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The Making Of The American Landscape



Synopsis

The only compact yet comprehensive survey of environmental and cultural forces that have shaped the visual character and geographical diversity of the settled American landscape. The book examines the large-scale historical influences that have molded the varied human adaptation of the continent's physical topography to its needs over more than 500 years. It presents a synoptic view of myriad historical processes working together or in conflict, and illustrates them through their survival in or disappearance from the everyday landscapes of today.

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Customer Reviews

IMPORTANT: Note that the preview that you access on this page is of the 1990 first edition, not the 2010 second edition! Many of the essays have been changed. They really should have two different entries, .Conzen's *The Making of the American Landscape* (1990), was a major publication in interdisciplinary American landscape studies and has been extensively revised in this second

edition. Many of the revisions have been made to expand coverage on the new trends of the past several decades, such as the New Urbanism and New Ruralism. The volume begins with essays on the natural environment and Native American occupation, through the major European colonizations (Spanish, French, British). American expansion explores transformation of forests, prairies, and deserts, and the contributions of various ethnicities to layers of human occupation on the land. Other essays cover industrialization and mechanization, civil society, authority, religion, and elite landscapes of power /wealth, the effect of automobiles (highways, commercial strips), and large-scale consumer landscapes (shopping, megastores, etc). Conflicts and contrasts in the American views of utopia, intentional communities, suburbs, and the increased theming (as in theme parks) and increasing transformation of our national landscapes. There are several new essays from different authors in the second edition. The essays give short shrift to Hawaii and Alaska, with a single mention of each, which is a real downside. I still decided to give it five stars with that caveat.

This book got me really into US Historical Geography. It provides an amazing insight into the geographical, political, and economic development of our country and illuminates the many ways that make this country so unique. Very incredible and work a read for the fan of US History or those interested in settlement patterns. Traveling is so much more fun after having been introduced to the info in this book.

Arrived on time and as described.

Great book.

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