Memory and Place on the New Haven Green, 1638-1876

Curriculum Unit 05.03.04
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Introduction

As the city grows more dense and thronged around it, its use as a convenient spot for public buildings can no longer be thought of, but its priceless value as a breathing and resting and gathering place for the people becomes constantly more conspicuous. May it be guarded from encroachment in the future more jealously than in the past; and may our successors in its care of every race and lineage protect its soil, and cherish its traditions with that affectionate veneration which is the heritage and test of every true son and daughter of New Haven!

Henry Blake 1898

This unit, Memory and Place on the New Haven Green, 1638-1876 will explore using the New Haven Green as a resource for teaching components of United States History I in the New Haven Public Schools. The Green as a figurative and geographical center of the New Haven community is rich in local history which in most cases parallels broader historical developments in the Colonial Period, Federal Period, the Age of Democracy, the Antebellum Period, and the period of the Civil War and Reconstruction. These parallels continue through twentieth century history up to the present. While I believe a similar unit can be developed for the modern period which might be as fascinating or more interesting, this unit will emphasize the blending of subject matter from 1876 and before with the following architectural concepts: sense of place and the urban
landscape. As the center of local culture, the Green is New Haven's most historic site. Additionally, the Green and its immediate surrounds are perhaps home to New Haven's most important architectural legacy. Therefore it seems fitting to accept the challenge of uniting primary and secondary resources about the Green and the beautiful physical landscape of the Green with school curriculum. Moreover, having created this unit in an informative and collegial seminar about sense of place and architecture, I hope to translate themes and concepts about urban landscape and sense of place into the teaching of this unit in my classes. To be quite candid, I should share that as I continue to find additional sources, material, and resources about the Green I am overwhelmed. I can't imagine how a place that continues to evolve as the cultural center of a community after three hundred years can be captured by one person. In many ways, I am glad that this is not meant to be a historical narrative but a framework through which students can explore the value of public places in our city and link the history of a local place with national and world events. Ultimately, our collective work will be more definitive and meaningful. I am struck with a couple of thoughts as I work: It seems that places shape our memories as much as our memory shapes our perspective of place. In addition, a sense of place is essential to the well-being of each of us individually and collectively as a community.

As a fellow in Dolores Hayden's seminar Architecture of the Imagination: Place, Memory, Poetry, I, along with my colleagues, broadened our understanding of the importance of place, public history, and public art in the built urban environment. We examined examples of remembrance in urban environments such as Los Angeles where massive development projects threatened, and in some cases succeeded in erasing important elements of the cultural landscape. We investigated how urban planning can incorporate elements of the cultural landscape to preserve place, memory, and public history. The New Haven Green is an excellent subject of focus because it has more or less retained its status as a center of spiritual, economic, and social activity in New Haven over a considerable period of time. In 1638, the founders of the New Haven Colony planned a community based on a grid of nine squares. Thomas Brockett, the colony planner set aside the central square of nine squares as common lands. Initially, as a built environment, the Green by today's standards was raw and natural. Aside from the first town meeting house which was built 1639, the primary features of the Green were uncultivated trees, marsh, dirt paths, and wandering geese, cattle and swine. By the time of the July 4, 1876 spectacle to celebrate the United States' Centennial, the Green had become a sophisticated urban center. It has remained as such unlike most other colonial and federal period greens, which have disappeared or have been significantly altered. The New Haven Green has developed over time as New Haven has evolved. Yet, while the architecture around the Green reflects the eras of change that have washed over New Haven in the last three centuries, the function and character of the Green has many commonalities with the Green of the early 19th century. Today, the Green serves as a place for public gatherings, for entertainment, worship, and recreation. In the past, it has also served as the town market place, burial ground, and the location for the town's first government. The Green survived urban development: including a post-World War II plan to build a parking garage beneath it. Today it remains the central landmark in downtown New Haven. The Green's survival has something to say about the communal sense of place in New Haven. Everyone who has visited the central square in downtown New Haven has a memory of the Green.

The Green offers visible links between the present and the past. It also suggests a future for New Haven. Evidence of memory exists in the sparsely but meaningfully placed written memorials that adorn the Green: the WWI Flagpole memorial, the water fountain, the bicycle plaque, the front, side, and rear façades of Center Church, the National Historic Register Marker, and the blue signage summary of New Haven's founding. Yet there is so much history that is not mentioned on the Green: the site of the Connecticut State Houses 1717-1889, the site of the first schools in New Haven, the dignitaries including Presidents, world leaders, artists and musicians who have visited, and the cultural events that have occurred and regularly occur. Memorializing every person and event on the Green risks turning the green into a gaudy stone bulletin board.
The chosen minimalist use of memorials suggest that the proprietors of the Green believe, probably quite correctly, that a "less is more approach" better enhances the natural beauty of the Green.

Moreover, written markings are not the only memorials or the best symbols that link New Haven's present with the past. The churches, the iron and stone fence, the spatial layout and cultivated plantings on the Green serve as objects of remembrance. The present churches, all built in the early 19th century, continue a tradition of worship that dates back to 1638. John Davenport, the spiritual leader of New Haven Colony led the first settlers of the New Haven Colony, including Theophilus Eaton, the leading businessman behind the colony's founding, in prayer in the open air until they completed their first meeting house a year later. The wrought iron and stone fence built circa 1846 retains its 19th century character. The special layout of open space, walkways, and trees offers a pleasing contrast to the urban surroundings. They serve as a remembrance to the 19th century movements to beautify New England cities and towns. The Green's newer disease resistant elm trees, planted in the 1980's, attempt to memorialize the giant and gracious elm canopy that once draped the edges of Temple Street. These trees once inspired New Haven's namesake, the City of Elms. The elms, spatial layout, wrought iron and stone fence, and churches evoke the stereotypical, yet pastoral image of a New England town common. Yet, modern use of the Green suggests it is a vibrant hub of social activity in New Haven's present and a promising bridge to New Haven's future.

