

## **History of Architecture (20<sup>th</sup> Century)**

58-206, 201; 58-206, 301 (Honors); and 58.490 Art History Seminar

MWF, 12:00-12:50 Coburn 300

Fall 2009

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## **History of Architecture**

### **Course Description:**

We cannot escape the art of architecture: we live in houses, we learn in schools, we work in offices. In this course we will learn how architecture affects our lives—in what ways does it shape our experiences, how does it enhance or detract from our activities? Why are some buildings successful while others fail? These are just a few of the questions that will be asked from both a historical and contemporary perspective.

This course will introduce students to the study of architecture through an examination of selected examples from the history of 20<sup>th</sup> century architecture. Classes will combine lecture and discussion that will teach students the fundamentals of architectural history as well as how to analyze buildings.

### **Class Compartment:**

Since class lectures are professional presentations at the university level, you are not permitted to eat, drink, converse or receive phone calls during class lectures and discussion. Students are not permitted to tape the lectures without the permission of the instructor. Disabled students must see me on the first day of class so that individual needs can be accommodated.

### **Requirements:**

**Text:** Please purchase the course textbook, P. Gössel and G. Leuthäuser, *Architecture in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*; and Michael Pollan, *A Place of My Own: The Architecture of Daydreams* (Penguin, 2008). **Note:** do not purchase the 1997 edition by Random House.

**Exams:** There will be three exams in this course (see lecture schedule for dates). Each is worth 25% of your final grade. Exams will consist of two parts: an in-class exam that includes identifications, short answer and essay questions; and an essay based upon selected sections of Pollan's book. **NOTE:** Examinations missed without prior **written** excuse from the instructor or **written** excuse for medical or other emergencies cannot be made up. **No electronic mail, fax, telephone, or voice mail is acceptable.**

**Paper:** You will write one paper for this course. The paper is due Sept. 21 and will count for 25% of your final grade. Please see the attached guidelines for the paper assignment.

**Attendance and Class Participation:** Attendance will be taken regularly; if you have more than three unexcused absences your final grade may be lowered proportionally. There will be ample opportunity for class discussion; your meaningful participation is highly encouraged and can benefit your final grade.

**On Reserve at O’Leary Library:** students may also wish to consult C.M. Harris, *An Illustrated Dictionary of Historic Architecture* in the Reference Area, call number NA 31.H56, 1983.

### **Schedule of lectures and events (N.B. Subject to change without prior notice)**

**Week of:**

**Sept. 2** Introduction; the Classical and Medieval traditions  
Key works: Crystal Palace, Eiffel Tower.  
Terms: Steel, truss.

**Sept. 7** **\*\*No class on Monday, Sept. 7\*\***  
The Chicago School and the American Skyscraper.  
Keyworks: Jenney’s Leiter Building; Sullivan’s Wainwright (Flagg’s Singer, Gilbert’s Woolworth); McKim, Mead and White’s Pennsylvania Station.  
Terms: Bessemer steel process, steel frame, curtain wall, form follows function.

**Sept. 14** The Arts and Crafts Movement and Art Nouveau  
Keyworks: William Morris textiles and furniture; Voysey’s Moorcrag; Horta’s Tassel House; Gaudi’s Casa Mila; Guimard’s Paris metro; Mackintosh’s Hill House; Wright’s Robie House; Stickley’s Craftsman furniture.

**Sept. 21** **\*\*Paper due: Sept. 21 on Pollan selection and NY Times article\*\***  
Arts and Crafts and Art Nouveau cont.; Expressionism.  
Keyworks: Mendelsohn’s Einstein Tower; Scheerbart.

**Sept. 28** **\*\*Pollan reading: pp. 132-152; 169-175 due Sept. 28\*\* AND \*\*Exam I: Friday Oct. 2\*\***

**Oct. 5** The Bauhaus and the International Style  
Keyworks: Gropius’s Bauhaus, Rietveldt’s Schroeder House, Mies’s Barcelona Pavilion, Corbusier’s Villa Savoye.  
Terms: gunite, piloti.

**Oct. 12** **\*\*No class on Oct. 12\*\*** Art Deco vs. IS Diaspora

- Alen's Chrysler Building; Neutra's Lovell House; Charles and Ray Eames, Johnson's Glass House  
Terms: MoMA International Style exhibition
- Oct. 19** Reactions to IS: Late Wright, the Scandinavians, and Brutalism  
Keyworks: Fallingwater; Aalto's Baker dormitory for MIT; Saarinen's TWA terminal; Kahn's Exeter Library in NH.
- Oct. 26** Cont.
- Nov. 2** **\*\*Pollan reading: pp.245-257 due Nov. 2\*\* AND EXAM II: Nov. 6, Friday\*\***
- Nov. 9** **\*\*No class on the 11<sup>th</sup>\*\***  
Post-Modernism and the 1970s  
Keyworks: Venturi's Guild House; SITE Best stores; Stern; Eisenman's House VI, Grave's Portland; Pei's JFK Library; Renzo and Piano's Pompidou Center; Gehry's Guggenheim, Bilbao; Libeskind's Holocaust Museum.  
Terms: Complexity and Contradiction.
- Nov. 16** Cont.
- Nov. 23** **\*\*Pollan reading: Chapter 6, due Nov. 23\*\***  
**Thanksgiving Break**
- Nov. 30** Architecture and Engineering  
Bucky Fuller and the Geodesic dome; the contemporary skyscraper: Abu Dhabi.
- Dec. 7** **\*\*Exam III, Monday Dec. 7\*\***  
Sustainable design: Nobis Engineering building, Lowell, MA
- Dec. 14** **\*\* Essay due Dec. 14\*\***

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## Paper Guidelines

**\*\*Due September 21\*\***

For this paper read the following materials:

- 1) *Class Matters*, Peter Kilborn, “The Five-Bedroom, Six Figure Rootless Life,” p. 146-165.

This book is the 2009 Fall Common Text; you may encounter it in other classes. I have put the reading on reserve at O’Leary Library.

- 2) M. Pollan, *A Place of My Own: The Architecture of Daydreams*; preface: ix-xi; Chapter 1 (pp. 3-8 and 14-21); Chapter 2 (pp. 30-48).

In your paper, compare and contrast the readings.

Consider the following:

- What do Kathy and Jim Link value most in choosing their house and location?
- What does Pollan value? Why does he decide to write the book?
- Is there room to day dream in the Link’s life? Why is daydreaming important to Pollan?
- Consider the title of the Link’s article: the “rootless life”—compare that with chapter 2 and Pollan’s attention to site. Why does he choose to “ride the tiger”?
- How does each reading address the sense of space in the American landscape?
- Despite the money, the luxury of the Link’s house, the activities they participate in, is there something missing in their life? Does Kathy recognize that?

When you write your paper, please anchor your argument by incorporating quotations from each of the readings, followed by the page number in parentheses. For example: “Kathy and her husband Jim....belong to a growing segment of the upper middle class, executive gypsies.” (p. 147)

PLEASE NOTE: You DO NOT need to do outside research for this paper; however, it is a formal writing assignment. Thus, it must be typed and proofread; the writing must be intelligent and not colloquial. If you do use outside sources, they must be indicated with proper citations. *Any late papers will drop five points for every day the paper is late. Any evidence of plagiarism will result in an “F” for the course. See attached statement on plagiarism.*