

AHST 3320 Section 501
Course in Contemporary Art
Kinetics of Urban Sprawl
Dr. Charissa N. Terranova
Spring 2008
Monday, 7:00-9:45
1.7.2008
Introduction: "Sprawl," origin of a word

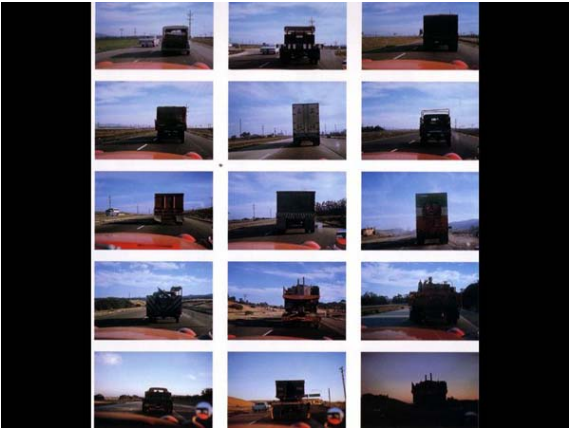
Landscape











Homes for America

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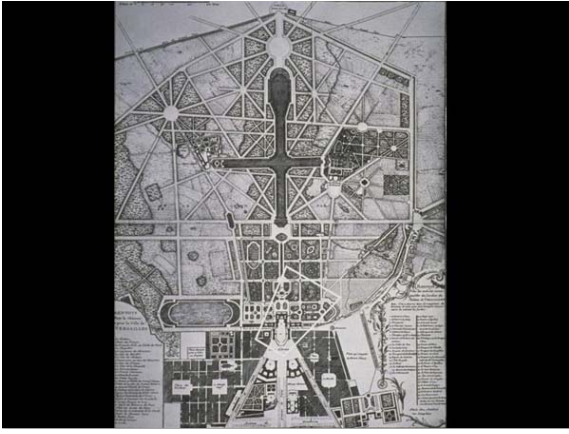
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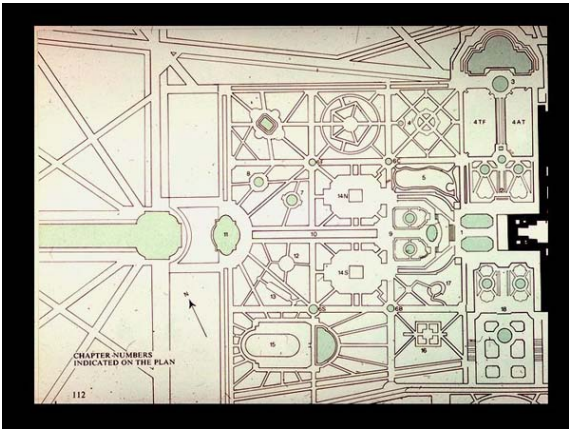
- 5.) Landscape is a medium found in all cultures.
- 6.) Landscape is a particular historical formation associated with European imperialism.
- 7.) Theses 5 and 6 do not contradict one another.
- 8.) Landscape is an exhausted medium, no longer viable as a mode of artistic expression. Like life, landscape is boring; we must not say so.
- 9.) The landscape referred to in Thesis 8 is the same as that of Thesis 6.

W.J.T. Mitchell, "Theses on Landscape," from *Landscape and Power* (1994; 2002)

- 1.) Landscape is not a genre of art but a medium.
- 2.) Landscape is a medium of exchange, between the human and the natural, the self and other. As such, it is like money; good for nothing in itself, but expressive of a potentially limitless reserve of value.
- 3.) Like money, landscape is a social hieroglyph that conceals the actual basis of its value. It does so by naturalizing its conventions and conventionalizing its nature.
- 4.) Landscape is a natural scene mediated by culture. It is both represented and presented space, both a signifier and a signified, both a frame and what a frame contains, both a real place and its simulacrum, both a package and the commodity inside the package.