In June 2005, the International Festival of Arts and Ideas celebrated a ten year birthday party. The popular festival has used the Green as a center for displays, performances, and exhibits. This phenomenon has included having full capacity attendance at performances of opera on the New Haven Green. The festival symbolizes that New Haven embraces the future use of the Green with the same vigor as displayed in past. The 1976 Bicentennial Celebration and the 1876 Centennial Celebration utilized the Green as a central forum for community celebration. Today diverse crowds come to the Green for popular entertainment and community events. People enjoy summer jazz and popular concerts, Friday night films, the New Haven Road Race, Christmas tree lightings and parades for Columbus Day, Saint Patrick's Day, and Freddy Fixer, the annual lower-Dixwell Avenue beautification festival. The Green also serves as a gathering place for the needy who often seek refuge of the Green.

Rationale

Memory and Place on the New Haven Green is being written concurrently while participating in the seminar Architecture in the Imagination: Place, Memory, Poetry. Dolores Hayden, the seminar leader has introduced a number of concepts that have broadened my understanding of architecture in general. Undoubtedly, I am gaining a keener appreciation for the design of urban space. The first concept deals with properly defining urban architecture. The urban landscape is an historical record rather than a collection of buildings. This definition encourages appreciation of the community as a whole. Second, consideration of the urban landscape should include spaces as well as buildings. While this concept may be troublesome to preservationists, it is paramount to understanding the diversity of an entire urban community. When most people think of preserving the culture or heritage of a city, they often focus on saving buildings such as town halls or the homes of famous people. Are there spaces worth remembering of perhaps equal significance, which are less easily defined? Professor Hayden's work on cultural mapping in Los Angeles suggests yes. Her project, the Power of Place created visual remembrances of historically important women, such as Biddy Mason, members of cultural/ethnic communities, and local social movements. The project incorporated these
visual commemorations into the urban landscape of Los Angeles. So while Los Angeles continues to develop, remembrances of diverse people who are significant to particular areas of the city offer continuity between the past and present. This type of interpretation of urban space may heighten debate over what is culturally significant in the urban environment. However, this more inclusive and comprehensive look at the urban landscape is why the New Haven Green is such an excellent subject for student/citizens of New Haven. Most, if not all, students have a connection with the Green because it is central to transportation, social events, and shopping downtown. In addition, while the landscape around the Green has changed over the centuries, the Green has remained as the symbol of continuity from the founding of New Haven to the present.

**Audience**

The target audience of this unit is students of United States History I college and honors classes at Wilbur Cross High School. Cross is a diverse urban high school with approximately 1400 students. The school serves children from different socio-economic backgrounds. Children who live in public housing, children of New Haven legacies, immigrant children, and children of Yale faculty all comprise the school’s student body. The three largest ethnic groups are African American, Hispanic, and Caucasian. However, there are also a significant number of Asian students that attend Wilbur Cross. Diversity pervades even these categorizations. The Hispanic population at Cross not only includes students who are from Puerto Rico and/or are of Puerto Rican ancestry but also is comprised of students who are immigrants from Mexico and Colombia. Asian students include American-born citizens and immigrants from China, Vietnam, and Korea. Students are grouped by ability level in honors or college level classes. Some remedial classes are offered to those in need. AP classes and elective courses are also offered. Students are required to accrue 24 credits in order to graduate.

History requirements includes taking a full year of World History (grade 9), a full year of United States History I Prehistory -1877 (grade 10), one half year course in United States History II 1877-present, and one half year course in Civics. The Green and themes from this unit lend themselves to adaptation to any of these core subjects because since 1638, the Green has been a major arena for New Haven's economy, mass transportation routes, civic/social affairs, and political activity.

**Students and the Green**

Many students spend time in downtown New Haven. They wait at bus stops along the Green, run in the grass, walk along the paved pathways, ride bicycles, and "hang out." They see the churches on the Green, the water fountain, the flagpole, remnants of the burial ground, and the surrounding buildings. They observe people who appear to be homeless or transient. Many enjoy concerts and festivals at the Green in the summer. Having students research people and events that are associated with the Green will hopefully challenge their visualization and understanding of the meaning of urban space.

By examining the history of the Green and its immediate surroundings students will see that space can be modern, functional and, serve as a link between the past and the future. This is of particular value for students to see in studying history today. The diversity of the urban high school student body demands that diversity be incorporated in the curriculum. The concept of cultural mapping fits directly into this interpretation. The more comprehensive the remembrances of an area are the more rich and textured the community can be.
The Green's legacy as a longstanding historical landmark and functional community space is buttressed by the architectural sampling of historic buildings that border the Green's periphery. Fortunately, the buildings are in use and there are resources available that document the history and function of each. Elizabeth Mills Brown's New Haven A Guide to Architecture and Urban Design gives detailed information on the history of the Green and the architectural significance of 53 buildings that surround the Green or are in the immediate vicinity. Brown provides copious background on New Haven's neighborhoods and historic roads. For each subject of study there is historical background in the form of information on the architect(s), builder(s), and alterations/renovations. Photographs and sketches depicting modern as well as historic portrayals of buildings and spaces are included. The chapter on *The Green and Downtown* includes a roughly three-page historical narrative, map, and descriptions with photographs and sketches of 53 buildings that surround the Green or are in the immediate vicinity. The book has served me well for the information as described above. I also found it extremely useful in visiting the Green and its surrounding buildings.5

Benjamin Gordon's 1983 curriculum unit in the Yale New Haven Teacher's Institute database documents the architecture of buildings that surround the Green. The unit has a lesson on identifying basic architectural features of buildings around the Green.6

**Standing on the Green and looking around.**

If one stands on the lower Green at the flagpole and looks east through the boughs of trees (a mixture of elm, oak, and maple) and over the wrought iron fence that borders the Green, one can see an interesting contrast on Church Street. The beautifully restored City Hall, designed by Henry Austin, built in 1861, and the center of city government is dwarfed between two of the tallest buildings on the New Haven skyline: the Connecticut Financial Center and the New Alliance Bank Tower. (You are welcome to picture this arrangement and/or visit it yourself and reflect on what this may say about contemporary values related to economics and politics.) Nonetheless, the site provides an interesting contrast of 19th century architecture with modern design. As one looks at the Chapel Street side of the Green, one's gaze is met by the Chapel Square Mall, an ambitious urban renewal project of 1965. Further west on Chapel Street, between Temple and College Streets, one can see various storefronts which when examined closely reveal characteristics of their early 20th century facades. The former Taft Hotel (1911), now luxury apartments, bookends the block. Along College Street, the outer wall of the buildings surrounding Yale's Old campus is visible. On Elm Street, historical links to early New Haven are visible in the Methodist Church on the corner of College and Elm Streets and in some architecturally restored federalist buildings which were once homesteads. Hendrie Hall, the original home of the Yale Law School, a turn of the 20th century brick building, is visible between the church and the old homesteads. The New Haven Public Library and Greco-Roman styled New Haven Courthouse sit side by side on Elm Street between Temple and Church Streets.

