Known by a variety of names in Louisiana, the shotgun house was first formally named by Fred B. Kniffen in his 1936 article on Louisiana house types. Since the pioneering work of John Michael Vlach in the 1970s, the shotgun house in New Orleans has functioned as a bellwether of political commitment to entire subcultures, including their associated social and racial predispositions. Theories of the origins of the shotgun lie deeply enmeshed in larger cultural debates on race and authority in the city. Some see the shotgun as a response to constrained urban lots while others see the building type inextricably linked to the city’s substantial nineteenth-century African American population. These biases lay relatively submerged and unstated, but with the receding flood waters of Hurricane Katrina, when roughly 40 percent of the city’s housing stock was severely damaged or destroyed, the competition between groups and classes for scarce resources and limited funding has brought these contests to the fore (Figure 1). In New Orleans, it seems everyone has a well-defined idea about what should be preserved and what should be bulldozed. Irreconcilable theories of the origins and value of the shotgun house go to the very heart of the question of what is to be saved. Entire sections of the city are at stake (Figure 2).
In New Orleans, the fate of thousands of vernacular houses rests on decisions made by planning commissions and recovery agencies and on their conceptions of the relative value of specific historic architectural types and neighborhoods. As the nation has discovered, Katrina recovery funding has been difficult to acquire. Many thousands of homeowners who lost their homes have gone without meaningful support. Large sections of the city remain almost entirely abandoned thirty-four months after the storm (Figure 3). A sizable proportion of the abandoned and endangered houses are shotgun related, but it is other building types and older neighborhoods considered to be more viable or more culturally significant that are being given priority.

A series of professional, city-sponsored redevelopment plans have favored placing resources into the more highly elevated (and less damaged) sections of the city while transforming heavily flooded residential areas such as the Seventh and the Ninth Wards into depopulated green zones. New Urbanist planning is often touted as the best hope for salvation of the city. The Bring Back New Orleans Commission offered a decisively New Urbanist plan for the city, which included the essential elimination of the majority of the existing housing stock of the “shotgun crescent” of New Orleans. The more recent “Unified New Orleans Plan” suggests that those neighborhoods where a “cluster of residents” rebuild for themselves should be supported by public funds. Thinner repopulated areas (including much of the nineteenth-century shotgun crescent) would be abandoned (Figure 4). So draconian have been these plans, and so biased in the direction of removal rather than recovery, that an alternate plan, “The People’s Plan,” was sponsored by the national NGO (nongovernmental organization) Acorn, three American universities, and the National Science Foundation. It addresses the problems of recovery in Planning Districts 7 and 8 (the Seventh through the Ninth Wards), and particularly the Ninth Ward.

Those sections of Orleans Parish most severely affected by flood waters immediately after Katrina were also the areas where the highest percentage of African American residents lived. They are also the areas with the lowest percentages of recovery and of returned families, as measured by voter turnout in the 2006 mayoral election and by mail delivery figures. By one estimate, “as many as 130,000 black residents still live outside the city.” It is not surprising that there is widespread belief among the city’s African American residents that they have been disproportionately impacted. “Political forces are continuing in the direction of New Orleans not being rebuilt.” As one Associated Press dispatch presciently warned, “Hurricane Katrina [may] prove to be the biggest, most brutal urban—

Figure 2. Map of flood depths in Orleans Parish after Katrina, based on Lidar data supplied by the CADGIS Laboratory, drafted by Mary Lee Eggart for the Fred B. Kniffen Cultural Resources Lab, Louisiana State University.

Figure 3. Wrecked shotgun in the Lower Ninth Ward, December 2005. Photograph by author.
narrative is that the shotgun is best explained as an adaptation to narrow urban lots of the early nineteenth century. As first articulated by architectural historian Sam Wilson Jr., the shotgun house finds its genesis as a local invention of the 1830s. Wilson’s landscape-determinist theory has become the accepted account for shotgun origins in New Orleans, but the position requires scrutiny.

Wilson and numerous architectural historians who follow him claim that the shotgun was created as an adaptation to the peculiar nature of lot layout in the French Quarter and the expanding Creole faubourgs (new satellite neighborhoods) that surrounded it. As laid out by Second Colonial Engineer, Adrien de Pauger, in 1722, the standard colonial urban lot was sixty French feet wide (63 feet 11 inches English measure) by 120 (127 feet 10.5 inches E.M.). Two “key lots” in each square were 150 French feet deep (roughly 159 feet E.M.) by the standard sixty-foot width (Figure 5a). French inheritance laws required that each child receive an equal division of the inheritance, so by the early nineteenth century, many of these lots had been subdivided into increasingly narrow linear strips, thirty feet (32 feet E.M.), or even twenty or fifteen feet wide, but still often 120 or 150 feet deep (Figures 5b and 5c).

Adapted to the narrow lots of New Orleans, “Creole cottages” dominated the streetscapes of working class neighborhoods from the 1790s, their roof ridges running parallel to the street (Figure 6). In the last decade of the eighteenth century, buildings with roof ridges running perpendicular to the street were generally limited to rear service structures. With the economic development and rapid expansion of the city between 1810 and 1840, many working class people prospered, and new generations of taller Creole cottages were developed (Figure 7). Their spatial limitations were still problematic, so residents continued to experiment with other ways of expanding their living spaces within the confines of the narrow lots.

