

ARCH 4315/5315 A History of Contemporary Theory

Dr. Kate Holliday

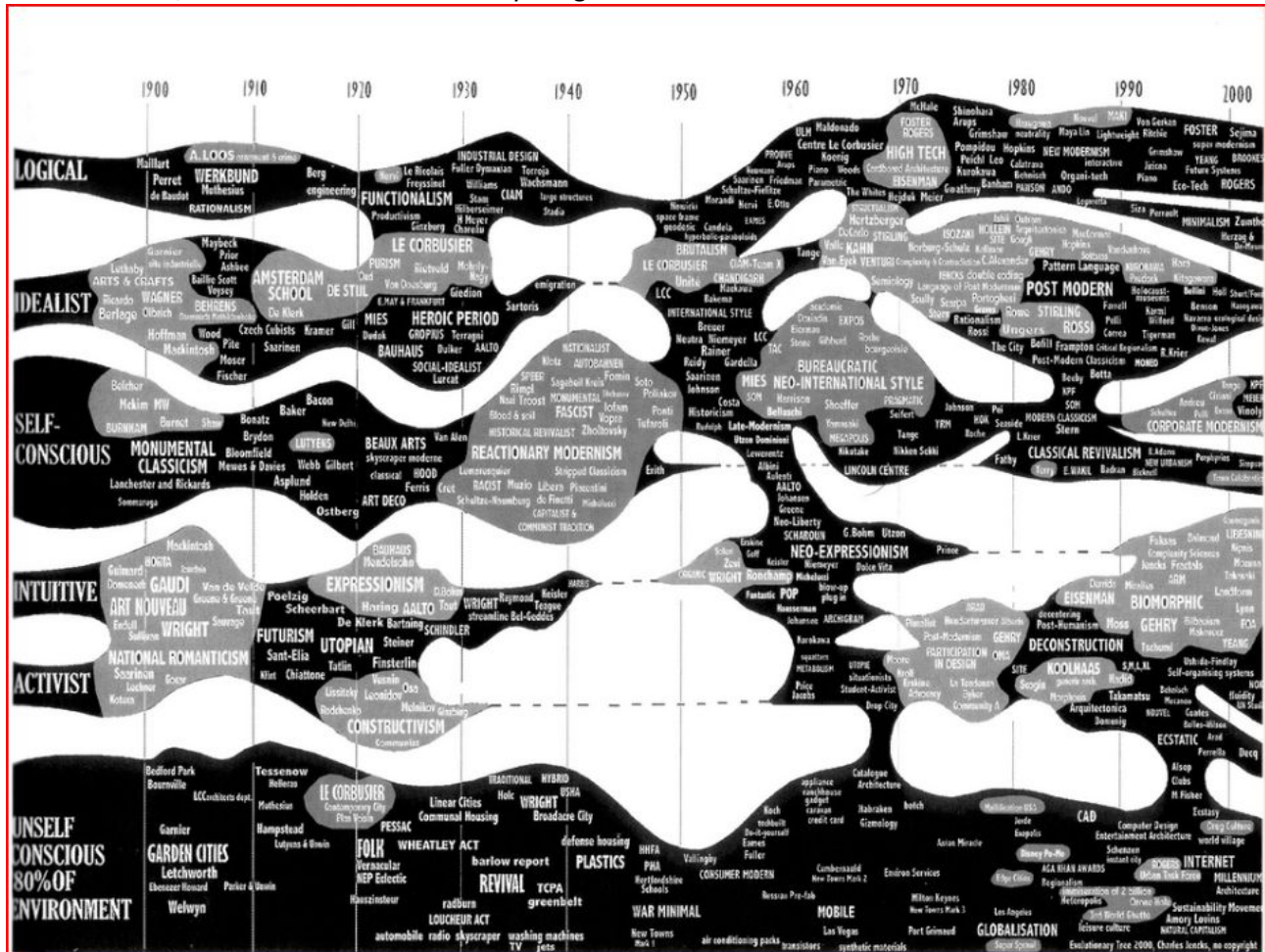
Spring 2014, Tuesday 2:00-4:50

Instructor contact

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Office hours: ARCH 416, Wednesday, 1:00-3:00, Thursday 12:30-2:00. If you cannot come during these times, please just schedule an appointment; I am happy to talk with you. E-mail is the best way to get in touch with me; voicemail will take a few days to get to me.



Make sense? It will.

