

BEST QUOTES ON GEOGRAPHY

In every outthrust headland, in every curving beach, in every grain of sand there is the story of the earth.

—Rachel Carson

The study of geography is about more than just memorizing places on a map. It's about understanding the complexity of our world, appreciating the diversity of cultures that exists across continents. And in the end, it's about using all that knowledge to help bridge divides and bring people together.

—Barack Obama

The world belongs to me because I understand it.

--Honoré de Balzac

Viewed from the distance of the moon, the astonishing thing about the Earth, catching the breath, is that it is alive. The photographs show the dry, pounded surface of the moon in the foreground, dead as an old bone. Aloft, floating free beneath the moist, gleaming membrane of bright blue sky, is the rising Earth, the only exuberant thing in this part of the cosmos. If you could look long enough, you would see the swirling of the great rifts of white cloud, covering and uncovering the half-hidden masses of land. If you had been looking a long, geologic time, you could have seen the continents themselves in motion, drifting apart on their crustal plates, held aloft by the fire beneath. It has the organized, self-contented look of a live creature, full of information, marvelously skilled in handling the sun.

--Lewis Thomas

Why do Americans have such a tough time understanding the rest of the world, and, from the rest of the world's perspective, why are Americans so damn hard to understand? Aaron David Miller...writes, 'The United States is the only great power in the history of the world that has had the luxury of having nonpredatory neighbors to its north and south....the luxury of America's circumstances' has made its people, by and large, optimistic and idealistic, and has inclined them to self-delusion when dealing with societies where ethnic, religious, and social hatreds are embedded deep in the DNA. Geography has indulged what Miller calls the Americans' 'schizophrenic' blend of isolationist ambivalence and missionary arrogance. But they have to remember, he says, that 'not everyone is lucky enough to have Canadians, Mexicans, and fish for neighbors.'

--Christopher Dickey

Geography affects history. Trace any civilization back to its origin, and geography takes center stage. Be it a strategic military position, an abundant water supply, or a convenient traveling location, geography determines, by in large, where historical events occur.

—Wayne Stiles

Geography is essential to a good education because all of the human drama has been played out in an environmental setting, on an environmental stage. Climate, resources, the presence of some peoples, the absence of others are all elements of geography that give character to the events we're studying.

--Christopher L. Salter

Geography is history. From the geographic factors that determined the course of evolution, to the fact that people built their cities near rivers, to all the wars that men have fought to get what was on the other side of the hill, geographic factors have shaped the events that have shaped our world.

--Kenneth C. Davis

Why is St. Louis where it is? Ah, of course! It's where the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers come together. Why were mill towns built along the fall line of the Appalachians? Because of the long north-to-south series of waterfalls.

—James Fallows

Geography is the science of space and place on Earth's surface. Its subject matter is the physical and human phenomena that make up the world's environments and places. Geographers describe the changing patterns of places in words, maps, and geo-graphics, explain how these patterns come to be, and unravel their meaning. Geography's continuing quest is to understand the physical and cultural features of places and their natural settings on the surface of Earth.

--*American Geographical Society*

For a billion years the patient earth amassed documents and inscribed them with signs and pictures which lay unnoticed and unused. Today, at last, they are waking up, because man has come to rouse them. Stones have begun to speak, because an ear is there to hear them. Layers become history and, released from the enchanted sleep of eternity, life's motley, never-ending dance rises out of the black depths of the past into the light of the present.

—Hans Cloos

Alaska is northernmost, westernmost, and easternmost state in the U.S. It sounds impossible, geographically, but Alaska's uninhabited Semisopchnoi Island lies just west of the International Dateline, technically making it the easternmost point of the United States.

—Terri Pous

Africa could comfortably fit most of the U.S., India, and China within its borders. The Mercator Projection distorts land masses in the southern hemisphere, making them look smaller than they actually are. In reality, Africa, the second-largest continent in the world, is huge.

—Terri Pous

The hardest part of being a Canadian kid is having to color in Nunavut with a crayon in school—hell on earth.

—Rebecca McNutt

Next to ignorance of the grammar of one's native language, nothing betrays want of information so soon as ignorance in matters of geography, without which it is almost impossible to carry on conversation long on any general subject.

—William Playfair

In our changing world nothing changes more than geography.

—Pearl S. Buck

I'm a great believer in geography being destiny.

—Abraham Verghese

Once an important part of the elementary curriculum, geography has suffered great neglect. A...study of 12-year-olds in eight industrialized countries found American students especially lacking in basic geographic knowledge. (In one test group, 20 percent of the students could not even locate the United States on a world map.) A...survey of North Carolina college students' geographic knowledge found 95 percent 'flunking'—that is, scoring less than 70 percent. Only 27 percent of the students knew that the Amazon River was in Brazil, and a mere 20 percent associated the Ganges with India. Of those responding, 71 percent 'never had reference to geography in their elementary schooling.'...children need to develop certain cognitive skills before they can handle abstract geographic concepts like 'north' and 'south.' But they can begin at an early age to learn illustrations of the five basic themes of geography education: location, place, relationships within places, movement, and regions.

—William J. Bennett

Every square inch of land on Earth has been altered by our presence.

—Nathaniel Rich

There are two worlds: the world we can measure with line and rule, and the world that we feel with our hearts and imagination.

—Leigh Hunt

Our woeful ignorance and lack of curiosity about the world beyond our borders amount almost to a national character flaw. Part of the reason is the short shrift given by our schools to geography.

--Alex Shoumatoff

The difference between history and geography is that geography tells me where I am and history tells me how I got here.

--Unknown

The importance of geology to geography is that, without geology, geography would have no place to put itself.

--Art Linkletter

We are the children of our landscape; it dictates behavior and even thought in the measure to which we are responsive to it.

--Lawrence George

Africa is called the Dark Continent not only because most of its inhabitants are dark (black) but chiefly because it is unknown and the light of the world is not on it.

--Cecil Rhodes

The only fence against the world is a thorough knowledge of it.

—John Locke

Whoever commands the sea, commands the trade, whoever commands the trade of the world, commands the riches of the world, and consequently the world itself.

--Sir Walter Raleigh

History is philosophy teaching by example, and also by warning; its two eyes are geography and chronology.

--James A. Garfield

Canada is not so much a country as a clothesline nearly 4,000 miles long. St. John's in Newfoundland is closer to Milan, Italy than to Vancouver.

--Simon Hoggart

The first time I ever felt the necessity or inevitableness of verse, was in the desire to reproduce the peculiar quality of feeling which is induced by the flat spaces and wide horizons of the virgin prairie of western Canada.

--T. E. Hulme

Living next to the United States is in some ways like sleeping with an elephant. No matter how friendly and even-tempered is the beast, one is affected by every twitch and grunt.

--Pierre Elliott Trudeau

The most serious charge which can be brought against New England is not Puritanism but February.

