



History of American Landscapes and Architecture

COURSE GUIDE

HIS/IAR 624

Spring 2003

Prof. L. Tolbert
Office: McIver 210
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Office Phone: 334-4646
Hours: Tues. & Thurs. 11:00-12:00
and by appointment

I do not mind if you call me at home with questions regarding the course, but please do not call after 9:00 pm. (856-7207).

Course Objectives

This course is designed as an advanced reading seminar in the history of American landscapes and architecture. You will also go beyond our classroom reading and discussion to master the literature of architectural history through fieldwork and secondary source research on specific buildings and landscapes. The course will introduce you to the 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.

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

- ?? Explain major changes in the development of the American landscape from the colonial period through the mid-twentieth century.
- ?? Evaluate a variety of methods for using buildings and landscapes as primary source evidence to understand American history.
- ?? Define particular architectural styles, use specialized architectural vocabulary/terminology, and explain the differences between vernacular and academic building traditions.
- ?? Evaluate a particular landscape in historical context.
- ?? Apply course ideas and materials to your own research plans.

Evaluation

Participation		10%
Unit Essays		90%
Unit 1	15 %	
Unit 2	10%	
Unit 3	15%	
Unit 4	25%	
Unit 5	25%	

Attendance Policy

Faithful attendance is essential for 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.

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. For this reason, consistent attendance is essential to your learning in this course. See above for an explanation of the course attendance policy which has an impact on your overall grade in the course beyond its importance for evaluating your participation.
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.

Unit Essays (90%)

This course is organized into five topical units. Unit essays should be typed and double-spaced, with appropriate citations in Turabian style. Assignments for each unit are as follows:

Unit 1: Use the readings assigned in this unit to identify three or four key periods in the development of American housing from the colonial period through the mid-twentieth century. What are the beginning and ending dates and the chief characteristics of each period? Use appropriate footnote references to cite specific author's points. You may

find it useful to consult the McAlester field guide to develop your response. [5-7 pages, due 3 February]

Unit 2: Compare and contrast the methodologies of two different authors in this unit. Explain what kinds of sources they used and the techniques and questions they used to evaluate the buildings and landscapes they studied. [5-7 pages, due 17 February]

Unit 3: Historians in this unit evaluate the ways that new ideas and cultural change shaped urban landscapes in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as much as commerce or technology. Explain three or four different ways that ideas and culture have historically shaped urban landscapes in America. [5-7 pages, due 17 March]

Unit 4: Apply the arguments and methodologies of one of these case studies to a particular landscape. Examples might include a local rural farm community, an industrial neighborhood in Greensboro, or an assessment of the commercial district of downtown Greensboro. You may also want to integrate appropriate arguments from previous course readings. In order to identify appropriate local landscape features, you may find it useful to consult Marvin A. Brown, *Greensboro: An Architectural Record*. Preservation Greensboro, 1995 (on reserve in Jackson Library). Include appropriate photos and illustrations of the particular landscape that is the subject of your essay. [about 10 pages, Due 7 April]

Unit 5: Develop a research bibliography (15-25 sources, including books and articles) and select five or six key books or articles to write a literature review/historiographical essay (15-20 pages) for a research project of your own design. You are encouraged to integrate appropriate readings already assigned in the course. A literature review/historiographical essay should include an evaluation of specific authors' arguments and methodologies appropriate to the research topic. The overall goal is an assessment of the current state of the field for your topic: key agreements and disagreements, key gaps in research your project might fill. Refer to arguments of specific authors with appropriate citations.
[Preliminary bibliography (15-25 sources) and topic description (about 2-3 pages) due 3 March. Revised bibliography (15-25 sources) and topic description (about 2-3 pages) due, 14 April. Final review essay (15-20 pages) and bibliography (15-25 sources) due, 5 May.]

Course Readings

Books (Available at the UNCG bookstore)

McAlester, Virginia and Lee. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Knopf, 1984.

Hanchett, Thomas W. *Sorting Out the New South City: Race, Class, and Urban Development in Charlotte, 1875-1975*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998.

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

McMurry, Sally. *Families & Farmhouses in Nineteenth-Century America: Vernacular Design and Social Change*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1997.

Book Chapters and Journal Articles

(Available on electronic reserve or online as noted.)

Bender, Thomas. "The 'Rural' Cemetery Movement: Urban Travail and the Appeal of Nature." In Robert Blair St. George, ed. *Material Life in America, 1600-1860*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1988.

Blackmar, Betsy. "Rewalking the 'Walking City': Housing and Property Relations in New York City." In Robert Blair St. George, ed. *Material Life in America, 1600-1860*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1988.

Brucken, Carolyn. "In the Public Eye: Women and the American Luxury Hotel." *Winterthur Portfolio* 31 (1996): 203-220.

