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DESIGNING WITH PRAIRIE: A HEIDEGGERIAN HERMENEUTICAL ANALYSIS

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Abstract. Landscape architects have been advocating the use of native species in designs for over 100 years. This Heideggerian hermeneutical analysis of the work of authors from 1919 to 1929 yields several underlying themes regarding the use of native species: 1) biological conservation (preservation), 2) possession (control of human-ordered world), 3) promotion of national and regional identity, 4) spirituality, and 5) aesthetics. The prairie-inspired designs of Jens Jensen, Darrel Morrison, and John Diekelmann illustrate the ways in which the emphasis placed on these themes and different assumptions about "prairie" influence the resultant plantings. Jensen's works are meant to evoke the relationship of people to a higher power, Morrison's are concerned with the visual impact of prairie and the feelings this evokes, and Diekelmann's are meant to unveil the phenomenon of nature and the associated interrelated play of human existence.

Key Words. design, history, landscape architects, landscape architecture, natural landscaping, prairie

INTRODUCTION

Designers often approach natural landscaping without an explicit idea about what it is they are trying to achieve or an historical perspective about what others have done. Most landscape architects have been inspired by nature, if only to react against its perceived characteristics. The forms of their works are influenced by these perceptions or conceptual models whether or not they are consciously expressed. As a way to enable designers to understand the background of professional practice, this hermeneutical analysis attempts to elucidate the assumptions of early practitioners as expressed in their writings. In addition, an examination of the work of three landscape architects, who have clearly expressed the motivations behind their prairie designs, is described to explain how the assumptions and perceptions of designers influence their work. The following discussion is a synthesis of these preliminary efforts to understand what it is to design with prairie.

METHODS

The method used for this analysis was two-fold. First, selected natural landscaping texts published between 1919 and 1929 were analyzed using Heideggerian hermeneutics. This time period was chosen because a review of other sources (Hubbard and Kimball 1917, Robinette 1973) suggested that much attention was given to the natural landscape during this period. The purpose of hermeneutics is understanding (Heidegger 1962, Palmer 1969, Tesch 1987). The process involves reading and discussing the texts so that themes emerge.

The second part of the study examined the work of three landscape architects, Jensen, Morrison, and Diekelmann, in light of these themes. Articles by and about these practitioners were examined. In addition, an interview with John Diekelmann was transcribed and analyzed as a text.

Examination of Themes Pertaining to the Use of Native Plants in Design

The use of plants native to a region is not a new idea in landscape architecture. It has been advocated and accomplished in the United States for over 100 years. A review of the literature in the first two decades of the Twentieth Century reveals botanists (including

members of the then relatively new field of ecology), landscape architects, and horticulturists all discussing the potential use of native plants. Five themes that weave through this literature have been identified. These are similar to ideas used by advocates of natural landscapes in the 1980s (Dyas 1975, Küchler 1973, Otto 1983).

The themes include:

- 1) Biological conservation (preservation)
- 2) Possession (control of human-ordered world)
- 3) Promotion of national and regional Identity
- 4) Spirituality
- 5) Aesthetics

Biological Conservation (Preservation)

The authors were alarmed by the changes evident in their lifetime which they attributed to the pressures brought about by increasing urbanization, industrialization, and the automobile:

"These beauties of our wild lands are free to the finder, but yearly they become more scarce. The green groves have passed from many a hillside; field crops now grow where we used to gather the wild phlox and the painted cup, and farther apart are the wild lady's slipper or moccasin flower. Less frequently than formerly can we gather armfuls of our Turk's cap lily."

Toole 1923 p. 5

"The great destructive agent to our native flowers is civilization and the operations that go with it. Cutting the forest, draining and plowing the meadows, building houses, roads, and railroad tracks, the smoke of cities, and the travel of feet—all these wipe our wild flowers out of existence. The only complete remedy would be for us to give up our civilized ways."

Hamblin 1922 p. 2

Alfred C. Hottes (1925) described another source of destruction:

"Some believe that they love nature. They have a fast car, which they pack to overflowing with persons disinclined to walk, the women prepare too much to eat, and after arriving at the spot they lie about on the grass and talk of every-day things—of the price of lots, and business conditions, and newspaper reports—blind to the beauties around them."

"Others of these 'nature-lovers' set the example to their friends by destroying what they can see, remarking as they pull and break the plants, 'These flowers are so beautiful I am sorry we can't stay longer to take all of them.'"

"If it be Dogwood time, they ruin the trees as high as they can reach to break the branches. If it be a shaded, marshy spot, they step full force upon an orchid, because they have their eyes on the path which will take them from the place as quickly as possible."

