Scale and the wartime Saturday Evening Post: A geographical strategy of nation building
L'échelle et le Post pendant la Guerre: Une stratégie géographique pour fonder la nation

Louise Appleton
Over the last decade, human geographers, particularly political geographers, have been paying increasing attention to the social construction of scale and its implication in the social construction of space. A number of studies have demonstrated how scale is socially constructed, but one of their weaknesses is their tendency to focus on the role of political and economic actors and processes in the social construction of scales. What is missing from these accounts is acknowledgement of socio-cultural actors (such as media) and processes (consumption, ideology, beliefs, values and so on) in these theorizations, as well as empirical evidence of how socio-cultural processes are thoroughly implicated in the social construction of scale.

This paper seeks to outline how a socio-cultural theory of scale might be used to investigate national identities articulated in the American magazine the Saturday Evening Post during World War Two, and focuses, in particular, on empirical investigation. The paper demonstrates how different geographical scales (domestic, local, national and global) order American civil society in the Saturday Evening Post, and how these scales articulated different, often contradictory, messages about what it meant to be American during this period. Drawing on events throughout the US and abroad during the early 1940s, negotiating editorial rules and regulations, and appealing to a market of paying customers, the Post framed the nation in relation to the context of its production at a scale that was meaningful to Americans. The realities of World War Two were thereby brought to bear on everyday Americans through the magazine’s employment of geographical scales. Although not a conscious decision by the editorial board, this paper
argues that scale served as a geographical strategy of nation building in the wartime Post. It begins with an introduction to the Post as a popular nationalist publication, followed by a brief analysis of the scale literature in relation to understanding this popular magazine. The final section illustrates how the Post can be read as a medium of geographical strategic nation building during World War Two.

The Saturday Evening Post

Before television the Saturday Evening Post was the pre-eminent form of visual popular culture in America, reaching on average one in seven Americans through subscriptions alone, and then up to six times more readers as it was passed on from subscribers to family members, and then members of the public through its presence in doctor’s and dentist’s waiting rooms and other public places in America (Wood, 1971). No other medium had such a powerful hold on mass society, and no other general-interest magazine sold as many copies as the Post until 1947. For over seventy years, between 1898 and 1969, the magazine delivered its version of America on a weekly basis for its readers to share and to shape their lives. It drew upon events from within America and from abroad, informing but also educating and entertaining readers with images of themselves and their places in the world. Leon Whipple said of the Post in the 1920s:

This is a magic mirror; it not only reflects, it creates us. What the Saturday Evening Post is we are…. Its advertising helps standardise our physical life; its text stencils patterns on our minds; it molds our ideas on Russia, oil preparedness, immigration, the World Court. Finally, it does queer things to our psychology by printing tales that deceive us with surface realism that are too often a tissue of illusions…. This bulky nickel’s worth of print and pictures is a kind of social and emotional common denominator of American life. (Whipple, 1928)

The importance of the Post for defining America in the pre-television era has been well acknowledged (Abrahamson, 1996; Cohn, 1995; Wood, 1971). The entire magazine was constructed to provide a vision of America, and every cover illustration, advertisement, fiction story and editorial exhibited the Post’s beliefs and values of what it meant to be American. The stories and illustrations were entertaining, advertisements and editorials were informative, but they each carried values of the time and of the magazine, constructing America for the Post readers. The Post created icons of nationhood, codified in shorthand symbols in image and text. Everything from familiar national icons, such as the flag, the American Eagles and parades, to more everyday artefacts and events, such as the school bus, the neighbourhood ball park, different landscapes, home and the family, all imbued with meanings about what the Post described as Americana at a particular moment in time. The icons of nationhood present in the pages of the Post mapped an America that was successful, built on fair play, hard work and democracy (on icons of nationhood, see Cosgrove and Daniels, 1988; Barnes and Duncan, 1992; Gottman, 1952).

