

**Architecture 653: Seminar in American Architecture
Landscape, History, and Public Culture**

Instructor: David Scobey
Office telephone: 764-7480
Email: scobey@umich.edu

Tuesdays 7-10 PM
Class: 2227 AA
Office: 3126 AA

OVERVIEW: How is history represented or effaced in the built and natural environment? What role do historical narrative and historical awareness play in public culture, so that stories about the past become expressions of present-day values and conflicts? How does social memory inform processes of city-building, and how might it inform landscape design? This seminar explores the links among place-making, historical consciousness, and public culture. It will explore such topics as cultural landscape studies, the relation of place to community identity, the role of historical narrative in public discourse, aesthetic practices of commemoration, and the ideology of historic preservation.

Equally important, the seminar will work collectively on a public cultural project involving the historical investigation and conceptual redesign of Broadway Park, a neglected riverside park in central Ann Arbor. This site-specific project is part of a longer-term effort by the University of Michigan's Arts of Citizenship Program to revivify the park and its environs in collaboration with the City of Ann Arbor's Parks and Recreation Department. There will be field trips to Broadway Park and the Bentley Historical Library, as well as presentations by faculty and community experts on various aspects of the history and potentiality of the site. Professor Caroline Constant's "gateway studio" for first-year M. Arch students will also be working on Broadway Park, and the two courses will cooperate loosely throughout the term. In sum, our seminar will ask you to pursue doctoral-level reading and discussion, locally-based archival research, and the development of conceptual proposals for the renewal of a historically-rich, neglected public landscape.

READINGS: The seminar readings explore the interrelationships between landscape, history, and public culture; they are quite voluminous but also, I think, quite interesting. All readings are required, and the success of the seminar depends on your coming to class prepared to talk, listen, and think about them. Nine books are available for purchase at Shaman Drum:

Arnold Alanen and Robert Melnick, Preserving Cultural Landscapes in America
M. Christine Boyer, City of Collective Memory
Hasia Diner, Jeffrey Shandler, and Beth S. Wenger, Remembering the Lower East Side
Kristin Hass, Carried To the Wall
Dolores Hayden, The Power of Place
Michael Kammen, Mystic Chords of Memory
James Kunstler, Geography of Nowhere
Simon Schama, Landscape and Memory
Nadia Wheatley and Donna Rawlins, My Place

Other readings, marked (X) in the syllabus, will be available in a master photocopy packet in the Doctoral Program in Architecture; still others (marked W) are on the World Wide Web.

WRITING AND PROJECT ASSIGNMENTS: You will have three work assignments. The first is a brief (5-page) interpretive paper on one of the required readings. The second, due after the February break, asks you to research and assemble an annotated documentary archive on a particular aspect of the history of the project site; collectively your research projects will create a research base about the history and topography of Broadway Park that will inform your own and future design proposals. Finally you will complete a term project using the research materials to produce either scholarly analysis, a proposal for a new program, or a conceptual design for Broadway Park and its environs. Your project may be produced individually or in a team; it may be “scholarly” or “design”; but all the term projects must participate in and contribute to the Broadway Park community project.

WEEKLY SYLLABUS

Readings marked (SD) available at Shaman Drum Bookstore

Readings marked (W) available on the World Wide Web

Readings marked (X) available in master photocopy packet in Doctoral Program mailbox

Jan 8: Introduction

I. Posing the Problem

Jan 15: Theme: Place, Maps, and Stories

Nadia Wheatley and Donna Rawlins, My Place (SD)

Simon Schama, Landscape and Memory, 3-36, 245-578 (SD)

Jan 22: Site: Broadway Park and the History of Ann Arbor

“The Making of Ann Arbor” Website (www.aadl.org/moaa) (W)

Jonathan Marwil, A History of Ann Arbor, chapters 1-3 (X)

Grace Shackman, “The Broadway Bridge Parks,” Ann Arbor Observer (August, 1996), and other materials about Broadway Park area (X)

David Scobey, “Putting the Academy In Its Place” (X)

There will be a field trip to Broadway Park during this week.

II. Landscape and History: An Overview of Themes and Methods

Jan 29: Urban Landscapes and the Production of Knowledge

M. Christine Boyer, City of Collective Memory (SD)

Wayne Booth, Gregory Colomb, and Joseph Williams, The Craft of Research, 1-84 (X)

There will be a trip to the Bentley Historical Library this week.

Feb 5: National Landscapes and the Production of Memory

Michael Kammen, Mystic Chords of Memory (SD)

D.W. Meinig, The Shaping of America, Vol. 2, 170-218 (X)

“Students On Site” Website, www.artsofcitizenship.umich.edu/sos, topics and archives concerning transportation and the Great Depression (X)

The first essay is due by the end of this week.

Feb 12: The Social History of Place-Making

Hasia Diner, Jeffrey Shandler, and Beth Wenger (eds.), Remembering the Lower East Side, 1-175 (SD)

Dolores Hayden, The Power of Place, Preface and chapters 1-3 (SD)

“Students On Site” Website, www.artsofcitizenship.umich.edu/sos, topics and archives concerning early settlement, German-Americans, and African-Americans (W)

Feb 19: The Ecology of Place-Making

Richard White, The Organic Machine: The Remaking of the Columbia River (SD)

Anne Whiston Spirn, "Constructing Nature: The Legacy of Frederick Law Olmsted," in William Cronon (ed.), Uncommon Ground, 91-113 (X)
"Students On Site" Website, www.artsofcitizenship.umich.edu/sos, topics and archives concerning the Huron River, transportation, and parks (W)

Feb 26: Midterm break—no class

Mar 5: Creating an Archive (I)
Student research presentations.

Documentary packets on research projects are due by Monday evening before class.

Mar 12: Creating an Archive (II)

Student research presentations: documents packets provided by Monday evening

Documentary packets on research projects are due by Monday evening before class.

Mar 19: Interventions: Land Development

James Kunstler, The Geography of Nowhere (SD)

Lowertown redevelopment proposals (X)

Mar 26: Interventions: Historic Preservation

Arnold Alanen and Robert Melnick, Preserving Cultural Landscapes In America (SD)

David Scobey, "Beyond Heritage" (X)

Apr 2: Interventions: Commemoration

Kristin Hass, Carried To the Wall: American Memory and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial (SD)

Apr 9: Interventions: Exhibits, Performances, and Public Cultural Work

Diner et al., Remembering the Lower East Side, 179-280 (SD)

Hayden, The Power of Place, 138-287 (SD)

Apr 16 or another time TBA: What To Do With Broadway Park?

Presentation of design and research projects

Final projects due April 24.