Hottes 1925, pp. 163-164

The solutions proposed by the writers we reviewed include the preservation of species through landscape gardening, genetic improvement (Toole 1923, Hamblin 1922, Wilder 1919), restoration (Hamblin 1922), the creation of public and private nature reserves, and other protective measures *in situ* (Jensen 1921 and 1927) and *ex situ* (Durand 1923). It is interesting to note that most authors writing in the period did not or would not consider the possibility that the expansion of development and hence "progress" should be slowed.

Possession (Control of Human-Ordered World)

This is a curious or ironic theme in some ways, describing the human desire to dominate nature even in the name of preservation. Note that the passage by Toole (1923) quoted above ends with a lament that opportunities to harvest (possess) wildflowers were becoming more scarce. Preservation, in the form of natural landscaping, was seen by several authors as the best way to ensure a continuing supply (Toole 1923, Hamblin 1922). Toole (1923) appears to be primarily interested in preserving species for his nursery business.

Another aspect of this theme is the very fact that as native plants were becoming rare they became more "valuable." Therefore, their possession in a garden conferred status and power on the owner:

"And while it is true that many of us do not begin to suspect the treasure trove contained in this flower gifted country of ours, we are making strides toward that knowledge, and each year longer lists of rare native plants appear in the collector's catalogues, and more gardening folk go afield in their own neighborhoods to seek out and establish in their gardens plants that have hitherto gone unnoticed."

Wilder 1919, p. 39

Similarly, in an era in which the "new look" was naturalistic, natives provided raw materials for the development of new varieties, which is another manifestation of the human desire to control nature:

"With seedlings, there is a chance for variation and through selection one can plan for bringing out new varieties. Such opportunities are manifest in the phloxes, Jacob's ladder, the native asters, black-eyed Susan, wild lilies, pleurisy root and others. I have derived much satisfaction from this work with some of the kinds."

Toole 1923 pp. 7-8

Others felt that by removing plants from their natural environment they could be improved and made more "worthy" (Toole 1923):

"It is a common but mistaken impression that wild plants are inherently scraggly and unattractive in form. The fact is that if they are relieved of the intense competition that prevails in the wild and given room to develop in a congenial location, they quickly make luxurious growth, become compact and shapely and produce larger and better flowers in greater profusion.

Durand 1923 p. 6

Promotion of National and Regional Identity

This theme has several aspects. One is a desire to preserve a regional American heritage. Jensen expresses the idea that the natural environment of the midwestern United States produced unique and desirable cultural characteristics and that it should be turned to for "new inspiration, for freshness, for vigor, and strength of mind" (p. 146):

"Few who have been born and bred on the prairies are happy amongst the hills, with the vision shut in, and deprived of the beauty and expanse of the far distant

horizon. Its influence on the imagination and the character of the prairie man and woman is already evident, whether in arts, in poetry, in politics, or in masters of industry, and one cannot foretell the growth of intellect due to the character molding by the prairie landscape. Masters like Louis Sullivan, Frank L. Wright, Walter Griffin, Vachel Lindsay and Carl Sandburg are all of mid-America growth."

Jensen 1927 p. 130

A second aspect is a kind of American "nativism" and/or "chauvinism" based on reaction to our involvement in World War I. The title of two works from this period, one a book (Roberts and Rehmann 1929) and the second an article (Wilder 1919), is "American Plants for American Gardens". This phrase aptly describes the nativism and chauvinism that formed the basis of the arguments used by several authors to promote natural landscaping. "Nativism" means the idea of protecting the interest of native inhabitants against those of immigrants, "chauvinism" is the exhibition of zealous patriotism:

". . . many who give honored space to the splendid phloxes, the soft-toned physostegias, gayfeathers, and Michaelmas daisies, the evening primroses, lungworts, heucheras, mallows, penstemons, shooting stars, and many more of our established garden favorites, have no notion that they are entertaining good Americans who, but a short while since, have nodded their greetings from roadsides and meadows in various sections of our homeland."

Wilder 1919 p. 39

"Perhaps now that we are experiencing a better appreciation of things American than we have in the past, patriotism may incline us to wish to know more about our native shrubs."

Toole 1923 p. 13

"No remarks about American plants would be in any way adequate without mention of the vast numbers of native shrubs that are worthy to be grown among the best of the foreigners."

Wilder 1919 p. 43

Spirituality

Several authors in the period express a profound emotional reaction to nature and the native species of which it is comprised. Several quote poetry, others philosophy; many describe scenes from nature in vivid terms. One of the dominant themes is that of spirituality. Two examples follow:

"How are wild flowers most truly appreciated? The real enjoyment of nature depends upon ourselves. As Emerson says, "Nature reflects the color of the spirit." Go to the woods, according to your temperament, either in groups, alone, or with some congenial companion. Go whenever the spirit moves, at any time of the year, and there will be something to delight you, if you give yourself to the spirit of the place."

