University of Oregon Department of Landscape Architecture
LA 408/508 Seminar Fall 2014 F 9:00-11:50
Instructor: Leslie Ryan

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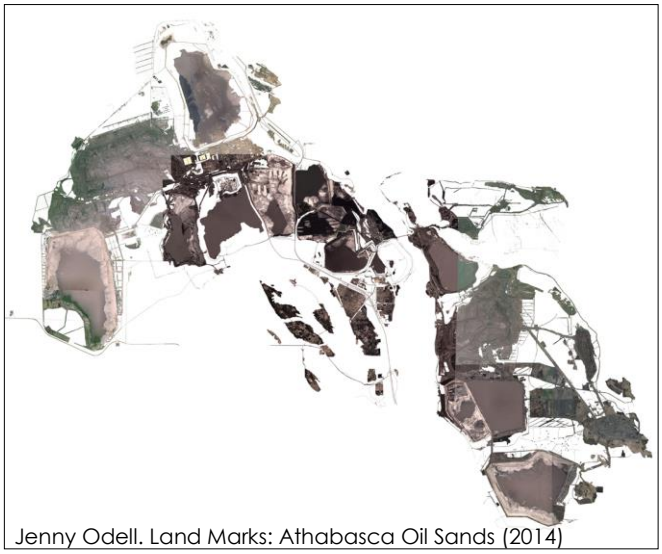
seminar: MAPPING MATERIALS



Jenny Odell. Land Marks: Athabasca Oil Sands (2014)

The constructed landscape is composed of geographies of materials from elsewhere: it is the nexus of a web of extraction and harvest sites, distribution and transportation lines, infrastructure and manufacture, and landscapes of waste and reclamation. The materials we use were once part of a forest, a mountain or streambank, air or water – in other words, part of an ecosystem. Removing them leaves holes in the ground, bare hillsides, and disturbed waterways. How do we take responsibility for the extent of what we take from the natural environment?

Our engagement with the natural world, like that of all organisms, changes that world. San Francisco writer Rebecca Solnit keeps a topographical map of Hetch Hetchy valley/reservoir above her kitchen sink, a reminder that the water flowing through the faucet originates in a very particular landscape. At each stage in the process there are a series of design questions that emerge, just as there are ecological questions of costs and benefits. What would need to be different in order to have that change advantage natural systems rather than destroy them, or at least to not leave legacies of toxic or dangerous by-products?

The objective of the seminar is to situate spatially and temporally distant landscapes of natural resources within the sustainability discourse, with the expectation that sustainable design should address the landscapes, ecologies, and infrastructures providing the natural resources we use and those we discard.

We will look at the previous life – as tree, as clay, as ore (for example) – of typical or everyday materials, and the dendritic patterns of movement that bring it to the job site as decking, brick, or mesh. We will also imagine the future life of the material, and the spatial requirements for recycling or reclaiming a material or a landscape for another use. Our goal in this seminar will be to map materials and their origins and uses in ways that are resourceful, efficient, and poetic. The material at hand is part of a much larger series of landscape-scaled events and processes that have significant impacts on remote, rural, and perhaps wild, places.

Format:

This is a seminar class based on reading, discussion, and individual investigations which will result in a map and written documentation of your research. Field trips are a significant element of the course. There is one mandatory Saturday field trip.

Each student will select a material for research, and follow it back to the original landscapes of production/extraction/harvest, distribution, and to its manufacture or preparation for construction, and then project the material forward to its post-consumer landscape and potentially into a field of "re____"s *(recycle, reclaim, reuse, restore, etc.)*.

The **final map** is the primary focus of the seminar. It will be a conceptual roadmap or timeline of the geography of the natural resource you are researching, its industrial re-shaping, and its future. The map can be digital or drawn and collaged by hand (then scanned), depending on your interests and skills. You will be submitting both hard and digital copies. The map will be done in landscape format, 24" wide, with a length dependent on the travels of your material; expect a min. of 48" in length.

The **written documentation** will record your research process and sources for the research of your material. Undergrads should expect to submit approximately 4 pages or 1200 words; graduate students should expect to submit approximately 8 pages or 2500 words. All writing must be in your own words or properly cited. We will discuss the format of the documentation during the class.

