

Jennifer L. Thomas, Ph.D., MLA, ASLA

Assistant Professor, Landscape Architecture Program

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
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EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Landscape Architecture, History/Theory Track	2019
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	
Dissertation title: "Landscape, Madness, and State: The Emerging Insane Asylum System of Nineteenth-Century New York State"	
Committee: David L. Hays (Dissertation Chair, Dept. of Landscape Architecture), Melissa M. Littlefield (Dept. of English, Dept. of Kinesiology & Community Health), Mark S. Micale (Dept. of History), D. Fairchild Ruggles (Dept. of Landscape Architecture).	
MLA, with Certificate in Historic Preservation	2009
University of Colorado Denver	
Thesis title: "The Education of Jane Silverstein Ries at the Lowthorpe School of Landscape Architecture for Women, Groton, Massachusetts, 1928-1932"	
Committee: Ann Komara (Chair), Joern Langhorst, Thaisa Way.	
MLA, partial completion of degree	2000-2002
Cornell University, Ithaca, NY	
BA in Art History, minor in French	1991
University of Oregon, Eugene	

TEACHING

Assistant Professor, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg campus

Landscape Architecture Program, College of Architecture, Arts, and Design

LAR 2254	Social and Cultural Landscapes	Fall 2022
LAR 2015	Design Studio: Place and Process	Fall 2022

Visiting Assistant Professor of Practice, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg campus

Landscape Architecture Program, College of Architecture and Urban Studies

LAR 5304G + 4304	Topics Seminar: <i>Iconoclasm & the Built Environment</i>	Spring 2022
LAR 3016	Design Studio: Site, Program, & Community II	Spring 2022
LAR 2254	Social and Cultural Landscapes	Fall 2021
LAR 5334	History of Landscape Architecture	Fall 2021

Lecturer (full-time appointment), University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign

Department of Landscape Architecture, College of Fine and Applied Arts

LA 336/438	Vertical Studio, Design Workshop II: Allerton Park Futures: New Design & Programming Options • Student evaluations 2021: acknowledged on the University of Illinois "List of teachers rated excellent by their students."	Spring 2021
LA 597	Research Design & Methods (for MLA and PhD students) • Student evaluations 2021: acknowledged on the University of Illinois "List of teachers rated excellent by their students."	Spring 2021
LA 233	Foundation Design Studio (BLA students) • Student evaluations 2020: acknowledged on the University of Illinois "List of teachers rated excellent by their students."	Fall 2020
LA 594	Cultural Heritage Seminar: Iconoclasm and the Built Environment	Fall 2020
LA 336/438	Vertical Studio, Design Workshop II: Reimagining Reuse: Site Design for Historic State Asylum & Hospital Sites	Spring 2020
LA 314/513	History of World Landscapes	Summer & Spring 2020
LA 437	Regional Design Studio: Data, Narrative, and Design in the Calumet National Heritage Area, spanning the shore of Lake Michigan in Illinois & Indiana. (BLA seniors) • Outcomes: Group project <u>URBAN FLUX</u> received an Illinois ASLA Merit Award 2020 for <u>General Design-Undergraduate Project</u> .	Fall 2019
LA 501	Landscape Architecture Theory and Practice • Student evaluations 2019: acknowledged on the University of Illinois "List of teachers rated excellent by their students."	Fall 2019

ADVISING

Mo Jia	Master's Thesis Committee Member. Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg	2022-2023
Bowen Xu	Master's Thesis Committee Member. Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg	2022-2023
Lizzie Davis	Senior Thesis Project Advisor Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg	2022-2023
Anaija Head	Senior Thesis Project Advisor Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg	2022-2023
Shekinah: Meza	Senior Thesis Project Advisor Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg	2022-2023
Siyi Wu	Senior Thesis Project Advisor Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg	2022-2023
Aliana (Lainey) Bessette	Independent Study. Topic: Public Housing in the U.S.: Design Analyses and Speculative Solutions. Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg	Spring 2022
Hayley Harrington	Master's Thesis Committee Member. Topic: Study of Reparation Programs and Community Design Projects within African-American Neighborhoods: Framework Guidelines for Future Initiatives. Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg	2021-2022
Alyssa Ratcliff	Senior Thesis Project Advisor. Topic: Monacan Nation Weaving and Horticultural Practices Demonstration Garden Design Proposal, Lynchburg, VA Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg	2021-2022
Sareen Ohannessian	Master's Thesis Committee Member. Topic: Critique, Post-Occupancy Analysis, and Proposed Community Design Alternatives for Superkilen Park (Copenhagen) by Topotek 1, Bjarke Ingles Group, and Superflex. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	2021-2022

