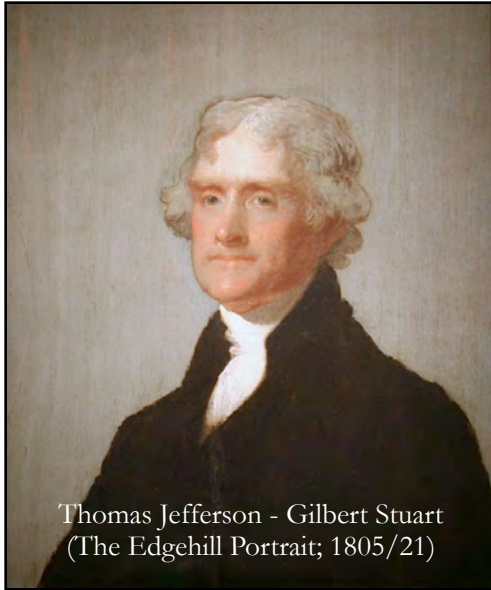


An Architectural Revolutionary

Thomas Jefferson Forges a National Identity Through Enlightened Design

Introduction



Thomas Jefferson - Gilbert Stuart
(The Edgehill Portrait; 1805/21)

In the American consciousness Thomas Jefferson's words of the Declaration of Independence serve as a beacon for liberty and individual freedom. As a politician, philosopher, historian, and distinguished public servant, Jefferson's achievements in authoring the Statute of Virginia for Religious Freedom, in founding the University of Virginia, and in serving as third president of the United States illuminate his contributions over a period of five decades. While these accomplishments illustrate Jefferson's importance in many facets of his life and public service, of equal value is a concentrated study of Jefferson's architectural acumen and his impact upon the aesthetic consciousness of the American nation. Learned, intellectual, knowledgeable, and an insatiable appetite for ideas, Jefferson wrote in 1809 that "architecture is my delight, and putting up and pulling down, one of my favorite amusements" (I) to Margaret Bayard Smith, *Winter in Washington*). As an architect Jefferson created structures of beauty and functionality. From Monticello that served as an "essay in architecture" to public buildings that reinforced the ideals of the American Republic, Jefferson's designs influenced American sensibilities by creating memorable structures that the populace could instinctually comprehend for their beauty and civic relevance.

Themes Explored in this Unit:

- * Thomas Jefferson's architectural vision and design.
- * The Enlightenment: the concept of beauty (examined from a philosophical perspective).
- * The architecture of Classical Antiquity and Renaissance Italy (specific attention: Greeks, Romans, and Andrea Palladio) and how this influenced Jefferson.
- * History: How Monticello is Jefferson's "essay in architecture".
- * History: How Jefferson's civic architecture creates a American identity based on republican virtues.

Objectives:

- * Students will examine and analyze visual images of classical antiquity (Parthenon and Pantheon), Monticello, the Virginia State Capitol, the University of Virginia, and the United States Capitol.
- * Students will read primary documents and analyze the meaning and importance of the documents.
- * Students will discuss the concept of beauty from an Enlightenment perspective and apply that understanding to Jefferson's architectural structures.
- * Students will evaluate perspectives of Jefferson's contemporaries.
- * Students will gain a working knowledge of architectural terminology by applying those concepts to Jefferson's designs (ornamentation and types of building materials)
- * Students will gain an appreciation for Jefferson's intellect, dedication, and ingenuity.
- * Students will comprehend that buildings reflect history, culture, and create national identities.

Activity 1: The Concept of Beauty in the Classical World and the Enlightenment

OBJECTIVES:

- * Students will analyze images from the Parthenon (Athens) and the Pantheon (Rome) to develop a sense of classical beauty, simplicity, and proportion.
- * Students will discuss how the building reflect the culture and the history of the creators.
- * Students will read primary source documents and comprehend the perspectives of the ancients and Enlightenment thinkers in regards to the concept of beauty.
- * Students will learn architectural terminology associated with classical antiquity.
- * Students will understand some symbols from the ancient world.
- * Students will work individually and then share observations in a discussion format.
- * This activity provides a solid foundation upon which students will comprehend necessary terminology as well as begin the process of understanding Thomas Jefferson's inspiration both in spatial design and philosophical reasoning.

TIME FRAME: 45 - 60 MINUTES

NOTES:

- * Classical Age in Greece (particularly Athens)

The period from 500 - 323 B.C. is the Classical Age of Greek civilization. In ancient Athens, the polis stressed the virtue of the individual while simultaneously showing deep reverence for the gods and tradition. This blend of looking back at history while reaching for greatness in the future characterized an Athenian culture that believed deeply in humanism. Humanism focused on the notion that humanity possessed rational thought, beauty, creativity, and individual spirit. From this culture sprang drama, sophisticated art, democracy, philosophy, the systematic study of history. This was also a time of war against the Persians, which upon victory over the Medes, the Athenians celebrated their accomplishment in honoring their patron deity, Athena Parthenos.

The Parthenon:

Evan Hadingham in the article "Unlocking the Mysteries of the Parthenon" suggests that "The Parthenon was part of an ambitious building campaign on the Acropolis that began around 450 b.c. A generation before, the Athenians, as part of an alliance of Greek city-states, had led heroic victories against Persian invaders. . . . Basking in glory, the Athenians planned their new temple complex on a lavish, unprecedented scale—with the Parthenon as the centerpiece. . . . The Parthenon's base was 23,028 square feet (about half the size of a football field) and its 46 outer columns were some 34 feet high. A 525-foot frieze wrapped around the top of the exterior wall of the building's inner chamber. Several scholars have argued that the frieze shows a procession related to the quadrennial Great Panathenaia, or the festival "of all the Athenians." By incorporating this scene of civic celebration, the scholars suggest, the Parthenon served not merely as an imperial propaganda statement but also as an expression of Athens' burgeoning democracy—the will of the citizens who had voted to fund this exceptional monument." <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history-archaeology/Unlocking-Mysteries-of-the-Parthenon.html#ixzz21y4xPIwP>

* The Roman Republic and Empire

The period from 509 - 27 B.C. in the Republican Age of Roman civilization. At this point, the Romans developed a constitution that outlined the legal rights for citizens and instituted a governmental structure that contained three major components: two Consuls, the Senate, and the Assembly. Essentially this system was one of checks and balances which enabled Rome to grow and prosper economically. Civil Wars led to the downfall of the Republic and the institution of an empire based on imperial power held in the hands of powerful military generals who gained political capital through maintaining public works projects, winning foreign wars, and keeping the empire economically solvent. The Empire lasts from 27 B.C. to 476 A.D. It was the men of the Republic like Cicero, Cincinnatus, and Cato that moved Thomas Jefferson. Not only did the thinkers inspire Jefferson, but so did the architecture of Rome, specifically the Pantheon.

The Pantheon:

The Pantheon was built as a pagan temple so Romans could worship the gods. The original structure was constructed in 27 - 25 A.D. by Marcus Agrippa, but succumbed to fire in 80 A.D. Between 118 - 125 A.D. the Emperor Hadrian rebuilt the temple on some of the foundation of the original structure. Since the 7th century, the Pantheon has been used as a Christian church and since the Renaissance, it has been used as a tomb. The building is circular with a portico of three ranks of Corinthian columns under a pediment opening to the rotunda. A coffered, concrete dome, with an oculus, opens directly to the sky. The height of the oculus and the diameter of the interior circle are the same, 142 feet. Jefferson echoed this dome structure in his private residence of Monticello, and the Rotunda at UVA.

* The Enlightenment:

An intellectual movement of the 18th century that believed human reason could create a better world by challenging governmental tyranny and religious authority, by thwarting human ignorance, and by championing personal freedom and change to existing social structures. While the Enlightenment had its roots in Europe, Americans sought to separate church and state, while believing that God underwrites the notion of human equality. American culture was founded on natural laws such as life, liberty, and property. Jefferson played a prominent role in the creation of the American nation and found inspiration in Bacon, Newton, and Locke.

