

American Cultural Landscapes

ARCH/LAND 530A | Fall 2016 | Thursdays 6:00 – 9:00PM | Givens 115
Instructor: Michael Allen

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Office hours by appointment; meeting immediately following class possible.

What we know as landscapes are not always inscribed by designers or created through nature – many are hybrid terrains that fuse nature, design and human culture. Some American places are constituted through their symbolic, utilitarian, architectural, scenographic or personal meanings rather than traditional attributes of landscape or urban design. This course examines this intersected space of the “cultural landscape” through a series of thematic reviews of types of landscapes. Throughout the semester, the course will interrogate the concept of vernacular landscapes, more broadly defined as landscapes of everyday life. From roadsides to homesteads to tourist attractions to landfills to urban neighborhoods, vernacular landscapes define the image of America to large extent. Readings will unpack the contingencies between design, economics, cultural politics, agriculture, consumption and technology that inscribe culture across the land. Readings will draw on the work of geographers, historians, writers, preservationists and artists. J.B. Jackson and Lucy Lippard’s theories about the cultural uses of land will be anchors. Along the way, course readings and experiences (including field work) will make stops along the way to examine local landscapes including a radioactive landfill, the neighborhoods of Detroit, private streets and vacant lots in St. Louis, Appalachian terrain, the Buffalo Bayou in Houston and other sites of memory and meaning. The course will pose a taxonomy of the types of cultural landscapes while presenting various methods for decoding, recording, interpreting, preserving and altering these places.

Readings

Some readings will be scanned and distributed throughout the semester. However, students are encouraged to purchase copies of these books:

- bell hooks, *Belonging: A Culture of Place* (New York: Routledge Press, 2009).
- J.B. Jackson, *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984)
- Chester Liebs, *From Main Street to Miracle Mile: American Roadside Architecture* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1995)
- Lucy Lippard, *On the Beaten Track: Tourism, Art and Place* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1999)

Other required readings are accessible on Blackboard (<http://bb.wustl.edu>) or will be distributed in class.

Required Work

Assigned Papers	40%
Final Project	30%
Attendance and Participation in Discussion	30%

Field Trips

All field trips will occur during class time.

Response Papers

Students will complete four assigned response papers, which will present readings and field experiences. If any student needs an extension on one of these assignments, the student should ask for one at the start of the class *before* which the paper is due. One extension will be granted, but only if it is requested according to the requirement listed on this syllabus. Late assignments will lose 3 points for each day they are not submitted. Email is an appropriate way of submitting a paper, and will be counted the same as paper submission.

Final Project

The final project will consist of a photographic essay on a local cultural landscape selected from an assignment description circulated by the fifth week of the course. The essay should be 12 pages in length, illustrated by maps and the student's own original photographs. The essays should be formatted for publication as small booklets. Conceptually, these essays could be guides to the selected landscapes and distributed to the public. The instructor may arrange for publication for students who consent.

Academic Integrity

Needless to say, you are responsible for adhering to the university's academic integrity policies (for a full articulation of them, see <http://studentconduct.wustl.edu/integrity/policy>). In particular, you are expected to produce your own work, to avoid inappropriate collaboration (especially on the written assignments), and to avoid various other forms of academic dishonesty, including falsification of data and misrepresentation of sources. Failure to cite and formally acknowledge your sources constitutes plagiarism, and will result in a failing grade (and likely disciplinary action within the bounds of Washington University's usual policies). You should produce work that is *very clear* in its acknowledgement of others' work – not only quoted material, but ideas and language as well

Citations and Formatting

All work for the course should use the Chicago Style or MLA Style. Please use an 11-point font, double space your work, and provide page numbers and appropriate references. Papers should also have a title, which can be generic or simply a statement of theme. Clear and well-structured writing is important in design practice, and hopefully you see it as a vital part of your education at Sam Fox School.

Schedule

* Denotes a reading posted as PDF on Blackboard. Additional readings may be assigned or recommended.

