As old as a roadway that was once a Native trail, as new as the suburban subdivisions spreading across the American countryside, the cultural landscape is endlessly changing. The study of cultural landscapes—a far more recent development—has also undergone great changes, ever broadening, deepening, and refining our understanding of the intricate webs of social and ecological spaces that help to define human groups and their activities. *everyday america* surveys the widening conceptions and applications of cultural landscape writing in the United States and, in doing so, offers a clear and compelling view of the state of cultural landscape studies today.

*everyday america* is an eloquent statement of the meaning, value, and potential of the close study of human environments as they embody, reflect, and reveal American culture.

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PREFACE

In the 1930s, the maverick writer, philosopher, and publisher John Brinck-erhoff Jackson found the subject of cultural landscape analysis in the spe-
cialist academic realm of human geography. Until his death in 1996, he
devoted much of his life to broadening cultural landscape study into a
popular as well as a professional endeavor that is now an ongoing part
of a dozen disciplines. This book is a critical review of Jackson’s legacy and a
survey of the current creative expansion and redefinition of cultural land-
scape writing in the United States. The authors collected here start with
Jackson’s example and with their own work address the question “What
next?”

These authors are a representative sample of three generations of cul-
tural landscape interpreters: first, people close to Jackson’s own gener-
a group that includes a number of people still actively writing, teach-
ing, and designing; second, the generation of scholars and designers who
often published in Jackson’s journal, Landscape, and the students and pro-
fessors who knew him as a teacher or senior colleague; and a new third
generation of cultural landscape interpreters who often have discovered Jackson or the endeavor of cultural landscape studies on their own.

The work in this volume rests on two key premises. First, cultural landscapes—the complex sets of environments that support all human lives and all social groups—provide important and diverse avenues of study for better understanding culture and history. Second, cultural landscape interpretations are essential tools for better design and management of the built environment. These premises help to explain the interest in cultural landscape interpretations as a thread in several disparate disciplines including, in this collection alone, geographers, historians, architects, landscape architects, architectural historians, journalists, and planners.

The introductory chapter surveys the history and diversity of cultural landscape studies. The balance of this collection is organized into four thematic sections, with a brief introduction at the beginning of each. The chapters in the first section focus primarily on the understanding of J. B. Jackson and his work. The next section examines salient methods of teaching and learning visual and spatial literacy. The chapters in the third section interrogate some of the ever-expanding theoretical bases of cultural landscape study. The final section provides a chronologically ordered set of case studies that demonstrate fresh insights in cultural landscape study as it enters the twenty-first century.

Just as the pages of Landscape magazine presented a variety of writing styles and disciplinary approaches, this collection embraces many different types of voices. The remembrances of the journalist Grady Clay and the practicing architects and planners Denise Scott Brown, Jeffrey Limerick, and James Rojas appear next to chapters by university professors writing within their academic traditions, such as the historian Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz and the landscape architecture historian Louise Mozingo. As diverse as this collection is, it represents just one of several clusters of approaches to cultural landscape study; here, readers will see a set of people who have been influenced by J. B. Jackson.

As a writer and editor, J. B. Jackson did everything he could to keep cultural landscape study in the foreground and himself in the background. Indeed, he resolutely refused to attend any meeting at which he might be featured above any other contributor. In 1998, Stephen Schreiber, director of the architecture program at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque, initiated the idea of a conference to be held at the UNM campus to honor the contributions of Jackson, who for fifty years had been a resident of New Mexico and a favorite guest lecturer and instructor in the UNM architecture program. That conference, entitled "J. B. Jackson and American Landscape," was the first large gathering on the subject to be convened after Jackson's death. The planning and paper selection committee (consisting of Schreiber and the editors of this volume) encouraged the eighty speakers not to memorialize Jackson, but rather to evaluate his work as a springboard for new study and as a basis for debate about how that study could be improved. The attendance at the fall 1998 conference—more than three hundred people from throughout North America—gave evidence of a robust continuing interest in cultural landscape studies. The chapters selected for this book, presented here in substantially refined versions, spoke most cogently as original and critical evaluations of Jackson's own work and as creative guides for stretching the boundaries of the field.

