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**instructor:** Julie Riesenweber  
**course title:** (North) American Architecture I  
**institution:** University of Kentucky  
**date offered:** Fall 2007

  

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## **HP 610: (North) AMERICAN ARCHITECTURE I**

### **Fall Semester 2007**

Wednesdays 2:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Pence Hall 207

Instructor: Julie Riesenweber  
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Office Hours: Tuesdays  
1 to 4 pm

#### **COURSE DESCRIPTION AND APPROACH:**

This course surveys architectural developments in North America from the arrival of colonists through 1860. Through it, you will become familiar with some of the major and more recent literature on North American architecture, interpretations of continuity and change in architectural form and structure, and the geographic, social, economic, political and technological forces that together influenced buildings and the practices of creating and inhabiting them.

Since the course topic is a large one, I have focused its scope, and have chosen to cover less material deeply, rather than covering a great deal of substantive ground shallowly. This means that the course is not a chronological survey of monuments and/or styles; it presents neither a 'canon' nor a genealogy of designers' influences upon one another. Rather, we will discuss the basic formal, construction and ornamental aspects of buildings important to recognizing them as the products of particular times and places and focus on "reading," "listening to" and interpreting buildings (primarily dwellings) constructed before 1860. We will approach buildings and landscapes as settings for everyday life, consider them as one of many forms of social/cultural expression and communication, and reflect upon the ways in which they are part of social relations, particularly unequal ones. In order to provide you with architectural background information useful to work in your other historic preservation courses and in local preservation projects, we will focus upon the architecture of British North America, especially the cultural hearths/landscape regions of New England, the Middle Atlantic, the Chesapeake and the Upland South. The extensive bibliography provided within the syllabus provides a starting point for reading in literature that takes other approaches to understanding North American architecture, or concerns that of other North American places.

The course takes a lecture/seminar format, which means that it will include both illustrated lectures and class discussions. Not only will it provide an opportunity for you to absorb substance (facts) about American buildings, but also will also guide you in developing both visual and verbal vocabularies, as well as skills in analyzing and interpreting North American architecture and landscapes, and reading and writing about them.

This class aims to complement, extend and apply the information and skills you will gain through HP612. While therein you will learn to document buildings, in this class you will learn to understand and interpret buildings them in "context" – i.e., in broad architectural, historical, cultural and social terms – and to think about them in relation to one another and to the surrounding landscape. In order to facilitate cooperative work with HP612, our course through our subject will be as thematic as it is chronological. This cooperation is another reason we will be paying special attention to the architectures of those places from which Kentuckians came to better understand the building types and methods of construction within Kentuckians' competencies. T

In the end, the course and collaboration aim to provide you with multi-textured understandings of American architecture in an academic sense, as well as a broad context for researching and evaluating the significance of particular historic properties within the parameters of preservation practice. Some of the questions with which we will grapple include:

- How European migrants to the American colonies extended their building traditions and modified them in response to American contingencies
- How the memories of African architecture possessed by enslaved Americans affected other building traditions in the Caribbean and American south
- How architecture and landscapes express and facilitate social relations of race, class and gender
- What concepts such as power, morality and identity have to do with architecture and landscapes
- How designers – both trained and untrained -- may have "thought" and imagined buildings
- How and when architecture emerged as a profession

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- Familiarity with the development of North American settlement landscapes, the variety of architecture appearing before 1860 in terms of form, ornament, construction and use, and its relationship to major social and cultural developments;
- Developing a vocabulary of terms commonly used in architectural history and in describing historic buildings for their preservation;
- Acquaintance with major interpretations of North American architecture;
- Beginning to adopt a critical approach to reading scholarly essays on the history of architecture;
- Accumulating a visual vocabulary that enables situating buildings in time and space and “reading” them to discern physical change over time;
- Developing a verbal vocabulary that enables written description of the formal, structural and ornamental characteristics of buildings;
- Application of concepts introduced in the course to the visual, formal and written analysis of buildings and landscapes;
- Write coherently about buildings and landscapes; and
- Confidence in participating in discussions about buildings, landscapes and their contexts