Hottes 1925 p. 163

"We marvel at their (native plants) various forms and the fitness of each to carry out the purpose given it by the Creator. Flowers speak more to our hearts than to our minds and intelligence, and it is in this that we are particularly interested at the present. We have toward favorite flowers an almost human affection. They become a part of our lives and by association come to have a symbolic meaning to us that early man never knew. This animism of flowers is bound to grow even more rapidly in the future, and have its peculiar phases among different peoples. The age of flower nymphs and flower fairies is passing, but still we can find the presence of something not to be seen by the human eye."

Hamblin 1923 p. 87

Aesthetics

Aesthetics is also a way in which emotional reactions to native plants are discussed. All of the authors reviewed discussed this theme with two approaches being most common: 1) descriptions of the line, form, color, or texture of individual species and 2) descriptions of the effects achieved by the landscape as a whole (often expressed as “pictures”). For example, Hottes quotes naturalist Samuel Soville Jr:

“In the half-light I knelt in the soft pine-needles and studied long the hollow purple pink shell (of *Cypripedium acaule*), veined with crimson, set between two other tapering petals of greenish-purple, while a sepal of the same color curved overhead. The whole flower swayed between two large, curved, grooved leaves”.

Hottes 1919 p. 165

Roberts and Rehmann (1929) describe native trees of the maple-hemlock-beech community as follows:

“The hemlocks are tall evergreen trees with seal brown trunks, dropping branches and short flat needles. The maples are sturdy round-topped trees. Their trunks are furrowed and gray-brown, their strong branches are noticeably upright, their leaves are deeply lobed. The beeches are broad symmetrical trees. Their smooth trunks are steel gray, their horizontal branches are placed in widespread tiers, their slender buds and pointed leaves are arranged far apart on spray-like stems.”

Roberts and Rehmann 1929 p. 57

Herbert Durand (1923) in describing the approach one should take in establishing a natural garden writes:

“The natural features of the place—such as the contours of the ground, the distant outlooks, the sky lines, desirable indigenous trees and shrubs—should be scrupulously preserved, so that by embellishing them and by guiding and encouraging Nature in their development, a series of delightful pictures will be created that are faithfully expressive of that simplicity, refinement and endless variety of form and color which characterize our American scenery.”

Durand 1923 pp. 3-4

Jens Jensen, whose work we will be discussing in some detail below, often referred to the color of natural scenery which he tried to emulate in his designs:

“Those who have seen the rim of the oak forest, festooned with the delicate pink of the crab apple blossom, entwined in the silver and rosy buds of the oak, against the blue sky of May, must have been inspired by their color composition—a symphony of colors, so to speak.”

Jensen 1927 p. 130

These visual values of nature were apparently a strong selling point for natural landscaping.

All of these themes have been echoed in modern times. Two new ideas have emerged in the writings of recent natural landscaping advocates. The first is that of energy and resource conservation (Morrison 1981). The second is a phenomenological approach that explores how humans are in their comportment towards involvement in the natural world. The phenomenon of “dwelling as a coming-into-nearness” with the natural world is grounded in Heideggerian phenomenology and advocated by Dieckmann (1988a) among others.

Prairie-Inspired Designs of Jens Jensen, Darrel Morrison, and John Dieckmann

The diverse prairie designs and writings of three landscape architects, Jens Jensen, Darrel Morrison, and John Dieckmann, illustrate the way in which different assumptions about the nature of “prairie”, and different emphases on the themes discussed above result in very different plantings. These assumptions and emphases were influenced in turn by the uses for which the sites were designed, plant material availability, the sophistication of knowledge about species requirements, and the cultural context in which these individuals worked. These three designers were selected because of an intellectual and, in some cases, a direct connection between them, and because they worked or are working in the upper Midwest.

Jensen, Morrison, and Dieckmann have several things in common in their approaches to prairie design. Most importantly: 1) they view the prairie as a community (as a whole) and not simply as a source of interesting plant materials; 2) they are motivated to create plantings for the benefit of people and the human spirit, not only to preserve species; and 3) there is more to the plantings than just copying nature, because the approach and process and the involvement and experience of people are paramount.

1. Jens Jensen

Jens Jensen designed public parks and gardens as well as private estates during the period 1888 to 1951. To Jensen, the spatial character of prairies (horizontal lines, flowing spaces) embodied the freedom of the human spirit:

“To many, the prairie country is monotonous and uninteresting, but to us who have lived with it most of our lives it shows great breadth and freedom that works upon the imagination in many ways.”

Jensen 1927 p. 130

In nature one could see God’s work:

“The landscape unadulterated by man is a finer thing than that which man calls his work. It has something of a spiritual nature that is beyond man’s ability. There is a mystery and a charm about it that leads one into a new realm of untold beauty, full of inspiration and a freshness and vigor that stimulates you to action. It is a different world—a world not of our making, that opens visions of depth and grandeur, with endless themes and forms for study, for spiritual enjoyment, and for a richer and broader life.”