Planning for the 1998 conference was already underway when it was learned that J. B. Jackson had bequeathed a substantial endowment to the University of New Mexico "for the betterment of education in the School of Architecture and Planning." This new endowment ultimately supported the conference and the preparation of this book. The support of the J. B. Jackson Endowment was aided by a grant for publication from the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts, of Chicago, Illinois. In addition to Stephen Schreiber, James R. "Ric" Richardson, interim dean of the School of Architecture and Planning, strongly supported the conference, its funding, and the preparation of this edited collection. The subsequent dean at UNM, Roger Schluntz, as well as Donlyn Lyndon and Charles C. Benton, successive chairs of the Department of Architecture at the University of California, Berkeley, also generously provided support. In Albuquerque, David Margolin provided invaluable editorial assistance; Anne Boynton, Anne Tyler, Lynée Busta, and Claudia Smith, research assistance; and Joseph Gallegos, supplemental graphics. At the University of California Press, at every point in the planning and editing process, the project enjoyed the skilled guidance of our editors, Charlene Woodcock, Monica McCormick, and Rose Vekony, and the meticulous contributions of copy editor Jacqueline Volin.

James Borcherdt, Elizabeth Collins Cromley, and Abigail Van Slyck read the entire manuscript and made helpful suggestions for improvement. Other essential assistance came from Elizabeth Byrne, Thomas Carter, Rita Douthitt, Claudia Farnswick, Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, Richard Hutson, Lawrence Levine, Richard Longstreth, Margareta Lovell, Waverly Lowell, Donald McQuade, Kathleen Moran, Louise Mozingo, Carolyn Porter, Christine Rosen, Mary Ryan, William Tydeman, and Dell Upton. We also thank the 1998 conference session chairs and featured pie-
nary speakers—F. Douglas Adams, Daniel Arreola, Joe Bilello, Will Bruder, Julia Czerniak, Dennis Doxtater, Miguel Gandert, Joel Garreau, Edward T. Hall, Kenneth Helphand, Ferdinand Johns, Edith Katz, William Kelly, Andre LARROQUE, Margaretta Lovell, Bruce MacNelly, Chris Monson, William Least Heat Moon, Baker Morrow, Barton Phelps, Antoine Predock, Robert Riley, Elizabeth Rogers, Virginia Scharff, Darius Sololhub, Marc Treib, and Joseph Wood—and the other conference speakers and participants, whose ideas have actively contributed to this work.

Four of the chapters presented here—Patricia Nelson Limerick, “J.B. Jackson and the Play of the Mind: Inquiry and Assertion as Contact Sports” (chapter 2); Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, “J.B. Jackson as a Critic of Modern Architecture” (chapter 3); Peirce Lewis, “The Monument and the Bungalow: The Intellectual Legacy of J.B. Jackson” (chapter 6); and Gwendolyn Wright, “Modern Vernaculars and J.B. Jackson” (chapter 10)—were selected by journal editor Paul Starrs to appear in a special issue of the *Geographical Review* dedicated to Jackson’s work (88, no. 4. October 1998). These chapters appear here with permission. Starrs also graciously assisted in the preparation of illustrations for Peirce Lewis’s chapter.

In the 1950s, the term *cultural landscape* rarely appeared in print. This was true even when writers needed a term to describe the intricate webs of mental, social, and ecological spaces that help to define human groups and their activities. By the 1990s, however, the term had clearly arrived in professional and literary circles. *Cultural landscape* or, more often, the word *landscape* alone, had come to refer to urban settings, building interiors, and even computer screen images, as well as planted or rural prospects. Between 1950 and 1990, people studying culture, history, and social relations had gradually realized the importance of the built landscape. The scholars who had used the term *cultural landscape* most before 1950—geographers and landscape architects—remained in the lead in the 1990s, with architects and planners not far behind. Even writers for the *New York Times*, *Preservation* magazine, and National Public Radio now employed the term *landscape* in its cultural landscape sense, without further definition. More surprising, perhaps, was the discovery of everyday built spaces as significant evidence of social groups, power relations, and
culture by historians, American studies scholars, literary critics, and a growing number of anthropologists, sociologists, and social theorists.

Indeed, cultural landscape is both a useful term and a necessary concept for understanding American environments. It is a way of thinking—one with inherent contradictions and multiple approaches—that people have readily adapted to new questions and social developments. This book surveys the widening conceptions and applications of cultural landscape studies in the United States. It also evaluates the pivotal role of one writer, John Brinckerhoff Jackson, in encouraging the study of cultural landscapes. As participants in a countermovement to the homogenizing forces of architectural and urban modernization, Jackson, his compatriots, and their successors have expanded and deepened the study of common landscapes and, in the process, have revitalized a term in use since the Middle Ages.