In these images of America, the Post interpreted abstract meanings of nationhood for everyday consumption, ensuring that the message reached a national audience. Designed to have popular appeal that would attract the audience missed by highbrow magazines such as Harpers and Atlantic Monthly (Abrahamson, 1996), the Post was able to articulate a series of political and cultural concerns, from world wars to racial integration, communism to housing, and to do so in an accessible manner to its largely (aspiring) middle-class family readers. Different geographical scales proved useful for interpreting key events and crystallizing them into symbols and icons of nationhood to be meaningful
and accessible to readers. Nationhood was thereby created in the interaction of processes operating at different geographical scales through the articulation of icons of America.

The success of the Post and the widespread delivery of its nationalist message was helped in no small part by the railroads. By using the nation’s newly developed railroads, the Post was assured national coverage across the continental expanse of the United States, ensuring a mass audience for its message of national union. National unification was also promoted through advertisements for household cleaners, cars, electrical appliances, cigarettes, and many other commodities. The Post standardized consumption across the nation, and suggested that readers could consume their way into a national culture, regardless of the many differences among the population (Ewen and Ewen, 1992). Their capacity to shape the American population through consumption was fully understood, and its publishers, Curtis Publishing Company, held a strict advertising code that forbade ‘all alcohol, medical, immoral or extravagantly worded ads’. The Post and other Curtis magazines (such as Ladies Home Journal and Country Gentleman) demonstrated to the popular culture sceptics that they took their social responsibilities seriously, and that the editorial committee played a decisive role in selecting the advertisements, articles and images that could be included in the magazine (Wood, 1971: 63).

In the communication of nationalist messages, the magazine itself became an icon of nationhood, and both a product and a process of a national culture. By providing a familiar sight on newspaper stands, and by featuring characters and stories, cover illustrations and cartoons, readers shared a conversation point with millions of others across the nation. ‘Readers became a national community’ Cohn (1989: 10) argues, ‘as they came to know, to share in and to talk to one another about familiar stories by familiar writers about familiar characters’. This cultural process of nation building through media has been discussed by Anderson (1983) and subsequent authors as ‘imagining community’. The Post played a pivotal role in creating this imagined community of America by breaking down the social and physical distance between readers through the articulation of an image of a shared America and through the process of its consumption across the continent (see Ethington, 1997, for his account of social distance as both a geometric and metaphorical space between individuals).

The Post was, therefore, central to the creation and communication of American national identities for a large part of the twentieth century. Its message, its mission, its distribution and its iconic status are testimony to the magazine’s part in constructing the nation. Understanding this magazine provides a glimpse of what it meant, for some people, to be American at that time.

However, while the magazine’s mission was to interpret the meaning of what it meant to be American for its readers, it presented its liberal conservative nationalist message in a variety of different ways. An important way of framing its message was through different geographical scales, from the domestic to the global, which enabled the editors, cover illustrators, story writers, cartoonists and advertisers to interpret events both at home and abroad to demonstrate their impact on the lives of average Americans. It is the purpose of this paper to illustrate how the magazine articulated competing national identities during the Second World War through different geographical scales. Before going on to illustrate this point with empirical material drawn from the magazine, the relevance of the scale literature to understanding identities at the Post will be discussed (for a more complete review of the scale literature, see Marston, 2000).
Geographical scale and the Post’s articulation of American identities

Geographical scale, according to social theorists, is ‘a way of framing conceptions of reality’ (Delaney and Leitner, 1997: 94-5), and something ‘which we employ for understanding social relationships’ (Agnew, 1997: 99). Speaking about the nation-state, Lefebvre argued:

Each new form of state, each new form of political power, introduces its own particular way of partitioning space, its own particular administrative classification of discourse about space and about things and people in space. Each such form commands space, as it were, to serve its purposes. (Lefebvre, 1991: 281)

Like the nation-state, the Post used scale as a spatial tool to articulate the nation and to order civil society.

