

GEOGRAPHY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN: A DEPARTMENTAL HISTORY

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This first history of the Department of Geography at the University of Texas at Austin focuses on providing an overall framework for understanding the department. Geography was first taught at Austin in 1905. The department was founded through the initiative of the Institute for Latin American Studies in bringing Donald Brand to campus, who created the first doctoral program in geography in Texas and the second-oldest geography doctoral program in the Southwest. The department has always had a focus on international and field work. It has developed other emphases during four well defined periods with distinct agendas. The most recent stage, initiated by the chairmanship of Paul English, has led to new levels of international prominence in research and publication, with emphasis on studies of culture, environment, and change. Regional strengths include Latin America, the Middle East, Europe, and the Southwest. Undergraduate and graduate education has also flourished, and increasingly, doctoral students are creating a network of Texas alumni in colleges and universities nationwide. *Key Words:* history of geographic thought, departments of geography, Texas.

The University of Texas at Austin is home to the second-oldest doctoral program in geography in the Southwest. The program has been nourished by close relations with professional schools and area-studies programs. Geographers at the University of Texas have often been both multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary, publishing in the journals of other disciplines and playing a leading role in creating bridges between subjects. The Texas

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program has always had a distinctive personality, with a strong emphasis on international studies and field work.

The department has gone through a series of stages in its development. One can recognize five such stages, beginning with geography's "prehistory" under the aegis of other departments. The second stage, after the department's founding in 1949, emphasized Latin America, biogeography, economic geography, and historical geography. The third stage, starting in 1956, emphasized the importance of educating future teachers. The fourth stage, initiated in 1967, targeted the development of a comprehensive research department. The fifth stage, beginning in 1982, involved specialization and focus on the department's major strengths. These five stages provide the framework for this account.

Geography at Texas before 1949

The University of Texas was authorized by the Texas legislature in 1881 and admitted its first students in Austin in 1883. However, its roots go back to the Republic of Texas, when President Lamar and the Texas Congress acted in 1839 to set aside forty acres for a state university. In 1876, the state constitution called for the establishment, as soon as possible, of "a university of the first class, to be . . . styled 'The University of Texas.'" The university was coeducational, and from the start included a graduate program.

Geography was first taught at the University of Texas in 1905 by Lindley Miller Keasbey (1867-1946). Keasbey (Ph.D. Columbia, 1890; Ph.D. Strasbourg, 1892) had studied under the German settlement geographer August Meitzen at Berlin and had written two dissertations about the Nicaragua canal scheme. There is no evidence that he studied under Friedrich Ratzel at Leipzig, although he did publish a review of Ratzel's work (Keasbey 1897). Keasbey taught at the University of Colorado, where he met Woodrow Wilson. He was chosen as Wilson's successor in the political science program at Bryn Mawr, where he taught courses in economic geography and published on the subject (Keasbey 1901a, 1901b). Keasbey was taken seriously enough as a geographer that he was nominated by Ellen Churchill Semple, in 1905, to be a charter member of the new Association of American Geographers (unfortunately, his nomination was to die, possibly due

to lack of vigorous support by William Morris Davis).

At Texas, Keasbey joined the Government Department, where he taught economic geography and demography, commercial geography, and the geography of Western and Eastern civilizations. Economic geography was still a new university subject, having been introduced to the nation only a dozen years earlier (Fellmann 1986). He was an influential teacher and was even nominated to be president of the University of Texas, despite his reputation as a supporter of socialism (favoring the "free land" ideas of Achille Loria).

Keasbey was fired on July 12, 1917, ostensibly for opposing Governor James "Pa" Ferguson but actually for his militant antiwar activities. Keasbey's academic career never recovered; he raised dogs, fruits, vegetables, and cotton on a small farm near Tucson, Arizona, wrote a book on the Christian mystery of the Trinity, and eventually died in Whittier, California. His papers are archived at the University of Texas (Dunbar 1981a, 1981b; Pilcher 1996; Mathews 1973).

Keasbey had two lasting impacts on the university. First, he founded a Department of Institutional History, which was subsequently to be transformed into the Department of Anthropology (Dunbar 1981b). Although from a narrow disciplinary perspective one might wish that Keasbey had stayed and that his department had become a geography department, anthropology's strength at Texas was in the future to prove beneficial to Texas geography's cultural and international focus. One anthropologist and Latin Americanist, George C. Engerrand, was in fact a "young colleague of Élisée Réclus in Brussels" (Gary Dunbar, personal communication).

Second, Keasbey's courses made a major impression on Walter Prescott Webb (1888-1963), an undergraduate student at the time. Keasbey's brand of environmentalism, so attractive to Semple, motivated Webb's life's work on environmental and spatial factors in history. Webb pursued graduate studies at Texas and began teaching in the Department of History in 1918. Webb's book *The Great Plains* (1931), whose basic plan was provided by Keasbey, argued for a fundamental transformation of American institutions west of the 98th meridian. Keasbey wrote Webb in 1931 to congratulate him on his book, but at the same time to warn him on a possible error: "the environment is essentially passive and could

not possibly act as anything further than an efficient cause. . . . That was my error, which I passed on to so many students" (Dunbar 1981a: 5).

Webb was to become a member of the Association of American Geographers, and to deliver a paper at the association's first meeting in Texas, where he credited Keasbey for his intellectual formation. Although Webb's ideas are widely criticized for their environmental determinism, he continues to have a large popular following, and his influence remains important in molding debates on American environmental history and historical geography. The university has continued to host faculty with an interest in environmental history and the American West.

In 1923, the Santa Rita No. 1 oil well began producing on University of Texas land in west Texas, initiating dramatic growth in the university's endowments. Between 1924 and 1940, the university's enrollment more than doubled, from five thousand to eleven thousand students. The university accumulated notable collections of Texana and Latin American materials. By the 1940s, geography courses were being re-established in the School of Business Administration and the Department of Geology.

