

History 488b/688b  
Landscapes of Lake Tahoe

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*course description:* Focusing on Lake Tahoe and the surrounding area, this interdisciplinary course will define and explore numerous facets of studying landscape as both a physical and cultural creation. We will consider Lake Tahoe historically, and analyze it as part of many different systems, both physical and perceptual. Diverse methodologies for the historical study of landscapes will be explored. There will be numerous guest lecturers, as well as possible field opportunities, all of which will be discussed in greater detail during the semester.

*course readings schedule:* **Additional readings may be assigned and will be announced in class.**

<u>date</u>	<u>topic</u>	<u>assignments</u>
1/23	introduction - What do we mean by landscapes?	begin Strong
1/30	How do we define and study landscapes?	Raymond, "Outside the Frame"; Starrs, "Work in the Sierra Nevada"; continue Strong
2/6	sources for studying Lake Tahoe <b>meet in Getchell Library Room 3</b>	<b>review of Strong due</b> Mills introduction, chaps.1 - 2
2/13	the physical landscape: constraints and opportunities	Mann, "1491"; Stine, "Climate," + 1 additional chapter from <i>SNEP</i> : <a href="http://geopubs.wr.usgs.gov/dds/dds-43/">http://geopubs.wr.usgs.gov/dds/dds-43/</a>
2/20	archaeological landscapes: Tahoe as part of a historical system	Bird, <i>A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains</i> ; Twain, <i>Roughing It</i> ; Moehring, "Comstock Urban Network" <b>proposal for primary source analysis #1 due</b>

<u>date</u>	<u>topic</u>	<u>assignments</u>
2/27	ethnographic landscapes: variant uses/perceptions of Tahoe	Mills, chapt. 3-5; Duane, chapt. 1 <b>688 project proposals due</b>
3/6*	working landscapes: the timber industry	Galloway, <i>Early Engineering</i> Wilson, <i>Sawdust Trails</i>
3/13	working landscapes, cont: the livestock industry	Mills, chapt 7, conclusion; <b>primary source analysis #1 due</b>
3/20	<b>spring break - no class</b>	
3/27	literary landscapes: creating a sense of place	Duane, chapt.3; James, <i>The Lake of the Sky</i> ; Greenwood, <i>New Life in New Lands</i> <b>proposal for primary source analysis # 2 due</b>
4/3*	working landscapes, cont.: Tahoe as water source	Duane, chapt. 6; Muir, "Lake Tahoe in Winter" <b>688 project abstract, outline, and bibliography due</b>
4/10	landscapes of leisure: Tahoe as playground	Raymond, "A Place One Never Tires Of"; Thompson, "Tahoe," "Tahoe Moods"
4/17	managed landscapes: public land issues at Lake Tahoe	Duane, chapt. 9 <b>primary source analysis #2 due</b>
4/24	landscapes of controversy: Whose place is it, anyway?	Duane, chapt. 7, 11 <b>688 papers due</b>
5/1	14 conversations about one place	<b>journals due</b>

\* indicates possible field-based segment

*required texts:*

Timothy Duane, *Shaping the Sierra*

Stephen Mills, *American Landscapes*

Douglas Strong, *Tahoe: From Timber Barons to Ecologists*

**Additional readings required by guest lecturers will be available electronically via Web CT [<http://webct.unr.edu>].**

*488/688 course requirements:*

1. **READINGS JOURNAL:** You will be required to keep a readings journal in which you review and respond analytically to each week's reading assignments. This journal should include your notes on the readings, but also some thoughtful **analysis** of the readings. As the semester progresses, you'll be expected to start making comparison among the readings, and to comment on differences or similarities in perspective and methodology. What does each author have to say about Lake Tahoe as a landscape? How would s/he define "landscape"? Which readings do you particularly like or dislike, and why?

Your journal entries should be completed every week before class, to assist you in preparing for the discussion. **Bring them with you to class each week.** Some will be collected randomly each week, and if yours is not available when called for, you will receive a zero for that component of your journal grade. Each journal will be read twice during the semester, but you will not know in advance when. Be forewarned that we could ask for it two successive weeks! Although we will read and make comments on your journal when it is collected, no grade will be awarded until the final review.

