and suburb; interior spaces, including those of the body and mind; as well as those which cross interior/exterior boundaries, such as the borderlands. The ways in which popular culture and race, class, gender, and sexuality impact upon the construction of particular spaces also will be a part of this examination. A variety of fields will be included in our assaying of the territory: cultural geography, landscape studies, gender studies, history, literature, sociology, and art are only some of the fields with which we will connect.

Course Objectives: The goals for your learning in this course include:

An understanding of
- the ways in which multiple disciplines come together to create meaning
- how particular disciplines construct meaning
- the ways in which the construction of space within America constructs us as individuals and vice versa,

a demonstration of visual and textual literacy, and the ability to:
- compare and contrast the experiences of diverse populations within the United States in relationship to space and place
- The ability to apply the techniques of formal analysis to a variety of texts
- The ability to communicate effectively in both oral and written formats

Coursework: Your grade will consist of participation, multiple short essays, a presentation and a long, researched essay. Essays are due at the beginning of class; papers turned in after the beginning of class are subject to a 5 point deduction for tardiness. Late papers will not be accepted unless arrangements have been made previous to the due date. If you have problems completing an assignment, please talk to me BEFORE it is due.

Presentations: You will sign up for one presentation. Details forthcoming.

Essays: Formatting: Essays should be typed, double-spaced, and have 1 inch margins. The font and its size should be normal (ex. Times 12). Please staple your essays. Don’t bother with plastic or cardboard covers or folders. At the top of the first page, single-spaced, include a descriptive title for your paper in addition to tagging information (your name/the date/essay #). E-mailed essays will not be accepted.

Research Essay. The research essay will consist of an analysis of the construction of space in a particular piece of film, music, literature, or other artwork. Use specific evidence from the text with which you are working, including direct quotes or visual references. Demonstrate why these references or quotes support your argument. Do not simply summarize or describe your primary text or your research! Students will present their paper topics to the class in workshop sessions. You will need to use a specified number of sources for this essay. More information will follow.

Common courtesies: Please do not come to class late, since it disrupts both the other students and the professor. Unless you have notified the instructor prior to class, please do not enter if you are more than five minutes late; please also notify me prior to class if you will have to leave class early. Due to the recent proliferation of inappropriate use of laptops in the classroom, laptops are not allowed in class without prior approval. All electronics should be turned off. Students using electronics in class without prior approval may be asked to leave.

Academic Integrity: Please turn in work that is solely your own. Appropriate credit must be given to the work of other authors that is used; this includes the proper use of paraphrasing and quoting as well as citation within and at the end of the paper. If you are unsure about what this means, please come and speak with me. Plagiarism is not an option: it can mean failure of an assignment, failure of a class, and/or expulsion from the university. In this class, it will mean a zero for the
assignment as well as a report to the appropriate office. If plagiarism occurs again, you will receive a failing grade for the course. If you are uncertain what plagiarism is, please see me. Additionally, you should examine the following URL: http://library.csus.edu/content2.asp?pageID=353

Accomodations: Accommodations will be made for disabilities recognized by the university, provided the student notifies the instructor of all official requirements and provides certification of said disability. Students must also take responsibility for expressing their needs clearly to me as well as for all forms and appointments required.

Participation: This class depends upon the full engagement of students with the material and the class itself. I expect students to participate in discussions on a regular and informed basis. Simply being in attendance does not qualify as participating in the class. You can receive a failing participation grade even if you attend every class. Disruptive and negative behavior works against you in your participation grade, and you may be asked to leave the class.

Grading: (see above on plagiarism)
Short Essays (2): 15 points each
Regular journal entries/quizzes: 20 points total
Research Essay (inc. presentation): 30 points
Presentation of reading: 10 points
Participation (see above): 10 points

*Anyone who does not complete the research essay will not pass the course*

Schedule of Readings (may change at discretion of instructor): S= SacCT; CP=Course Pack; Q/J = Quiz or journal entry
Due to mandatory faculty furlough days (9 days/semester), this syllabus may be adjusted. According to fair labor practices, I am restricted from doing CSUS-related work on those days. This includes grading, e-mailing and class preparation. Furlough days may also include the cancellation of class meetings.