Alonzo Bettis Cox (1884-1968; Ph.D. Wisconsin, 1920), professor of cotton marketing and a member of the American Geographical Society, reintroduced a course in economic geography by 1943. Economic geography would be taught by the business school for decades; after 1957, the course was crosslisted with geography.

Cox organized the university's Bureau of Business Research and was its director from 1926 to 1942. An early associate of the bureau was William John Reilly (1899-1970; Ph.D. Chicago, 1927). He was at the Bureau for only two years, from 1927 to 1929, but while there he developed his "law of retail gravitation" using data from Texas cities (Reilly 1929). This became a classic monograph for urban and quantitative geographers. Another early teacher of economic geography in the business school was Erich W. Zimmermann (Ph.D. Bonn, 1911), author of a text on world resources (Zimmermann 1951) and a member of the Association of American Geographers (Gerlach 1952).

From the 1940s into the 1960s, a course in descriptive meteorology was taught by Professor Kenneth Jehn in the College of Engineering. The Department of

Geology offered courses in physical geography, geomorphology, and the physiography of North and South America during the 1940s, taught by professors Stafford, Bybee, and Deen; geologist Sam Ellison also provided support for geography. However, the modern Department of Geography was not to be born from the business school or geology, but rather through the efforts of the Institute of Latin American Studies (ILAS). In the late 1940s, ILAS Director Charles W. Hackett approached Donald D. Brand (Figure 1), then at the University of Michigan, to teach Latin American geography at Texas.



Figure 1. Donald D. Brand (*center*), with Mrs. Brand and Chauncy Harris, at the Conference on East European Geography, April 18-20, 1969. Brand founded the department, defined its initial agenda, served as chair from 1949 to 1960, and supervised the first master's and doctoral students.

Brand was asked to join an existing department such as anthropology. Brand only agreed to come if he would be allowed to organize and chair a department of geography that could grant the doctoral degree. ILAS had sufficient clout to meet Brand's conditions, and the modern Department of Geography was born, with Brand as chair. Brand was also appointed a member of the executive committee of ILAS.

1949-1956: An Ambitious Vision, A Disappointing Outcome

Brand (Ph.D. U.C.-Berkeley, 1933) had established a national reputation in geography, anthropology, and history, with an emphasis on Mexican and Southwestern studies (Holz *et al.* 1987). He had been chair of the Department of Anthropology



Figure 2. George W. Hoffman (*left*) on the hayride, German-American Symposium, October 1979. Hoffman was one of three founding members of the department and served as chair from 1978 to 1982.

at New Mexico from 1936 to 1947. His appointment at Texas was effective February 1, 1949, initially as junior distinguished professor in the Department of Geology. That semester, he taught courses on the geography of Mexico, geography of Spanish South America, and a proseminar in the geography of Latin America. He recruited two faculty to be charter members of the new department: Dan Stanislawski, and George W. Hoffman (Figure 2). In addition, Edwin B. Doran, Jr., was hired as a lecturer to teach physical geography.

Stanislawski was a member of a peer group of influential students of Carl O. Sauer which also included George Carter, Andrew H. Clark, James J. Parsons, and Robert C. West (Mathewson and Shoemaker 1997). He was actually senior to Brand in age, although he received his doctorate at Berkeley quite a bit later. His major assignment in the new program was to teach economic and historical geography, contribute to the departmental summer field course in Michoacan, and teach courses

on the Caribbean and western Mediterranean lands.

Hoffman, a native of Austria, fled the Nazis just before World War II, served in the OSS (U.S. Army), and after the war pursued a Ph.D. at the University of Michigan, where he met Brand (Jordan *et al.* 1990). Hoffman's role was to teach cartography and political geography. Although later he was to be best known for his work on eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, it is interesting to note that he was hired as much for his expertise on the Near East. Doran started teaching in the spring of 1950, while working on his dissertation on the physical and cultural geography of the Cayman Islands for the University of California at Berkeley. The department's initial faculty was drawn from Berkeley and Michigan; over the next fifty years, influence of the Berkeley School and the upper Midwest would remain strong.

Brand's initial vision of the department's future is perhaps best reflected in the official catalog of the College of Arts and Sciences published on May 1, 1949 (University of Texas 1949a). The undergraduate major was designed to produce "professional geographers." All undergraduate majors were to take twenty-four semester hours in the subject, including a capstone seminar in the history and philosophy of geography. All were expected to master a reading knowledge of German, French, or Spanish. In addition, geography was to have the most rigorous minor requirements of any social or natural science: eighteen hours in one directed subject. The program was designed to ensure that geographers had in-depth knowledge of another discipline. The course listings were also ambitious. There were to be thirty-six undergraduate courses and three new graduate courses, all to be taught by a faculty of four.

The department's 1949 agenda is clarified by its first message to the nationwide geography community: "[T]he department plans to concentrate regionally on Latin America and topically on biogeography, economic geography, and historical geography. Field work will be commenced in the summer of 1950 with the field course conducted in the state of Michoacan, Mexico" (PG/GC 1949).

Brand and Hackett secured a Rockefeller Foundation grant to invite geographers from across the United States to a set of activities in Austin during the summer of 1949. These included a Latin American "Institute," an economic con-

ference, and special lectures. A new Texas faculty member, Stanley Arbingast, participated in the Latin American Institute offered by Brand. Arbingast had recently obtained his master's degree in geography at Washington, where he had been a student of Stanislawski. He joined the University of Texas School of Business faculty in 1949, where he was to teach the economic geography course. Arbingast was to become an active contributor to (and eventually an affiliated faculty member of) the the Department of Geography and a participant in the Association of American Geographers and its Southwest division (SWAAG), which he was to chair twice. During his long career, he served as president of the Southwest Social Science Association, led the Bureau of Business Research, and published atlases of Texas, Mexico, Latin America, and Central America.