2. **REVIEW OF STRONG:** Each student will submit a 3-4 page, typewritten analysis of Strong's book on Lake Tahoe. Guidelines for the review, which is to be a critique of the work, and not simply a book report, will be discussed in class.

3. **PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSES:** During the semester there will be two papers, each 6-8 typewritten pages in length, that ask you to locate a primary source about Lake Tahoe, and explain what your source reveals about the landscape. The first of these papers will be based on a textual source of some kind (historical document, oral history, poem, novel, etc.). The second paper will be based on a visual source (map, chart, photograph, painting, etc.). Specific guidelines for the primary source analysis will be discussed in class, and part of the class session on 2/6 will be devoted to locating primary sources on Lake Tahoe.

4. **CLASS PARTICIPATION:** This class requires active participation by all members. You are expected to attend faithfully, to have the readings completed beforehand, and to participate in class discussions. More than one unexcused absence will jeopardize your grade, although attendance alone will not insure a good class participation grade.

*688b course requirements:*

In addition to the requirements above, 688b students will be expected to complete a research project (15-20 pp.) that will involve applying at least one of the methodological frameworks from this course to the landscape of Lake Tahoe. This is a field-based assignment. In other words, we'd like you to travel to the lake (or to whatever part of the extended Tahoe landscape you choose to focus on), and make the physical components of the landscape a feature of your project in some way. Your framework might be archaeological, ethnographic, cartographic, literary, or some other methodology covered in the course. You are free to conceive this assignment broadly, subject to instructor's approval.

<i>grading:</i>	<u>488b</u>	<u>688b</u>
readings journal	25%	15%
Strong review	15%	10%
primary source analyses	20% each	15% each
class participation	20%	20%
final project	—	25%

*course policies:*

**ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:** Academic dishonesty and plagiarism are serious intellectual offenses, as well as being against university policy. Either one is grounds for failing the course. Protect yourself by making certain that you can substantiate that any work you submit is your own.

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:** Students with documented disabilities should confer with the instructor to arrange for appropriate accommodations.

**LATE PAPERS:** Late papers will not be accepted. Be sure that your work is submitted on or before the due date on the syllabus.

600-level distinctions:

Graduate students in History 688b are expected to undertake significant independent research on a topic of their choosing. A general description of this project from the syllabus follows:

*688b course requirements:*

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This assignment gives graduate students the opportunity to synthesize the perspectives and materials presented in this class at a deeper level than the undergraduate exercises do. Each graduate student's specific proposal will be devised in consultation with the instructor, and will be tailored to his/her specific disciplinary background. In addition, graduate students will present the results of their research projects to the entire class, which undergraduate students do not do.

*grading:*

**Graduate students will be held to a higher level of performance than undergraduates.** In other words, class participation, level of analysis, and inventiveness of primary sources location and discussion by graduate students are all expected to exceed undergraduate levels for a comparable grade.

## Course Bibliography

UNR's Special Collections Department has created a special website devoted to Lake Tahoe images ([www.library.unr.edu/specoll/photoweb/tahoe](http://www.library.unr.edu/specoll/photoweb/tahoe)). In addition, numerous one-of-a-kind works on Lake Tahoe are housed physically in the Special Collections Department.

Relevant recent government publications include:

Sierra Nevada Ecosystem Project (USGS, 1997)

Lake Tahoe Watershed Assessment (USDA, 2000)

Other published sources for Lake Tahoe include:

Isabella Bird, *A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains* (1879)

Timothy Duane, *Shaping the Sierra Nevada* (1999)

John Galloway, *Early Engineering Works Contributory to the Comstock* (1947)

Peter Goin, *Stopping Time* (1992)

Grace Greenwood, *New Life in New Lands*, (1873)

George Wharton James, *Lake of the Sky* (1914)

Charles Mann, "1491" (*Atlantic Monthly*, 2002)

Eugene Moehring, "The Comstock Urban Network," (*Pacific Historical Review*, 1997)

John Muir, "Lake Tahoe in Winter," (*Sierra Club Bulletin*, 1900)

Nevada Museum of Art, *Picturing the Sierra Nevada* (1998)

Douglas Strong, *Tahoe: From Timber Barons to Ecologists* (1999)

David Thomson, *In Nevada* (1999)

Mark Twain, *Roughing It* (187-)

