

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY 2
ARCH 251
School of Architecture
McGill University
Prof. Annmarie Adams
Winter 2020

This course explores new architecture that emerged since 1945 in urban North America. In planning the lectures, discussion seminars, field trips and the assignment, we assume that buildings are a form of material culture, and as such are manifestations of social and cultural history. Each lecture focuses on a specific architectural issue, typology, or case study, spinning out to broader societal ideas, including vernacular and everyday architectures. The lectures and readings offer new approaches to the subject, carefully chosen to nurture skills in critical reading and to encourage students to question the traditional canon of Architectural History. Which buildings matter and why? How do historians balance architectural evidence and how can architects engage historical evidence? Additionally, every effort is made to engage Montreal's architectural offerings as a teaching laboratory, especially evident in the field trip and assignment.

Furthermore, this course serves as an introduction to writing about architecture, through hands-on "how-to" sessions and weekly analysis of readings. Architecture students can expect to gain significant skills in historical research, configuring a research proposal, the engagement of primary sources, the construction of arguments, the compilation of a bibliography, and study skills.

Lectures: Fridays, 10:30-12:30, Room MDHAR 212.

Seminars: Wednesdays, 9:35-10:35 and 10:35-11:35, MDHAR G-01. Seminars will focus on required readings and offer an opportunity to ask questions about the lecture material. Note that the Wednesday seminars *follow* the Friday lectures, thus beginning Jan. 15.

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Requirements: Regular attendance at lectures, participation in weekly discussion sessions (10%); a research paper (40%); a midterm quiz (20%); a final exam (30%) during the university's exam period.

Proposed Lecture Schedule:

January 10 **Brave New World**

- Daniel Bluestone, "'A city under one roof,' Chicago skyscrapers, 1880-1895," in [*American Architectural History*](#), ed. Keith Eggener (London: Routledge, 2004), 177-205.
- Robert W. Rydell, "A cultural Frankenstein? The Chicago World's Columbian Exposition of 1893," in Eggener, 249-66.

January 15 **Discussion: The Skyscraper**

- Louis Sullivan, "The Tall Office Building Artistically Considered," *Lippincott's Magazine* 57 (March 1896), 403-9.

January 17 **Glass Houses**

- Alice Friedman, "People Who Live in Glass Houses: Edith Farnsworth, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, and Philip Johnson", in Eggener, 316-41.

January 22 **Discussion: The Post-War Home**

- Philip Johnson, "House in New Canaan, Connecticut," *Architectural Review* 108 (Sept. 1950), 152-9
- National Historic Landmark Nomination, "Philip Johnson's Glass House," 1996.

January 24 **Brutalism and Free Speech**

- Daniel Abramson, "Reversing Obsolescence," in *Obsolescence: An Architectural History* (Chicago, London: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 107-34.

January 29 **Discussion: Field trip to the Leacock Building**

January 31 **TBA (Laura O'Brien)**

- February 5 **Discussion: How to Write a Paper with Prof. Adams**
- February 7 **Historic Preservation**
- Katharine G. Bristol, "The Pruitt-Igoe myth," in Eggener, 352-64.
 - Neil Levine, "Robert Venturi and 'the return of historicism,'" in Eggener, 365-79.
- February 12 **Discussion: Cities**
- Jane Jacobs, "From The Life and Death of the American City," in *Architectural Theory Volume II, An Anthology from 1871-2005*, ed. Harry Francis Mallgrave and Christina Contandriopoulos (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 339-42.
- February 14 **Women Architects**
- Gwendolyn Wright, "On the Fringe of the Profession: Women in American Architecture," in *The Architect*, ed. Spiro Kostof (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 280-308.
- February 19 **Discussion: Review for Midterm Quiz**
- February 21 **Expo 67**
- Inderbir Singh Riar, "Expo 67, or Megastructure Redux," in *Meet me at the Fair: A World's Fair Reader* (January 2014): 255-70, <https://dl.acm.org/doi/10.5555/2811094.2811121>.
- February 26 **Discussion: Montreal as megastructure**
- Reyner Banham, "L'Homme à l'Expo," *New Society*, 1 June 1967, 811-13.
- February 28 **Midterm Quiz - 1 hour**
Four pairs of slides for fifteen minutes each.

- March 6 **Study Break - No Lecture**
- March 11 **Discussion:** midterms returned
- March 13 **Postmodernism 1** (Theme park cities), Jencks I
- Charles Jencks, [*The Story of Post-Modernism: Five Decades of the Ironic, Iconic and Critical in Architecture*](#) (Hoboken: Wiley, 2012), Part I.
- March 18 **Discussion**
- March 20 **Postmodernism 2** (European)
- Jencks, *The Story of Post-Modernism*, Part II.
- March 25 **Discussion:** European Architects
- Rem Koolhaas, "From Delirious New York," in Mallgrave and Contandriopoulos, 455-56; and "OMA, Rem Koolhaas, and Bruce Mau from Bigness, or the Problem of Large," 566-68.
- March 27 **Postmodernism 3** (High-Tech)
- Jencks, *The Story of Post-Modernism*, Part III.
- April 1 **Discussion:** Formalism
- Peter Eisenman, "From The End of the Classical: The End of the Beginning, the End of the End," in Mallgrave and Contandriopoulos, 471-73.
 - John Seabrook, [*"The Abtractionist,"*](#) *New Yorker* December 21, 2009.
 - Saskia Sassen, "Scale and Span in a Global Digital World," in *Architecture and Design in Europe and America, 1750-2000*, ed. Abigail Harrison-Moore and Dorothy C. Rowe (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), 488-93.
- April 3 **Postmodernism 4** (Starchitects) *submit paper at beginning of class*
- Charles Jencks, *The Story of Post-Modernism*, Part V.
- April 8 **Discussion:** How to study effectively (what's important in history)
- April 10 **Architecture Today**

Participation

Please bring 2-3 questions or comments (can be in point form) to the discussion seminar in hard copy each week. These will be used to guide the discussion and handed in at the end of each seminar. Each will count for 1 mark in the participation grade (total of 10 percent).

Final exam – 3 hours (Date TBA, exam period is April 17-30)

The final exam covers the entire course including lectures, discussion sessions, and readings.

Assignment (more information to follow)

The assignment is intended to introduce students to critical, argumentative writing in architectural history. You are invited to write a research paper on Expo 67 by undertaking a close study of a national pavilion. Your paper must have an original argument, supported by architectural evidence, and include the following eight components, each worth 5% (total = 40%): an introduction, conclusion, and clear statement of an argument; 6-10 illustrations with sources acknowledged; an unpublished quote from someone who visited or experienced the pavilion directly; the engagement of at least two primary sources; a bibliography of a dozen secondary sources. The final paper, due April 3 at the beginning of class, should be ten pages of 12-pt text, double spaced excluding notes (2500 words). Follow the *Chicago Manual of Style* for papers in the humanities for footnoting style. Note a selection of excellent papers from past years is available through eScholarship@McGill.

Academic integrity

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES (see www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/ for more information).