**EVALUATION:** the grade for the course will be determined by 4 factors:

- Class participation -- 25 percent
  - You are expected to make a commitment to this class, attending weekly, arriving on time and having completed the weekly assigned readings. You should also demonstrate engagement with the substance of the course by participating in all class discussions. In addition, each student will be responsible for leading discussion during one class session.
  - You are also expected to be present for two field days to be held in conjunction with HP612. If you are not enrolled in HP612, you need only be present during the meeting time for HP610 (though if you have no other commitments, you are welcome to participate the entire day one or both days).
  - There will, in addition, be one or two field trips to examine buildings and landscapes in Kentucky. While these field trips will take place outside the regular class meeting time, we will together determine their timing so as to cause everyone the least inconvenience.
- Architectural Description – 15 percent  
Each student enrolled in HP612 will be assigned a building to document. You will write a complete architectural description of this building. If you are not enrolled in HP612, I will locate a comparable building for this exercise, or you may suggest one. Your architectural description should be accompanied by several photographic images of the subject building. **Architectural descriptions are due October 24.**
- Book Review – 20 percent  
Each of you should read and review Dell Upton’s *Architecture in the United States* (1998). Your review should not merely summarize the book’s content, but also provide a critical assessment of the author’s approach to his topic, the sub-topics and examples he chooses to make his arguments, his organizational logic and the appropriateness, strengths and weaknesses of these to/for his topic. Book reviews should be 5 to 7 double-spaced pages in length. **Book reviews are due November 28.**
- Term Paper and Presentation – 40 percent (paper 25%; presentation 15%)  
The term paper will be an original and interpretive 15 to 20-page essay about a the building assigned in HP612 for your investigation which is both descriptive (i.e., presents both archival and architectural data) and interpretive (an analysis of this data). If you are not enrolled in HP612 and do not have a subject building, we will together negotiate a suitable topic. Your interpretive/analytical framework should come from class readings or lectures, and also draw upon the larger body of relevant literature. Each student will also do a 10-15 minute slide or PowerPoint presentation of his or her topic during the last class sessions. **Presentations will take place and term papers will be due on December 12 during finals week.**

<b>GRADING SCALE:</b>	A	100.00 - 90.00
	B	89.99 - 80.00
	C	79.99 - 70.00
	F	69.99 or less

## TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS

**August 22**                    **Introduction to the course, approach and syllabus**

**August 29**                    **Dwelling Form: Plan and Use**

Herman, 2005: 1-76 (Chapters 1 and 2)  
Kniffen, 1986 [1965]: 3-26  
Lanier and Herman, 1997: 10-60 (Chapter 2)  
McAlester and McAlester, 1988: 21-31

**September 5**                **Construction**

Herman, 1987: 83-108 (Chapter 5)  
Kniffen and Glassie, 1986: 159 - 181  
Lanier and Herman, 1997: 61-118 (Chapter 3)  
McAlester and McAlester, 1988: 33-53  
Peterson, 1992: 5-39 (Chapters 1 and 2)

**September 12**              **Fieldwork**

Friend, 2005: 9-101 (Chapters 1 and 2)  
Herman, 2005: 77-117 (Chapter 3)  
Riesenweber, 1990: 1-6

**September 19**              **Fieldwork**

Friend, 2005: 103-282 (Chapters 3, 4 and 5)

**September 26**              **Style, Ornament, Finish**

Herman, 1987: 42-60 (Chapter 3)  
Lanier and Herman, 1997: 119-176 (Chapter 4)  
McAlester and McAlester, 1988: 5-19  
Pierson, 1970: 1-21 (Chapter 1)  
Upton, 1986 (*Holy Things & Profane*): 101-162 (Chapter 6)

**October 3**                    **National Trust Conference: No Class**

**October 10**                  **British cultural hearths: colonial New England**

Cummings, 1979: 3-94 (Chapters 1, 3, 4 and 5)  
Pierson, 1970: 45-54; 78-94  
St. George, 1986: 336 – 364  
Steinitz, 1989: 16-26

**October 17**                    **British cultural hearths: colonial mid-Atlantic and Chesapeake**

Carson, et. al., 1988 [1981]: 113-158  
Chappell and Richter, 1997: 3-22  
Glassie, 1986 [1972]: 394-425  
Pierson, 1970: 22-33; 61-78  
Upton, 1986 [1982]: 315–335

**October 24**                    **Architecture and power on plantation landscapes**

**Architectural descriptions due**

Pierson, 1970: 111-123; 150-156  
Upton, 1986 (*Holy Things and Profane*): 199-232  
Vlach 1993: 1-17; 183-236  
Wenger, 1986: 137-149