The Civil War contributed to the breakup of the large extended family. In its wake, the growth of the Savings and Loan Industry stimulated a high demand for relatively inexpensive...
single-family houses. Artisan and working class families could now afford to purchase linear wooden houses seventy to ninety feet long (four to six rooms). “The [Creole Cottage] type proliferated throughout the city for a half century until it began to evolve into the shotgun about 1845.” Because their roofs sloped toward the front and back, it was difficult and expensive to expand Creole houses linearly towards the rear. A three-room, sixty-foot-deep Creole house was about all a one-and-a-half-story-tall gabled roof would cover (Figure 7). At this point, according to Wilson, developers and builders of speculative housing in New Orleans simply reoriented the roof ridge of the traditional working class Creole house, aligning it with the long dimension of the narrow urban lot and creating the shotgun house. This provided a form that could be more conveniently expanded to any desired length within the confines of the restrictive geometric units of these French urban lots. Those who believe that the shotgun is largely a late-nineteenth-century addition to the cultural landscape generally tend to undervalue its significance when considered against other typical New Orleans houses, for example Greek Revival mansions, Creole cottages and porte-cochère townhouses.

In 1975, John Michael Vlach offered an alternative view. His dissertation described the findings of a year of comparative study on the shotgun-type houses of Louisiana, Haiti, and the Yoruba culture of southwest Nigeria. Vlach argued that the shotgun house of Louisiana found its origins in a small rural Haitian folk cottage called the “ti kay” or small house. It probably originated as a rural African maroon house type in the mountains of central Hispaniola in early colonial times. Vlach described it as a syncretism of an indigenous Arawak house combined with West African dimensional and proportional preferences and (eventually) French building technologies and European materials. One byproduct of the diasporas of the Haitian revolution (1791–1803) was that this house was reconstituted by Haitian
Figure 6. An 1820s-style Creole cottage with abat vent and architrave, St. Peter Street, Vieux Carré, by Charles de Armas, June 4, 1862. Courtesy New Orleans Notarial Archives (006.114); detail.

Figure 7. A 1830s style 1 1/2 story, two-bay Creole cottage, 830 N. Rampart Street, by Childe Hassam (1927). The buildings are extant. Lithograph courtesy Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

Figure 8. A (circa 1830) shotgun maisonette, with abat vent, 616-618 Marigny Street, Faubourg Marigny, by Charles de Armas, May 4, 1860. Courtesy New Orleans Notarial Archives (065.003), detail. The lot is over 54 feet wide, the house about 21 1/2 feet wide. The mirror-image lot behind contains a 33-foot-wide classic four-room Creole cottage with room to spare. Both lots have carriageways providing access to the sheds and stables at the rear.

builders in New Orleans between circa 1810 and 1840 (Figure 8).

Vlach pointed out that shotgun-like house forms were abundant in Haiti. Sources unavailable to him at the time of his study demonstrate their prevalence in the towns of the French colony of Saint-Domingue since early in the eighteenth century. A watercolor painting of the town of Les Cayes on the southwestern peninsula circa 1729, by a French sailor, clearly shows no fewer than twelve shotgun-like houses and what appears to be a church and a public building in the shotgun form (Figure 9). Shotguns are also depicted on plantations from this period. Based on its current geographical distribution, the shotgun was dominant in the central and southern sections of the French colony and abundant in the center of the colonial city of Gonaïves, in northwestern Haiti.

In several waves, substantially more than twelve thousand refugees from the Haitian Revolution arrived in Louisiana between 1791 and 1809. They included roughly equal proportions of colonial French, African slaves, and affranchis (free people of color, called gens de couleur libres in New Orleans). This latter, largely mulatto, population had become a petit bourgeois class in Saint-Domingue. Men worked as planters, as small businessmen, and as artisans—carpenters, house builders, cabinetmakers, carriage makers, masons, barbers, upholsterers, and real estate brokers. They were renowned tailors and shoemakers. At the end of colonial rule (1803) the city of New Orleans had 1,335 free people of color out of a total population of 8,050 (the colony of Saint-Domingue had well over 28,000). But in the year 1809, after Spain expelled Haitian refugees from Cuba, at least 9,059 French-speaking refugees arrived in New Orleans. Of these, 3,102 were free people of color, more than doubling the total free colored population of the city (to 4,950). The total city population is now 17,242. These refugees were to have a substantial impact on the culture and vernacular architecture of the city.11

During the 1790s and the first decade of the nineteenth century, the free colored Creole population of New Orleans settled in certain peripheral areas. Creole neighborhoods included the northern corner of the French Quarter (not completely settled before circa 1820), Faubourg Tremé and the Bayou Road (the Esplanade Ridge-Tremé-Lafitte neighborhood), and Faubourg Marigny (being laid out for residential settlement
circa 1805. These became the natural settlement zones for French- and French Creole–speaking Haitian refugees between circa 1800 and 1812."