Jensen 1927 p. 129

Landscape architects, using native species, translate this “prairie spirit” into a form which can be enjoyed in a human setting:

“The real worth of the landscaper lies in his ability to give to humanity the blessings of nature’s spiritual values as they are interpreted in his Art. The field is boundless, and there is no need of importing from foreign shores.”

Jensen 1939 p. 2

“But in trying to make the garden natural, we must not make the mistake of copying Nature . . . Art idealizes; it is creative, and a reproduction is only a reproduction, no matter how fine and noble the model is. The landscape garden must have a dominant thought in it. To me, that feeling should be spiritual; it should be love for the great out-of-doors, for the world that God made.”

Jensen 1930b p. 169

The garden writer Wilhelm Miller describes Jensen's design for the Henry Ford Estate in Dearborn, Michigan as follows: "Of course

the garden does not attempt to reproduce literally the broad, treeless prairie. No garden can do that because it would require too great a scale. It merely embodies. The open part or lawn suggests the freedom and flatness of the prairie, the irregular border of trees suggests the woods that line the every river. . . . The case is analogous to program music. Beethoven in his "Pastoral Symphony" did not try to imitate a storm. Music cannot do that, but music can arouse in us the emotions we have during a storm."

Miller from Eaton 1964 p. 128

A similar approach can be seen in Jensen's design for Columbus Park, Chicago, Illinois, illustrated in Figure 1 and described in Table 1. Jensen did not use many true prairie species in this design, being mostly concerned with the placement of woody materials to create the open spaces that represented the freedom of the prairie in his conception. In part this may be a result of lack of knowledge about prairie grass cultivation, although Jensen was reputedly quite knowledgeable about native materials and also because this open space was designed for active use as a golf course. On the other hand, one could say that his attention was not on creating diversity; but on representing the spatial essence of the prairie.

Representational Planting Plan
Columbus Park (Southern Portion) Chicago, Illinois
Jens Jensen, Landscape Architect
Source: Jensen, J. 1939. *Siftings*

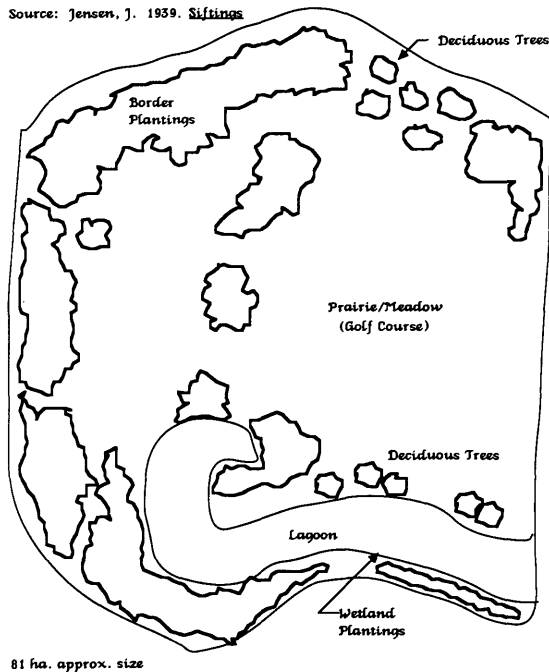


FIG 1. Representational planting plan for Columbus Park, Chicago, Illinois. Jens Jensen, Landscape Architect.

Table 1. Plantings¹ for Columbus Park, Jens Jensen, Landscape Architect.

Trees:	
<i>Acer saccharum</i>	Sugar Maple
<i>Fraxinus</i> sp.	Ash
<i>Prunus</i> sp.	Cherry
<i>Quercus</i> sp.	Oak
<i>Tilia</i> sp.	Linden
<i>Ulmus</i> sp.	Elm

Table 1. Continued.

