

Kavanagh reminds readers that museums must respond to broad public audiences, be receptive to visitors' concerns, pay as much attention to amenities as to exhibits, and take every opportunity to make exhibits instructive, easily understandable, and interactive. She notes that history reflects present concerns, and that efforts to reconstruct the past inevitably legitimize, celebrate, or question topics in ways that are currently deemed important. Although museums once simply told truths to the public, she states that their role should be the promotion of further inquiry. Since audiences come to museums on a voluntary basis, she notes that curators must carefully think through all aspects of their exhibits.

Kavanagh makes many references to British museums that readers may find unfamiliar. However, she offers readers an international museum perspective, and makes many worthwhile suggestions about museum practices that will benefit all museum professionals.

Exploring the Beloved Country: Geographic Forays into American Society and Culture, by Wilbur Zelinsky. American Land and Life Series. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1994. xiv, 604 pp. Illustrations, maps, tables, notes, references, index. \$49.95 cloth, \$22.95 paper.

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Exploring the Beloved Country represents a sampling of essays from a cornucopia of articles written by a distinguished cultural geographer, Wilbur Zelinsky. Some of these essays were seminal articles that became benchmarks from which scholars in interdisciplinary fields have expanded our understanding of the history of American culture and landscape. The University of Iowa Press, with publication of this collection of essays, provides the curious general reader and traveler the opportunity to explore the spatial-temporal patterns of the American experience in terms of who we were, are, and are becoming. The book's only minor flaw is that some of the photographs, maps, and graphs are grainy and are not high-quality reproductions.

Zelinsky selected a fascinating collage of 21 articles that assess the American geographical experience at the place, regional, national, and international levels. The essays are integrated within four themes: society, built landscape, language, and transnationalism. His perspective stresses not only the significance of an alluring historical, geographical, and cultural saga, but an evolving American consciousness that has shaped and nurtured the people, land, and life in America. The diverse topics emerge from a focus on a wide array of commonplace landscape elements: magazines, religious affiliation, season of

marriage, towns, regional boundaries, houses, architectural style, flags and eagles, barns, community identity, cemeteries, classical town names, personal names, generic toponyms, vernacular regions, ethnic cuisine, sister cities, and conventions. Each essay is exploratory in nature, an attempt to unravel the content, context, and meaning of a diverse American terra incognita.

Zelinsky's essays suggest an infinite number of research problems for students of Iowa's history and culture. For example, based on magazine sales, what are the diverse subculture regions at the county level in Iowa when Zelinsky's research methodology is applied to contemporary data? How have county areal patterns of religion in Iowa changed since his seminal study in 1961? Why? Town morphology and distinctive landscape elements are a part of a community's personality. Are there Pennsylvania towns in Iowa? Where? Why? What is the extent of southernness in Iowa's cultural landscape? The ubiquitous dwelling of the frontier in the eastern United States was the log house. Of those remaining log cultural artifacts in Iowa—houses, barns, cribs, fences—what are the patterns and heritage of the log building traditions? What was the extent of Greek Revival styling in antebellum Iowa? Are there diagnostic patterns in the displaying of flags and eagles as symbols of nationalistic pride or ethnocentrism in Iowa? Are there other unique symbols of nationalism arrayed across Iowa? Why? Welcome signs reveal the personality of place associated with the well-being of a community. Is there a spatial sorting to welcome signs in Iowa? Does the geography of signs in Iowa focus on state pride, midwestern regional affiliation, or the centrality of the heartland? How do Iowa's patterns of generic place names or toponyms fit within the broader patterns and processes in the northeastern United States? What subculture vernacular regions existed in Iowa in the past? How have they changed in the contemporary cultural landscape? Have the patterns and processes shaping Iowan's roving palates changed?

Zelinsky's *Exploring The Beloved Country* encourages and teaches Americans to learn to look at, read, and interpret the diverse folk and popular culture components of the contemporary cultural landscape. Reading and interpreting Iowan and American landscapes encourages "landscape watchers" to expand their curiosity beyond "fields of dreams" and "the bridges of Madison County."

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