Other faculty in attendance at the summer program at Texas included Salvador Massip (head of the Department of Geography of the University of Havana,



Figure 3. Dorothy Gebauer Building (former Speech Building), home of the geography department from 1952 to 1962. Geography occupied the second and third floors. While here, the department granted its first doctoral degrees. Photograph courtesy of Terry Jordan.

Cuba) and Edwin J. Foscoe of Southern Methodist University (president of the Southwest Social Science Association). Students included Campbell W. Pennington, Oscar Horst, John Thompson, and Tom L. McKnight. Despite the fierce summer temperatures without air conditioning, the workshop was a success.

The department began operations on September 1, 1949, and classes started on September 16, 1949. In June

1952, the department moved to the second and third floors of what is now the Dorothy Gebauer Building (earlier called the Speech Building or the “Old Journalism Building”). This dignified old building is located at the heart of the campus (Figure 3).

The first half of the 1950s was marked by the achievement of some of Brand’s objectives: the establishment of a graduate program, a solid research and publication record, and an emphasis on international field work. Other essentials for a department’s success, however, were not achieved; course enrollments and majors were few, and faculty tensions were high.

Geography was officially listed as an acceptable major for the Ph.D. beginning in the fall of 1949 (University of Texas 1949b). The doctorate in geography, however, was to be available “only in Latin American studies” (University of Texas 1952: 96). Note the lower-case “s” in “studies”; doctorates were not offered in “Latin American Studies,” per se, but rather in disciplinary departments. Master’s degrees could be granted in any subfield of geography. The first master’s students began work in 1950-51, and the first master’s degrees were awarded in 1952 to Coyle E. Singletary and John Francis Bergmann. By 1956, five master’s degrees had been awarded, all of them supervised by Brand.

The department recruited its first two Ph.D. students in 1952. Alfonso Gonzalez had obtained his bachelor’s degree in geography at Clark University and his master’s at Northwestern. Pablo Guzmán-Rivas transferred from Colorado. By 1956, both Guzmán-Rivas and Gonzalez had been advanced to candidacy, and another Ph.D. student, Margaret Smith, was working on a dissertation on north-eastern Mexico.

Faculty were very successful in grants and publications. Stanislawski traveled to Portugal and Spain in 1952-53 with Guggenheim and Social Science Research Council (SSRC) support, and he returned to Portugal in the spring of 1955 to continue his work on terraces and historical geography. His work in Portugal would eventually bear fruit in his books, *The Individuality of Portugal*, *Portugal’s Other Kingdom: The Algarve*, and *Landscapes of Bacchus*, all published by the University of Texas Press. Two years after arriving in Texas, Brand published his book *Quiroga: A Mexican Municipio* with the Smithsonian Institution. Brand later obtained an Office

of Naval Research grant for a long-term project on Mexico's southwestern coast. The \$44,221 grant supported work by Brand and his students from 1955 to 1959. The results of this project were to published by the Department of Geography in two volumes as *Coastal Study of Southwest Mexico*, and in his 1960 book, *Coalcoman and Motines del Oro: an Ex-distrito of Michoacan, Mexico*. Hoffman traveled to fourteen countries of Europe on Ford Foundation and SSRC grants in 1952-53. Hoffman began a prolific research and publishing career that would eventually include eight books, nearly 150 articles, and a college-level textbook on Europe that went through six editions.

Numerous summer field courses were directed by faculty for the benefit of students. Brand led four field courses to Mexico between 1950 and 1957. Stanislawski codirected the 1950 summer field course, and in 1952, he led a ten-week departmental field school in Nicaragua, Honduras, and Guatemala. Hoffman directed a field course on urban geography in Austin in 1950.

The new department was in the Southwest Division of the Association of American Geographers (SWAAG), which had been formed in 1946 to include the states of Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Texas, and New Mexico. Its official meetings came to be "piggybacked" with the annual meetings of the Southwest Social Science Association (SSSA) until 1983 (Shelley 1997). The first such piggy-backed meeting reported to the nation was the one that Brand arranged in Austin, March 23-24, 1951, the fifth year after SWAAG came into existence (Hoy 1952).

Undergraduates probably found both Brand and Hoffman to be daunting lecturers. Brand, who possessed a phenomenal memory, insisted on mastery of minute details, while Hoffman focused on fine points of eastern European nationalism. The department never had more than ten or so majors during the 1950s, and enrollments were small in most courses. The department was forced to pare down its more specialized course offerings, especially its two-semester sequences. Many of the students were education majors, requiring the department to focus its teaching attention on world regional geography, Texas, and North America.

By the summer of 1950, Brand and Stanislawski had a falling out. Brand was conservative, pro-military, placed a high priority on teaching, and (as admitted even by his friends) could be cantankerous. Stanislawski was liberal, pacifist, and

took numerous leaves of absence for research purposes. The differences between the two senior members made departmental governance progressively more difficult.

Edwin Doran departed and was replaced with Tom McKnight and Charles B. McIntosh, who were to teach physical geography, Texas, and North America—courses important for education majors. McKnight and McIntosh resigned less than a year after their hire, in the spring of 1956. Rather than deal with this crisis, both senior faculty left the department for the summer—Stanislawski to Berkeley, and Brand to another field school in Mexico. In the absence of professors Brand and Stanislawski, Dean H. H. Ransom took matters into his own hands. In view of pressing needs in the College of Education, he instructed Associate Professor Hoffman to find an outstanding instructor in the geography of North America and Texas, who would also be oriented toward the needs of education. With the recommendation and encouragement of Arbingast, Lorrin Kennamer was hired to fill these requirements. He had obtained his doctorate in geography and education at George Peabody College (later Vanderbilt/Peabody) in 1952. Kennamer had already published two articles on geographic education in the National Council for Geographic Education's *Journal of Geography*, and he would publish five more, as well as eventually becoming the council's president.

