
Editors' Introduction

We are excited to present this theme issue “Teaching with Culture in Mind: Cross-Cultural Learning in Landscape Architecture” for several reasons. First, it serves to reaffirm the *Journal*'s deep commitment to its constituency in the Council of Educators in Landscape Architecture, and to the fundamental joys and challenges of making landscape architecture education better. Cross-cultural studios provide practical, critical, and professional preparation for many contemporary practices, which increasingly require communication between working groups with differing values and objectives. The growth of international opportunities in professional degree programs, as well as in professional practice, also motivates this timely review of alternative strategies for teaching.

At every level, this group of studies acknowledges the global character of the field(s) in which we practice. Obviously, the world beyond our national borders does not now, nor did it ever exist merely as a frontier for new forms of professional colonialism, or a site passively waiting for economic development. We also know that working between, through, or across cultures does not always require a passport. The wider world offers vital opportunities for cultural, intellectual, social, political, even personal transformation for those who choose to engage it (Figure 1). This is as true for practitioners as for students, for—at some level—we are always both when navigating in new cultures.

This theme issue represents what we hope will be a model for other, future editions. In this venture we gratefully recognize professors Margarita Hill (California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo) and Shenglin Chang (University of Maryland) as the conceptual organizers, guest editors, and initial shepherds for the manuscripts. Their own cross-cultural connections



Figure 1. Undergraduate student exploring the Valley of the Temples, Agrigento, during his off-campus semester in Sicily. (Photograph by Elen Deming)

and interests served as a catalyst to bring other contributors together. Meanwhile, the editors of *Landscape Journal* managed and maintained normal standards and processes for peer review, editing and production. We also supplemented the original group of manuscripts with two additional articles that complement and extend the educational theme. The resulting collegial collaboration with the organizers (and all the authors involved) not only made this edition coherent but enjoyable to put together.

The Whole is Greater Than the Sum of Its Parts

In addition to their content, the papers presented here illustrate several factors associated with case study research, particularly case studies based on design studio expe-

riences. *Landscape Journal* receives a fair number of manuscripts that describe studio projects and their frameworks. As a category, these types of submissions typically, or at least historically, have not fared well in peer review. Sometimes they lack robust literature reviews, clearly-defined exploratory or investigative objectives, or reliable, well-documented evaluations of learning outcomes. And this should not seem too surprising. It is difficult to design a vibrant studio and conduct excellent research on it at the same time. The breakneck pace and mercurial imperatives of the studio setting are rarely well suited to the deliberate, self-reflective, and measured progress of a conventional research project.

By no means should it be construed that the editors of *Landscape Journal* do not want to publish case studies or manuscripts about education: on the contrary. The point is simply to acknowledge that case studies, despite their apparent straightforward ‘innocence,’ can be challenging to design, conduct, and describe well.

The case study is an approach to research that eschews the logic of randomness that is the hallmark of experiments and surveys. Rather it seeks to describe the unique character of each case as a building block for greater patterns. As a *research design* it is more cumulative and ambitious: not limited to simply documenting descriptions of unique cases, it aims to validly and reliably identify general themes through systematic inquiry across a series of similarly prepared cases. Identifying these general themes is the goal of mature case study research.

The demands of academia might compel junior faculty to publish sooner rather than later. Boyer's ‘scholarship of teaching’ suggests that sharing successful pedagogical tactics for design education is also a good idea. However, merely describ-

ing an isolated studio without a clear framework for analysis or evaluation may result in one-off studies, and single cases are rarely sufficient as a basis for a substantive research article. What to do?

About this Issue

We offer this issue of *Landscape Journal* "Teaching with Culture in Mind: Cross-Cultural Learning in Landscape Architecture" as an imperfect truce, and perhaps only a partial solution to the case study dilemma. As a compendium of individual cases, we hope this edition of *Landscape Journal* is greater than the sum of its parts alone. It may be argued that each of these articles is somewhat incomplete, and might be improved with additional iterations, nevertheless, considered all together these articles succeed in making a meaningful report on an important topic.

Teaching with Culture in Mind. The framing essay by Margarita Hill (Cal Poly San Luis Obispo), "Teaching with Culture in Mind: Cross-Cultural Learning in Landscape Architecture Education," serves to establish several important objectives for the theme issue. Hill recognizes the importance of multiculturalism in our field, and in placemaking in the global era, and argues that in recognizing the changing complexion of society, landscape architecture educators should be able to prepare better professionals. If cross-cultural education will make young practitioners better global citizens, perhaps it will also make them better designers. To this end, four progressive levels of cross-cultural educational benefits are discussed in Hill's article: experiential learning; self and reflexive learning; design knowledge and its applications; and personal transformation within cross-cultural engagement. These four themes very generally organize the sequence of the theme articles.