Suddenly, pressure on the housing stock of New Orleans was enormous. In 1809–10 the city had doubled its population in a single year; there was no place to put all of the new refugees. They were crowded into attics and outbuildings. “The women did sewing, embroidery, dress-making, millinery, living or lodging, not in the new brick houses, but in the little two-room cottages opposite or alongside.” The refugees built a temporary fringe housing in and around the edges of the expanding city. Among the house types they constructed were small, inexpensive modules similar to those they had known in the countryside and plantations of Saint-Domingue.

While Vlach’s “early genesis” hypothesis is not supported by sufficient data to permit a claim of clear proof, it is buttressed by growing evidence that suggests that houses with shotgun type floor plans were commonplace in the 1805–40 period. At the same time, Creole cottages were strongly preferred by French Creoles, both white and black, before circa 1840. Timing is an important factor in determining the plausibility of either of the two prevailing narratives explaining the shotgun house. Architectural historians Malcolm Heard, Sally Reeves, Ellen Weiss, and Karen Kingsley find little hard evidence of shotgun houses at all before the Antebellum period. “The oldest shotguns are recorded in New Orleans by 1840.” Weiss states, “Shotguns seem to have appeared in New Orleans by the 1840s.” By the 1870s, “New Orleans builders even figured out how to shape the city’s vernacular house types: the shotgun, the double shotgun, and the latter’s cousin, the two-story party-wall double, and make them speak to the [Queen Anne] taste of the time.” In 1997, architectural historian Malcolm Heard argued:

A handful of French Quarter cottages one room wide and several rooms deep . . . survive from the first decades of the nineteenth century. . . . These have been used to support a theory proposed by John Michael Vlach that the New Orleans shotgun house evolved from a house found among the Yoruba people of west Africa, having been transmuted and brought here by refugees from the slave uprisings in the Caribbean in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This theory may be plausible in the case of the early cottages. It was decades later however (relatively late in the nineteenth century) when the shotgun as we know it came to be built in large numbers in New Orleans. To think that this movement took its remarkable energy from a fairly uncommon type of

Figure 9. Les Cayes, Saint-Domingue (Haiti), circa 1729, showing many shotgun-style houses. Detail of a watercolor painting by Pierre Caillot. Courtesy Historic New Orleans Collection (2005.11).
cottage built decades earlier seems too much of a stretch. . . . More likely, the shotgun developed as a relatively inexpensive solution to building separate houses on New Orleans’ narrow lots.14

One difficulty with Wilson’s Creole cottage–genesis theory is that if before 1840 there were comparatively few single-wide linear cottages to act as models for the expanded shotgun (Figure 8), there were also comparatively few single-room-wide Creole cottages, as revealed by surviving examples, contemporary poster sale images of the New Orleans Notarial Archives, and by the 1876 Sanborn maps (Figure 7). Given the roughly equal proportion of early single-story linear cottages and one-and-one-half-story gabled Creole cottages in the Creole faubourg, the linear cottage is an obviously closer fit as a prototype.

The significance of Wilson’s late-genesis theory, if valid, would be that Vlach’s proposed diffusion of the shotgun from the French colony of Saint-Domingue is eviscerated. If shotguns were invented or massively reinvented in the Antebellum period, blacks and free people of color played a relatively insignificant creative role in the development of this, the overwhelmingly dominant vernacular house type in the city of New Orleans.15

The issue of the origins of the shotgun house has been raised in several kinds of post-Katrina public forums in New Orleans, with different groups either denying or defending the Caribbean and African connection.16 Recent publications by anthropologists and representatives of African American shotgun preservation groups generally support Vlach’s position, while the architecture historians of New Orleans remind us with increasing vigor that Vlach and his followers have offered insufficient evidence to provide a convincing argument that shotguns represent an invaluable historical resource.17 If Vlach’s early genesis theory is not supported by hard evidence, and shotguns are a contribution of Antebellum period developers, the Afro-Creole contribution to the historic cultural landscapes of New Orleans is less central to questions of historic preservation and the politics of recovery.

While New Orleans is a city where “interest groups are sharply factionalized along racial lines,” members of the white preservation community have written in some detail on the architectural contributions of Africans and Afro-Creoles.18 The preservationists are a comparatively small and close-knit subculture, sharing ideas and cooperating closely with prominent preservation-oriented associations such as the Preservation Resource Center, the Historic New Orleans Collection, local neighborhood development associations, and community-oriented projects of the Tulane University School of Architecture. Foremost among the preservationist community is the influential Friends of the Cabildo group, who are individually or jointly the authors of much of the significant literature on the architecture of New Orleans and its preservation. As such, they have provided the master narratives for popular conceptions surrounding New Orleans’s unique vernacular architecture.