For the purposes of the Unit as it relates to Jefferson and his architectural vision, the quotations from the Enlightenment will focus primarily on those comments related to a philosophical discussion of beauty. Jefferson believed that there existed two types of beauty and two causes of beauty:

- * **Formal beauty:** intrinsic beauty formed by harmonies of form and color
 - * innate within all people is a sense of proportion
- * **Functional beauty:** relative and comparative beauty
 - * the accuracy of a painting's imitation of nature or the utility of architecture
- * **Enlightenment thinkers who influenced Jefferson in regards to beauty:**
 - * William Hogarth's *Analysis of Beauty* (included)
 - * Edmund Burke's *Essay on the Sublime*
 - * Henry Home, Lord Kames' *Elements of Criticism* "Gardening and Architecture" (included)
 - * James Adams' *Essay on Architectural Theory while in Rome* 1762

** For an incredibly detailed analysis on this subject of beauty, consult Kenneth Hafertepe's An Inquiry in Thomas Jefferson's Ideas of Beauty. Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians, Vol. 59, No 2 (June 2000).*

Image Analysis & Primary Source Document Analysis

DIRECTIONS:

- * Students will write down as many observations as they can from the images shown from the Parthenon and the Pantheon. (Use glossary of terms for specific elements)
- * Be sure students define the terms so they understand their meaning, function, and importance.
- * Read and Analyze Primary Source documents (creation, context, content, consequence -below)
- * In class analyze the Parthenon and read Henry Home - Homework - Pantheon and Hogarth

ATHENIAN PARTHENON



Photo - James C. Newman - 2007

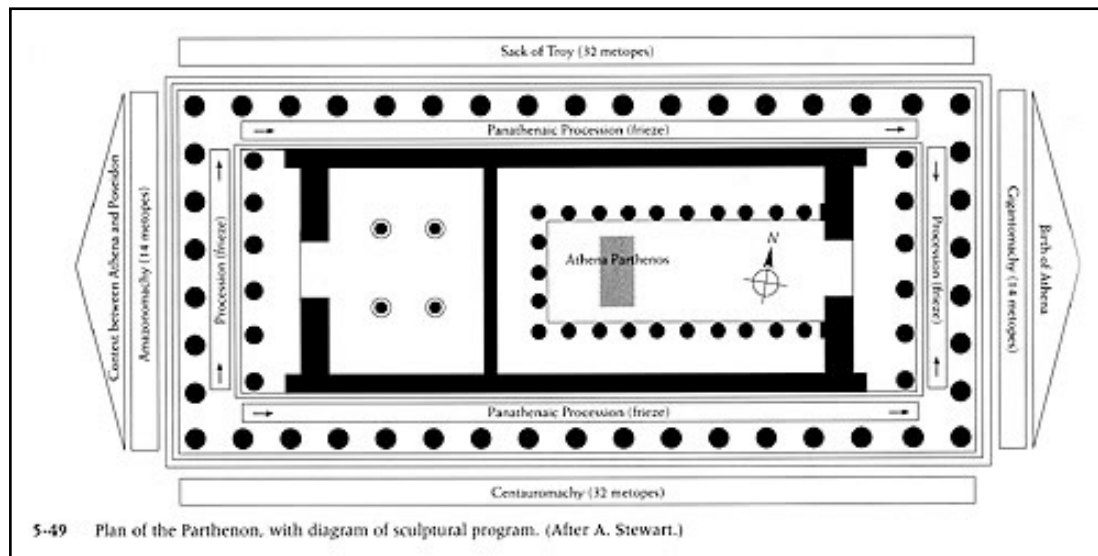


Diagram: Western Michigan University - Art History Page

http://www.wmich.edu/art/arthistory/protected/gallery2200/g220_greece_CLASS.htm

ROMAN PANTHEON



Photos by James C. Newman - Rome - 2009

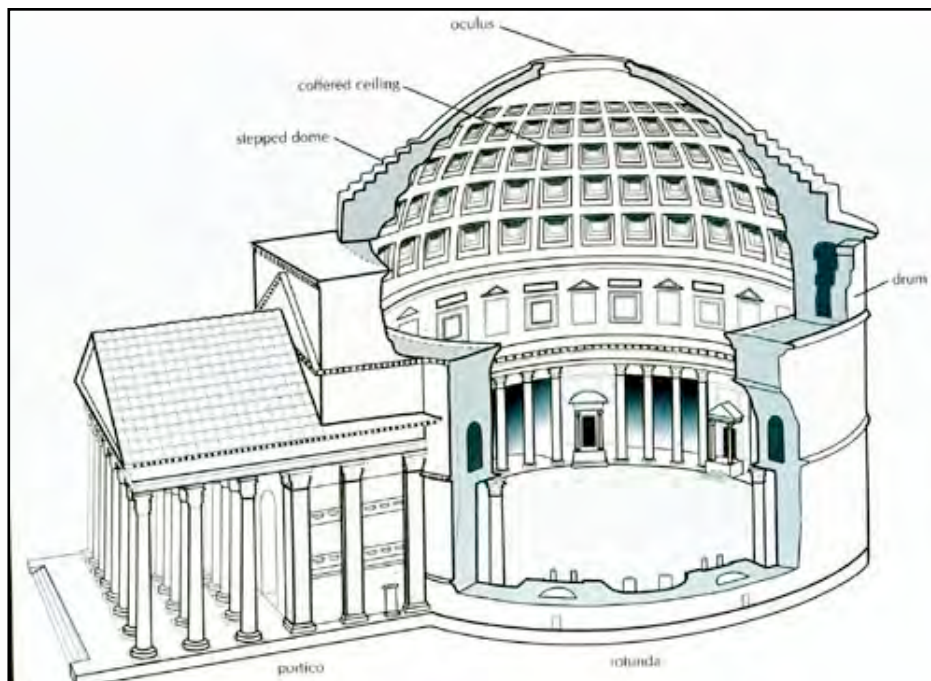


Diagram: Western
Michigan University -
Art History Page

http://www.wmich.edu/art/arhistory/protected/gallery2200/g220_greece_CLASS.htm

GLOSSARY

Pediment: The triangular space created by the sloping eaves and horizontal cornice line of a gabled temple or other classical building.

Entablature: The whole assemblage of parts supported by the column. Three primary divisions are the architrave, frieze, and cornice.

Architrave: The lowest of the three primary divisions of the entablature. The word is loosely applied to any moulding round a door or window and such mouldings do, in fact, most frequently borrow the profile of the architrave in the strict sense.

Frieze: The middle of the three primary divisions of the entablature. Is a horizontal band that differs depending upon the order.

Cornice: The uppermost of the three primary divisions of the entablature. Horizontal moulding forming a main decorative feature.

Metope: The square space between two triglyphs in the frieze of the Doric order. Often left plain but sometimes decorated with ornaments.

Triglyph: A feature of the frieze of the Doric order, consisting of a vertical element with two sunk vertical channels and two half-channels at the edges. They serve as a paraphrase in masonry of features deriving from timber construction.

Capital: The uppermost member of a column or pilaster crowing the shaft and taking the weight of the entablature. Differences in Doric, Corinthian, and Ionic.

Shaft: The part of a column which is between the base and the capital.

Entasis: The swelling of a column. All classical columns are broader at the base than the capital.

Bukrania: Carved representations of ox skulls, often found in the metopes of a Doric frieze.

Stylobate: The steps under a portico or colonnade.

Source: Dawn H. Stegall. Thomas Jefferson: Architect - 1992.

