McGill University
Peter Guo-hua Fu School of Architecture

ARCH 652
Architectural History and Theory Seminar 2
Fall 2019
Monday 08:35–12:25 Room MH 207

Instructor
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514-398-6706; office hours; casual or by appointment
Room 309, Macdonald-Harrington Building

Calendar Description
Arch 652
Second of four intensive seminars on the thematic study of modern architecture and its theoretical underpinnings as a response to technological, cultural, environmental, and philosophical challenges. Historiographical and design approaches to architectural problems encountered from the pre-industrial age to contemporary post-industrial expansion.

Course Objectives
There are three skills students will develop in this seminar: reading, talking, and writing. None of these are trivial. Your grade will be based on both your speaking and your writing. There’s enough reading every week that you’ll have to learn how to distil a large number of pages down to a few important arguments and pieces of evidence. In each of our class meetings, you’ll also have to speak with confidence and engage your classmates as peers.

In terms of content, we want to understand the engagement of theory and architecture. We will be looking at how architectural theory depends on what Catherine Ingram calls the “import export” business: how, in doing architectural theory, scholars “expand into different domains, then return to architecture with an argument in hand (good or bad) like a brace of pheasants shot on somebody else’s property.” Theory, in this case, will be drawn from philosophers; explications of philosophical ideas; and from the methodologies of architectural historians.

Requirements
i) Mini-seminars. 15%.
Each student will prepare and lead discussion twice in a smaller group in collaboration with me. In the week preceding the respective session, the three (or four) of us will meet to discuss the key issues to be addressed and plan the seminar session.
ii) In-class, ten-minute paper presentation 15%. Presentations will be held in class on the last day of class, Thursday 5 December.

iii) Term paper. The paper will explore a recent book of theory, summarizing and elucidating it, and then suggesting how the theory could engage architecture (i.e. topics such as buildings, architects, architectural education, history, architectural tourism, preservation, design and construction, and ethics).

The paper has four components (see assignment sheet for further explanation):

a) Proposal. 10%. Due 7 October at 5 p.m.
b) Two-minute video outline summary of the book (précis). 10%. Due 21 October. https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbfYPyITQ-7I4upoX8nvctg
c) Critical analysis of the book. 10%. Due 4 November.
d) Final paper: 40%. Due last day of class, 5 December at 5 p.m. 5,000 to 7,500 words including references. Optional review of draft of final paper: date to be determined.

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**Late Policy**

Grades for late work will be penalized at one grade level per day. For example, work graded as “A” but handed in in one day late will receive a “A-”; work graded as “A” but handed in two days late will receive a “B+.”

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**Ethics**

Please note that all projects dealing with human subjects require ethics review and approval before research can begin. For more information, see: http://www.mcgill.ca/research/researchers/compliance/human

If you have questions, please see the Director of the School of Architecture.

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**McGill Policy Statements**

The following two statements must be included in all course outlines, in keeping with various Senate resolutions:

“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). (Approved by Senate on 29 January 2003.)

“In accord with McGill University’s Charter of Students’ Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.” (Approved by Senate on 21 January 2009 - see also the section in this document on Assignments and evaluation.)

"In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University’s control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.”
Schedule and Required Readings
This schedule and list of required reading are subject to change.

Students without any background in architectural theory may wish to consult:

Week 1
9 September INTRODUCTION

Week 2
16 September HISTORIANS AND THEORY


Week 3
23 September CONSCIOUSNESS
a) René Descartes, Discourse on Method. Read the whole text, but concentrate on part 4.

Week 4
30 September  SPACE
b) Doreen Massey, “Space, Place, and Gender,” Space, Place, and Gender (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 185-90.


Week 5  BOOK OUTLINE SUMMARY DUE 7 October; email PDF by 5 p.m.
7 October  BODIES
b) Iris Young, “Throwing Like a Girl: A Phenomenology of Feminine Body Comportment, Motility, and Spatiality,” in Throwing Like a Girl and Other Essays in Feminist Philosophy and Social Theory (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 141-159.


Week [~]  Thanksgiving
14 October  no class

Week 6  COMPUTATION In-Class Review: two-minute video summaries
21 October


Week 7
28 October

MEDIA


c) Mary Louise Lobsinger, “Architectural History: Turn from Culture to Media,” Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians 75, no. 2 (June 2016), 135–139.


Week 8
4 November

CRITICAL ANALYSIS DUE; email PDF by 5 p.m.

TECHNOLOGY


c) Martin Heidegger, “The Question Concerning Technology.”

Suggested Film: David Barrison and Daniel Ross, The Ister (New York: First Run films, 2005).

Week 9
11 November

ANT


**Week 10**

**18 November**

**AESTHETICS**


**Week 11**

**25 November**

**SR/OOO**


**Week 12**

**2 December**

**THEORY’S CURRICULUMS**

a) https://www.e-flux.com/architecture(curriculum/)

Editorial, Nick Axel, Joseph Bedford, and Nikolaus Hirsch. Also peruse the syllabi.


**Week 13**

**5 December**

**FINAL PAPER DUE** email PDF by 5 p.m.

**STUDENT PRESENTATIONS**