One cannot mention the Green without referring to the legacy of the elm trees which once draped the Green's periphery with a canopy of green and brown. This spectacle had elicited the nicknaming of New Haven as the "City of Elms" in the mid 19th century. While most of the elm-planting initiatives of James Hillhouse have succumbed to tragic waves of worm, beetle, and fungus attack, a modern effort has maintained the connection between the Green and elm trees. During the 1980's disease resistant elms were planted on an around the Green. Without this effort, the living and visible connection between the Green and elms, and a broader association with one of the first urban environmental initiatives may have been erased from collective.
memory. Thomas Campanella in Republic of Shade, offers a published account of how the urban landscaping design in New Haven parallels beautification programs throughout New England. Campanella, describes New Haven as the "apotheosis of urban pastoralism in antebellum New England, and the pinnacle of elm culture in America." Campanella describes the industry and foresight of James Hillhouse, New Haven businessman and Connecticut Senator, who planted elms on the lower Green and on the newly constructed Temple Street. Hillhouse personally raised necessary funds to plant elm trees on the lower Green in 1786. In 1792, after Temple Street was completed, he planted elms at 40 foot intervals along the entire road. In 1810, Hillhouse was responsible for overseeing the planting of forty foot elms on the west side of Temple Street. Thanks to Hillhouse's efforts New Haven earned the praises of citizens and visitors throughout the 19th century. Charles Dickens wrote "Even in wintertime, these groups of well-grown trees, clustering among the busy streets and houses of a thriving city, have a quaint appearance: seeming to bring a kind of compromise between town and country; as if each had met the other half way and shaken hands upon it." Author and 1827 Yale graduate Nathaniel Parker Willis said, "It has the appearance of a town roofed with trees...it is commonly said, that, but for the spires, a bird flying over would scarce be aware of its existence...the whole scene, though in the midst of the city, breathes of nature." 

The Lower Green

From the flagpole, one can walk toward any of the surrounding streets along the six paved pathways that reach the Green's perimeter. (The walks are generally arranged as spokes from a hub are, although there are tangential paths that perpendicularly cross these hubs too. A bird's eye view is sketched in figure 1.

(image is available in print form)

Figure 1: A sketch of the Green

The lower Green's paths have the look of two overlapping stars. The flagpole is ornamented by a granite war memorial (1928) and water fountain (2003). The fountain was installed to commemorate the bringing of water to the Green from the Lake Whitney by the New Haven Water Authority, approximately 150 years ago. A plaque commemorating this event has been placed directly east of the flagpole at the Church Street entrance. At the South east entrance to the Green, an Athenian monument of Lysicrates was installed in 1907 to serve as a water fountain. A Christmas tree is traditionally placed just north of the flagpole during the winter season. During the summer, a large iron framed stage is erected on the North edge of the Green to facilitate holding a schedule of community events that include the summer concerts, performances, and movies. It is also the main stage each June for the International Festival of Arts and Ideas.

The Upper Green

If one were to walk directly west of the flagpole, one would encounter Temple Street, which bisects the Green, and then arrive at three churches; Center Church, or First Congregational Church is flanked to the North by the United Congregational Church (North Church) and by Trinity Episcopal Church, to the south. This portion of the Green is known as the Upper Green.

Behind First Congregational Church remnants of New Haven's original burial ground are visible. Built over the burial grounds, the church houses a crypt in its basement. It has facilitated efforts to maintain the historic grave sights and accompanying headstones. The Church sponsors tours of the crypt weekly or by appointment.
Beyond the churches, the upper Green slopes gently upwards. The most direct westerly path is the widest walkway. This path leads directly to College Street and Phelps' Gate (1819), Yale's College Street entrance to Old Campus. In 1717, Yale's first building faced the Green. Connecticut Hall (1750), Yale's second building faced the Green with other structures in the Brick Row until expansion of the main campus after the Civil War resulted in an outer row of buildings that enclosed the campus.12

Park benches have been placed along walks in the upper Green and large trees have been allowed to grow between the rear of the churches and College Street. On the corner of College and Chapel Streets, a bronze plaque on the walkway-entrance to the Green commemorates the riding of the bicycle to New Haven in April 1865 by Pierre Lallement a French immigrant who was living in Ansonia. Lallement received a patent from the United States' Patent Office for his invention in November 1865.13

A Look Back: The History of the Green

(image is available in print form)

The Green, or Market Place, as it was first referenced before the 19th century was slow to develop. The first map of the Green is attributed to Thomas Brockett who is responsible for arranging the New Haven Colony in a grid pattern based on nine squares. While his original map is lost a copy exists. See figure 2.14

Figure 2: a copy of The Brockett map of 1641

(image is available in print form)

The sketch shows an undeveloped central square surrounded by eight squares. Each of the eight squares is divided into plots that were allotted to each of the persons who had invested in the colony. These eight squares have long since been subdivided and transferred into different hands many times over. However, the land for the Green, remains as the same central square as was set aside as part of the community's "Common and Undivided Lands" in the mid 17th century. Maps from the 18th and 19th century indicate that aside from the churches, school, and government buildings that were built on the Green, most of the development occurred on the Green's periphery. See figure 3 (Early Maps of New Haven) Brown's map of 1724 shows the meeting house, prison and government building (county house) on the Green. Approximately 19 small and non-uniform structures border the Green. The largest appears to be Yale College. A 1748 map (Wadsworth) shows the center meeting house with the graveyard behind it, a grammar school, jail (goal), courthouse, and county house on the Green.