ARCHITECTURAL ORDERS:

The Orders

DORIC

“Characterized by a slightly tapered column. The Greek forms of the Doric order have no individual base and instead rest directly on the stylobate. The frieze section of the Doric entablature is distinctive. It is composed of projecting triglyphs that alternate with metopes that may be either plain or carved with sculptured reliefs. The Roman forms of the Doric order have smaller proportions and appear lighter and more graceful than their Greek counterparts.”

IONIC

“This order differs from the Doric in having more flutes on its shaft and in the scrolls, or volutes, that droop over the front and rear portions of the echinus in the capital. On the entablature, the architrave is usually made up of three stepped fasciae (bands). The frieze lacks the Doric triglyph and metope, and hence this area can hold a continuous band of carved ornament, such as figural groups.”

CORINTHIAN

“Its distinguishing characteristic is the striking capital, which is carved with two staggered rows of stylized acanthus leaves and four scrolls.”

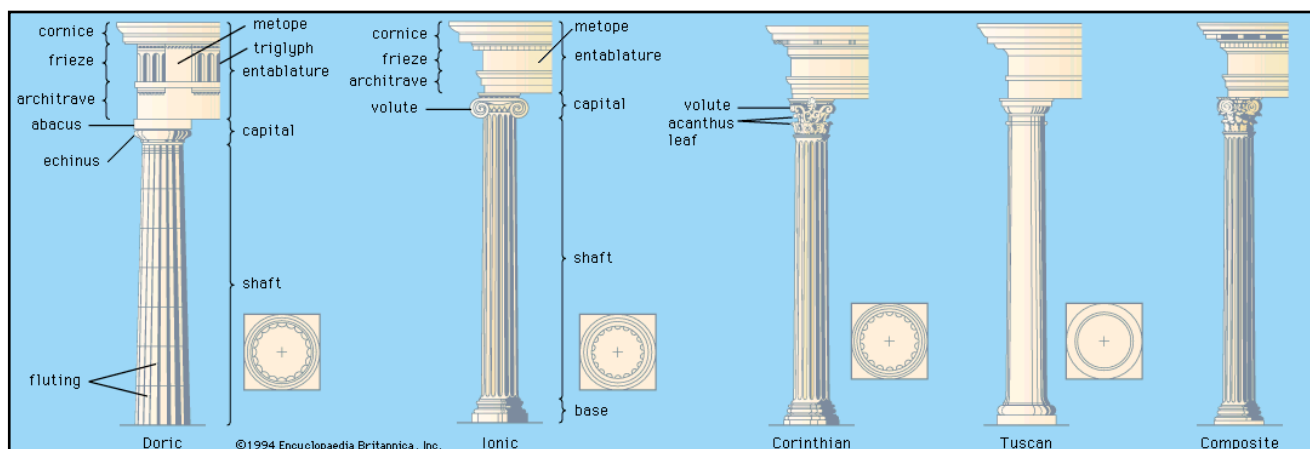
TUSCAN

“This order is a Roman adaptation of the Doric. The Tuscan has an unfluted shaft and a simple echinus-abacus capital. It is similar in proportion and profile to the Roman Doric but is much plainer.”

COMPOSITE

“This order which was not ranked as a separate order until the Renaissance, is a late Roman development Of the Corinthian. It is called Composite because its capital is composed of Ionic volutes and Corinthian acanthus-leaf decoration.”

Source: Encyclopedia Britannica on-line - <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/431390/order>



PRIMARY SOURCE DOCUMENTS

Henry Home, Lord Kames (1696 - 1782)Biography:

Born and privately educated, Lord Kames was a central figure in the Scottish Enlightenment. Writing and publishing a great deal while serving as a lawyer then as a judge in the High Court of Justiciary, Kames concentrated on history, philosophy, literary criticism and religion. In 1762 he wrote his two volumes on Elements of Criticism from which the following excerpts are taken. Here he focuses his thoughts on the relevance and beauty of architecture.

Source for Biography: The International Association for Scottish Philosophy, "Henry Home, Lord Kames (1696 - 1782)" <http://www.scottishphilosophy.org/lordkames.html> (accessed 7/30/2012)



Chapter XXIV: Gardening and Architecture - Henry Homes, Lord Kames,
Elements of Criticism, Vol. 2 (1762)

Edited by Peter Jones (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2005). 2 vols. Vol. 2. <http://oll.libertyfund.org/> accessed July 2012

"Architecture has . . . continued many ages an useful art merely, without aspiring to be classed with the fine arts. Architecture, therefore, . . . being useful arts as well as fine arts, afford two different views. The reader, however, will not here expect rules for improving any work of art in point of utility; it being no part of my plan to treat of any useful art as such: but there is a beauty in utility; and in discoursing of beauty, that of utility must not be neglected.

In architecture, the beauties of regularity, order, and proportion. . . Grandeur can be expressed in a building. . . architecture can display the beauty of utility in the highest perfection. . . Architecture, considered as a fine art . . . seems not far advanced beyond its infant state. To bring it to maturity, two things mainly are wanted. First, a greater variety of parts and ornaments than at present it seems provided with. In architecture . . . materials are so scanty, that artists hitherto have not been successful in raising any emotions but of beauty and grandeur. . . But though it is evident, that every building ought to have a certain character or expression suited to its destination; yet this refinement has scarce been attempted by any artist. A death's head and bones employ'd in monumental buildings, will indeed produce an emotion of gloom and melancholy; but such ornaments, if these can be termed so, ought to be rejected, because they are in themselves disagreeable. The other thing wanted to bring the art to perfection, is, to ascertain the precise impression made by every single part and ornament, cupolas, spires, columns, carvings, statues, vases, &c.: for in vain will an artist attempt rules for employing these, either singly or in combination, until the different emotions they produce be distinctly explained.

In architecture, simplicity ought to be a ruling principle. Profuse ornament hath no better effect than to confound the eye, and to prevent the object from making an impression as one entire whole. An artist destitute of genius for capital beauties, is naturally prompted to supply the defect by crowding his plan with slight embellishments.

Architecture, being an useful as well as a fine art, leads us to distinguish buildings and parts of buildings into three kinds, namely, what are intended for utility solely, what for ornament solely, and what for both. Buildings intended for utility solely, such as detached offices, ought in every part to correspond precisely to that intention: the slightest deviation from the end in view, will by every person of taste be thought a blemish. In general, it is the perfection of every work of art, that it fulfils the purpose for which it is intended; and every other beauty, in opposition, is improper. But in things intended for ornament, such as pillars, obelisks, triumphal arches, beauty ought alone to be regarded. A Heathen temple must be considered as merely

ornamental; for being dedicated to some deity, and not intended for habitation, it is susceptible of any figure and any embellishment that fancy can suggest and beauty admit. The great difficulty of contrivance, respects buildings that are intended to be useful as well as ornamental. These ends, employing different and often opposite means, are seldom united in perfection; and the only practicable method in such buildings is, to favour ornament less or more according to the character of the building: in palaces, and other edifices sufficiently extensive to admit a variety of useful contrivance, regularity justly takes the lead; but in dwelling-houses that are too small for variety of contrivance, utility ought to prevail, neglecting regularity as far as it stands in opposition to convenience.

Intrinsic and relative beauty being founded on different principles, must be handled separately. I begin with relative beauty, as of the greater importance.

A dwelling-house may admit ornaments; and the principal door of a palace demands all the grandeur that is consistent with the foregoing proportions dictated by utility: it ought to be elevated, and approached by steps; and it may be adorned with pillars supporting an architrave, or in any other beautiful manner. The door of a church ought to be wide, in order to afford an easy passage for a multitude: the width, at the same time, regulates the height, as will appear by and by. The size of windows ought to be proportioned to that of the room they illuminate; for if the apertures be not sufficiently large to convey light to every corner, the room is unequally lighted, which is a great deformity. The steps of a stair ought to be accommodated to the human figure, without regarding any other proportion: they are accordingly the same in large and in small buildings, because both are inhabited by men of the same size.