One measure of the preservation community’s concern for the architectural significance of the shotgun house is the fact that, out of the 147 specific Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) projects that have been completed and posted online for Orleans Parish, only eight woefully incomplete surveys deal with the Shotgun Family of house types. This is despite the overwhelming preponderance of this historic house type in the city. By my rough estimate approximately 60 percent of the housing stock of Orleans Parish falls within the Shotgun Family of house types. Clearly, comparatively little effort has been expended on documenting the historic shotgun houses of New Orleans by its architectural historians. There has been no census of shotgun houses, nor is there even a definition agreed upon by geographers, folklorists, anthropologists, and architectural historians. Nor is there a master plan for New Orleans that might provide guidelines and protection for the neighborhoods of the shotgun crescent.19

It would seem that all that is required to resolve the historical argument over this building type is to conduct surveys of shotguns in New Orleans between circa 1800 and 1840. Unfortunately, expansive and detailed surveys of New Orleans neighborhoods do not exist prior to 1876, when the first Sanborn maps were published. By that time, shotgun houses were common, though
not dominant, throughout most subdivisions of the city (Figure 10). Archivist Sally K. Reeves has pointed out that the approximately sixteen hundred archived nineteenth-century affiches (advertising posters) of buildings and properties for sale in New Orleans, and the records of surviving building contracts held in the New Orleans Notarial Archives, do not support the contention that shotgun houses were numerous in the city before 1845. This would seem to end the matter, except for the fact that a broader historical assessment of the development of the shotgun has not been undertaken.

In order to demonstrate that the late-genesis hypothesis is based on incomplete evidence, one would have to show that many dozens or hundreds of shotgun houses existed in the city from at least shortly after the largest influx of Haitian émigrés in 1809. But how does one reexamine the architectural history of a historic city when the very best sources in the entire country for nineteenth-century architecture have proved unsupportive? Not only must we uncover sweeping new evidence, but we must also explain why the traditional sources have failed so completely to record a once popular house type.20

Reassessing Architectural History
To address these problems, I began a reevaluation of the architectural history of New Orleans by constructing a database of identifiable historic shotgun-like houses. Several kinds of empirical data were used as evidence that a linear cottage had existed during a specific decade. First, using style dating, architectural features, settlement history, and other information, professional architectural historians of the New Orleans Notarial Archives had provided approximate dates for a considerable number of linear cottages in their files. These dates serve as a first rough cut for the establishment of a timeline for the recorded residences. In addition, each property in the French Quarter had been subjected to chain-of-title searches. Second, a number of standing structures survive from the 1800–1840 period. These were identified by field surveys and by checking the property locations against recorded histories and chains of title as provided by the Historic New Orleans Collection, the Vieux Carré Commission, and the Notarial Archives. A few chains of title were run specifically for this study. Third, in addition to these sources, new survey data was uncovered for the early American period, particularly from the manuscript Trudeau (Pintado) and Lafon survey books. The resulting database included 140 historic linear cottages. Of these, forty-six were dated prior to 1830 and ninety-three prior to 1840. This foundation was sufficient to provide a general overall portrait of the development of the progenitors of the shotgun house prior to 1840.21

I shall refer to the specific kinds of proto-shotgun houses from the early period as linear cottages. Local architectural historians do not
classify them as shotguns. No less than four different types of proto-shotgun houses existed in the city of New Orleans between circa 1790 and 1830. Most were a single room wide and two or more rooms in depth. Each had its roof ridge running perpendicular to the street. Its front doors were set in the narrow end of the building, opening onto the street.

**Appentis Cottages**

Earliest recorded are the *appentis* cottages. They can be documented prior to the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. The “Cajun Swamp” shop, an excellent surviving example dating from 1801 stands at 631 Bourbon Street, its briquette-entre-poteaux walls and “Norman” roof truss exposed to view from the interior (Figure 11).

The term *appentis* refers to a shed roof in French. In colonial times, shed-roofed buildings were often used as service structures set in courtyards behind the main house. They served as storage “magazins,” as stables, as detached kitchens, as quarters for enslaved servants, and as bedroom *garçonnières* for the teenaged men of the family. As in eighteenth-century Paris, such buildings were built as if they were one-half of a complete building, each half being set against one side of the party wall that stood along the property line separating urban lots. Their roofs consisted of a single shed with its high side abutted against the brick party wall and the lower side covering the wall facing the courtyard. The doors of *appentis* buildings opened from the long side directly onto the courtyard. Their roofs were generally hipped, with their (half-) hip sheds facing the front and the rear. Curiously, in New Orleans, such “half” buildings were often built as freestanding houses, without the mirror-image structure or any other structure present or even anticipated on the opposite side of the party wall (Figures 11, 25). Many survive.22

For some unknown reason in the 1794–1810 period, New Orleans residents began moving their *appentis* service structures to the front of the
lots and treating them as if they were shotgun houses. Often they were the only structures on the lot with the exception of a detached kitchen and a privy in the rear. Front doors opened directly onto the banquette or sidewalk. This building type remained popular and continued to be built in frame through the 1840s.23

_Cabannes and Shanties_

During the period of the Haitian Revolution, and particularly in the period between 1803 and 1815, temporary housing was thrown up for the thousands of refugees pouring into the city of New Orleans. Linear freestanding settlers’ shacks were referred to as “cabannes” in New Orleans: something less substantial than a frame house or one with murs en dur (masonry walls). In the local English, the term “shanties” was used, while the Spanish colonial word “brigadores” was sometimes applied to the small residences of blacks.