Undergrowth Among the Trees:	
<i>Cornus racemosa</i>	Gray dogwood
<i>Hamamelis virginiana</i>	Witch hazel
<i>Viburnum lentago</i>	Sheepberry
<i>Viburnum</i> sp.	Viburnum
Border Plantings: Shrubs	
<i>Cornus racemosa</i>	Gray dogwood
<i>Cornus stolonifera</i>	Red dogwood
<i>Crataegus</i> sp.	Hawthorn
<i>Hamamelis virginiana</i>	Hazel
<i>Physocarpus opulifolius</i>	Ninebark
<i>Prunus americana</i>	Plum
<i>Prunus virginiana</i>	Chokecherry
<i>Pyrus</i> sp.	Crabapple
<i>Rosa</i> sp.	Prairie rose
<i>Viburnum lentago</i>	Sheepberry
Prairie Flowers in Open Spaces Bordering Meadow:	
<i>Aster</i> sp.	Asters
<i>Dodecatheon meadia</i>	Shooting star
<i>Echinacea</i> sp. or <i>Ratibida</i> sp.	Coneflower
<i>Phlox</i> sp.	Phlox
<i>Solidago</i> sp.	Goldenrod
Understory:	
<i>Anemone</i> sp.	Anemones
<i>Claytonia virginica</i>	Spring beauty
<i>Erythronium</i>	Dogtooth violet
<i>Polemonium reptans</i>	Jacob's ladder
<i>Trillium</i> sp.	Trillium
<i>Viola</i> sp.	Violet
Wetland Plantings:	
<i>Cornus stolonifera</i>	Red dogwood
<i>Hibiscus palustris</i>	Rose mallow
<i>Juncus</i> sp.	Rushes
<i>Nuphar</i> sp. or <i>Nymphaea</i> sp.	Water Lily
<i>Ribes</i> sp.	Yellow currant
<i>Sagittaria</i> sp.	Arrowhead
<i>Sambucus</i> sp.	Elderberry
<i>Staphylea trifolia</i>	Bladdernut
<i>Typha</i> sp.	Cattail

¹From Jensen (1930a). In this text, species are listed by common name only. Identification of botanical taxa is based on the authors' knowledge of Jensen's work. See Great Plains Flora Association (1986) for appropriate authorities for the scientific names.

2. Darrel Morrison

Darrel Morrison, like Jensen, was interested in embodying an idea of prairie in design. His concept emphasizes aesthetics, what he calls the "visual essence" of prairie:

"... there is not, and indeed there cannot be a single 'recipe' for design and implementation of a successful prairie planting. . . . Some may be aesthetically-oriented with a primary goal of recreating the 'visual essence' of prairie with tall grasses waving in the wind, interspersed with contrasting colors and textures of prairie forbs.

Morrison 1981 p. 11

Morrison worked with prairie in the 1970s and early 1980s, designing home grounds and industrial sites. He was highly influenced by Jensen's designs and can be said to have taken Jensen's spatial concept and expanded on it by concentrating on the species composition of the open space.

Morrison's designs consist of selected groupings of species chosen to represent typical botanical compositions and what he understood to be the ecological structure of prairie, combined to create characteristic "scenes". These scenes are adapted to the purpose at hand. Plantings meant to be viewed at a distance are handled differently from more garden-like arrangements meant to be viewed up close (Howell and Morrison 1979).

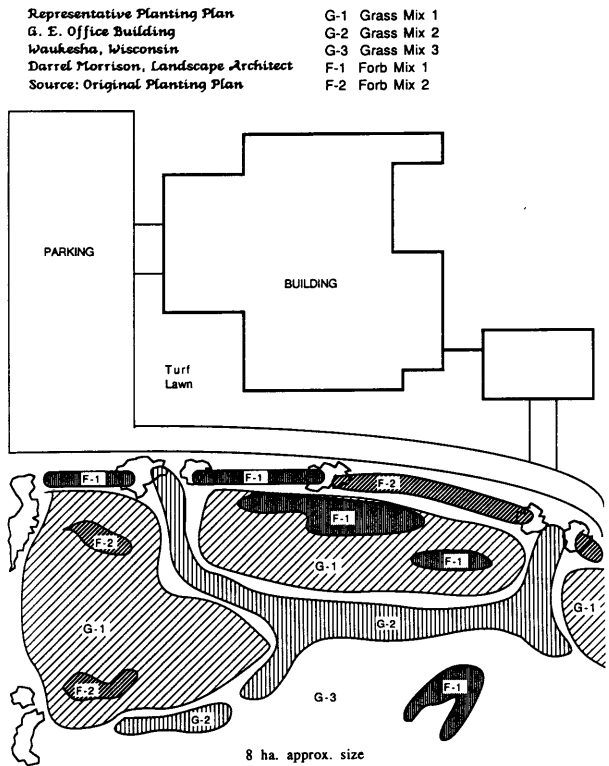


FIG 2. Representational planting plan for General Electric Office Building, Waukesha, Wisconsin. Darrel G. Morrison, Landscape Architect.

Table 2. Plantings¹ for General Electric Company, Darrel Morrison, Landscape Architect.

