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## Vernacular Architecture Forum Syllabus Exchange



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**instructor:** Annmarie Adams  
**course title:** The Cultural Landscape of Home  
**institution:** McGill University  
**date offered:** Fall, 2006

  

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**ARCH 631  
Housing Seminar II  
The Cultural Landscape of Home  
Prof. A. Adams  
Fall 2006**



**Objectives:** This graduate reading seminar engages the plan of a 20<sup>th</sup>-century North American house to study the cultural landscape of home. We move through familiar rooms—kitchens, living rooms, and bedrooms—informed by classic readings in housing research, welcoming opportunities to discuss the methodologies, scope, and subject framing. In the final phase of the course we revisit the authors previously encountered on the house tour, and take a closer, comparative look at their approaches to research.

**Meetings:** Wednesdays. 9:00-11:00 am. Attendance and full participation are mandatory. Each student should speak at least once in each class meeting. If for any reason you need to miss a class, please inform Prof. Adams and submit an abstract and response to the readings discussed that day.

**Office:** Room 309, 398-6706, [annmarie.adams@mcgill.ca](mailto:annmarie.adams@mcgill.ca)

**Readings:** Akiko Busch, *Geography of Home*, available at The Word Bookstore, 469 rue Milton. Course reader is available at the McGill bookstore.

**Assignments:**

1. The major assignment (50%) of the course is a cultural-landscapes analysis of a specific house in North America that you have visited. Please include the following in your study: typological context (2) historical context (3) description of exterior and interior (4) plan analysis (5) photos and drawings, including credits (6) bibliography of relevant sources (7) acknowledgements. Many of the articles we read in class make ideal models for this assignment.

2. 15-minute oral presentation of your research (10%) during the last three weeks. Students present in alphabetical order.
3. A book review of 750 words (30%) of Jan Jennings' *Cheap and Tasteful Dwellings* (2005), due Nov. 1, written as if it is for an academic journal.
4. Weekly participation, 10%.

Website: Note that this course outline will be updated as necessary on:  
<http://www.mcgill.ca/domestic-environments/courses/>

Schedule:

**Sept. 6: Introduction to the seminar**

**Sept. 13: Approaching the House Busch 15-27**

JB Jackson, "Westward Moving House" in *Landscapes*, ed. Ervin H. Zube, 1-42.  
 Strongly recommended for background information:  
 Upton, Dell. "Outside the Academy: A Century of Vernacular Architecture Studies, 1890-1990" *Studies in the History of Art* 35 (1990), 199-213.

**Sept 20 and 27: The Kitchen, Bathroom and Laundry Busch 39-50, 61-70, 135-142**

Christine Rosen, "Are We Worthy of Our Kitchens?" *The New Atlantis* 11 (Winter 2006): 75-86.

<http://thenewatlantis.com/archive/11/rosen.htm>

Elizabeth Cromley, "Transforming the Food Axis," *Material History Review* 44 (Fall 1996), 8-22.

Abigail Van Slyck, "Kitchen Technologies and Mealtime Rituals: Interpreting the Food Axis at American Summer Camps, 1890-1950," *Technology and Culture* 43 (Winter 2002), 668-92.

[http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/technology\\_and\\_culture/v043/43.4vanslyck.pdf](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/technology_and_culture/v043/43.4vanslyck.pdf)

Ellen Lupton, *Mechanical Brides*, 15-27

Annamarie Adams, "'The House and All That Goes On In It': The Notebook of Frederica Shanks," *Winterthur Portfolio* 31 (Summer/Autumn 1996), 165-172.

**Oct. 4: Front door/Front Porch Busch 29-38, 103-114**

Francois Dufaux, "A new world from two old ones..." *Urban Morphology*, 4, no. 1 (2000), 9-19.

James Rojas, "The Enacted Environment," in *Everyday America*, ed. Chris Wilson and Paul Groth, 275-92.

Annamarie Adams and Pieter Sijpkens, "Wartime Housing and Architectural Change, 1942-92," *Canadian Folklore Canadien* 17, No. 2 (1995), 13-29.

**Oct. 11: Guest instructor: Dr. Robert Mellin**

Robert Mellin, "Conservation in Tilting, Newfoundland: Rugged Landscape, Strong People, Fragile Architecture" *APT Bulletin*, 37, Nos. 2-3 (2006), 13-21.

Robert Mellin, "The Material Culture of Tilting, Fogo Island, Newfoundland," *Canadian Journal of Irish Studies*, 26, No. 2 (Fall 2000/Spring 2001), 49-73.

Robert Mellin, "A Toast to Tilting," *Harrowsmith Country Life*, 189 (August 2006), 46-48, 52.

**Oct. 18: Guest instructor: Dr. Tania Martin, Université Laval**

Readings not included in reader.

Tania Martin, "From Object of Poverty to National Treasure: The Ambiguous Place of

Catholic Convents in Quebec and the Rhetoric of Heritage," *Material History Review*, Vol. 59 no. 1 (2004): 45-61.

