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instructor: Anna Andrzejewski
course title: Field Methods in Vernacular Architecture
institution: University of Wisconsin
date offered: Summer 2006

posted date: June 2008
stable URL: www.vafweb.org/resources/syllabi/andrzejewski1.pdf

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Field Methods in Vernacular Architecture

Art History 600 (Summer 2006)

May 30 – June 18, MTWR, 8:55-12:05

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Course Description:

This course teaches students field-based methods of analyzing everyday buildings in order to help them interpret what they see in the landscape. This includes (but is not limited to): identifying and describing basic features of buildings, categorizing buildings and building details (by type and feature), photographic recording, and recording through rough sketches and measured drawings. Some attention also is given to exploring how archival information can help when trying to learn about the history of a building-- particularly the relationship of written sources to actual buildings. Lectures and discussions in class will address the “how to’s” of fieldwork as well as the logic behind it, while “field trips” to various destinations in and around Madison will teach students the fundamentals involved in fieldwork.

Course Goals:

The course develops out of the belief that fieldwork is “at the heart of good scholarship” on the American built environment (to quote Carl Lounsbury). The primary goal of the course is to offer students tools that they can employ in their effort to study buildings of all types – from the ordinary to the extraordinary. By the end of the course, students will have basic skills that will enable them to:

- Recognize and categorize the basic features of construction, ornamentation, and layout of common building forms in southwestern WI
- Document a structure and its relationship to the landscape using drawings and photography from a “windshield” to an intensive level
- Assemble data gathered in the field into a coherent form that can be shared with others

Course Requirements:

Success in the course is contingent upon attendance and participation in lectures, discussions, and field sessions, as well as significant time spent outside of class on assigned readings and activities.

Readings. There are multiple readings for this course, as listed in the **CALENDAR** below. You are expected to read them by the day they are listed on the syllabus. The following book is **REQUIRED**, and available for purchase at the UNIVERSITY BOOKSTORE:

- Thomas Carter and Elizabeth Collins Cromley, *Invitation to Vernacular Architecture: A Guide to the Study of Ordinary Buildings and Landscapes*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2005. ISBN: 1572333316

You should also purchase the COURSEPACK at Bob’s Copy Shop on University Avenue (REQUIRED). Other readings are available on-line or will be made available through some other means.

Supplies. Doing the kind of work may require that you acquire some supplies; details will follow. Recommended items are listed in Carter and Cromley, *Invitation*, p. 29.

Quizzes. There will be two short quizzes – on the Mondays of the 2nd and 3rd weeks. The contents to be tested will be reviewed in advance. These quizzes will be open note, and are designed to make sure you are keeping up to date with lectures, reading assignments, and fieldwork.

Field Responses. You will be required to hand in your “field notes” along with a one-page written “field response” no later than the Monday following each field trip (or, in the case of WEEK 3, on Friday the 16th). Your one-page field response should be oriented around explaining how what you did in the field builds on what you learned in class, as well as explaining what you found particularly insightful or problematic in the field. Although it is a “response paper,” it should not be written off the top of your head; rather, it should be well-written, organized, and above-all, reflective. Details on the kinds of “field notes” to hand in will be explained in class.

Final Essay. For the final written assignment, choose one of the essays assigned on the last day of the class to summarize and consider relative to the work done in this class. All three of the essays – written recently, by prominent scholars in the field – suggest fieldwork is at the heart of architectural history, but that it is, somehow, in crisis. Thus they offer a great way of pondering the state of the “field” of vernacular architecture studies as well as a means of reflecting on what we’ve been doing in this class, and its potential import in a larger sense. In your paper (which should be two to three pages in length), you should: 1) summarize the major argument of the essay; 2) discuss how you think the author would view the kinds of fieldwork we did in this class and the techniques that we used; 3) using the author’s arguments and considering what we did in this class, offer what you think is the importance of fieldwork (or not) in the study of vernacular buildings and landscapes.