Emphasizing that "intercultural reality presents a stark contrast to the seamless 'space of flows'" that characterizes the world of global capital, Jeffrey Hou (University of Washington), Isami Kinoshita

(Chiba University), and Sawako Ono (Chiba University) challenge the sometimes naïve, sometimes rigid preconceptions of aspiring future practitioners. In "Design Collaboration in the Space of Cross-Cultural Flows," American and Japanese design students learn a great deal about other places, as well as other styles of working and thinking during an innovative, semester-long, transpacific conversation, utilizing both face-to-face and digital encounters.

Examples of peculiarly 'American-yet-Taiwanese' student designs illustrate the next article "Seeing Landscape Through Cross-Cultural Eyes." In this article, Shenglin Chang (University of Maryland) introduces the critical concept of transculturality to landscape design pedagogy. By synthesizing the attributes of multiple cultural identities, transculturality serves as a metaphor for new forms of global awareness. Much more than a generator of sensitive design, however, it may also be a motivator for engaged global citizenship. In this paper, Chang describes how her American design students grapple with unfamiliar meanings of 'memorial' and 'public' open space in the dense urban fabric of Taipei, as a way of understanding their own multi-ethnic community.

In "Dialogue Through Design: The East St. Louis Neighborhood Design Workshop and South End Neighborhood Plan," Laura Lawson (University of Illinois) examines service-learning and participatory design studios as a domestic form of cross-cultural education. This very synthetic article ably reconciles and applies interlocking theoretical frameworks to problems specific to distressed inner city communities, as well as to the social and practical education of (mostly white) landscape architecture students. Studio projects like the East St. Louis Design Workshop studio, Lawson argues, need to emphasize meaningful processes of engagement—respect for cultural difference, openness to critical reception and feedback, and responsibility for the actions and outcomes of design.

Linking landscape architectural education with global sustainability, David Myers (University of Maryland), Margarita Hill (Cal Poly San Luis Obispo), and Stacy Harwood (University of Illinois) make a compelling argument for the transformational power of cross-cultural education. The discussion is framed by the history and objectives of the Sustainable Futures Program of the Monteverde Institute, in Costa Rica. "Cross-Cultural Learning and Study Abroad: Transforming Pedagogical Outcomes" describes the way community-based, service-learning projects, and direct personal encounters with the place, have served to broaden students' emotional maturity, as well as professional outlook.

Supplementary Articles. While we understand that the terms international and cross-cultural are not coterminous, we do appreciate having a clear empirical baseline for the prevalence and types of international education components available in professional curricula among CELA-affiliated schools. In "Assessing International Education in Contemporary Landscape Architecture," Robert Hewitt (Clemson University) and Hala Nassar (West Virginia University) present much-needed data on current trends in international study in landscape architecture programs. The article provides a clearer understanding of the evolution of international study opportunities over time, and changes in character, preference, and support for international study, and suggests some of the educational costs/benefits of such programs. It begs for follow-up research and response from both educators and practitioners.

Another independently submitted paper, "Learning by Teaching Others" by Mimi Wagner (Iowa State University) and Ann Gansemer-Topf (Grinnell College), marvelously fits and extends the theme of the current issue by exploring the value of peer-to-peer teaching as an alternative form of experiential learning. Virtually all design studios engage some facet of 'learning-by-doing' in practical training in the design

process. Wagner and Gansener-Topf suggest that a variant of this—learning-by-teaching—might be effectively introduced in other course formats such as laboratory, seminar, and lecture courses, with excellent results. Using focus groups and interview techniques, the researchers found that students felt they ‘owned’ the information they were responsible for delivering—testimony to warm the heart of any educator. Sadly, this technique cannot yet be shown to have lightened the load of any supervising faculty.

What is missing? There may be another dozen articles, like these, that could be written by our colleagues in other programs—travel-abroad programs, service-learning studios, funded international projects. Corollary essays might be offered by practitioners who have engaged cross-cultural learning in business and consulting experiences (Figures 2 and 3). What is your cross-cultural story? The purpose of this theme issue is to stimulate dialogue; develop a network of

resources; share some new techniques. Perhaps because these articles represent a compilation of reports from independent researchers, with separate agendas and frameworks for study, they lack the forceful, overarching argument or concluding presentation of general principles we might expect from a single mind. We therefore encourage readers to look for overlaps and cross-references to cogent principles and resources, and to synthesize the broader patterns in these case studies for yourselves.

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Figure 2. Japanese schoolgirls in the temple precinct at Daitokuji, Kyoto, Japan. (Photograph by Elen Deming)



Figure 3. Multicultural marketplace in Montmartre, Paris. (Photograph by Elen Deming)

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