Grass Mixture 1:	
<i>Bouteloua curtipendula</i>	Sideoats grama 10%
<i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i>	Little bluestem 75%
<i>Stipa spartea</i>	Needlegrass 15%
Grass Mixture 2:	
<i>Bouteloua curtipendula</i>	Sideoats grama 10%
<i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i>	Little bluestem 70%
<i>Sporobolus heterolepis</i>	Prairie dropseed 10%
<i>Stipa sparea</i>	Needlegrass 10%
Grass Mixture 3:	
<i>Andropogon gerardii</i>	Big bluestem 40%
<i>Panicum virgatum</i>	Switchgrass 15%
<i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i>	Little bluestem 15%
<i>Sorghastrum nutans</i>	Indiangrass 30%
Forb Mixture 1:	
<i>Amorpha canescens</i>	Leadplant
<i>Baptisia leucantha</i>	White false indigo
<i>Echinacea pallida</i>	Pale purple coneflower
<i>Echinacea purpurea</i>	Purple coneflower
<i>Liatris aspera</i>	Rough blazingstar
<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>	Black-eyed susan
<i>Solidago rigida</i>	Stiff goldenrod
<i>Solidago speciosa</i>	Showy goldenrod
Forb Mixture 2:	
<i>Amorpha canescens</i>	Leadplant
<i>Lespedeza capitata</i>	Prairie bush-clover
<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>	Bergamot
<i>Ratibida pinnata</i>	Gray-headed coneflower
<i>Solidago rigida</i>	Stiff goldenrod

¹From original planting plan. See Great Plains Flora Association (1986) for proper authorities for scientific names.

Figure 2 and Table 2 illustrate one of Morrison's early prairie projects. The General Electric planting is meant to be viewed at a distance and represents a prairie scene in which color and texture contrasts created by the drifts of forbs among the grass background predominate. Morrison describes his approach as follows:

“Within the general category of species selection, an important consideration in ultimately achieving the appearance of prairie is the proportion of grasses to forbs. In the prairie stands studied by Weaver, he found grasses comprising 95 percent of the vegetational cover (Weaver, 1968). The importance of grasses is not only in quantitative terms, but also in terms of visual character of prairies. The linear form of the grass blades . . . , unify it visually. Further, this screen of narrow, predominantly vertical lines ‘filters’ the sometimes blatant flower colors and modifies the effect of coarse-textured leaves. Extending a bit further into the subjective evaluation of the effects of grasses on prairie aesthetics, there is the important element of movement displayed by them. This quality, perhaps more than any other is critical in imparting a ‘prairie spirit’ to a landscape (Morrison 1980).”

Morrison 1981 p. 12

“A visual analysis of natural prairies from a distance often reveals a degree of ‘zoning’ of species, seen as ‘bands’ or ‘drifts’ of different colors or textures, blending or grading one into the next. Typically, these are not sharply defined, but in some cases, they may be quite apparent.”

Morrison 1981 p. 12

The results are generally simplifications of natural stands, especially for plantings several acres in extent. To some extent this effect was part of Morrison's aesthetic concept, but it was probably also influenced by the pragmatics of working in an era in which large quantities of seed (especially of forbs) and large numbers of species were not available.

3. John Diekelmann

John Diekelmann was a student of Morrison and a reader of Jensen. His prairie designs have been implemented in the 1980s and involve residential sites. In landscaping with prairie, Diekelmann seeks to provide complex intellectual and emotional stimulations. He is concerned with “the how” or the ways in which one approaches the landscape. Thus the lived experiences of his clients—the way in which they dwell in his planned landscapes—as well as the practice of “being-in-the-world” (Heidegger 1962) as a landscape architect are integral parts of his approach. His work and writings are influenced by the German philosopher, Martin Heidegger, among others. Diekelmann describes the practice of landscape architecture as a return to a phenomenological understanding of the indigenous landscape as well as landscape architectural practices. He sets his conceptions apart from several of the themes advocated by others.

“If we look for a meaning in Nature, we could say that it has intrinsic worth in and of itself, independent of our subjugating it.”

Diekelmann 1988b p. 42

“Let me then submit my interpretation of what natural landscape is taken to be and what it can be and why. For the most part natural landscaping is not:

1. The planting of weeds . . .
2. Neglect . . .
3. Chaotic. There is a dynamic order to ecosystems that we are only beginning to understand.
4. Jingoistic. Plants indigenous to a place are encouraged to inhabit it not because they are ‘Americans’ but because they have an intrinsic right to exist independently of us.
5. Subjugation. Plantings are controlled, but they are controlled through the understanding of the intrinsic Being of beings in relation to human culture.”

