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UNIVERSITY OF UTAH
COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING

ARCH 6231: Architecture, Landscape, and History in the American West.
Fall Semester 2007. Monday, Wednesday from 10:45am to 12:05pm, AAC Room 227.
Instructor: Thomas Carter. Office hours Mondays from 1:30-3:30pm, or by appointment
at tcarter@arch.utah.edu

Course Description

The intent of this course is to propose a method for studying the cultural landscape of the western United States. Cultural landscapes are human-produced environments which include buildings but also such things as town plans, streets and fields, work spaces and campgrounds, civic monuments and cemeteries, public and household art, and even furniture. In short, when we speak of cultural landscapes we are referring to the totality of the built environment, even though we may choose to focus our research attention on but a small part of that larger entity (houses for instance). The advantage of adopting a cultural landscape approach to both architecture and history is that it allows us to see objects operating within larger, more all-encompassing thought processes. Cultural landscapes, as we will see, are inherently symbolic: they are material worlds that stand for conceptual systems—what we think of as structuring “ideologies.” Our work during the semester will be directed toward exploring the symbolic content of the western American cultural landscape. The time frame for the work begins in the early years of the nineteenth century with the Louisiana Purchase and extends into the present.

The underlying proposition in the class is that the cultural landscape of the western United States is best understood from the standpoint of *what people have asked it to do and be*. Such demands are embodied in four main cultural stories or myths—The West as Eden, The West as Commodity, the West as Conquest, and the West as Refuge—which structure symbolic life in the region and give us the landscape we see before us. Butte, Montana, will serve as a laboratory for the investigation of these materials and ideas.

Course Readings

There is no single text. Individual readings are placed on reserve in the Marriott Library. I would suggest, however, several book purchases.

Required: Thomas Carter, *Images of an American Land: Vernacular Architecture Studies in the Western United States* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997). Copies of this text are available from me for the remaindered price of \$5.

Recommended (on reserve): William Cronon, George Miles, and Jay Gitlin, eds., *Under an Open Sky: Rethinking America's Western Past* (New York: WW Norton, 1992). We will be reading several essays from this collection, which is on the whole an excellent survey of contemporary issues in western American history.

Recommended (on reserve): Robert Hine and John Mack Faragher, *The American West: a New Interpretive History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000). This is a good overview of western history and I would strongly recommend having this or some other general text in your library.

Strongly recommended (on reserve): John Reys, *Cities of the American West: a History of Frontier Urban Planning* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1979). This is an essential book and anyone interested in the western American landscape should own it. See in particular the three chapters on mining towns.

Strongly recommended (on reserve): William Cronin, *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (New York: WW Norton, 1991). Cronin's study of Chicago and its relations with the region surrounding it remains the single-most important study in western landscape history studies and applies directly to our work in Butte.

Recommended (on reserve) Chris Wilson, *The Myth of Santa Fe: Creating a Modern Regional Tradition* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997). An outstanding treatment of how the Santa Fe "style" was invented—a must read for every architect working in the West.

Recommended (on reserve): Peter Burke, *History and Social Theory* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1992). Historians and architectural historians alike will benefit from this overview of current "theories" in historical explanation.

Requirements and Grading

Course grades will be determined on the basis of class participation, attendance, two short exams, a term research project, and in-class presentation of your project. The two exams will be an hour in length and will consist of definitions and identifications as well as several short essay-type questions dealing with the basic concepts dealt with in class. The exams are intended to keep you up on your reading and note-taking and count for 50% of your grade. Test #1 will be given on October 3rd, while #2 is scheduled for the last day of the semester, which is December 6. This last test is NOT a final, but rather, an exam dealing with material from the second half of the course.

Your main effort (which counts for the other 50% of your grade) will be directed toward a term research project. This year our class research topic will be the cultural landscape of Butte, Montana. You may work alone or in teams of two on research that explores and interprets various aspects of the city's built environment. Each person/team should choose one of the following project topics (you may devise your own but be sure to have it approved before you begin your research):

- (1) town planning (how did Butte come to look the way it does)
- (2) population patterns/enclaves (mapping race and ethnicity)
- (3) residential densities (urban forms)
- (4) contested terrain/boundaries (how space is appropriated and marked)

- (5) aesthetics and palette (the stylistic use of color and texture)
- (6) materials and technologies (process and product)
- (7) industrial design strategies (the look of the land)
- (8) commercial building typologies (main street study)
- (9) boarding house/apartment typology (ideas for packing them in)
- (10) pattern language (formal rhythms)
- (11) Add-ons and additions (organic architecture?)

Again, I'd like you to choose from the above list if possible. Alternative topics may be proposed, but you must have permission from the instructor to proceed. Background research and reading should be accomplished before our field trip in early September.