Proportion of parts is not only itself a beauty, but is inseparably connected with a beauty of the highest relish, that of concord or harmony; which will be plain from what follows. A room of which the parts are all finely adjusted to each other, strikes us with the beauty of proportion. It strikes us at the same time with a pleasure far superior: the length, the breadth, the height, the windows, raise each of them separately an emotion: these emotions are similar; and though faint when felt separately, they produce in conjunction the emotion of concord or harmony, which is extremely pleasant.

Regularity and proportion are essential in buildings destined chiefly or solely to please the eye, because they produce intrinsic beauty. But a skilful artist will not confine his view to regularity and proportion: he will also study congruity, which is perceived when the form and ornaments of a structure are suited to the purpose for which it is intended. The sense of congruity dictates the following rule, That every building have an expression corresponding to its destination: A palace ought to be sumptuous and grand; a private dwelling, neat and modest; a play-house, gay and splendid; and a monument, gloomy and melancholy. A Heathen temple has a double destination: It is considered chiefly as a house dedicated to some divinity; and in that respect it ought to be grand, elevated, and magnificent: it is considered also as a place of worship; and in that respect it ought to be somewhat dark or gloomy, because dimness produces that tone of mind which is suited to humility and devotion. A Christian church is not considered to be a house for the Deity, but merely a place of worship: it ought therefore to be decent and plain, without much ornament: a situation ought to be chosen low and retired; because the congregation, during worship, ought to be humble, and disengaged from the world. Columns, beside their chief service of being supports, may contribute to that peculiar expression which the destination of a building requires: columns of different proportions, serve to express loftiness, lightness, &c. as well as strength. Situation also may contribute to expression: conveniency regulates the situation of a private dwelling-house; but, as I have had occasion to observe, the situation of a palace ought to be lofty.”

QUESTIONS

1. How would Kames define beauty?
2. How is architecture beautiful?
3. When Jefferson read Kames, how might Kames have influenced Jefferson's thoughts?
4. How do buildings make an impression upon the viewer?
5. How are form and function related in buildings?



William Hogarth (1697 - 1764)

Biography:

An artist from London, England who brought art to the common man through satirical caricatures and moral paintings. Not only a prolific painter, Hogarth wrote extensively on politics, literature and the theatre.

The excerpt below comes from Hogarth's "The Analysis of Beauty."

Photo and biographical information come from:

http://www.artble.com/artists/william_hogarth

Chapter IV, VII, & VIII of *The Analysis of Beauty*, William Hogarth (1753)

Edited by Charles Davis (Fontes: Sources and Documents for the History of Art 1350 - 1750) pdf
Accessed July 2012

Chapter IV. "Of simplicity, or DISTINCTNESS"

"Simplicity, without variety, is wholly insipid, and at best does only not displease; but when variety is joined to it, then it pleases, because it enhances the pleasure of variety, by giving the eye the power of enjoying it with ease.

There is no object composed of straight lines, that has so much variety, with so few parts, as the pyramid: and it is its constantly varying from its base gradually upwards in every situation of the eye, (without giving the idea of sameness, as the eye moves round it) that has made it been esteemed in all ages, in preference to the cone, which in all views appears nearly the same, being varied only by light and shade.

Yet, in my mind, odd numbers have the advantage over the even ones, as variety is more pleasing than uniformity, where the same end is answered by both; as in this case, where both polygons may be circumscribed by the same circle, or in other words, both compositions bounded by the same cone. And I can't help observing, that nature in all her works of fancy, if I may be allowed the expression, where it seems immaterial whether even or odd numbers of divisions were preferred, most frequently employs the odd; as for example, in the indenting of leaves, flowers, blossoms, etc.

Thus we see simplicity gives beauty even to variety, as it makes it more easily understood, and should be ever studied in the works of art, as it serves to prevent perplexity in forms of elegance."

Chapter VII. "Of LINES"

"The constant use of lines. . . We suppose, that the straight line, and the circular line, together with their different combinations, and variations, etc. bound, and circumscribe all visible objects whatsoever, thereby producing such endless variety of forms, as lays us under the necessity of dividing, and distinguishing them into general classes; leaving the intervening mixtures of appearances to the reader's own farther observation.

First, objects composed of straight lines only, as the cube, or of circular lines, as the sphere, or of both, together, as cylinders and cones, etc.

Secondly, those composed of straight lines, circular lines, and of lines partly straight, and partly circular, as the capitals of columns, and vases, etc.

Thirdly, those composed of all the former together with an addition of the waving line, which is a line more productive of beauty than any of the former, as in flowers, and other forms of the ornamental kind: for which reason we shall call it the line of beauty.

Fourthly, those composed of all the former together with the serpentine line, as the human form, which line hath the power of super-adding grace to beauty. Note, forms of most grace have least of the straight line in them.”

Chapter VIII. “Of sorts of PARTS, and how PLEASING FORMS are composed”

“I am thoroughly convinced in myself, however it may startle some, that a completely new and harmonious order of architecture in all its parts, might be produced by the following method of composing, but hardly with certainty without it; and this I am the more apt to believe, as upon the strictest examination, those four orders of the ancients, which are so well established for beauty and true proportion, perfectly agree with the scheme we shall now lay down.

This way of composing pleasing forms, is to be accomplished by making choice of variety of lines, as to their shapes and dimensions; and then again by varying their situations with each other, by all the different ways that can be conceived: and at the same time (if a solid figure be the subject of the composition) the contents or space that is to be inclosed within those lines, must be duly considered and varied too, as much as possible, with propriety. In a word, it may be said, the art of composing well is the art of varying well.

Tho’ the moderns have not made many additions to the art of building, with respect to mere beauty or ornament, yet it must be confessed, they have carried simplicity, convenience, and neatness of workmanship, to a very great degree of perfection, particularly in England; where plain good sense hath preferred these more necessary parts of beauty, which every body can understand, to that richness of taste which is so much to be seen in other countries, and so often substituted in their room.

Whence the eye is entertained throughout with the charming variety of all its parts together; the noble projecting quantity of a certain number of them, which presents bold and distinct parts at a distance, when the lesser parts within them disappear; and the grand few, but remarkably well-varied parts that continue to please the eye as long as the object is discernable . . . so justly esteemed the prince of architects.”

QUESTIONS

1. How does simplicity and variation create beauty according to Hogarth?
2. What is the relationship between different types of lines in architecture?
3. How do you think Hogarth’s thoughts influenced Jefferson’s architecture?
4. How are pleasing forms composed?
5. If Hogarth and Lord Kames were to advise Jefferson in building Monticello, what would they recommend?

PRIMARY SOURCE DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

Questions to consider as you read and analyze a primary source document:

Creation of document:

1. Who is the author?
2. When was the document written?
3. Where was the document composed?
4. What kind of document is it? (i.e. journal, letter, contract, court report, etc.)

Context of the document:

5. For whom is this document being written? (consider explicit vs. implicit)
6. What is the stated purpose of the document?
7. Is there an implied purpose behind the document?
8. What is the historical context of the author(s) or text? (In other words, what significant historical events precede and/or coincide with the creation of this document?)

Content of the document:

9. What are the main points of the document?
10. What facts does the author/document use to make its point(s)?
11. What opinions does the author/document use to make its point(s)?
12. Is there any significance to the style or format in which the document is written?
13. Is there anything that particularly jumps out at you as you read this document?
14. Do you detect that the author is operating under any assumptions or biases?
15. Do you feel there is any important information missing?

Consequences of the document:

What impact do you feel this document may have had on the people or institutions of the time period under consideration?