Tania Martin, "The Mother House of the Grey Nuns: A Building History of the General Hospital," *Journal of the Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada*, Vol. 24, no. 2 (1999): 40-9.

Tania Martin, "Housing the Grey Nuns: Power, Women, and Religion in fin-de-siècle Montréal," dans *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture, VII*, eds. Annmarie Adams and Sally McMurry (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1997): 212-29.

**Oct. 25: Guest instructor: Dr. Cynthia Hammond, Concordia University**

Readings TBA

**Nov. 1: Living/dining rooms Busch 51-60, 151-160**

**[book reviews due]**

Lizabeth Cohen, "Embellishing a Life of Labor" in *Common Places*, ed. Dell Upton and John Michael Vlach, 261-78.

Bernard Herman, "The Embedded Landscapes of the Charleston Single House, 1780-1820," *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture VII*, 41-57.

Lynn Spigel, "The Suburban Home Companion: Television and the Neighborhood Ideal in Postwar America," *Sexuality and Space*, ed. Beatriz Colomina, 185-217.

Annmarie Adams, "The Eichler Home," *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture V*, 236-58.

**Nov. 8: Bedroom/Dressing Room Busch 115-134**

Annmarie Adams, *Architecture in the Family Way*, 103-28.

Annmarie Adams and Peter Gossage, "Chez Fadette: Girlhood, Family, and Private Space in Late-Nineteenth-Century Sainte-Hyacinthe," *Urban History Review* 26, No. 2 (March 1998), 56-68.

Alice Friedman, Chapter 4, *Women and the Making of the Modern House*

Rebecca Ginsburg, "Come in the Dark'," *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture VIII*, 83-100.

**Nov. 15: Library/Home-office Busch 81-92, 93-102**

Carolyn Torma, "The Spatial Order of Work," *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture VII*, 183-95.

Dell Upton, "White and Black Landscapes in Eighteenth-century Virginia," *Material Life in America*, ed. Robert Blair St. George, 357-69.

**Nov. 22, 29, Dec. 6**

Student presentations.

Final papers due Dec. 13, 11:00 a.m., in my mailbox in room 201.

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see <http://www.mcgill.ca/integrity/> for more information).

L'université McGill attache une haute importance à l'honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l'on entend par tricherie,

plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l'étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le site <http://www.mcgill.ca/integrity/>).

### Further Reading:

#### Books:

Adams, Annmarie. *Architecture in the Family Way*  
 Adams, Annmarie and Peta Tancred. *Designing Women*  
 Attfield, Judy and Pat Kirkham eds., *A View from the Interior*  
 Bauer, Catherine. *Modern Housing*  
 Carruthers, Annette, ed. *The Scottish Home*  
 Clark, Clifford. *The American Family Home*  
 Cromley, Elizabeth. *Alone Together*  
 Cummings, Abbott Lowell. *The Framed Houses of Massachusetts Bay*  
 Friedman, Alice. *Women and the Making of the Modern House*  
 Glassie, Henry. *Folk Housing in Middle Virginia*  
 Glassie, Henry. *Passing the Time in Ballymenone*  
 Green, Harvey. *The Light of the Home*  
 Gowans, Alan. *The Comfortable House*  
 Grier, Katherine. *Culture & Comfort*  
 Grover, Kathryn, ed. *Dining in America*  
 Handlin, David. *The American Home*  
 Hayden, Dolores. *The Grand Domestic Revolution*  
 Herman, Bernard. *The Stolen House*  
 Jackson, Kenneth. *Crabgrass Frontier*  
 Kidder, Tracy. *House*  
 McDannell, Colleen. *The Christian Home in Victorian America*  
 McMurry, Sally. *Families & Farmhouses in 19<sup>th</sup> Century America*  
 Mellin, Robert, *Tilting*  
 Ogle, Maureen. *All the Modern Conveniences*  
 Oliver, Paul. *Dwellings*  
 Parr, Joy. *Domestic Goods*  
 Peterson, Fred W. *Homes in the Heartland*  
 Pocius, Gerald. *A Place to Belong*  
 Rybczynski, Witold. *Home*  
 Scully, Vincent. *The Shingle Style and the Stick Style*  
 Simpson, Pamela, *Cheap, Quick and Easy*  
 Upton, Dell. *America's Architectural Roots*  
 Upton, Dell and John Michael Vlach, eds. *Common Places*  
 Ward, Peter, *A History of Domestic Space*  
 Warner, Sam Bass. *Streetcar Suburbs*  
 Wright, Gwendolyn. *Building the Dream*  
 Wright, Gwendolyn. *Moralism and the Model Home*

#### Journals:

Many academic journals feature articles on domestic topics. The following are highly recommended: *Design Book Review*, *Home Cultures*, *Material History Review*, *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture*, *Technology & Culture*, *Winterthur Portfolio*.