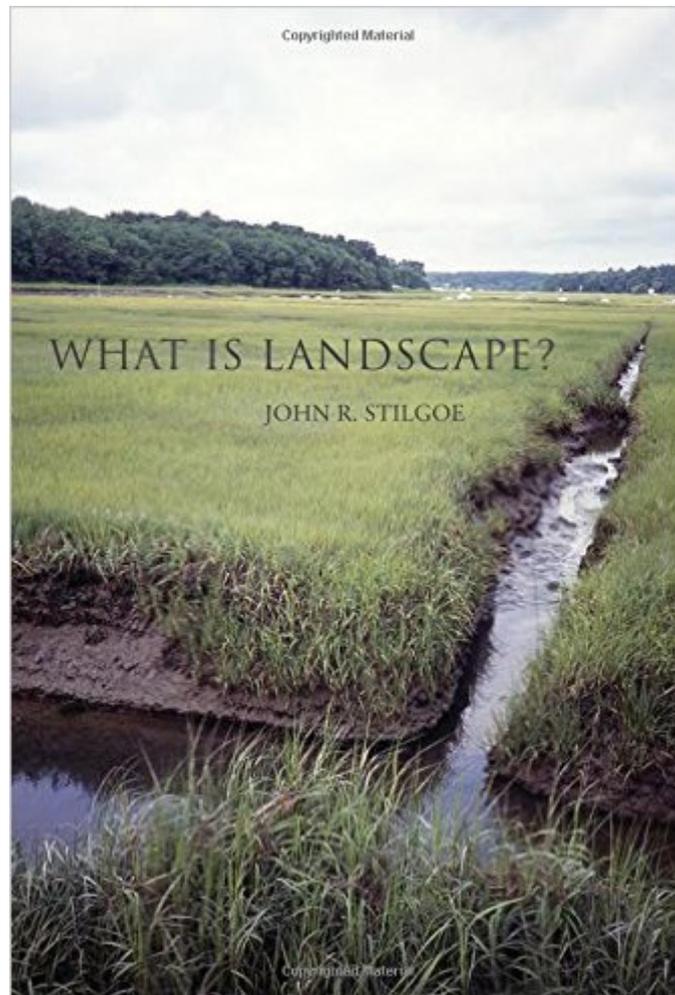


The book was found

# What Is Landscape? (MIT Press)



## Synopsis

Landscape, John Stilgoe tells us, is a noun. From the old Frisian language (once spoken in coastal parts of the Netherlands and Germany), it meant shoveled land: landschop. Sixteenth-century Englishmen misheard or mispronounced this as landskep, which became landskip, then landscape, designating the surface of the earth shaped for human habitation. In *What Is Landscape?* Stilgoe maps the discovery of landscape by putting words to things, zeroing in on landscape's essence but also leading sideways expeditions through such sources as children's picture books, folklore, deeds, antique terminology, out-of-print dictionaries, and conversations with locals. ("What is that?" "Well, it's not really a slough, not really, it's a bayou...") He offers a highly original, cogent, compact, gracefully written narrative lexicon of landscape as word, concept, and path to discoveries. *What Is Landscape?* is an invitation to walk, to notice, to ask: to see a sandcastle with a pinwheel at the beach and think of Dutch windmills -- icons of triumph, markers of territory won from the sea; to walk in the woods and be amused by the Elizabethans' misuse of the Latin *silvaticus* (people of the woods) to coin the word savages; to see in a suburban front lawn a representation of the meadow of a medieval freehold. Discovering landscape is good exercise for body and for mind. This book is an essential guide and companion to that exercise -- to understanding, literally and figuratively, what landscape is.

## Book Information

Series: MIT Press

Hardcover: 280 pages

Publisher: The MIT Press (October 9, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0262029898

ISBN-13: 978-0262029896

Product Dimensions: 5.4 x 0.7 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.6 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (4 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #56,130 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #11 in [Books > Arts & Photography > Architecture > Landscape](#)

## Customer Reviews

This book is for mental excursions, glimpses of past times, and casual lectures. The lectures come from a fund of knowledge that the author must have accumulated over many years. He is a student

of etymology (word history) with a shelf of old and historic dictionaries. Starting with all aspects of the lands we walk, including seashores, farm fields and bridges, he tells what they encompass and how they got their names. But he also encourages the reader to simply pay more attention to what he sees around him. Look up from your phone. Enjoy the natural wonders and ponder what man has done to alter nature. It isn't all bad.

a little too academic, especially from a writer who is known about detailed about landscape. This type of discussion has been lost and dismissed in current academia, but could be of use to fiction writers. Not this book. Too philosophical; too much defense of the discipline and not enough talk about how landscapes marvel and move us.

a totally unique book for a change, it may forever alter your perceptions

Like all of Stilgoe's work, this book is a delight to read!

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