--Joseph Wood Krutch

In the United States there is more space where nobody is than where anybody is. This is what makes America what it is.

--Gertrude Stein

In geography, we create an initial framework—the patterns of the human use of the earth—then we try to figure out how to study these patterns, and make sense of the landscape.

--Christopher L. Salter

Throughout history, our greatest resource has been our land—forests and plains, mountains and marshlands, rivers and lakes. Our land has sustained us. It has given us a love of freedom, a sense of security, and courage to test the unknown.

--Richard Nixon

The land is like poetry: It is inextricably coherent, it is transcendent in its meaning, and it has the power to elevate a consideration of human life.

--Barry Lopez

It is not necessarily those lands which are the most fertile or most favored climate that seem to me the happiest, but those in which a long stroke of adaptation between man and his environment has brought out the best qualities of both.

--T. S. Eliot

The wealth of a nation consists not in its mass of material things, but in its system. The natural resources of South America are not inferior to those of the United States, but the wealth of the two regions is vastly different. The land of India is far richer than that of Japan, but the comparative wealth of the two nations is reversed.

--George Brockway

Geography is the stage upon which the human drama is played.

--C. Frederick Risinger

Think of our world as it looks from that rocket that's heading toward Mars. It is like a child's globe, hanging in space, the continents stuck to its side like colored maps. We are all fellow passengers on a dot of earth.

--Lyndon B. Johnson

New England has a harsh climate, a barren soil, a rough and stormy coast, and yet we love it, even with a love passing that of dwellers in more favored regions.

--Henry Cabot Lodge

There is a sumptuous variety about the New England weather that compels the stranger's admiration—and regret...In the spring I have counted one hundred and thirty-six different kinds of weather inside four-and-twenty hours.

--Mark Twain

Ohio is the farthest west of the East and the farthest north of the South.

--Louis Bromfield

These are the gardens of the Desert; these
The unshorn fields, boundless and beautiful,
For which the speech of England has no name—
The Prairies.

--William Cullen Bryant

The Midwest isn't one region; it's several that you can't really tell apart.

--Unknown

The Midwest is what you have to cross to get to there from here.

--Unknown

Geography is where they make history.

--Unknown

Mountains interposed
Make enemies of nations, who had else
Like kindred drops been mingled into one.

--William Cowper

In the world today, with air the means of communication, with time and space almost annihilated, geography still remains a fact.

--John Foster Dulles

The difference between landscape and landscape is small, but there is a great difference in the beholders.

--Ralph Waldo Emerson

Nature is magnificent, which is why geography starts by saying, 'Gee!'

--Unknown

Geography is the most important study of man, because it ends up telling him where he can go.

--Unknown

He said that he should prefer not to know the sources of the Nile, and that there should be some unknown regions preserved as hunting-grounds for the poetic imagination.

--George Eliot

Geography has no place in the medieval catalogue of the 'seven liberal arts.' Somehow it fit neither into the quadrivium of mathematical disciplines (arithmetic, music, geometry, and astronomy) nor into the trivium of logical and linguistic disciplines (grammar, dialectic, and rhetoric). For a thousand years of the Middle Ages no common synonym for 'geography' was in ordinary usage, and the word did not enter the English language until the mid-sixteenth century. Lacking the dignity of a proper discipline, geography was an orphan in the world of learning. The subject became a ragbag filled with odds and ends of knowledge and pseudo-knowledge, of Biblical dogma, travelers' tales, philosophers' speculations, and mythical imaginings.

--Daniel J. Boorstin

All things are born of earth; all things earth takes again.

--Euripides

The sea is not a bargain basement....The greatest resource of the ocean is not material but the boundless spring of inspiration and well-being we gain from her. Yet we risk poisoning the sea forever just when we are learning her science, art, and philosophy and how to live in her embrace.

--Jacques Cousteau

We have probed the earth, excavated it, burned it, ripped things from it, buried things in it....That does not fit my definition of a good tenant. If we were here on a month-to-month basis, we would have been evicted long ago.

--Rose Elizabeth Bird

As one went to Europe to see the living past, so one must visit Southern California to observe the future.

--Alison Lurie

The darkest thing about Africa is America's ignorance of it.

--Reverend James J.
Robinson

Where we live is environment; where everybody else lives is geography.

--Unknown

We are living beyond our means. We have developed a lifestyle that is draining the earth of its priceless and irreplaceable resources.

--Margaret Mead

All Gaul is divided into three parts: igneous, metamorphic, and sedimentary.

--Wilson Hinckley

The world is a book, and those who do not travel, read only a page.

--Saint Augustine

As soils are depleted, human health, vitality and intelligence go with them.

--Louis Bromfield

Territory is but the body of a nation. The people who inhabit its hills and valleys are its soul, its spirit, its life.

--James A. Garfield

High mountains are a feeling, but the hum of human cities torture.

--Lord Byron

Geography is a representation of the whole known world together with the phenomena which are contained therein.

In Geography one must contemplate the extent of the entire Earth, as well as its shape, and its position under the heavens...the length of its days and nights, the stars which are fixed overhead, the stars which move above the horizon, and the stars which never rise above the horizon at all....

It is the great and exquisite accomplishment of mathematics to show all these things to human intelligence.

--Ptolemy

Furthermore, the sphericity of the Earth is proved by the evidence of our senses, for otherwise lunar eclipses would not take such forms; for whereas in the monthly phases of the moon the segments are of all sorts—straight, gibbous, and crescent—in eclipses, the dividing line is always rounded. Consequently, if the eclipse is due to the interposition of the Earth, the rounded line results from its spherical shape.

--Aristotle

And then, as never on land, he knows the truth that his world is a water world, a planet dominated by its covering mantle of ocean, in which the continents are but transient intrusions of land above the surface of the all-encircling sea.

--Rachel Carson

Although we are mere sojourners on the surface of the planet, chained to a mere point in space, enduring but for a moment of time, the human mind is not only enabled to number worlds beyond the unassisted ken of mortal eye, but to trace the events of indefinite ages before the creation of our race, and is not even withheld from penetrating into the dark secrets of the ocean, or the solid globe.

--Sir Charles Lyell

The following list of ports of call between Panama and Valparaiso contains the name of every important point on the coast, and gives the relative positions of many places which, if the war continues, will become familiar, for whatever evil war brings in its train, it has value in teaching us geography.

—*Rose-Belford's*
Canadian Monthly
(1879)

Our bombs are smarter than the average high school student. At least they can find Kuwait.

--A. Whitney Brown

Many detailed scientific studies have shown that the entire planet's population can be adequately housed and fed and provided with a livelihood which allows them to live beyond the fear of poverty. There are even sufficient resources for the six or more billion people who will be here by the end of the century. The issue is how existing resources are managed. The key to the future is the concept of sustainable development.

