

TOWARD A PERFORMANCE THEORY  
OF VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE:  
EARLY TIDEWATER VIRGINIA AS A CASE STUDY

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The study of material culture must be, to whatever extent it escapes antiquarianism, an

explanation of those phenomena must ultimately be couched in terms of the learned, patterned behavior that for convenience we call culture.<sup>1</sup> We are anxious to know how one learns to design objects, to understand how the ideas which are transmitted from one person to another are manipulated by each to produce new artifacts. We seek to describe artifacts, that is, as products of patterned behavior. From whom does the builder of a house get his ideas? What does he do with them between the time he learns them and the time he produces a structure? These questions are of particular interest with respect to traditional houses, where the patterns of learning may not be directly established by documented personal or literary links.

One theory of transmission in vernacular architecture studies holds that the patterning observable among similar buildings is the result of the diffusion of ideas from a common source, rather than of many separate, independent inventions of the same form.<sup>2</sup> In its extreme versions, the diffusionist argument often seems to imply that, as a system without "theoretical or aesthetic pretensions,"<sup>3</sup> vernacular architecture is the product of the mindless imitation of a limited number of building models. Diffusion is nevertheless a useful concept in many ways,

and it has formed the basis of most important British and American studies of vernacular building. In England, for example, it has shaped studies of crown-post roofs and of three-unit and aisled-hall house plans. Many building forms are believed to have come from France to southeast England, and thence to have spread from the lowland to the highland regions of the island.<sup>4</sup> In the United States, diffusion studies have been equally important, inspired at least in part by the diverse ethnic origins of America's builders.<sup>5</sup>

In this paper I have chosen to examine that corollary of diffusion theory known as social diffusion because I think that it points up many of the limitations of diffusionist explanations of vernacular architecture.<sup>6</sup> This aspect of the theory holds that building types and techniques, as well as individual buildings, tend to pass down the social scale. New ideas are introduced at the top of the social order and gradually filter down, often reaching the bottom long after they have gone out of fashion at the top.<sup>7</sup>

Lord Raglan, the anthropologist and scholar of Welsh vernacular architecture, offered the most explicit exposition of this idea in a 1963 essay on "The Origin of Vernacular Architecture." He said that "the rich and powerful" are responsible for the invention of new types of artifacts, which they adopt as real or imagined improvements on whatever they replace. As a result of their adoption by the upper classes, everyone wants these new items, and cheap imitations are produced in great numbers to meet the demand. But then the rich take up yet another novelty, while "some of the poor specimens survive among remote rustics and are mistaken by folk-lore enthusiasts for the spontaneous products of folk culture."<sup>8</sup>

Mere proximity to new ideas does not explain their adoption. Some motive must be present. Raglan and his associates therefore attributed to imitation all of the non-academic buildings in Britain.<sup>9</sup>

The idea of social diffusion is only a particularly elitist version of the general diffusionist view. Social diffusionists resolve the complex question of influence in favor of a simplistic affirmation of the official social and economic structure. They postulate the inexorable movement of ideas downward from the more powerful to the less powerful in a process rendered less orderly than it ought to be by the faulty understanding of the recipients.<sup>10</sup>

Any analysis which offers as an explanation the complete dependence of one group upon another is automatically suspect. If we have learned nothing else from several excellent new historical and folkloristic studies, we should know by now that each group has its own values and inner dynamic. It is not only the elite who can think for themselves. Distinctive minority cultures persist despite overwhelming explicit and implicit pressures to be assimilated. In the face of the long-standing assumption that blacks had no culture except for fragments gleaned from Europeans, for instance, recent studies show very clearly that Afro-Americans retained their own family ties, house planning traditions, musical forms, and oral culture.<sup>11</sup> Similarly, some traditional building practices in Virginia--board roofing and thatching are two--survived in active use there long after they had been dismissed from the public architectural repertoires of Virginia's elite builders.<sup>12</sup>

If it is true that "lower" groups, defined socially, economically, or numerically, do not merely absorb the dominant culture, it is also true that they exert positive influence upon the dominating groups around them.<sup>13</sup> A strong case for this statement can be made from the early history of timber framing in Virginia. An ancient building practice in Europe--one found for instance on excavated Anglo-Saxon archaeological sites--is the technique of building on posts.<sup>14</sup> The lower ends of the vertical framing members, rather than being set on a horizontal sill or upon any sort of foundation or underpinning, were placed directly in the ground, either by being driven in or by being set into previously prepared holes or trenches. Only a few excavated examples dating between the eleventh century and the present have been reported from Europe,<sup>15</sup> yet recent archaeology in Virginia has shown that most seventeenth-century Virginians of whatever social standing lived in post-built houses. Here is an example of a traditional building practice which obviously survived through seven centuries of use without being detected by modern scholars, and which experienced a resurgence of popularity in seventeenth-century America.<sup>16</sup>