**Week 1: Introducing Place:**
1/26 Intro to course, syllabus, clips
1/28 What does it mean to be in place? How does this relate to our identities? Cresswell, ch 1 [1/29: Furlough Day]
Purpose: Begin to understand how place functions within our lives. How do we apply this idea to American identity?

Purpose: Begin to develop critical analysis skills.

**Week 3: Online: 18th and 19th Century Origins of an ‘American Character’** (I will be in Albuquerque for a conference)
2/9-11: Q/J SacCT; Read: Jonathan Edwards, Benjamin Franklin, J. Hector St. John de Crevecoeur, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Frederick Turner (S); View: The Wilderness and the West (on own in library media center)
Purpose: Link the introspection and self-improvement skills of Edwards and Franklin to what has been called “The American Character”. What does Emerson think Americans need to do? How does de Crevecoeur talk about America as different from other countries?
Week 4: **Contrasting Viewpoints on the Landscape**
2/16-18: Native American Viewpoints: View on own: *Hopi: Songs of the Fourth World* (available online, S, and on reserve. Watch all parts); read selections from Basso, Kennedy, Momaday, and Rogers (CP) [2/15: Furlough Day]

Purpose: How are Native Americans situated in relation to place? Have Native Americans and Euro-Americans thought about place differently?

**Week 5: A Short History of the West**
2/23-25 Q/J Read: Turner’s Frontier Thesis, chap 1 (SacCT); Discuss *The Wilderness and the West* -- select images available on SacCT. (see also [http://xroads.virginia.edu/~cap/NATURE/cap2.html](http://xroads.virginia.edu/~cap/NATURE/cap2.html) for more) (Recommended: Simpson, *Visions of Paradise*, pgs. 1-115; Tompkins, *West of Everything*)

Purpose: How does art and literature reflect the sociopolitical atmosphere of the time in which they are produced? How is place used to express national and regional identities?

**Weeks 6-7: Southern Culture and American Identity**
3/2 Read: Faulkner, “A Rose for Emily” (S)
3/4 March for CSUS; Furlough Day

**Essay 1 due 3/11**

Purpose: What are the stereotypes of Southern American identity? Are there stereotypes of other regions and where do these come from? Does Southern identity relate to American identity?

**Week 8: City Spaces**
3/18** Q/J Read: Rushbrook, Denka. “Cities, Queer Space and the Cosmopolitan Tourist” (S); Sorkin and Zukin, "Introduction" and Setha Low’s "Spaces of Reflection, Recovery, and Resistance" in *After the World Trade Center*, which is on reserve. These are pages vii-xi and 163-171. **Bibliography, outline, and thesis statement due 3/18**

Purpose: How do cities sell themselves? How are cities constructed in our imagination? How are cities a part of our American identity?

**Week 9: Middle America, Small Towns, and the Suburbs**

**Week 10: 3/30-4/2 Spring Recess**

**Week 11+:** Week 9 topic, cont.
4/6 Furlough Day [4/5-4/7 Furlough Days]
4/8**-4/13 Q/J Read: *Beloved* (A-H) and *Linden Hills* (I-Z)

Purpose: Examine how suburbs and small towns function. How is ethnicity reflected in the experience of these places? How do people relate to each other and what are the social, economic, and cultural parameters in and of them? How do these places reflect an American identity?


**Weeks 14-16: Borderland Spaces/ Space as Resistance: The (South)West, Mexican/Native American Identity and Borderlands**
4/29 Q/J Read: Gloria Anzaldua’s *Borderlands*, chaps 1, 2, 5 (CP)
5/4-6 Q/J Read: *Woman Hollering Creek* (A-H) and *Flight* (I-Z)
5/11-13 TBA

Purpose: To analyze how Others relate to the margin and the center, using Mexican-American and Native American cultures as examples. Can the margin be a space of liberation as well as constriction or exile? How is place a part of ethnic identity?

**Research essay due: 5/18 by noon**