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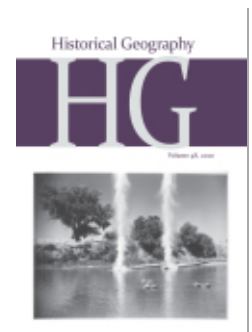
*Riding Shotgun with Norman Wallace: Rephotographing the Arizona Landscape* by William Wyckoff (review)

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*Riding Shotgun with Norman Wallace: Rephotographing the Arizona Landscape.* William Wyckoff. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2020. Pp. xv+176, color, photographs, map, notes, index. \$34.95, paperback, ISBN 978-0-8263-6141-7.

As a discipline, geography possesses an opportunity to which few others can relate—academic publications rich with photography that carries a story forward as much as the text. As a discipline steeped in the concepts of place and landscape, we carry a special talent to assess what we see in a photo, connect that to larger patterns of culture, politics, and economics, and at times we even let the photos speak for themselves.

Geography also has the great fortune of calling William Wyckoff one of our own. He belongs to an exclusive group of scholars whose skill with a camera and the ability to capture such thought-provoking images matches their skill with a pen or keyboard and the facility to question and interpret what they see without spoiling exploration for others.

*Riding Shotgun with Norman Wallace* is an excellent synthesis of these two features. In it William Wyckoff sets out to repeat-photograph a collection of images taken throughout Arizona, primarily during the first half of the twentieth century by Norman Wallace, a former surveyor for the state's highway system. Following up his previous monograph, *How to Read the American West* (University of Washington Press, 2014), Wyckoff provides a case study on his own expertise—understanding a western state (Arizona) and its changes over the past seventy to one hundred years, while also challenging (perhaps inspiring) the reader to head out and inquire about a place for themselves.

*Riding Shotgun*, however, is not just a case study in repeat photography in Arizona. It is a conversation between Dr. Wyckoff and the late Norman Wallace, with Wyckoff's keyboard providing the dialogue between past and present. While at times hectic, satisfying, and solitary by today's standards, Mr. Wallace's life and career trajectory likely filled him with stress. From 1912 to 1950, he helped survey railroads before doing the same for Arizona's highway system. In these professions Wallace traveled—and in part helped build—the state while it developed from a western desert scattered with extractive oases to a fledgling Sun Belt mecca. Along the way, really throughout his time in the state from 1906 to 1983 when he passed, he photographed Arizona's terrain and towns. For decades Wallace rarely lived at home. He lived

in mobile camps with hot days, cold nights, and Arizona's penchant for severe weather and exotic flora and fauna, rarely knowing where the next assignment (or employment) would take him. What is more, Wallace scribed detailed notes of his photographs, recording data such as location and exposure. Wyckoff translates these logs in his follow-up sessions with Arizona's landscapes to show us precisely what has changed—and what has not—in the Grand Canyon State.

From 2016 to 2018 Wyckoff followed Wallace's ghost to the places the latter photographed. Requiring at times long hikes, awkward stances, traffic, and the occasional obstruction, he attempted to recapture as many of Wallace's photographs as possible. This alone, without the text, is a great achievement. Wyckoff's understanding of light, angle, exposure, and scale make for an impressive series of repeat photography exhibits that highlight the American West's development in minute detail, and several lessons emerge.

After a preface (including a map of every location photographed) and eighteen-page introduction to the life and work of Wallace, Wyckoff divides the book into seven thematic galleries of repeat photography. These sections highlight a particular type of Arizona space: Nature's Palette, Monuments to History, Mining's Mark, Small Towns, The Mother Road, Urban Arizona, and Far Corners. For each of Wallace's photographs, Wyckoff provides the context of Wallace's travels when he took the photo—when the photo was taken, the particular sojourn at hand for Wallace and his coworkers, and details on the particular place of focus, all in a quick paragraph. For his own images, Wyckoff offers changes in the landscape and any challenges he had accessing the particular site of capture, again all in a short paragraph. Thus, this is not a text-heavy monograph. It is an exploration where the figures speak as much as the text, and again we know Wyckoff thrives in this kind of environment (see his 2006 book *On the Road Again: Montana's Changing Landscape* from University of Washington Press).

Looking at these image pairs, one take-home for myself (and hopefully my students) is that regardless of the context—urban or rural, mountains or desert—the state has experienced an exponential growth of vegetation as natural wildfire has been suppressed and replaced with increased piñon, juniper, sage, and cacti in every seeming square yard. A second constant theme is the vast space that characterizes Arizona as a large state with an also large but very concentrated population. The

third take-home is the juxtaposition of wealth and poverty throughout the state, often, and acknowledged by Wyckoff, along lines of ethnicity. While the text lacks theory, that is not the point of the book. References and grand ideas would take away from the beauty of the photographs and the discussion of skill—both Wallace’s and Wyckoff’s—required to capture the images. Again, there is plenty of information and context for the reader to lead themselves into their own exploration of Arizona or another place of their choosing, where they can also dive into why we are letting our forests grow and how we have left behind our most economically vulnerable and many people of color.

*Riding Shotgun* offers readers that inspiration. I already want to chase stacks of photos at the Creede Historical Society in Colorado (a summer getaway of mine) and track down that mining region’s similar spots to see how the landscape there has or has not changed. I do not share Dr. Wyckoff’s photographic experience. Nor do I have his prose. Nonetheless, I want to get to know those spots and their changes. And I suppose that is any book’s purpose—to motivate us to change and see change. Thank you, Norman and Bill.

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*Geography’s Quantitative Revolutions: Edward A. Ackerman and the Cold War Origins of Big Data.* Elvin Wyly. Morgantown: West Virginia University Press, 2019. Pp. xx+171, notes, index. \$99.99, hardcover, ISBN 978-1-949199-08-6. \$22.99, paperback, ISBN 978-1-949199-09-3.

This slender monograph uses the career and writings of Edward Ackerman as a mirror to reflect on the evolution of the discipline of geography from the mid-twentieth century to the present, with some speculations into the future. Using Ackerman’s work to center the discourse, Elvin Wyly weaves a narrative that links the origins of geography’s quantitative revolution to the cadre of geographers involved in intelligence efforts in the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) during World War II and its transition after the war to the Central Intelligence Agency (better known to Americans as the CIA). While this is to some extent an oversimplification, those geographers involved in the OSS played an important role in amplifying the use of mathematical