The Post’s articulation of scales consists of the mediation of a variety of different processes and practices in the US and abroad, framing them in such a way that they become meaningful for Post readers. Scale, therefore, suggests the embedding of processes operating at different geographical scales, which are framed in different ways at different times to serve different ends. Lefebvre considers this in his ‘principle of interpenetration and superimposition’. He states that the world can be conceived as an amalgam of overlapping socio-spatial networks articulated on divergent geographical scales, but these do not replace each other but instead co-exist in interrelations: ‘the world-wide does not abolish the local’, (Lefebvre, 1978, quoted in Brenner, 1997: 278). Brenner goes on to argue ‘local, regional, national and global social relations co-exist and overlap within the same world-wide territorial grid’ (see also Cox, 1998 for a similar discussion). This means that when the Post presents American national identities to its readers through different geographical scales, it draws upon events taking place both within and beyond the United States, which are pulled through the geographical lens of domestic, local, national or global scales to become meaningful to American readers. The choice of lens is not determined by hierarchy or size, and there is no primary scale at which national identities are best communicated (Smith, 1984). Instead, the most suitable scale at a particular moment in time for presenting a particular image of the world is determined by the historical context of its production and consumption (on the historical contingency of scale see Brenner, 1997; and Appleton, 2000).

A further consequence of Lefebvre’s interpenetrating and superimposed scales is that the choice of articulation, that is, the frame selected to articulate social relations at certain times, ‘shapes the meaning of space’ (Jonas, 1994, 257). Hence, there is always a politics of scale (Smith, 1992a). Scale is used as a strategy for presenting a certain argument in the interest of particular actors, in this case, cultural actors. Agnew (1997) demonstrates the politics of scale through his discussion of the way Italian political parties presented their politics to the Italian population at the time of the national elections between 1992 and 1994. ‘Political parties organize themselves and their messages through the ways in which they divide and order space’ he argues (Agnew, 1997, p. 118). The scales they create in their political campaigning ‘channel and limit their political horizons’ (Agnew, 1997, p. 118; see also Miller, 1997; Delaney and Leitner, 1997; and Howitt, 1998 for similar discussions).
In the Post, scale is manipulated (often subconsciously) to serve the interests of the magazine in its mission to present a liberal conservative image of the nation. That image, however, is not necessarily uniform, for tensions and contradictions emerge between scales and over time. In the articulation of changing social relations and changing cultural, political and economic contexts, national identities are simultaneously modified. As this paper will illustrate, those tensions and contradictions between scales were evident at the Post during World War Two.

To argue that the Post used scales to serve its own purpose, however, is not to suggest that the Post was an autocratic ‘state apparatus’, consciously manipulating and coercing, for it also needed to select its framings in the interest of its readers and was thereby influenced by these demands. The magazine was also embedded within a particular spatial and temporal context which also limited the choice of frames and their contents. In a competitive market, the Post had to appeal to reader’s collective worries, to yearnings to improve, redeem, or repair their individual and collective lives, and perhaps to escape from them. The Post had to be relevant to people’s lives. Its success at communicating an important and relevant message can be measured in its popularity on the newsstands, where it beat rivals such as Look and Colliers until its demise in 1969, and was only eclipsed by Life in 1947. In making itself appealing to its readers (as well as serving the needs of the advertisers and the editorial staff), the Post can be understood as a form of Gramscian hegemony, constituted through a negotiation of ideological consensus. Hence, media are not coercive forms intended to control and manipulate their audience but are consensual, enabling the interests of subordinate groups to be included (McRobbie, 1991; Sharp, 1993).

Likewise, the readers of the Post were incorporated into the national community through their identification with particular scales: the images they saw, the stories they read and the Post experiences they shared with other readers. Crucially, the choice of scale is important in facilitating this process. Marston (2000), for example, argues that women in early twentieth century America manipulated the domestic scale to provide their link to civic society:

The home was utilized as a scale of social and political identity formation that eventually enabled American middle-class urban women to extend their influence beyond the home to other scales of social life, enabling them to influence issues of production, social reproduction and consumption in the process. (Marston, 2000: 235)

Smith demonstrates through his work on homelessness how individuals and social groups can use scale for their own gain (Smith (1992b, 1993, 1996). He advocates the possibility of ‘jumping scales’, or moving to a wider geographical field, in order to counter the impacts of capitalism. Similarly, the Post and its readers could jump scales or reinterpret scales to serve their own ideological ends in creating relevant national identities.

