Architectural History and Theory - 19th Century

Course number: ARCH 4111.03
Term: Winter 2017
Instructor: Dr. Sarah Bonnemaison
Credit-hours: Three

Class times:
Lectures: Thursdays 11:00 am - 12:30 pm in Room HA19
Except where noted in the calendar below
Seminars: Tuesday mornings
Sara Deter | Group 1 at 10am, Group 2 at 11am in Room HA18
Pearl Chan | Group 3 at 10am, Group 4 at 11am in Room HB4
Masha Shobbar | Group 5 at 10am, Group 6 at 11am in Room HD4

Contact:
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Teaching Assistants:
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Course description:
This course studies impacts of industrialization on architecture and the city in nineteenth-century Europe and its colonies. It considers in their socio-political context the major urban transformations and the creation of new architecture for all the new institutions from public schools to hospitals. Students examine primary and secondary sources to develop skills in research and criticism.

You will study major building types that developed during the nineteenth century. These include communal housing, public institutions such as schools, hospitals, public baths and national parks, as well as department stores, urban infrastructure and skyscrapers. The lectures contextualize each building type in
terms of the debates that took place at the time and contemporary critical perspectives. These include, among others, Marxism, organicism, preservation, fetishism, the gaze, environmental determinism, progress, and colonialism.

You will develop analytical skills from reading essays and discussing their content in a seminar format. To develop interpretive skills, you will write an essay about the architecture that supported a fundamental activity of urban life in the nineteenth century.

**Seminars**

You will be in a seminar group that meets weekly to discuss the assigned reading using the questions prepared for each seminar. Over the term, each student in the group will lead one seminar. The leader ensures that each person reports ahead on the reading in a written document and during the seminar meeting, directs the discussion using the questions with the assistance of the TA. The leader then writes a reading report and adds a selection of interpretive comments from the group. Seminar reports are due within a week. Participation in seminars is mandatory. Participation means giving to the seminar leader a copy of reading notes ahead, arriving on time and participating in the discussion.

**Readings**

Copies of articles will be sent via email in PDF format. Most readings are available as e-books or e-articles are available through the Dalhousie library network.

**Evaluation**

**Seminars**

- Seminar report (marked by TAs) 25% (individual)
- Attendance at lectures (marked by professor) 10% (individual)
- Participation at seminars (marked by TAs) 15% (individual)

**Major Assignment**

- Research dossier (marked by professor and TAs) 10% (group)
- Outline (marked by professor) 20% (individual)
- Final essay (marked by professor) 20% (individual)

If an assignment is resubmitted, the final mark will be an average of the two. Late submissions will be penalized by reducing the final mark at the rate of 2% per day. No assignment will be accepted after April 6, 2017.
1889 La Tour Eiffel et l'exposition universelle, Catalogue of the Musée d'Orsay, 1989
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7  Reading Week

8  Tu 2/28  Seminar 4. Organicism

Th 3/2  No lecture. *Printed outline due by 5pm in faculty mailbox*

9  Tu 3/7  Seminar 5: The nail as a metaphor for American democracy

Th 3/9  Lecture 5: Creating the metropolis
Mechanization takes command of the farm, the slaughterhouse and tall building. Case study: Chicago and the surrounding landscape that feeds it.

10 Tu 3/14  Seminar 6: Communes and co-operatives for women
*For those who were asked to resubmit: printed revised outline due by 5pm in faculty mailbox*

Th 3/16  Lecture 6: Density in dwelling
Emergence of market-generated housing types, planning controls and regulations of immigrant neighborhoods. ‘Motion studies’ of factory workers were translated to the design of the home to increase efficiency of the kitchen layout.

11 Tu 3/21  Seminar 7: The birth of the National Parks

Th 3/23  Lecture 7: The working landscape
The end of the American frontier, the beginning of conservation of nature and reservations for Native Americans. Case study: Yellowstone National Park as the first and exemplary national park. The Simple Life: a critique of modernity.

12 Tu 3/28  Seminar 8. Gendered spaces
Adrian Forty, "Masculine, Feminine or Neuter?" in *Desiring Practices: Architecture, Gender and the Interdisciplinary*, 1996

Th 3/30  *Essay collection due by 5pm on memory stick (labeled with the title) in mailbox or sent via wetransfer.com*
**Major Assignment**

Working in your seminar group, you will develop an essay about one fundamental activity and understand how it was supported and structured by nineteenth century architecture such as birthing, learning, bathing, aging, studying nature, shopping.

