

GEOG 1000 – National Parks

"National parks are the best idea we ever had. Absolutely American, absolutely democratic, they reflect us at our best rather than our worst."

Wallace Stegner, Pulitzer Prize winning author and environmentalist

America's National Parks are places that are the physical manifestations of American values and ideals. Thus, at the heart of each park is a sense of place (a core geographic concept). They each reflect or represent something of value to individuals and Americans as a whole. But the history of many national parks is associated with conflicts about the value of that place. Many of these conflicts stem from what America is supposed to represent - wilderness and nature versus manifest destiny, public versus private interests, indigenous versus national ownership, and various types of representation. This course focuses on the history, process, and values involved in developing national parks as places worth preserving for the American public.