

Architecture 142

Fall 2023

School of Architecture

AN INTRODUCTION TO CULTURAL HISTORY

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Time: Tue 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm

We acknowledge that the School of Architecture is located on the traditional territory of the Neutral, Anishinaabeg and Haudenosaunee peoples. The University is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes 10 kilometres on each side of the Grand River.

Course Description

This course defines and introduces an approach to cultural history as a discipline, and attempts to localize modern humanity by looking at the principal experiences and images that have been central to the experience of an open, globalized society. This course examines some of the main narrative structures that allow people to create meaning, and also provides an introduction to one of the key skills of an architect: the ability to read and critically assess often complex visual information, known as both iconography and iconology (which is the reason for the nickname “ICO” for cultural history stream).

Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, students will have a greater sense of the unique power of different forms of narrative to shape meaning. In addition, they will have a more sophisticated ability to analyze visual information, especially as embodied in urban maps and architectural plans.

Course Requirements and Assessment

Students are expected to read the following books:

1. Arendt, Hannah, *Between Past and Future* (Penguin) 978-0143039884
2. Hurston, Zora Neale, *Barracoon: The Story of the Last Black Cargo* (Amistadt) 978-0062748218

3. Kertesz, Imre, *Fatelessness* (Vintage) 978-1400078636
4. Levi, Primo, *The Periodic Table* (Schocken) 978-0805210415
5. Mann, Thomas, *Tables of the Law* (Paul Dry Books) 978-1589880573
6. Morris, Jan, *Conundrum* (NYRB Classics) 978-1590171899
7. Orwell, George, *Homage to Catalonia* (Penguin) 978-0141183053
8. Rose, Gillian, *Love's Work* (NYRB Classics) 978-1590173657
9. Sebald, Winfried Georg (Max), *Austerlitz* (Random House) 978-0676974348
10. Swift, Graham, *Waterland* (Vintage) 978-0679309376
11. Wagamese, Richard, *One Story One Song* (978-1771620802)

In addition, students are expected to attend class, keep an individual illustrated notebook of the classes given in Arch 142 and the books read (50% of final grade, with the first submission of Sep 26 counting for 10% and the second and final submission for 40%), and write a personal essay (50% of final grade, with the first submission of Nov 17 counting for 10% and the second and final submission of Nov 28 for 40%).

Topics & Schedule

Sep 12	Presentation: Not-So-Safe Behind the Dikes. Presentations by Tas.
Sep 19	Reading: Gillian Rose, <i>Love's Work</i> . Presentation: An Apprentice in Search of a Mission
Sep 26	Submission 1: Photocopies of notebook pages for the first two weeks of Arch 142. Reading: George Orwell, <i>Homage to Catalonia</i> . Presentation: A Journeyman's World.
Oct 03	Reading: Primo Levi, <i>The Periodic Table</i> . Presentation: Learning from a Master.
Oct 10	Reading Week: No Class.
Oct 17	Title and 500-word outline of an environmental autobiography. This outline should contain one sketch. Reading: Hannah Arendt, "The Crisis in Culture," "The Crisis of Education," and "Truth and Politics" in <i>Between Past and Future</i> . Presentation: Between the Stable Ground and a Moving Cloud: Historical Memory in the Age of Fake News.
Oct 24	Reading: Graham Swift, <i>Waterland</i> . Presentation: Nature, History, and Nature again. <i>This presentation is part of the school-wide sustainability initiative.</i>

Oct 31	Reading: Imre Kertesz, <i>Fatelessness</i> . Presentation: Sheep to the Slaughter.
Nov 07	Reading: Winfried Georg (Max) Sebald, <i>Austerlitz</i> . Presentation: The Crumbling Fortress.
Nov 14	Reading: Thomas Mann, <i>The Tables of the Law</i> . Presentation: On Cultural History.
Nov 21	Reading: Zora Neale Hurston, <i>Barracoon</i> . Presentation: A Short History of Slavery.
Nov 28	Submission 3: Environmental autobiography. Reading: Jan Morris, <i>Conundrum</i> . Presentation: On Memoirs, Autobiography, and Memoir.
Dec 05	Reading: Richard Wagamese, <i>One Story One Song</i> . Presentation: Genocide and Restitution.