Post building by its very nature was an inexact technology. The use of elaborate or multiple joints in a building that were imprecisely laid out and subject to movement through the actions of settling, rot, and frost was not possible. As a result, the English framing traditions that were so carefully maintained in New England were allowed to dissolve in Virginia and were replaced by the simplest, most flexible kind of framing.<sup>17</sup> Long walls were framed with the plated tenoned to the tops of the posts and linked together by joists lapped over the plates. The rigid, box-like, four-sided bay of the New England house became

in Virginia an open-ended, additive skeleton flexible as a snake's, and able to twist and turn with the stresses upon it. The loose articulation of parts was carried into roof framing. The usual rafter system employed a series of light, closely-spaced, common rafters linked at the top by open mortises and in the centers with lapped-on collar beams. The rafter couple was attached to the frame only indirectly, either by being nailed to a board laid along the ends of the joists or by being notched over a square member set diagonally along the ends of the beams (Fig. 1).

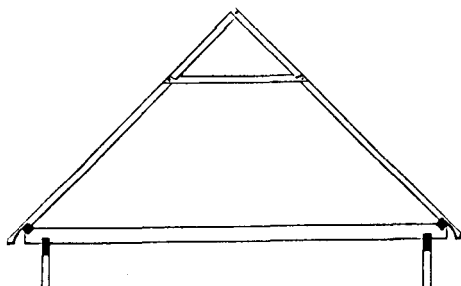


Figure 1: Schematic diagram of typical Virginia roof framing, with light common rafters and collars of uniform scantling. The rafters are supported at the eaves on tilted false plates--the square black members at the outside ends of the joists. (All drawings by the author).

Post houses fell down quickly unless they were subjected to frequent, extensive repairs. In the eyes of Virginians this system was by no means an improvement over English practice.

It was introduced at first as an expedient; contracts for well-built buildings always specified houses "well underpinned with brick," with frames "hewed by a line," and "neatly and well set together after the manner," they added significantly, "of English building."<sup>18</sup> Early Virginians contrasted their own buildings to "substantial" English houses; the terms substantial and English were at first used interchangeably. By the late seventeenth century, though, they had grown accustomed to post building conventions and it became definitionally possible to have a substantial Virginia house. The new English fashion of having a frame without exposed beams "as the new way of Building is,"<sup>19</sup> was therefore applied to Virginia framing, rather than reintroducing English methods, for Virginians found that from their post technology they had produced a framing system that was strong, light, cheap, and adaptable to almost any structural problem. After the general addition of sills and braces to stiffen a frame, no longer required to be flexible, no changes were made to the system until after the Civil War.<sup>20</sup> Contrary to Raglan's assertion that changes are introduced as improvements<sup>21</sup> or to the complementary belief that craftsmen always seek to refine their techniques,<sup>22</sup> the change to post building in Virginia did not finally result in a degeneration of craftsmen nor can it be explained as "everyone's" wanting to partake of a new fashion.

The problem with the diffusionist argument, then, is that without the idea that people naturally copy their social or economic betters, there is no real explanation of the movement of ideas. An alternative model may be posited if architectural traditions are considered to constitute symbolic systems. To have any real meaning to its builders and users, a building

must be one expression of a whole system of possibilities; it derives its meaning as much from the alternatives not chosen as it does from those which are selected.

The techniques of linguistics can be of great assistance in the examination of architectural forms considered as symbolic systems. Drawing upon structural linguistics, semiotics, and generative grammar, for instance, James Deetz and Henry Glassie have gone far toward establishing the utility of linguistic models to material culture studies.<sup>23</sup> Glassie, in his Folk Housing in Middle Virginia has constructed an elaborate grammar that brilliantly codifies the syntactical principles of nineteenth-century house builders in Piedmont Virginia. Ultimately, however, grammar is itself only a conventionalized method of encoding and relating meanings for their efficient transfer to an audience.<sup>24</sup> As an avowedly neutral concept it can add little to the understanding of the social meanings which are embodied in architectural performances, and which give vernacular buildings their local character.<sup>25</sup>

The work of sociologist Basil Bernstein on linguistic codes offers a useful approach to the problem of the relationship of architecture and society.<sup>26</sup> In Bernstein's view, "a number of . . . frames of consistency are possible in any given language and . . . these fashions of speaking, linguistic forms, or codes are themselves a function of the forms social relations take."<sup>27</sup> Each social structure can generate a distinctive code within a language.