Theorizations on scale can be seen to have much to offer cultural geographers, particularly those working on issues of identity. Scale provides a theory for understanding how civil society is ordered along spatial parameters, how identity is constructed in relation to social, political, economic and cultural events at different geographical scales, how space is imbued with meaning and how those meanings can contradict each other and shift in time, and how space can be strategically employed by different actors. The paper demonstrates how scale is used to promote certain readings of American identities at the Saturday Evening Post during World War Two.
The examples I use to illustrate the role of scale in articulating nationhood are representative of the Post throughout the Second World War. Space confines the discussion to two particular scales, the domestic and the global, but the local and national were not absent from the Post at this time. I argue elsewhere that during this period, the roles of the local and the national scales in the magazine complemented the kinds of messages that the domestic and global scales respectively articulated (Appleton, 2000). The two examples discussed are also advertisements, which has the advantage of illustrating the role of image and text in the Post’s articulation of nationhood. However, the decision to use advertisements in this paper should not be seen as an exclusive focus on advertising, instead, these are representative examples of the magazine’s contents and should be read in this light.

American National Identity during World War Two

With the bombing of Pearl Harbour on December 7th 1941, the United Sates was dragged into a war in which the Post and many other Americans felt they had no place (Honey, 1984; Leaming, 1969). The Saturday Evening Post had voiced such views since 1939, but when America’s fate was sealed the magazine turned in full support of the government’s decision to enter the war on the side of the Allies. This support can be found in a comment made by William Fuller in the director’s minutes from a meeting on 13 March 1942. The statement reads:

We can’t all be Marines at Wake Island. We can’t all be building bombing planes and tanks or serve in the Red Cross, but all of us at Curtis are ‘Marines in America’s Cause’ today, helping make this a stronger, braver nation and helping repel fear, disunity, discontent and the other enemies of national welfare.

Post thus began its campaign to fight the war on the homefront through its portrayal of a nation fighting a war in defence of its freedom (Harrington, c. 1946, Curtis Archives).

One of the ways in which this support was shown was in Curtis Publishing Company’s involvement in the Magazine Bureau. Established by a number of American magazines during 1942, the Magazine Bureau worked in direct co-operation with the Office of War Information in Washington, to ensure that magazines were able to fully publicize and endorse the government’s war messages by incorporating them into the contents of magazines. As a nationalist magazine, the Post was quick to become part of this mission. During the war, therefore, while the Post framed America so that it was relevant to its readers, its editorial decision-making, along with that of other general-interest magazines in the Magazine Bureau, was also being shaped by Washington (Honey, 1984).

During World War Two, the Post drew upon four scales to indicate the reasons for war, but each scale articulated different meanings of national identity. At the domestic and local scale, the emphasis was on personal sacrifice, hard work, and pulling together for the benefit of others. In this sense, America’s involvement in World War Two was discussed in familiar and familial terms to bring the meaning of war into the ken of average Americans. An advertisement for war bonds, sponsored by United Sates Steel, provides an example of the domestic scale articulations of nationhood in the Post during this period. It illustrates how local, national and global social and political relations were pulled through the lens of the domestic scale. The full-page advertisement appeared in the Post on December 19, 1942, and translated America’s war into a battle for the future of the
home and the family. It shows a father leaning over his sleeping baby’s cot. It is Christmas Eve and a stocking is hung in the corner of the cot that has been filled with toys to which his father is adding war bonds, saying ‘You don’t know it son – but I’m giving you Christmas and the 4th of July’.

