Sex & SPACE

This undergraduate course explores the relationship between architecture and sexuality. Architecture is permeated with sexual metaphors – the shaft, the high(rise), the closet – and sexual and gender identities and politics have been shaped by architectural formations – the bathhouse, the kitchen, the harem, the interior, the secret garden. Yet, the space of sexuality has always been painstakingly veiled and excluded from architectural discourses. Leading architects, including Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, Sir John Soane, Adolf Loss, and Le Corbusier, played on the notions of sex in their designs, at times as innuendoes and suppressed pathologies. Others, Robert Venturi, Louis Kahn, and Charles Eames made their famed careers with female partners whose stories remain predominantly in the closet, so to speak. Defined by a solid history of masculinity and “stud” culture, the architectural profession is one of the last male-dominated domains. The spatial dimension of gender and sexuality became further poignant in the colonial context where binary opposites and temporal flux were omnipresent.

The course explores the multidimensional aspects of sex in shaping architectural myths, designs, discourses, and critical theories through lectures, class discussions, student presentation of case studies, student building of architectural models, viewing of short films, and field trips in Greater Boston. Active student engagement with and participation in the course activities is an essential part of this little examined and rarely taught topic.
REQUIREMENTS

Exam: There is only one big exam on the final day of this course. The exam must be taken when scheduled. It will have four parts: identifications; comparisons; terminology; and essay. A review session prior to the exam, during which details will be provided, will give you a very good idea of what to expect and how to prepare.

Model Project: A research paper (1,500 words), accompanied by a three-dimensional model will be displayed and examined in class. Each group will speak about its project and paper. Three course sessions have been dedicated to the two stages of this project. Papers much be uploaded on LATTE on time. Models have to fit into a 20x20 inch format. You are free to choose the material. Handwritten, emailed, or incorrectly formatted papers will be disregarded and given no grade.

Attendance: Grades will be based on lectures, class discussions, debate, case studies, films, and readings. It will be affected by your attendance and active participation in all class activities.

Grading: Grading scale follows standard Brandeis scale. All grades will be posted on LATTE. I cannot pass out grades nor discuss your grades in public. Please come to my office hours.

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<th>Grade</th>
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<td>A</td>
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Readings, etc.: Readings assigned in the syllabus must be done prior to or immediately after the class. Refer to the required books for most of the readings and your syllabus for the pages. Articles outside textbooks are posted on LATTE. All handouts, instructions, and assignments are also found on LATTE. Lectures and readings from required books will NOT be posted on LATTE. You must attend class to hear the lectures and you have to secure the required books.

Required Books

All first tow books are available at the university bookstore. Try to find the last three on amazon or other used bookstores since they are out of print.

My Availability: Office Hours: Fridays 12:30-2:30, in my office Mandel 207.
Make sure you let me know that you are coming before passing by [tgrigor@brandies.edu]. I will be available to answer your questions. We can also arrange an appointment. I encourage you to speak to me right before and after lectures in class for short answer questions. If you think that your question might interest other students, ask it during class.

Miscellaneous: I expect my students to abide by the academic honor code. I count on their integrity, honesty, and hard work to create a productive and an intellectually stimulating environment. Students with special needs, see me at the beginning of the semester. This syllabus, the schedule of courses, and requirements for the class will be followed; in the case of unforeseen exceptions, these are subject to change at my discretion.
**SCHEDULE**

**Jan 14-17**  
**S&S**  
Film: *The Fountainhead* (dir. Ayn Rand & King Vidor, 1949)

**Jan 21-24**  
**Shaft**  
**Case 1:** Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, Oikema, Maison de Plaisir, 1789  
Obelisk of Luxor, Place de la Concorde, Paris, France, Ramesses II period  
Leaning Tower of Pisa, Pisa, Italy, 1173  
Michel Foucault, “The other Victorians,” and “The repressive hypothesis,” in *The History of Sexuality* (1976), v. 1, optional

**Jan 28-31**  
**High-rise**  
Film:  
*Pillow Talk* (dir. Michael Gordon, 1959)  
*Mad Men* (AMC, 2007)  
*Nip/Tuck* (FX, 2003)  
*King Kong* (dir. Merian Cooper & Ernest Schoedsack, 1933)  
*American Beauty* (dir. Sam Mendes, 1999)  
*Rear Window* (dir. Alfred Hitchcock, 1954)  
James Bond film *Diamonds Are Forever* (1971)  
**Case 2:** William Lamb, Empire State Building, Manhattan, New York, 1931  
Boris Iofan, Palace of the Soviets, 1934  
SOM, Lever House, Manhattan, New York, 1952  
Jean Nouvel, Torre Agbar, Barcelona, Spain, 2005  
Meaghan Morris, “Great moments in social climbing: King Kong and Human Fly,” in *Sexuality & Space* (Princeton, 1992) 1-51
Susan Buck-Morss, Dreamworld and Catastrophe (MIT, 2000) chap. 1, optional

Feb 2-7  Window

Peter L. Laurence, “Contradictions and complexities: Jane Jacobs’s and Robert Venturi’s complexity theories,” Journal of Architectural Education 59/3 (Feb 2006) 49-60

Film:  Jane Jacobs: Urban Wisdom (1997)
Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown (dir. Michael Blackwood, 1988)
The World of Charles and Ray Eames (pro. Masaaki Hagimo, 1986)