Group Project. Each “group” (of 3 to 4 students) will be responsible for putting together a “report” based on one of the three sites visited in the course of the class. Each group will have different responsibilities, but their “report” will include, at minimum, a written description and interpretation of their site, graphic documentation, and photographic documentation. Details will be discussed in class. Responsibilities will be divided up during the first week of class. These are due – no exceptions – by FRIDAY, the 16th, at 4:00 p.m. in the MAIN OFFICE, Art History 232.

Distribution of Grading:

Quizzes (10% each):	20%
Field Response 1:	10%
Field Response 2:	10%
Field Response 3 (due Friday):	10%
Final Essay:	10%
Group Project:	30%
Class Participation:	10%

Grading Scale: The grade scale will follow University standards, but might vary given exam results: 94-100, A; 89-93, AB; 84-88, B; 79-83, BC; 74-78, C; 65-73, D, 64 and below, F.

POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND ALL THAT OTHER STUFF

Attendance/Make-up Policy:

Each student is expected to attend all class sessions. Failure to attend class regularly will result in a failing grade. If you cannot attend class, you should call and leave a message, particularly on fieldwork days – so your classmates and the Professor are not waiting around for you. Make-ups on quizzes and late papers will only be allowed in the case of extenuating circumstances (death in the immediate family, hospitalization, etc). Given the condensed nature of the summer session, any absence ensures that you will fall behind, so please make every effort to attend class and keep up.

Communications Policy:

I welcome questions and are eager to discuss any thoughts you have related to material covered in class. Please contact me by email for an appointment. If you have something important to discuss – such as missing more than one class period in a row, handing in an assignment late, or requesting reconsideration of a grade -- you should CALL me rather than use e-mail. I only discuss issues involving grades in person or on the phone (not EMAIL); this is for everyone's privacy protection. This includes requests to reconsider FINAL grades.

Academic Integrity Policy:

You are responsible to know what constitutes academic dishonesty. If you feel tempted to commit an act of academic dishonesty, ask yourself why you are in the class in the first place. Taking shortcuts only prevents you from adding to your knowledge. If learning something new is challenging for you, don't bother taking this course. The two most common types of academic dishonesty are "cheating" and "plagiarism." *Cheating* is the act of obtaining or attempting to obtain academic work through the use of dishonest, deceptive or fraudulent acts. *Plagiarism* is representing the work of someone else as one's own and submitting it to fulfill academic requirements (this includes the INTERNET!). On the consequences of academic dishonesty, see the section on Academic Misconduct on the University webpage at (<http://www.wisc.edu/students/conduct/uws14.htm>)

Special Needs and Accommodations:

If you have special educational needs (i.e., trouble with timed written quizzes), you should register at the McBurney center and contact me DURING THE FIRST WEEK OF CLASS to make arrangements.

CALENDAR (Subject to Change)WEEK 1 WINDSHIELD SURVEY & BASIC DOCUMENTATION TECHNIQUES

- May 30 (T) INTRODUCTION: FIELDWORK & THE STUDY OF EVERYDAY ARCHITECTURE
Read: Carson, Cary. "Doing History with Material Culture." In *Material Culture and the Study of American Life*, edited by Ian M.G. Quimby, 41-64. New York: W. W. Norton, 1978.
Carter, Thomas, and Elizabeth Collins Cromley. *Invitation to Vernacular Architecture: A Guide to the Study of Ordinary Buildings and Landscapes*. Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2005. INTRODUCTION (pp. xiii-xxv) and CHAPTER 1 (P. 1-18).
- May 31 (W) FIELD SURVEY 101
Read: *Guidelines for Local Surveys: A Basis for Preservation Planning*. National Register Bulletin 24. Washington, DC: National Park Service, 1985. Read Introduction, Chapter 1, and Chapter 2 (skip sections on archaeology)
<http://www.cr.nps.gov/NR/publications/bulletins.htm>
Excerpts from McAlester, Virginia, and Lee McAlester. *Field Guide to American Houses*.
Carter & Cromley, *Invitation to Vernacular Architecture* (textbook), pp. 19-27
- June 1 (R) FIELD TRIP – HIAWATHA CIRCLE, NAKOMA NEIGHBORHOOD, MADISON
Read: Clark, Clifford Edward. Chapter 7, "Ranch House Modern," in *American Family Home, 1880-1960*. 193-216. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986.
Historic Residential Suburbs: Guidelines for Evaluation and Documentation for the National Register of Historic Places. National Register Bulletin. Read: Introduction; also read parts of OVERVIEW OF SUBURBANIZATION, HOUSE & YARD, AND IDENTIFICATION that relate to POST 1945 HOUSING at
<http://www.cr.nps.gov/NR/publications/bulletins/suburbs/index.htm>.