Activity 2: Thomas Jefferson's Architectural Vision & the Influence of Palladio

OBJECTIVES:

- * Students will read letters and excerpts from Thomas Jefferson through the course of his life to develop a sense of his architectural vision personally and civically.
- * Students will learn of Andrea Palladio and his influence upon Jefferson.
- * Students will be exposed to reflections upon Jefferson's architectural prowess by other notable contemporaries, both foreign and domestic, as well as more contemporary scholars and dignitaries.
- * Students will possess a knowledge of Jefferson's voice and his keen intellect regarding architecture and design.

TIME FRAME: 45 - 60 MINUTES

NOTES & INTRODUCTION TO THOMAS JEFFERSON AS AN ARCHITECT

Jack McLaughlin's seminal work on Jefferson, *"Jefferson and Monticello: The Biography of a Builder"* claims that "those who construct their own shelter replicate themselves, at their deepest and most significant level, in their houses. They are what they build." Jefferson did just this, he left us a "detailed portrait of himself in timber, brick, plaster and paint" (Jefferson and Monticello, p. vii, viii). McLaughlin goes on to state

But to say that Thomas Jefferson was simply among the first of millions of Americans who designed and built their own homes, or that Monticello is a typical, if somewhat large, example of domestic architecture, is to deny the palpable genius of the man. He was larger than life in most things he did—America's outstanding example of a Renaissance man in an age that produced more than its share. As in virtually everything he attempted, Jefferson's lifelong involvement in rendering into reality the house of his creative imagination was heroic in scale. Most owner-builders take inordinate lengths of time to complete their projects; Jefferson took fifty-four years. . . . Jefferson built one house, tore much of it down, doubled its size, and continued to alter, remodel, improve, and add to it for decades. (p. 13 - 14)

Thomas Jefferson wrote prolifically, thus there is a treasure trove of resources that reflect his architectural vision, but he never declares it directly. These sources below are compiled from many different sources, and while many of the excerpts are short, they create a picture of an intellectually curious man engaged enthusiastically in the process of creating architectural structures of simplicity, beauty and purpose.

ORGANIZATION OF PRIMARY SOURCES FROM JEFFERSON OR ABOUT JEFFERSON & PALLADIO

With the exception of the quotation found below, the quotations will be organized by headings that tell the exact type of source origin for that specific quotation. Sorry, this is wordy . . . For example, the heading might include something like Jefferson Papers then followed by the sources with specific citations.

The Marquis de Chastellux wrote of Jefferson that *"But Nature so contrived it, that a Sage and man of taste should find on his own estate the spot where he might best study and enjoy Her . . . [The name Monticello] bespeaks the owner's attachment to the language of Italy and above all to the Fine Arts, of which Italy was the cradle and is still the resort. . . . My object in giving these details is not to describe the house, but to prove that it resembles none of the others seen in the country; so that it may be said that Mr. Jefferson is the first American who has consulted the Fine Arts to know how he should shelter himself from the weather. . . . for no object has escaped Mr. Jefferson; and it seems indeed as though, ever since his youth, he had placed in his mind, like this house, on a lofty height, whence he might contemplate the whole universe."*

Chastellux, *Travels in North America*. Revised translation by Howard C. Rice, Jr. UNC Press, 1963. vol. II, p. 390 - 392.

Primary Source Document Analysis - The Writings of Thomas Jefferson

DIRECTIONS:

- * In class students read the excerpts from Jefferson in small groups.
- * In class students write salient points based on the document analysis sheet and choose three quotations that best characterize Jefferson's thinking around architecture.

Thomas Jefferson - Notes on the State of Virginia - 1782

Query 15 "Colleges, buildings, and roads"

"The private buildings are very rarely constructed of stone or brick; much the greatest proportion being of scantling and boards, plastered with lime. It is impossible to devise things more ugly, uncomfortable, and happily more perishable. There are two or three plans, on one of which, according to its size, most of the houses in the state are built. The poorest people build huts of logs, laid horizontally in pens, stopping the interstices with mud. These are warmer in winter, and cooler in summer, than the more expensive constructions of scantling and plank. The wealthy are attentive to the raising of vegetables, but very little so to fruits. The poorer people attend to neither, living principally on milk and animal diet. This is the more inexcusable, as the climate requires indispensably a free use of vegetable food, for health as well as comfort, and is very friendly to the raising of fruits. -- The only public buildings worthy mention are the Capitol, the Palace, the College, and the Hospital for Lunatics, all of them in Williamsburg, heretofore the seat of our government. The Capitol is a light and airy structure, with a portico in front of two orders, the lower of which, being Doric, is tolerably just in its proportions and ornaments, save only that the intercolonnations are too large. The upper is Ionic, much too small for that on which it is mounted, its ornaments not proper to the order, nor proportioned within themselves. It is crowned with a pediment, which is too high for its span. Yet, on the whole, it is the most pleasing piece of architecture we have. The Palace is not handsome without: but it is spacious and commodious within, is prettily situated, and, with the grounds annexed to it, is capable of being made an elegant seat. The College and Hospital are rude, mis-shapen piles, which, but that they have roofs, would be taken for brick-kilns. There are no other public buildings but churches and court-houses, in which no attempts are made at elegance.

Indeed it would not be easy to execute such an attempt, as a workman could scarcely be found here capable of drawing an order. The genius of architecture seems to have shed its maledictions over this land. Buildings are often erected, by individuals, of considerable expence. To give these symmetry and taste would not increase their cost. It would only change the arrangement of the materials, the form and combination of the members. This would often cost less than the burthen of barbarous ornaments with which these buildings are sometimes charged. But the first principles of the art are unknown, and there exists scarcely a model among us sufficiently chaste to give an idea of them. Architecture being one of the fine arts, and as such within the department of a professor of the college, according to the new arrangement, perhaps a spark may fall on some young subjects of natural taste, kindle up their genius, and produce a reformation in this elegant and useful art. But all we shall do in this way will produce no permanent improvement to our country, while the unhappy prejudice prevails that houses of brick or stone are less wholesome than those of wood."

Source: **Notes on the State of Virginia** Electronic Text Center, University of Virginia Library -

<http://etext.virginia.edu/toc/modeng/public/JefVirg.html>

QUOTATIONS FROM THOMAS JEFFERSON'S PERSONAL PAPERS AND THOMAS JEFFERSON'S BUILDING NOTEBOOK ABOUT MONTICELLO & CIVIC DESIGN

Thomas Jefferson to James Madison (20 September 1785)

"I received this summer a letter from Mess^{rs} Buchanan & Hay as directors of the public buildings desiring I would have drawn for them plans of sundry buildings, & in the first place of a Capitol ... we took for our model what is called the Maison-quarrée of Nismes, one of the most beautiful, if not the most beautiful & precious morcel of architecture left us by antiquity. it was built by Caius & Lucius Caesar & repaired by Louis XIV. and has the suffrage of all the judges of architecture who have seen it, as yeilding to no one of the beautiful monuments of Greece, Rome, Palmyra & Balbec which late travellers have communicated to us. it is very simple, but it is noble beyond expression, and would have done honour to our country as presenting to travellers a morsel of taste in our infancy promising much for our maturer age.

But how is a taste in this beautiful art to be formed in our countrymen, unless we avail ourselves of every occasion when public buildings are to be erected, of presenting to them models for their study & imitation? . . . the comfort of laying out the public money for something honourable, the satisfaction of seeing an object and proof of national good taste, and the regret and mortification of erecting a monument of our barbarism which will be loaded with execrations as long as it shall endure. . . . You see I am an enthusiast on the subject of the arts. but it is an enthusiasm of which I am not ashamed, as it's object is to improve the taste of my countrymen, to increase their reputation, to reconcile to them the respect of the world & procure them it's praise." (*Published in PTJ*, 8:534–37.)

Thomas Jefferson to Madame la Comtesse de Tesse (20 March 1787)

"Roman taste, genius and magnificence excite ideas."