Figure 3: Early Maps of New Haven

About 28 structures bordered the Green on this map. Ezra Stiles map of the Green (1775) shows two churches, a new courthouse, the prison, and county house on the Green. Trees line the Green's border and two paths cross each other in front of the center church. More than thirty buildings border the Green. These buildings appear noticeably more uniform when compared to the structures in earlier maps. By 1817, the Green had adopted a form that more closely resembles the layout of the Green today. Doolittles's map of 1817, shows the three current churches and the old courthouse as the only structures on the Green. The map
shows a fence around the Green which is bordered on each side by Hillhouse's elm trees. Approximately 40 buildings surround the Green.15

Governance of the Green today remains the responsibility not of the city government but of a self perpetuating group of private individuals called the Committee of the Proprietors of Common and Undivided Lands at New Haven. They function much as outlined by New Haven Colony planners in the 17th century. While the Proprietors Committee has evolved from all original investors in the New Haven Colony it essentially has been a continuous force in managing the Green for over 300 years.16

The narrative record of the Green's development can be found in Henry Blake's Chronicles of the New Haven Green, Rollin Osterweis' Three Centuries of New Haven 1638-1938, and in Susan Mills Brown's New Haven A Guide to Architecture and Urban Design. A medley of Brown's words succinctly describes the Green's development:

In the original town plan this square was held as common land and used as a place for military drill, the burying ground, and other public necessities...it was called the Market Place and the first meeting house was built somewhere on it..by 1740 only about 14 houses had been built around it, along the new Yale College standing among the cornfields. The square itself was a ragged lot-rutted and dotted with a motley group of buildings, some dilapidated-the meeting house, courthouse, school, jail, and others. In the mid-18th century efforts at improvement began: a state house... a new meeting house...the offensive graveyard was hidden by a board fence painted red. 17

She describes the Federal period as being the crucial period in the Green's history.

...the field was graded, fenced, cleared of old buildings and roads, and transformed into a public square..the graveyard was moved away (to the newly commissioned Grove Street Cemetery), and elm trees were planted all around the edge. ..three churches (were built) as a monumental composition down the center...Ithiel Town's great Doric Temple (replaced the old state house)...in 1821, the Methodist church was allowed to build on the northwest corner (and then encouraged to move off the Green across the street in 1849). ...town life moved up from the waterfront..retail shops spread on Chapel Street on one side of the Green and residences rose on Elm Street (on the other side of the Green).the Exchange was built on the corner of Church and Chapel Streets (and became the hub of downtown) ..a new County House established the town government on Church Street....Yale bought the whole College Street frontage...throughout the rest of the century the basic scheme received only a few changes 18

In addition to this architectural legacy, the events on and around the Green offer insight into peculiar episodes in local history as well as reflect regional, national, and universal trends. The development of the New England colonies is reflected in the Green's use as a town marketplace, place of worship, and town government. Troops drilled on the Green during the American Revolution, Civil War, World War I and World War II. The Civil Rights Movement is represented in the demonstrations that occurred on the Green for Bobby Seale's Black Panther Trial. While the focus of my unit will be to connect students to the historical Green of New Haven from its
foundation as a colonial land parcel until 1876, the time of the America's Centennial, so much more contemporary and well documented events have occurred that teachers of United States History II, or Civics, would find it easy to adapt some of the activities and strategies of this unit to their classes. For instance, there are many more spaces and buildings that survive into the modern era from the late 19th and early 20th century. Topics such as urban renewal of the 1960's and the current remaking of downtown into an entertainment district would be great subject to study. Some sensible and controversial decisions were made in the name of improving the city. Some entire neighborhoods were removed for highways and development. In some cases, such as the construction of the Chapel Square Mall in 1965, a lasting change was made to the city's architectural, economic, and social environment. In other cases, such as the clearing of space for the Oak Street Connector, plans were initiated but development never materialized. The impending demolition of the New Haven Coliseum offers the prospect of a current debate over preservation and re-use over demolition.

Some notable events and people make the New Haven Green an interesting historical as well as architectural study. During the colonial period, theocratic government could be found on 'the Marketplace.' New Haven Colony joined the Connecticut Colony in 1665 and served as co-capital until 1873. The tension with England leading up to the American Revolution is characterized early in the 1660's in the hiding of Charles I's regicides: Whalley, Goffe, and Dixwell. Events regarding the American Revolution, such as Benedict Arnold's demanding powder for Connecticut troops to fight the British are part of the Green's legacy. The creation of state government saw New Haven shine and darken as a state political star. The Green provided the stage for the Amistad Affair in Antebellum America. Public School children performed patriotic spectacles to rally support for the Union troops in the Civil War. Lastly, the 1876 Centennial Celebration for America displayed the Green still as the communal central square in a now sophisticated urban center that was 234 years removed from its humble but ambitious founding.

**Colonial England**

The Marketplace, as the Green was called at that time, was also the place of town government and town worship. The first meetinghouse, church, and market were built on the Green by 1639. The Green served as the town's first burial ground until the late 18th century.

Town records indicate that the responsibilities of a town drummer (circa 1650) included "attend(ing) the publique occasions of the Towne for drumming" According to Ruth Wilson in Connecticut's Music in the Revolutionary Era, the drummer's public service included announcing meetings, accompanying the watch to and from the watch house, calling hours such as 9 o'clock curfew, raising 'alarmum' in times of danger, marking cadence for military training exercises, and performing special functions as closing auction sales. Most of these activities took place on the Green.

While a single congregation founded the New Haven Colony, it fractured in the wake of the Great Awakening. A second congregation of "New Lights" established their own church. Later, Methodists and Episcopalians would also worship in churches on the Green. The three churches on the Green today are the Center Church or First Congregationalist Church, the Second Congregational Church, and the Episcopal Church.

The first public commencement for Yale College occurred n the Green in 1718. The tradition continued through the mid 19th century.

**Tension with England and the American Revolution**

King Charles II of England sought to avenge the condemnation to death of his father, Charles I. The judges, or
regicides, who sentenced Charles I to death fled England to avoid Charles II's order for their arrest. Judges Whalley and Goffe were hid by New Haven residents in homes and then in a cave on West Rock. A third judge, John Dixwell lived in New Haven after Whalley and Goffe left. He went by the alias James Davids and married Governor Eaton's daughter Hannah. He is buried behind Center Church on the Green. His large gravestone is simply marked with the initials 'J.D.'.