EXPANDING THE DEFINITIONS OF LANDSCAPE

The long and varied careers of the word landscape in English, and of its cognates in other northern European languages, have centered on the human shaping of space and also on the dynamic interaction of actual places with mental or visual images of place. The conception of landscape has expanded from genres of painting and garden design, through the study of seemingly unchanging agricultural societies, to the entire contemporary American scene, to applications in design and preservation movements and a growing interest in conflicts of race, class, gender, and power.

Old English precursors to landscape—landskip and landscaef—already contained compound meanings. In the Middle Ages, a land was any well-defined portion of the earth, ranging from a plowed field to a kingdom. The original senses of -skip, -scipe, and -scape were closely related to scrape and shape, meaning to cut or create. The related suffix, -ship, denotes a quality, condition, or a collection. It yields a word such as township—in Old English, tænscape—which primarily meant the inhabitants of a town or village, but, secondarily, the domain or territory controlled by that settlement. Thus, landskip essentially meant a collection or system of human-defined spaces, particularly in a rural or small-town setting.

The Old English sense of landscape, which was social as well as spatial, appears to have faded into disuse by 1600, when artists and their clients introduced a related Dutch word, landschap, back into English. A landscape, in this new Dutch sense, was a painting of a rural, agricultural, or natural scene, often accented by a ruin, mill, distant church spire, local inhabitants, or elite spectators. In contrast to the earlier traditions of religious, mythological, and portrait paintings done on commission for the church or nobility, landscapes were painted on speculation for anonymous consumers in emerging mercantile centers such as Antwerp, Amsterdam, and London. As a result, the term landscape and the painting genre it described were tied to the rise of a merchant class with the power and leisure to cast their controlling and organizing gaze from the city out onto the countryside. Subsequent painting genres—seascapes, cloudscapes, towns- capes—extended this sense of a scape as a carefully framed and composed real-life scene.

By the early 1700s, well-to-do English landowners had begun to employ the aesthetics of picturesque landscape painters such as Nicolas Poussin, Claude Lorrain, and Salvator Rosa to record the natural aspects of the lands they visited. A landscape, thereby, became a pleasing view or panorama in seemingly wild or untouched nature. Before long, wealthy landowners also had begun to remake their English countryside estates to match the artful asymmetries of landscape painting. Interwoven as they were with the European grand tour, picturesque aesthetics, and the Romantic movement, the conceptions of landscape in Europe and the United States by the early nineteenth century involved not only the creation of paintings of natural and rural views, but also a growing interest in naturalistic gardens, vernacular architecture, and picturesque revival buildings (fig. 1.1).

In the United States the popular fascination with the vibrant architecture, communities, and landscapes of everyday America has ranged from Walt Whitman, Mark Twain, and Winslow Homer through early-twentieth-century populism and on to the 1930s regionalism of New Deal writers and painters and the architectural and urban criticism of Lewis Mumford. The concern for environmental degradation caused by human activities was another American theme, spurred particularly by the Vermont writer George Perkins Marsh.

Meanwhile, the growth of universities in the nineteenth century supported the notion among at least a few geographers, anthropologists, and sociologists—all influenced strongly by European colonialism—that everyday surroundings, not just high art, could provide important evidence of social life and cultural values. In Europe, several countries developed a distinct school of thought about the proper questions and methods of cultural landscape study. In Germany, geographers such as Friedrich Ratzel, Alfred Hettner, and Otto Schlüter focused particularly on scientif-
tish city and regional planner Patrick Geddes, who applied field study to city and regional planning. After the 1950s, W.G. Hoskins's close documentation of rural landscapes and M.R.G. Conzen's attention to the details of urban streets and buildings inspired new generations of historical geographers and landscape archaeologists who are still active today.  

These European approaches found their way in varying proportions to different universities in the United States and became part of the basis for the present-day complexity of landscape study. For instance, by the early 1900s German ideas dominated geography at the University of Chicago, while British geography had more influence at the University of Wisconsin. Beginning in the 1920s, Carl Sauer, who had studied in Germany and at Chicago, became the longtime chair of the geography department at the University of California, Berkeley, where he revised and updated the German landschaft idea, using the term landscape. Through Sauer, the idea of cultural landscape gained prominence in American geography. In his groundbreaking 1925 essay, "The Morphology of Landscape," Sauer set forth his definition: "The cultural landscape is fashioned from the natural landscape by a cultural group. Culture is the agent, the natural area is the medium, the cultural landscape the result."  