Resources:

Readings will be available on-line, posted on Blackboard, or on reserve in the AAA library.

Much of your research will be specific to the material you select. You will be forming your own "constellation" of resources, since this will be an original project using very contemporary and material-specific sources. You are encouraged to use the internet, with the caution that Wikipedia is not an academically accepted source. Also, much information on the web is repetitive and uncited; please be sure that the sources you use are reputable and can be traced back to original research. It will be necessary to directly contact potential sources: manufacturers; companies dealing with distribution or extraction; other designers, engineers and planners; public or private waste or reuse facilities, etc. Interviews can be an excellent way to discover the latest thinking, problems, and solutions.

ALL OF YOUR RESEARCH AND CONVERSATIONS SHOULD BE WELL-DOCUMENTED. See APA for citation format (https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/)

Reading references

Barnes, Rick and Audrey Barnes. (2004). Recognizing educational opportunities. Retrieved from http://www.ccffa-oswa.org/NWWoodlands/everything-else/2004summer-EducationalOpportunities.pdf

Behrens, Roy R. (1998). Art, design and Gestalt theory. *Leonardo,* 31(4), 299-303.

Calkins, Meg. (2009). *Materials for sustainable sites: A complete guide to the evaluation, selection, and use of sustainable construction materials*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Engler, Mira. (1995). Waste landscapes: Permissible metaphors in landscape architecture. *Landscape Journal,* 14(1), 11-25.

Giordani, Cesare, Stefano Cecchi, and Camillo Zanchi. (2008). Phytoremediation of soil polluted by nickel using agricultural crops. *Environmental Management,* 36(5), 675-681.

Gregory, Stanley V., Randy Wildman, David W. Hulse, Chris Enright, and Allan Branscomb. (2008). Confluence Island: an assessment of current and future opportunities for ecological restoration at the confluence of the McKenzie and Willamette Rivers. Metropolitan Wastewater Management Commission, Eugene, OR. Retrieved from http://ise.uoregon.edu/publications.html

King, Roger J. H. (2003). Toward an ethics of the domesticated environment. *Philosophy & Geography*, 6 (1), 3-14.

McDonough, William, and Michael Braungart. (2013). *The upcycle: Beyond sustainability – Designing for abundance*. New York, NY: Northpoint Press.

Reimers, Frederick. (2006). "Oregon Energy." *Earth Island Journal.* Retrieved from http://www.earthisland.org/journal/index.php/eij/article/oregon_energy/

Wood, Mary Christina. "You can't negotiate with a beetle": Environmental law for a new ecological age. *Natural Resources Journal,* 50, 167-210.

Environmental Peacebuilding logo design contest. Retrieved from http://www.environmentalpeacebuilding.org/news/program-news/env

SCHEDULE

	TOPICS	READINGS	ASSIGNMENTS
Week 1 3 Oct 14	Introduction to course Syllabus overview		Select material to research; begin preliminary research. Logo for Environmental Peacebuilding.
Week 2 10 Oct 14	Discussion: mapping	Behrens 1998	Due: 1. Initial sketch of research (pinup) 2. Logo design
Week 3 17 Oct 14	FIELD TRIP Delta Sand and Gravel, Eugene	Gregory et al. 2008.	
Week 4 24 Oct 14	Discussion: sustainable materials	McDonough and Braungart 2013 (excerpt) Calkins 2009 (chapter 1)	Due: Patterns, Holes and Presences collage (pinup)
Week 5 31 Oct 14	FIELD TRIP Short Mountain landfill, Goshen	Reimers 2006.	
Week 6 7 Nov 14	Discussion: waste and reclamation	Giordani, Cecchi, and Zanchi 2008. Engler 1995.	Due: Final map in progress (pinup)
*8 Nov 14 (Saturday)	FIELD TRIP Nickel Mountain mine and tree farm, Riddle	Barnes 2004.	
Week 7 14 Nov 14	Discussion: the future	Wood 2010. King 2003.	
Week 8 21 Nov 14	Final pinup of map		Due: Final map (pinup)
Week 9 28 Nov 14	HOLIDAY – no class		
Week 10 5 Dec 14	Final review week – no class		
FINALS WEEK	No final exam in this seminar		Due: Final documentation of research and map (on scheduled exam day)