Chappell, Edward A. "Housing a Nation: The Transformation of Living Standards in Early America." In Cary Carson, Ronald Hoffman, and Peter J. Albert, eds. *Of Consuming Interests: The Style of Life in the Eighteenth Century*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1994.

Clark, Clifford. "Domestic Architecture as an Index to Social History." In Robert Blair St. George, ed. *Material Life in America, 1600-1860*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1988.

Cohen, Lizabeth, Hanchett, Thomas W.; and Jackson, Kenneth T. AHR Forum on Shopping Malls in America. *American Historical Review* Vol. 101, No. 4 (1996): 1049-1121. [JSTOR]

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. [JSTOR]

Rubin, Barbara. "Aesthetic Ideology and Urban Design." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* Vol. 69, No. 3 (Sept. 1979): pp. 339-361. [JSTOR]

Sies, Mary Corbin. "North American Suburbs, 1880-1950: Cultural and Social Reconsiderations." *Journal of Urban History* 27/3 (2001): 313-346. [Proquest]

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.

Sweeney, Kevin. "Meetinghouses, Town Houses, and Churches: Changing Perceptions of Sacred and Secular Space in Southern New England, 1720-1850." *Winterthur Portfolio* 28 (Spring 1993): 59-93.

Upton, Dell. "Another City: The Urban Cultural Landscape in the Early Republic." In Catherine E. Hutchins, ed. *Everyday Life in the Early Republic*. Winterthur, DE, 1994.

Vogel, Neal. "Picture This." *Old-House Journal* Vol. 29, No. 4. (July/August 2001): 27-30.

The following chapters from Upton, Dell and John Vlach, eds. *Common Places: Readings in American Vernacular Architecture*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1986:

Bishir, Catherine W. "Jacob Holt: An American Builder," pp. 447-481.

Borchert, James. "Alley Landscapes of Washington," pp. 281-291.

Chappell, Ed. "Acculturation in the Shenandoah Valley: Rhenish Houses of the Massanutten Settlement," pp. 27-57.

Cohen, Lizabeth A. "Embellishing a Life of Labor: An Interpretation of the Material Culture of American Working-Class Homes," pp. 261-278.

Glassie, Henry. "Eighteenth-Century Cultural Process in Delaware Valley Folk Building," pp. 394-425.

Hubka, Thomas. "Just Folks Designing: Vernacular Designers and the Generation of Form," pp. 426-432.

Neiman, Fraser D. "Domestic Architecture at the Clifts Plantation: The Social Context of Early Virginia Building," pp. 292-314.

Upton, Dell. "Vernacular Domestic Architecture in Eighteenth-Century Virginia," pp. 315-335.

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

Course Schedule

13 January Introductions

20 January MLK Holiday, no class

Unit 1: History of American Housing

Assignment: Use the readings assigned in this unit to identify three or four key periods in the development of American housing from the colonial period through the mid-twentieth century. What are the beginning and ending dates and the chief characteristics of each period? Use appropriate footnote references to cite specific author's points. You may find it useful to consult the McAlester field guide to develop your response. [5-7 pages, due 3 February]

27 January **History of American Housing: 17th - 18th centuries**

Neiman, Fraser D. "Domestic Architecture at the Clifts Plantation: The Social Context of Early Virginia Building," In CP, pp. 292-314.

Upton, Dell. "Vernacular Domestic Architecture in Eighteenth-Century Virginia," In CP, pp. 315-335.

Chappell, Edward A. "Housing a Nation: The Transformation of Living Standards in Early America." In Cary Carson, Ronald Hoffman, and Peter J. Albert, eds. *Of Consuming Interests: The Style of Life in the Eighteenth Century*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1994.

3 February **History of American Housing: 19th – 20th centuries**

Clark, Clifford. "Domestic Architecture as an Index to Social History." In Robert Blair St. George, ed. *Material Life in America, 1600-1860*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1988.

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. [JSTOR]

Cohen, Lizabeth A. "Embellishing a Life of Labor: An Interpretation of the Material Culture of American Working-Class Homes," In CP, pp. 261-278.

Vogel, Neal. "Picture This." *Old-House Journal* Vol. 29, No. 4. (July/August 2001): 27-30.

Unit 2: Comparative Methodologies and Architectural History

Assignment: Compare and contrast the methodologies of two different authors in this unit. Explain what kinds of sources they used and the techniques and questions they used to evaluate the buildings and landscapes they studied. [5-7 pages, due 17 February]

10 February **Ethnicity and Folk Culture: Spatial Design as Evidence**

Chappell, Ed. "Acculturation in the Shenandoah Valley: Rhenish Houses of the Massanutten Settlement," In CP, pp. 27-57.

