



# History of American Landscapes and Architecture

## COURSE GUIDE

HIS/IAR 624

Fall 2006

Prof. L. Tolbert

Office Phone: 334-3987

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Hours: Tues. & Thurs., 2:00-3:00

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and by appointment

### Course Objectives

A landscape “happens not by chance but by contrivance, by premeditation, by design.” –John Stilgoe, *Common Landscape of America*

This course is designed as an advanced reading seminar in the history of American landscapes and architecture. The course will introduce you to a variety of methods developed by architectural and cultural historians to interpret buildings and landscapes as cultural artifacts with historically specific meanings that must be understood in particular context over time. An important objective of the course is to go beyond classroom reading and discussion to application of specific scholars' arguments and methodologies through analysis of particular buildings and landscapes.

By the end of the semester you should be able to do the following:

- Identify and evaluate major periods in the development of the American landscape from the colonial era through the mid-twentieth century.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the ways that buildings and landscapes document cultural and social change over time.
- Define particular architectural styles, use specialized architectural vocabulary/terminology, and explain the differences between vernacular and academic building traditions.

- Compare and contrast the methodologies developed by a variety of scholars to interpret landscape and architecture as historical evidence.
- Develop a meaningful research bibliography.
- Use different interpretive approaches to evaluate a particular landscape or building in historical context.

## Evaluation

Participation	10%
2 Midterms	30%
Methodology Analyses	30%
Research Bibliography/PowerPoint Presentation	30%

All written assignments should be typed, with appropriate citations in Turabian style [<http://library.uncg.edu/depts/ref/handouts/turabian.html>]. You will submit your written assignments electronically to my email address on the appropriate due date. Late assignments will be penalized. Communication is essential ....you should make arrangements in advance if you are unable to meet a course deadline.

### **Participation (10%)**

This assessment will be based on three criteria:

1. Consistent attendance—this is a seminar, not a traditional lecture course. We will be critically evaluating the content of the readings and practicing the application of analytical skills during each class period. You will not be able to make up for your absences by copying someone else's notes. Consistent attendance is essential to your learning in this course. Therefore, beyond the part attendance plays in the overall participation grade, **there will be a 3% reduction of your final grade for each absence after the first 1.** Beyond even this penalty, a student who seriously neglects attendance and preparation risks failing the course.
2. Thorough preparation for class—readings must be completed before class and assignments must be turned in on time.
3. Regular contributions to class discussions—the success of this course for your learning depends on active intellectual engagement with your peers.

### **Midterms (30%)**

You will complete two take-home midterms consisting of a choice of essay questions. The questions will be distributed 1-2 weeks in advance of due dates. All midterms should be typed and double-spaced, 7-10 pages long, with appropriate citations in

Turabian style [<http://library.uncg.edu/depts/ref/handouts/turabian.html>]. You will submit your essays electronically to my email address: [lctolber@uncg.edu](mailto:lctolber@uncg.edu) on the due dates identified in the course schedule below.

### **Methodology Analyses (30%)**

You will complete at least **two** assignments that require you to evaluate the methodology of specific scholars in the assigned reading. If you complete more than two exercises your final grade in this category will be based on your two best scores. Your analysis will be based on a form posted on Blackboard. Analyses will be due on the date of the assigned reading. You must choose at least two different scholars working with different kinds of architectural evidence in different historical periods.

### **Reading Landscape: Research Bibliography and PowerPoint Presentation (30%)**

The primary goal of this assignment is to practice reading a specific landscape or building using interpretive strategies developed by scholars whose work you've encountered in the course and through independent research. You will analyze visual evidence, put your building/landscape in appropriate historical context, create a meaningful research bibliography useful for understanding your subject, and present your analysis of the subject to the class in a PowerPoint presentation at the end of the semester.

## **Course Readings**

### **Books** (Available at the UNCG bookstore)

Eggenger, Keith L., ed. *American Architectural History: A Contemporary Reader*. New York: Routledge, 2004.

Gelernter, Mark. *A History of American Architecture: Buildings in Their Cultural and Technological Context*. Hanover: University Press of New England, 1999.

Heath, Kingston Wm. *The Patina of Place: The Cultural Weathering of a New England Industrial Landscape*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2001.

Herman, Bernard. *Townhouse: Architecture and Material Life in the Early American City, 1780-1830*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005.

Isenberg, Allison. *Downtown America: A History of the Place and the People Who Made It*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004.

Loeb, Carolyn. *Entrepreneurial Vernacular: Developers' Subdivisions in the 1920s*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001.

Small, Nora Pat. *Beauty and Convenience: Architecture and Order in the New Republic*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2003.