Landscape, in this sense, was not a painting, a vista, or a garden, but rather a particular area shaped by a cultural group and strongly influenced by the limits of soil, climate, and plant life. Sauer and the so-called Berkeley School of cultural geography shifted the sense of landscape back from a composed image to the place itself. Like Hoskins and his followers in England, Sauer and his students often equated landscapes with coherent and stable cultures and thus typically left modern, industrialized cities outside their purview. For cultural geographers of the Berkeley School, the historical diffusion of ideas from one region to another became a theme of primary importance. Fred Kniffen was one of several Sauer students who followed vernacular landscape elements—fences, building types, and settlement forms—to identify cultural hearths and migration patterns (fig. 1.2). Thus, by the interwar years of the twentieth century, the study of landscape had several competing and overlapping paradigms in Europe and in the United States.

J.B. Jackson as a Catalyst for Landscape Studies

The independent writer, editor, and landscape philosopher John Brinckerhoff Jackson played a central role in the maturation of cultural landscape...
to learn (particularly by close observation) the dress, manners, and speech of people far wealthier than himself.  

With such a background, it is hardly surprising that the young Jackson was fascinated by the contrasts of different languages and cultures. By his teenage years, he was fluent in French and German, had traveled widely in Europe, and was already adept at sketching as a method of recording travel impressions. In the mid-1920s, he began spending his summer vacations in Santa Fe with his uncle, Percy Jackson, a Wall Street lawyer who also served as treasurer and legal advisor to the School of American Archaeology, headquartered there. Percy Jackson was well acquainted with the circle of artists and anthropologists then remaking Santa Fe into a tourist center and art colony. In one particularly memorable summer, Jackson accompanied his uncle to Mayan archaeological digs on the Yucatan peninsula, where the Jacksons dined with the senior scholars as they discussed emerging interpretations of the Mayan past, based primarily on the physical landscape record, and where Jackson also added Spanish to his linguistic skills.

Jackson finished preparatory school at Deerfield Academy in Massachusetts and, at the urging of his headmaster, enrolled in the multidisciplinary Experimental College of the University of Wisconsin instead of following the family path to Harvard. The program at Wisconsin eschewed disciplinary boundaries and devoted an entire year to the study of one place during one century. Students were encouraged to examine their surroundings with their own eyes and to consider the importance of religion in understanding culture. A series of visits by Lewis Mumford encouraged several students to study architecture.

Although the Wisconsin experience greatly influenced Jackson's later work, he was unhappy in Madison, and after one year he transferred to Harvard, completing his bachelor's degree in history and literature in 1932. After studying architecture for one year at MIT and commercial drawing in Vienna, Jackson traveled by motorcycle around Europe for two years. His articles on the rise of fascism for the American Review and Harper's Magazine led to a 1938 novel, Saints in Summertime, which he published under the name of Brinckerhoff Jackson. The New York Times called the book "a remarkable piece of work, crafty, witty and original," and the Saturday Review of Literature placed Jackson on its cover (fig. 1.3). But instead of immediately pursuing this literary success, Jackson returned to New Mexico to work as a cowboy on an isolated ranch near Wagon Mound.

In 1940, Jackson enlisted in the United States Army. His European experience and his command of Spanish, French, and German led the army...
Discharged from the army in early 1946, Jackson drove across the United States in a surplus jeep—sketching, taking notes, and applying the skills he had developed during the war to the American cultural landscape. He ran a ranch in east-central New Mexico until he was thrown and dragged by a horse. During eighteen months of traction, surgery, and convalescence, Jackson decided to go back to writing and to start a magazine inspired by the vivid French regional geographies he had studied during the war, and by a new French journal, _Revue de géographie humaine et d’ethnologie_. At Santa Fe, in the spring of 1951, a forty-one-year-old Jackson began publishing his small magazine, entitled _Landscape_. His first statement of intentions concludes:

Wherever we go, whatever the nature of our work, we adorn the face of the earth with a living design which changes and is eventually replaced by that of a future generation. How can one tire of looking at this variety, or of marveling at the forces within man and nature that brought it about?

The city is an essential part of this shifting and growing design, but only a part of it. Beyond the last street light, out where the familiar asphalt ends, a whole country waits to be discovered: villages, farmsteads and highways, half-hidden valleys of irrigated gardens, and wide landscapes reaching to the horizon. A rich and beautiful book is always open before us. We have but to learn to read it.