Diekelmann 1988a pp. 6-7

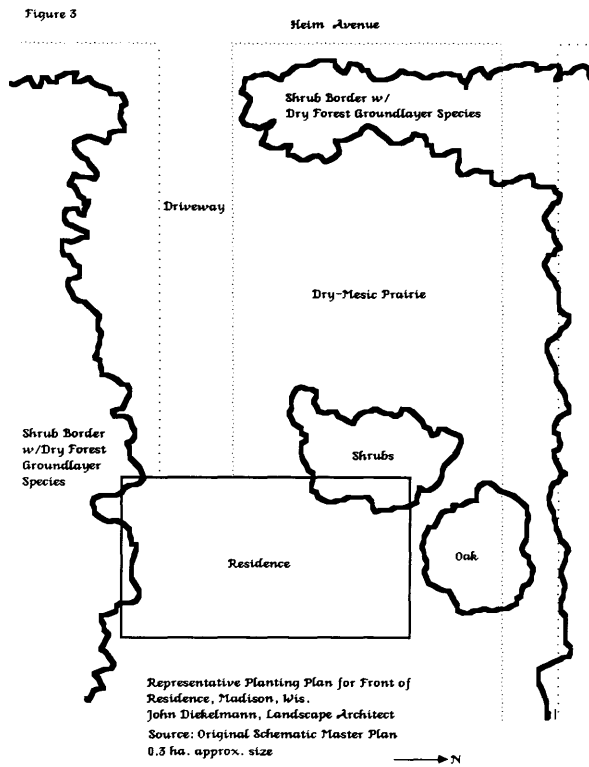


FIG 3. Representational planting plan for residence, Madison, Wisconsin. John Diekelmann, Landscape Architect.

Table 3. Plantings¹ for residence in Madison, Wisconsin, John Diekelmann, Landscape Architect.

Dominant:

<i>Rosa blanda</i>	Thornless rose
<i>Sorghastrum nutans</i>	Indiangrass

Common:

<i>Asclepias syriaca</i>	Common milkweed
<i>Cacalia atriplicifolia</i>	Indian plantain
<i>Carex pensylvanica</i>	Pennsylvania sedge
<i>Coreopsis palmata</i>	Stiff coreopsis
<i>Dodecatheon meadia</i>	Shooting star
<i>Erigeron</i> sp.	Fleabane
<i>Erythronium albidum</i>	White trout-lily
<i>Eupatorium rugosum</i>	White snakeroot
<i>Euphorbia corollata</i>	Flowering spurge
<i>Geranium maculatum</i>	Wild geranium
<i>Helianthus divaricatus</i>	Woodland sunflower
<i>Hysterix patula</i>	Bottle-brush grass
<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>	Bergamot
<i>Potentilla simplex</i>	Old-field cinquefoil
<i>Ratibida pinnata</i>	Gray-headed coneflower
<i>Smilacina stellata</i>	Starry false soloman's seal
<i>Solidago altissima</i>	Tall goldenrod
<i>Solidago canadensis</i>	Canada goldenrod
<i>Solidago rigida</i>	Hard-leaved goldenrod
<i>Tradescantia ohioensis</i>	Spiderwort
<i>Veronicastrum virginicum</i>	Culver's root

Occasional (ten stems or less):

<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Yarrow
<i>Agrimonia</i> sp.	Agrimony
<i>Ambrosia psilostachya</i>	Western ragweed
<i>Amphicarpa bracteata</i>	Hog peanut
<i>Andropogon gerardii</i>	Big bluestem
<i>Anemone patens</i>	Pasqueflower
<i>Anemone quinquefolia</i>	Wood anemone

Table 3. Continued

<i>Anemone virginiana</i>	Thimbleweed
<i>Anemonella thalictroides</i>	Rue-anemone
<i>Apocynum androsaemifolium</i>	Spreading dogbane
<i>Aquilegia canadensis</i>	Columbine
<i>Arisaema triphyllum</i>	Jack-in-the-pulpit
<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	Butterflyweed
<i>Aster ericoides</i>	Heath aster
<i>Aster laevis</i>	Smooth aster
<i>Aster lateriflorus</i>	Calico aster
<i>Aster novae-angliae</i>	New England aster
<i>Aster pilosus</i>	Frost aster
<i>Aster simplex</i>	Panicled aster
<i>Baptisia leuchophaea</i>	Cream wild indigo
<i>Bouteloua curtipendula</i>	Sideoats grama
<i>Bromus kalmii</i>	Brome grass
<i>Ceanothus americanus</i>	New Jersey tea
<i>Convolvulus sepium</i>	Hedge bindweed
<i>Desmodium canadense</i>	Showy tick-trefoil
<i>Desmodium glutinosum</i>	Pointed-leaved tick-trefoil
<i>Desmodium illinoense</i>	Illinois tick-trefoil
<i>Echinacea pallida</i>	Pale purple coneflower
<i>Elymus canadensis</i>	Canada wild rye
<i>Eryngium yuccifolium</i>	Rattlesnake master
<i>Galium boreale</i>	Northern bedstraw
<i>Gentiana quinquefolia</i>	Stiff gentian
<i>Geum triflorum</i>	Prairie smoke
<i>Heliopsis helianthoides</i>	Ox-eye sunflower
<i>Heuchera richardsonii</i>	Alum root
<i>Liatrus aspera</i>	Rough blazingstar
<i>Oenothera biennis</i>	Evening primrose
<i>Oxalis violacea</i>	Violet wood-sorrel
<i>Panicum</i> sp.	Panic grass
<i>Parthenocissus</i> sp.	Virginia creeper
<i>Pedicularis canadensis</i>	Lousewort
<i>Phlox pilosa</i>	Downy phlox
<i>Polygonatum canaliculatum</i>	Great solomon's seal
<i>Quercus macrocarpa</i>	Bur oak (saplings)
<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>	Black-eyed susans
<i>Sanguinaria canadensis</i>	Bloodroot
<i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i>	Little bluestem
<i>Silene stellata</i>	Starry campion
<i>Silphium laciniatum</i>	Compass plant
<i>Smilacina racemosa</i>	False solomon's seal
<i>Smilax lasioneura</i>	Greenbriar
<i>Solidago juncea</i>	Early goldenrod
<i>Solidago speciosa</i>	Showy goldenrod
<i>Thalictrum dasycarpum</i>	Purple meadow-rue
<i>Uvularia grandiflora</i>	Large-flowered bellwort
<i>Verbena urticifolia</i>	White vervain
<i>Vitis</i> sp.	Wild grape
<i>Zizia aptera</i>	Heart-leaved golden alexander
<i>Zizia aurea</i>	Golden alexander