After you have agreed on the activity, the first step is to gather research material on the best examples. The research dossier includes analytical drawings such as annotated elevations, sections and plans, illustrated printed matter such as newspapers articles from the time, photographs, drawings and paintings of the time, as well as written descriptions of the way spaces were used.

There are three steps to the essay. First create a research dossier, then write a detailed outline and after getting feedback on the outline, each person writes one section of the final essay.

1. **Research dossier**
   As a group, collect documents on your research topic. These include, but are not limited to, maps, architectural drawings, engravings of the time, caricatures, articles from the era, oral histories, photocopied chapters from books or essays in scholarly journals. Then organize all these documents in files according to topics that you foresee becoming the headings of the final research paper.

2. **Outline**
   The second step is the interpretation of these documents. Your task is to put the building(s) and the activities in their socio-cultural context.

   In addition to what you have collected, you will draw from the lectures and other readings and first hand studies. Individually and as a group, write an outline for the final essay that lays out the various components of the analysis and the interpretation. Each person in the group takes on one section and shares the peripherals. A detailed outline includes extended bullet points under the following titles:
   - **Title.** Names of the authors, listed as they will appear in the final document.
   - **Abstract,** a short description of the type of 19th century activity that will be investigated, what building is compared to a similar activity taking place in a room of a house and why that is significant.

   Each essay focuses on one of the following aspect of the whole:
   1. **Place the activity in its urban and socio-economic context.** Describe where that activity takes place and justify your choice of private building and room in a house to analyze.
   2. **Analyze and interpret a typical room in the private building where the activity takes place.** Show how this activity was supported by architectural means. Using plan, show how the area of interest in the building relates to others and who uses what rooms, to do what, when.
   3. **Analyze and interpret an institution or a business where the same type of activity (in the same city) takes place through plans or axonometric drawings.** Refer to a building that represents 'best practice' and was designed by a well-known architect or landscape architect. On other plans, show how the activity is spatially organized at three scales: the site, the way one particular building relates to the others, and at the scale of the users. Again, show who does what where.
   4. **Analyze and interpret the structure and the creation of a well-tempered environment for the users through sections.**
   5. **Analyze and comment on the role of professionals in the design and running of the institution- such as architects, doctors, religious organization, and political figures.**
   6. **Comment on the way the debates surrounding the activity were represented at the time.** If it was the subject of discussions, show how these were argued through words and images in books, essays and articles in the popular...
press. What does your analysis reveal that was not shown?

7-9. Following 3-5, analyze another building that will contrast with the first one.

Bibliography. It should list in alphabetical order of the authors all the books and articles you have referred to in all the essays. Note: Wikipedia references are not permitted.

3. Final essay
After getting feedback on the outline, working individually, address the various issues as you develop the final essay. Each final essay should be footnoted using the Chicago Manual of Style and include 2,000 words. Images should be fully captioned. Even though the final research project is presented as a whole, each author should be clearly identified. Each person should write a 150 word abstract of their essay and have it at the start of their essay. The title and the abstract of the essay should then be included in the design portfolio to apply for MArch as an example of the humanity’s course.

Format: Printed in faculty mailbox or as PDF on a labeled memory stick or sent via Wetransfer.com

4. Marking criteria
Criteria for marking the final essay are the following:
- Clear thesis
- Logic of the demonstration of the thesis
- Each point made is supported by the proper documentation and references
- A wide enough range of references (5 minimum)
- Integration of the visual material in the essay
- Interesting conclusion drawn from the research
Seminars | Readings and discussion questions

Seminar 1. A healthy body in a healthy city
Lisa Heschong, Thermal Delight in Architecture, Introduction and Chapter one, 1979 (PDF posted on Brightspace)

Discussion questions:
• (From the Introduction) How does the YMCA, through its mission and building typology, reflect a “modern yet moral public culture” of the time? What is the significance of the term in quotations as it relates to modern architectural ideas (such as clarity and openness, form follows function, etc.)?
• With grand ideas of introducing Christian values through leisure and recreation, who was the builder of the building? What was the architect’s contribution? Was it significant or essential and why?
• How did the architect, through spatial arrangement, achieve the demands of the program? Was the client’s goal to create a “manhood factory” achievable under this medium?
• What was Lupkin’s suggestion of the relationship between the architect and his client? Was it successful? Ideal?
• Based on the YMCA building typology, what value did the client see in modern architecture? Discuss why might the client felt it was integral to the identity of the organization.
• Discuss and contrast the intentions of Lupkin versus the ideas put forth in Thermal Delight in Architecture. How are these two modes of analysis of architecture can inform your own research for your design project?