By sustainable development I mean the rational use of resources to meet all basic human needs. To be sustainable, development cannot ignore long-term costs for short-term gains. Concern for the environment is not a luxury that only richer nations can afford. If some development project is damaging forests or soil or water or clean air, then it is not true development.

--William Clark

War is God's way of teaching us geography.

--Paul Rodriguez

We're living beyond our means. We have developed a lifestyle that is draining the earth of its priceless and irreplaceable resources.

--Margaret Mead

Geographically, Ireland is a medium-sized rural island that is slowly but steadily being consumed by sheep.

--Dave Barry

Geography has much more to do with asking questions and solving problems than it does with rote memorization of isolated facts....It is an integrative discipline that brings together the physical and human dimensions of the world in the study of people, places, and environments.

--*Geography for Life:
National
Geography
Standards*

The great fact was the land itself, which seemed to overwhelm the little beginnings of human society that struggled in its sombre wastes.

--Willa Cather

There are many places which nobody can look upon without being consciously influenced by a sense of their history...In some places history has wrought like an earthquake, in others like an ant or mole; everywhere, permanently; so that if we but knew or cared, every swelling of the grass, every wavering line of hedge or path or road were an inscription...When we muse deeply upon the old road worn deep into the chalk, among burial mound and encampment; we feel rather than see.

--Edward Thomas

Today, no less than in the past, the tetrahedral form of the earth and the relation of the tetrahedron to the poles and to the equator preserve the conditions that favor rapid evolution.

—Ellsworth Huntington

Australia is properly speaking an island, but it is so much larger than every other island on the face of the globe, that it is classed as a continent in order to convey to the mind a just idea of its magnitude.

—Charles Sturt

The knowledge of the world is only to be acquired in the world, and not in a closet.

—Lord Chesterfield

Once you have traveled, the voyage never ends, but is played out over and over again in the quietest chambers, that the mind can never break off from the journey.

—Pat Conroy

From ground level, America is mainly road—after all, that's where cars can take you. From the sky, America is mainly forest in the eastern third, farmland in the middle, then mountain and desert in the west, before the strip of intense development along the California coast.

—James Fallows

America is egalitarian, and snobbish. The city looks down on the countryside, the north on the south, the coastal meccas on the flyover interior—and of course each object of disdain looks back with its own reverse snobbery. A version of today's hierarchical awareness is the concept of the 'big sort.' This is the idea that if you have first-rate abilities and more than middling ambitions, you'll need to end up in one of a handful of talent destinations. New York for finance; the San Francisco Bay Area or Seattle for tech; Washington, D.C., for politics and foreign policy. If you can make it there...

—James Fallows

The jet stream is the controlling influence over the world's weather systems.
—Michael Fish

Morocco as it is is a very fine place spoiled by civilization.
—Richard H. Davis

Easterners commonly complain that there is no 'weather' at all in Southern California, that the days and the seasons slip by relentlessly, numbingly bland. That is quite misleading. In fact the climate is characterized by infrequent but violent extremes: two periods of torrential subtropical rains which continue for week and wash out the hills and send subdivisions sliding toward the sea; and twenty scattered days a year of the Santa Ana, which, with its incendiary dryness, invariably means fire.

—Joan Didion

Los Angeles weather is the weather of catastrophe, of apocalypse, and just as the reliably long and bitter winters of New England determine the way life is lived there, so the violence and the unpredictability of the Santa Ana affect the entire quality of life in Los Angeles, accentuate its impermanence, its unreliability. The wind shows us how close to the edge we are.

—Joan Didion

The West begins where the average annual rainfall drops below twenty inches.
—Bernard DeVoto

Ten geographers who think the world is flat will tend to reinforce each others errors. Only a sailor can set them straight.

—John R. Saul

I've lived in good climate, and it bores the hell out of me. I like weather rather than climate.

—John Steinbeck

The Earth is our canvas. The question is, what kind of artists will we decide to be?...Our recent history isn't promising. We continue to place lawns and swimming pools in deserts, skyscrapers in swamps, and mansions on beaches. In search of fuel, we decapitate mountains, turn forests into lumberyards, and break our promises to defend the sanctity of public land. We reserve our most beautiful landscapes for the wealthiest, restricting the poor to overcrowded slums or depleted agricultural zones...we tend to favor temporary effects at the expense of the future.

—Nathaniel Rich

For millennia beyond computation, the sea's waves have battered the coastlines of the world with erosive effect, here cutting back a cliff, there stripping away tons of sand from a beach, and yet again, in a reversal of their destructiveness, building up a bar or a small island.

—Rachel Carson

By the end of eighth grade, we should certainly expect that our children will know the basic saga of American history and the stories of its great men and women; the sources of our form of government in the Greek, Judeo-Christian, Roman, and Enlightenment traditions; the contours and locations of the physical world, and the major features of international landscapes; essential facts of the world's major nations; and their rights and obligations as American citizens.

—William J. Bennett

The weather in England can really darken your spirits.

—Claire Forlani

Water covers two-thirds of the surface of the Earth, but Fresh water is 0.002% of Earth.

—Slogan

Teach people to surf the Internet and they can tour the world. Teach people to serve on the Internet and they can touch the world.

--Harry M. Kriz

151 Countries, One Technology.

—*ThinkSlogans.com*

About fifteen miles above New Orleans the river goes very slowly. It has broadened out there until it is almost a sea and the water is yellow with the mud of half a continent. Where the sun strikes it, it is golden.

—Frank Yerby

The history of almost every civilization furnishes examples of geographical expansion coinciding with deterioration in quality.

--Arnold Toynbee

History is all explained by geography.

--Robert Penn Warren

When Columbus, in 1492, first discovered what came to be called the New World, he thought it to be the eastern coast of Asia and maintained that belief to the day of his death. The first person to maintain something else—that the lands reached by Columbus were not parts of Asia but were newly found continents, separated from Asia by a second ocean at least as large as the Atlantic—was the Italian navigator Americus Vesputius in 1502. It was for this reason that the new continents were justly named for him rather than for Columbus.

—Isaac Asimov

It was in 1519 that the Portuguese navigator, Ferdinand Magellan (in Spanish employ) first sailed across the South Sea and proved it to be an ocean larger than the Atlantic. Because he entered it in calm weather, after a very stormy trip through what is now called the Strait of Magellan, he named it the Pacific Ocean.

—Isaac Asimov

I believe very strongly, and have fought since many years ago - at least over 30 years ago - to get architecture not just within schools, but architecture talked about under history, geography, science, technology, art.

—Richard Rogers

Switzerland is a small, steep country, much more up and down than sideways, and is all stuck over with large brown hotels built on the cuckoo clock style of architecture.

—Ernest Hemingway

Landscape architecture is basically geodesign; it's designing geography. And yet geodesign is not only done by landscape architects, it's done by some of the world's largest corporations.

—Jack Dangermond

I think it's important to approach a house in a way that's reflective of the original environment. Maybe I'm a sentimentalist, but I think that certain geographies call out for certain architecture. I like residences that reflect their place.