Undated Entry in Jefferson's building notebook

"Light. Rule for the quality of a requisite room. Multiply the length, breadth & height together in feet, & extract the square root of the product. This must be the sum of all the windows."

Extracts from Thomas Jefferson's Hints to Americans Traveling in Europe

"Architecture worth great attention. as we double our numbers every 20 years we must double our houses. ... it is then among the most important arts: and it is desireable to introduce taste into an art which shews so much." (*Published in PTJ*, 13:264–76.)

Extracts from Thomas Jefferson to Benjamin H. Latrobe

Monticello 10 October 1809 -- "In referring to the Capitol in Washington D.C. Jefferson wrote "I think that the work when finished will be a durable and honorable monument of our infant republic, and will bear favorable comparison with the remains of the same kind of the antient republics of Greece & Rome." (*Published in PTJ:RS*, 1:595–6.)

Monticello 22 April 1807 -- "It is with real pain I oppose myself to your passion for the lantern, and that in a matter of taste, I differ from a professor in his own art. but the object of the artist is lost if he fails to please the general eye. you know my reverence for the Graecian & Roman style of architecture. I do not believe recollect ever to have seen in their buildings a single instance of a lantern, Cupola, or belfry. I have ever supposed the Cupola an Italian invention, produced by the introduction of bells on the churches, and one of the instances of degeneracy in degeneracies of modern architecture. I confess they are most offensive to my eye, and a particular observation has strengthened my disgust at them. in the project for the central part of the Capitol which you were so kind as to give me, there is something of this kind on the crown of the dome. the drawing was exhibited for the view of the members, in the president's house, and the disapprobation of that feature in the drawing was very general. on the whole I cannot be afraid of having our dome like that of the Pantheon, on which had a lantern been placed it [w]ould never have obtained that degree of admiration in which it is now held by the world."

Monticello 12 July 1812 -- "I shall live in the hope that the day will come when an opportunity will be given you of finishing the Middle building in a style worthy of the two wings, and worthy of the first temple dedicated to the sovereignty of the people; embellishing with Athenian taste the course of a nation looking far beyond the range of Athenian destinies." (*Published in PTJRS*, 5:238-9.)



http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andrea_Palladio

Andrea Palladio (1508 - 1580)

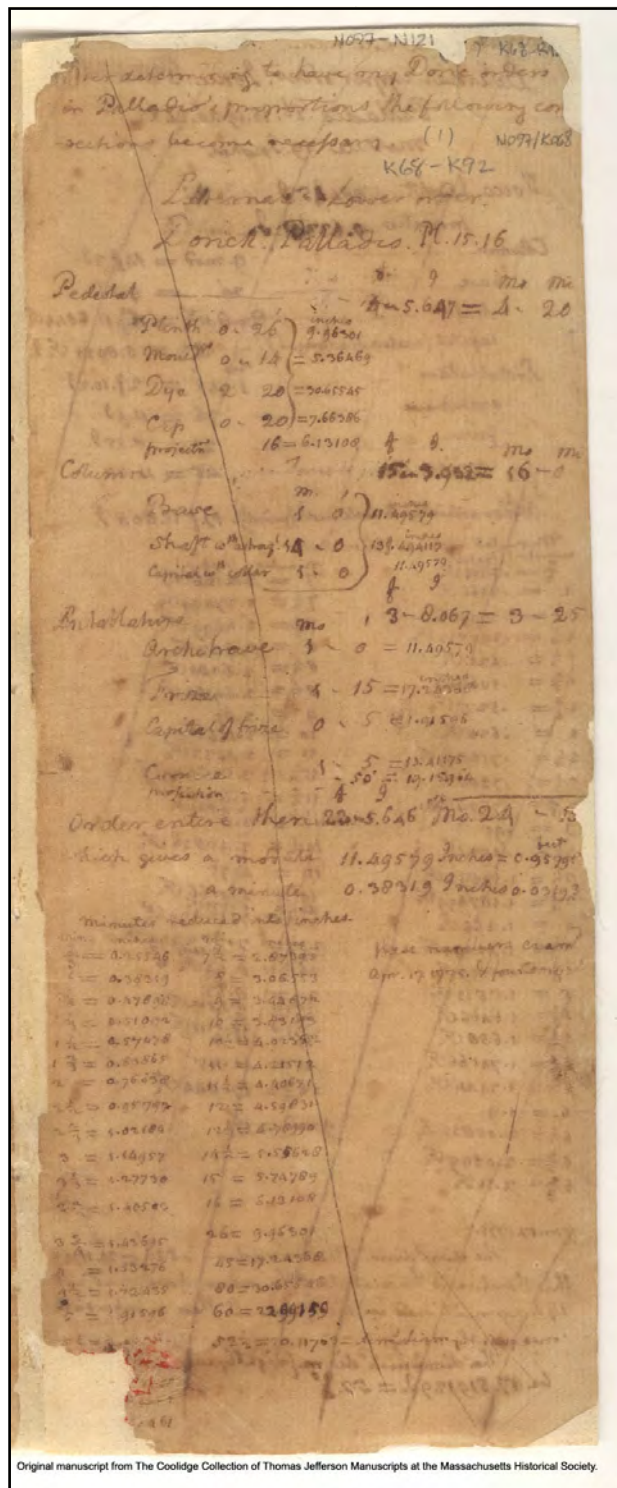
Venetian Architect who wrote *The Four Books of Architecture* had a deep influence upon Jefferson.

Palladio wrote in the first chapter of the first book of his architecture that "Great Care ought to be taken, before a building is begun, of the several parts of the plan and the elevation of the whole edifice intended to be raised: For three things, according to VITRUVIUS, ought to be considered in every fabrick, without which no edifice will deserve to be commended; and these are utility or convenience, duration, and beauty. That work therefore cannot be called perfect, which should not be useful and not durable, or durable and not useful, or having both these should be without beauty."

Source: Andrea Palladio, *The Four Books of Architecture* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1965), 1.

Jefferson's building notebook at Monticello

"After determining to have my Doric orders in Palladio's proportions the following corrections became necessary..."



Monticello: building notebook, page 1 of 52, 1770, by Thomas Jefferson. N97; K68 [electronic edition]. *Thomas Jefferson Papers: An Electronic Archive*. Boston, Mass.: Massachusetts Historical Society, 2003. <http://www.thomasjeffersonpapers.org/>

QUOTATIONS ABOUT JEFFERSON'S ARCHITECTURAL STYLE & INFLUENCE

La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt

(*Visitors to Monticello* / edited by Merrill D. Peterson. Charlottesville : University Press of Virginia, 1989), 22.

As observed by La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt in 1796 “The apartments will be large and convenient; the decoration, both outside and inside, simple, yet regular and elegant. Monticello, according to its first plan, was infinitely superior to all the houses in America, in point of taste and convenience; but at the time Mr. Jefferson had studied taste and the fine arts in books only. His travels to Europe have supplied him with models; he has appropriated them to his design; and his new plan . . . will certainly deserve to be ranked with the most pleasant mansions in France and England.”

chevalier de Castellux

(*Visitors to Monticello* / edited by Merrill D. Peterson. Charlottesville : University Press of Virginia, 1989), 12.

As observed by chevalier de Castellux on April 13, 1782, “Mr. Jefferson is the first American who has consulted the Fine Arts to know how to shelter himself from the weather.”

Richard Rush to Charles Jared Ingersoll

(*Visitors to Monticello* / edited by Merrill D. Peterson. Charlottesville : University Press of Virginia, 1989), 72.

Writing in October of 1816, Rush stated that “Now figure to yourself a house exalted upon such an eminence . . . decked off with art and wealth, and you have Monticello.”

Henry D. Gilpin

(*Visitors to Monticello* / edited by Merrill D. Peterson. Charlottesville : University Press of Virginia, 1989), 111.

