

CENTER FOR COGNITIVE SCIENCE
University at Buffalo, State University of New York

Wednesday, October 27, 2004

280 Park Hall
North Campus
2:00 pm –4:00 pm

David Mark Ph.D.

Dept. of Geography
National Center for Geographic Information and Analysis, University at Buffalo
and

Andrew F. Turk, Ph.D.

School of Information Technology, Murdoch University, Perth, Australia

**"Ethnophysiography:
An Ethnoscience of the Landscape"**

Recently, ethnophysiography has been defined as an ethnoscience of landscape. Ethnophysiography explores the meanings of terms used in various languages and cultures to refer to the landscape and its components. Ethnophysiography has objectives similar to ethnobiology, which studies folk names and categories for plants and animals, but differs in important ways. Ethnobiology often uses scientific taxonomy as a baseline for assessing folk categories for plants and animals; however, variation in landforms and waterbodies is not constrained by mind-independent natural kinds in any obvious way. Thus ethnophysiography could contribute to the understanding of categorization in general by examining categorization of an inorganic natural domain. Ethnophysiography also can provide a valuable basis for multilingual access to geographic databases. Examples of differing language-specific conceptualizations will be presented. These are mainly drawn from a comparison of arid-landscape terms in an Australian aboriginal language (Yindjibarndi) with terms and their definitions in English. We will conclude with a description of plans for extending the work to Native American languages in Arizona and New Mexico, and with a listing of open problems for future research.

Refreshments will be available

Open to the Public!

For information please or check

<http://www.cogsci.buffalo.edu/Activities/Colloquium/CLLQf04/2004fall.htm>