Bernstein claims that two basic types of linguistic codes can be distinguished. Although they are parts of the same language, they comprise alternate symbol systems and they operate in different ways to different ends. They may

be distinguished by "the extent to which each facilitates or inhibits an orientation to symbolize intent in verbally explicit form."<sup>28</sup>

One code he calls the restricted code. It is characterized by a high degree of syntactical and lexical predictability and it is readily and informally learned. It does not facilitate the elaboration of meaning or the expression of individual intent. Rather it acts to promote group solidarity, but sacrifices a facility for signalling individual differences among group members. Expressions in the restricted code depend upon an assumed body of shared interests and indentifications which remove the necessity of being explicit. A restricted code can be developed in any community with shared values, whether it be a group of seventeenth-century Virginia planters or twentieth-century folklorists. Each will develop codes which allow reference to a whole complex of assumptions by a few short words or phrases.

The elaborated code is characterized by low syntactical and lexical predictability. The user selects from many linguistic alternatives which allow him to express his experience in a particularized, differentiating manner. Bernstein cautions that restricted codes should not be stigmatized as substandard versions of elaborated codes and notes that "a restricted code carries its own aesthetic. It will tend to develop a metaphoric range of considerable power, a simplicity and directness, a vitality and rhythm . . . ." <sup>30</sup>

It is important to note here that codes are conceived of as "nothing more than verbal planning activities at the psycho-



logical level and only at this level can they be said to exist."<sup>31</sup> Because of this concept, and because of codes' relationship to each other as parts of a single language, many individuals may have the ability to use both restricted and elaborated codes, or several varieties of each. Although some persons will have access only to the restricted code, everyone who has access to an elaborated code can use a restricted code as well.

Let us consider vernacular building as a restricted artifactual code. It is semantically predictable. One way of examining the restricted range of meanings attached to vernacular buildings is to examine the ways houses were used, with the help of probate inventories. As the cognitive anthropologists do with living informants,<sup>32</sup> we may "question" the occupants of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century houses about their classification of buildings by using inventories which list the decedent's possessions according to the rooms that they were found in when the inventory was made. These documents are normally called room-by-room inventories. If we do so, we quickly learn that most early Virginians had a very limited vocabulary of rooms--the hall, the chamber, and the kitchen were the three most common terms. The hall was the conceptual center of the house, in relation to which all other rooms were categorized. Functionally, it was an all-purpose room serving as a kitchen, sitting room, sleeping room, store room, work room, and so on. Other rooms can be understood as subtractions of specific aspects of the hall's function, thereby "modifying" it. The first specified activity normally accorded a separate room--or chamber, to use the contemporary term--was sleep. The familiar two-cell house of seventeenth- through nineteenth-century Virginia that is called a hall-parlor house today--parlor being a relatively modern

term in the seventeenth century which refers to a private room used for sitting and sleeping as well<sup>33</sup>--was to early Virginia estate appraisers a hall and chamber house. The rooms were called "the hall" and "the chamber," where they were given any names at all beyond "outer" and "inner."

The second most common modifying room was the kitchen. In 165 eastern Virginia room-by-room inventories made between 1646 and 1720, there were 117 "the" chambers, 275 other chambers, and 110 kitchens. In large houses other named rooms were occasionally found, such as closets, dairies, and studies. Extra rooms were usually generically called chambers, and classified according to their location in relation to the hall, the conceptual core; the "middle chamber," the "little middle room," or the "Little Rome next the Yard" are typical room names.<sup>34</sup> Of the 165 eastern Virginia inventories, about 40 percent had all three of the major room types, while 50 percent had only two of the three. Usually these were the hall and the chamber, for the kitchen was frequently placed in a separate building.<sup>35</sup>

It is important to note, however, that room-by-room inventories were normally made only for the estates of the richest men and women, hence the preponderance of large houses. Most houses had only one room, yet I have so far been able to identify only three--all made in the same county within a few years of each other--in the room-by-room inventories.

Syntactically, early Virginia houses were as predictable as they were semantically. The number of house forms into which these three-room designations were fit was very limited. Two-room houses, for instance, were always set with the rooms adjacent to each

other, and with the ridge running the long way. That this arrangement was not a structural necessity but a reflection of the code is emphasized by the rare exception (Figs. 2, 3).