**Site visit: Auvergne, the Brutus Clay farm (plantation) in Bourbon County, Kentucky. Date TBA**

**October 31**                    **The architecture of American slavery**

Herman, 2005: 119-154 (Chapter 4)  
Vlach, 1986 [1976]: 58-78  
Vlach, 1993: 18-122; 153-182 (Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 11)

**November 7**                    **Across the Appalachian mountains to the upland south**

Hofstra, 1991: 211 - 224  
Lancaster, 1991: 6-86 (Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4)  
Montell and Morse, 1976: 1-40; 52-86 (Chapters 2 and 4)  
Williams, 1986: 130–136

**November 14**                    **Community and urbanity**

Herman, 2005: 193-230 (Chapter 6)  
Lancaster 1991: 106-156 (Chapters 6, 7 and 8)  
Lanier and Herman, 1997: 278-315 (Chapter 7)  
Price, 1986: 124 - 145  
Wood 1986: 54-63

**Site Visit: Millersburg, Bourbon County, Kentucky or Washington, Mason County Kentucky. Date TBA**

**November 21**                    **Thanksgiving Break: No class**

**November 28**

**Architecture and identity in the new republic**

**Book reviews due**

Fazio and Snadon, 2006: 183-191; 389-446

Pierson, 1970: 205-235; 286-346; 395-403

**December 5**

**Pattern books, popularization and professionalization**

Bishir, 1986 [1981]: 447-481

Fazio and Snadon, 2006: 192-208

Gifford, 1966: 198-247 (sections 7 and 8 of part 2; on Downing and Vaux)

Upton, 1984: 107 – 150

**December 12**

**Presentations**

**Final papers due**

## **BOOKS YOU MAY WANT TO PURCHASE**

Rather than working from a text, we will be reading parts of books, as well as a number of essays that appear in edited collections. Most readings will be available both electronically (either scanned in and filed on the computers in the Bowman Hall CHAP space or through an aggregator such as JSTOR) and on reserve in the Architecture library.

Citations in bold type are those books that meet two conditions: we'll be reading a good deal of them and they are good additions to your libraries. They should thus be priorities for your purchases.

Cummings, Abbott Lowell, *The Framed Houses of Massachusetts Bay, 1625 - 1725*. (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1979).

Friend, Craig Thompson, *Along the Maysville Road: The Early American Republic in the Transappalachian West*. (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2005).

**Herman, Bernard L. *Townhouse: Architecture and Material Life in the Early American City, 1780-1830*. (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005).**

**Lanier, Gabrielle M. and Bernard L. Herman, *Everyday Architecture in the Mid-Atlantic: Looking at Buildings and Landscapes*. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997).**

**Pierson, William H., Jr., *American Buildings and Their Architects: the Colonial and Neoclassical Styles*. (Garden City, New York: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1976 [1970]).**

**Upton, Dell, *Architecture in the United States*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).**

Upton, Dell, *Holy Things and Profane: Anglican Parish Churches in Colonial Virginia*. (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press for the Architectural History Foundation, 1986).

**Upton, Dell and John Michael Vlach, eds., *Common Places: Readings in American Vernacular Architecture*. (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1986).**

**Vlach, John Michael, *Back of the Big House: The Architecture of Plantation Slavery*. (Chapel Hill: the University of North Carolina Press, 1993).**

While we will not be reading a great deal from the McAlester and McAlester *Field Guide*, most students, preservationists and architectural historians benefit from owning some sort of "style guide," and it is one of the best.

**McAlester, Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1988).**

## GENERAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

**NOTE:** Titles in bold are those we'll read in class.

Ackerman, James S., *The Villa: Form and Ideology of Country Houses*. (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1990).

Adams, Annmarie and Sally McMurray, eds., *Exploring Everyday Landscapes: Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture VII*. (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1997).

Bergengren Charles, "The Cycle of Transformation in Schaefferstown, Pennsylvania, Houses," in *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture IV*. Thomas Carter and Bernard L. Herman, eds., (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1991), 98-107.

Bishir, Catherine W., Charlotte V. Brown, Carl R. Lounsbury, and Ernest H. Wood III, *Architects and Builders in North Carolina: A History of the Practice of Building*. (Chapel Hill: the University of North Carolina Press, 1990).