Course description

Beginning in the 1960s, the decade postmodernism was born, an influx of theoretical thinking from disciplines outside architecture changed the dialogue about architectural practice. The intellectual paradigms of structuralism and poststructuralism, phenomenology, deconstruction, etc., led to a wave of attempts to reconceptualize the purpose and meaning of architecture in the wake of a crisis of modernist thought. This class surveys these positions and schools of thought, providing a platform for understanding the diversity of architectural thinking in the past 50 years. While the heyday of theory

may have peaked in the 1980s, its own demise marked by the end of publications like *ANY* and *Assemblage* in 2000, contemporary practice still responds in diverse ways to the legacy of these theoretical models even as it constructs new ones based in emerging digital technologies, ideas about public space, and continued exploration of environmental consequences.

Course objectives

This course will familiarize students with major intellectual paradigms and themes that have informed postwar architectural theory, criticism, and practice in the western tradition. Through reading primary theoretical texts by architects, philosophers, historians, and critics, students will hone their skills of critical thinking, research, writing, and presentation. They will become more intellectually self-aware and be better able to position themselves in their navigation of contemporary theoretical and practical issues.

Course format

This course will consist largely of discussion and analysis of weekly readings interspersed with illustrated lectures to introduce you to major theoretical concepts. As a result, this course is reading-intensive and its success depends on your engagement with the material and willingness to share your views. Do not leave your reading until the evening before class. Since the pace is relentless and the content is new for many of you, it may help you to form *reading groups* that meet weekly. Discussions in class will only benefit from it. Please note: to ensure that the classroom is a safe place ask questions and grapple with difficult ideas I do *require* respect and consideration for your colleagues in our discussions. Disagreement is entirely acceptable – disrespect is not.

Evaluation

Grades will be based on your class participation (10%) and weekly assignments (20%), two 5 page position papers (20% each), and a final personal statement of a personal theoretical position (30%, 40% of this grade is based on the draft). Attendance is required and more than 1 unexcused absence will reduce your final grade.

A = exemplary performance, well above average

B = very good work, above average

C = average work, all assignments completed according to the instructor's directions

D = below average work, failure to follow directions or to complete work

F = unacceptable work, incomplete assignments

Assignments

To encourage your engagement with the readings, which must be done weekly, assignments will ask you to assess the theoretical positions established by our authors. You cannot learn about architectural theory without reading it! Assignments include:

- Weekly blog posts (5 of these at 5% each, see schedule)
- Architecture journal review (10%)
- David Dillon mini-exhibit outline (10%)
- Critical essay on a building (20%)
- Theoretical position paper (15%) and poster presentation (10%)
- Class participation (includes attendance, 10%)

Texts

There are three required texts for this course. You **must** purchase them and bring the relevant volume to class each week to facilitate discussion.

Kate Nesbitt, *Theorizing a New Agenda for Architecture: An Anthology of Architectural Theory*

Neil Leach, ed., *Rethinking Architecture: A Reader in Cultural Theory*

Course reader, available at UTA Bookstore

Course policies

Late papers and assignments will not be accepted. Please look at the schedule of assignments and mark your calendars now. Most of the work for this class can be done well in advance if you have multiple assignments due at the same time. Working independently without someone breathing over your shoulder is a key to success in this seminar – and in any profession.

Attendance is required. This class is focused on group discussion and analysis – you cannot learn and participate if you are not here. We meet once per week – if you miss it once, you have missed 8% of the class. If you miss more than once class, I reserve the right to drop your grade one full letter grade.

If you are having trouble with any assignments or want to discuss issues outside of class please come to office hours or schedule an appointment. I am happy to discuss your questions and concerns.

You may also seek counseling in time management from the department of Student Services, see http://www.uta.edu/gradcatalog/2010/student_services

Plagiarism and other forms of cheating are serious academic offenses and will be grounds for failure of the assignment. DO NOT COPY AND PASTE from online sources, period. If you are uncertain about standards of academic honesty and ethics, please consult me and UTA's student code of ethics or visit <http://www.uta.edu/studentaffairs/conduct/academicintegrity.html>

Communication

I will use university-assigned e-mail addresses for communication if necessary, so if you do not check your mavs address, please be sure it is forwarded somewhere that you will receive it.

A full syllabus with all course policies laid out in detail is available on our Blackboard site: elearn.uta.edu

Schedule of course meetings and assignments

Week 1

1. January 14 Introduction

Michael Speaks, "Which Way Avant-Garde?" *Assemblage* 41 (April 2000): 78.