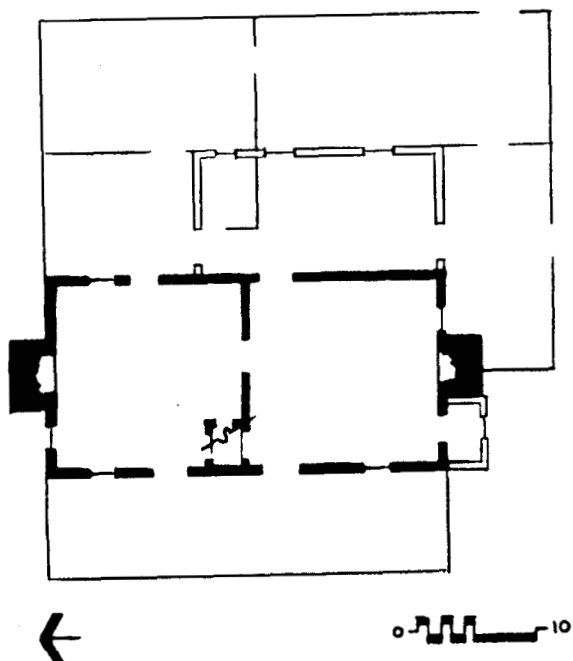


Figure 2: House at Cabin Point, Surry County, third quarter 18th c. In all of the plan drawings the solid black areas are the original portions, the hollow black outlines mark ante-bellum additions and the single black lines designate porches and post-bellum additions. All houses are in Virginia.

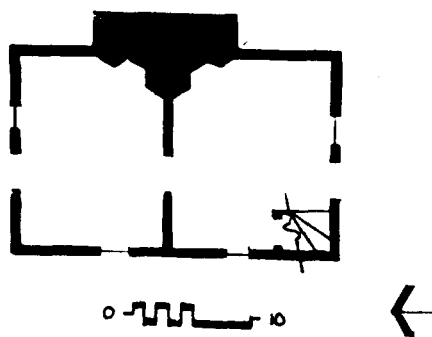


Figure 3: Lumpkin House,  
Essex County, mid-18th c.  
The ridge runs east to west.

Several of Bernstein's suggestions about the interrelations of the two codes help to illuminate the place of vernacular architecture in the total architectural environment. With no exceptions, the early vernacular buildings that survive in Tidewater Virginia parallel the room-by-room inventories in being the creation of relatively affluent persons.<sup>36</sup> Even the smallest standing houses of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries can be shown to have been built by individuals of well-above-average economic and social standing; many were members of what might be called the country gentry.<sup>37</sup> They were men who, in the course of their daily lives had access to both restricted and elaborated codes,<sup>38</sup> to academic as well as to traditional modes of architectural expression, and they shifted from one to the other as the occasion demanded. Their use of vernacular forms was intentional,

not a matter of ignorance or financial inability. The same men who, as planters, lived in unmistakably traditional houses could as vestrymen switch codes and inform the builder of Pohick Church in 1771 that his altarpiece design was "not according to the proportions of Architecture," and that he should brush up on the Ionic order and try again.<sup>39</sup>

In this model, then, the question of social class in vernacular building is of secondary importance. It is not the architecture of any particular social situation.<sup>40</sup> It is the architecture of groups sharing common assumptions, values, or ways of doing things. It is the architecture of any unitary subgroup-- of farmers following traditional agricultural practices or of members of separatist religious groups, for instance. In a complex society many persons shift from a vernacular code to an elaborated academic one as the occasion demands. Within a social class embodying great competition for social or political dominance, we might expect dwelling houses of great academic pretensions to be built by the same individuals who as farmers build vernacular farm- and out-buildings.<sup>41</sup> We may also expect to find a great variety of specific combinations of restricted and elaborated codes manifested by particular individuals or communities.

Persons with access to elaborated codes might not use them in small communities where their status is unchallenged and needs no assertion; relatively isolated or simple societies manifest the use of restricted codes almost exclusively.<sup>42</sup> In seventeenth-century Virginia, there were few exceptions to the restricted code of room types--a study here or a dining room there, or the occasional oddity like George Procter's "Shovellboarde Roome."<sup>43</sup> The syntactical structure was equally restricted. Archaeologists have shown that there was no way to incorporate the extended "modifying"

chambers into a single unified house. The largest excavated structures were rambling additive structures. The alternative was to build a group of two-cell structures. A late seventeenth-century French visitor to Tidewater Virginia, Durand de Dauphiné, noted this phenomenon. "Whatever their rank," he wrote, "& I know not why, they build only two rooms with some closets on the ground floor, & two rooms in the attic above; but they build several like this, according to their means."<sup>44</sup>

If architectural codes are indeed closely integrated into the social structure then they ought to be sensitive indicators of changes in the society. As a society grows more complex, then we should expect to find evidence of the development of an elaborated code layered over the ever-present restricted code. The excessive restriction of the architectural traditions of late seventeenth-century Virginia began to be remedied in the first half of the eighteenth century. New meanings and new forms were adapted by those southeastern Virginians whose houses and inventories survive. More specialized spaces appeared; dining rooms and passages were most common. Nicer distinctions among rooms were drawn as room definitions became boundary-oriented, that is, mutually exclusive. An elaborated code emphasizing individual distinction was clearly in effect. The central passage, the ultimate separator of outsiders from insiders, is particularly noteworthy in this respect.