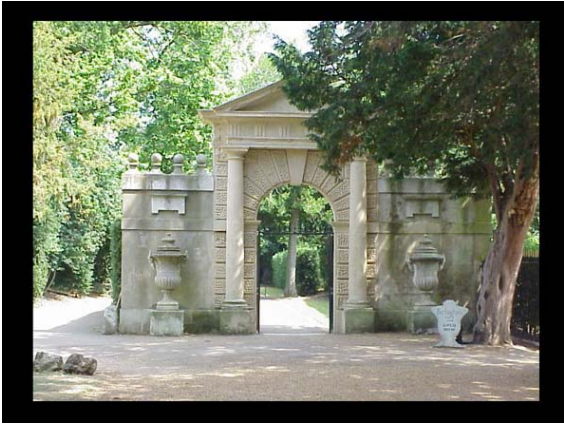






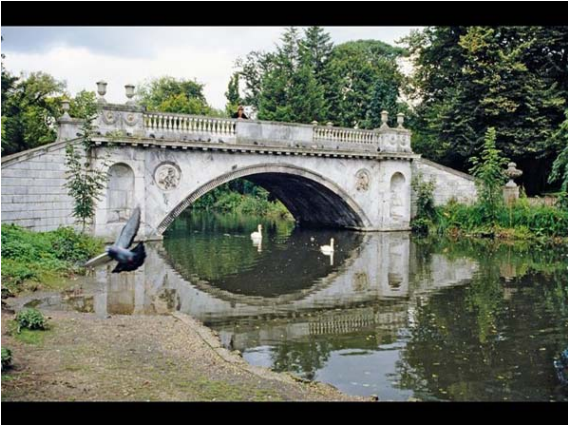












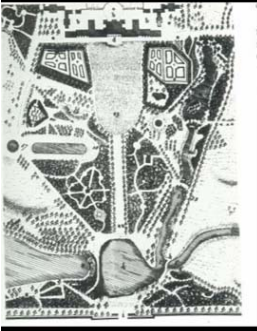


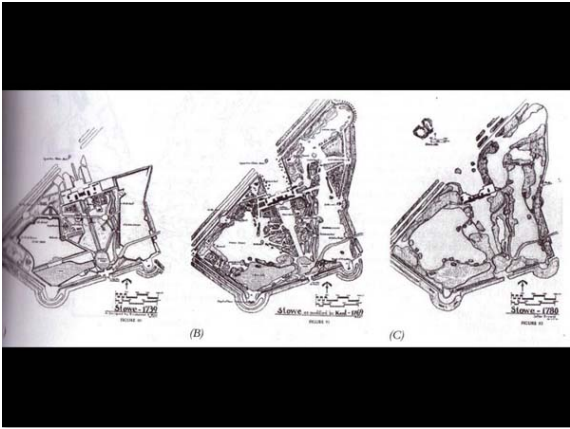


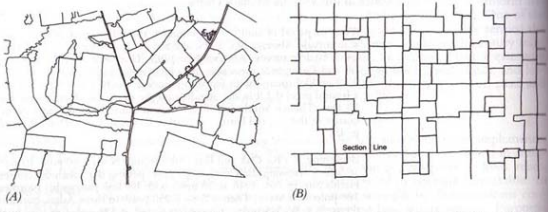




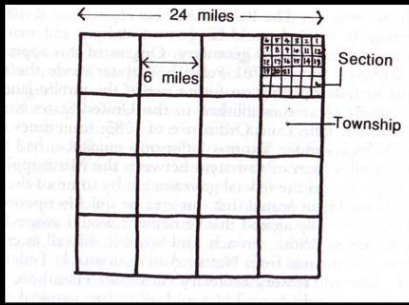


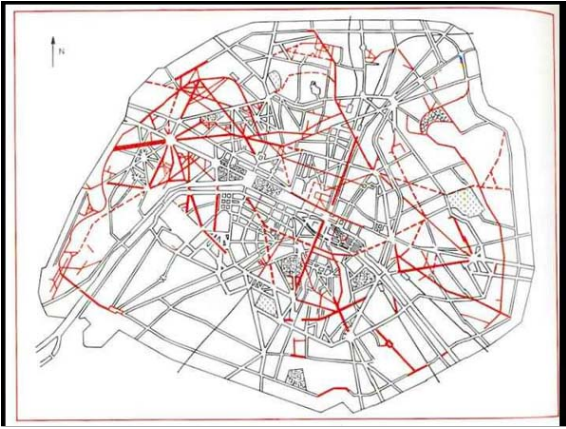






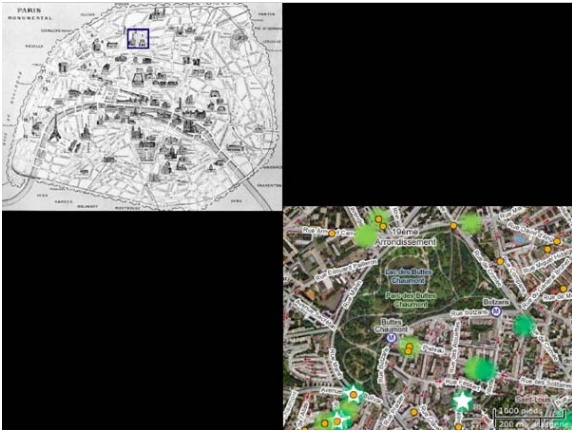
Diagrammatic plan comparison of typical land ownership, land use, and road patterns produced under (A) metes and bounds surveys and (B) the U.S. Public Land Survey. (Data from Thrower, 1966; drawn by Rossi.)