Grading:

Grading will be as follows:

Participation and attendance	20%
Initial sketch of research	10%
Landmarks collage	20%
Final map	25%
Final documentation of research	25%

Following are grade breakdowns and criteria for Excellent, Average and Failing work:

A 100 – 90 % ---- Excellent. Ideas are clearly stated and developed. Specific examples are appropriate and help develop claims. Student not only demonstrates full knowledge of subject, but also demonstrates insight, invention, critical thought and ability to elaborate.

B 80 - 89 % ------ Good (satisfactory for graduate level work). Meets expectations for assignments, analysis and critique.

C 70 - 79 % ------ Average (unsatisfactory for graduate level work). Work is competent. Student demonstrates reasonable awareness and knowledge of subject, but fails to elaborate; work is often not supported by specific examples, analysis or synthesis.

D 60 - 69 % ------ Inferior. Notably lacking preparation; project/assignment content may be irrelevant or dispersive.

F 59% or less ---- Failing. Work is incomplete, not understandable or logical, poorly organized. Student doesn't have grasp of information, and can't answer questions about subject.

Grading policy for graduate students follows the University of Oregon grading system: http://gradschool.uoregon.edu/policies-procedures/grades

Participation

Participation in class discussions and critiques is mandatory and a significant aspect of your grade. Criteria for evaluating participation are as follows:

A Student demonstrates excellent preparation through exceptional analysis and synthesis that relates to readings and other material (e.g., field trips, discussions, etc.) and puts together pieces of the discussion to develop new approaches that take the class further; contributes in a very significant way to ongoing discussion through keeping analysis focused, responding very thoughtfully to other students' comments, contributing to the cooperative argument-building, suggesting alternative ways of approaching material, etc.; and demonstrates ongoing and very active involvement.

B Student demonstrates good preparation for class discussion through reading, critical thinking and analysis; offers interpretations and analysis of case material (more than just facts) to class; contributes to discussion through volunteering interpretations and analysis, responding to other students' points, and through demonstrating ability to think and consider suggestions that may be counter to the majority opinion; is consistently involved in the class discussions.

C Student demonstrates adequate preparation for discussion; knows basic case or reading facts and offers straightforward information (e.g., straight from the case or

reading), but does not show evidence of trying to interpret or analyze it; does not often offer to contribute to discussion, but contributes to a moderate degree when called on.

D Student is present in class and not disruptive; student does not offer much when called on and demonstrates very infrequent involvement in discussion.

F Absent or disruptive

Criteria for evaluating grades and participation are adapted from the University of Virginia Teaching Resource Center.

Attendance

Consistent and informed participation is crucial to a successful seminar. With the Thanksgiving holiday falling on our class meeting day and so shortening our class, it becomes even more essential that you attend all class sessions and field trips and come to class prepared to participate actively in discussions. Planned absences should be discussed in advance with the instructor. Students are allowed one absence; two or more unexcused absences will result in a lowered grade of one letter grade for each missed class.

Academic honesty policy

The University Student Conduct Code (http://conduct.uoregon.edu) defines academic misconduct. Plagiarism is taking and using *as one's own* the ideas, concepts, analysis and writings of another without giving appropriate credit through proper documentation. "Proper documentation" includes quotation marks, foot- or endnote citations, or noting that a sentence or paragraph is paraphrased (with references to where the original information was found). Providing assistance to another student who is attempting to cheat or plagiarize is also considered academically dishonest.

If there is any question about whether an act constitutes academic misconduct, it is the student's obligation to clarify the question prior to taking any action. Principles of academic honesty and professional ethics also apply to any use of computers associated with the class. This includes observing all software licensing requirements and respecting copyrights of intellectual property published on the Internet.

Students with disabilities policy

The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive environments. If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in barriers to your participation, please notify the instructor as soon as possible, or contact the UO Accessible Education Center at 541.346.1155 or uoaec@uoregon.edu.