WEEK 2 BUILDING DOCUMENTATION

- June 5 (M) QUIZ; FIELDWORK AND BUILDING DOCUMENTATION
Read: Chappell, Edward A. "Architectural Recording and the Open-Air Museum: A View from the Field." In *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture II*, edited by Camille Wells, 24-36. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1986.
John A. Burns, Chapter 1, "Overview" in *Recording Historic Structures*, 2nd edition. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2004, 2-25.
Carter & Cromley, *Invitation to Vernacular Architecture* (textbook), Chapters 2, 3 and 4
- June 6 (T) PRINCIPLES OF DOCUMENTATION – IN THE FIELD AND THE ARCHIVE
Read: John A. Burns, Chapter 4, "Measured Drawings," In *Recording Historic Structures*, 2nd ed., edited by John A. Burns, 88-139. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2004.
Lanier, Gabrielle, and Bernard L. Herman. "Recording Historic Buildings." In *Everyday Architecture of the Mid-Atlantic: Looking at Buildings and Landscapes*, 316-50. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1997.
Howe, Barbara J., et al. "Written Records." In *Houses and Homes: Exploring their History*, 39-58. Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press, 1987.

June 7 (W) FIELD TRIP – TBA (somewhere in Dane County)
Reading: TBA

June 8 (R) THE ART OF DESCRIBING: HOW TO PRESENT YOUR DATA
Read: Guide to Formal Analysis of Buildings and Landscapes (handout)
Alison Hoagland & Gary Fitzsimons, Chapter 2, “History.” In *Recording Historic Structures*, 2nd ed., edited by John A. Burns, 26-51.
How to Complete the National Register Registration Form, National Register Bulletin 16a, especially part III, #7, “Description.”
<http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb16a/>

WEEK 3 LANDSCAPE DOCUMENTATION

June 12 (M) QUIZ; FIELDWORK AND THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE
Reading: Peirce F. Lewis, “Axioms for Reading the Landscape: Some Guides to the American Scene.” In *The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes*, ed. D.W. Meinig, 11-32. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979.
Excerpts from Introduction, “Why Cultural Landscape Preservation?” and Arnold R. Alanen, “Considering the Ordinary: Vernacular Landscapes in Small Towns and Rural Areas.” In *Preserving Cultural Landscapes in America*, ed. Dolores Hayden, Arnold R. Alanen, and Robert Z. Melnick, 112-42. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins Press, 2002.

June 13 (T) FIELD TRIP – LANGFOSS FARM
Read: Ingolf Vogeler, “Dairying and Dairy Barns in the Northern Midwest,” in Noble and Wilhelm, *Barns of the Midwest*, 99-121.
EXCERPTS from Wyatt, Barbara, et al. *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin: A Manual for Historic Properties*, on “Agriculture” (published by the Historic Preservation Division, State Historical Society of Wisconsin).

June 14 (W) FIELD TRIP – LANGFOSS FARM

June 15 (R) WORK DAY!!!!
READ: Reinhart, Thomas. “Fieldwork: Scholarly Foundation or Quaint Tradition?,” typescript.
Lounsbury, Carl. “Whither Fieldwork,” *VAN* 87 (Spring 2001): 22-26
Hudgins, Carter L. “The Future of Vernacular Architecture Studies,” *VAN* 75 (Spring 1998): 26-30.

FINAL GROUP PROJECTS DUE 16 JUNE, 4:00 P.M.