Plan forms reflected the syntactical dimensions of this change. House plans were more complex and the interplay among dimensions--up and down, front and back--allowed for a delicate interrelation of parts. So-called Georgian plans of the eighteenth century were rarely made up of equal-sized

rooms. At the least, the two front and the two rear rooms were of different sizes. Often the rooms were arranged in such a fashion that no two were the same size; the "modifiers" were worked into more complicated syntactic structures entirely different from the rambling "and . . . and . . . and . . ." recursive structures of restricted code houses of the late seventeenth century and after<sup>45</sup> (Figs. 4, 5). This differentiation of room size carried over into the smaller single-pile, central-passage-plan houses as well (Fig. 6).

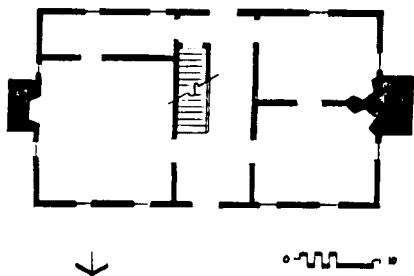


Figure 4: Moore House,  
York County, mid-18th  
c.

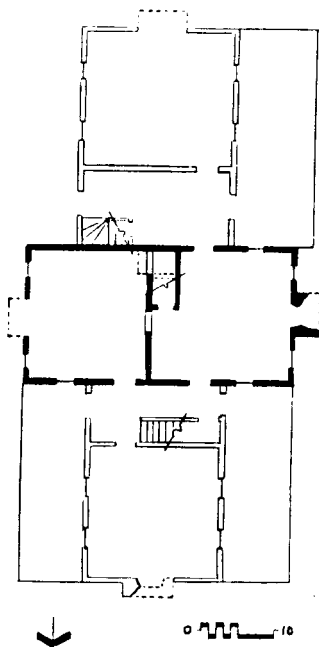


Figure 5: Mantua  
House, Chesterfield  
Co., late 18th c.

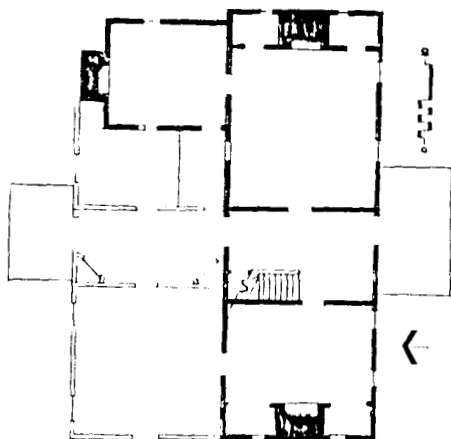


Figure 6: Kittiewan, Charles City Co., third quarter 18th C.

How did these single- and double-pile central passage houses become the vernacular structures of nineteenth-century Virginia? The code model can help us to understand this change without resorting to notions of descent, upper-class mimesis, or any of the usual diffusionist notions. We may simply suggest that, as more and more such houses were built, they became, in a sense, clichés. They were symbols so widely agreed upon that they came to serve a unifying function in rural Virginia, rather than a distinguishing one.<sup>46</sup> Once more, we can observe a shift in the syntax. The intricate interrelations of the eighteenth-century Georgian plan were formalized, and the differences in room size



and arrangement were minimized in the nineteenth-century houses (Fig. 7). Thus, an elaborated-code plan form passed into the restricted architectural code. This process was not an inexorable filtering down of an elite form to the masses, nor did it occur without the elaborated house types having been modified and having shed many of the distinguishing powers which characterized eighteenth-century Georgian plan houses. It was the choice and adaptation of one appropriate architectural form from available alternatives.

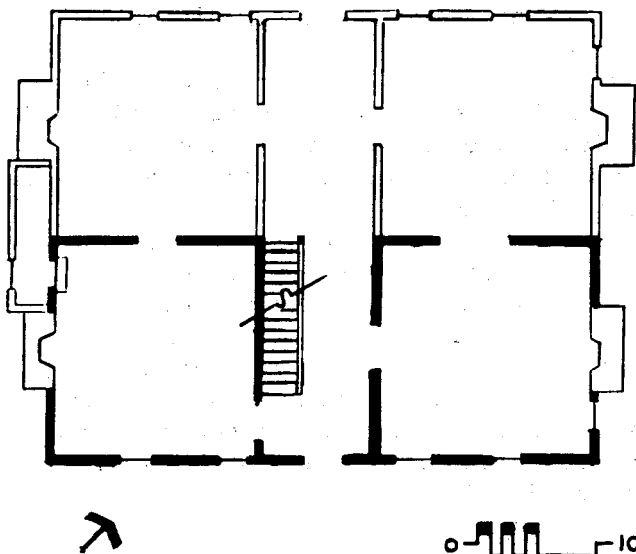


Figure 7: Chippokes, Surry County, early 19th c.; mid-19th c. additions.