On Keeping a Notebook

See the relevant description in the Arch 120 syllabus.

In addition, the following observations. Typically, you should produce for the notebook to be kept in Arch 142 around 500 words of journal entries each week. The entries should be written in complete sentences that contain at least a subject and a predicate, and not be written in point form. The purpose of the journal is to record experiences, observations, and ideas. This journal should be distilled from

1. your class notes
2. notes on your readings in this course
3. notes on your other experiences as an architecture student
4. notes on what is happening around you, both close by, and in the wider world.

You will have to submit your journal in the third week of the term, which will allow us to provide feedback as to its form and effectiveness.

The third and most important deliverable is a personal narrative or first-person essay that reflects on the term as a whole and your participation in Arch 142 in particular.

Personal Essay

Architects do not only communicate their ideas in drawings, but also in words. For the architect, writing is a necessary and important skill. And it is an essential part of any academic program that aspires to do more than simply train people in the use of discrete set of skills.

In this course you will have to write a personal narrative, which may take the form of a memoir or a first-person essay. Linked closely to an art form with which most of us are very familiar—the storytelling that occurs in every conversation—the personal narrative seeks to create prose that, in the words of the writer Vivian Gornick, is “controlled by an idea of the self under obligation to lift from the raw material of life a tale that will shape experience, transform event, deliver wisdom.” The raw material of life is, in this case, collected in the journal kept during this term. In the personal narrative you ought to attempt to distil from the manifold of experience an insight and a position. Almost two centuries ago the German writer Friedrich Hebbel wrote in his diary that “I consider it to be the great duty of every person who writes to contribute materials to his biography. And when he has made no spiritual discoveries and has not conquered foreign countries, then he must at least have made many different errors, and those errors are as important to mankind as the truths discovered by the greatest of men.”

The great test of any personal essay, or memoir, which is closely related, is if the reader senses that the writer is truthful. Truth in this context is achieved not through a recital of actual events, but when the reader comes to believe that the writer is working hard to engage with the experience at hand. In other words: what matters is not what happened to the writer, but the large sense that the writer is able to make of what happened. For that the power of a writing imagination is required. As British writer Victor Sawdon Pritchett once said of the genre, “It’s all in the art. You get no credit for living.” Given the fact that you will be keeping a journal in a situation of crisis, caused by the Covid epidemic, and in a situation that must be deeply disappointing to you, because you are not able to begin your architectural education at the school in Cambridge in the physical presence of your peers, TAs, and professors, it might help to remember Israeli writer David Grossman’s observation, made in his volume of essays *Writing in the Dark*: “Writing about reality is the simplest way to not be a victim.”

In this course you will write a particular kind of personal narrative, which we may define as a short environmental autobiography. In this essay, you are asked to reflect upon a single place that is especially important to you, to consider the way(s) it made you the person you are today, and the way(s) it shapes your ambition as an architect-to-be. While this essay has much in common with a “normal” autobiography, its central focus should be not on people or events, but on a place, its location, form, texture, sound, light and so on. You must include three sketches. This essay should be around 3,000 words long. This essay requires some sustained thought and work. In order to stimulate you to begin work six weeks before the deadline you must submit a title with a 500-word outline for the essay on October 17. If you fail to submit this outline by that date, your essay mark will be reduced with 10 points (out of 100)—that is an essay that would have earned an A becomes a B, and so on.

Vocabulary

ICONOGRAPHY, N

Etymology: < medieval Latin *īconographia*, < Greek *εἰκονογραφία* sketch, description (Strabo), < *εἰκών* icon n. + *-γραφία* writing, -graphy comb. form.

1. A pictorial representation, delineation; a drawing or plan. *Obsolete.*

1628 Robert Burton, *Anatomy of Melancholy* (ed. 3) ii. ii. iv. 254: Those curious Iconographies of Temples and Pallaces.