Each person or team will submit a term paper of roughly 20-25 pages including illustrations. Remember, landscape-based history/analysis revolves around the study of objects, so your project/paper should be in some way artifactually-centered. We will talk more about this in class, but essentially this means that the built environment itself forms the primary data for your research. Fieldwork, photos, and drawings are required unless otherwise specified.

Research project grades will be based on (1) punctuality: late projects will penalized a grade per day; (2) conceptual rigor: you must put to use the ideas and methods introduced and covered during the semester; (3) originality: I expect your research to cover new ground and not merely summarize the work of others; (4) depth: your bibliography should be extensive and include references/sources other than those on the syllabus; and (5) interpretation: description is necessary but not an end in itself—your project should have a point to make about western life and culture.

Equal Opportunity

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services, and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in this class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, 581-5020. CDS will work with you to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in this course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services.

Accommodations Policy

Some of the lectures, films, readings, and presentations in this course may include material that conflicts with the core beliefs of some students. Please review the syllabus carefully to see if the course is one that you are committed to taking. If you have a concern, please discuss it with me at your earliest convenience.

Weekly Course Outline

Week 1: Introductions and Definitions

Aug 20 M Goals, Expectations, and Assignments

Aug 22 W Stories to Build By

Background: Howard Lamar, "An Overview of Westward Expansion," in *The West as America: Reinterpreting Images of the Frontier*, ed. by William Truettner (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991), 1-26.

History and Myth: Richard Hughes, "Introduction," *Myths America Lives By* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 1-18.

History as Myth: Henry Glassie, "Meaningful Things and Appropriate Myths: The Artifact's Place in American Studies," in *Material Life in America*, ed. by Robert Blair St. George (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1988), 63-92.

Western Myths: Donald Worster, "Beyond the Agrarian Myth," in *Under Western Skies: Nature and History in the American West* (New York: Oxford, 1992), 3-18.

Week 2: Myths and Realities

Aug 27 M *American Heroes* movie and discussion

Aug 29 W Theoretical Propositions

World systems: Thomas Carter, "A Theory for Western Architecture," in *Images of an American Land: Vernacular Architecture Studies in the Western United States* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1989).

An Urban Frontier: John Reps, "Preface," in *Cities of the America West: a History of Frontier Urban Planning* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1979), ix-xii; Kingston Heath, "False-Front Architecture on Montana's Urban Frontier," in *Images of an American Land*, 21-41; and Margaret Purser, "Keeping House: Women, Domesticity, and the Use of Domestic Space in Nineteenth-Century Nevada," in *Images of an American Land*, 173-198).

Cultural Diversity: Dolores Hayden, "Urban Landscape History: The Sense of Place and the Politics of Space," in *Understanding Ordinary Landscapes*, ed. by Paul Groth and Todd Bressi (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1997), 111-133.

Week 3: Research Methods

Sept 3 M Labor Day (no class)

Sept 5 W Fieldwork Methods/Background on Butte, Montana

Fieldwork: Thomas Carter and Elizabeth Cromley, Chapter 2, *Invitation to Vernacular Architecture: A Guide to Studying Vernacular Architecture and Landscapes* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2006); and Frances Downing and Thomas Hubka, "Diagramming: A Visual Language," *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture, II* (1986).

Mining Landscapes: Fred Quivik, "The Historic Industrial Landscape of Butte and Anaconda, Montana," in *Images of an American Land*, 267-291; and Richard Francaviglia, "Reading the Landscape," in *Hard Places: Reading the Landscape of America's Historic Mining Districts* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1991), 1-61.

Butte History (on reserve): Michael Malone, *The Battle for Butte: Mining and Politics on the Northern Frontier, 1864-1906* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1981).

Friday September 7 to Monday September 10, Field Trip to Butte Montana

Leave SLC Friday morning and return Monday. Vans provided.

Schedule: Friday, drive to Butte and brief tour of the city; Saturday, fieldwork for projects; Sunday morning, open; Sunday afternoon, complete field research; Monday, return to Salt Lake City

Weeks 4 and 5: The West as Eden

Film: TBA

Sept 10 M No class/return from Butte

Sept 12 W Paradise in Oregon and California

Carolyn Merchant, "Reinventing Eden: Western Culture as a Recovery Narrative," in *Common Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature*, ed. by William Cronon (New York: WW Norton, 1985) 157; and Phillip Dole, "The Calef's Farm in Oregon: A Vermont Vernacular Comes West," in *Images of an American Land*, 63-87.

Sept 17 M Mormons in Utah

Leonard Arrington, Feramorz Fox, and Dean May, "Mormonism and the American Dream," in *Building the City of God: Community and Cooperation Among the Mormons* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book, 1976), 1-14; and Thomas Carter, "Folk Design in Utah Architecture," in *Images of an American Land*, 41-60.