September 1: Exploring the Cultural Landscape

Introduction

Field Trip:

4562 Enright Avenue (installation at the Pulitzer Arts Foundation)

Reading (please read before class):

J.B. Jackson, "The Necessity for Ruins," *The Necessity for Ruins* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1980)*

Gwendolyn Brooks, "A Street In Bronzeville," (New York: Harper & Row, 1963).*

Recommended Reading:

4562 Enright Avenue (catalog, available at the Pulitzer Arts Foundation).

September 8: Defining the Cultural Landscape

Brief Field Trip at Start of Class:

Confederate Memorial, Forest Park

Depart from Classroom

Reading:

National Park Service, *Preservation Brief 36: Protecting Cultural Landscapes: Planning, Treatment and Management of Historic Landscapes*

<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/36-cultural-landscapes.htm>

Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History," *Representations* (Spring 1989).*

J.B. Jackson, *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape*, p. 1-69.

Rachel Lippmann, "Mayor Wants Confederate Memorial Out of Forest Park," St. Louis Public Radio (December 24, 2015)

<http://news.stlpublicradio.org/post/mayor-wants-confederate-memorial-out-forest-park>

September 15: Identifying the Cultural Landscape

Field Trip at Start of Class:

Walking Tour of Parkview, Skinker DeBaliviere & University City Loop

Depart from Classroom

Reading:

J.B. Jackson, *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape*, p. 70-157.

Trevor Paglen, "Experimental Geography: From Cultural Production to the Production of Space," *Critical Landscapes: Art, Space, Politics* (Oakland, Calif.: University of California Press, 2015).*

George L. Henderson, "What (Else) We Talk About When We Talk About Landscape: For a Return to the Social Imagination," *Everyday America: Cultural Landscape Studies After J.B. Jackson* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).

Response Paper #1 Due.

September 22: The Indigenous Landscape

Guest Lecture at Start of Class: Cahokia Mounds

John Kelly, Senior Lecturer, Department of Anthropology, Washington University in St. Louis

Reading:

Lucy Lippard, *On the Beaten Track: Tourism, Art and Place*, p. 1-87.

Timothy R. Pauketat, *Cahokia* (New York: Penguin Books, 2009), chapters 1, 3 and 5.*

September 29:

Meet at 7:00 PM, Pulitzer Arts Foundation,

Panel Discussion: Deconstructing and Reconstructing St. Louis

Moderated by cultural historian and urbanist-in-residence Michael Allen, this discussion will focus on the panelists' collective work to shape the St. Louis cityscape. Panelists, including many collaborators on the raumlabor project, will be Arnice Little of Z & L Wrecking Company; Pam Talley, President of Lewis Place Historical Preservation, Inc.; Bob Hansman, Associate Professor at Washington University in St. Louis; Jessica Eiland, President of Northside Community Housing, Inc.; and Frank Oswald, Building Commissioner of the City of St. Louis.

Reading:

Lucy Lippard, *On the Beaten Track: Tourism, Art and Place*, p. 88-164.

October 6: The Vernacular American Landscape

Meet at 6:00 PM, Missouri History Museum

Field Trip:

Route 66 Exhibit (6:00 – 7:00 PM; Return to Givens Hall).

Reading:

Chester Liebs, *From Main Street to Miracle Mile*, p. 3-117.

Sarah Kanouse, "Critical Day Trips: Tourism and Land-Based Practice" *Critical Landscapes: Art, Space, Politics* (Oakland, Calif.: University of California Press, 2015).*

Response Paper #2 Due.

October 13: The Vernacular American Landscape

Guest Lecture at 7:30 PM: Drawing Displacement: Chinatown in St. Louis
Anya Liao, artist

Reading:

Chester Liebs, *From Main Street to Miracle Mile*, p. 118-227.

October 20

NO CLASS; INSTRUCTOR OUT OF TOWN

Reading:

bell hooks, *Belonging* (recommended – get a start)

October 27: The Landscape of Struggle

Film In Class: *Harlan County USA* (1976; directed by Barbara Kopple).

Reading:

bell hooks, *Belonging*, p. 1-105.

October 29 (Saturday Tour)

Field Trip: North Webster, Webster Groves
Guest Guide: Lynn Josse, public historian
Meet at Givens Hall, 10:00 AM

Reading:

bell hooks, *Belonging*, p. 105-119; 143-183; 202-223.