Le'Passion Darby Capstone Project Advisor for Graduate Cultural Heritage Studies Minor. Paper Title: "The Remains Behind the Rename: The Heritage of Sarah Baartman Hall as Recounted by Campus Architecture," University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign **2020-2022**

TEACHING Graduate Teaching Assistant (University of Illinois and Cornell University)		
LA 101	Introduction to Landscape Architecture Department of Landscape Architecture Faculty: David L. Hays	2018, 2015, 2014, 2013, 2012, 2011
HORT 301	Woody Landscape Plants I Department of Landscape Architecture Faculty: Gary Kling	2017
LA 314	History of World Landscapes Department of Landscape Architecture Faculty: M. Elen Deming (2016); Rachel Leibowitz (2012); Dianne Harris (2011) • Course fulfilled undergraduate Composition II requirement. • Student evaluations 2016: acknowledged on the University of Illinois "List of teachers rated excellent by their students."	2016, 2012, 2011
LA 580	Landscape Preservation: Women as Professionals Seminar Department of Landscape Architecture, Cornell University Faculty: Daniel Krall	2002
ARTH 3440	Leonardo, Michelangelo and Raphael Department of the History of Art and Visual Studies, Cornell University Faculty: Claudia Lazzaro	2002

PUBLICATIONS

Thomas, Jennifer L. Book Review of *Topography of Wellness: How Health and Disease Shaped the American Landscape*, by Sara Jensen Carr. In *Buildings & Landscapes: Journal of the Vernacular Architecture Forum*, 29.2 (Fall 2022): 126-129.

Forthcoming: Thomas, Jennifer L. "The Insane Asylum Landscape Designs of Olmsted & Vaux." Paper publication in the symposium proceedings *Olmsteds: Landscapes and Legacies*, National Park Service and the Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site.

Abstract: <https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/the-insane-asylum-landscapes-of-olmsted-and-vaux.htm>

Thomas, Jennifer L. "Bodies at Work and Leisure: Therapeutic Landscapes of Early Nineteenth-Century New York State Insane Asylums" in *Healing Spaces, Modern Architecture, and the Body*, edited by Sarah Schrank and Didem Ekici, 150-168. London and New York: Routledge, 2017. See: <https://www.routledge.com/products/9781472470836>

Thomas, Jennifer L. Invited contributor to Cornell University's School of Criticism and Theory (SCT) *In Theory* Newsletter (Winter 2016); reflections on my experience at the 2016 SCT summer session, page 9:
https://blogs.cornell.edu/sctcu/files/2016/12/SCT_newsletter2016_eview_v2-2lzpalo.pdf

Thomas, Jennifer L. "Study Day: New York Botanical Garden, 'An Oasis in the Metropolis'." Society of Architectural Historians, Study Tour Fellowship Report (21 October 2015):
<http://www.sah.org/publications-and-research/fellowship-reports/study-tour-reports/study-tour-blog-detail/study-tour-blog/2015/10/21/study-day-the-new-york-botanical-garden-an-oasis-in-the-metropolis>

Thomas, Jennifer L. "The Historic American Landscape Survey (HALS): A Beneficial Tool for Colorado." *Exposures: Planning Issue*. Vol. 1, No. 4 (December 2009): 19-21.

CONFERENCE, UNIVERSITY, and other PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

"Early Influences of Urban Planning and Infrastructure on Central Park Design." Lecture for the course *Understanding the Arts: Art History and Architecture*, summer immersion Pre-College Program, Columbia University, NY. 7 July 2022.

