



National Roundtable on Heritage Education 2010

Thursday, September 30, 2010

**Basilica Museum and Library, Basilica of St. John the Baptist
200 Military Road, St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador**

Present:

Ronald Bean (Conestoga College), Terry Bishop-Sterling (Memorial University, Newfoundland Historical Society), Claudine Déom (Université de Montréal), Mathieu Dormaels (UQAM), Helen Edwards (CAHP), Stephen Fai (Carleton University), Barb Hogan (Yukon Government), Shelley Huson (Willowbank School), Thomas Hutton (UBC), George Kapelos (Ryerson University), Noel Keough (University of Calgary), Ned Kaufman (Vinoly Architects, New York), Andrew MacAdam (Nova Scotia Community College), Hilary Meyer (Concordia University), Robert Shipley (University of Waterloo), Julian Smith (Willowbank School), Angela Specht (Athabasca University), Chris Wiebe (HCF).

Agenda:

1. Introductions

Barb Hogan referenced a heritage education pilot project in Yukon at a local college and will have more info in the coming months.

Stephen Fai explained that Carleton University's undergraduate program in the School of Architecture now has four streams – design, architecture and philosophy, urbanism, conservation and sustainability. At the moment, only the design stream leads to the professional Masters in Architecture program. The School is currently completing an application to the OCGS for a second professional entrance from the conservation and sustainability stream. They are simultaneously developing a stream of the professional MA with a diploma in conservation.

Tom Hutton said that UBC's School of Canadian Regional Planning has a growing urban design stream which attracts conservation students, particularly those interested in the interaction between planning and the built environment.

Hilary Meyer, who is currently enrolled in Concordia University's Urban Planning program, pointed out that it has very little emphasis on heritage conservation, but there is strong student appetite for it.

Noel explained that while the University of Calgary's Faculty of Environmental Design does not have a program focusing on heritage conservation, there is some overlap with programs in Architecture, Urban Design and Planning, and Environmental Science. Faculty member research interests included cultural and natural landscapes, building and neighbourhood conservation, and the synergies between heritage conservation, sustainability and the social economy.

2. 2009/2010 Roundtable Activities

Chris explained how the steering committee met by teleconference in January and March and then by email. One of the things it undertook was the development of materials for HCF's website. Robert explained that on the Canadian Built Heritage Research Inventory on the Heritage Resources Centre website, students and others were creating write-ups for individual articles. The Distance Education and Ethics and Competencies subcommittees have deferred their reports to the next meeting.

3. Presentation – Thomas Visser (Vice-Chair, National Council for Preservation and Director, Historic Preservation Program, University of Vermont)

The National Council for Preservation Education: History, Workings, and Efforts to Serve Academic Programs in the United States.

<http://www.uvm.edu/histpres/NRHE/NCPE.htm>

- a. NCPE's Organization and History – NCPE was established in 1980 with two main objectives: (1) assisting the improvement of historic preservation education programs in the US; (2) disseminating information concerning preservation education and coordinating efforts with public and private organizations. It is a volunteer non-profit without paid staff which is directed by an Executive Committee elected by the membership. Preservation programs are initially vetted for inclusion in the Council, and programs pay an annual membership fee. There is an annual meeting held in conjunction with the NTHP's annual conference and the organization recently added the publication of an academic journal – *Preservation Education and Research Journal*.
- b. The Organization's Evolving Interests – Initial efforts involved publicizing preservation programs and establishing the credibility of the field (including 1984 report *Toward Promotion and Tenure: Guidelines for Assessing the Achievement of a Preservation Educator*).
- c. Organizational Opportunities and Challenges:
 - Academic program standards developed in 1981 as review criteria for NCPE membership: including program components, faculty assigned and degrees granted.
 - Student internships were developed with the National Park Service and other federal agencies.
 - Lack of public awareness of preservation education led to publication in 1977 of the *Guide to Academic Programs in Historic Preservation* – a resource now online.
 - Professional recognition of preservation credentials needed to be inscribed in public policy directives.