**Book Chapters/Journal Articles** (Available on electronic reserve or online as noted.)

- Archer, John. "Ideology and Aspiration: Individualism, the Middle Class, and the Genesis of the Anglo-American Suburb." *Journal of Urban History* 14:2 (1988): 214-253. [Use Journal Finder]
- Bishir, Catherine W. "Jacob Holt: An American Builder," *Common Places*, pp. 447-481. [ereserves]
- Brucken, Carolyn. "In the Public Eye: Women and the American Luxury Hotel." *Winterthur Portfolio* 31 (1996): 203-220. [Use Journal Finder]
- de Miranda, Cynthia. National Register Nomination. Wachovia Building, Greensboro. [ereserves]
- Doucet, Michael J., and John C. Weaver. "Material Culture and the North American House: The Era of the Common Man, 1870-1920." *The Journal of American History* 72 (December 1985): 560-587. [Use Journal Finder]
- Feagin, Joe. "The Other Suburbanites: African American Suburbanization in the North before 1950." *Journal of American History* 85 (March 1999): 1495-1525. [Use Journal Finder]
- Isenstadt, Sandy. "Richard Neutra and the Psychology of Architectural Consumption." In Sarah Williams Goldhagen and Rejean Legault, eds. *Anxious Modernisms: Experimentation in Postwar Architectural Culture*, pp. 97-118. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2000. [ereserves]
- Marsh, Margaret. "From Separation to Togetherness: The Social Construction of Domestic Space in American Suburbs, 1840-1915." *Journal of American History* 76:2 (September 1989): 506-527. [Use Journal Finder]
- Southern, Michael. "The I-House as a Carrier of Style in Three Counties of the Northeastern Piedmont." In *Carolina Dwelling: Towards Preservation of Place: In Celebration of the North Carolina Vernacular Landscape*. Edited by Doug Swaim. North Carolina State University, 1978. [ereserves]
- Vlach, John Michael. "The Shotgun House: An African Architectural Legacy," *Common Places*, pp. 58-78. [ereserves]
- Wells, Camille, "The Planter's Prospect: Houses and Rural Landscapes in 18<sup>th</sup> c. Virginia," *Winterthur Portfolio* 28 Spring 1993: 1993 28(1): 1-31. [Use Journal Finder]

## Course Schedule

**15 August**                    Introductions

**17 August**                    **Form and Style: Learning to Look at Architecture**

*American Architectural History* Reader, Introduction / Keith L. Eggener –

Southern, Michael. "The I-House as a Carrier of Style in Three Counties of the Northeastern Piedmont." In *Carolina Dwelling: Towards Preservation of Place: In Celebration of the North Carolina Vernacular Landscape*. Edited by Doug Swaim. North Carolina State University, 1978. [ereserves]

Vlach, John Michael. "The Shotgun House: An African Architectural Legacy," pp. 58-78. [ereserves]

## Colonial Worlds

**22 August**                    **Early America influences**

Gelernter:

1. First civilizations 12,000 BC-AD 1500
2. Cultures transformed and transplanted 1500-1650
3. Colonial culture 1650-1763

*American Architectural History* Reader:

2. "Modifying factors" in Native American architecture / Nabokov and Easton
3. Church design and construction in Spanish New Mexico / Marc Treib

**24 August**                    **Architecture and Region: Southern Enlightenment**

Gelernter 4. The age of revolution 1763-1820

*American Architectural History* Reader:

4. Space : parish churches, courthouses, and dwellings in colonial Virginia / Dell Upton –

Wells, Camille, "The Planter's Prospect: Houses and Rural Landscapes in 18<sup>th</sup> c. Virginia," *Winterthur Portfolio* 28 Spring 1993: 1993 28(1): 1-31. [methodology analysis due]

**29 August**                    **Urban Atlantic**

Herman, Bernard. *Townhouse: Architecture and Material Life in the Early American City, 1780-1830*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005. [through page 154]

**31 August            Urban Atlantic**

Herman, Bernard. *Townhouse: Architecture and Material Life in the Early American City, 1780-1830*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005.  
[methodology analysis due]

**5 September            Architecture and Region: New England Enlightenment**

Small, Nora Pat. *Beauty and Convenience: Architecture and Order in the New Republic*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2003. [methodology analysis due]

**7 September            Workshop: Reading Landscape**

National Register nomination form 201 N. Elm St., Wachovia Building, [ereserves]

## **Romanticism and the Market Economy**

**12 September            Form, Style, and National Identity**

Gelernter, 5. Culture realigned 1820-65

*American Architectural History* Reader:

1. National design : mercantile cities and the grid / John R. Stilgoe –
7. The Greek revival : Americanness, politics and economics / W. Barksdale Maynard –

**14 September            Architects and Builders in the Market Economy**

*American Architectural History* Reader

6. The first professional : Benjamin Henry Latrobe / Mary N. Woods

Bishir, Catherine W. "Jacob Holt: An American Builder," pp. 447-481. [methodology analysis due]

**19 September            Domestic Ideals**

*American Architectural History* Reader:

5. The plantation landscape / John Michael Vlach –
8. Independence and the rural cottage / Gwendolyn Wright –

Archer, John. "Ideology and Aspiration: Individualism, the Middle Class, and the Genesis of the Anglo-American Suburb." *Journal of Urban History* 14:2 (1988): 214-253. [use journal finder]

# Victorians and Industrialization

## **21 September      Defining Public and Private Space**

Gelernter, 6. Enterprise and turmoil 1865-85

*American Architectural History* Reader:

9. First impressions : front halls and hall furnishings in Victorian America /

Kenneth L. Ames –

11. Creating New York's nineteenth-century retail district / Mona Domosh –

Brucken, Carolyn. "In the Public Eye: Women and the American Luxury Hotel."