"The Conolly and Kirkbride Treatises: A Nineteenth-Century Asylum Design Comparison." Paper presentation, American Association for the History of Medicine Annual Conference (95th), Saratoga Springs, NY, 21-24 April 2022.

Chair for the session "Politics of Space" at the American Association for the History of Medicine Annual Conference (95th), Saratoga Springs, NY, 21-24 April 2022.

"The Insane Asylum Landscape Designs of Olmsted & Vaux." Paper presentation for the symposium *Olmsteds: Landscapes and Legacies*, at the Boston Society of Architects Space, in conjunction with the Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, Boston, MA, 30 March – 2 April 2022. Abstract: <https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/the-insane-asylum-landscapes-of-olmsted-and-vaux.htm>

"Landscape Architecture, History, Preservation, and Heritage Practice: A Select Chronicle." Lecture for the *Fridays @ 1* Series, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg. 24 September 2021.

Invited expert witness to testify at the Illinois General Assembly's first public hearing of the bipartisan *Statue and Monument Review Task Force*, Springfield, Illinois, 21 April 2021.

Abstract accepted: "Reflections: Cultural Heritage Graduate Seminar: Iconoclasm and the Built Environment." Paper presentation, declined by author. Council of Educators in Landscape Architecture (CELA), *100 + 1: Resilience Conference*, Virtual. March 2021.

Host for the panel discussion (a Zoom webinar) *Fostering Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Anti-Racism in Contemporary Landscape Architecture: Lessons from Cultural Landscape Preservation*. Hosted by the Department of Landscape Architecture, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 17 November 2020.

Invited speaker to present the paper "Landscape as Treatment: Contextualizing the Insane Asylum Movement in the United States" for the panel "Constructing Spaces" at the conference *Feeling DIS/EASE: New Perspectives on Modern History* at the Max Planck Institute for Human Development, Berlin, Germany, 29-31 January 2020.

"An Exemplar Design Turn: Early Landscapes of the Pennsylvania Hospital for the Insane and Thomas Story Kirkbride." Paper presentation, American Association for the History of Medicine Annual Conference, Los Angeles, CA, 10-13 May 2018.

"Framing a Mid Nineteenth-Century Design Turn: Thomas Story Kirkbride, the Pennsylvania Hospital for the Insane, and Landscapes of the New York State Insane Asylum System." Paper presentation for the three-week Dumbarton Oaks Garden and Landscape Studies Graduate Workshop, Washington D.C., 6 June 2017.

"Researching Nineteenth-Century Insane Asylum Landscapes of New York State." Presentation, Mellon CNY Humanities Corridor Visiting Scholars Program, Syracuse University, 5 September 2014.

"Landscape as Practical and Therapeutic Setting for Nineteenth-Century New York State Insane Asylums." Paper presentation, Illinois Program for Research in the Humanities Spring Symposium *Ecological Bodies*, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1-2 May 2014.

"Spatializing Treatment in Nineteenth-Century Insane Asylum Landscapes of New York State," for the session *Healing Spaces, Modern Architecture, and the Body*. Society of Architectural Historians Annual Conference, Austin, TX, 9-13 April 2014.

Abstract: <https://sah.conference-services.net/reports/template/onetextabstract.xml?xsl=template/onetextabstract.xsl&conferenceID=3674&abstractID=764855>

"Institutional Palimpsests: Former Insane Asylum Landscapes of New York State." Paper presentation at the architecture and landscape architecture lecture series "Erlanger Evenings", University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 21 February 2013.

"Jane Silverstein Ries: Pioneer of Sustainable Colorado Landscape Architecture." Paper presentation. Colorado Preservation Inc. Saving Places Annual Conference, Denver, CO, 3-5 February 2010.