—Kelsey Grammer

One half the world knows not how the other half lives.

--George Herbert

Maine is the closest U.S. state to Africa. A peninsula of Maine called Quoddy Head is 3,154 miles away from El Beddouza, Morocco, making it way closer than other states you might've thought, like Florida or North Carolina.

—Terri Pous

Reno, Nevada is actually further west than Los Angeles.

—Terri Pous

Rome is further north than New York City. Rome's latitude is at 41°54'N, and New York City's is at 40°40'N. Think about that the next time you consider Italy for a warm wintertime vacation.

—Terri Pous

Chicago is on the same latitude as Madrid, Rome, and Istanbul. Chicago usually brings to mind snow, ice, and more snow, but those other cities? Not so much.

—Terri Pous

If you drive south from certain parts of Detroit, you'll end up in Canada. It's hard to think of Canada as being south of... well, anything, but Windsor, Ontario, actually lies south and east of Detroit.

—Terri Pous

About 90% of the world's population lives in the northern hemisphere. Massive northern hemisphere cities like Tokyo and New York City account for the disparity.

—Terri Pous

The world's largest desert isn't the Sahara. It's the entire continent of Antarctica. Deserts aren't measured by grains of sand or amount of camels; it's all about precipitation, and Antarctica takes the cake. The roughly 5.5 million square mile continent only gets about eight inches of rain a year.

—Terri Pous

No offense to Mount Everest, but it technically isn't the world's tallest mountain. If you measure height from below sea level, Mauna Kea in Hawaii is the winner. At 29,035 feet, Everest is by far the tallest mountain above sea level. Because much of Mauna Kea's height is underneath the ocean, only 13,796 of it rises above sea level. In total, though, Mauna Kea rises to 33,500 feet from base to peak, making it nearly a mile taller than Everest.

—Terri Pous

Mount Everest isn't the closest mountain to space. Mount Chimborazo in Ecuador is. Thanks to a bulge in the earth's shape around the equator, the peak of Chimborazo — which rises to 20,500 feet above sea level — is further from the earth's center than that of Everest.

—Terri Pous

Minnesota has more shoreline — 90,000 miles, to be exact — than California, Florida, and Hawaii, combined. It is the land of 10,000 lakes, after all.

—Terri Pous

The country with the longest coastline in the world is none other than Canada. With more than 125,000 miles of coastline, Canada far outpaces more obvious choices like Australia or the Philippines.

—Terri Pous

Russia spans a whopping 11 time zones. Thanks to Russia's expansive size, the exclave of Kaliningrad, and parliament's 2014 decision to reinstate the impressive number of time zones, the world's largest country has a lot of time on its hands.

—Terri Pous

The longest place name in the world is a hill in New Zealand called Taumatawhakatangihangakoauauotamateaturipukakapikimaungahoronukupokaiwhenuakitanatahu. That's 85 letters long. It means 'The summit where Tamatea, the man with the big knees, the climber of mountains, the land-swallower who travelled about, played his nose flute to his loved one' in Māori.

—Terri Pous

The largest city by area in the world, Hulunbuir, Mongolia, is almost half as big as France. Hulunbuir is a prefecture-level city that lies over 101,913 square miles. France, by comparison, is 248,573 square miles.

—Terri Pous

Istanbul is only city in the world that is on two different continents. The Bosphorus River separates the European and the Asian sides.

—Terri Pous

Finland and North Korea are separated by just one country. Russia shares a small land border with North Korea.

—Terri Pous

The world is so empty if one thinks only of mountains, rivers and cities; but to know someone here and there who thinks and feels with us, and though distant, is close to us in spirit - this makes the earth for us an inhabited garden.

—Johann von Goethe

The Earth is beautiful, and bright, and kindly, but that is not all. The Earth is also terrible, and dark, and cruel.

—Ursula K. LeGuin

Our primeval Mother Earth is an organism that no science in the world can rationalize. Everything on her that crawls and flies is dependent upon Her and all must hopelessly perish if that Earth dies that feeds us.

—Viktor Schaubерger

Wherever we look the dreadful disintegration of the bridges of life, the capillaries and the bodies they have created, is evident, which has been caused by the mechanical and mindless work of man, who has torn away the soul from the Earth's blood - water. The more the engineer endeavors to channel water, of whose spirit and nature he is today still ignorant, by the shortest and straightest route to the sea, the more the flow of water weighs into the bends, the longer its path and the worse the water will become. The spreading of the most terrible disease of all, of cancer, is the necessary consequence of such unnatural regulatory works. These mistaken activities - our work - must legitimately lead to increasingly widespread unemployment, because our present methods of working, which have a purely mechanical basis, are already destroying not only all of wise Nature's formative processes, but first and foremost the growth of the vegetation itself, which is being destroyed even as it grows. The drying up of mountain springs, the change in the whole pattern of motion of the groundwater, and the disturbance in the blood circulation of the organism - Earth - is the direct result of modern forestry practices. The pulse-beat of the Earth was factually arrested by the modern timber production industry. Every economic death of a people is always preceded by the death of its forests. The forest is the habitat of water and as such the habitat of life processes too, whose quality declines as the organic development of the forest is disturbed. Ultimately, due to a law which functions with awesome constancy, it will slowly but surely come around to our turn. Our accustomed way of thinking in many ways, and perhaps even without exception, is opposed to the true workings of Nature. Our work is the embodiment of our will. The spiritual manifestation of this work is its effect.

—Viktor Schaubерger

I thought how utterly we have forsaken the Earth, in the sense of excluding it from our thoughts. There are but few who consider its physical hugeness, its rough enormity. It is still a disparate monstrosity, full of solitudes, barrens, wilds. It still dwarfs, terrifies, crushes. The rivers still roar, the mountains still crash, the winds still shatter. Man is an affair of cities. His gardens, orchards and fields are mere scrapings. Somehow, however, he has managed to shut out the face of the giant from his windows. But the giant is there, nevertheless.

—Wallace Stevens

We do not inherit the land from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children.
—American Indian
Proverb

The sun, the moon and the stars would have disappeared long ago had they happened to be within the reach of predatory human hands.
—Havelock Ellis

We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect.
—Aldo Leopold

The past history of our globe must be explained by what can be seen to be happening now. No powers are to be employed that are not natural to the globe, no action to be admitted except those of which we know the principle.
—James Hutton

Strabo,... enters largely, in the Second Book of his Geography, into the opinions of Eratosthenes and other Greeks on one of the most difficult problems in geology, viz., by what causes marine shells came to be plentifully buried in the earth at such great elevations and distances from the sea. He notices, amongst others, the explanation of Xanthus the Lycian, who said that the seas had once been more extensive, and that they had afterwards been partially dried up, as in his own time many lakes, rivers, and wells in Asia had failed during a season of drought. Treating this conjecture with merited disregard, Strabo passes on to the hypothesis of Strato, the natural philosopher, who had observed that the quantity of mud brought down by rivers into the Euxine was so great, that its bed must be gradually raised, while the rivers still continued to pour in an undiminished quantity of water. He therefore conceived that, originally, when the Euxine was an inland sea, its level had by this means become so much elevated that it burst its barrier near Byzantium, and formed a communication with the Propontis, and this partial drainage had already, he supposed, converted the left side into marshy ground, and that, at last, the whole would be choked up with soil. So, it was argued, the Mediterranean had once opened a passage for itself by the Columns of Hercules into the Atlantic, and perhaps the abundance of sea-shells in Africa, near the Temple of Jupiter Ammon, might also be the deposit of some former inland sea, which had at length forced a passage and escaped.