I have confined myself in this paper largely to examples drawn from the social or "sociotechnic" dimension of architecture. Buildings also fulfill environmental and ideo-

logical functions which if examined closely ought to be at least complementary to the conclusions drawn here.<sup>47</sup> The period of most rapid change from post to underpinned framing in Virginia coincided with the early eighteenth-century planning changes just described, for example.

There are of course difficulties with any use of isomorphic models. But I believe that this one offers a way of considering vernacular architecture in the context of all buildings, a way of understanding vernacular structures outside of the usual tacitly pejorative or condescending framework of descending forms, devolution, cultural lag, provincial or naive building, or any of the other ways that we have been taught to think about traditional building. This model gives to vernacular building its rightful status as a complex phenomenon, possessed of its own inner logic and cutting across class and economic lines. It suggests that vernacular builders had purposes of their own beyond the imitation of an elite who were, in any case, often themselves. Rather than being the benefactors of inexorable cultural seepage, vernacular builders were active agents who contributed as much to this history and technology of academic building as they got from that history.<sup>48</sup>

## NOTES

- 1 James Deetz, Invitation to Archaeology (Garden City, New York: Natural History Press, 1967), p. 6.
- 2 J. T. Smith, "The Concept of Diffusion in Its Application to Vernacular Architecture," in Studies in Folk Life: Essays in Honour of Iorwerth C. Peate, ed. J. Geraint Jenkins (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1969), p. 60; cf. E. Estyn Evans, The Personality of Ireland: Habitat, Heritage and History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), p. 8.
- 3 Amos Rapoport, House Form and Culture (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1969), p. 5.
- 4 For example, M. W. Barley, The English Farmhouse and Cottage (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961); Eric Mercer, English Vernacular Houses: A Study of Traditional Farmhouses and Cottages (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1975).
- 5 Examples are Henry Glassie, Pattern in the Material Folk Culture of the Eastern United States (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1969); Fred B. Kniffen, "Folk Housing: Key to Diffusion," Annals of the Association of American Geographers 55 (1965):549-77; Fred B. Kniffen and Henry Glassie, "Building in Wood in the Eastern United States: A Time-Place Perspective," The Geographical Review 56 (1966):40-66; Richard Pillsbury, "Pattern in the Folk and Vernacular House Forms of the Pennsylvania Culture Region," Pioneer America 9 (1977):12-31.
- 6 Peter Smith, Houses of the Welsh Countryside: A Study in Historical Geography (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1975), pp. 4-5.
- 7 R. W. Brunskill, Illustrated Handbook of Vernacular Architecture (New York: Universe Books, 1970), p. 24; Mercer, p. 9.
- 8 Lord Raglan, "The Origin of Vernacular Architecture," in Culture and Environment: Essays in Honour of Sir Cyril Fox, ed. I. Ll. Foster and L. Alcock (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963), p. 382. See also Lord Raglan, "The Cruck Truss," Man 56 (1956):103; F. W. B. Charles, "The Medieval Timber-Frame Tradition," in Scientific Methods in Medieval Archaeology, ed. Rainer Berger (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1970), p. 237.
- 9 Vernacular architecture scholars are at one with the standard art-historical view of vernacular forms of all kinds--that they are the products of the untutored mimesis of academic forms, resulting from "simultaneous imitation and distortion--slavishly aping the high style, yet deliberately exaggerating it." (Wendell D. Garrett, "The Matter of Consumers' Taste," in Country Cabinetwork and Simple City Furniture, ed. John D. Morse (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1969/, p. 206.) This viewpoint, with the complementary one that

vernacular forms are somehow *sui generis*, products of the mystical relationship between man's environment and his "needs," form two poles of a deeply rooted, startlingly undemocratic Anglo-American paradigm of the relationship between the elite and the general populace. It is a model most clearly realized in the minstrel-show archetypes Zip Coon and Jim Crow. Zip Coon was an uppity urban nigger, hilariously but futilely striving to imitate his white superiors' elegance. In Wendell Garratt's terms, he was "slavishly aping" them. Jim Crow, on the other hand, was a simple-minded unambitious plantation darky, generally lazy but possessed of certain childlike virtues as well. Though blacks no longer allow us to shackle them openly with this imagery, we cherish it in many other contexts. We see the non-academic forms as Zip Coon distortions of the academic or as Jim Crow, with no aspirations to "real" art at all. For a discussion of minstrel stereotypes see Robert C. Toll, Blacking Up: The Minstrel Show in Nineteenth-Century America (London: Oxford University Press, 1974).