Week 2

January 21 Understanding Writing about Architecture: History, Theory, Criticism

Mary McLeod, "Theory and Practice," Joan Ockman, [untitled], and Rafael Moneo, [untitled], *Assemblage* n. 41 (April 2000): 51, 55, 61.

First weekly assignment due: Review an issue of an architecture periodical (10%).

Week 3

January 28 Historical Role of Theory

- Vitruvius, *Ten Books on Architecture* trans. Morris Hicky Morgan (New York: Dover Books, 1960), 13-17, course reader.

- Marc-Antoine Laugier, *Essay on Architecture* (1753; tr. Wolfgang Herrmann, Los Angeles: Hennessey & Ingalls, 1977), 11-18; course reader.
- Gottfried Semper, "The Four Elements of Architecture," (1851) in Gottfried Semper, *The Four Elements of Architecture and Other Writings*, Harry Francis Mallgrave and Wolfgang Herrmann, trans. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989): 101-104; 126-128, course reader.

Weekly assignment: create a blog post with 2-3 images of a building you feel reflects the issues discussed in this week's readings (5%).

Week 4

February 4 Systems of Thought 1 – Structuralism

- Umberto Eco, "Functionalism and Sign: The Semiotics of Architecture" (1973), Leach 181-202.
- Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown, and Steven Izenour, "A Significance for A&P Parking Lots, Or, Learning From Las Vegas" (1968), Nesbitt 308-21.

Week 5

February 11 Systems of Thought 2 – Poststructuralism and Deconstruction

- Peter Eisenman, "Architecture and the Problem of the Rhetorical Figure," Nesbitt 174-81.
- Bernard Tschumi, "Architecture and Its Limits II," Nesbitt 156-61.

Week 6

February 18 The Role of Architectural Criticism

- Ada Louise Huxtable, preface and "Marketing Illusion," from *The Unreal America: Architecture and Illusion* (New Press, 1997), 2-5, 92-107.
- Paul Goldberger, "Designing Downtown," *New Yorker* 6 January 2003, http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2003/01/06/030106fa_fact1?currentPage=all
- Nicolai Ouroussoff, "Koolhaas, Delirious in Beijing," *New York Times* 11 July 2011. http://www.nytimes.com/2011/07/13/arts/design/koolhaas-cctv-building-fits-beijing-as-city-of-the-future.html?_r=1&pagewanted=all
- Alexandra Lange, "Why Nicolai Ouroussoff Is Not Good Enough," *Design Observer* 18 February 2010. <http://observatory.designobserver.com/feature/why-nicolai-ouroussoff-is-not-good-enough/12708/>

Week 7

February 25 Class meets in Special Collections: Criticism in Dallas

Class will meet to discuss the David Dillon Papers and for students to begin to choose the papers/objects they will use for their mini-exhibit.

Week 8

March 4 Type and Archetype

- Giulio Carlo Argan, "On the Typology of Architecture," (1963), Nesbitt 240-46.
- Alan Colquhoun, "Typology and Design Method" (1967), Nesbitt 248-57.
- Aldo Rossi, "An Analogical Architecture" (1976), Nesbitt 345-52.

Weekly assignment: Create a blog post that includes 2-3 images of a building that you feel engages the ideas in Tuesday's readings. (5%)

Week 9

March 11 NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK

Week 10

March 18 Phenomenology

- Martin Heidegger, "Building, Dwelling, Thinking," (1971), Leach 143-61.
- Juhani Pallasmaa, "The Geometry of Feeling: A Look at the Phenomenology of Architecture," Nesbitt, 447-453.
- Peter Zumthor, *Thinking Architecture* (2006), 7-27; course reader.

Assignment due: Building review

Week 11

March 25 Regionalism and Local Criticism

- Kenneth Frampton, "Prospects for a Critical Regionalism," (1983), Nesbitt 468-82.
- David Dillon, "Shaping Up [Arts District]," *Dallas Morning News* 1E, 4E; "Where are they all going to live?" *Dallas Morning News* 10 June 2007, 1A, 20A.
- Christopher Hawthorne, "An Esther McCoy revival tells story of L.A.'s modern architecture," and "Century Plaza as L.A. Statement," *Los Angeles Times*, 18 December 2011 and 1 June 2009.
- Blair Kamin, "The Sky Above, The Dud Below," in *Why Architecture Matters*, 77-84.