New Haven and Hartford's role as co-capitals originated in the colonial period. The New Haven Colony rested its claim to the land on a transaction with the Quinnipiac Indians and not on a charter issued by the King of England. An attempt to gain a charter from the King of England failed when the ship carrying New Haven's emissary to the king failed to reach England. Members of the Connecticut Colony agitated that New Haven's territory fell under the Connecticut charter. As dispute developed between the members of both colonies, a compromise eventually materialized; New Haven would join the Connecticut colony and both would serve as co-capitals. The legislature would meet once in New Haven and once in Hartford each year. A state house existed on the Green for the purpose of hosting the legislature from the colonial period until 1873.

During the revolutionary period, New Haven resident Benedict Arnold was one of the first to agitate for fighting the King's troops. At New Haven town meetings on the Green, after the battles at Lexington and Concord, Arnold called for the New Haven militia to march to the aid of the Massachusetts militiamen. Arnold's requesting of powder from the armory for his troops is re-enacted each April on 'Powder House Day' on the Green. Arnold became captain of the unit which became the Governor's Second Company of Guards. He was instrumental to the colonial victory with Ethan Allen's Green Mountain Boys at Fort Ticonderoga but received little credit. He later became a traitor in planning to hand over West Point to the British and giving out secrets that led to the British burning of New London, Connecticut. His effigy was burned on the Green as a result of his traitorous acts. His first wife's grave is in the Center Church's crypt on the Green.

The British attacked New Haven and planned on burning the town. Despite occupying New Haven, they instead left and burned Ridgefield.

Nathan Hale, a Yale student who lived across from the Green most likely trained with the Yale militia on the Green. He is commemorated in history books for his bravery as a spy during the American Revolution. A statue in his likeness is outside of Connecticut Hall, the oldest building on Yale Campus (1750). Occupants of the building could once gaze out the windows onto the Green before the outer row of buildings (still present) including Phelp's Gate were constructed.

In response to the fighting at Lexington and Concord, Yale students joined the militia on the Green to drill. Noah Webster, a Yale freshman at the time reported keeping time for the militia with his flute. He also reported escorting General Washington with Washington's new recruits from Yale and New Haven out of New Haven from Yale campus. 24

As far as music and religion on the Green is concerned, Ezra Stiles reported in 1780: "they sing Watt's Version of the Psalms in the three Meetings in Town; as well as at the College. At Mr. Hubbard's Episc Ch they sing Tate & Brady's Version of the Psalms. Twenty years ago they sang the old New England Version at the Meetings." 25

**Connecticut State Governance**

New Haven served as co-capital of the Connecticut Colony (with Hartford) and the state of Connecticut from 1665 until 1873. The Connecticut State Legislature held one of two sessions each year in a statehouse on the
Green (the other session was held in Hartford). The last state house was a large, stone, Greek Revival structure which was designed by Ithiel Town (1830). New Haven ceased being the state capital in 1873 after a state referendum ended two city rule. Three non-profit agencies, the Boy's Club, the Connecticut Museum of Art, and the New Haven Colony Historical Society occupied part of the structure for some time after. The building was torn down in 1889. Unfortunately, when one visits the Green today there is no visible remembrance of what Shumaway and Hegel refer to as "(Ithiel) Towns' once-imposing Greek Revival structure". The building, which had become a dilapidated eyesore to many by 1884, when Shumaway and Hegel report that people made fun of it and advocated razing it, was removed in 1889. This seemingly tragic event raises the question of remembrance previously referred to. How could the status of being home to the state's capital be publicly and appropriately commemorated on the Green? Indeed the story of how New Haven ceases to be the capital is a lesson in civics or government. The fact that the transfer of power came about through a state referendum indicates the practice of using a public referendum to resolve controversial issues in our society is historical. Arguably there are many symbols of civic pride that should occupy our collective memory, but perhaps the fact that our city was once the state's co-capital should be recognized somewhere near the spot where important state decisions once were made.

**Antebellum America**

Slaves were bought and sold in the marketplace just as they were in town commons and marketplaces up and down the east coast. The last slaves were sold on the Green in the 1825. Pastor Bacon, was named pastor of the Center Church the day after the last slaves were auctioned on the Green. He became a staunch abolitionist who favored gradual emancipation. His writings against slavery are said to have been read by Abraham Lincoln. The Amistad captives were held in the New Haven jail and tried in the Courthouse. These buildings were on the upper Green. A memorial to the Amistad affair rests not on the Green but across Church Street next to the steps at City Hall.

The Green also took its present form during this important period. First, the opening of the Grove Street Cemetery meant that the Green would cease being the town burial plot. Headstones were removed to the new cemetery and gravesites covered over in the beginning of the 19th century. In addition, a new Center Church (the fourth one) was constructed (1812-1814). It was built over gravesites which were preserved. The crypt now serves as an important remembrance to the first burial ground in New Haven. Displays and publications about the crypt list 137 identified remains and perhaps up to 1,000 unidentified remains. It is believed that between 5,000 and 10,000 unidentified remains of the settlers of New Haven Colony lie under the upper green. The names and epitaphs on the gravestones in the crypt are great resources for students to explore.

James Hillhouse's tree plantings and the building of the iron and stone fence created a natural and open space in the midst of one of the largest cities in New England. This look of urban pastoralism as defined by Campanella generated the praise by citizens and visitors alike by which the Green gained a substantial reputation. Undoubtedly, this reputation helped reinforce the image and arguably still continues to influence urban planners.

A law making it illegal to play football and all other athletic games in the streets and squares of the city was passed in 1858. Initiatives to pass similar laws dating back to 1848 had been unsuccessful. Apparently, rough football games and other Yale student athletics on the Green had aroused public complaints.