Excerpts from the work of French human geographers in the early issues of _Landscape_ indicate Jackson’s debt to them. Yet in Jackson’s hands, the concepts of _genre de vie_ and _pays_ became transformed into essays about generic archetypical landscape elements, such as the house, the yard, or the suburb.

Although subscriptions covered some costs, Jackson never accepted any advertising and heavily subsidized the costs of _Landscape_ himself. During his seventeen years as publisher and editor, the circulation of _Landscape_ magazine never exceeded three thousand individual and library subscribers. Nevertheless, it was read by leading figures in half a dozen fields and by students who would emerge as important scholars and commentators in their own right. Jackson hoped to reach an interested lay audience and typically drafted conversational, wry, and piercing essays of his own in the tradition of Michel Montaigne, HenryThoreau, and H.L. Mencken. Jackson also contributed to _Landscape_ under several pseudonyms, each voice expressing its own style and expertise.

As an editor traveling often to scholarly conventions and universities around the country looking for authors and articles, Jackson consciously wove together a diverse network of geographers, historians, architects, land-
to be comprehensive and tolerant, but to see the ordinary landscapes of the automobile, mobile home, supermarket, and shopping center as legitimately "vernacular"—that is, native to the area, but area now defined more at the national than the local scale.\(^\text{22}\)

While he was still publishing Landscape magazine, Jackson began a new phase of his career, as a peripatetic university professor and popular guest speaker. After he quoted Carl Sauer approvingly in the second issue of the magazine, a cordial correspondence had ensued, and in 1957, Sauer invited Jackson to visit the Berkeley geography department. Articles soon began to flow from Berkeley to the journal, and Jackson began making extended annual visits to the campus, where he sat in on seminars, gave talks, and finally taught a seminar class of his own. The Berkeley School of cultural geography reinforced Jackson's own impatience with academic fragmentation and specialization and his desire to understand the cultural and physical connectedness of the landscape.

Jackson eventually added the Berkeley architecture and landscape architecture departments to his annual circuit, and by 1967 he was teaching a course in landscape architecture. Two years later, he began a similar relationship at Harvard. Design faculty at both schools soon became readers and contributors to Landscape.

In 1969, Jackson turned over the reins of Landscape to a new publisher, Blair Boyd, who, with longtime editor Bonnie Loyd, produced the journal for another twenty-eight years. This freed Jackson to write book-length collections of essays and to teach nearly full time.\(^\text{23}\) Jackson was in his late fifties when he began teaching his survey of American cultural landscape history at Harvard in the fall semester of each year, at Berkeley in the winter quarter, and at other universities for one-term rotations. His lectures soon were drawing two hundred to three hundred students, with design and architectural history faculty auditing from the back of the room. For these professors and design students, the course was a conversion experience to a new way of looking at the built environment.\(^\text{24}\) Jackson's survey lectures, like his earlier writings, took ordinary settings usually overlooked by academic study and made them interesting. Helaine Caplan Prentice observed in Landscape Architecture, "His curriculum is as indispensable to designers' perceptions today as was once the European grand tour."\(^\text{25}\)

In 1978, Jackson retired from regular teaching duties and returned to live full time in his house in La Cienega, a village ten miles southwest of Santa Fe. He continued a voluminous correspondence and hosted a steady stream of academic visitors. Although the income from his family inheri-
tance remained secure, he chose to take a series of manual-labor jobs. Rising early six days a week, he worked successively as a gardener, a trash hauler, and finally, a janitor for Ernie's Auto Repair, a transmission repair shop in Santa Fe owned by a family from La Cienega. Jackson found satisfaction in manual labor: "It is a blessing to be of service," he sometimes explained.26 Parallel with these changes in his work life, Jackson also gave up using his nickname, "Brinck," which he felt confused his neighbors and had upper-class pretensions. People who met him after 1978 knew him as John Jackson, as his Hispanic neighbors and fellow members of the local Catholic congregation knew him, or as Brother Jackson, as he was known to the members of the African American church in Albuquerque and an Anglo-Texan Pentecostal mission in Santa Fe that he also enjoyed attending. His jobs and his church visits provided social contacts as well as observations for many of his later essays, which he continued to write each afternoon. Only months before his death in 1996, at the age of eighty-six, he completed a final essay for Landscape in Sight, a retrospective of his best writing, edited by Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz.27

Much about Jackson's life is contradictory: he was a son of the upper class, educated in fine arts and literary classics, who preferred studying the environments of working-class and middle-class people; a cosmopolitan world traveler who was equally at home in the small towns and factory neighborhoods of the United States; a writer, editor, and popular professor who had no official graduate degrees and who routinely set himself apart from scholars and academic life. Perhaps because of his year in the Wisconsin experimental college, Jackson never claimed any particular academic discipline, preferring "landscape studies" to any of the several disciplines that claimed him as a member. He never attempted to make his speculations seem exhaustive or conclusive on a subject. Instead, his intention was to stimulate other people to take up the challenge, to spur their own seeing, thinking, writing, and designing.