Assignment due in class: David Dillon mini-exhibit

Week 12

April 1 Theories of Tectonic Expression

- Marco Frascari, "The Tell-the-Tale Detail" (1984), Nesbitt 500-514.
- Kenneth Frampton, "Rappel à ordre, the Case for the Tectonic" (1990), Nesbitt 516-529.
- Discussion of position paper assignment

Week 13

April 8 Theories of Urban Form: The Postmodern City

- Steven Holl, "Within the City: Phenomena of Relations," *Design Quarterly* (1988): 1-31, course reader.
- Rem Koolhaas, "Junkspace" *October* 100 (2002): 175-90, course reader.
- Michel Foucault, "Panopticism," Leach 356-367.
- Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (extracts), Leach 138-46.
- Peer review comments on your building reviews due: comment on two other reviews and be prepared to discuss in class (5%)

Week 14

April 15 Gender and Feminism

- Beatriz Colomina, "Battle Lines: E.1027", in Conway, *Sex of Architecture*, course reader.
- Dolores Hayden, "What Would a Non-Sexist City Be Like?," *Signs* 5 (1980), 170-87, course reader.
- Despina Stratigakos, "Why Architects Need Feminism," *Places* (September 2012) available online:
<http://places.designobserver.com/feature/why-architects-need-feminism/35448/>
- Weekly assignment: create a blog post with 2-3 images of a building you feel reflects the issues discussed in this week's readings (5%).

Week 15

April 22 Digital Frontiers: The First Wave

- Gilles Deleuze and Jonathan Strauss, "The Fold," *Yale French Studies* n. 80 Baroque Topographies (1991): 227-247, course reader.
- Greg Lynn, ed., *Folding in Architecture*, rev. ed. (Chichester: Wiley-Academy, 2004), excerpt, course reader.
- Weekly assignment: create a blog post with 2-3 images of a building you feel reflects the issues discussed in this week's readings (5%).

Week 16

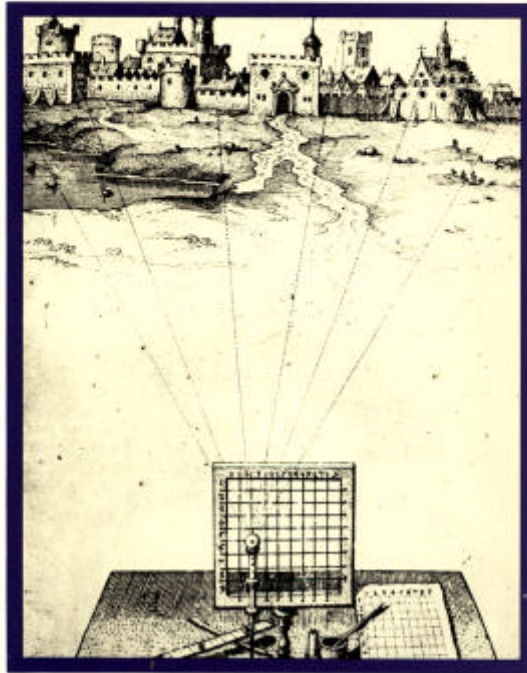
April 29 Presentation of student posters and position papers (10%)

Final position paper (rewritten in response to my comments and peer review) Due MAY 9 at noon

Have a good summer – read a book!

A Harvest / HBJ Book

INVISIBLE CITIES ITALO CALVINO



Bibliography

Below is a brief bibliography of 4-5 books for further reading on each of the themes we cover each week. We are scratching the surface here and you have a lifelong opportunity to continue to investigate ideas and histories that puzzle or provoke you. This is a place to start.

Other Anthologies on Theory

K. Michael Hays, ed., *Architecture Theory Since 1968* (MIT Press, 1998)

Harry Francis Mallgrave and Christina Contandriopoulos, *Architectural Theory: Volume II: An Anthology from 1871 to 2005* (Wiley, 2008)

Joan Ockman, *Architecture Culture 1943-1968: A Documentary Anthology* (New York: Rizzoli, 1993)

Krista Sykes, *Constructing a New Agenda: Architectural Theory, 1993-2009* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2010)

Bernard Tschumi and Irene Chang, *The State of Architecture at the Beginning of the 21st Century* (New York: Monacelli Press, 2003)

History of Theory

ANY, volume 1, no. 1

Fil Hearn, *Ideas that Shaped Buildings* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2003)

Mark Jarzombek, "A Prolegomena to Critical Historiography," *Journal of Architectural Education* 52/4 (May 1999): 197-206.