Temporary vernacular architecture was ignored as huts and hovels by most record makers. Because these were not considered permanent buildings there was little official government interest, except when houses were constructed on “borrowed” property. No building contracts were drawn up and notarized, nor did surveyors often bother to record these structures. No fancy sales posters by professional artists were hung in the coffee houses, advertising property sales at public auction. Many, being cheaply and quickly constructed, did not survive a sufficient number of decades to be recorded. In short, this was a historically invisible fringe architecture. The first accurate depiction of such a shotgun building in the United States known to me was drawn in 1803 on what was at that time the edge of urban New Orleans (Figure 12). It bears a striking resemblance in size and form to the _ti kay_ linear cottages that survive in abundance in Haiti today.

But if official record keepers were disinterested, who would bother to record such refugee architecture, equivalent to the FEMA trailers of their day? (We’re not recording them either). Because New Orleans was expanding out of its earlier boundaries so rapidly in these years, recordation would be left to land speculators and private surveyors. It would not be unreasonable to assume that these may have been poorly educated opportunists of low record-keeping ability. No doubt some were, but luckily others proved to be among the most well-trained and important visionaries in the history of the city. They included cartographers and land developers, some of whom would become wealthy entrepreneurs in the new American territory.24

Men such as Barthélémy Lafon took on both government-sponsored and private commissions. Lafon’s public and private records exemplify the kinds of contemporary architectural records that were being produced. Luckily, some of Lafon’s personal survey books have survived.25 If a land surveyor happened to also be an architect particularly interested in local architecture, the building indications in his field surveys might include details such as roof ridge-lines. These permit us to differentiate between Creole cottages and linear cottages (although not in every case). The quality of the architectural indications is apparent in these sketches from the period 1806–1810 (Figures 13 and 14). It is clear from these and his other surveys in and beyond the French Quarter

Figure 12. A Single Shotgun–style building on the fringes of New Orleans. “A View of New Orleans Taken from the Plantation of Marigny,” by Boqueta de Woiseri (1803). Courtesy Historic New Orleans Collection (1958.42); detail.
Figure 13. Plan of a portion of Square 106 in the Vieux Carré, sketch by Bethelemy Lafon, illustrating shotgun maisonette houses, including the house of Pierre Roup (spelled Roux), April 10, 1808. Courtesy Historic New Orleans Collection (Mss. 408, Bk. 2, p. 94); detail.

that many smaller shotgun-like houses existed even before 1810.

One of the more interesting examples drawn from the Lafon survey books is the case of a new landowner named Valerie Boisdoré versus a free black named Esprit. In 1808, these neighbors lived in small shotgun-style houses on the edge of the city along Bayou Metairie in what is now City Park. Lafon conducted two surveys, twelve days apart. In the first he demonstrates that Boisdoré’s property extends into that of Esprit (Figure 14). In the second survey he ignores the boundary markers and “adjusts” Boisdoré’s property lines so that they encompass those of Esprit, presumably rendering the boundary dispute between them in favor of Boisdoré (old New Orleans hands might be forgiven for assuming that some exchange of wealth may have occurred in the interim). The houses of both are clearly smaller shotgun-type houses set on open, long lots. That of Esprit is labeled a “cabane neuve”; the somewhat larger house of Boisdoré, a “maison.”

Against all probability, a few surviving refugee houses in the form of small two- or three-room-deep linear cottages survived to be depicted on the 1876 Sanborn maps (Figure 15). They are almost always labeled “Old Shanties” and are shown to be frame buildings rather than brick-walled. They are found both in the Creole faubourgs and in the Vieux Carré itself.

Creole Maisonettes

The third kind of linear cottage also survives from the first decade of the nineteenth century. Called the maisonette, or “small house,” by New Orleans architectural historians, it closely resembles a hip-roof shotgun house (Figures 16a and 16b). These were no settlers’ shacks; they were built with the very best French construction technology of the day. Our knowledge is enhanced by the fact that a few of the more solidly constructed examples survive. Sadly, Katrina dealt a last serious blow to others. The walls of early maisonsettes were briquette-entre-poteaux or solid brick. Their pantile and slate-covered roofs were supported by heavy hewn roof beams, mortised and pegged together in the “Norman” style. Most interesting, perhaps, are the stylistic features that characterized them in the 1820s. They were built in what local historians call a generalized Federal style. Many of the earlier shotgun maisonsettes share a decorative motive, an architrave. In French New Orleans this term also referred to a wide, flat band representing pilasters and a frieze framing the façade of the building. Above the flat frieze was a decorative cornice composed of compound cyma elements and, above that, what the local French refer to as an abat vent: a roof extension that projects about four feet over the banquette or sidewalk (Figures 6, 8, 11, 16a, 17, 18, and 21). These were required by late Spanish-period zoning laws that continued in force well into the American period. Maisons longues, or linear cottages, of the 1820s almost always had paired double doors opening onto the street.
The roofs of maisonettes are inevitably hipped (Figures 16a and 17). They bear a marked similarity to the single-story townhouses (maisons basses) of Cap Haitian, Haiti, in the same period. Other examples, and other kinds of evidence for the popularity of this style of linear cottage, survive in the French Quarter and the Creole faubourgs. The traveling French naturalist Alexandre Lesueur made rough sketches of what is clearly a hip-roofed shotgun maisonette on the bank of Bayou St. John in May of 1830.