1956-1967: Focus on Education and Area Studies

In 1956, Dean Ransom, Hoffman, and Kennamer initiated a new agenda for the department, with a greater emphasis on the relationship with the public school teachers of Texas, and improving the role of geography in the school curriculum. The new agenda also stressed service to the area-studies programs on campus, particularly Asian Studies and Middle Eastern Studies.

The political tensions in the department were dealt with by reducing chairman Brand's authority, especially in matters concerning Stanislawski. The department existed in a kind of receivership, with the dean making key decisions. Dean J. Alton Burdine continued Dean Ransom's policy in this regard. Even this arrangement failed to solve all problems. After a particularly contentious faculty meeting in February 1960, the crisis came to a head, and Dean Burdine felt forced

to step in. Burdine asked Kennamer (then a counselor in the dean's office) to provide reasons why the department should not be immediately dissolved. The dean was so impressed with Kennamer's case for geography that he made him acting chair of the department. Kennamer was charged with making sure that Brand and Stanislawski cooperated. At the same time, Kennamer was made associate dean of arts and sciences.



Figure 4. Robert C. Mayfield served as faculty member (1964-67) and chair (1967-71). He helped to define an agenda for the department's third (1967-1982) period. Photograph taken at the Conference on East European Geography, April 1969.

Kennamer proved so successful in his tasks that he continued to serve as chair until 1967. Course enrollments rose to acceptable levels, and Kennamer was permitted to hire six tenure-track or tenured faculty during this period.

While teaching summer school at Michigan State in 1960, Kennamer had scouted talent for the department's needs in cartography and physical geography. H. Daniel Stillwell was hired in 1961 to teach these courses, but he resigned for personal reasons after one year. He was replaced by his fellow Michigan State alumnus Robert K. Holz. For many years, Holz was responsible for the department's course offerings in cartography (and later, remote sensing), in addition to playing an important role in Middle Eastern Studies.

Paul Ward English, a student of Andrew Clark at Wisconsin, was hired in

1963. In 1965, English left Texas for a position at Michigan State. He was brought back to Texas in the fall of 1966 with a promotion, tenure, and a joint appointment with the Center for Middle Eastern Studies. English's dissertation was published as the award-winning *City and Village in Iran* (1966). English, like Holz, was to play a conspicuous role as director of the Center for Middle Eastern Studies as well as eventually a chair of the Department of Geography.

The department's regular faculty was to further expand to six when Robert C. Mayfield (Ph.D. Washington, 1961) was hired as an associate professor in 1964 (Figure 4). Mayfield was hired to bring the latest ideas of the "quantitative revolution" to the department. He had performed his doctoral field research in India, and he returned to India again on a Fulbright grant in 1966-67 for field work on agricultural innovation. Frederick J. Simoons was hired at the rank of professor in 1967, but he soon left the department to establish a career at the University of California at Davis. During his short stay at Texas, he found time to supervise two master's theses on the theme of animal domestication. Palmyra Monteiro (Leahy), from Minas Gerais, Brazil, also taught a number of departmental courses in the late 1960s.

Although Stanislawski remained on the faculty, he took lengthy research leaves in Europe and Brazil, working on his books. In January 1963, he joined the University of Arizona. Stanislawski never allowed his disagreements with Brand to affect his relationships with his numerous friends in Austin, and he was to return to Austin as a visiting lecturer. The department continues to honor Stanislawski as one of its founders. Brand remained with the department, playing a somewhat reduced role.

The department sponsored a number of notable guest lecturers during Kennamer's chairmanship. These included Anthony Leeds, Preston E. James, George Carter, Richard Hartshorne, Brian J. L. Berry, Harm de Blij, Donald Meinig, William M. Denevan, and Xavier de Planhol, among others.

The graduate program continued to expand. Texas was included in a 1959 list of thirty-seven departments granting the Ph.D. in geography in the U.S. and Canada (Gerlach 1959). The first Ph.D. in geography at Texas was conferred on June 4, 1960, to Pablo Guzmán-Rivas. It was announced in an official Texas bulletin as a

Ph.D. in geography with a minor in business administration (University of Texas 1960). A citation for Guzmán-Rivas's dissertation appeared in the geography section of *Dissertation Abstracts* (UMI 1960) and in the *Professional Geographer* (PG/TT 1960). Besides Brand, Kennamer, and Hoffman, the dissertation committee included AAG member Erich Zimmermann, Thomas F. McGann (History), and Eastin Nelson (Economics).

Two additional doctorates were to be granted in close succession, to Margaret Harrison Smith and to Alfonso Gonzalez. All three of the early Ph.D. recipients were supervised by Brand and were to pursue careers as college professors of geography, at Colorado, Southeast Missouri State College, and Calgary, respectively. The department had achieved its objective of establishing a program of doctoral geographic training in Texas, with a solid track record of placing students in major national and international universities. In 1961, the *Professional Geographer* included Texas in its listing of the seventeen major Ph.D.-granting departments in the country. This article also commented on Texas's unique emphasis on international studies (Raup 1961).

Other students soon began work in the Ph.D. program in the early 1960s: Richard G. Boehm, William Morris Holmes, and Judy Parker Appelt. On February 7, 1966, Dean Heitner noted that the Department of Geography "has for some time given Ph.D. degrees by individual approval [by the Dean]. Their program now seems to be well-developed and qualified for recognition as a regular program. It was moved, seconded, and passed that this program be recommended to the Board of Regents for approval" (University of Texas 1966: 459). The regular program was approved by the Board of Regents on April 1, 1966.

