

A4469 The History of Architectural Theory
Wed.11:00am-1:00pm, 114 Avery

Mark Wigley

Architecture emerges out of passionate and unending debate. Every design involves theory. Indeed, architects talk as much as they draw. This class will explore the way that theory is produced and deployed at every level of architectural discourse from formal written arguments to the seemingly casual discussions in the design studio. A series of case studies, from Vitruvius through to Cyber-Chat, from ancient treatises on parchment to flickering web pages, will be used to show how the debate keeps adapting itself to new conditions while preserving some relentless obsessions. Architectural discourse will be understood as a wide array of interlocking institutions, each of which has its own multiple histories and unique effects. How and why these various institutions were put in place will be established and then their historical transformations up until the present will be traced to see which claims about architecture have been preserved and which have changed.

Lecture 1

The Sound of the Architect: Between Words and Drawings

Lecture 2

The Reign of the Classical Treatise: Digesting Vitruvius

Lecture 3

Curriculum as Polemic: Disciplining Architecture from Academy to University

Lecture 4

The Invention of Architectural History: Strategic Narratives

Lecture 5

The Invention of Criticism: Buildings in Review

Lecture 6

Theory as Weapon: System versus Manifesto

Lecture 7

The Canonization of Modern Theory

Lecture 8

Domesticating Discourse: Soft Packages

Lecture 9

Theory on the Couch: Self-Analysis

Lecture 10

Postmodern Theory: Engaging the Other

Lecture 11

The Commodification of Architectural Theory.

Lecture 12

Transgressive Theory: Sciences of Insecurity