- Dues payments became an issue when a key faculty member left a program. Created a mechanism to remove a program and delist members if necessary.
 - Preservation programs suffering from chronically weak support from their institutions, including a perception of a lower academic status relative to architecture and planning programs. Accreditation by NCPE is no longer seen as enough and hence recent efforts to create a mechanism to certify programs.
- d. Utility of NCPE to individual members – Membership helps with reviewing curriculum content and planning curriculum changes; *NCPE Promotion and Tenure Assessment Guidelines* have been helpful in guiding career paths and providing performance guidelines for non-preservation academics; networking with other educators; knowledge of the other academic programs in the field;
 - e. Visser's Research - *Career Opportunities in Historic Preservation: What Are Employers Seeking?*
 - f. What Can the Roundtable Learn from the NCPE experience? – In North America work opportunities in the conservation field tend to be broad-based and interdisciplinary. With so much interdisciplinary breadth in the heritage conservation field and similar breadth in the approaches being offered for professional heritage education, the articulation and acceptance of basic standards for academic curricula may: (1) help to strengthen the identity of academic programs and promote their continuity; (2) and help to serve the needs of professional conservation practice, especially in light of the fragmentation of the field. By working together as an organization with a common mission and by sharing news of this with the public, academic programs, the conservation field as a whole may be strengthened. Beyond adopting standards, academic programs in heritage conservation may also wish to consider certification or accreditation. Visser recommended that the National Roundtable continue to work together. He observed that there have been benefits in HCF support; NCPE, by contrast, has not had a close relationship with NTHP. Option of the Canadian heritage preservation programs to work with the accreditation body, the Council on Preservation Education, currently under development.

3. Discussion on Roundtable's Current Mandate based

Claudine asked about succession planning within NCPE as many of the people involved are first generation. Tom responded that he thought the strength of the membership, not just those on the executive, seems to show that there is a well of ongoing support. Part of the sustainability is being address by the creation of COPE as an accrediting agency; though there are financial risks involved in this move.

George asked how NCPE does or does not define the core disciplines given the proliferation of emphases in recent years and whether research has been done on students entering programs directly out of an undergraduate program or come later with more life skills. Tom responded that in 1960s and 70s America the federal regulations were premised on the existence of two groups responsible for heritage conservation: architectural historians and historical architects. It has been a sensitive issue. There has been more work with archaeologists to get involved with NCPE in recent years. The most

typical period for students entering the University of Vermont programs would be 26-30 years of age with only 10% coming directly out of undergraduate experience.

Chris asked about the state of “competition” between preservation education institutions in the US and how this has figured in NCPE. Tom talked about differentiation between programs through geographical location and discipline (architecture, history, preservation) and therein finding their niche. Vermont, for instance, has carved out a niche in broad-based preservation education without an explicit career track. The recognition that there is not that much head-to-head competition has led to a genuinely collaborative dynamic in NCPE. The focus has therefore been on the institutional chart and the collective desire to frame it as fairly as possible.

Given the more fragmented and dispersed nature of the Canadian conservation education scene, what can we learn from NCPE’s “policing” of who is acknowledged as a bona fide preservation education centre? George said that while conservation began with architectural history it has naturally morphed into other areas. The tension between specificity and inter-disciplinarity remains a challenge for academics; where do we sit and how do we connect the dots? Tom Hutton said the Planning School at UBC is also accredited every 5 years by CIP and the American review board so that they can recruit US students (typically 20% of the student population). At UBC interest in heritage is spread promiscuously through many departments; a UBC urban studies committee was founded four years ago with connections with archaeology. UBC is currently working at new institutional frameworks to raise standards and network better with the heritage sector. Noel said the question for heritage conservation is whether the professionalization of the field is desirable or whether the continued interdisciplinarity is the way to proceed. There are positives and negatives to accreditation and the burdens it puts on departments.

Claudine observed that the NCPE chart included programs in conservation and those with an emphasis on conservation, and asked how these were defined. Tom said by asking the kind of degree they are giving. The NCPE standards are designed to embrace all of these groups. Discussions in NCPE to expand its reach to include the trades are currently underway, though there are currently some – Belmont Community College, College of the Redwoods. What about programs offering preservation courses? These would not be NCPE members because they are not offering degrees. It raises questions about whether preservation education is academic and where “trades” training fits in.

Chris asked how people are driven to the chart and the field. NCPE has done this through limited advertising driving people back to the NCPE website. Having a presence at the NTHP conference and other conferences is also mechanism. Hilary suggested that the chart would be extremely beneficial in the Canadian context; she had had great trouble in unpacking the various Canadian programs. Tom observed that the internet has become the primary recruiting tool for most programs; today virtually all initial contacts with students are coming by email, clicking through from the NCPE chart – they then follow up with personalized package. Ned said that in his mind the end game for conservation was to move towards an interdisciplinary model, understanding all of the difficulties this raises for universities and institutions. This reflects the pressure around the world to expand the definition of heritage: intangible, folklore, local practices. And we are not equipped with our current emphasis on core disciplines to respond effectively. How to include the perspectives of anthropologists, ethnographers and geographers, is the new

frontier for conservation? The goal should be to think beyond North America to the entire hemisphere as we share social conditions, tensions between immigrant and native groups which provide tremendous opportunities to exploit for education and training. For instance, the government of Columbia recently required universities to establish international relationships; faculty are now being professionally reviewed for their international relationships. Bogata's city government is on the cutting edge in melding tangible and intangible and new processes of community involvement.

