

GEOG125 Cultural Landscapes

MWF 10:10-11:00
Carolina Hall 220
Prof. Elizabeth Olson



Perhaps the only class you will ever take that asks you to really understand where you stand. As in, right now. Literally. Why are you standing here?

Both the American Western and the plastic pink flamingo are indelibly, iconically associated with the US landscape. But how well do we really know them? What do they represent beyond their basic material expressions of dusty frontier towns and love-em-or-hate-em, unearthly pinkness?

The purpose of this course is to introduce you to the geographic concept of cultural landscapes. More importantly, this course is intended to help you see your world in a very different way. We dig deep into things we take for granted - the roads and paths

that we use every day, the homes we live in, and the names that are given to our streets and buildings.

During the semester, we will consider how attitudes towards suburban landscapes shifted from celebrated escapism to critical disdain; how golf, football and surfing contribute to our geographic imaginary of the US; how film and digital imagery have changed where we travel and where we think we are; and how we respond to and construct landscapes of violence and justice.