Henry Gilpin wrote in 1827 that “The principal front towards the east has a large and lofty portico, with a vane above it, and a clock under the pediment; indeed on all hands you are struck with the marks of Mr. Jefferson’s attention to objects of science.”

Franklin D. Roosevelt

(*Visitors to Monticello* / edited by Merrill D. Peterson. Charlottesville : University Press of Virginia, 1989), I.

“More than any historic home in America, Monticello appeals to me as an expression of the personality of the builder.”

Activity 3: *The Concept of Redesign: Comparing Monticello I with Monticello II*

OBJECTIVES:

- * Students will observe the differences between Jefferson's Monticello 1 & Monticello 2.
- * Students will write a paragraph comparison.

TIME FRAME: 20 MINUTES

NOTES:

TIMELINE OF EVENTS SPECIFIC TO JEFFERSON'S ARCHITECTURE @ MONTICELLO

1770 - Construction began at Monticello

1778 - Brickwork of Monticello completed

1784 - 1789 - In France as Commissioner and Minister

1785 - 1796 - Architect of the Virginia State Capitol

1796 - Remodeling and enlarging of Monticello

1800 - Dome constructed at Monticello

1801 - 1809 - Served as President of the United States

1808 - At Monticello, North Pavilion completed and South Pavilion remodeled.

1809 - Remodeling of Monticello and construction of dependencies largely completed.

1822 - 1825 - Monticello roof recovered with tin shingles

1824 - Historic reunion with the Marquis de Lafayette at Monticello

1825 - University of Virginia opened

1826 - Died at Monticello, July 4

Duncan Faherty wrote in "Remodeling the Nation: The Architecture of American Identity, 1776 - 1858 that

* "Jefferson's view of home design involves both durability and change, a vision consistent with his hopes for the Republic. Jefferson believed that America needed houses that could withstand alterations buildings that could be amended by future occupants to better serve their needs. **In other words, Jefferson argued that the Republic needed architectural practices that mirrored, in spirit, its political ethos.**" (p. 27)

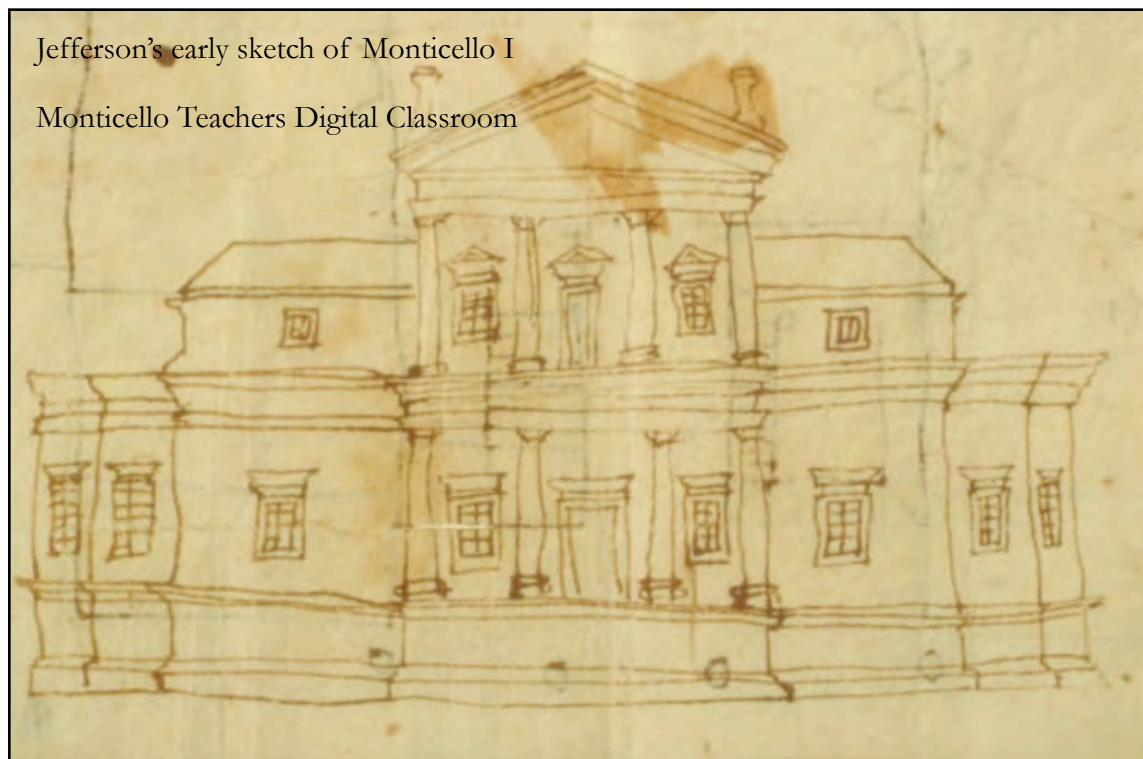
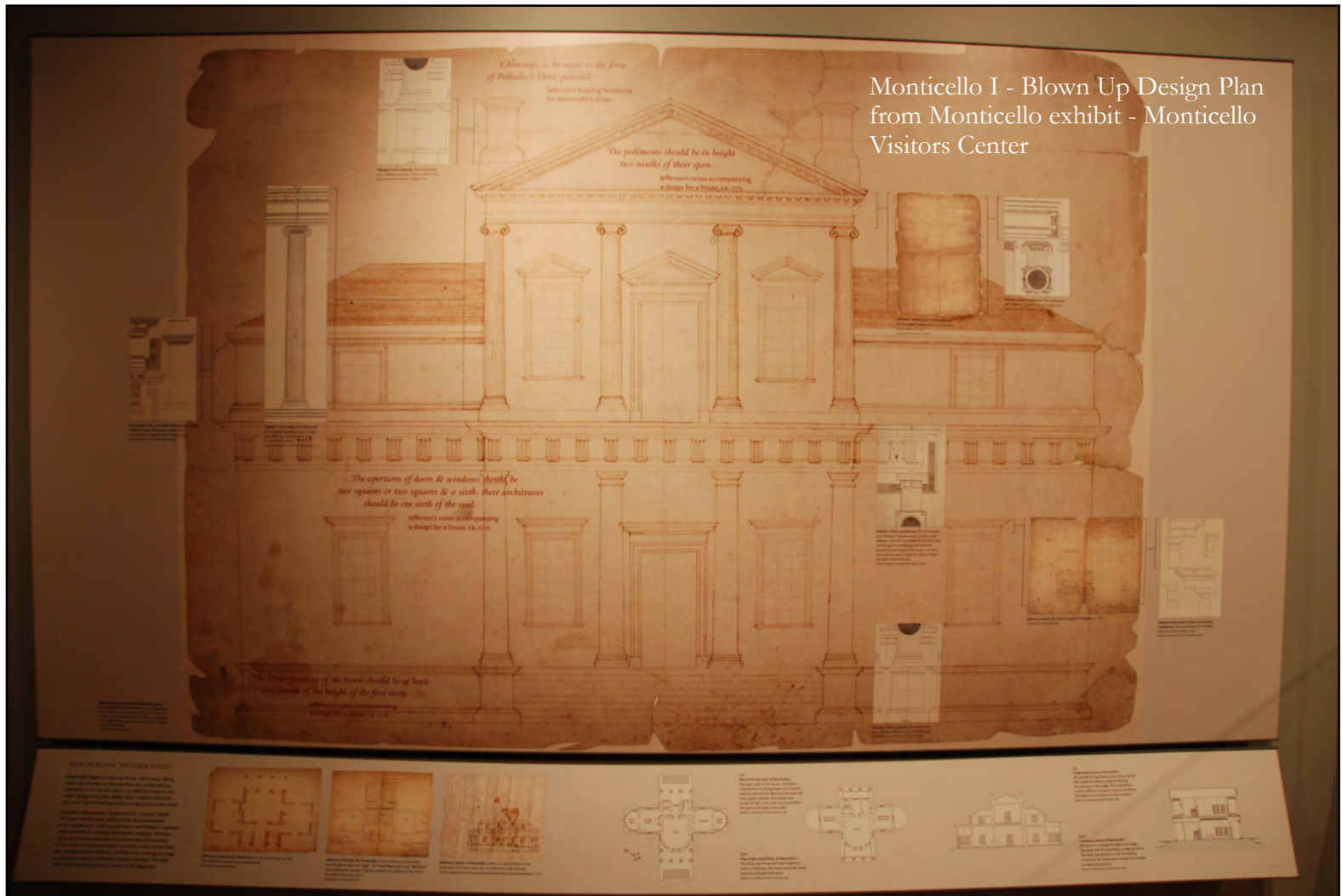
* "For Jefferson, the Constitution's strengths reside in its flexibility. It could be altered without destroying its original framework. Similarly, the nation needed houses worth preserving even when circumstances necessitated remodeling, because such houses would establish a rooted citizenry committed to the labor of local community construction. **In testimony to this belief, Jefferson built and refashioned Monticello.**" (p.27)