Fourteen master's degrees were granted under geography faculty supervision during this period (1956 to 1967). Eight were supervised by Brand. Hoffman supervised the master's degree of Terry G. Jordan, who would go on to Wisconsin for his Ph.D. before eventually returning to Texas as a faculty member.

In April 1960, the Association of American Geographers met in Dallas, Texas. This was the second time in its history that the AAG had met in the Southwest and the first time in Texas. Department faculty helped with the field trips and the program committee. Stanislawski presided at a plenary session featuring Walter



Figure 5. Large globe in the hallway of Waggener Hall, home of the geography department from 1962 to 1974. Photograph taken *ca.* 1969.

Prescott Webb, with commentaries by Kennamer, Meinig, and Sauer. At this session, Webb credited Keasbey for providing the basic plan of his book, *The Great Plains* (Dunbar 1981a). Hoffman organized and presided at a special session on eastern Europe. Karl W. Butzer attended the meeting and presented a paper; after many years of further contact with the department, he would eventually join the faculty. Field trips included a variety of central and northern Texas and southern Oklahoma locales, including a visit to Neiman-Marcus “for ladies.” Kennamer and Arbingast led a trip through the Texas Hill Country, spending the night at Villa Camille in Hunt.

The department moved to a new, air-conditioned location on the fourth floor of Waggener Hall in August 1962. There was a seminar/library room and a map library, but the cartography room had minimal equipment, and the department still had no real physical geography laboratory. A noteworthy feature of this building was a massive globe that nearly blocked the main corridor of the department

(Figure 5). The globe came to be seen by some faculty as an eyesore; with secret faculty encouragement, the globe was spirited away by students and became part of a conceptual art project at a nearby museum. Police were called, but eventually all was forgiven.

A chapter of Gamma Theta Upsilon (GTU), the national geography honor society, was established at the University of Texas in 1963 under the faculty sponsorship of Holz. This chapter was the fourth to be founded in Texas, and it is now the second-oldest active chapter in the state (after the University of North Texas). GTU sponsored numerous student social events such as movies, picnics (Figure 6), and tubing excursions. The club sponsored panels and talks as well, often in conjunction with departmental lectures and colloquia.

Kenamer resigned to become professor of geography and dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Texas Technological University (Texas Tech) in 1967. He had achieved his objectives for the department, which now had strong course enrollments, a regular doctoral program, and a new strength in Middle Eastern



Figure 6. Gamma Theta Upsilon spring picnic, May 4, 1967. Richard Van Steenkiste (Ph.D. 1970) is being thrown into Lake Austin as part of his initiation.

Studies. The department would have the opportunity to build on this heritage.

1967-1982: Striving for Breadth

In the nation as a whole, the late 1960s and 1970s were a period of dramatic social, political, and cultural changes. In the university, the period was marked by growth in enrollments and great building projects. In the discipline, the quantitative and theoretical revolutions were taking place.

Dean Burdine appointed Robert C. Mayfield as acting chair effective September 1967. Mayfield sent to the *Professional Geographer* the first update on the department in thirteen years; he stressed the doctoral program and faculty publications, and he articulated a goal for the department that differed in significant ways from the 1956 agenda of Ransom and Hoffman: "a gradual expansion of staff and graduate student body is envisaged, with the goal of establishing a balanced scholarly department of reasonable size" (PG/GC 1968). The goal of balance included expansion of urban and quantitative geography. Aspects of this agenda can be found in the influential reader coauthored by English and Mayfield, *Man, Space, and Environment: Concepts in Contemporary Human Geography*, published in 1972.

During the next fifteen years, the department would hire across all the varying fields of geography. Many new courses were added to the curriculum, and the pace of change increased toward the end of the period. There was a trend to replace the earlier regional tradition with thematic courses on historical geography, cultural geography, urban geography, energy, hunger, remote sensing, and spatial analysis.

John Silber, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, left the University of Texas for Boston University after losing a power struggle with Board of Regents chairman Frank Erwin in 1970. After Silber's departure the old College of Arts and Sciences was broken up, and the department was placed in the new College of Social and Behavioral Sciences. As part of the fallout of the Silber affair, Mayfield accepted a position at Boston University; he was later to become provost at that institution. The chairmanship eventually passed to Holz (1972-78), and Hoffman (1978-82). The department, under these chairs, continued to attempt to imple-

ment Mayfield's 1967 vision of a broadly balanced program.

Hiring for breadth turned out to be a difficult task. From 1967 to 1982, some twenty tenured or tenure-track faculty were hired, but only five were to remain with the department for the long term. Most of those who remained reflected the pre-1967 emphases of the department on cultural, environmental, and historical geography, as well as international field research. In retrospect, it can be noted that the department lacked facilities and laboratories to retain physical geographers and that most urban, quantitative, and applied geographers were to find their niches in the professional schools on campus rather than in the department.

Geographic techniques remained the specialty of Holz. He helped pioneer the new field of remote sensing during this period, publishing one of the first texts in the subject (*The Surveillant Science: Remote Sensing of the Environment*) and helping to start the AAG's Remote Sensing Specialty Group. Holz's work in the Middle East was eventually to lead to his directorship of the Middle Eastern center.

The Faculty Council had finally approved physical geography as counting towards a "science requirement" for undergraduate students. M. Ernest Sabbagh, who had been a student of Glen Trewartha at Wisconsin, provided the department with the needed expertise for this course; he also pursued a regional interest in Africa. He supervised six master's students and one Ph.D. student; these included the first two physical geography graduate degrees in the department's history. Sabbagh was a congenial personality; he was active with students and student organizations, and an important figure in Austin's 1970s social scene. He died in 1978. Additional physical geographers teaching during this period included Curtis J. Sorenson, James L. Hesler, James J. Nasuti, and J. Richard Jones.