—Charles Lyell

What have we achieved in mowing down mountain ranges, harnessing the energy of mighty rivers, or moving whole populations about like chess pieces, if we ourselves remain the same restless, miserable, frustrated creatures we were before? To call such activity progress is utter delusion. We may succeed in altering the face of the earth until it is unrecognizable even to the Creator, but if we are unaffected where-in lies the meaning?

—Henry Miller

Union of geology with geography, without which the latter science is deprived of its firmest foundation

—Sir Roderick I

War is God's way of teaching Americans geography.

—Ambrose Bierce

Our world is evolving without consideration, and the result is a loss of biodiversity, energy issues, congestion in cities. But geography, if used correctly, can be used to redesign sustainable and more livable cities.

—Jack Dangermond

East and Gulf Coast states are at risk of hurricanes; prairie and other central and southern states are constantly threatened by tornados; and western states commonly face damaging droughts. Extreme weather does not discriminate by American geography.

—Matt Cartwright

The biggest difference between England and America is that England has history, while America has geography.

—Neil Gaiman

For sheer majestic geography and sublime scale, nothing beats Alaska and the Yukon. For culture, Japan. And for all-around affection, Australia.

—Sam Abell

To me, it seems a dreadful indignity to have a soul controlled by geography.

—George Santayana

I'm somewhat horrified because I don't think the young people today even know what history is. Some of them don't even study History at school anymore or Geography and they don't know where one place is from another.

—Joan Sutherland

Cultural values are, in themselves, neutral as well as universal, and so much depends on how individuals or ethnic groups use them. Values are influenced by so many factors such as geography, climate, religion, the economy and technology.

—F. Sionil Jose

In particular, Australia, because of its ancient geography, soil profile and distinctive weather patterns, is more adversely affected by climate variability than some other continents.

—Peter Garrett

Nature, I have constantly argued in my work, is the real superpower of this godless universe. It is the ultimate disposer of human fate, randomly recarving geography over 10,000-year epochs.

—Camille Paglia

America is a poem in our eyes; its ample geography dazzles the imagination, and it will not wait long for metres.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Travel stories teach geography; insect stories lead the child into natural science; and so on. The teacher, in short, can use reading to introduce her pupils to the most varied subjects; and the moment they have been thus started, they can go on to any limit guided by the single passion for reading.

—Maria Montessori

GIS, in its digital manifestation of geography, goes beyond just the science. It provides us a framework and a process for applying geography. It brings together observational science and measurement and integrates it with modeling and prediction, analysis, and interpretation so that we can understand things.

—Jack Dangermond

I like geography best, he said, because your mountains & rivers know the secret. Pay no attention to boundaries.

—Brian Andreas

Everywhere's been where it is ever since it was first put there. It's called geography.

—Terry Pratchett

The decline of geography in academia is easy to understand: we live in an age of ever-increasing specialization, and geography is a generalist's discipline. Imagine the poor geographer trying to explain to someone at a campus cocktail party (or even to an unsympathetic administrator) exactly what it is he or she studies.

'Geography is Greek for 'writing about the earth.' We study the Earth.'

'Right, like geologists.'

'Well, yes, but we're interested in the whole world, not just the rocky bits. Geographers also study oceans, lakes, the water cycle...'

'So, it's like oceanography or hydrology.'

'And the atmosphere.'

'Meteorology, climatology...'

'It's broader than just physical geography. We're also interested in how humans relate to their planet.'

'How is that different from ecology or environmental science?'

'Well, it encompasses them. Aspects of them. But we also study the social and economic and cultural and geopolitical sides of—'

'Sociology, economics, cultural studies, poli sci.'

'Some geographers specialize in different world regions.'

'Ah, right, we have Asian and African and Latin American studies programs here.'

'But I didn't know they were part of the geography department.'

'They're not)'

(Long pause.)

'So, uh, what is it that do study then?'

—Ken Jennings

Bhutan does seem a bit unreal at times. Hardly anybody in the U.S. knows where it is. I have friends who still think the entire country is a figment of my imagination. When I was getting ready to move there, and I told people I was going to work in Bhutan, they'd inevitably ask, 'Where's Butane?'

'It is near Africa,' I'd answer, to throw them off the trail. 'It's where all the disposable lighters come from.'

They'd nod in understanding.

—Linda Leaming

Geography is the key, the crucial accident of birth. A piece of protein could be a snail, a sea lion, or a systems analyst, but it had to start somewhere. This is not science; it is merely metaphor. And the landscape in which the protein 'starts' shapes its end as surely as bowls shape water.

—Annie Dillard

Eratosthenes, the mapmaker who was the first man to accurately measure the size of the Earth, was a librarian.

—Ken Jennings

Take geography. Physical geography, which is a science, is considered difficult; human geography, which strives to be a science, is considered less difficult; humanistic geography, full of poetry and good feeling, is widely viewed as the softie of the three, taken up by the intellectually lazy or unprepared.

Human geography studies human relationships. Under the influence of Marxism, it often shows them to be one of exploitation, using physical force when necessary and the subtler devices deception when not. Human geography's optimism lies in its belief that asymmetrical relationships and exploitation can be removed, or reversed. What human geography does not consider, and what humanistic geography does, is the role they play in nearly all human contacts and exchanges. If we examine them conscientiously, no one will feel comfortable throwing the first stone. As for deception, significantly, only Zoroastrianism among the great religions has the command, 'Thou shalt not lie.' After all, deception and lying are necessary to smoothing the ways of social life.

From this, I conclude that humanistic geography is neglected because it is too hard. Nevertheless, it should attract the tough-minded and idealistic, for it rests ultimately on the belief that we humans can face the most unpleasant facts, and even do something about them, without despair.

—Yi-Fu Tuan

It is no coincidence that, on all four sides, in all four corners, the borders of the Roman Empire stopped where wine could no longer be made.

