ARCH 4315/5315  A History of Contemporary Theory

Dr. Kate Holliday
Spring 2010
Tuesday, 1-4

Course objective
This course will familiarize students with major intellectual paradigms and themes that have informed postwar architectural practice in the western tradition. Through reading primary theoretical texts that have had major impact on practice, students will hone their skills of critical thinking and be better able to position themselves in their navigation of contemporary theoretical issues.

Course format
This is a seminar based entirely on discussion of the readings. Its success depends on your engagement with the material and willingness to share your views. As a result, this course is reading-intensive. 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.

Texts
There is a course reader that is required for purchase.

Weekly Assignments
To encourage your engagement with the readings, weekly assignments will ask you to engage with the themes and issues raised by our authors. Each week students must complete two assignments as determined by the instructor:
1) A two page paper responding to the readings for the week, due in class
2) submitting images of a building that you would like to share/discuss with your classmates that is relevant to the readings, to be submitted in a powerpoint file to our course’s digital drop box the evening before class, Monday by 10 pm
The instructor may, in class, change the topic of the weekly assignment to a special topic.

Evaluation
Grades will be based on your class participation (10%) and weekly assignments (50%), and a final position paper (20%), and attendance (10%). Attendance is required and unexcused absences 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
F = unacceptable work, incomplete assignments

Course policies
Late papers will not be accepted. If you are having trouble with any assignments or want to discuss issues outside of class, please do come to office hours or schedule an appointment. E-mail is the best way to get in touch with me. 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. 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.

Schedule of course meetings

Week 1
Introduction

Week 2
Understanding Writing about Architecture: History, Theory, Criticism
• (R) Mary McLeod, “Theory and Practice,” Joan Ockman, [untitled], and Rafael Moneo, [untitled], Asemblage n. 41, April 2000
• Special issue on criticism, JAE 2009

Week 3
Theories of Origin

Week 4
Adaptations of Classical Doctrine
• Jean-Nicolas-Louis Durand, “How to Acquire in a Short Time True Architectural Talents” and “Summary of the Oral Portion of the Lectures,” in Précis of the Lectures

Week 5
Type and Archetype

Week 6
Structural Rationalism and Theories of Tectonic Expression
• Kenneth Frampton, “Rappel à ordre, the Case for the Tectonic” (1990): 516-529.

Week 7
Systems of Thought – Structuralism, Poststructuralism

Week 8
Phenomenology
• Peter Zumthor, Thinking Architecture, excerpt

Week 9
Regionalism


• Special assignment: Select a building from our north Texas region and write a paper that uses the lens of one of our readings to evaluate it.

Week 10

**Architecture as an Ethical Position**

• Dolores Hayden, “What Would a Non-Sexist City Look Like?”


• Hannes Meyer, “Building” *Bauhaus: Zeitschrift für Gestaltung* (Dessau, 2nd year, 1928), 153f; reprinted in Ulrich Conrads, ed., *Programs and Manifestoes on 20th-Century*

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

Week 11

**MEGASTRUCTURE**

• Kenzo Tange

• Rem Koolhaas

• Reyner Banham

Week 12

**Gender and Concepts of the Other**


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

Week 13

**Architecture and Film**

Dietrich Neumann, *Film Architecture: Set Designs from Metropolis to Blade Runner*

Special assignment: Choose one film from the list provided by the instructor; view it and critique its use of architecture.

Week 14

**Theories of Urban Form 1: The Postmodern City**

• Colin Rowe and Fred Koetter, “Collage City” (1975): 166-293.

Week 15
**Theories of Urban Form 2: Sprawl**
Robert Bruegmann, *Sprawl*
Andrés Duany, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk & Jeff Speck, *Suburban Nation*
Steven Holl, “Within the City: Pheonmena of Relations”

Week 16
**Digital Media**
Kieran Timberlake, *Refabricating Architecture*