Although the advertisement is for war bonds, the scene seems far from the realities of war. The peacefulness of the sleeping baby, the doting look of the father and his light touch on the baby’s hand, coupled with the father’s provision for the child’s future suggest a tenderness that is far removed from the images of battle. Similarly, the setting of the scene at Christmas also suggests distance from the war. ‘The Christmas festival’, McGreevy (1990: 32) argues, ‘is intimately linked to ... the notion of home in America’ as home represents the most private utopian space furthest from the external world. Similarly, the horrors of the external world intensify the serenity of this domestic scene and heighten its sentimentality. War is not removed from the scene, but is relied upon by the advertisers to sentimentalise the domestic scene for the Post readers.

Consumption brings the serenity and sentimentality of the domestic scale into the public domain, and the purchase of war bonds renders that public domain a place of civic duty. The concluding paragraph of the advertisement confirms this faith in consumerism as an act of patriotism, stating that ‘once upon a Christmas you and your dad together bought a slice of today’s – and tomorrow’s – AMERICA!’ The war bonds, however, are not referred to as material goods, but as a means to buying ‘Christmas, the 4th of July, Thanksgiving, hot dogs, pink lemonade, ball games and twilight games’. In short, the events and experiences that families can share which provide testimony to their nationhood. Family security and happiness can be bought, this advertisement suggests, and, moreover, it should be bought as a matter of civic responsibility to fight the war from the homefront.

This appeal to the civic responsibility of individuals made through the domestic scale becomes more poignant in the context of war because the advertisement speaks specifically to the needs of American men left behind on the homefront. Jeffords (1996) argues that for a man not engaged in wartime combat, unable to demonstrate his masculinity in battle, the need to find an alternative source for that demonstration was crucial. The source identified in this advertisement is breadwinning. The man in the advertisement possesses purchasing power and, by using his wages to buy war bonds, he combines his campaign to preserve his family’s future with that of preserving the nation’s future, thereby demonstrating his masculinity as a father, a breadwinner, and a patriot. Thus, while the domestic scale is a place worlds apart from war, the ‘interpenetration and superimposition of social spaces’ of the nation and the global war (to use Lefebvre’s terminology) shows how the Post provided American men with an image of how they could support the nation through supporting their families. Home and nation thus become intertwined through masculine consumerism in the purchase of war bonds. This interpenetration and superimposition of the domestic and national scale is a common feature of American national identities, because it illustrates how individuals are made to feel part of a national family through their first-hand experiences as members of their own family (Kozol, 1994; 1996).

Meanwhile, the national and the global scale were employed to promote different images of America. At these scales, the emphasis was much less on selflessness and public spiritedness than the domestic and local scales had indicated, and more on promoting America as a unique and superior place that must save the rest of the world from tyranny. ’American Nationalist Globalism’ perhaps best describes these images, a term
coined by Fousek (1994) to highlight the importance of the global scale for articulating nationhood in the later stages of World War Two. American Nationalist Globalism highlights the belief that American national values were globally oriented, and implies a certain national arrogance. It also neatly defines the two social spaces interpenetrating these global scale images, namely national and global processes, while domestic and local are largely omitted. According to Gottman (1952), this was a familiar partitioning of global space by sovereign powers throughout the war.

An advertisement for American Airlines from 21 April 1945, exemplifies the *Post’s* wartime message of American Nationalist Globalism at the global scale. The single page colour advertisement shows a golden sphere representing the earth, on which an outline of the United States has been drawn, and above which an aeroplane flies. Beneath the illustration a caption reads ‘Let’s Keep It The Best Place On Earth’, and a short text provides further evidence of American global pre-eminence and the role of aviation in ensuring this ranking. The national scale and the global scale are both important features picked out by the advertisement, promoting America as unsurpassed. In short, national greatness and global supremacy are seen to go hand in hand for Americans. The local scale and domestic scale, meanwhile, are omitted or ‘jumped’ in order to portray an image of America as politically supreme.