10 See Benno M. Forman's statement that the rural woodworker in eighteenth-century Massachusetts "produced furniture in new styles as he conceived to be--without ever having had the opportunity of knowing the significance of those styles from the first-hand experience of regular apprenticeship under an urban or English-trained cabinetmaker." ("Urban Aspects of Massachusetts Furniture in the Late Seventeenth Century," in Country Cabinetwork, ed. Morse, p. 28; emphasis in the original.) In other words he was "incompetent" both aesthetically and in Noam Chomsky's technical sense. (Noam Chomsky, Aspects of the Theory of Syntax /Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1965/, p. 4.) Alan Dundes has characterized this viewpoint in folklore studies as the "devolutionary premise," the idea that somehow each new element of culture begins to be debased and/or to disappear almost as soon as it is introduced. He has suggested that there ought to be theories of cultural evolution or progression instead in "The Devolutionary Premise in Folklore Theory" (1969), in Analytical Essays in Folklore (The Hague: Mouton, 1975), pp. 17-27. Dundes' contention has been contested by Elliott Oring in "The Devolutionary Premise: A Definitional Delusion?" Western Folklore 34 (1975):36-44, but it would be hard to deny that Dundes' thesis applies to Raglan's statement. It is assumed in this paper that vernacular architecture neither evolves nor devolves, but merely changes.

11 Melville J. Herskovitz, The Myth of the Negro Past (Boston: Beacon Press, 1941), p. 3; John Michael Vlach, "The Shotgun House: An African Architectural Legacy," Pioneer America 8 (1976):47-70; Paul Oliver, Savannah Syncopators: African Retentions in the Blues (London: Studio Vista, 1970); Lawrence Levine, Black Culture and Black Consciousness: Afro-American Folk Thought from Slavery to Freedom (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976). For a discussion of this issue see John F. Szwed, "An American Anthropological Dilemma: The Politics of Afro-American Culture," in Reinventing Anthropology, ed. Dell Hymes (New York: Vintage Books, 1972), pp. 153-81.

- 12 Dell Upton, "Board Roofing in Tidewater Virginia," APT Bulletin 8 (1976):22-43.
- 13 Jesse Lemisch, "Bailyn Beseiged in His Bunker," Radical History Review 4 (1977): 74; Bruce R. Buckley, "A Folklorist Looks at the Traditional Craftsman," in Country Cabinetwork, ed. Morse, p. 271; Michael Owen Jones, "Two Directions for Folkloristics in the Study of American Art," Southern Folklore Quarterly 32 (1968):251.
- 14 P. V. Addyman, D. Leigh, and M. J. Hughes, "Anglo-Saxon Houses of Chalton, Hampshire," Medieval Archaeology 16 (1972):13-31.
- 15 Among the few exceptions are the unanalyzed drawing in Breandan O'Riordain, "Excavations at High Street and Winetavern Street, Dublin," Medieval Archaeology 15 (1971):73-P5; several illustrations in Gwyn I. Meirion-Jones, "Some Early and Primitive Building Forms in Brittany," Folk Life 14 (1976):52, 57; Colin Platt, Medieval England: A Social History and Archaeology from the Conquest to 1600 A.D. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1978), p. 58.
- 16 A pole (post) barn of indeterminate age is illustrated in the Surtees Society's nineteenth-century edition of seventeenth-century Yorkshireman Henry Best's account book, and identified as Best's barn. (Henry Best, Rural Economy in Yorkshire in 1641, Being the Farming and Account Books of Henry Best of Elmswell, C. B. Robinson, ed. /Durham: George Andrews, 1857/, pp. 40, 170-171.)
- 17 Cecil A. Hewett, "Some East Anglian Prototypes for Early Timber Houses in America," Post-Medieval Archaeology 3 (1969):100-21.
- 18 Truro Parish, Minutes of the Vestry. Truro Parish, Virginia, 1732-1785 (Lorton, Virginia: Pohick Church, 1974), p. 15; see also p. 32.
- 19 C. G. Chamberlayne, ed., The Vestry Book and Register of St. Peter's Parish, New Kent and James City Counties, Virginia, 1684-1786 (Richmond: Library Board, 1937), p. 129.
- 20 A fuller discussion of Virginia framing is offered in chapter 5 of my dissertation, "Early Vernacular Architecture in Southeastern Virginia" (Brown University, June 1979).
- 21 Raglan, "Origins of Vernacular Architecture," p. 237.
- 22 Cecil A. Hewett, The Development of Carpentry, 1200-1700: An Essex Study (New York: Augustus M. Kelley, 1969), p. 186.
- 23 Deetz, esp. ch. 3; Henry Glassie, "Structure and Function, Folklore and the Artifact," Semiotica 8 (1973):313-51; idem., Folk Housing in Middle Virginia: A Structural Analysis of Historic Artifacts (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1975).

