Wheeler’s current research addresses the development of the architectural working drawing in 19th and 20th-century Britain and the US. Architects design buildings, but they make drawings, and the working drawing in particular is at the heart of architectural production. Working drawings prescribe the process as well as the product of the architects’ imaginations. Curiously, the working drawing has received little scholarly attention, and it has changed dramatically over the course of the last century and a half, with current technologies pushing their production in ever new directions. This book will look at the architectural working drawing both historically and in terms of its theoretical implications. While the general outline is chronological, the book will also address specific themes that transcend historical periods and styles including: graphic standards, organization of information, relationship to specifications, changes in technology, and how the drawing defines the position of the architect.

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Victorian Perceptions of Renaissance Architecture (Ashgate 2014) examines the conflicting characterizations of the Renaissance in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The book reveals how the writing of architectural history in Britain was intimately tied to the rise of the professional architect and the formalization of architectural education. Drawing on a broad range of evidence, including literary texts, professional journals, university curricula, and census records, Victorian Perceptions reframes works by seminal authors such as John Ruskin, Walter Pater, John Addington Symonds, and Geoffrey Scott alongside those by architect-authors such as William J. Anderson and Reginald Blomfield within contemporary architectural debates.

“This volume is of particular relevance today as the Italian Renaissance continues to influence young architects, many of whom spend a semester studying a canon of masterworks in Italy.”

Wheeler has also just published the article, “‘They cannot choose but look.’ Ruskin and Emotional Architecture,” in the Journal of 19th-C Interdisciplinary Studies. In the article she investigates the importance of emotions in architecture in the writings of John Ruskin, Robert Kerr, and George Aitchison. Kerr, who typically disagreed with Ruskin’s ideas, wrote the critic’s obituary for the R.I.B.A.J., cited the critic’s “emotional authority.” How feeling can contribute to architectural experience and what feelings might be appropriate to convey was at the center of these men’s works.

Katherine Wheeler teaches courses in Architectural History, Theory, and Design. Her specialty is 19th and 20th-C architectural history in Britain and the US. Her recent book Victorian Perceptions of Renaissance Architecture addresses the intersection of architectural practice, pedagogy, and the writing of history. Her current work is on the development of the architectural working drawing.