Four-bay double-wide linear cottages appear in the decade beginning in 1810 (Figures 17 and 18). In the French Quarter today, the majority of surviving early linear cottages are “doubles”—double-wide shotgun houses—set on lots sufficiently wide to accommodate a two-room-wide Creole house if the owner had so desired. Though shotgun-like houses are not yet dominant in the Creole faubourgs in the first decades of the nineteenth century, they are sufficiently commonplace to be recognized as a recurring type.

It is worth asking why dwellings such as the 1820s LePage (Figure 16a) and Baker maisonettes have not been clearly identified as shotgun prototypes by New Orleans architectural historians. They appear to have been thought of as a kind of half-width Creole cottage and are consistently identified as such in the New Orleans Architecture series of publications. Local architectural historians believe that early nineteenth-century houses with shotgun floor plans and hipped roofs are to be classified as two-bay Creole maisonettes (single-room wide, hip-roofed Creole cottages turned endwise), rather than as shotguns. The same assessment applies to the more popular “Doubles.” Historians seem to have resisted application of the term “shotgun” to what they believe to be historically inappropriate forms, believing that in roof form and in construction technology the shotgun maisonette of the 1820s participated more profoundly within the Creole cottage tradition than in the shotgun tradition. This was a time when the orientation of the roof ridge was less a diagnostic mark of ethnic or class association than it became in later decades. But by employing a designation that, if considered loosely, may have been culturally appropriate to the linear maisonette of 1825, the question of its possible parental role for the increasingly numerous framed shotguns of the 1830s and thereafter has been largely set aside. Ti kay “shotguns” with hip roofs are, of course, commonplace in Haiti today and have been since as early as the 1730s. How common were they in New Orleans? No reasonably complete historical survey has yet been undertaken, but the ease with which it was possible, from the
Lafon survey books, to identify fifteen houses appearing to be shotguns within the architecturally conservative French Quarter prior to 1810, and indications of others in the Marigny, Tremé, and Bayou Road areas, suggests that they were not uncommon between 1805 and 1830.

**Single Shotguns and North Shore Cottages**

If we consider shotgun houses to be linear cottages with gabled or pedimented fronts, there is evidence that they begin to be built in relatively small numbers in the first decade of the nineteenth century. The Lafon surveys have indications of what appear to be several gable-fronted linear cottages in 1808. By the 1820s, frame, gable-fronted shotgun houses begin appearing in Faubourg Marigny.10

Another phase in the growing popularity of the shotgun occurs prior to the antebellum period. New Anglo residents of the Garden District begin to construct shotguns with double side galleries and with an “Ell” or “Tee” at the rear (Figure 19). None remains in its original appearance. The 1840s and 1850s witnessed severe yellow fever epidemics in New Orleans. Residents who could afford to do so deserted the city in summer and early fall for more rural places. Communities on the north shore of Lake Pontchartrain became popular. Mandeville, in St. Tammany parish, developed by Bernard de Marigny in 1834, became the site of a new variant of the shotgun: the North Shore house. Builders duplicated a style of *ti kay* (shotgun) found in Haiti, though it was probably modeled most directly on the Side-Galleried Shotguns of New Orleans. Like the Haitian houses, it often had a series of doors along its flanks. It is not known whether this represented stimulus diffusion, independent invention, or convergent evolution. Double Side Gallery Shotguns continued to be constructed in several parts of New Orleans, though in limited numbers (Figure 20).
A Synthetic Perspective on Shotgun Origins

The “narrow lot theory” of Wilson and those who follow him is insufficient to account for the origins of the shotgun house in New Orleans. This is not to claim that it is wrong. It probably accounts for a proportion of the motivation for selection of linear-style houses, but it remains woefully incomplete. If we are to provide a satisfactory and balanced account of the rise of the shotgun in New Orleans, we must add other perspectives: social, economic, technological, and architectural.

The Landlady Effect: A Social Perspective

The rise of the linear cottage in the period following 1810 becomes more fully understandable when set against the background of racial demography and the sociology of the Early Republican period in New Orleans. Under the more liberal manumission laws and protections for the rights of enslaved workers of the previous Spanish administration (1759–1803), Louisiana had developed a society with three legally defined castes or strata: free citizens (white Creoles and Europeans), free people of color (manumitted Creoles or those born of free mulattas), and the enslaved (a few mulattos but mostly Creole negres and bozales—“salt water” slaves).

The demographic patterns of free people of color in New Orleans in the first decades of the American period are worthy of note. Among the gens de colour libres caste in 1820, the sex ratio was only 63:88. The sex ratios were reversed on rural plantations, but in the city there were only sixty-four males for every one hundred females of marriageable age (14–45 years). This remarkable imbalance meant that many free females of color would not find a mate within their caste, even if they had wanted one, which many did not. Within French Creole society the institution of pлацe—formalized hypergamy—arose to fill the gap. Young quadroon (“quarter-blooded”) women were described as “highly educated externally [outside of Louisiana], and probably as beautiful and accomplished a set of women as can be found.” In their late teens, light-skinned free women of color were introduced and, after considerable background research on the part of their mothers or family members, eventually contracted to well-to-do free white males. The institution was neither equivalent to marriage nor to concubinage. The men entailed considerable financial and other formal obligation to their placées. Men typically provided their mates with a small house on or near rue de Rampart and a stipend, and they publicly acknowledged the parentage of the children who bore the name of the father and received the sacraments of the Catholic Church. Many placées claimed family inheritance on the death of their “husband/lovers.” For the white male there were several kinds of benefits. Contemporary observer Frederick Law Olmsted
Figure 18. The (circa 1810) Phillippon cottage, 1016 Dauphine Square 77. Vieux Carré, by artist Pietro Gualdi, January 3, 1855. Courtesy New Orleans Notarial Archives (044.035).

is quoted as saying that for many young men, the life of plaçage was simply “much cheaper than living at hotels and boarding houses,” but he clearly underestimated the power of the attractiveness of the quadroon lady.  