*Winterthur Portfolio* 31 (1996): 203-220. [use journal finder]

## **26 September      Housing Workers in an Industrial Economy**

Heath, Kingston Wm. *The Patina of Place: The Cultural Weathering of a New England Industrial Landscape*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2001. [pp. 1-118]

## **28 September      Housing Workers in an Industrial Economy**

Heath, Kingston Wm. *The Patina of Place: The Cultural Weathering of a New England Industrial Landscape*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2001  
[methodology analysis due]

## **3 October            Redesigning Urban Space**

Gelernter 7. The age of diversity 1885-1915

*American Architectural History* Reader:

10. "A city under one roof," Chicago skyscrapers, 1880-1895 / Daniel Bluestone

12. Architecture and the reinterpretation of the past in the American renaissance  
/ Richard Guy Wilson –

13. A cultural Frankenstein? : the Chicago World's Columbian Exposition of 1893  
/ Robert W. Rydell –

## **5 October            Research Presentation Workshop Midterm I due.**

## **10 October          Fall Break**

## **12 October          [No Class] Presentation Topic Description and Preliminary Bibliography due**

# Modernisms

## 17 October            **Modernism and National Identity**

Gelernter, 8. *Between the World Wars 1915-45*

*American Architectural History* Reader: 16. The search for modernity : America, the international style, and the Bauhaus / Margaret Kentgens-Craig –

## 19 October            **Modernism and Domesticity**

*American Architectural History* Reader:

14. The prairie house / James F. O'Gorman –

15. Wright, influence, and the world at large / Anthony Alofsin –

Doucet, Michael J., and John C. Weaver. "Material Culture and the North American House: The Era of the Common Man, 1870-1920." *The Journal of American History* 72 (December 1985): 560-587. [Use Journal Finder]

## 24 October            **Suburban Contexts**

Marsh, Margaret. "From Separation to Togetherness: The Social Construction of Domestic Space in American Suburbs, 1840-1915." *Journal of American History* 76:2 (September 1989): 506-527. [Use journal finder]

Feagin, Joe. "The Other Suburbanites: African American Suburbanization in the North before 1950." *Journal of American History* 85 (March 1999): 1495-1525. [Use journal finder]

## 26 October            **The Role of the Developer**

Loeb, Carolyn. *Entrepreneurial Vernacular: Developers' Subdivisions in the 1920s*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001. [through p. 139]

## 31 October            **The Role of the Developer**

Loeb, Carolyn. *Entrepreneurial Vernacular: Developers' Subdivisions in the 1920s*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001. [methodology analysis due]

## 2 November            **No class**

## 7 November            **Main Street**

Isenberg, Allison. *Downtown America: A History of the Place and the People Who Made It*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004. [through p. 165]



**9 November Main Street**

Isenberg, Allison. *Downtown America: A History of the Place and the People Who Made It*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004. [methodology analysis due]

**14 November Modernism and Consumer Society**

Gelernter, 9: Modern Culture, 1945-1973

*American Architectural History* Reader:

17. People who live in glass houses : Edith Farnsworth, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, and Philip Johnson / Alice T. Friedman –
18. Mirror images : technology, consumption, and the representation of gender in American architecture since World War II / Joan Ockman –
19. The Pruitt-Igoe myth / Katharine G. Bristol –

Isenstadt, Sandy. "Richard Neutra and the Psychology of Architectural Consumption." In Sarah Williams Goldhagen and Rejean Legault, eds. *Anxious Modernisms: Experimentation in Postwar Architectural Culture*, pp. 97-118. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2000. [ereserves]

**16 November [No class] Midterm II due.**

**21 November Postmodernism**

Gelernter 10: Postmodern Culture, 1973-1998

*American Architectural History* Reader:

20. Robert Venturi and "the return of historicism" / Neil Levine
21. The battle for the monument : the Vietnam Veterans Memorial / Mary McLeod
22. Introduction : variations on a theme park / Michael Sorkin
23. Fortress Los Angeles / Mike Davis
24. Planes of existence : Chicago and O'Hare International Airport / Marc Spiegler

**23 November Thanksgiving Holiday**

**28 November Presentations**

**30 November Presentations**