The advertisement asserts both textually and visually that America is ‘the best place on earth’. ‘Despite covering only one-and-a-half percent of the earth’s surface’, the United States is ‘the biggest country in productive power. Also it is the best place in terms of standard of living’, the text states. The visual presentation of America as a homogeneous bloc in the form of a map portrays the nation as a stalwart force in this uncertain world. The selective mapping of just one place on the earth suggests that only what is important has been portrayed on the globe (Harley, 1988). In addition, the image of the globe also promotes superiority and global mastery, with antecedents in imperial iconography, where the icon represented knowledge, power, control, and domination (Harley, 1988, 1992; Pickles, 1989, 1992; Cosgrove, 1989, 1994; Whitefield, 1997). During the Second World War, global imagery was effectively exploited by the aviation industry, and in this advertisement the golden orb, perfectly round and flawless, presents the view from the aeroplane. No place on earth escapes the powerful observation of those flying American Airlines. Hence the globe, as in imperial history, symbolises the scale over which those living in ‘the best place on earth’ achieve mastery. America, the advertisement reassures *Post* readers, is an intrepid power in the wartime world.

In suggesting that America is a powerful place, the image of the plane provides the justification for its global supremacy. The silver colour of the plane and its imposing wingspan across the earth implies wealth and status, while its ability to provide this Appollonian view of ‘the best place on earth’ places the plane alongside the angels and the gods. This connection between aviation (especially aviators) and godliness had been made in reports from Lindbergh’s arrival in France after his momentous transatlantic crossing: ‘it seems as if all hands in the world are touching or trying to touch the New Christ and that the New Cross is the plane’ (Eksteins, 1989: 242). Similarly, the heavenly setting of the plane in this advertisement suggests a sanctimonious America.

The timing of the advertisement is important for drawing strong links between the aeroplane and national supremacy, because it was in World War Two that the real test of air power was seen. Aeroplanes and aviation had long been associated with progress but, during the war, that technological power of flight would be harnessed by nations to fight
their campaigns on a global stage, and air power thus became associated with national achievement and global supremacy. Paris (1995) argues that 'aeronautical technology and achievement increasingly became a channel through which national aggrandisement could be promoted'. By the time this advertisement appeared in the Post, the connection between aviation and national status was already a well-developed thesis, and the image relies on this understanding for its effect. The text also makes this link between air power and global power, claiming that ‘we have the engineering and aircraft experience to keep the USA the first among nations as an airfaring people’ (emphasis in original). Global mastery in this advertisement is tightly bound with national security.

Yet, while air supremacy brought the promise of global supremacy (cf. Atkinson, 1996; and Pirie, forthcoming), the advertisement also suggests that the airman’s view also brings increased vulnerability. The advertisement uses this evidence, in tandem with the threat to America’s position, to demand support for keeping America supreme by flying with American Airlines. For example, the text suggests vulnerability by claiming that Americans have to ‘exercise eternal vigilance’, and that American Airlines is insuring ‘our nation’s prosperity and security’. Aviation is seen as a double-edged sword: representing technological excellence on the one hand, but bringing vulnerability to weaker nations on the other. By the mid-1940s, the world had seen the destructive force of the scientific progress aviation had brought to global combat, and the culmination of this destruction would be unleashed just a few months after the publication of this advertisement with the atomic nightmare that would haunt the post-war world. Yet, despite suggestions of global vulnerability, the overwhelming message is one of reassurance and national greatness.

The advertisers, in their suggestion that readers are part of the American nationalist globalist vision, exploit the reassurance sought by readers. Despite the grand image of global mastery and national supremacy in the advertisement (though not necessarily typical of all Post images of America at the global scale), readers are made to feel part of this campaign. The title reads ‘Let’s Keep This The Best Place On Earth’, inviting readers to fulfill their civic responsibilities in America’s imperialist domination of the world by flying with American Airlines. Americans are made to feel part of the nation by their ability to fly American Airlines and, thereby, become part of the driving force behind America’s imperial mission. This advertisement illustrates how the global scale has been usefully employed to market a product to the Post’s American readers by associating it with the nation’s war effort.