The upside of the arrangement was that it left many young free women of color in a better financial position than they might otherwise have been. The downside was that, for most, the arrangement was impermanent. After several years many of the white men married women of their own class and, either then or later, terminated the arrangement. The result was a large number of abandoned plaçage divorcees who were financially comfortable and property owners. Land values were increasing almost exponentially in these decades in New Orleans. The streets of the quarter were being paved in the 1820s. Many free women of color became successful businesswomen, specializing in rental property and rooming houses in the rapidly expanding city. “Later in life these women were renowned for their successful businesses: rooming houses accommodating white gentlemen.” As historian Gayarré described them, “those furnished rooms were models of Dutch cleanliness.” They served hot coffee in the mornings and had a tub of hot water drawn on the tenant’s return in the evening. “They were intent on guessing at your wants, on anticipating your wishes.” “The female quadroons may be said to have monopolized the
renting, at high prices, of furnished rooms to the whites of the male sex. This they easily did, for it was difficult to equal them in attention to their tenants, and those tenants would indeed have been very hard to please if they had not been satisfied."

In the Spanish slang of New Orleans, the plaçée herself was known as the casa chica or “little house” (presumably, the white wife lived in the casa grande or big house). One of the most interesting of the unresearched questions about this period concerns the relationship between the free women of color and their little houses. Many lived in what was called the “Quadroon Quarter”—the northernmost sector of the Quarter, bounded roughly by Rampart Street, Esplanade Avenue, St. Peter, and Bourbon streets. They commissioned both their own houses and rental properties on

Figure 19. A (circa 1836) galleried cottage at 928 Euturbe Street, Lower Garden District, by Mondelli and Reynolds, architects. Courtesy New Orleans Notarial Archives (042.015). Unsigned and undated.

Figure 20. A North Shore Duplex-style, two-story shotgun on Moss Street (west). Photograph by author, 2005.
in Saint-Domingue picked up their professions once again in New Orleans. Among free men of color the profession of carpenter is listed as the most common by far. Take the example of Pierre Roup, h.c.l. (free man of color). Roup was a builder and contractor who arrived in New Orleans in 1805. By 1808 he is listed as a property owner in the Quadroon Quarter, owning four lots (Figure 13). He appears to have been comfortable building a localized form of the maison longue with which he was previously familiar in Saint-Domingue, and his native Gonaïves (Figure 16). Over the next two decades, he and his wife, Coralie Lafitte (f.c.l. and niece of Jean Lafitte), bought and sold properties in the Quarter, Marigny, and along the Bayou Road. Roup died in 1836 in a house almost certainly of his design, a four-room-deep Single Shotgun–style house at 374 Rue d’Amour (1744 North Rampart Street in Marigny) (Figure 21). He and several of his free colored contemporaries, such as Bartholomew Bacas and Jacques Tinchant, specialized in building both Creole cottages and shotgun houses. Contemplative observers make special mention of the houses of the quadroon women: “Those pretty and peculiar houses, whole rows of which may be seen in the Ramparts” and “Those peculiar little dwellings near the Ramparts.” Creole cottages had been commonplace in the French Quarter since early colonial times. They were found throughout the Quarter, not confined to “the Ramparts,” so observations of the 1830s about the peculiarity of the local houses almost certainly refer to the then more recently popular linear cottages. Conceivably, they may also have referred to the unusual single-room-wide, two- and three-bay Creole cottages that were also fairly popular in the Ramparts area, except that other commentators refer to the new houses as “low” (see above). Creole cottages in this era are one and one-half stories tall (Figure 7).

By the 1830s and 1840s, the shotgun form was becoming accepted as a basic house type throughout the Creole faubourgs and beyond, not only among free people of color and their renters but, increasingly, among both white and black businessmen. Many of these new linear cottages were built only two rooms deep. Each residence narrow lots in this area and created an atmosphere in which narrow houses, including particularly the linear cottage, came to be associated with a certain excellence of lifestyle. “There are, in some streets, long blocks of one-story houses, with one or two rooms built purposely to let out to bachelors. Indeed, there are neither hotels nor boarding-houses enough to accommodate one-tenth part of this class of male”.

Was it perhaps this association with pampered living that was remembered by their increasingly wealthy and influential tenants in future years when shotgun houses began to be built as the primary residences of successful businessmen all over the growing city? Perhaps, a shared architectonic jouissance helped to turn the lowly shotgun into a favored form of New Orleans residence. It was certainly the most historically obvious mechanism by which Anglo men were introduced to the unique linear cottage of New Orleans. But who originally designed and built these houses for the quadroon landladies?