—Neel Burton

Krakatoa, spelled 'Krakatau' in Indonesian, is a volcano in the Sunda Strait between Java and Sumatra. It is also the name of an island group made up of what is left of a larger island, consisting of three volcanic peaks that were destroyed by the catastrophic 1883 eruption. This explosive force was equivalent to 100,000 Hiroshima sized atomic bombs. It was the loudest sound ever heard in modern history and could be heard up to 3,000 miles away. At that time, the explosion caused huge tsunamis which killed more than 36,000 people and sent out shock waves that were recorded worldwide for almost a week. Years later in 1927, 'Anak Krakatau' a new island mountain formed in its place and is again the location of volcanic activity. It is considered a part of the Pacific 'Ring of Fire.'

—Captain Hank Bracker

That thing we call a place is the intersection of many changing forces passing through, whirling around, mixing, dissolving, and exploding in a fixed location. To write about a place is to acknowledge that phenomena often treated separately—ecology, democracy, culture, storytelling, urban design, individual life histories and collective endeavors—coexist. They coexist geographically, spatially, in place, and to understand a place is to engage with braided narratives and sue generous explorations.

—Rebecca Solnit

[A]s Geography without History seemeth a carkasse without motion; so History without Geography, wandreth as a Vagrant without a certaine habitation.

—John Smith

Geography is an earthly subject, but a heavenly science.

—Edmund Burke

There is only one sensible way to think of the Pacific Ocean today. It is the highway between Asia and America, and whether we wish it or not, from now on there will be immense traffic along that highway.

—James A. Michener

‘Do you know what geography really is?’ Ted asked. ‘It’s not the shapes of countries or a list of trade routes. Geography is a snapshot of war, plain and simple. It’s a record of the state of hostile powers at a moment of suspended animation.’

—Christopher Bollen

If one is seeking for Heaven on earth, he has slept in geography class.

—Stanisław Jerzy Lec

Science rocks: The pursuit of science lead us to the beautiful places of the world.

—Lailah Gifty Akita

As any distance we take from things give us an outside perspective, so does taking a geographical distance—offering us a new vantage point over our lives.

—Lauren Klarfeld

It is the relationship between the physical environment and the environed organism, between physiography and ontography (to coin a term), that constitutes the essential principles of geography today.

—William Morris Davis

Let us start by picturing the Japan archipelago lying in the sea by the Chinese mainland. If its proximity allowed it to become part of the Sinosphere and acquire a written culture, its distance benefited the development of indigenous writing. The Dover Strait, separating England and France, is only 34 kilometers (21 miles) wide. A fine swimmer can swim across it. In contrast, the shortest distance between Japan and the Korean Peninsula is five or six times greater, and between Japan and the Chinese mainland, twenty-five times greater. The current, moreover, is deadly. . . . Japan's distance from China gave it political and cultural freedom and made possible the flowering of its own writing.

—Minae Mizumura

Arthur Jay Klinghoffer, a professor of political science at Rutgers University, has argued that geography seems less relevant than ever in a world where nonstate actors -- malleable entities like ethnicities, for example -- are as powerful and important as the ones with governments and borders. Where on a map can you point to al-Qaeda? Or Google, or Wal-Mart? Everywhere and nowhere.

—Ken Jennings

Anatomy is to physiology as geography is to history; it describes the theatre of events.

—Jean Fernel

Much of the geographical work of the past hundred years... has either explicitly or implicitly taken its inspiration from biology, and in particular Darwin. Many of the original Darwinians, such as Hooker, Wallace, Huxley, Bates, and Darwin himself, were actively concerned with geographical exploration, and it was largely facts of geographical distribution in a spatial setting which provided Darwin with the germ of his theory.

—David R. Stoddart

The enemy must fight his battles far from home for a long time... We must weaken him by drawing him into protracted campaigns. Once his initial dash is broken, it will be easier to destroy him... When the enemy is away from home for a long time and produces no victories and families learn of their dead, then the enemy population at home becomes dissatisfied and considers it a Mandate from Heaven that the armies be recalled. Time is always in our favor. Our climate, mountains, and jungles discourage the enemy; but for us they offer sanctuary and a place from which to attack.

—Tran Hung Dao

Do you understand the sadness of geography?

—Michael Ondaatje

If some peoples pretend that history or geography gives them the right to subjugate other races, nations, or peoples, there can be no peace.

—Ludwig von Mises

To me, it seems a dreadful indignity to have a soul controlled by geography.

—George Santayana

John Hall, my geography teacher at school inspired me to a lifelong interest in geography and a curiosity about our world which has stayed with me through my life. Geography is a living, breathing subject, constantly adapting itself to change. It is dynamic and relevant. For me geography is a great adventure with a purpose.

—Michael Palin

The peculiar value of geography lies in its fitness to nourish the mind with ideas and furnish the imagination with pictures.

—Charlotte Mason

Charleston has a landscape that encourages intimacy and partisanship. I have heard it said that an inoculation to the sights and smells of the Carolina low country is an almost irreversible antidote to the charms of other landscapes, other alien geographies. You can be moved profoundly by other vistas, by other oceans, by soaring mountain ranges, but you can never be seduced. You can even forsake the low country, renounce it for other climates, but you can never completely escape the sensuous, semitropical pull of Charleston and her marshes.

—Pat Conroy

Columbus's real achievement was managing to cross the ocean successfully in both directions. Though an accomplished enough mariner, he was not terribly good at a great deal else, especially geography, the skill that would seem most vital in an explorer. It would be hard to name any figure in history who has achieved more lasting fame with less competence. He spent large parts of eight years bouncing around Caribbean islands and coastal South America convinced that he was in the heart of the Orient and that Japan and China were at the edge of every sunset. He never worked out that Cuba is an island and never once set foot on, or even suspected the existence of, the landmass to the north that everyone thinks he discovered: the United States.

--Bill Bryson

I wanna hang a map of the world in my house. Then I'm gonna put pins into all the locations that I've traveled to. But first, I'm gonna have to travel to the top two corners of the map so it won't fall down.

—Mitch Hedberg

Without geography you're nowhere.

—Jimmy Buffett

Many adults, whether consciously or unconsciously, find it beneath their adult dignity to do anything as childish as read a book, think a thought, or get an idea. Adults are rarely embarrassed at having forgotten what little algebra or geography they once learned

—Isaac Asimov

What makes a nation in the beginning is a good piece of geography.

—Robert Frost

Yes, gentlemen, give me the map of any country, its configuration, its climate, its waters, its winds, and the whole of its physical geography; give me its natural productions, its flora, its zoology, etc., and I pledge myself to tell you, a priori, what will be the quality of man in history, not accidentally, but necessarily; not at any particular epoch, but in all; in short, -what idea he is called to represent.

—Victor Cousin

Canada emerged as a political entity with boundaries largely determined by the fur trade. These boundaries included a vast north temperate land area extending from the Atlantic to the Pacific and dominated by the Canadian Shield. The present Dominion emerged not in spite of geography but because of it.

—Harold Innis

Geography is the art of the mappable.