The socio-cultural articulation of scale during World War Two

Taken together, these different geographical scales picture wartime America as a united and safe home front, where hard work, selflessness and protection of those nearest and dearest will protect America’s international reputation as a global leader. By linking the home to moral obligations to family and promoting this as patriotic endeavour, America’s involvement in the war was made more meaningful to Post readers through its domestic scale images. As a result, readers were assured that they could contribute to the war and to be made to feel a part of this vast nation through their everyday behaviour. At the same time, however, the magazine presented national and global scale images to illustrate national supremacy, strength and power, particularly in a global context. These images suggested distance and size in awesome proportions, which, in relation to the
domestic scale, implied that the nation was remote and detached from the everyday experiences of readers. However, rather than alienating readers by highlighting their insignificance at such scales, advertisers showed how Americans could contribute to American nationalist globalism through consumption. The Post’s simultaneous reliance on different scales, illustrated here through the domestic and global, provided reassurance that everyday citizens of America, like those reading the Post on the American homefront, were safe and secure under the protection of the nation and were actively contributing to this global war. The wartime Post relied on the simultaneous articulation of different geographical scales to reassure its readers in an otherwise politically uncertain time.

34 Scale, this paper has demonstrated, is culturally constructed in popular media to serve the nation-building needs of the magazine by ordering civil society through space. In articulating social relations, socio-cultural actors may draw upon the same historical events, but they pull these through different spatial lenses to frame them in particular ways that serve the needs of the magazine in reaching readers. Taken together, however, the Post’s use of different geographical scales, although not necessarily consciously conducted, served its own ends as a nationalist magazine, but also served the needs of its readers who could begin to comprehend the world in which they lived and their place in it. Scale, I believe, offers an interesting and insightful way of understanding the way cultural life is conducted, and cultural geographers need to begin to explore the possibilities for importing some of these ideas into their investigations of the relationship between people and place.

© cybergeo 2002

BIBLIOGRAPHY


Cosgrove D., Daniels S. (eds); 1988, The Iconography of Landscape, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.


Cox K., 1998, 'Spaces of Dependence, Spaces of Engagement and the Politics of Scale or: Looking for Local Politics' Political Geography 17, 1, 1-23.


Honey M., 1984, Creating Rosie the Riveter: Class, Gender and Propaganda During World War Two. Amherst, University of Massachusetts Press.


Smith N., 1992b, 'Contours of a Spatialised Politics: Homeless Vehicles and the Production of Geographical Scale’ Social Text 33, 54-81.


Unpublished Curtis Publishing Company Documents

President's Advisory Committee Meetings Minutes Archives
ABSTRACTS

Over the last ten years, geographical scale has been at the forefront of academic enquiry in political geography. Scale has been used to demonstrate the social construction of space, and to illustrate how space is framed in particular ways to satisfy political ends. What scale literature lacks, however, is an acknowledgement of how socio-cultural actors play an important role in these constructions and how cultural (as well as political and economic) processes are thoroughly implicated in the construction of space. This paper demonstrates, through an empirical study of national identity in the Saturday Evening Post during World War Two, how the national space is articulated through different geographical scales. It shows how scales frame particular images of the nation so that readers are provided with an understanding of the meaning of the United States of America, and their place in it. The paper concludes that this application of scale to cultural geographical enquiries is useful for demonstrating the political significance of geographical scale in ordering civil society.

INDEX

Keywords: national identity, Saturday Evening Post, scale

Mots-clés: échelle géographique, identité nationale, Saturday Evening Post

Geographical index: Amérique du nord, Etats-Unis d'Amérique

AUTHOR

LOUISE APPLETON
B.L.Appleton@lboro.ac.uk BSc, MA, PhD, Department of European Studies, Loughborough University, Loughborough, Leicestershire, United Kingdom, LE11 3TU, Tel: +44 (0)1509 223655