



# The American Lawn

By Georges Teyssot

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## The American Lawn By Georges Teyssot

Like so many other aspects of modern life-the interstate highway system, fast food chains, telephones, televisions, and shopping malls-the lawn occupies a central, and often unconsidered, place in America's cultural landscape. In spaces as diverse as city parks, town squares, and suburban backyards, it has played an essential part in the development of our national identity. The site of political demonstrations, sporting events, and barbecues, and the object of loving, if not obsessive, care and attention, the lawn is also symbolically tied to our notions of community and civic responsibility, serving in the process as one of the foundations of democracy.

*The American Lawn: Surface of Everyday Life* examines the lawn within its historical, artistic, literary, and political contexts, situating it on the boundary between utopian ideal and dystopian nightmare. Contributions from a distinguished group of historians, theorists, and architects cover a variety of topics, ranging from European precedents to the golf course fairway as a model for today's flawless suburban lawn. Illustrations and references are drawn from film and television, horticultural and architectural publications, gardening tools, corporate literature, and the fine arts.

Essays in this collection include "The American Lawn: Surface of Everyday Life" by Georges Teyssot, "The Saga of Grass: From the Heavenly Carpet to Fallow Fields" by Monique Mosser, "The Lawn in Early American Landscape and Garden Design" by ThŽrse O'Malley, "Professional Pastoralism: The Writing on the Lawn" by Alessandra Ponte, "Fairway Living: Lawncare and Lifestyle from Croquet to Golf Course" by Virginia Scott Jenkins, "The Lawn at War: 1941-61" by Beatriz Colomina, "The Electric Lawn" by Mark Wigley, and a text and graphics project by Diller & Scofidio.

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## Editorial Review

From Library Journal

From carefully manicured golf greens to small patches nurtured in front of row houses, the lawn is a symbol of private and civic pride and personal and community enrichment. This collection of essays by historians, architects, and social theorists identifies the role that "green space" has played in the development of our collective self-image. The enclosure or privatization of the lawn in earlier days has given way to a more politically acceptable idea of shared open spaces, and purely aesthetic value has often taken second place to commercial adaptations. From the backyard barbecue to campus demonstrations and architectural elements, the lawn has provided a background to all our activities. The inclusion of court cases based on "failure to cut grass" and "violation of lawn sign ordinance" emphasizes how passion about lawns influences personal and civic behavior. Published to coincide with an exhibition organized by the Canadian Centre for Architecture, this book offers an interesting look at the encounter between idealism and technology. A Paula Frosch, Metropolitan Museum of Art Lib., New York  
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Review

According to **The American Lawn**...grass is the ragged border where the American Dream holds sway, and the lawn itself is the mood ring of the American domestic environment. *New Art Examiner*, July/August 1999

This volume helps fill a gap in the field of landscape architecture, whose comprehensive history in the United States remains to be written. But even reads with no scholarly brief will appreciate the rich texture the authors give to the concept of the lawn as a social form...With copious illustrations and archival sources, the volume details how importantly the lawn figures in innumerable aspects of American culture...Editor Georges Teyssot and company have produced a history of the lawn as multicated and visually inviting as their subject. **Sara Blair**, *Preservation Magazine*

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From reader reviews:

**Sylvester Wedding:**

People live in this new moment of lifestyle always try and must have the extra time or they will get large amount of stress from both daily life and work. So , whenever we ask do people have extra time, we will say absolutely yes. People is human not a robot. Then we consult again, what kind of activity are there when the spare time coming to an individual of course your answer may unlimited right. Then ever try this one, reading ebooks. It can be your alternative within spending your spare time, the actual book you have read is actually The American Lawn.

**Lillian Tobias:**

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**Katherine Herron:**

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