Glassie, Henry. "Eighteenth-Century Cultural Process in Delaware Valley Folk Building," In CP, pp. 394-425.

Vlach, John Michael. "The Shotgun House: An African Architectural Legacy," In CP, pp. 58-78.

17 February **Style and Form as Evidence**

Rubin, Barbara. "Aesthetic Ideology and Urban Design." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* Vol. 69, No. 3 (Sept. 1979): pp. 339-361. [JSTOR]

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.

Bishir, Catherine W. "Jacob Holt: An American Builder," In CP, pp. 447-481.

Hubka, Thomas. "Just Folks Designing: Vernacular Designers and the Generation of Form," In CP, pp. 426-432.

Unit 3: History of Urban Landscapes

Assignment: Historians in this unit evaluate the ways that new ideas and cultural change shaped urban landscapes in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as much as commerce or technology. Explain three or four different ways that ideas and culture have historically shaped urban landscapes in America. [5-7 pages, due 17 March]

24 February **Shaping Urban Landscapes: Ideology and Commerce**

Bender, Thomas. "The 'Rural' Cemetery Movement: Urban Travail and the Appeal of Nature." In Robert Blair St. George, ed. *Material Life in America, 1600-1860*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1988.

Blackmar, Betsy. "Rewalking the 'Walking City': Housing and Property Relations in New York City." In Robert Blair St. George, ed. *Material Life in America, 1600-1860*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1988.

Upton, Dell. "Another City: The Urban Cultural Landscape in the Early Republic." In Catherine E. Hutchins, ed. *Everyday Life in the Early Republic*. Winterthur, DE, 1994.

Sweeney, Kevin. "Meetinghouses, Town Houses, and Churches: Changing Perceptions of Sacred and Secular Space in Southern New England, 1720-1850." *Winterthur Portfolio* 28 (Spring 1993): 59-93.

3 March **Shaping Urban Landscapes: Race and Gender**

Brucken, Carolyn. "In the Public Eye: Women and the American Luxury Hotel." *Winterthur Portfolio* 31 (1996): 203-220.

Borchert, James. "Alley Landscapes of Washington," In CP, pp. 281-291.

***Preliminary research bibliography and topic description due.**

10 March **SPRING BREAK**

17 March **Reshaping Urban Landscapes: 20th Century Mass Culture**

Cohen, Lizabeth, Thomas W. Hanchett, and Kenneth T. Jackson, AHR Forum on Shopping Malls in America. *American Historical Review* Vol. 101, No. 4 (1996): 1049-1121. [JSTOR]

Sies, Mary Corbin. "North American Suburbs, 1880-1950: Cultural and Social Reconsiderations." *Journal of Urban History* 27/3 (2001): 313-346. [Proquest]

Unit 4: Case Studies in the History of American Landscapes

Assignment: Apply the arguments and methodologies of one of these case studies to a particular landscape. Examples might include a local rural farm community, an industrial neighborhood in Greensboro, or an assessment of the commercial district of downtown Greensboro. You may also want to integrate appropriate arguments from previous course readings. In order to identify appropriate local landscape features, you may find it useful to consult Marvin A. Brown, *Greensboro: An Architectural Record*. Preservation Greensboro, 1995 (on reserve in Jackson Library). Include appropriate photos and illustrations of the particular landscape that is the subject of your essay. [about 10 pages, Due 7 April]

24 March **Families & Farmhouses**

McMurry, Sally. *Families & Farmhouses in Nineteenth-Century America: Vernacular Design and Social Change*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1997.

31 March **New England Industrial Landscape**

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

7 April **New South City**

Hanchett, Thomas W. *Sorting Out the New South City: Race, Class, and Urban Development in Charlotte, 1875-1975*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998.

Unit 5: Applications for Research

Assignment: Develop a research bibliography (15-25 sources, including books and articles) and select five or six key books or articles to write a literature review/historiographical essay (15-20 pages) for a research project of your own design. You are encouraged to integrate appropriate readings already assigned in the course. A literature review/historiographical essay should include an evaluation of specific authors' arguments and methodologies appropriate to the research topic. The overall goal is an assessment of the current state of the field for your topic: key agreements and disagreements, key gaps in research your project might fill. Refer to arguments of specific authors with appropriate citations.

[Preliminary bibliography (15-25 sources) and topic description (about 2-3 pages) due 3 March. Revised bibliography (15-25 sources) and topic description (about 2-3 pages) due, 14 April. Final review essay (15-20 pages) and bibliography (15-25 sources) due, 5 May.]

14 April **Revised bibliography and topic description due**

21 April Writing and research design workshop

28 April TBA

5 May Course Evaluations/**Review Essays due**