Bishir, Catherine W., "Good and Sufficient Language for Building," in *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture, IV*. Thomas Carter and Bernard L. Herman, eds. (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1991), 44-52.

**Bishir, Catherine W., "Jacob W. Holt: An American Builder," in *Common Places: Readings in American Vernacular Architecture*, Dell Upton and John Michael Vlach, eds. (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1986).**

Bonta, Juan Pablo, *Architecture and its Interpretation: A Study of Expressive Systems in Architecture*. (New York: Rizzoli International, 1979).

Borchert, James, "Alley Landscapes of Washington," in *Common Places: Readings in American Vernacular Architecture*, Dell Upton and John Michael Vlach, eds., (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1986), 281 - 291.

Brunskill, R. W., *Illustrated Handbook of Vernacular Architecture*. (New York: Universe Books, 1971).

Cars, Peter, "'A School House Well Arranged:' Baltimore Public School Buildings on the Lancasterian Plan," in *Gender, Class and Shelter: Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture V*. Elizabeth Collins Cromley and Carter L. Hudgins, eds. (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1995), 70 - 77.

**Carson, Cary, et. al., "Impermanent Architecture in the Southern American Colonies," in *Material Life in America, 1600-1860*, Robert Blair St. George, ed. (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1988, 113-158. Originally published in *Winterthur Portfolio*. Vol. 17, no. 2/3 (1981), 135-196.**

Carter, Thomas and Bernard L. Herman, eds., *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture III*. (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1989).

Carter, Thomas and Bernard L. Herman, eds., *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture IV*. (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1991).

Chappell, Edward A., "Acculturation in the Shenandoah Valley: Rhenish Houses of the Massanutten Settlement," in *Common Places: Readings in American Vernacular Architecture*, Dell Upton and John Michael Vlach, eds., (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1986), 27 - 57.

**Chappell, Edward A. and Julie Richter, "Wealth and Houses in Post-Revolutionary Virginia," in *Exploring Everyday Landscapes: Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture VII*. Annmarie Adams and Sally McMurray, eds. (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1997), 3 -22.**

Cromley, Elizabeth Collins and Carter L. Hudgins, eds., *Gender, Class and Shelter: Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture V*. (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1991).

Cummings, Abbott Lowell, ed., *Architecture in Colonial Massachusetts*. (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1979).



Cummings, Abbott Lowell, "Inside the Massachusetts House," in *Common Places: Readings in American Vernacular Architecture*. Dell Upton and John Michael Vlach, eds. (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1986), 219 - 239.

**Cummings, Abbott Lowell, *The Framed Houses of Massachusetts Bay, 1625 - 1725*. (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1979).**

Cosgrove, Denis, *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*. (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1998 [1984].).

Dann, Nigel, *Historic English Carpentry: Traditional Green Timber Buildings*. (Bristol: University of West England, n.d.).

Deetz, James, *In Small Things Forgotten: The Archaeology of Early American Life*. (Garden City, New York: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1977).

Downing, Andrew Jackson, *The Architecture of Country Houses*. Reprint (New York: Dover Publications, 1969).

Downing, Andrew Jackson, *Cottage Residences, Rural Architecture and Landscape Gardening*. [1842] Reprint (Watkins Glen, New York: American Life Foundation, 1967).

Edwards, Jay D., *Louisiana's Remarkable French Vernacular Architecture, 1700-1900*. (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: the Fred B. Kniffen Cultural Resources Laboratory, Department of Geography and Anthropology, Louisiana State University, 1988).

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Ensminger, Robert F., *The Pennsylvania Barn: Its Origin, Evolution, and Distribution in North America*. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992).

**Fazio, Michael W. and Patrick A. Snadon, *The Domestic Architecture of Benjamin Henry Latrobe*. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006).**

Fitchen, John, *The New World Dutch Barn: A Study of its Characteristics, its Structural Systems, and its Probable Erectional Procedures*. (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1968).

Francaviglia, Richard V., *The Mormon Landscape: Creation and Perception of a Unique Image in the American West*. (New York: AMS Press, 1979).

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Groth, Paul and Todd W. Bressi, *Understanding Ordinary Landscapes*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997).

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**Herman, Bernard L., *Architecture and Rural Life in Central Delaware, 1700 - 1900*. (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1987).**

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