J. B. Jackson also left much work to be done by others. He wrote primarily about the landscapes of men; rarely about those of women and children. Predictable points of view and systematic thinking were not among his many gifts. He often sidestepped political questions and borrowed freely from both conservative and radical sources. Although he avidly read theoretical works (often in their original languages), he took playful, experimental, and often elusive positions on issues of theory, which infuriated doctrinaire followers of any one particular stripe. At the beginning of his formal and informal education, Jackson had found studies of the landscape already in multiple voices and competing schools of thought. His influence was not to create any new, well-defined disciplinary rigor or a single paradigm. Instead, he consciously added still more diversity to the enterprise.

APPLYING LANDSCAPE STUDIES TO DESIGN AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

From the beginning of his writing and publishing career, Jackson applied cultural landscape perspectives to contemporary planning, architecture, and landscape architecture, often as part of a personal critique of modernist design and planning. The potential role of designers in making a more meaningful environment was a consistent theme in his writing, and he was vitally interested in the cultural and social meaning of architectural design.28 Jackson sought out designers as friends, students, and as a reading audience. He and his magazine built important bridges between geography and design. However, Jackson also was exasperated when designers applied landscape study too quickly, looking only at the visible surface of the landscape and not doing the kind of personal observation, research, or reading that lead to deeper analysis. He faulted architectural modernists for neglecting the importance and meaning of popular American settings such as the suburbs, commercial roadways, office parks, and shopping malls. He also gently chided landscape architects for ignoring the aesthetic qualities and significance of the giant rural grid and ubiquitous parking lots. For Jackson, vernacular landscapes provided indispensable inspiration and context for contemporary design.

In Jackson's writing and teaching, and in other contributions to Landscape, designers found inspiration and encouragement for contextualism and regionalism. At Jackson's urging in 1962, four junior Berkeley architecture professors—Donlyn Lyndon, Charles W. Moore, Sim Van der Ryn, and Patrick J. Quinn—wrote an antimodernist manifesto, "Toward Making Places," for Landscape. Learning from Las Vegas, the path-blazing 1972 book by Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown, and Steven Izenour, demonstrated how the study of a new vernacular such as the automobile commercial strip could inform design practice.29 Jackson's fascination with commercial architecture did not include a call for its universal preservation, however. His ambivalence about the preservation of historic built environments and the conservation of wilder nature in state and national parks mirrors an ongoing series of debates within the field. Like cultural landscape studies, preservation and environ-
mentalism trace their roots, in part, to the romanticism of the nineteenth century. During the mid-twentieth century, as architectural preservationists broadened their focus from house museums and singular buildings to the protection of urban districts, small towns, and rural landscapes, they drew support from cultural landscape scholars. Academic landscape studies have at times been closely allied with the historic preservation and environmental movements. Following J. B. Jackson’s death, *Preservation* (the magazine of the National Trust for Historic Preservation) noted, “Jackson was the first to identify persuasively the elements that make a particular landscape American, and to explain convincingly how commerce, imagination, need, and nature collaborated over time in creating the look of the land.” Beginning in the early 1980s, Robert Melnick and Linda McClelland led efforts to systematize the study and nomination of rural historic landscapes to the National Register of Historic Places. The concept was becoming a given within the movement by the time the topic of cultural landscape was adopted as the theme for the 1997 National Trust convention. In a related vein, Elizabeth Barlow Rogers founded the Cityscape Institute in New York to promote high standards for public space design, restoration, and management.31

Although Jackson on occasion supported preservation, he also provided ample ammunition for battles against preservation and environmentalism. Here is one of the sharp distinctions between Jackson and more preservation-oriented writers such as Hoskins. Like Jackson, other cultural landscape scholars such as David Lowenthal and planners such as Kevin Lynch have voiced serious doubts about the advisability, or even the possibility, of freezing any particular landscape, whether a national park or a trailer park.32 “The power which an ancient environment possesses to command our affection and respect derives from its having accepted change of function,” wrote Jackson. “Its beauty,” he continued, “comes from its having been part of the world, not from having been isolated and protected, but from having known various fortunes” (fig. 1.5).33

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS AND DEBATES

On the questions of method, theory, and philosophy that undergird landscape studies, J. B. Jackson’s pronouncements were short, elliptical, and widely scattered.34 Thus, even the people inspired by Jackson continue to exhibit diverse choices in philosophical underpinnings. Methods and theory have also tended to divide cultural landscape scholars into different groups, several of them completely independent of Jackson’s influence.