Hanno Walter Kruft, *A History of Architectural Theory*

Joseph Rykwert, *On Adam's House in Paradise: The Idea of the Primitive Hut in Architectural History* 2nd ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1981)

Anthony Vidler, *Histories of the Immediate Present: Inventing Architectural Modernism* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2008)

Structuralism and Semiotics

Roland Barthes, *Elements of Semiology* (Hill and Wang, 1977)

Charles Jencks, *The Language of Postmodern Architecture* (London: Academy, 1977)

Charles Moore and Donlyn Lyndon, *Chambers for a Memory Palace* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1994)

Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown, and Steven Izenour, *Learning from Las Vegas*, rev. ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1977)

Christopher Alexander, *Notes on the Synthesis of Form* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1964)

Poststructuralism and Deconstruction

Jacques Derrida and Peter Eisenman, *Chora L Works* (New York: Monacelli Press, 1997)

Thomas Docherty, *Postmodernism: A Reader* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993)

Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983)

Philip Johnson and Mark Wigley, *The Architecture of Deconstruction* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1988)

Bernard Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1994)

Mark Wigley, *The Architecture of Deconstruction: Derrida's Haunt* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1993)

Gender

Artur J. Aldama, ed., *Violence and the Body: Race, Gender, and the State* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003)

Denise Scott Brown, "Room at the Top? Sexism and the Star System in Architecture," in Ellen Perry Berkeley, ed., *Architecture: A Place for Women*

Karen Burns, "Gender in the Contemporary Architectural Theory Anthology," *Journal of Architectural Education* 65, n.2 (March 2012): 125-34.

Diller + Scofidio, *FLESH: Architectural Probes* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996)

Elizabeth Grosz, *Architecture from the Outside: Essays on Virtual and Real Space* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2001)

Architecture and Ethics

Hassan Fathy, *Architecture for the Poor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973)

Thomas Fisher, *Ethics for Architects: 50 Dilemmas of Professional Practice* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2010)

Karsten Harries, *The Ethical Function of Architecture* (MIT Press, 1998)

Bryan Bell et al., *Expanding Architecture: Design as Activism* (Metropolis Books, 2008)

Phenomenology and Perception

A+U special issue (1994): *Phenomenology and the Perception of Architecture* authors: Steven Holl, Alberto Perez-Gomez, et al.

George Dodds and Robert Tavernor, eds., *Body and Building: Essays on the Changing Relation of Body and Architecture* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2005)

Christian Norberg-Schulz, *Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture* (New York: Rizzoli, 1991)

Peter Zumthor, *Thinking Architecture* 2nd rev. ed. (Basel: Birkhäuser, 2006)

Critical Regionalism / Tectonic Culture

Vincent B. Canizaro, ed., *Architectural Regionalism: Collected Writings on Place, Identity, Modernity, and Tradition* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2007), 42-53.

Edward R. Ford, *The Details of Modern Architecture* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2003)

Kenneth Frampton, *Studies in Tectonic Culture: The Poetics of Construction in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Architecture* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2001)

David Leatherbarrow and Moshen Mostafavi, *Surface Architecture* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2005)

Philip Ursprung, *Herzog & De Meuron, Natural History* (Lars Muller, 2005)

Urban Form: The Postmodern City

Rem Koolhaas, *Delirious New York: A Retroactive Manifesto for Manhattan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977)

OMA, Rem Koolhaas, and Bruce Mau, *S,M,L,XL* (New York: Monacelli Press, 1995)

Steven Harris and Deborah Berke, *Architecture of the Everyday* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1997)

Thom Mayne, *Morphosis: Connected Isolation* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992)

Lebbeus Woods, *Radical Reconstruction* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1997)

Digital Revolution

Manuel de Landa, "Philosophies of Design: the Case of Modeling Software," *Verb: Boogazine* (Barcelona: Actar, 2001), 130-43.

Kieran Timberlake, *Refabricating Architecture* (New York: McGraw Hill, 2004)

Anthony Vidler, "Technologies of Space/Spaces of Technology," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 58, no. 3 (September 1999): 482-86.

Patrik Schumacher, *Digital Hadid: Landscapes in Motion* (Basel: Birkhäuser, 2004)
Antoine Picon, *Digital Culture in Architecture* (Basel: Birkhäuser, 2010)