Case 3: Charles and Ray Eames, Eames House, Los Angeles, 1949
Robert Venturi, Vanna Venturi House, Chestnut Hill, Pennsylvania, 1964

Dana Arnold, “Reading architectural herstories: The discourses of gender,” in Architecture and Design in Europe and America (Malden, 2006) 172-79
Denise Scott Brown, “Room at the top? Sexism and the star system in architecture,” in Architecture: A Place for Women (Smithsonian, 1989) 237-46
Louis Kahn, Louis Kahn to Anne Tyng: The Rome Letters 1953-54 (Rizzoli, 1997) 28-61, optional
Virginia Woolf, A Room of One’s Own (1929) optional
Simone de Beauvoir, The Second Sex (1951) optional

Feb 11-14  Harem

Barbara Penner, “Doing it right: Postwar honeymoon resorts in the Pocono Mountains,” in Architecture and Tourism (Berg, 2004), 207-23

Film:  Psycho (Alfred Hitchcock, 1960)
Under the Skin of the City (Rakhshan Bani-Etemad, 2001)

Case 4: Alhambra or Madinat al-Hamra, Granada, Spain, 13th-14th centuries
French Algiers, 1830-1960

Alain Grosrichard, The Sultan’s Court: European Fantasies of the East (1998), optional

Feb 18-21 University holiday

Feb 25-28 House
Sylvia Lavin, “Colomina’s web: Reply to Beatriz Colomina,” in The Sex of Architecture, 183-90

Film: Women and Architecture: Public Space and Public Work (Amanda Willett, 2002)
A Personal Journey with Maya Lin, Artist and Architect

Case 5: Modernism in Iran, Turkey, and India
Talinn Grigor, “Masculinist myths of modernism,” Building Iran (Periscope, 2009) 174-222

Mar 4 Class Debate

Mar 7 Rose Museum Visit
Guided by Molly Shannon through the exhibitions and special collection
Meet at the main entrance of Rose Museum at 11:00

Mar 11 Model Project Presentations 1a
In-class Display & Presentation
A research paper (1,500 words), accompanied by a three-dimensional model will be displayed and examined in class. Each group will speak about its project and paper. Papers and models will not be returned unless requested. Papers must be typed, 12-point typeface with 1” margins and 1½ spaced. Papers must be uploaded on LATTE on time. Models have to fit into a 20x20 inch format. You are free to choose the material. Handwritten, emailed, or incorrectly formatted papers will be given no grade.

Mar 14 Model Project Presentations 1b

Mar 18-21 Closet

Film: The Haunting (dir. Robert Wise, 1963)

Case 6: Philip Johnson, Glass House, New Canaan, Connecticut, 1949
Philip Johnson, AT&T Building, Manhattan, New York, 1984
Mar 25-28  Baths

- Film: *My Beautiful Laundrette* (dir. Stephen Frears, 1985)

Case 7: Louis Sullivan or bathhouses and bathrooms

- Yolanda Retter, “Lost in space: Queer theory and community activism at the fin-de-millennaire” & “Queer space,” *Queers in Space: Communities, Public Places, Sites of Resistance* (1997) 3-26
- Laud Humphreys, *Tearoom Trade: Impersonal Sex in Public Places* (1975) sections

Apr 1-4  Interior


Case 8: Adolf Loos’ interiors

- Adolf Loos, Steiner House, Vienna, Austria, 1901
- Adolf Loos, Villa Müller, Prague, Czech Republic, 1930
- Le Corbusier’s villas and urban planning
- Le Corbusier, Villa Savoye, Poissy, France, 1931

- Sylvia Lavin, “Open the box: Richard Neutra and the psychology of the domestic environment,” *Assemblage* 40 (Dec 1999) 6-25

Apr 4  Sorabjee-Saivetz Architectural Symposium: *Architectural Exchanges in South Asia*

4:00-8:00 Admission’s Building Lecture Hall

Required of all students in class. Student models will be displayed.

Apr 8  Model Project Presentations 2ab
Apr 7-10  Mandel Lectures in the Humanities: *Divine Spark of Syracuse*

Prof. Ingrid Rowland, University of Notre Dame
Mandel Auditorium, 4:30-6:00
Mandatory participation in two out of four lectures offered in this week

Apr 11  Exam Review
Apr 15-22  University holiday

Apr 25  Self-guided Field Trips
Visit any six of these buildings anytime during the semester

**Lincoln**

Gropius Home, Walter Gropius, Lincoln, 1938  
68 Baker Bridge Road, Lincoln, MA 01773-3105, (781) 259-8098


**Cambridge**

Harvard Graduate Center, Walter Gropius, Cambridge, 1949
Harvard’s Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts, Le Corbusier, Cambridge, 1964
MIT’s Brain and Cognitive Sciences Complex, Charles Correa, Cambridge, 2005
MIT’s Stata Center, Frank Gehry, Cambridge, 2004
MIT’s Kresge Chapel, Eero Saarinen, Cambridge, 1955
MIT’s Baker Dormitory, Alvar Aalto, Cambridge, 1947

**Boston**

Public Library Addition, Philip Johnson, Back Bay, 1969
Hancock Tower, I. M. Pei, Back Bay, 1977

Apr 29  Exam