

Course Outline/Syllabus Pending
Please find a brief description below:

Winter 2007

ARTH 548 -- Architectonics of knowledge

The construction of university buildings, or in more critical terminology, the fabrication of knowledge(s), at Point Grey affords a very interesting lens to analyze the capacity of architecture to both embody and affect public and institutional policy in the field of higher education. The seminar will use the Centennial of UBC (1908) to combine theoretical, archival and historical investigation of the work of architecture in conveying, coalescing and even contesting policy, ideology and modes of knowing/knowledge formation. The campus was conceived at the height of provincial and federal association with an imperial conception of the Canadian Confederation. The original 1914 scheme for the university grew out of an extensive debate on the proper situating and purpose of higher education in British Columbia. It was one that erased prior indigenous habitation and usage. Comparable processes of architectonic and socio-economic colonization persisted beyond the Reconstruction of UBC in the post 1945 decades as a regional utility of social renewal, economic expansion and technical development. The building campaigns of the 1950s and 60s also demonstrate shifts within Modern Movement theory and practice toward successively less radical aesthetic and ethical constructions of later-modern society. Similarly, the planning policy and architectural production at UBC during of the last quarter of the 20th century reflect the theoretical revisionism and critical deconstruction accompanying the ironic re-emergence of either hegemonic or market models of public education. This seminar will take advantage of the "Recovering the University Fabric" research initiative and have as a major objective the organization of a symposium and exhibition to coincide with the special meeting at UBC of the Learned Societies of Canada in late May 2008.

Rhodri Windsor-Liscombe