"The Lowthorpe School of Landscape Architecture for Women, Groton, MA, 1901-1945: An Overlooked Cultural Landscape in Need of Awareness and Preservation." Paper and poster presentation. Alliance for Historic Landscape Preservation (AHLPP) Annual Conference, St. Louis, MO, 28-30 May 2009. Abstract: <http://www.ahlp.org/pdfs/2009/thomasabstract-1.pdf>

"The Education of Jane Silverstein Ries at the Lowthorpe School of Landscape Architecture for Women in Groton, Massachusetts, 1928-1932." Paper presentation. Council of Educators in Landscape Architecture (CELA) 2008-2009 Annual Conference, Tucson, AZ, 14-17 January 2009. Abstract: <http://thecela.org/wp-content/uploads/cela-conf-2008-09-abstracts-1.pdf> , page 109.

GRANTS, FELLOWSHIPS, HONORS, and AWARDS

- Principal Investigator for the Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Units (CESU) and National Park Service Grant -- \$18,000** 2022
Project title: "CESU-Establish Youth Partnership for Future Design Professionals."
Objectives: Initiate and oversee paid internships for Virginia Tech design students with the National Park Service's Blue Ridge Parkway design and management professionals. This year's topic: *History of the African-American Woods Picnic Area in Doughton Park, North Carolina.*
- New Faculty Mentoring Grant, Provost Office – Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg -- \$1,500** 2022
- Participant in the School of Criticism and Theory (SCT) at Cornell University.** 2021
Six-week summer seminar "Critical History and the Archive," taught by Camille Robcis, Professor of History and French, Columbia University.
- Illinois American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) Student Merit Award.** Studio proposal *URBAN FLUX* received a Merit Award for "General Design-Undergraduate Project" that was produced in my Fall 2019 *Regional Design Studio: Data, Narrative, and Design in the Calumet National Heritage Area (Illinois & Indiana).* 2020
- National Science Foundation (NSF) Travel Grant** to present at the annual conference of the American Association for the History of Medicine, Los Angeles, California, 10-13 May 2018. 2018
- Dumbarton Oaks Garden and Landscape Studies Graduate Workshop, funded participant** "with support from the Mellon Initiative in Urban Landscape Studies and in collaboration with the New York Botanical Garden" Washington D. C., 5-23 June 2017. 2017
- Nicholson Graduate Student Fellowship to attend the School of Criticism and Theory (SCT), Cornell University** 2016
Participant in the six-week summer seminar "Seeing Madness: Insanity, Media, and Visual Culture," led by W. J. T. Mitchell. Sponsored by the Unit of Criticism and Interpretive Theory, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.
- Mellon Foundation Travel Award to attend the Dumbarton Oaks spring symposium *Landscape and the Academy*** Washington D.C., 6-7 May 2016. For my subsequent "Student Award Narrative", see: 2016
<https://www.doaks.org/research/garden-landscape/scholarly-activities/past/landscape-and-the-academy/student-award-narratives>
- Society of Architectural Historians (SAH) Scott Opler Endowment for New Scholars Fellowship** 2015
for the SAH Study Day Tour at the New York Botanical Garden, Bronx, New York.
- Finalist for the Douglas Dockery Thomas Fellowship in Garden History and Design, Landscape Architecture Foundation** 2015
Sponsored by the Garden Club of America, Washington D.C. (honorary distinction).
- Mellon-Central New York Humanities Corridor Visiting Scholars Program** 2014
Grant for primary source research in member institutions. (Syracuse University, Cornell University, University of Rochester).
- Larry J. Hackman Research Residency, New York State Archives, Albany.** 2014, 2013
- First Place Winner, team submission to the "2014 HALS (Historic American Landscape Survey) Challenge:** 2014
"Documenting Landscapes of the New Deal," administered by the National Park Service. Project: Allegheny National Forest, Civilian Conservation Corps Camp ANF-1, Duhring, Pennsylvania. (HALS PA-25) Team leader: Prof. Ann Komara, University of Colorado Denver. My role: photographer (large format camera). Photographs and documents not yet digitized but the project file in the Library of Congress may be found at: <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/hh/item/pa4153/>
- Conference Travel Grant from the Graduate College, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.** 2014
- Illinois Program for Research in the Humanities (IPRH), Graduate Student Fellow** AY 2013-2014
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Annual theme: "The Body/Bodies".
- Charles E. Beveridge Research Fellowship, funded by the Friends of Fairsted for research in the Olmsted Archives at the Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, Brookline, MA.** 2013
- Fiel Travel Fellowship in Landscape Architecture, Department of Landscape Architecture, College of Fine and Applied Arts, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.** 2012
Project Title: *Touring Select Nineteenth-Century Insane Asylum Landscapes of New York State.*