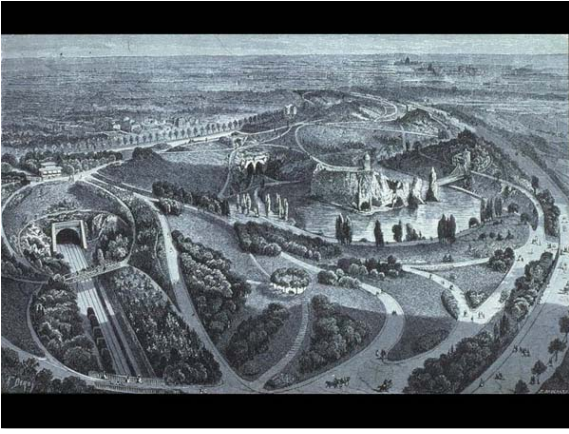










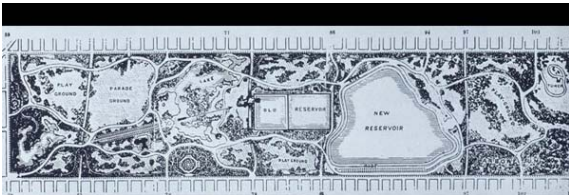










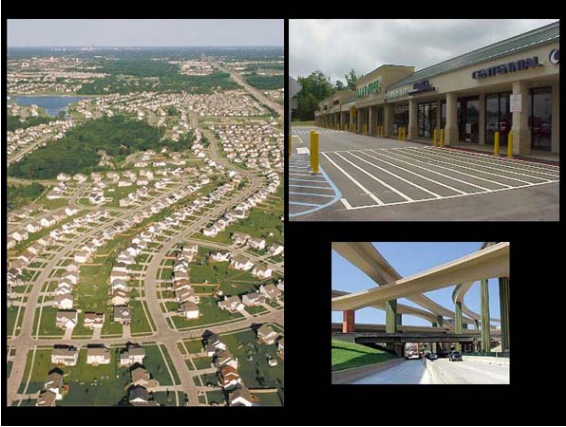






THE CITY OF CHICAGO.





Oxford English Dictionary, on-line version

sprawl, n. - **a.** The, or an, act of sprawling; an awkward or clumsy spreading out of the limbs. [1719] **b.** A straggling array or display of something. [1827] **c.** *the sprawls*, a disease affecting the legs of young ducks. *dial.* [1880] **d.** The straggling expansion of an indeterminate urban or industrial environment into the adjoining countryside; the area of this advancement. Freq. with defining adj. (see *suburban* and *urban sprawl* at first element). [1955]

urban sprawl, the uncontrolled expansion of urban areas [1958]

John Brinkerhoff Jackson, "Jefferson, Thoreau & After," 1970

- Thomas Jefferson's position on the city
- Henry David Thoreau's position on the city
- Jefferson: rural solitude versus rural society
- Jefferson: rural citizenship
- Thoreau: the farmer
- Agrarian versus Romantic: "Whereas the Jeffersonian concern for man as a social being determined the character of our whole rural landscape, the Romantic feeling for solitude and for closeness to unspoiled nature was confined to the middle-class urban citizen on the Eastern seaboard."
(p. 6)
- Existential Landscape

•Utopia: "What we have lost in the last generation is this assurance and with it the capacity – or the temerity – to contrive Utopias. It is of no use trying to resurrect the vanished forms, beautiful though they may have been; their philosophical justification has gone. All that we can now do is to produce landscapes for unpredictable men where the free and democratic intercourse of the Jeffersonian landscape can somehow be combined with the intense self-awareness of the solitary Romantic...Our own American past has an invaluable lesson to teach us: a coherent, workable landscape evolves where there is a coherent definition not of man but of man's relation to the world and to his fellow man." (p. 9)

Denise Scott Brown and Robert Venturi, "The Highway," 1970

- Position on the highway

- In relationship to urban form and the city

- "If a city is a work of art, expressing and symbolizing in its built forms the cultural meaning of the society, it will be understood from its roads." (9)

- Movement function

- Communication function

- Architecture and built landscape of highway: "The roadside commercial vernacular of the 1960s could do for today's architecture what the industrial vernacular architecture of the late 19th and early 20th centuries did for the early Modern movement. It jolted architects from their aesthetic grooves and gave them a new heuristic, an energizing horror source

as inspiration. Certainly our present horror of the commercial strip is equivalent; the source has a vitality that today's architecture, for all its attempts at heroic originality, appears to have missed, and it can present useful lessons in the functional problems of relating auto and architecture." (pp. 15-16)