—Peter Haggett

People look down on stuff like geography and meteorology, and not only because they're standing on one and being soaked by the other. They don't look quite like real science. But geography is only physics slowed down and with a few trees stuck on it, and meteorology is full of excitingly fashionable chaos and complexity. And summer isn't a time. It's a place as well. Summer is a moving creature and likes to go south for the winter.

—Terry Pratchett

It is impossible to understand history, international politics, the world economy, religions, philosophy, or 'patterns of culture' without taking geography into account.

—Kenneth C. Davis

I hope to make pictures like I walk in the desert—under a spell, an instinct of motion, a kind of knowing that is essentially indirect and sideways. Of all the things I wondered about on this land, I wondered the hardest about the seduction of certain geographies that feel like home—not by story or blood but merely by their forms and colors. How our perceptions are our only internal map of the world, how there are places that claim you and places that warn you away. How you can fall in love with the light.

—Ellen Meloy

The course of the line we indicated as forming our grandest terrestrial fold [along the shores of Japan] returns upon itself. It is an endless fold, an endless band, the common possession of two sciences. It is geological in origin, geographical in effect. It is the wedding ring of geology and geography, uniting them at once and for ever in indissoluble union.

—Charles Lapworth

All that comes above the surface [of the globe] lies within the province of Geography; all that comes below that surface lies inside the realm of Geology. The surface of the earth is that which, so to speak, divides them and at the same time 'binds them together in indissoluble union.' We may, perhaps, put the case metaphorically. The relationships of the two are rather like that of man and wife. Geography, like a prudent woman, has followed the sage advice of Shakespeare and taken unto her 'an elder than herself; but she does not trespass on the domain of her consort, nor could she possibly maintain the respect of her children were she to flaunt before the world the assertion that she is 'a woman with a past.'

—Charles Lapworth

In the long winter evenings he talked to Ma about the Western country. In the West the land was level, and there were no trees. The grass grew thick and high.

—Laura I. Wilder

There are no other Everglades in the world. They are, they have always been, one of the unique regions of the earth; remote, never wholly known. Nothing anywhere else is like them.

—Marjory S. Douglas

I stress the uniqueness of the Australian landscape and its metaphysical and mythic content.

—Arthur Boyd

The greatest obstacle to discovering the shape of the earth, the continents, and the ocean was not ignorance but the illusion of knowledge.

--Daniel J. Boorstin

That long (Canadian) frontier from the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans, guarded only by neighborly respect and honorable obligations, is an example to every country and a pattern for the future of the world.

--Sir Winston Churchill

Morality is largely a matter of geography.

--Elbert Hubbard

Customs form us all, our thoughts, our morals, our most fixed beliefs; are consequences of our place of birth.

—Aaron Hill

If geography is prose, maps are iconography.

—Lennart Meri

Not understanding the human terrain has the same effect on your operations that not understanding the physical terrain has on conventional military operations. If you don't really appreciate the physical terrain and its impact on your operations, you don't succeed. If you don't understand the human terrain in the conduct of population-centric counterinsurgency operations, you don't succeed.

--General David
Petraeus

The noblest monument to peace and to neighborly economic and social friendship in all the world is not a monument in bronze or stone, but the boundary which unites the United States and Canada—3,000 miles of friendship with no barbed wire, no gun or soldier and no passport on the whole frontier.

--Franklin D. Roosevelt

You can't see Canada across lake Erie, but you know it's there....You have to have faith, especially in Cleveland.

—Paul Fleischman

The day I arrived in Yakutsk...it was 46 below. When our plane landed, the door was frozen solidly shut, and it took about half an hour for a powerful hot-air blower—standard equipment at Siberian airports—to break the icy seal. Stepping outside was like stepping onto another planet, for at those low temperatures nothing seems quite normal. The air burns. Sounds are brittle. Every breath hovers in a strangle slow-motion cloud, adding to the mist of ice that pervades the city and blurs the sun. When the breath freezes into ice dust and falls almost silently to the ground, Siberians call it the whisper of stars.

--David K. Shipler

THE CHRISTMAS ISLANDS

Around the world there are four separate islands that have been dubbed 'Christmas Island.' Canada has one in Nova Scotia which is a community on Cape Breton Island. Another one is off the New Year Island Group north-west of Tasmania, and then there is Little Christmas Island a part of the Schouten Island Group off eastern Tasmania. Another Australian Christmas Island is an island territory in the Indian Ocean.

Finally there is Kiritimati, formally called 'Christmas Island.' Kiritimati is a direct translation from English to the Kiribati language. It is a small island of the Central Pacific Ocean Nation of Kiribati lying 144 miles north of the Equator. The entire population of the Republic of Kiribati is just over 100,000 people half of which live on Tarawa Atoll. With the Earth's climate changing the entire nation is in danger of disappearing into the Pacific Ocean. The 33 atolls and islands comprising the country have a total of 310 square miles and are spread out over 1,351,000 square miles. Kiribati is a member of the Commonwealth of Nations, the IMF and the World Bank, and is a full member of the United Nations.

'Christmas Island' or Kiritimati has the greatest land area of any coral atoll in the world and comprises about 70% of Kiribati's land mass with about 150 square miles. The atoll is about 150 km (93 mi) in perimeter, while the lagoon shoreline extends for over 30 miles. The entire island is a Wildlife Sanctuary. It lies 144 miles north of the Equator and is one of the first place on Earth to experience the New Year.

--Hank Bracker

Our ancestors began the long experiment in figuring out how they fit into the world, by inventing a bold new tool: the map.

One of the oldest surviving maps is, ironically, about the size and shape of an early iPhone: the Babylonian Map of the World. A clay tablet created around 700 to 500 B.C. in Mesopotamia, it depicts a circular Babylon at the center, bisected by the Euphrates River and surrounded by the ocean. It doesn't have much detail—a few regions are named, including Assyria—but it wasn't really for navigation. It was more primordial: to help the map holder grasp the idea of the whole world, with themselves at the center.

—Clive Thompson

The first great attempt to make mapping realistic came in the second century A.D. with Claudius Ptolemy. He was an astronomer and astrologer obsessed with making accurate horoscopes, which required precisely placing someone's birth town on a world map. 'He invented geography, but it was just because he wanted to do better horoscopes,' notes Matthew Edney, a professor of cartography at the University of Southern Maine.

Ptolemy gathered documents detailing the locations of towns, and he augmented that information with the tales of travelers. By the time he was done, he had devised a system of lines of latitude and longitude, and plotted some 10,000 locations—from Britain to Europe, Asia and North Africa. Ptolemy even invented ways to flatten the planet (like most Greeks and Romans, he knew the earth was round) onto a two-dimensional map. What did he call his new technique? 'Geography.'