1678 Edward Phillips, *New World of Words* (new ed.) Iconography is the platform or model of a House.

2. The description or illustration of any subject by means of drawings or figures; any book or work in which this is done; also, the branch of knowledge which deals with the representation of persons or objects by any application of the arts of design.

1678 Edward Phillips, *New World of Words* (new ed.): Iconography, a Description by Cuts, etc.

1939 Erwin Panofsky, *Studies in Iconology*, i. 3: Iconography is that branch of the history of art which concerns itself with the subject matter or meaning of works of art, as opposed to their form.

1970 *Oxford Companion of Art*, 555/1: Iconography, a term in art history, extended in the 20th century to cover the whole descriptive investigation of the subject matter of the figurative arts. Iconography studies the development of the themes which artists use, for instance the transformation of the images of planets in astrological manuscripts, the rise of genre painting, the origins of still life, and the use of political satire.

ICONOLOGY, N.

Etymology: modern < Greek εἰκών, εἰκονο- image: see -logy comb. form. Compare Greek εἰκονολογία figurative speaking, whence Italian *iconologia* (1611 Cæsare Ripa).

1. That branch of knowledge which deals with the subject of icons (in any sense of the word); also the subject matter of this study, icons collectively, or as objects of investigation, etc.

1730 Nathan Bailey et al. *Dictionary Britannicum*: "Iconology" Interpretation of ancient Images, Monuments, and Emblems.

1949 René Wellek and Austin Warren, *Theory of Literature*, xi. 125: The conceptual and symbolic meanings of works of art ('Iconology').

1956 Erwin Panofsky, *Meaning in Visual Arts*. 31: The discovery and interpretation of these 'symbolical' values (which are often unknown to the artist himself and may even emphatically differ from what he consciously intended to express) is the object of what we may call 'iconology' as opposed to 'iconography'.

ETCETERA

Moving to the mundane, here the basic rule that governs class time: electronic communication devices, ipads, tablets, androids and computers, must be turned off for the

duration of the class and cannot be on your desk. This means that you will have to make your notes by hand with pencil, marker or pen on paper, either single sheets to be assembled in binders, or in notebooks of your choice. For those of you who wonder why I exclude the use of other electronic means as tools of notetaking, the following: the great majority of students are more engaged in class discussion when they are laptop-free. In some classes computers might be necessary, but in the cultural history classes they are only a nuisance. So when you need to surf the web, or check your email or messages: you'll have to wait until the break, or the end of the class.

Course Delivery Platforms & Communication

The course will be given in person. LEARN will be used for additional communication outside of class hours, and for the posting of slide lectures given in class. Microsoft Teams will be used as a course delivery platform in case the Covid pandemic forces us to switch to virtual classes.

COVID-19 Special Statement

Given the on-going situation around COVID-19, students are to refer to the University of Waterloo's developing information resource page (<https://uwaterloo.ca/coronavirus/>) for up-to-date information on academic updates, health services, important dates, co-op, accommodation rules and other university level responses to COVID-19.

Fair Contingencies for Emergency Remote Teaching

To provide contingency for unforeseen circumstances, the instructor reserves the right to modify course topics and/or assessments and/or weight and/or deadlines with due and fair notice to students. In the event of such challenges, the instructor will work with the Department/Faculty to find reasonable and fair solutions that respect rights and workloads of students, staff, and faculty.

Late Work

Assignments that are handed in late will receive an initial penalty of 5% on the first calendar day late and a 5% penalty per calendar day thereafter. After 5 calendar days, the assignment will receive a 0%. Only in the case of a justified medical or personal reason will these penalties be waived, and only if these have been officially submitted to the Undergraduate Student Services Co-Ordinator and accepted by the Undergraduate Office. Students seeking accommodations due to COVID-19, are to follow Covid-19-related accommodations as outlined by the university here: (<https://uwaterloo.ca/coronavirus/academic-information#accommodations>).

