Art History 404
Philadelphia Architecture and Urbanism
Temple University, Department of Art History
Spring Semester 2006
Tyler Campus
President’s Hall, M002
Wednesday, 3:30-5:30 PM

Instructor: Anthony Raynsford
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Office hours: Tuesday, 2:00-5:00 PM

* E-mail is generally the best method of contact during non-office hours.
* Please allow 48-hours for an e-mail response.

GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION

**Topic and Scope of the Course:** The City of Philadelphia presents a rich laboratory for the investigation of American architecture and urbanism over the last three hundred years. All of the layers of this history are still visible in the forms of streets, buildings, urban renewal projects, and public art. The contemporary city, then, is a collage or matrix of cumulative episodes of building and destruction, each layer of which interacts with the others, spatially, aesthetically and functionally. This seminar will focus on major episodes in the design and building of the city, examining the ways in which city-builders attempted to shape and arrange buildings or monuments according to ideal views of what the city should be and how it should function. At the same time, the seminar will examine the ways in which these episodes emerged out of and responded to the pre-existing layers of the city. The episodes considered in this course will include: the 18th–19th-century Georgian city near the Delaware River; the development of new institutions in the early 19th-century; the mid-nineteenth developments of Broad Street and Rittenhouse Square; the City Beautiful Movement and the design of the Benjamin Franklin Parkway; urban renewal and the redevelopment of Market Street and Society Hill in the 1950s and 60s; and postmodern attempts to reorganize the city into entertainment and tourist districts. The course will consist of discussions of articles and readings relevant to the episodes of Philadelphia’s building history.

The first three sessions will address the city as an entity existing in the present but simultaneously revealing evidence of successive time. The next part of the course will involve detailed investigations of specific historical moments in the development of Philadelphia’s buildings and urban spaces, considering both the intentions behind the designs and the social uses of spaces. The last two sessions of the course will be devoted to the presentations of the final projects.

**Purpose of the Course:** This course is a graduate seminar, whose purpose is to combine historical research with creative approaches to the built environment and its meanings. The course will allow students to develop familiarity with the architectural history of Philadelphia, while also using that knowledge to think about the urban environment in new ways. Students will be expected to develop an individual research project related to the theme of the course. This project may include a creative, visual component, but it must also include a written component based on historical evidence. To that end, students will be encouraged to become familiar with various archives and libraries in the City of Philadelphia. One or more field trips may be arranged,
according to the interests of the class. Students will also be expected to take an active role in class discussions, including introducing one of the readings during the semester.

**Class Format:** This course will be a seminar discussion course, with various times set aside for lectures and student presentations.

**Required Texts:** Gelernter, Mark, *A History of American Architecture: Buildings in Their Cultural and Technological Contexts*, (Hanover: University Press of New England, 2001); Articles and book chapters will be available for download via e-reserve. In addition to those listed below, other required readings may be added over the course of the semester.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

**January 18:** Course introduction

**January 25: The Image of Philadelphia – Textures and Meanings:**

**Assignment:** Mapping Mental Image of Philadelphia

**February 1: Time in Philadelphia: Perceptual / Fictional / Archaeological**

**Assignment:** Describing Time in Philadelphia

**PART I: THE COLONIAL CITY**

**February 8: William Penn’s Plan: Ideals and Consequences**

**February 15: Spatial and Cultural Patterns of Late 18th Century Philadelphia**

**Assignment:** Preliminary Project Proposal

**PART II: PHASES AND STYLES OF THE 19TH CENTURY CITY**
Syllabus, Philadelphia Architecture and Urbanism, p. 3

February 22: Expansion, Order and Discipline in the Ante-Bellum City

March 1: High Victorian Architecture in Philadelphia

March 8: [SPRING BREAK --- NO CLASS]

March 15: Streets, Avenues and the Spreading Metropolis

PART III: PROGRESSIVISM AND THE CITY BEAUTIFUL MOVEMENT

March 22: The Parkway and the Museum of Art
Gelernter pp. 190-207; David Brownlee, Building the City Beautiful: The Benjamin Franklin Parkway and the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Chapters 1-3, pp. 1-70; David Brownlee, Making a Modern Classic: The Architecture of the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

PART IV: MODERNISM AND URBAN RENEWAL

March 29: Edmund Bacon and the Replanning of Center City

April 5: Louis Kahn and the Rhetoric of Civic Space
Gelernter pp. 260-279; Kahn, Louis, “Toward a Plan for Midtown Philadelphia,” in Writings, Lectures, Interviews, pp. 29-87; Goldhagen, Sarah, Louis Kahn’s Situated Modernism, Chapter 3, pp. 64-87
PART IV: POSTMODERN PHILADELPHIA

April 12: The Architectural Ironies of Venturi and Scott Brown
Gelernter pp. 279-306; Von Moos, Stanislaus, “Penn’s Shadow,” Venturi Scott Brown &
Associates, pp. 11-23; Venturi, Robert, Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture, pp. 16-17,
116-23.

April 19: Student Presentations

April 26: Student Presentations

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

General Requirements:
The course is a graduate seminar in art history, intended to combine rigorous historical research with
creative interpretations. Evaluations will be based on class participation, project presentations, a project
proposal, and a final seminar project, which must contain a researched written component of at least 15
pages. These projects will be presented as 10-minute oral presentations at the last two seminar sessions.
Course performance will be evaluated on a combination of: a formal project proposal; class participation,
including short assignments; and the quality of the final project, both as submitted and as presented to the
class.

Relative weight of course requirements:

1) Project Proposal (10%)
2) Project Presentation (15%)
3) Final Research Paper (50%)
4) Class Participation (25%)

Policy on late assignments and class participation:
Extensions and incompletes will only be granted in cases of documented personal emergencies.
Since class participation is an essential component of the course, students may normally not miss more
than 2 sessions without their final grades being negatively affected.

Exceptional Accommodations:
Any student who has a documented need for accommodation based on the impact of a disability should
discuss the matter privately with me within the first two weeks of classes. The student should also contact
Disability Resources and Services at (215) 204-1280.

ADDITIONAL NOTES:
This syllabus is subject to change, in the event of unforeseen circumstances, or in the case that changes
will significantly enhance the quality of the course.