The themes of urban geography and spatial analysis, reflecting the quantitative revolution of the 1960s, were supported by a number of faculty hires. Christopher Shane Davies, a native of Wales and an Indiana University graduate, began teaching in 1969. Kingsley E. Haynes, hired in 1970, supervised two master's theses and two doctoral dissertations while at Texas. He soon relocated to the LBJ School of Public Affairs, where he was promoted to associate professor before leaving the university in 1978. Other urban geographers teaching courses during

this period included Ronald Briggs, K. Patricia Burnett, Gundars Rudzitis, and Bruce L. Bigelow. Only Davies was to remain with the department, eventually assuming sole responsibility for courses in urban geography and spatial analysis. Davies has supervised many graduate theses and dissertations on these themes. In addition, David L. Huff of the business school and David J. Eaton of the LBJ School of Public Affairs were granted joint appointments with geography. Huff's doctoral advisor had been Washington geographer William L. Garrison. Huff has published extensively in geography journals, is active in the International Geographical Union, and has supervised a number of geography graduate students. Eaton received his doctorate in geography and environmental engineering at Johns Hopkins, and he has been active in the AAG and in supervising graduate students in environmental analysis.

Area studies, long one of the department's strengths, continued to be supported during this period. English directed the Center for Middle Eastern Studies after 1973, and Holz worked in the region. Ian R. Manners (D.Phil. Oxford, 1969) was hired in 1972, with a joint appointment in Middle Eastern Studies. Manners served as associate director, acting director, and director of the Center for Middle Eastern Studies between 1979 and 1991. Asian expertise was provided by Charles E. Greer and Bharat L. Bhatt. The Latin American focus was pursued with the successive hires of Richard W. Blood, Richard Symanski, and Larry L. Patrick. Symanski developed an introductory course, which was to become a requirement for the Latin American Studies major. He was a critic of prevailing models and methodologies in geography, and became the center of a number of controversies, exemplified by his 1976 *Annals* article, "The Manipulation of Ordinary Language." His departure in 1979 was a stormy one, but he continued to influence the discipline from outside academia. Brand retired in 1975, and after his retirement few graduate students were to pursue Latin American topics until the mid-1980s.

Geography at the interface of culture, environment, and history, long a departmental strength, was supported by the hires of Robin W. Doughty, Ian R. Manners, William E. Doolittle, and Terry Jordan, and the joint appointment of Alfred W. Crosby, Jr. Although Crosby's degree was not in geography, his interdisciplinary concerns (reflected in his 1972 book, *The Columbian Exchange*) were an

excellent match; he was to teach the department's medical geography course for two decades.

Doughty had obtained bachelor's degrees at both the Vatican University and Reading University before becoming a student of Clarence Glacken at Berkeley (James Parsons stepped in later to chair his dissertation when Glacken became ill). Doughty has, to date, authored or coauthored seven books on human relationships with wildlife and environmental perception, including *At Home in Texas: Early Views of the Land*.

Manners's interest in resources resulted in his coediting the influential book *Perspectives on Environment* with Marvin Mikesell (1974). Manners also helped develop the university's Center for Energy Studies, which provided support for departmental activities in this area.

William E. Doolittle joined the department in 1981 to fill a new faculty position in the area of historical and environmental geography. Doolittle's 1979 Ph.D. at Oklahoma had been supervised by Texas alumnus B. L. Turner, II. Doolittle has written on themes of traditional and prehistoric agriculture, including his book *Canal Irrigation in Prehistoric Mexico: The Sequence of Technological Change*. Doolittle was to reorganize the undergraduate program and revamp graduate advising, organize numerous meetings, and chair the department as well as SWAAG.

Terry G. Jordan joined the department as a full professor in September 1982 to occupy the Walter Prescott Webb Chair of History and Ideas. As noted previously, he obtained his master's at Texas; his doctorate at Wisconsin was supervised by Andrew Clark. Jordan, a sixth-generation Texan, had authored eleven books prior to his appointment at Texas. He has published four books of national and international scope since joining the Texas faculty, including *The American Backwoods Frontier: An Ethnic and Ecological Interpretation*. He served as president of the Association of American Geographers and has been active in participating in regional and national meetings.

The department continued to host a wide range of visiting faculty and speakers during this period, including Carl O. Sauer, Duane Marble, Philip J. Wagner, Jean Gottman, David Hooson, David Ward, and Richard Nostrand. Symposia included the nation's first attempt to bring together all geographers specializing in

Eastern Europe (1969), a "German-American International Seminar" (1979), and a meeting to develop instructional materials in Latin American geography (1981). The department played a major role in hosting the 1982 AAG meeting at San Antonio, with Holz serving as chair of the local arrangements committee, and ten Austin faculty members presenting papers.

The Ph.D. program began to be consistently productive during this period. Richard Van Steenkiste completed his degree work in August 1970—the first Texas Ph.D. since Gonzalez in 1962. He was followed by fifteen other Ph.D.s between 1970 and 1982, many of whom went on to careers in higher education. Richard G. Boehm (Ph.D., 1975) went on to chair the Department of Geography at Southwest Texas State University and has played a leading, national role in geographic education. Geography faculty also supervised seventy-seven master's degrees during this interval. Master's degree recipients included B. L. Turner II, who would eventually be inducted into the National Academy of Sciences and head the geography program at Clark University. Equally significant was the broadening of the number of thesis and dissertation supervisors. In previous periods, Brand had supervised most graduate students.