Terry, who has considered herself a heritage educator for years but doesn't teach anything about buildings, wondered where she fit in the Roundtable? They have a certificate program in the Faculty of Arts at Memorial, but they don't have a Planning or Architecture school so they don't foresee a graduate program in heritage. A registry of Canadian graduate programs would be very useful for university student advisors; it would also be beneficial for Memorial to know the entrance requirements for these schools so that curricula could take this into account.

Julian said with this interest in intangible heritage and traditional knowledge is how we gain respect for the absolute equality of theory and practice and some of this will be the First Nations voice – "where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge, and the knowledge we have lost in information" (T.S. Eliot). On the question of accreditation, while the end of the 20th century was interested in codifying, I find today's young people are open to new ways of thinking. Tom made an interesting observation that perhaps these shared rules allow more experimentation because there is a minimum standard of excellence that will be shared and taken seriously which students respect. If we can find commonalities that don't create homogeneity but in fact foster diversity, that is the important challenge.

5. Roundtable Goals for the 2010-2011

Robert observed that this is the fourth year of the Roundtable, but from the very beginning we wanted to continue the work of the group throughout the years via conference calls. I think this remains a good idea and would hope it will continue. With an eye to interdisciplinarity, he suggested we may want to think about which people we want to have at the 2011 Roundtable; can we have a meeting that involves historians, archaeologists, etc and to have them take a piece of the Roundtable and begin to broaden heritage in a tangible way.

Mathieu encouraged the Roundtable to think beyond a mere website list, but use it as the basis for something more useful for students and faculty by using it as a place to post research, heritage management studies, etc. In this way, the Roundtable may be able to identify gaps and approach individuals about participation in 2011. Ron recommended taking students to visit other heritage conservation programs, because there is a great deal of movement between institutions. Claudine reminded the Roundtable that the idea of a detailed program list arose because the Ethics and Competencies Subcommittee had a desire to understand the bigger picture of who does what in the conservation field. She felt quite positive about what the Roundtable had accomplished this year, because although it is a slow process establishing a list, she thought having it posted would allow us to take the next step in terms of competencies discussions. Terry said that it was important to relate jobs to academic programs. There is a need to work together to post

jobs from across Canada (small and large, regional and national) to show students that there are the prospects for jobs at the end of their degrees and what kinds of skills employers are looking for. Tom Visser suggested a Roundtable member take the job posting question on as a project and to present on it in 2011; his US-based project has given very useful feedback especially in these times of economic uncertainty.

Robert said that the University of Waterloo Co-op program has a “job of the month” to promote what students are doing. He suggested that Steering Committee members come up with a “heritage job of the month” – with a description, name, picture for posting on the website; this is a small thing, but significant in flagging the kind of careers available in the field. If we all agree to bring a colleague to the next Roundtable that may be a mechanism for expanding and diversifying the group. Hilary said that the jobs network, a literature catalogue that people comment on, outlining current events, list of educational programs, in other words creating a real heritage conservation hub – like Planetizen, general interest hub on planning.

Unable to Attend:

Ken Alexce (Heritage Saskatchewan), Susan Algie (Parks Canada), Victoria Angel (FHBRO), Lyse Blanchet (ICOMOS), Ian Brodie (Cape Breton University), Christina Cameron (Université de Montréal), Joy Davis (University of Victoria), Masha Etkind (Ryerson University), Julia Gersovitz (McGill University), Mehdi Ghafouri (Vanier College), Andrew Jeanes (Ontario Ministry of Culture), Yew-Thong Leong (Ryerson University), Tania Martin (Université Laval), Gregory Monks (University of Manitoba), Luc Noppen (UQAM), Robert Pajot (PWGSC), Stephanie Phaneuf (Parks Canada), Michael Ripmeester (Brock University), John Scott (Algonquin College), Herb Stovel (Carleton University), Rod Stutt (SIAST), Tom Urbaniak (Cape Breton University), Francois Varin (Rue principales), Brenda Weatherston (University of Victoria), Donald Wetherell (Athabasca University).