November 3: The Landscape of the Invented Past (Historic Preservation)

Reading:

Burra Charter
<http://australia.icomos.org/publications/charters/>

James Marston Fitch, *Historic Preservation: Curatorial Management of the Built World* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1982; excerpts)*

Ned Kaufman, "Protecting Storyscape," *Place, Race and Story: Essays on the Future of Historic Preservation* (New York: Routledge Press, 2009)*

Chris Wilson, "Put On Your Hipster Hat," *Bending the Future: 50 Ideas for the Next 50 Years of Historic Preservation* (Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts Press, 2016).*

Michael Allen, "What Can Historic Preservation Learn From Ferguson?" *Bending the Future: 50 Ideas for the Next 50 Years of Historic Preservation* (Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts Press, 2016).*

Response Paper #3 Due.

November 5 (Saturday Tour): The Commemorative Landscape

Field Trip: Jefferson National Expansion Memorial & National Building Arts Center

Meet at Givens Hall, 10:00 AM (Return

Reading:

Jefferson National Expansion Memorial Cultural Landscape Report (excerpt).*

Recommended Reading:

CityArchRiver website:

<http://www.cityarchriver.org>

National Building Arts Center website:

<http://nationalbuildingarts.org>

Lauren Leone, "Dream of Architectural Artifact Museum Gets Closer to Reality," *St. Louis Beacon* (June 18, 2012).

https://www.stlbeacon.org/#!/content/25581/national_museum_architecture_061412

Michael R. Allen, "Utopia or Oblivion: Erasing Kiener Plaza," *nextSTL* (December 11, 2015):

<https://nextstl.com/2015/12/utopia-or-oblivion-erasing-kiener-plaza/>

November 10: The Landscape of Ruin (Or Regeneration)

Film In Class: *Escape from New York* (1981; directed by John Carpenter).

Reading:

Dora Apel, *Beautiful Terrible Ruins: Detroit and the Anxiety of Decline* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2015), chapters 3 and 4*

Camilo Jose Vergara, "Energies of the Outmoded," *American Ruins* (New York: The Monacelli Press, 1995).*

Barry Langford, "Seeing only corpses: Vision and/of urban disaster in apocalyptic cinema,"
Urban Space and Cityscapes: Perspectives from Modern and Contemporary Culture
(Oxon, UK: Routledge, 2006).

November 17: The Landscape of Production (and Waste)

Film in Class:

The First Secret City (2015; directed by Alison Carrick and C.D. Stelzer).

Guest Speaker: Alison Carrick

Reading:

Rachel Hooper and Nancy Zastudil, editors, *On the Banks of Bayou City: The Center for Land Use Interpretation in Houston* (Houston: The University of Houston, 2009; excerpts).*

Andrew Hurley, "Floods, Rats and Toxic Waste: Environmental Hazards Since World War II,"
Common Fields: An Environmental History of St. Louis (St. Louis: Missouri Historical Society Press, 1997).*

Robert Alvarez, "West Lake Story: An Underground Fire, Radioactive Waste and Governmental Failure," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* (February 11, 2016).

<http://thebulletin.org/west-lake-story-underground-fire-radioactive-waste-and-governmental-failure9160>

Recommended Reading:

Jesse Vogler, "Company Towns," The American Bottom Project.

<http://theamericanbottom.org/itinerarySix.html>

Response Paper #4 Due.

November 19 (Saturday Tour)

Field Trip: West Lake Landfill

Meet at Givens Hall, 10:00 AM (Return by 12:30 PM)

Reading:

US EPA: West Lake Landfill

<https://www.epa.gov/mo/west-lake-landfill>

Just Moms STL

<http://www.stlradwastelegacy.com>

November 24

NO CLASS; THANKSGIVING DAY

December 1

Guest Lecture at Start of Class: The Mexican Landscape of St. Louis
Danny Gonzales, Historian, St. Louis County Department of Parks and Recreation

Work Session

December 8

Final Presentations

Guest Reviewers: Jesse Vogler and Juan William Chavez