In 1974, geography moved to its present location, in a building previously occupied by journalism. Holz, who was chair at this time, successfully lobbied to have the facility renamed the "Geography Building." For the first time, geography was located in a namesake building with plenty of room for future expansion.

By the late 1970s, university president Peter Flawn was creating an atmosphere of progress on campus, with a focus on academic excellence. The College of Social and Behavioral Sciences was merged with Humanities to form the larger College of Liberal Arts. Geography had achieved high course enrollments, but the churning among its faculty had taken somewhat of a toll. It was not clear that the 1967 goal of achieving a comprehensive department with strength in urban geography could be achieved. The department had declined somewhat in national rankings, and the number of majors was still relatively low. Geography clubs had been relatively inactive since 1968. As Hoffman's term of office drew to a close, Dean Robert King chose English as the next chair, with a mandate to further raise the department's national research profile.

1982-Present: Specialization for Excellence

English convened a freewheeling faculty discussion in September 1982, which concluded that the department should focus on the human/environment theme. The department would no longer attempt to recruit in all subfields in geography. The department as a whole would emphasize research and graduate study. Physical geography would be strengthened by building new laboratories and, when funding permitted, expanding faculty strength. English would act to implement this new agenda, as would his successors in the chairmanship.

Between 1982 and 1998, the department hired eight tenure-track or tenured faculty, six of whom remain with the department today. In general, the hires complemented the emphases on field and international studies, culture and environment, and research and publication. Considerable progress was made in building on such old strengths as cultural geography and Middle Eastern Studies. The Latin American focus was given new life; and for the first time, the department developed a major commitment to earth science. The success of the 1982 plan was to be made evident by the high retention rate of faculty, the dramatic growth in the Ph.D. program, and a rise in national rankings.

Many of these emphases were exemplified by the recruitment of Karl W. Butzer (D.Sci. Bonn, 1957) to a Centennial Professorship in 1984. Butzer added to the strength of the Middle Eastern program, which already counted upon the contributions of English, Holz, and Manners. He also helped to expand the Latin American focus, as his research-area interests were shifting from Spain to Mexico. Butzer's interests in archaeology, cultural ecology, archives, and architecture fit with the culture/environment focus of the department. He provided impetus to the program in physical geography, and a succession of doctoral students have finished their field studies working in his Geoarchaeology Laboratory. His publication record, supervision of graduate students, and election to the American Academy of Arts and Science and the National Academy of Sciences all helped the department's international reputation. Elisabeth Butzer was appointed as research fellow in the Institute of Latin American Studies and helped prepare geography students in archival work; her research on Mexican historical geography and demography resulted in a number of publications.

Other early hires included Kenneth E. Foote (in 1983) and Gregory W. Knapp (1984). Foote joined the department after completing his dissertation under the supervision of Paul Wheatley at Chicago in 1982. Foote had multiple skills in environmental perception, cultural geography, urban geography, and computer technology. He would co-edit a landmark reader, *Re-Reading Cultural Geography*, and publish on landscapes of tragedy, as well as develop computer and web technologies. Humanistic geography was also supported by Robert W. Mugerauer, Jr., appointed as an affiliated geography faculty member in 1989.

Foote's interest in civil religion would fit with a new departmental focus on religious geography. Butzer, Doughty, English, and Jordan were also interested in religion, and by the late 1990s, the department was participating in a new university program in religion. The department also sponsored numerous conferences and visitors on such themes of cultural geography as sense of place (Doughty), cultural maps (Manners, Knapp), and landscape.

Doughty, Manners, English, Davies, and Foote expanded the department's European focus. A departmental summer study-abroad program in Oxford was inaugurated in 1985. The program was helped by Sheila O'Clarey, a former administrative associate with the School of Geography at Oxford. By 1998, more than 250 undergraduate and graduate students had participated in the program.

Knapp took over the course on Latin America, which had been pioneered by Symanski and Patrick, and he served as a departmental liaison to the Institute of Latin American Studies. Knapp went on to author, coauthor, or edit nine books and monographs on themes of cultural ecology and Latin America, including *Andean Ecology*, and he served as executive director of the Conference of Latin Americanist Geographers, supervising the move of its headquarters to Texas.

During the previous decade, Latin America had been a relatively minor departmental concern; only four master's theses were written on the area. The hiring of Doolittle and Knapp, and a shift of research interest from Spain to Mexico by the Butzers, helped lift the region to the importance it had during the first decade of the department's history, and to the importance it deserved given Texas's strategic location.

The department sponsored (and subsidized, with Jordan's help) five graduate-

student field trips to Mexico in the late 1980s, supervised by Doolittle, Knapp, Jordan, and the Butzers. Individual faculty sponsored numerous additional field trips to Mexico to allow for more specialized research by faculty and graduate students. In 1989, the department sponsored and organized an international meeting of the Conference of Latin Americanist Geographers in Queretaro, Mexico, including field trips and a bus trip from Austin to central Mexico. Knapp organized five annual symposia (1989-93) on cultural adaptation and ecological impacts in northeastern Mexico and Texas, involving many faculty and graduate students. Efforts by Knapp, Butzer, Doolittle, and Eaton led to the 1997 establishment of the Center for Environmental Resource Management in Latin America (CERMLA). Since 1984, department faculty have supervised twenty-eight theses and eight dissertations on Latin American topics. The hire of Mexicanist urban geographer Peter Ward by the LBJ School of Public Affairs further added to strength in this area.

Geographers expert in Asian and Soviet studies also contributed to the department during this period—Barbara Brower, Anne Helgeson, and Philippe Foret. Mayfield returned to Austin after his retirement from Boston University, where he had served as provost under President Silber. He taught courses in development, urban geography, and Asia. Cultural geography in the Southwest and West was supported by Jordan, Doolittle, and Brower, with Jordan organizing a meeting of the Pioneer Society and Doolittle co-organizing Gran Quivira meetings and a Conference of Latin Americanist Geographers meeting in Ciudad Juarez.