Seminar 2. Consumerism, spectacle and leisure
David Harvey, “Consumerism, spectacle and leisure” in Paris, Capital of Modernity, Routledge, 2006, 204-218. (PDF of chapter on Brightspace) or the whole book HT321 H368 Sexton library

• In what way did the spectacle of July Monarchy differ from that of the Second Empire?
• What were the means by which Haussmann and other architects of the Second Empire tried to limit the possibilities of popular conflict on the streets of Paris?
• How did new urbanism and architecture facilitate “the spectacle of the commodity”?
• How did these transformations affect the division of public and private realms of different classes of Parisian society?
• Compare and contrast the ideas and principles used by Haussmann with later developments of thought in urban design (e.g. Le Corbusier’s Plan Voisin & Villa Radieuse)

Seminar 3. History as an inspiration

Discussion questions:
• How did Jean-Nicholas-Louis Durand’s utilitarian view of architecture influence his approach to architecture and design? In which ways did he exhibit his rationalist and utilitarian views through his architecture? How were these views adopted outside of France?
• What sparked the need for a nationalist architecture for the British Isles in the 19th Century?
• Why was William Chambers considered the “architect of the King’s works”?
• How did Jefferson’s “academic village” demonstrate his progress as an architect?
• How was the Neo-Gothic style in architecture used as a means to push ideas about religious reforms in 19th century Britain?

Seminar 4. Organicism


Discussion questions:
- What makes architecture unique among the arts in terms of its relationship to nature?
- Discuss the relationship between the natural sciences (biology, zoology, paleontology, etc.) and architecture in the context of 19th century organicist theory.
- In what ways was Semper’s work inspired by Cuvier and his visits to the Jardin des Plantes in Paris?
- How does Semper take organicism from an abstract theory to a concrete strategy for solving problems?
- How does 19th century organicism theory compare to the concept of an organic style in modern architecture? What are the most significant differences?

Seminar 5. The nail as a metaphor for American democracy


Discussion questions
- What did differences in ideologies across the Atlantic (from Europe to America) created what Tom F. Peters calls the Rube Goldberg method? (Suggestion: Discuss value systems and how they relate to architectural practice.)
- Why are Americans at peace with the Rube Goldberg method of detour? How would a European designer critique this method?
- Discuss the appropriateness of Peter’s nail analogy to the democratic nature of America. At which scale does this analogy fall apart compared to European practice?
- Why does an ambiguous relationship exist between construction method and form in North America? How does this perpetuate the “do-it-yourself” culture? Does this culture change the way architects are viewed as professionals? Why?
- Peters warns American designers that if designs are generated from an empirical process, it would be based on everyday iconography. Why would this be the case?

Seminar 6. Communes and co-operatives for women


Who was Melusina Fay Peirce and what did she mean by “cooperative housekeeping”, a term she created in 1868?

- Describe and what was housework drudgery at that time?
- What did she propose as a solution to housework drudgery?
- What architectural experiments for cooperative housekeeping took place?

- Although unsuccessful in practice, Peirce’s theories stuck. Just like Catherine Beecher, she placed a high value on domestic work, however she perceived this value less as “sacred” and more as an important economic strength.
• How Peirce's ideas lay in stark contrast to today's typical domestic kitchens?

• Discuss how Pierce's ideas are echoed in different arenas such as the communal kitchens found in contemporary cooperative housing or other venues.

Seminar 7. The Birth of the National Park

How was the "end of the frontier" significant for North American cultural attitude towards nature in general and wilderness in particular?

In the book we draw a parallel between the natural reserves and the natives reserves. Discuss our proposal.

Why did we choose the smallest exhibition at the Columbian exhibition by the Boone and Crocket Club? How did it come about and what did it mean?

What were the original vision for preserving wilderness and what were the consequences on the people who lived in these areas?

Why was it important to the 19th century mind to bring people (especially men) to the wilderness? Is this still true today, how did this change through the 20th century?

Seminar 8. Gendered spaces
Adrian Forty, "Masculine, Feminine or Neuter?, *Desiring Practices: Architecture, Gender and the Interdisciplinary*, 1996
Discussion questions TBA

References


Forty, Adrian “Masculine, Feminine or Neuter?, *Desiring Practices: Architecture,*


*Atlantic Canada sources*

Acadiensis The history journal for Atlantic Canada (SMU Library)