Sept 19 W Southern California

William McClung, *Landscapes of Desire* (Berkeley: University of California Press), pp TBA; and Richard Longstreth, "Innovation without Paradigm: The Many Creators of the Drive-in Market," in *Images of an American Land*, 231-264. Strongly recommended: Stephanie Barron, Sheri Bernstein, and Ilene Susan Fort, eds., *Made in California: Art Image, and Identity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

Week 6: The West as Resource/Commodity (Part 1)

Film: TBA

Sept 24 M Mining the West
Sept 26 W No Class (Tom's away)

See Repts, mining town chapters in *Cities of the American West*; read William Cronon, "Kennecott Journey: The Paths out of Town," in *Under an Open Sky*, 28-51; and Robert McCarl, *Contested Space: The Above and Below Ground Landscape of Idaho's Coeur D'Alene Mining District* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah, 1997).

Week 7: Midterm

Oct 1 M Review
Oct 3 W Exam #1

Week 8: Fall Break

Oct 8 and 10: no class (Tom is in Ireland visiting his daughter)

Week 9: The West as Resource/Commodity (Part 2)

Oct 15 M Lumber Camps

James Buckley, "A Factory without a Roof: The Company Town in the Redwood Lumber Industry," in *Exploring Everyday Landscapes: Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture VII*, ed. by Annmarie Adams and Sally McMurry (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1997), 75-92

Oct 17 W Ranching

Donald Worster, "Cowboy Ecology," in *Under Western Skies*, 34-52; Thomas Carter, "Johnny Ward's Ranch," in *Settler Communities*; and Blanton Owen, "Dry Creek: Central Nevada's Demale Ranch," in *Images of an American Land*, 91-109.

Weeks 10 and 11: The West as America/Conquest

Film: TBA

Oct 22 M Manifest Destiny

Richard Hughes, "The Myth of the Millennial Nation," in *Myths America Lives By*, 91-125.

Oct 24 W Indians

Thomas Carter, Timothy McCleary, and Edward Chappell, "In the Lodge of the Chickadee: Architecture and Cultural Resistance on the Crow Indian Reservation," in

Building Environments: Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture X, ed. by Kenneth Breisch and Alison Hoagland (Knoxville, University of Tennessee Press, 2005), 97-111; and Alison Hoagland, "Russian Churches, American Houses, Aleut People: Converging Cultures in the Pribilof Islands, Alaska," in *Images of an American Land*, 129-150.

Oct 29 M Mexicans

Chris Wilson, "When a Room is the Hall: The Houses of West Las Vegas, New Mexico," in *Images of an American Land*, 113-128; and "Pitched-Roofs Over Flat: the Emergence of a New Building Tradition in Hispanic New Mexico," in *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture IV*, ed. by Thomas Carter and Bernard Herman (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1991), 87-97.

Oct 31 W Race and ethnicity

Sarah Deutsch, "Landscape of Enclaves: Race Relations in the West, 1865-1990," in *Under and Open Sky*, 110-131; Christopher Yip, "A Chinatown of Gold Mountain: the Chinese in Locke, California," in *Images of an American Land*, 153-167; and David Chuenyan Lai, "The Visual Character of Chinatowns," in *Understanding Ordinary Landscapes*, 81-84.

Weeks 12 and 13: The West as Refuge/Renewal

Film: TBA

Nov 5 M Invented Traditions

Eric Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions," in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1983), 1-14; Dell Upton, "Introduction," *America's Architectural Roots: Ethnic Groups that Built America* (Washington, D.C.: The Preservation Press, 1986), 7-15; Melinda McQuaid and Karen Bartlett, "Building an Image of the Southwest: Mary Colter, Fred Harvey Company Architect," in *The Great Southwest and the Fred Harvey Company* (Phoenix: the Heard Museum, 1996); and Chris Wilson, *The Myth of Santa Fe*.

Nov 7 W Call of the Wild

Roderick Nash, "The Wilderness Cult," in *Wilderness and the American Mind* 1967; Revised edition, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), 141-160; and Thomas Carter, "Together for the Summer": Architecture and Seasonal Community on Idaho's Henry's Fork River," *Perspective in Vernacular Architecture* 11 (2004): 71-89.

Nov 13 M Eco-Tourism
TBA

Nov 15 W Spamodification
TBA

Week 14: Thanksgiving Break

Nov 19 No class

Nov 21 Thanksgiving

Week 15: Project Presentations

Nov 26 M Presentations TBA

Nov 28 W Presentations TBA

Term Projects Due in Class

Week 16: Review and Exam #2

Dec 4 M Review

Dec 6 W Exam #2