In one way or another, philosophical debates among cultural landscape scholars revolve around the relationship between agency and structure—the ways in which individual experience and action become the basis for shared social and cultural ideas and actions (and, in a dialectical feedback loop, how social experience influences individual thought and life). This is a basic question of all sociology and social theory. Seeing the landscape as an arena of agency and structure requires a shift from viewing landscape as the somewhat passive result of human activity to landscape as essentially an active influence on social, economic, and political processes. Winston Churchill put it simply when he wrote, “We shape our buildings, and then they shape us.”35 These approaches bring to the foreground the idea that landscapes of the mind (including images of landscape and landscapes only imagined) are inextricably involved in perceptions of and actions within everyday built space.

As the early publication of a “place-making” article suggests, in the 1960s and 1970s, *Landscape and Jackson himself showed a strong interest in phenomenology and its emphasis on “sense of place” as a way of putting individual experience back into the agency side of the agency-and-structure debate. Jackson published many writers with a phenomenological
own not related to social action or power. Following from the work of Michel Foucault and Henri Lefebvre, a large number of writers who might—with some provocation—are grouped together as postmodernists avoid using the term culture altogether and focus on ideology, hegemony, the illusions of representation, and the social construction of knowledge. If they do use the term, they emphasize the contingency and individual acting out of culture, the importance of multiple or hybrid cultures, and opposition to cultural norms as central considerations.

While the Sauerian approach to landscape, like nineteenth-century French and German geography before it, sought evidence of cultural cohesion and continuity, more recent studies of social space have emphasized class conflicts, differing social constructions of identity, and unequal power relationships. One direction of these studies, which we might call the global strategy, has been to situate local landscapes within their worldwide consequences and connections, and to analyze specific landscapes more fully as manifestations of large-scale economic forces and multinational corporate power. In 1984, Anthony King's The Bungalow: The Production of a Global Culture showed that the global strategy could be insightfully tied to building types. Another direction of these critical theorists is a focus on locally "contested landscapes"—for instance, the places where ethnicity, race, class, age, or gender are spatially defined, reinforced, and counteracted (fig. 1.6). Here the aim is not only to dissect how spaces have helped to shape and reproduce social hierarchies, but also to illuminate how individuals and social movements have opposed those hierarchies. With the contention between field laborers and landowners in California's Central Valley in mind, Don Mitchell usefully extends the definition of landscape: "Landscape is thus best understood as a kind of produced, lived, and represented space constructed out of the struggles, compromises, and temporarily settled relations of competing and cooperating social actors; it is both a thing (or suite of things), as Sauer would have it, and a social process, at once solidly material and ever changing."

Dolores Hayden's The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History published in 1995, and Setha Low's On the Plaza: The Politics of Public Space and Culture, published in 2000, are other salient examples of this more local strategy of analysis (fig. 1.7).

Another group of theorists, who sometimes are lumped together as "structurationists," most overtly use the issue of structure and agency as their theme. Applying the ideas of Anthony Giddens, Allan Pred, or Pierre Bourdieu, they trace the relations of power that are often expressed not only in conscious political action but also in common, daily cultural
practices and patterns of consumption that, in turn, interact with cultural landscapes.66

Yet another group of theoretically astute landscape analysts primarily use images of landscape as their points of departure. Cultural historians such as Raymond Williams and geographers such as Denis Cosgrove have taken an approach closely tied to art history and the Dutch landscape-as-image tradition. Cosgrove, for instance, has argued that the very notion of landscape as a privileged perspectival vision is inextricably linked to the rise of capitalism and the conception of land as a marketable commodity.67

The issue of the relationship of humans to wilder nature presents another philosophical focus for cultural landscape study. Even at the end of the twentieth century, the common attitude has been to assume good nature and bad humankind. The ethnobotanist Edgar Anderson—the most frequent contributor to Landscape after J. B. Jackson himself—framed the issues in 1957:

The Amateur Thoreaus and the professional naturalists have in the United States raised the appreciation of nature to a mass phenomenon, almost a mass religion; yet at the same time they have refused to accept man as part of nature.... They are one of the chief ultimate sources of our unwritten axioms, that cities are something to

flee from, that the harmonious interaction of man and other organisms can only be achieved out in the country, that the average man is too noisy, too ugly and too vile to be accepted as a close neighbor.68

Since the 1970s, environmental historians, led by Donald Worster, Richard White, Carolyn Merchant, and William Cronon, have expanded upon the repercussions of intellectually separating humans and nature, noting that concepts such as nature and wilderness are human constructions. Through nuanced histories of particular regions, they have detailed the intricate interactions of human and environmental forces (fig. 1.8).69

Although philosophical underpinnings vary widely within any one field, study of cultural landscape remains strong in the disciplines that first embraced the topic. Historical and cultural geographers such as Michael Conzen, Peirce Lewis, Donald Meinig, Karl Raitz, and Wilbur Zelinsky—and, in turn, their students—have extended both the questions and the methods of landscape study.70 In American literature and American studies, John Stilgoe and Thomas Schlereth have been influential contributors.71 The journalist and editor Grady Clay has compiled a lifetime
situation as a “schism between cultural studies and political economy.” He suggests the solution may be “the promiscuous mingling and mutual education of cultural geographers and political economists.” If cultural landscape scholars need to give more attention to social power relationships, most political economists could better integrate the effects of the physical, spatial world into their analyses. In these exchanges lies an important truth for all landscape study: the lurking, ever-present potential for cunning camouflage and landscape duplicity—that what we can’t see, what is not in view, may be more important than what conscious public relations strategies have made visually obvious.

THE POLYPHONY OF LANDSCAPE STUDIES

Given the variety of impulses that underlie its history and use, cultural landscape study is of necessity a many-voiced endeavor. In the eighteenth century, the conception of landscape first expanded from a genre of painting to the appreciation of natural vistas, then to the design of romantic gardens. In the twentieth century, European schools of geographic thought were refashioned for new American applications. Carl Sauer’s Germanic interests in rural societies and ecologies and the French notions of the pays were extended by J.B. Jackson to serious consideration of the entire contemporary American landscape. Through Jackson’s magazine and his teaching, cultural landscape studies helped invigorate the design professions with a new respect for the vernacular scene. Meanwhile, the sheer number of divergent disciplines, schools of thought, philosophical bases, and professional applications in preservation and design guarantees the continuing expansion of both parallel and divergent approaches to landscape. The recent scholarly interests in race, class, gender, power relations, and world economic exchanges have added still more essential polyphony to the study of cultural landscapes.

Decidedly, we can expect no single, unified, rigidly bounded approach to the study of something so essential and yet so complex as the reciprocal relationships between individuals, groups of people, and their everyday surroundings. Jackson himself required a number of pseudonyms in order to address the different approaches that he personally needed for his journal. The people who have found encouragement and inspiration in Jackson’s influence (or who have directly reacted against its limitations) continue to take cultural landscape studies in both old and new directions. And the “Jacksonian” approaches (Jackson would
have abhorred the notion of anything named after himself, and especially any single approach) represent only one of several other valid, lively clusters of approaches to understanding and interpreting space, place, and landscape.

Thus, with Jackson's influence and also with the influence of writers not associated with him, landscape has become a common concept in the popular press. As more writers have returned the suffix -scape to its Old English sense of a created or shaped space, people have begun to think and write about cityscapes, townscape, streetscape, and the landscapes of tourism, work, automobile travel, and every other human activity. More recently, the trademark Netscape, a major browser for the World Wide Web, is notable because it refers not only to a framed two-dimensional image on a computer screen, not so different from landscape as a painting of scenery, but also to a virtual four-dimensional experience of images and connections changing over time, something more akin to walking or driving down a road than to viewing a painting.

"The indeterminate disciplinary boundaries of Jackson's teaching about the landscape," observed the geographer Michael Conzen soon after Jackson's death, "were its greatest problem and its greatest strength." Yet polyphony is not necessarily cacophony. Many different voices, especially those that can be heard and joined across boundaries, can enrich one another. New approaches can fill in gaps left by other traditions. Whether one opts for "promiscuous mingling and mutual education" between landscape observers and social theorists, more active communication between landscape scholars and design professionals, or bridging disciplinary boundaries to move between description and abstract analysis, the very variety and expansion of approaches and perspectives continue to be the strength of cultural landscape studies—and, we believe, of this collection of essays.