**The Civil War**

The tradition for militia to train on the Green was compulsory. May 1 was one compulsory training day.
reports that this event was a spectacle to which thousands would descend on the Green to witness in the 1840's. Ironically, its popularity waned in the years leading up to the Civil War. However once, Lincoln was elected, support for drilling and parading increased. On May 10, 1861, the Second regiment of Connecticut Volunteers paraded on the Green in full uniform and with all their equipment before being dispatched to battle. Included were the New Haven Grays under the command of Alfred H. Terry.30 Professor Jepson began organizing annual patriotic processions of public school children for Fourth of July celebrations in 1855. In 1861, he organized the biggest of these processions to date to rally support for the union troops as the first big battle of the Civil War loomed. Jepson would later organize a tremendous procession and performance of students for the Centennial Celebration of 1876.31

The American Centennial

New Haven celebrated America's centennial on the Green with tremendous fanfare. A large advertisement on the front page of the New Haven Evening Register announced a full day of spectacles. (See Figure 4)

(image is available in print form)

Figure 4: Advertisement for the Centennial Celebration of America

The advertisement included the following itinerary: the ringing of church bells and a thirteen gun salute at sunrise, a military and civic parade, a military dress parade, balloon launching, prayers in the Center Church, a reading of the Declaration of Independence, a historical oration by Reverend Leonard Bacon, a concert on the Green by 2800 public school children led by Professor Benjamin Jepson and the Teutonia Maenner-Choir. Lastly, the advertisement announced that at sunset following bellringing and a 38 gun salute, the "Grandest and Most Magnificent Display of Fireworks Ever Exhibited in New England would take place.32

The New Haven Evening Register of July 5 reported that despite some delays in starting particular events, the celebration largely lived up to its billing. Chinese lanterns and fire cups "illuminated the Green and buildings facing it, including the colleges" on the eve of the fourth while popular tunes were played in the bandstand in front of the Center Church.33 Soldiers marched to the Green from outposts in each of the outlying neighborhoods at dawn. Church bells and a 13 gun salute were sounded at dawn. Morning parades departed from the Green, processed through city streets and returned to the Green. They included costumed figures and antique carriages with local dignitaries. P.T. Barnum contributed a carriage with strange animals. Among the carnival like procession people carried banners with humorous and political messages. "Centennial Kisses" was carried on one banner by an old couple. "May I Vote?" was carried on an ensign by an "old lady in fantastic bloomer costume of many colors." Despite some difficulty in getting the balloon up on schedule, it flew dangerously close to the trees before heading into the sky and landing in Haddam, Connecticut.34

A highlight of the afternoon was a 2 hour Children's Concert performed by 2800 public school children under the direction of Professor Benjamin Jepson and assisted by the Teutonia Menner-Chor (German American Choir). Students from the High School, Webster School, Eaton School, Wooster School, Dwight School, Skinner School, Washington School, Hamilton School and Woolsey School marched in procession to the Green. They were dressed in red white and blue and were arranged on the stage so as to form the American Flag. The article reports that they sang 13 songs including 'Rally Round the Flag', 'The Glorious Fourth of July, Yankee Doodle, the 'Star Spangled Banner' and Praise God from Whom all Blessings Flow. The concert was considered to be "the feature of the day"35
Following a 38 gun salute (one for each state in the union) at sunset, the crowd prepared for fireworks. The two hour long display elicited cheers from many for the aerial shells and bombs. However, many of the advertised pieces disappointed the crowd. The newspaper article summed up the festivities with a congratulatory note and prognostication to the future: "And yet it was a great and successful celebration, unmarred by any serious accident or fire, and enlivened by many noteworthy and pleasing sights and observations. Whoever lives to see the next centennial celebration of the day in New Haven will doubtless witness a more imposing (fireworks) display; it is doubtful however, if they will view one which will be more harmonious, more free from deplorable events, or one which will awaken greater enthusiasm in the hearts of people."36

**Objectives**

The goal of the unit is for students to appreciate the value of urban space as a resource to understanding the past and as a springboard to the future. Objectives toward reaching this goal are aligned with standards outlined in the New Haven Public School Curriculum, State of Connecticut Department of Education standards, and National History standards. Alignment with specific standards is listed where applicable. An addendum of standards is also included as a table in this unit.

Students will be able to connect events and places associated with the New Haven Green with historical events in New Haven/Connecticut/American History.

Students will define sense of place.

Students will gain an understanding of the form, purpose and function of public space in light of the current renewal that is going on downtown around the Green and the 18th/19th century urban pastoralism initiative.

Students will look at historical interpretations of a place. Students will generate their own interpretations of place.

**Standards**

These objectives are linked to the following standards. As a result of completing lessons in this unit students will:

- demonstrate an understanding of the ways that cultural encounters and the interaction of people of different cultures in pre-modern as well as modern times have shaped new identities and ways of life. [SS12:3c]
- gather, analyze, and reconcile historical information, including contradictory data, from primary and secondary sources to support or reject hypotheses. [SS12:1b]
- demonstrate an understanding of major events and trends in world history, United States history from all historical periods and from all regions of the world. [SS12:2a]
- describe, explain and analyze political, economic and social consequences that came about as the resolution of a conflict. [SS12:3e]
- evaluate data within the historical, social, political and economic context in which it was created
testing its credibility and evaluating its bias. [SS12:1d]

· explain relationships among the events and trends studied in national and world history. [SS12:2c]

· describe and analyze, using historical data and understandings, the options which are available to parties involved in contemporary conflicts or decision making. [SS12:4b]

· demonstrate an understanding of the ways race, gender, ethnicity, and class issues have affected individuals and societies in the past. [SS12:3f]

· describe relationships between historical subject matter and other subjects they study, current issues, and personal concerns. [SS12:4e]

· analyze historical and contemporary conflicts through the respective roles of state and national governments. [SS12:5b]

Strategies

In order to accomplish the unit objectives, students will visit the Green and complete reflective writing tasks about their associations with the space. Students will also create maps of the Green. A number of reading strategies will help students accomplish the objectives. First students will read multiple texts; primary source material, secondary material, newspaper articles, and sketches. Students will be asked to look for characteristics of people who used the Green at different times of history. Through examining readings, writings, and visual evidence students will generate knowledge of rules/laws, common practices, and, assumptions that people at that time and place lived under. In order to tie the objectives together, students will complete a culminating project: A Students Guidebook to the New Haven Green.