- 24 R. Hasan, "Code, Register and Social Dialect," in Class, Codes and Control, 2, Applied Studies Towards a Sociology of Language, ed. Basil Bernstein (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973), p. 269.
- 25 Chomsky, p. 9.
- 26 The possible uses of Bernstein's model were suggested to me by Mary Douglas's use of it in Natural Symbols (New York: Vintage Books, 1970). The following exposition is based on Basil Bernstein, "Social Class, Speech Systems and Psycho-Therapy," British Journal of Sociology 15 (1964); idem., Class, Codes and Control, 1, Theoretical Studies Towards a Sociology of Language (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1971); Douglas, Natural Symbols; Hasan, "Code, Register and Social Dialect." I will cite references only for direct quotations.
- 27 Bernstein, Class, Codes and Control, 1:122.
- 28 Ibid.
- 29 The similarity of Bernstein's definition of the restricted code to Michael Owen Jones' concept of folk technology as "the technology of individuals who tend, owing to certain cultural conditioning and restrictions, to employ limited codes of behavior . . ." in "'There's Gotta Be New Designs Once in Awhile': Culture Change and the 'Folk' Arts," Southern Folklore Quarterly 36 (1972): 46.
- 30 Bernstein, Class, Codes and Control, 1:136.
- 31 Bernstein, Class, Codes and Control, 1:131 (emphasis in the original).
- 32 See the essays in Stephen A. Tyler, ed., Cognitive Anthropology (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969).
- 33 Maurice Barley, "A Glossary of Names for Rooms in Houses of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," in Culture and Environment, ed. Foster and Alcock, pp. 496-97.
- 34 Lancaster County, Virginia, Deeds, Wills and Settlements of Estates, etc., 1654-1702, p. 68; York County, Virginia, Deeds, Orders, Wills, etc., No. 3, 1657-1662, p. 275; Surry County, Virginia, Deeds, Wills, Orders, 1671-1684, p. 307. Photostats of the MS. Lancaster and Surry volumes and a MS. transcript of the York County volume are all deposited in the Archives of the Virginia State Library, Richmond. They are listed here by titles on the spines of the State Library copies.
- 35 See my dissertation, ch. 4, for a full discussion of this.

- 36 The same was true in Great Britain. (Lord Raglan, "Origins of Vernacular Architecture," p. 386.)
- 37 Dell Upton, "Traditional Architecture and the Virginia Plantation System," a paper read at the annual meeting of the Society for Historical Archaeology, Ottawa, Ontario, January 1977.
- 38 Bernstein, Class, Codes and Control, 1:129.
- 39 Truro Parish, pp. 121-22. The terms restricted and elaborated cannot be thought of as synonymous with the terms vernacular and academic architecture. Rather, they transcend those categories. Buildings in each code may be composed of diverse elements traditionally associated with either vernacular or academic architectural modes, or both. Academic elements may as easily be used in a restricted, predictable way as traditional ones. For example, the Greek Revival style which was so widely used in the northern United States during the second quarter of the nineteenth century embodied few traditional elements but very quickly settled into a narrow, predictable, though rather pleasing range of expressions. The introduction of classical or academic forms into the restricted code, then, does not always signal the arrival of a more elaborated expressive style, in the sense of complexity. Paul Kay has warned against the assumption that "arbitrary shibboleths of class or race are . . . signs of elaborated or proper speech" in "Language Evolution and Speech Style," in Socio-cultural Dimensions of Language Change, ed. Ben G. Blount and Mary Sanches (New York: Academic Press, 1977), p. 30n. William Labov's discussion of middle-class verbosity is also a useful caveat. See his Language in the Inner City: Studies in the Black English Vernacular (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1972), pp. 213-21.
- 40 Cf. Bernstein, Class, Codes and Control, 1:128.
- 41 Westover and Shirley, two well-known eighteenth-century plantation houses in Charles City County, Virginia are examples of this.
- 42 Charles F. Hummel, "The Dominys of East Hampton, Long Island, and their Furniture," in Country Cabinetwork, ed. Morse, pp. 48-49, 52, 56; Douglas, ch. 2.
- 43 Surry County, pp. 307-310.
- 44 Durand de Dauphiné, A Huguenot Exile in Virginia or Voyages of a Frenchman exiled for his Religion, with a description of Virginia and Maryland, Gilbert Chinard, trans. and ed. (1687; rpt, New York: Press of the Pioneers, 1934), p. 119.

45 Peter Smith has called this "the Unit system of addition" in Houses of the Welsh Countryside, pp. 166-68.

46 Hasan, p. 269.

47 Lewis R. Binford, "Archaeology as Anthropology," rpt. in Man's Imprint from the Past: Readings in the Methods of Anthropology, ed. James Deetz (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971), pp. 252-53.

48 An obvious example is the work of the Queen Anne architects of the late nineteenth century, many of whom made remarkably adept use of post-medieval vernacular forms.