—Clive Thompson

Christopher Columbus' discovery of America was partly due to Ptolemy—and errors in his cartography. Columbus carried a map influenced by the ancient Roman's work. But Ptolemy thought the world was 30 percent smaller than it actually is; worse, the mapmaker was using Arabian miles, which were longer than Italian ones. Together these mistakes led Columbus to believe the voyage to Asia would be much shorter.

—Clive Thompson

By the late 19th century, this surge in mathematical reasoning and measurement technology made map making explode. In France, the Cassini family crisscrossed the country to calculate its dimensions with precision never before seen. Their trick? Using 'triangulation'—a bit of trigonometry—to let them stitch together thousands of measurements taken by peering through the new, high tech 'theodolite.' Breakthroughs in binocular lenses allowed surveyors to measure scores of miles at a glance. World maps became increasingly accurate.

—Clive Thompson

No map entirely tells the truth. There's always some distortion, some point of view.
—Mark Monmonier

What road led Hannibal to Rome? The vexed question is one of those problems on the border line of history and geography that are fascinating and perhaps insoluble. Much ink has been spilled in pinpointing the route of Hannibal's improbable five-month, thousand-mile trek from Catalonia across the Pyrenees, through the Languedoc to the banks of the Rhone, and then over the Alps to the plains of Italy. Many boots have been worn out in determining the Alpine pass through which tens of thousands of foot soldiers and cavalymen, thousands of horses and mules, and, famously, 37 African battle elephants tramped.

—Franz Lidz

Few historical problems have produced more unprofitable discussion than that of Hannibal's pass over the Alps.

—F. W. Walbank

The researches of many commentators have already thrown much darkness on this subject [Hannibal's route through the Alps], and it is probable that, if they continue, we shall soon know nothing at all about it.

—Mark Twain

The general wildness, the eternal labyrinths of waters and marshes, interlocked and apparently never ending; the whole surrounded by interminable swamps....Here I am then in the Floridas.

—John James Audubon

He [Christopher Columbus] stands in history as the completer of the globe.

—John Sterling

The Lord hath blessed me abundantly with a knowledge of marine affairs. Of the science of the stars He has given me that which would suffice; so, also, of geometry and arithmetic. Besides this He has granted me the mind and skill to draw globes and maps, and indicate upon them in their proper places the various cities and rivers and mountains. I have studied all sorts of writings, history, the Chronicles, and some of the other arts, for which our Lord has quickened my intelligence and understanding.

--Christopher Columbus

And I purpose to make a chart and to set down therein the lands and waters of the Ocean Sea, with all their positions and bearings, and to compose it into a book, and to illustrate the whole with paintings, showing, as we go, the latitude from the Equator, and also the western longitude.

--Christopher Columbus

He [Christopher Columbus] accomplished more than anyone else towards making us masters of the world on which we tread, and giving us, instead of yawning abysses and realms of vapour, wide waters for our ships, and lands for the city and the plough...He stands in history as the completer of the globe.

--John Sterling

It is because they took the easy way out, That rivers and people, go crooked.

—Jill Peterson

When we were on the farm, we were isolated, not just by geography but by the primitive living conditions: no electricity, no running water and, of course, no computer, no phone.

—Sally Mann

Imagine a world 6 degrees warmer. It's not going to recognize geographical boundaries. It's not going to recognize anything. So agriculture regions today will be wiped out.

—Steven Chu

The lack of roads in Africa greatly hinders agriculture, education, and development.

—Norman Borlaug

There is something in this January Siberian landscape that overpowers, oppresses, stuns. Above all, it is its enormity, its boundlessness, its oceanic limitlessness. The earth has no end here; the world has no end. Man is not created for such measureless. For him a comfortable, palpable, serviceable measure is the measure of his village, his field, street, house. At sea, the size of the ship's deck will be such a measure. Man is created for the kind of space that he can traverse at one try, with a single effort.

--Ryszard Kapuściński

Students have to learn content, including geography, dates, and political contexts. But books can put a human face on historical events. That [ability] is the greatest power of integrating literature with social studies, science, math, and history.

—Joan Ruddiman

Teacher: Maria, go the map and find North America.

Maria: Here it is.

Teacher: Correct. Now, class, who discovered America?

Class: Maria.

—Internet Meme

The continent of Africa is located in all four hemispheres.

—Roger Matile

See where American and Mexico had a joint earthquake. That's the only thing I ever heard that we split 50-50 with Mexico.

—Will Rogers

Geologically, the West Coast of North America is one of the oldest coastlines on earth.

—Kirk Johnson

Visual surprise is natural in the Caribbean; it comes with the landscape, and faced with its beauty, the sigh of History dissolves.

—Derek Walcott

The States which form the northern border of the United States westward from the Great Lakes to the Pacific coast include an area several times larger than France and could contain ten Englands and still have room to spare.

—John Moody

Geographers think there may be as many as 30,000 islands in the Pacific.

—Roger Matile

The most significant breakup was that of Pangaea, roughly 200 million years ago. The resultant continental drift was one of the factors behind the great diversity of flora and fauna we enjoy today.

—Jon Mathias

In the Historys, War always starts ‘for patriotism’s sake,’ but you read on then get down to the Peace Conference and you find that the historian has to write pretty fast and veil things over pretty cleverly, or the reader is apt to discover what changed hands at the finish besides a mere satisfying of honor. You look at all Wars and you will find that there is more new deeds for land signed at these Peace Conferences than there is good will. Did you ever look at a map and see the Colonies that Germany lost at Versailles? All these Nations that are crying Debt Cancellations, you never hear ’em mention a word about returning Colonies to Germany so she would have a chance to kinder use ’em to help dig up this Reparations. So, you see, in Wars the Slogan is Honor, but the object is Land. They are always fighting for Independence, but at the finish they always seem to be able to use quite a snatch of the defeated opponent’s land to be independent on.

—Will Rogers

More than 60 places throughout the United States have been named in honor of Christopher Columbus.

—Roger Matile

Brotherly love has never crossed a boundary line yet. If you think it has why don’t somebody protect China? China has never bothered anybody. They have been a friend to the World. They are having their Country taken away from em, but nobody says a word for she is so far away that they hope no Nation can march clear through her and get to them. Yes sir geography has more to do with brotherly love than civilization and Christianity combined.

—Will Rogers (1934)

Aleksandr Kolchak...calculated the whereabouts of the most remote place in all of the vast Arctic—a spot some 400 miles from the geographic North Pole that he said was ‘permanently covered with ice fields of the Arctic Pack and inaccessible to navigation.’ Because nothing is more alluring than a place that supposedly can’t be reached, the ‘pole of inaccessibility’ would become an irresistible challenge for generations of adventurers. And it still is.

—Amy Crawford

The earth’s hundreds of thousands of miles of seacoasts are daily reshaped by waves that are driven by winds, pulled by the gravity of sun and moon, and churned by submarine earth tremors. For each cliff or headland that is eroded by surging seas, somewhere a curved beach is being molded of drifting sands carried by the waves.

—Leonard Engel