University Fellowship—Block Grant , Department of Landscape Architecture, the Graduate College at the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign.	2016, 2015, 2012, 2011
Bellafore Fellowship , Department of Landscape Architecture, College of Fine and Applied Arts, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.	2013, 2010
Inducted into the Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi , University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.	2011

ACADEMIC and PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

School of Design, New School Director Search Committee College of Architecture, Art, and Design, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg	2022-2023
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee Member College of Architecture, Art, and Design, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg	2022-2023
School of Design Representative on the University Commencement Committee Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg	2022-2023
Student Awards Coordinator (for university, state, and national awards) Landscape Architecture Program, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg	2023, 2022
Council of Educators in Landscape Architecture. Annual Conference Abstract Reviewer for History, Theory, & Culture Tracks + Landscape Architecture for Health Track	2023, 2022, 2021
Events Committee Member (planning lectures, panels, symposia) Department of Landscape Architecture, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	2020-2021
Master of Landscape Architecture (MLA) Committee Member Department of Landscape Architecture, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	AY 2020-2021, 2019-2020
Faculty Search Committee Member for Assistant Professor & Design Center Initiative Fellow Department of Landscape Architecture, College of Fine and Applied Arts, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	2016
Student Advisory Committee, PhD Student Representative Department of Landscape Architecture, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	2015-2016
Moderator (for six paper sessions), Graduate Student Volunteer Council of Educators in Landscape Architecture (CELA) Annual Conference University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, March 28-31.	2012
Instructional Awards Committee, Graduate Student Member College of Fine and Applied Arts, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	2011
Historic American Landscape Survey (HALS) Liaison American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA), Colorado Chapter	2009-2010
Member, Board of Directors, Jane Silverstein Ries Foundation Charitable arm of ASLA Colorado Chapter http://www.jsrfoundation.org	2008-2010
Consultant to the Denver Public Library Consulted on early biographical and educational details for the exhibit <i>Jane Silverstein Ries (1909-2005): Retrospective of a Colorado Landscape Architect</i> 6 February – 20 May 2009	2008-2009

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE and DEVELOPMENT

Administrative Coordinator (dual appointment) Center of Preservation Research and the Colorado Center for Community Development College of Architecture and Planning, University of Colorado Denver.	2009-2010
Professional Development – Grant Writing and Historic Preservation Surveys Colorado Historical Society, State Historical Fund Grant Writing and Grant Management Workshop, and Historical & Architectural Survey Training Initiative-Short Course, Colorado Historical Society.	2009
Garden History and Design Summer Intern Archives of American Gardens, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C., sponsored by Garden Club of America	2007
Graduate Student Employee Visual Resource Center, College of Architecture and Planning, University of Colorado Denver.	2006-2008
Landscape Design Assistant The Last Detail Inc., a residential landscape design and maintenance company. Denver, Colorado.	2005-2006
Category Manager for Select Accounts Tagawa Greenhouses Inc. (Supplier of annuals and perennials to Colorado Home Depot Stores) Brighton, Colorado.	2004-2005
Security Supervisor Metropolitan Museum of Art. New York, New York.	1994-2000

MEMBERSHIPS

Alliance for Historic Landscape Preservation (AHLP)

American Association for the History of Medicine (AAHM)

American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) and member of two ASLA Professional Practice Networks: Historic Preservation, plus the Healthcare and Therapeutic Design PPN

Society of Architectural Historians (SAH)

Vernacular Architecture Forum (VAF)