Readings from John Stilgoe's *Common Landscape of America*

1) **The Medieval Landschaft**
   - A self-sustaining cluster of dwellings surrounded by concentric **arable fields**, at distances that all are walkable. Outside the arable land or fields is **wilderness**...
   - The **wilderness** is the spatial representation of chaos, evil, bewilderment, danger, madness...
   - Literally, **wylder ness** is an old Anglo-Saxon word meaning the *lair of the wild beast*.
   - **The Landschaft, then, was the alternative to danger and evil** - it represented order, agriculture, protection, civility, the Old Religion, and then the New Religion (Christianity).
   - In the center of the landschaft was the **roland** a tree that represented the life of this tenuous agricultural community. It was semi-sacred - an **axis mundi** for the community.
   - The agricultural land upon which the landschaft resided was owned by a **noble**. Nobles allowed workers or **serfs** to live on the land in exchange for a portion of crop or military service. This arrangement of **indentured servitude** with minimal rights (if any) was **feudalism**. **Serfs were the workers tied to the land and the land was owned by nobles**.
   - Three types of dwellings in the landschaft:
     - **dwelling** - an impermanent shelter for a laborer or shepherd
     - **cottage** - slightly more permanent. The cottage could be dismantled and moved
     - **house** or **homestead** - a dwelling that was permanent and could be owned apart from the noble. If one were lucky enough to hold one (own one), they became a **householder**
   - Therefore, **spatial position** and **social position** was intimately tied to the landscape, which was adherent to common law

2) **Roads through the wilderness**
   - Once nobles and landowners become aware that it was beneficial for them to connect their holdings, they, in fact, did connect them, by **building roads through the wilderness**...
   - A new spatial, landscape-architectural awareness comes into play, along the path of the road - now the spatial form is **linear**, or **linearity**
   - The **road** brings with it connotations and narratives that suggest **mystery**, **linearity**, **anonymity** (the anonymous traveler), **unknown places**, **romance of the road**, **traveling commerce**, **vitality from other places**... etc, etc...
   - French word **vill** for cluster of dwellings becomes **village** now that it is connected to other villages outside of the **landschaft**
   - This becomes the **dominant spatial organization** of medieval society
   - And so the **village evolves into a town** and the **medieval town becomes the setting for the Gothic cathedrals to follow**.

3) **Landskip and Landscape (and then to America)**
   - The Dutch word **landschap**, meaning painting of natural scenery, is garbled in English into **landskip**... meaning traditional Dutch scenery painting of the land. **landskip** becomes **landscape**....
   - The connotations remain. Stilgoe posits then that there are three types of **landscape** :: **wilderness; agricultural; the homestead & garden**