Classroom Activities

Lesson 1 Initiating Activity 1-2 days

K-W-L Activity.
Reflective Writing: Written in Student Journals

a. Students should think about and write what they know about the Green. Students will list any current or historical facts.

b. Have students sketch a map of what they think the Green looks like. They should list or draw as many places and things that they can remember about the Green. They should also include a description of what they think the Green is used for.

c. Have students pair share to compare their lists and maps. Have them combine information to make one list and map.

d. Repeat activity by combining pairs in the room.

e. Give out poster board and have groups report their combined list. On a second piece of poster paper have them draw a map and label it with landmarks, paths, streets, trees etc.

f. Have students present and discuss their work. Point out similarities and differences with what the groups come up with. Perhaps point out that even people in the same room can come with different interpretations of the same place.

g. Have students discuss what they would like to know about the Green. This can be done as a reflective writing exercise and then as discussion. Tell the class that they will investigate things that they want to know about the Green.

h. At completion of the unit students will write reflectively about what they have learned about the Green.

Lesson 2 Observations at the Green: Written in Journals 1 day

a. Bring students to the Green. Have students watch activity for five minutes. Have them describe in writing what they see happening: ie. What I see happening at the Green.... Who is doing what?

b. Have students sketch a map of the green based upon the visit.

Lesson 3: Reading Strategies 5 days

1. Historical Narratives

a. Reading Aloud/Reading Silently. Have students read selections from historical narratives such as Blake, Osterweiss, Brown, Hegel, and Shumway et al. Read some selections aloud to the students, have them read aloud to the class, and have students read some selections silently.

b. Prepare a packet of multiple texts: a biographical piece, a newspaper article, historical account, a letter, a photograph or illustration. Have students read the items in the packet and list the rule/laws, common practices, and assumptions they can infer from each piece of evidence. Some discussion of what rules/laws, common practices, and assumptions are will have to take place.

Guide Questions for this reading strategy:

What are the laws/rules/policies (both written and unwritten) which have been designed to govern the
behavior of the individuals in that particular society?

What are the common practices which are considered to be "normal " or "natural"?

What are the dominant assumptions which seem to underlie the belief system of most of the individuals in that society?

c. Coding Text and Using Post-it Notes. Teach students how to code text and use post-it notes to construct, process, and question ideas as they read.

d. RAFT. Have students adopt a role, audience, format, and topic. For instance students might adopt the role of a public school student at the centennial celebration. He or she might identify an audience such as a classmate who is sick and cannot attend the celebration. He or she might adopt a letter as the format. Lastly he or she would write a letter to the sick classmate on the topic of what happened at the celebration and why having that celebration on the New Haven Green is such a big deal.

**Lesson 4: Student’s Guidebook for the Green: An Inquiry Project into How Things Are and Should Be Remembered. 5 days**

Goal: Students will create and appreciate memory in regard to preserving our community's history and linking it to events in national and world history.

Performance Objective: Students will create a guide book for historical events and places that took place on the Green between 1638 and 1876 after assessing their own knowledge of the Green. Students will pick an event or topic in New Haven history associated with the Green and explore what type of remembrance, if any, there is to remind/educate us about it. Possible topics include: religion, government, slavery, abolition, nature, economics, and science. If there is no memorial then students will make a case as to what kind of memorial if any should be on or around the Green.

Activities:

1. Reflective writing in journal:

   a. Think about the last time you were at the Green in New Haven. Think about statues, stones, and things that look like monuments. Write down what you remember about these statues, stones, signs, and monuments. (ie Do they say anything?)

2. Discuss student responses and write their examples on poster paper.

3. Tell the class that they are going to explore why these statues, stones, signs, and monuments are there. Tell them that you are going to explore other events and places on the Green that may be new to them and discuss whether or not they think that there should be memorials to these places and events. Tell the students they may be able to propose and create a model for a new memorial for an event they learn about and present it to the class.

4. Take the class to the Green to explore the remembrances discussed. Assign groups of students (2-3) to investigate sites on the Green and then report back to the large group. For instance, if a group is going to explore the elm trees on the Green, (after making sure they know what an elm tree looks like) their job would be to count and plot elm trees on the Green. Another group might be assigned to report on the fence. They...
might make note by sketching what the fence looks like and plot where the fence and gates are located. Other topics will include:

the Water Fountain The Center Church

The Second Congregational Church The Episcopal Church

The Drinking Fountain The Pathways/Walkways

Temple Street

Some topics are not directly on the Green but have a close association

The Amistad Memorial City Hall

The Court House

Some topics no longer exist but were historically significant to New Haven

The State House First School/Meeting House

Investigating the Old State House The Franklin Elm/Hillhouse Elms

Assessment: Student work would be assessed based upon a rubric.

Resources

Bibliography

Center Church on the Green. Bernard Heinz. Bruce Mochan 1976. This 32 page softbound publication is available in the Center Church vestibule. It has many historical facts about the church, the Green, the Crypt, and famous people such as Noah Webster, Eli Whitney, Samuel Morse, and James Hillhouse. A handout called 'Historical Points of Interest in the Center Church Crypt' accompanies the booklet. It has facts and figures about who is buried in the crypt and the number of people buried there.

Chronicles of New Haven Green from 1638 to 1862 A series of Papers Read Before the New Haven Colony Historical Society. Henry T. Blake. The Tuttle, Morehouse and Taylor Press 1898

Blake's work is a treasure of information regarding many particular events in all areas of New Haven and the Green. It contains early maps and illustrations. It consists of

papers read before the New Haven Colony Historical Society between 1894 and 1898 regarding the history of the Green from 1638 - 1862.


Written as one of 35 booklets dedicated to Whitney Brooks, Vice Chairman of the American Revolution Bicentennial Commission of
Connecticut. The book describes the music and people involved in the music of the Revolutionary Era in Connecticut. Chapter III Music in the War Years makes reference to fife and drummers from Yale and New Haven that accompanied militia who drilled in New Haven on the Green. Reference is also made to the musical arrangements made to accompany psalms at the three churches on the Green. The book describes the hiring and responsibilities of a town drummer. P. 33. The book traces the struggle for church congregations to adapt a new style of music.


Robert Leeney's work is an informative archive of 20th century New Haven. While the content is beyond the focus of the timeframe of my unit, the material is useful background knowledge for continuing the story of the New Haven Green. It would be a great reference for United States History II or for a course in 20th Century History.