Middle Eastern Studies continued to be a strong point, primarily supported by English, Manners, Holz, and Butzer. Manners and Holz both directed the Middle Eastern Studies program during this period, and numerous students obtained degrees in the area. Manners organized symposia on Istanbul and the Middle East and helped start an overseas summer program in Turkey. He also secured grants for international studies and developed joint programs. Since 1982, Manners and other faculty supervised five dissertations and eighteen theses and reports on the Middle East.

In addition to the hiring of Karl Butzer, physical geography was supported by the hiring of Stephen A. Hall, Francisco Perez, Troy Kimmel, and Paul Hudson.

As a leading palynologist of the southern High Plains, Hall (Ph.D. Michigan, 1975) had published widely and was assigned the maintenance of the university's pollen collection. Pérez had obtained his doctorate in Wildland Resource Science at Berkeley, but he had taken numerous courses from geographers—Mrowka, Price, and Johannessen at Oregon; and Oberlander, Byrne, and Sternberg at Berkeley. Pérez has authored numerous research papers on process geomorphology. Troy Kimmel, trained in meteorology (but with a degree in geography) at Texas A&M University, began teaching as a lecturer in 1989 and developed a popular introductory meteorology course. Fluvial geomorphologist Paul Hudson (Ph.D. Louisiana State) was added to the program in 1998. These new appointments, along with Butzer's presence, provided unprecedented strength to the department's physical geography program. In addition, at this time, the department developed three laboratories for analysis of soils, sediments, and pollen. The department hosted a meeting of the Friends of the Pleistocene. Department faculty have supervised fifteen physical geography graduate degrees since 1982, far outpacing the two degrees granted in all of the department's previous history.

Manners led the department's efforts to develop a joint degree program in Community and Regional Planning and Geography, which was approved in 1984. The program was to graduate a number of Ph.D. students.

In 1985, Foote opened the department's first computer cartography laboratory, and he went on to develop on-line materials for a new two-semester course, "The Geographer's Craft." Foote organized a series of workshops and meetings in web technology and educational methodology for geography faculty nationwide—"The Virtual Geography Department" project. These projects attracted substantial support from the National Science Foundation.

The graduate program continued to expand. From 1982 to 1998, department faculty supervised 118 master's theses or reports and 35 doctoral dissertations. Many faculty shared in dissertation and thesis supervision. Approximately seventy per cent of the department's Ph.D.s have found employment in higher education.

Doolittle, following as a model the plan used by the University of California at Los Angeles, made the undergraduate major more rigorous and added an internship course to the program. From 1987 to 1991, the number of majors more

than doubled, the largest such increase in the department's history. During the same period, the number of honors majors more than tripled. In the 1990s, it would prove possible to count on a large and enthusiastic community of academically motivated undergraduate majors to help propel the department's program. Apart from majors, the department benefitted from large enrollments in the introductory human geography course, sustained by the teaching of Doughty and English.

The geography honor society, Gamma Theta Upsilon, was revived in 1988 under the faculty sponsorship of Knapp. In 1995, the University of Texas Geographical Society (UTGS) was founded as an undergraduate club and has grown rapidly in the last two years. The UTGS now organizes numerous colloquia, field trips, and other activities. Geography faculty have also been active in the campus chapter of Phi Beta Kappa, which has inducted numerous geography majors. Walter Prescott Webb served as president of the campus chapter in 1955, as did Knapp in 1994 and 1995; Foote joined its executive committee in 1993, and Jordan is also a member. A department tradition was kicked off on August 28, 1988, with the first annual Alexander von Humboldt's Birthday Party. Organized by Doolittle, it has established a reputation as a highlight of geography's national social season, drawing attendees from around the globe. The first issue of *Field Notes*, the department's first newsletter, appeared in May 1991, under the editorship of Kimmel, serving to document the activities of the department's many communities. Beginning in 1996, the department's web site was expanded to include on-line versions of the newsletter, complete lists of graduate alumni, an alumni chat room, and materials for internships, jobs, and the "enviromentors" community outreach program for at-risk youth, developed by Manners.

English's chairmanship (1982-1992) was followed by those of Doolittle (1992-1996) and Knapp (1996-present) with no major change in trajectory. The past sixteen years in many respects have been the most stable in the department's history, and administration support has remained strong. The department's national ranking among doctoral programs has risen from twenty-second to fourteenth in the nation (the highest ranking in the Southwest), and it is the top geography department in the nation in faculty book publication (Groop and Schaetzel 1997).

The department currently reaches 160 majors and 3,000 total students a year. Most freshman courses are taught by senior faculty who have garnered teaching awards.

Conclusion

Unlike some departments, geography at the University of Texas has had to struggle to put together a coherent identity and develop consistent momentum. Certain emphases have been present from the start, such as international and interdisciplinary studies. The current focus on culture, environment, and history had to be worked out through trial and error. The strengths in Middle Eastern and European studies have a long history in the department, but the Latin American focus had to be revived after a period of weakness. Physical geography has come into its own relatively recently.

A lasting legacy of geography at Texas has been its publications, many of which have had impacts beyond the discipline. Its alumni are also of great importance, at the bachelor's, master's, and doctoral levels. Increasingly, graduates of the department can count on the networks of support provided by former students.

Geography at Texas has never been dull. Austin has always been a place of creative and outspoken individualists; the department has also had to learn over time to nurture its various constituent communities. In this regard, the improvement of the major, community outreach, clubs, classroom and laboratory facilities, and the graduate program are all positive signs. As the department prepares to celebrate its fiftieth anniversary, the future looks bright.

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