

# Reaction paper assignment



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Art 100: Visual Dynamics Fall 2013 Instructor: Name Reaction Paper: The Unique Style of Georgian Architecture 11/27/13 One of the most popular architecture styles over many centuries has been the Georgian style. This style is one that is symmetrical and elegant in its details both interior exterior. This style keeps its features in both domestic and religious buildings. This style has remained consistent in its design and popularity since it originated in England.

The Georgian style was first introduced in the colonial era and reflected the late Italian Renaissance architecture Andrea Palladio. Georgian architecture gets its name from the succession of English kings named George starting in 1715. The style was cumulative of architectural fashion in Britain during the rule of the first three King Georges of England. Georgian architecture is a modification of the renaissance style through the 18th century in Europe.

It was a balance of the Palladian style, which was known for its balanced facades, muted ornament, and minimal detailing. The style was simple, symmetrical, and solidity. The floor plans and details were constructed according to the English Georgian styles. Georgian houses were built so well that they would remain unchanged for 200 years after being constructed. This style is so pleasing too, that it is used extensively in colonial revival in the 20th century.

The Georgian era traces back in Great Britain's history from 1714 to 1830 where it was the time when most of the Georgian structures were made. The prime rulers of this era were George I, George II, George III and George IV and all of them had a very ostentatious taste for architecture. Before them,

British architecture was dominated by great architects like Sir John Vanbrugh, James Gibbs and Thomas Archer who basically followed the Baroque style. Although Georgian architects planned to rebuild existing towns and cities, the scope was very limited.

So when England prospered in the late 17th and early 18th century, new towns were formed, providing an opportunity for framing new structures of Georgian architecture. As these towns flourished, the architects used to construct at least one fine Georgian church in each town, with their classical facades, tall steeples, spacious altars and transepts. In the United States the style included innumerable variations of an English home. The buildings were constructed symmetrically, two story house with center- entry facade, combined with the two room deep center passage floor plan.

By the end of the 17th century, the upper classes in the colonies began to embrace the European concept of gentility. Early buildings in some areas of the United States reflect the architectural traditions of the colonial powers that controlled these regions. The architectural style of Louisiana is identified as French colonial, while the Spanish colonial style gives off the Renaissance and Baroque styles of Spain and Mexico; in the United States it is found in Florida, Louisiana, New Mexico, Texas, Arizona, and California.

These buildings typically included details including steep roofs, small casement leaded glass windows rich ornamentation and a massive central chimney. To maximize natural light in northern climates, early houses faced southeast, regardless of a building's alignment to the road. Conversely, in southern colonies, houses faced northwest to minimize the sun's heat. The

architecture of Canadian buildings up to the start of the 20th century followed styles developed largely in France, Britain and the United States.

Local adaptations resulted in what can be said to be Canadian architecture. Variations were due in part to restrictions posed by the availability of building skills, materials and technology; they were due also to attempts to relate buildings to their surroundings and to the occupants' functional needs. Stone cottages in rural Ontario and Quebec, prairie grain elevators, small railway stations were all reflections of indigenous architectural styles. Buildings in which foreign styles and details have been more faithfully copied have a Canadian originality of scale and proportion.

The earliest buildings in Canada are of French design, characterized by steeply pitched roofs, broad chimneys and unadorned exterior walls of stone. British and Loyalist settlers introduced the solid Georgian style. It was very simple with rectangular shapes and symmetrical facades and rectangular window openings very similar to the styles in Europe. The technological developments of the late 19th century led to a variety of architectural styles and to a period of eclecticism rather than adaptation. Designs of the late 1880s and 1890s often grafted architectural details of various periods onto buildings of irregular outline.

This continued on through the 19th century. Georgian architecture has its own unique style on the exterior features. This type of architecture is uncommonly symmetrical in its design. The exterior characteristics of Georgian buildings consisted of symmetry, with a centered facade entry and windows that were aligned horizontally and vertically. The structures were

either one or two story box buildings that were two rooms deep. They would have side gables and sometimes have a gambrel or hipped roof. The buildings would normally have their foundation raised off the ground.

The front doors were paneled and capped with a decorative crown. They would be supported by decorative pilasters that are pillars to uphold the building as well as give it the Georgian look. The cornice or ledge would be the most decorated feature on the building. Also present above the door were the decorative dentils. Before 1750, the chimneys on the buildings would be in the center. After this date, Georgian style buildings were built with paired chimneys, continuing the symmetrical pattern. The walls would be wood framed shingles or clapboard walls. tone or wood. The windows would also have pilasters to add to the Georgian look. The interior of Georgian architecture was known for its elegance and lightness of touch. The interior features of Georgian buildings would consist of 10-11 foot high ceilings that were smoothly plastered, painted and decorated with molded or carved ornament. The interior designs of the mantelpieces, paneling, stairways and arched openings were copied from pattern books. The windows would be pedimented both on the inside and out.

The windows on the second floor would be small, sashed windows, whereas the windows on the first floor would be very large with 9 or 12 panes in each window. The Georgian style is all symmetrical on the outside, and it continues on the inside as well. If there was a door on one side of the room there would be another one on the other side as well. The domestic style of architecture for Georgian houses is best seen in many of England's old

market towns. The most obvious feature of a Georgian house is the multi-panel sash window.

What makes this so significant are the number, proportion, and size of these windows that help determine the house's appearance. These three characteristics help determine how old the building is. If the window is three window panes wide, it is most likely that the building is from the eighteenth century. If there are four, it is from the nineteenth century. If the sash boxes of the windows are external it is likely that the house was built pre 1790's, if they are hidden behind the stonework the building was most likely constructed later. The next most distinctive feature to these buildings is the doorway.

This often is the only part of the building that has significant decorations. When you are trying to identify a Georgian house, you have to look at the doorways, carved cornices, and ironwork. Other characteristics that you can determine if it is a Georgian house is by the round headed fan lighted doorways, with reeded decorations, large eight over eight sash windows with very slim glazing bars, and a fine smoothly finished masonry. These are the characteristics that you look for when trying to identify a domestic Georgian style house. The Georgian architect style has been popular now for several centuries.

It originated in Europe and is now popular in the US and in Canada. It has many interior and exterior features that give the Georgian style its unique and distinct look. The symmetry of the Georgian style is present in domestic and religious buildings. This style is still popular and is still used today. The

reaction that I get, when I view Georgian architecture, is almost a time lapse. I imagine the different social, aesthetic, and political preferences that are representative of that period. A Georgian piece of architecture also makes me realize that a piece of art does not just come out of thin air.

For example, Van Gogh's painting *The Night Cafe*, was the product of Van Gogh's surroundings and environment. The same is true about Georgian architecture. The style, materials, and functionality, are all the product of the social, political, and artistic environment at that time. <http://www.historicnewengland.org/preservation/your-older-or-historic-home/architectural-style-guide> <http://www.crewkernemuseum.co.uk/architecture.htm> <http://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/charleston/architecture.htm> [www.ontarioarchitecture.com/georgian.htm](http://www.ontarioarchitecture.com/georgian.htm)