Floyd Shumway and Richard Hegel vividly portray New Haven in 1884 in a comprehensive narrative. Their account includes descriptions of The Nine Squares: New Haven's neighborhoods. Some illustrations and photographs/daguerreotypes are included. The account traces the name, Elm City, to circa 1865, when elm trees planted on and around the green in the 1790's had reached their magnificence. Ironically, as the name was catching on the trees began to die from damage of cankerworms. Noteworthy features described include: the stone and wrought iron fence, the town well, with a three handled pump (on the corner of Church and Chapel Street), the Franklin Elm planted next to the pump in 1790 to commemorate the death of Benjamin Franklin.


Elizabeth Mills Brown writes in her preface that this book is a field guide but is "also intended to be of use to scholars" (p.viii). In addition to detailed information on the history of the Green and the architectural significance of the buildings that surround the Green, Brown provides copious background on New Haven's neighborhoods and historic roads. For each subject of study there is historical background in the form of information on the architect(s), builder(s), and alterations/renovations. Photographs and sketches depicting modern as well as historic portrayals of buildings and spaces are included. The chapter on the Green and Downtown includes a roughly three-page historical narrative, map, and descriptions with photographs and sketches of 53 buildings that surround the Green or are in the immediate vicinity. I found it extremely useful in visiting the Green and its surrounding buildings.


This is an account of New Haven's Bicentennial Celebration.

New Haven Evening Register. July 1st through July 5th 1876

Copies are available on Microfilm in the New Haven Public Library. There are excellent accounts of the centennial celebration in the July 1st and 5th editions. I suspect that other editions from other years will also be informative to teachers and students.


Dolores Hayden launched the Power of Place, a small nonprofit corporation, in 1984. The purpose of the organization was to "situate women's history and ethnic history in downtown (Los Angeles), in public places, through experimental, collaborative projects by historians, designers, and artists" (Hayden p.xi) Section II of this work describes the Power of Place Project. Section I, Claiming Urban Landscapes as Public History challenges one to see the urban landscape as a record of public history. The framework presented in this work is the obvious framework through which the seminar and subsequently this unit are based. Chapter 1, Contested Terrain outlines the debate over preservation policy. Chapter 2, Urban Landscape History: The Sense of Place and the Politics of Space "sketches a way to frame the social history of urban space". The model proposed incorporates elements of cultural geography, architecture, and social history. It is based on the premise that the urban landscape is the product of diverse inhabitants-indigenous people, colonizers, laborers, architects, politicians, housewives (might I add students) - over time. She introduces cultural mapping as a tool to uncover the cognitive pictures of places shared by different groups. Chapter 3, Place Memory and Urban Preservation offers examples of urban history projects where the limitations of respective social historians and architectural preservationists are minimized.


Mr. Campanella's work explores the practical use and adoption of the American Elm in the first grassroots environmental movement in America. His work contains the history of the elm plantings on the New Haven Green and in other communities throughout New England. Beautiful old photographs are in this text. In addition, the text explains Dutch Elm disease and describes programs to re-introduce disease resistant strains of elms in communities throughout New England


Content Area Reading Strategies for Lessons were adapted from strategies outlined and described in this contemporary text. I received training in using strategies from the text through the weeklong Connecticut Writing Project Workshop conducted by Mary Mackley and Carol at Wilbur Cross High School in June 2005.

Three Hundred Years of Progress in New Haven 1638-1938. May White, Supervisor of Social Studies, New Haven Public Schools. Boardman Trade School Print Shop New Haven, 1938. Commissioned by the New Haven Board of Education to celebrate the New Haven Tercentenary Celebration, this work is a summary history of New Haven's first three hundred years. The fact that it was commissioned, written, and printed by agents of the New Haven Public Schools makes it an interesting publication.


Internet Resources

www.TownGreens.com

This website allows the browser to reference factual data and reports on every town green in Connecticut. The information on the New Haven Green includes general information, a physical description, historical significance, maps and documents, and data sources. James Sexton's report, Not a Park or Mere Pleasure: a case study of the New Haven Green which can be accessed through the maps and documents tab, has been cited for historical data on the Proprietor's Committee and for general historical background.
Living In Style: The New Haven Green and Its Architecture

Benjamin Gordon Yale New Haven Teachers' Institute Unit 83.01.05. 1983

teachersinstitute.yale.edu/curriculum/units/1983/1/83.01.05.x.html#9

**Student Reading List**

For description of each reading please see above reading list.

Center Church on the Green. Bernard Heinz


Connecticut's Revolutionary War Leaders North Callahan

"New Haven in 1884" *Journal of the New Haven Colony Historical Society*. Floyd Shumway and Richard Hegel


*New Haven Evening Register*. July 1st through July 5th 1876

Nineteenth-Century Historians of New Haven. Richard Hegel

Three Centuries of New Haven 1638-1938. Rollin Osterweiss

Three Hundred Years of Progress in New Haven 1638-1938. May White

www.TownGreens.com

**Materials List**

Journal books Paper Poster paper Pens/Pencils

Markers Bus Tokens Readings

**Endnotes**

1. pp. 14-20 Blake

2. p. 29 White, May. 300 Years of Progress in New Haven

3. Osterweiss describes the initial prayer on page 4. He describes how the first church government was established on pages 12-14. Blake describes the first record of the meeting house being built on the Green on page 15.

5. Mills Brown. *The Green and Downtown* is located on pages 100-118. Sections on the central complex of Yale University and the surrounding neighborhoods follow in the subsequent chapters.

6. Benjamin Gordon. Living In Style- The New Haven Green and Its Architecture Unit 83.01.05

7. p. 130 Campanella

8. p. 107 Campanella

9. p. 131 Campanella

10. p. 131 Campanella

11. p. 112 Mills Brown

12. pp. 120-121 Mills-Brown

13. The plaque on the Green which was sponsored by Club Cyclotourute Mussipontain and The Wheelmen was dedicated June 27, 1998.

14. Map courtesy of the New Haven Colony Historical Society

15. Maps courtesy of the New Haven Colony Historical Society


17. p.101 Mills-Brown

18. pp. 101-102 Mills-Brown

19. p.33 Wilson

20. pp. 207-208 Blake

21. p. 15 Bernard Heinz. Center Church on the Green


24. p. 70 Wilson

25. p.89 Wilson

26. p.5 Shumway and Hegel

27. pp.12-15 Hegel

28. 'Historical Points of Interest in the Center Church Crypt'

29. p. 245 Blake