MODELS AND PHOTOGRAPHS OF MONTICELLO (PHOTOS JAMES C. NEWMAN 2012)

DIRECTIONS:

- * Students examine and compare Monticello 1 with Monticello 2 by the photographs below and by using <http://explorer.monticello.org> Click Explore the House and find "Comparison of Monticello I & II"
- * Notice the classical structure, balance, proportion, decoration - dare I say "beauty"
- * Write Notes and then paragraph comparison





Monticello II - West Portico View



Green House - South View



East Portico View



Activity 4: Scavenger Hunt Through the Rooms of Monticello

How Did Jefferson Employ Neo-classical Elements?

Jefferson wrote to Henry Latrobe 10 October 1809 that “my essay in Architecture has been so much subordinated to the law of convenience, & affected also by the circumstance of change in the original design, that it is liable to some unfavorable & just criticisms.”

Published in *PTJ:RS*, 1:595–6.

DIRECTIONS:

* Students will use the images from friezes to go on a digital scavenger hunt through Monticello using the Monticello Explorer 3-D website.

* <http://explorer.monticello.org>

* After clicking on this link, students are brought to the welcome page.

* When they read the titles they should click on Explore the House.

* They will then begin the scavenger hunt.

* On the attached sheet are the frieze elements and further instructions.

* Possible Rooms on the Scavenger Hunt Tour

* The Entrance Hall

* South Square Room

* Book Room

* Bed Chamber

* Parlor

* Dining Room

* Octagonal Room

* Dome Room

TIME FRAME: 35 - 45 MINUTES

FOCAL POINTS:

1. Spatial Organization
2. Scale and Proportion
3. Implementation of Neo-Classical Features
4. Symbolism of Frieze Ornamentation
5. Relationship between interior space and outdoor space (How Does Jefferson Bring in the natural world to the House)
6. This exercise provides a great opportunity to Explore the Monticello Explorer website and learn about the application of Neo-Classical Elements and Jefferson's Revolutionary Quality as an Architect and Builder.

Activity 5

Thomas Jefferson's Designs Beyond Monticello: Scope & Impact

OBJECTIVES:

- * Students will think about Jefferson's influence in the public sphere through his architecture.
- * Students will recognize the importance of the Virginia State Capitol design and the University of Virginia Design.
- * Students will synthesize what they have learned from primary source documents, image analysis, and architectural ornaments.
- * Students will gain an appreciation for Jefferson's contributions and how he modeled for America beauty in architecture.
- * Students when moving through their towns and cities will identify architectural elements and orders and know their origin.
- * Simplicity, Order, Proportion, Revolutionizing, Inspiring - All traits associated with Jefferson.

TIME FRAME: TO BE DETERMINED BY TEACHER

DIRECTIONS:

Project: Students will create a 3 - 5 minute multi-media project based on: (Movie Maker or iMovie)

- * our study of Enlightenment thinkers related to beauty
- * our study of Greek and Roman influences
- * our study of Jefferson's architectural thoughts
- * our study of Monticello I & II
- * a student study of the Virginia State Capitol (photos below for reference)
- * a student study of the University of Virginia architecture (photos below for reference)

Procedure:

The Point:

- * What are you trying to say about Thomas Jefferson's architecture?
- * What is the relationship between Jefferson and Enlightenment thought?
- * How did the ancients influence Jefferson?
- * How did Jefferson revolutionize American architecture?
- * How did his public projects (Virginia State Capitol and UVA) demonstrate his architectural vision?

The Background:

- * Spend a few minutes educating the viewer on your topic. Assume we know nothing about the argument you are putting forth.
- * Tell it like a story by creating a beginning, middle and end.

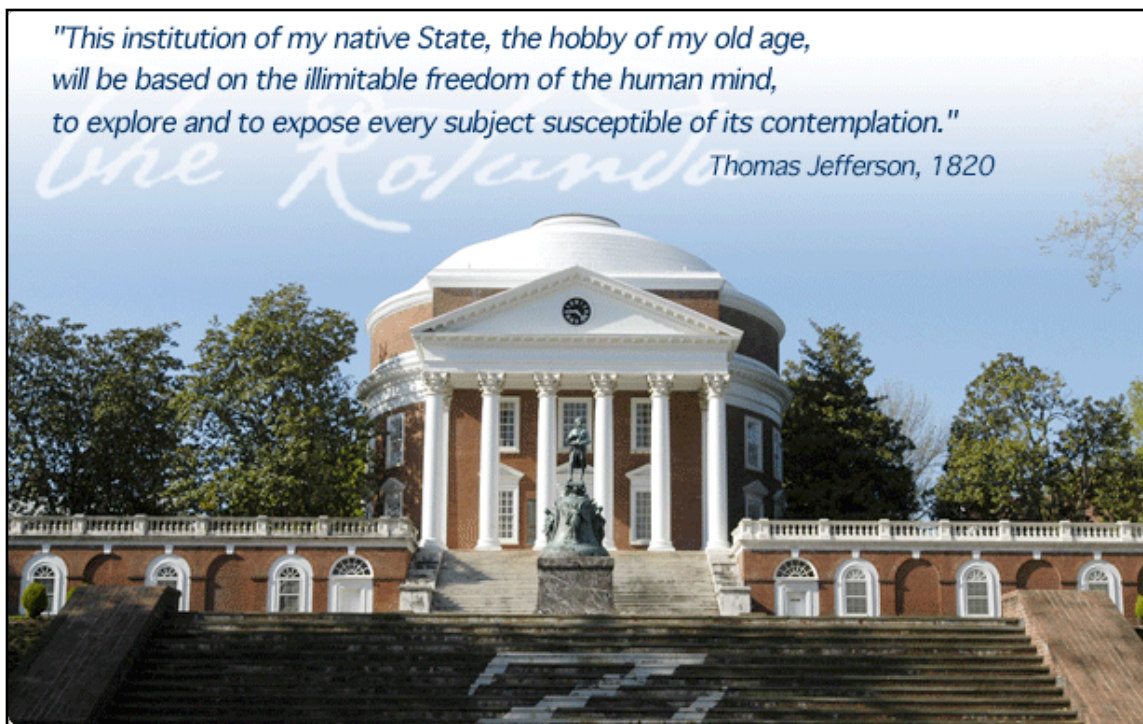
The Delivery:

- *The purpose is to demonstrate that you have synthesized and learned about Jefferson's architecture.

VIRGINIA STATE CAPITOL PHOTO



Virginia Capitol Art Collection (<http://www.tfaoi.com/aa/1aa/1aa333.htm>)



The University of Virginia - The Rotunda Page
<http://www.virginia.edu/rotunda/>

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