¹See the Great Plains Flora Association (1986) for authorities for scientific names.

An example of a portion of one of Diekelmann's residential designs is illustrated by Figure 3 and Table 3. As Diekelmann (1988b) expresses it, his prairie designs:

1. Carefully match plants to environmental conditions.
2. Bring together as many species that are found in prairies as possible, as it is in diversity that the essence and therefore the meaning of the community lies.
3. Strictly within this framework (points 1 and 2), use a variety of studied visual relationships to highlight certain areas when possible or desirable because of the site's use.
4. Work with natural processes even if they change the composition, but allow for intervention to add propagules or remove exotics.

Diekelmann's approach considers traditional visual aspects of aesthetics, but also goes beyond this to stress the "experience" of being in a plant community. To encourage "dialogue" with the planted landscape in a way that creates new meanings for people is seen by Diekelmann as a better approach to landscaping than other expressions that symbolize human dominance. Considering the prairie landscapes of Jensen, Morrison, and Diekelmann as a group, several comparisons can be made. First, there appears to be an increased understanding of the "science" of prairies moving chronologically from Jensen to Morrison to Diekelmann. This is in large part because of advances in the field of ecology over this time. Second, the designs exhibit a wide range of botanical complexity. Jensen and Morrison achieve their effects with relatively few species (Tables 1 and 2). It is not unusual for Diekelmann, on the other hand, to advocate the inclusion of 50 or more species even on a small home site. Third, the designs show a range of obvious control by people. Some of Jensen's later designs, such as Springfield Gardens, and some of those by Diekelmann appear superficially to be out of control and without order. Plants are placed seemingly at random and left to reproduce where they will, rather than being confined to designated, clearly defined often "balanced" locations. These designs make some people uncomfortable.

In a sense, the works of these designers all reflect a search for "order" which evolved differently for each of them. Jensen was concerned with spirituality, seemingly in a reaction to what he perceived as the materialism of his day (Jensen 1921). Morrison was in part reacting to the environmental crisis of the 1970s in which energy and other natural resources were perceived as running out. Diekelmann was reacting to what he perceived as the increasing attempts of people to control nature and to the crisis of our increasing alienation from the biosphere.

If one wanted to characterize the works of each of these designers, one could say that Jensen's are meant to evoke the relationship of people to a higher power; Morrison's are concerned with the visual impact of prairie and the feelings this evokes; and Diekelmann's are meant to re-involve us with the flux and mystery of our relationship with indigenous landscapes.

CONCLUSIONS

Landscaping with indigenous plants is a means of expressing our relationships with the natural world. Advocates over many years have shared a belief in the value of natural elements in day to day life. However, notions as to what this "value" is are quite varied, and have led to different activities ranging from attempts to use "improved" natives in traditional garden settings to preserving intact communities.

The prairie-inspired designs of Jensen, Morrison, and Diekelmann, illustrate this concept. Their very different creations are studied evocations of individual reactions to experiencing prairie. They reflect the practices of the designers and the cultural contexts in which they arose. They are "successful" because they each have an underlying framework that can be communicated to those experiencing the plantings.

It is important that all of us who design with prairie adopt and explain our own "frameworks" so that our creations, too, can begin to communicate particular concepts. In this way, natural landscaping can begin to be seen, not just as a means of assembling indigenous plants in which any arrangement or grouping goes (a criticism that we have heard voiced on several occasions by the public and landscape professionals alike), but as sophisticated design expressions.

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