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Zach's News

August 19, 2010

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Recommended Citation

Georgia Southern University, Zach S. Henderson Library, "Zach's News" (2010). *University Libraries News Blog*. 314.
<https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/lib-news-online/314>

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Database trial and evaluation: Oxford Music Online

August 19, 2010

Until Sept. 12, the Zach S. Henderson Library is sponsoring a trial and evaluation of [Oxford Music Online](#), which includes online, searchable, and combined full text of The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians (second edition), The New Grove Dictionary of Opera, and The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz (second edition). Some articles have been updated since the print versions were released. It covers Western classical music most thoroughly and includes some coverage of popular music and music of non-Western cultures. It also includes over 500 music examples illustrating various entries. Sound examples require the download of the free Sibelius Scorch plugin available at <http://www.sibelius.com/download/>. We would love to know what you think about this database and its usefulness in support of our curriculum and/or faculty research. Please e-mail Jonathan Harwell, Collection Development & Assessment Librarian, at jharwell@georgiasouthern.edu or leave a comment here at Zach's News.

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Book Review: The Last Empty Places

August 19, 2010

Jane Harkleroad, in our Collection & Resource Services Department, specializes in acquiring new items for the library collection. She has contributed a review of the book [The Last Empty Places](#). Check it out below.

****Note:** Our newest books are in their brand-new location, on the 2nd floor between the Circulation Desk and

Zach's Brews. These include the Browsing Collection for books of popular interest, as well as new

Government Documents. Any of these items can be checked out. In addition, our newest Reference Books

are shelved on the 2nd floor in the Reference Collection, on the shelf nearest the main staircase. The

Reference Books remain in the library building.**

[The Last Empty Places: A past and present journey through the blank spots on the American map](#) by Peter Stark

Review by Jane Harkleroad

Empty places seem to be where people did not reside at all and where there were seldom travelers within those

spaces, Peter Stark's quest to find "empty places" really began in his childhood. He was brought up what he calls a "rough-hewn" old log cabin in Wisconsin in an oak forest with the nearest neighbor a quarter of a mile away.

As a young boy, Peter listened to his father's stories of Scandinavian pioneers and Potawatomi Indians. He

roamed along remote creeks, hunted arrowheads, rambled the woods as if they were his "playground" which,

indeed, they were. This love for undisturbed surroundings continued unquenched.

Peter Stark became a freelance writer and over time his eagerness to enjoy remote, unpopulated areas led him

all over the world so he could write about them.

Finally, he turned his attention to the continental U. S. (excluding Alaska) and began a kind of pilgrimage to learn

whether there were any of these (almost) untouched "empty places" still around.

Happily, he found they do exist, in varying degrees. A friend provided a satellite-generated "[Nighttime Map of the](#)

[United States.](#)" There were indications of bright areas everywhere, indicating population.

However, there were

dark areas which indicated that there were few people and even less commercialism in these dark spots.

Peter chooses to take his family on parts of his trips and they agree. Considering the age of the children, they

seemed to be eager young kids—Skylar and Molly— who love adventure and do not shrink from travelling what I

call "roughly ." I was amazed at these children and their mother, Amy, and their wonderful exuberance and

stamina.

One trip was down Northern Maine's St. John River and another was a hike through New Mexico's high desert.

On two journeys, Peter travels alone through remote woods of north-central Pennsylvania and the dusty desert

remoteness of eastern Oregon.

All the while, Peter mixes his commentary about some first great naturalists like Henry David Thoreau, William

Bartram, John Muir, and Aldo Leopold with history of the area, practical and useful information to use in the wilderness.

He comments on the French and Indian War and its influence on 18th-century Pennsylvania, on the Spanish and

their quest for riches and the Pueblo Indians in old New Mexico.

He tells us the history of how Nova Scotia and other areas of Canada were settled and what it meant to be

Charles de la Tour and Charles Biencourt, some French boys in the early 1600s.

Peter admits that he fears the loss of our wildernesses. I have felt much the same, wondering whether mygrandchildren and great-grandchildren will know enough to treasure the nearby forests and mountains and the experiences the wilderness can provide.

As he travels, Peter continually inquires about the blankest spot in the area. Sometimes, it is a wooded ravine; sometimes it is an almost inaccessible segment of the valleys, empty of all but sagebrush. This book left me with a yearning to hike and explore my country as never before. Maybe, just maybe, I will set my mind to do just that.

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