Passing Grade

A passing grade in Arch 142 is 50%.

The So-Called “Small Print”

Mental Health Support

All of us need a support system. We encourage you to seek out mental health supports when they are needed. Please reach out to Campus Wellness (<https://uwaterloo.ca/campus-wellness/>) and Counselling Services (<https://uwaterloo.ca/campus-wellness/counselling-services>). We understand that these circumstances can be troubling, and you may need to speak with someone for emotional support. Good2Talk (<https://good2talk.ca/>) is a post-secondary student helpline based in Ontario, Canada that is available to all students.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Commitment

At the School of Architecture, we are committed to foster and support equity, diversity and inclusion. We recognize however, that discrimination does occur, sometimes through an isolated act of discrimination, but also through practices and policies that must be rewritten. If you ever experience discrimination and need to report on instances of micro-aggressions and other forms of racism, sexism, discrimination against LGBTQ2S+, or disability, please note that there are different pathways to report these instances:

- A. If you feel comfortable bringing this up directly with the faculty, staff or student who has said or done something offensive, we invite you, or a friend, to speak directly with this person. People make mistakes and dealing them directly in the present may be the most effective means of addressing the issue.
- B. If you do not wish to bring this up with this person directly, you are invited to reach out to the undergraduate coordinator (Amanda Dudnik), the undergraduate officer (Lola Sheppard) or the director (Maya Przybylski). If you contact any of these people in confidence, they are bound to preserve your anonymity and will be able to follow up on the report.
- C. You may also choose to report centrally to the Equity Office. The Equity Office can be reached by emailing equity@uwaterloo.ca. More information on the functions and services of the equity office can be found here: <https://uwaterloo.ca/human-rights-equity-inclusion/about/equity-office>.
- D. Racial Advocacy for Inclusion, Solidarity and Equity (RAISE) is a student-led Waterloo Undergraduate Student Association (WUSA) service. RAISE serves to address racism and xenophobia on the University of Waterloo campus with initiatives reflective of RAISE's three pillars of Education and Advocacy, Peer-to-Peer Support, and Community Building. The initiatives include but are not limited to: formal means to report and confront racism, accessible and considerate peer-support, and organization of social events to cultivate both an uplifting and united community. You can report an incident using their online form.

Academic Integrity

In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. [Check the Office of Academic Integrity for more information.]

Grievance

A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4. When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department's administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

Discipline

A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity to avoid committing an academic offence, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. [Check the Office of Academic Integrity for more information.] A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about "rules" for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course instructor, academic advisor, or the undergraduate associate dean. For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71, Student Discipline. For typical penalties, check Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties.

In general, you are required to undertake work that you represent as yours by yourself, without copying or adapting work by other, with the exception of work that you derive from others and in turn credit to those others. 'Others' includes AI tools. All work derived from others must be appropriately cited.

AI Policy

Generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) trained using large language models (LLM) or other methods to produce text, images, music, or code, like Chat GPT, DALL-E, or GitHub CoPilot, may be used for assignments in this class with proper documentation, citation, and acknowledgement. Recommendations for how to cite GenAI in student work at the University of Waterloo may be found through the Library:

https://subjectguides.uwaterloo.ca/chatgpt_generative_ai. Please be aware that generative AI is known to falsify references to other work and may fabricate facts and inaccurately express ideas. GenAI generates content based on the input of other human authors and may therefore contain inaccuracies or reflect biases.

In addition, you should be aware that the legal/copyright status of generative AI inputs and outputs is unclear. Exercise caution when using large portions of content from AI sources, especially images. More information is available from the Copyright Advisory Committee: <https://uwaterloo.ca/copyright-at-waterloo/teaching/generative-artificial-intelligence>

You are accountable for the content and accuracy of all work you submit in this class, including any supported by generative AI.

Appeals

A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or Policy 71, Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to Policy 72, Student Appeals.

Note for students with disabilities

AccessAbility Services, located in Needles Hall, Room 1401, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with AccessAbility Services at the beginning of each academic term.