

Wikipedia Assignment on Mining Landscapes, Sent 10/24/16:

Friends--

As I explained today in lecture, we're adding an extra reading assignment to the four readings about mining landscapes that are already listed in the syllabus and that are available for download from the Library e-reserve collection. For your convenience, here's what the syllabus already asks you to read:

Thomas Andrews, "Dying with Their Boots On," *Killing for Coal: Americas Deadliest Labor War* (2008), 122-56.

Kathryn Morse, "The Nature of Gold Mining," *The Nature of Gold: An Environmental History of the Klondike Gold Rush* (2003), 89-114.

Robert Service, "The Trail of Ninety-Eight," *Ballads of Cheechako* (1909).

Martha A. Sandweiss, "Prologue: An Invented Life," *Passing Strange: A Gilded Age Tale of Love and Deception Across the Color Line* (2009), 1-10.

We hope you'll find all of these texts lively and engaging. They aren't long, and each offers a very different perspective on themes we're discussing in section next week. That said, none of them offers a very broad or integrated perspective on mining landscapes in North American history. That's where Wikipedia comes in.

For next week, to put these readings in a wider context, **please spend at least an hour** (longer, if you're so inclined) **browsing Wikipedia entries that seem to you in any way relevant or interesting relating to the history of mining and mining landscapes in the United States and Canada.**

Although I'll offer below some suggestions you might want to peruse, it's very important that you let yourself head off in whatever directions seem to you most intriguing.

The purpose of this Wikipedia assignment is for you to experience for yourself the serendipity of **browsing ... wandering**. The directions you choose to wander are your own, but your goal is to look for **contexts** and **connections** that will broaden and deepen your understanding of this

subject. *Landscape history (and history in general) rewards wandering.* What we're explicitly asking you to do in Wikipedia this week is in fact worth doing for almost all the topics we're exploring in this course.

To maximize the serendipity of your browsing experience, it will help to remember that encyclopedia entries (especially in Wikipedia) are often conceptually and geographically *nested*, which is to say that *you can approach a topic at different levels of generality.*

To get an overview of major topics covered by Wikipedia, it's often helpful to start with the pages that list some of the most significant entries on a broad topical area. Wikipedia calls these "Category" pages. For mining, these might include (but are not limited to)

Category: Mining: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Mining>

Category: History of Mining:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:History_of_mining

Category: Mining Disasters:
https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Mining_disasters

Category: Economic Geology:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Economic_geology

(You might try rummaging around for other category pages that feel especially relevant to this course.)

I often open pages like these in one tab of my browser, and then click on entries of interest to open additional tabs to see if they might interest me.

Please remember that you should never rely on an encyclopedia (whether it's Wikipedia or the *Encyclopedia Britannica*) as your main source, and you should not generally *quote* a source like Wikipedia. By their nature, encyclopedias synthesize what's found in other sources; they are never the original source for the information they contain (Wikipedia insists on this). They can be superb tools for *orienting* yourself to a topic you're exploring, but you should then use them to point yourself to other, more authoritative sources. You should not, for instance, rely on them as your main source of evidence for the place paper you'll be writing, except perhaps to confirm ancillary points that aren't central to your main

research.

In my own perusal of Wikipedia entries relevant to the next couple lectures, the following all seemed like they might be of interest. I'll list them here just to get you started, but remember: these are **NOT** required readings. Please approach them as invitations for your own explorations of what Wikipedia has to offer about mining landscapes. You're the one discovering what you want to learn. You're the decider. You're the wanderer.

That's the spirit of play and serendipity that usually yields the best, most insightful, and most productive browsing ... even though, paradoxically, it doesn't initially seem like it's pointed at any very "productive" goal at all.

Here's my list of pages that might be worth perusing, but it's just my list. I do recommend that you read several entries that are fairly broad in their focus (e.g., "Mining" or "Gold Rush") and then begin to drill down conceptually or geographically or historically toward topics and places that are more focused (e.g., "California Gold Rush" or "History of Coal Mining in the United States" or "Copper Mining in Michigan"). After that, just let yourself go sideways toward anything that catches your fancy.

Mining: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mining>

Gold Rush: https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gold_rush

California Gold Rush:

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/California_Gold_Rush

Sutter's Mill: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sutter's Mill](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sutter's_Mill)

Prospecting: <https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prospecting>

Placer Mining: https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Placer_mining

Silver Mining: https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Silver_mining

Comstock Lode: https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comstock_Lode

Sutro Tunnel: https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sutro_Tunnel

Hydraulic Mining: https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hydraulic_mining

Klondike Gold Rush: https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Klondike_Gold_Rush

Butte, Montana: https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Butte,_Montana

Western Federation of Miners:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western_Federation_of_Miners

History of Chinese Americans (includes significant section on Chinese role in the Gold Rush):

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Chinese_Americans

General Mining Act of 1872:

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/General_Mining_Act_of_1872

History of Coal Mining:

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Calumet_and_Hecla_Mining_Company

History of Coal Mining in the United States:

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Calumet_and_Hecla_Mining_Company

History of Coal Miners:

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_coal_miners

Timeline of Mining in Colorado:

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timeline_of_mining_in_Colorado

Uranium Mining and the Navajo People:

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uranium_mining_and_the_Navajo_people

Hydraulic Fracturing in the United States:

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hydraulic_fracturing_in_the_United_States

History of the Oil Shale Industry in the United States:

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_the_oil_shale_industry_in_the_United_States

Mining Accident: https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mining_accident

Pendarvis, Wisconsin: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pendarvis,_Wisconsin

Copper Mining in Michigan:

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Copper_mining_in_Michigan

Calumet and Hecla Mining Company:

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Calumet_and_Hecla_Mining_Company

Iron Ore: https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iron_ore

Iron Mining in the United States:

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iron_mining_in_the_United_States

Mesabi Range: https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mesabi_Range

Diamond Hoax of 1872:

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diamond_hoax_of_1872

Clarence King https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clarence_King

I could go on for quite a while longer -- Wikipedia truly is a treasure trove -
- but this should be enough for now. Have fun!!

Bill

P.S.: You may have noticed that I've inserted .m. as the second element in many of the Wikipedia entries I've given you. The general Wikipedia entry on "Mining" looks like this:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mining>

But if you add .m. to convert it to

<https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mining>

you'll force your browser to format the page as if you were reading it on a mobile phone (hence ".m."). The mobile-formatted version of these pages omits the HTML frame that typically surrounds Wikipedia content, making it easier to copy and paste that content if you're gathering material for your notes.