Refugee free men of color who had been carpenters, masons, plasterers, and cabinet makers
was served with a detached kitchen, servants’ quarters, and privies in the rear yard. Also during this period, the clapboard or board-and-batten-clad shotgun became increasingly popular. An example of an 1830s shotgun presumed to be prototypical is the Greek Revival–style frame house at 1031 Clouet (in Bywater) (Figure 22).42

An important innovation resulting from the sizable number of rental linear cottages being built was the Side-Hall and Side-Gallery Shotgun. The evolution is clearly seen in the floor plans of linear cottages, so carefully documented by the artists of the sales affiches archived in the New Orleans Notarial Archives. Whether single or double wide, they share two distinctive features. Rental rooms were always set at the rear of the main house; they are distinguished by not having direct access into the front portion of the residence where the landladies lived. Rather, the renter had to pass outside to get to and from the street. In order to further the passage of renters to their rooms, side-hall and side-gallery linear cottages provided access under a roof to the rear rental rooms (Figure 18). The same passageways permitted landladies to service the rooms in all kinds of weather when the renters were absent.

An early approximation of the side-hall and side-gallery accommodation may be seen in certain early linear cottages that have extended roofs running down one side of the building only.
The Economic Impact: Creole Cottage versus Shotgun

Assuming that you are faced with the decision of building a single-family Creole cottage or a linear cottage–type house of similar square living footage, which kind of house would you wish to build? The costs of construction are clearly an important factor in the selection of a building type. Inexpensive, machine-cut framing material in standard sizes was becoming available in these decades. Most shotgun-type houses could be built without the use of heavy framing and specially fitted roof trusses. Ceiling joists did not have to support a second story as they did on the post-1820 Creole cottages.41

As a first and very rough approximation, I collected data on sixteen probable Creole cottages and fifteen probable linear cottages (sometimes described as “low houses”) built between 1814 and 1839. The information was gleaned from the building contract database housed in the Historic New Orleans Collection. The average construction cost of the Creole cottage group was $3,058.50, while the mean cost of the linear cottage house type was $1,258.00. The mean date of construction of the Creole cottage group was March 1832, and that of the linear group was April 1833. My tentative conclusion is that in these decades it was approximately twice as expensive to build a Creole cottage as it was to build a linear cottage of approximately the same floor space—for many, clearly a motivation for the selection of shotgun-type houses.

The Greek Revival Revolution: An Architectural Theory

By 1834 a truly remarkable transformation was underway in New Orleans vernacular architecture. The hugely popular pattern books of Asher Benjamin (1838, 1843) and Minard Lafever (1833) were being used as guides by builders across the country. Architects formally trained in classical “Greek Revival” forms such as those depicted in these pattern books had begun to arrive in New Orleans. Two were particularly significant: James Gallier Sr. (1798–1866) arrived in New Orleans in 1834, and James Dakin (1806–1852) followed in 1835. Almost immediately they began to impact local architectural styles. Soon, Greek Revival fever was sweeping the increasingly prosperous city. Builders and contractors who labored to construct the mansions and public buildings...
designed by these architects were soon applying similar decorative treatments to their own more modest commissions. Those who built even humble traditional dwellings began to add elegant new forms of decoration to the façades of their otherwise commonplace cottages. Dental frieze moldings outcropped immediately below the eaves of the roof. Doorways sometimes receded behind open vestibules in imitation of the Greek prothyron, or domestic entrance hall. Decorative treatments of doors came to include any combination of transom lights, side lights, classical columns, entablatures, and, increasingly, pediments—all considered "Greek Revival" elements. Among the more popular stylistic innovations were trapezoidal door surrounds that sprouted up on vernacular structures throughout the city, even on humble shotgun houses (Figures 22, 29). These surrounds were referred to as "mouldings with diminished architraves" in building contracts of the period. Since the 1970s they have been called "Greek Key" architraves by New Orleans architectural historians. All of these elements were, in fact, a new reworking of the Classical Revival, which had been popular in America since the 1780s.44

This stylistic revolution is curiously coincident with the rise of the gable-fronted shotgun house and the end of construction of new Creole cottages. They co-occur beginning in the 1835–45 decade. Could they possibly be causally linked? I believe that they are. It is difficult to Greek Revitalize a Creole cottage. The steep gable roof is unlike the massing of any classical building, so the entablature must be very tall to mask the shape of the roof. On the other hand, a linear cottage with a gabled front is simply a Greek temple form in miniature. All that is required is the addition of Classical Revival columns, pilasters, entablature, and a pediment and—you have your own Greek temple (Figure 24). Jump ahead two decades, to 1855, and you find such a variety of Greek Revivalized shotgun houses throughout every district of the city that to term it an architectural revolution is not an exaggeration. It was Greek Revival mania in the streets.

By the end of the 1840s, the single-room-wide linear cottage had become popular with both the working class and middle-class Anglo businessmen, as well as with Germans, Irish, and other European immigrants. They began to construct larger and more elegant shotgun

Figure 25. A (circa 1820) appentis cottage with attached two-story kitchen, by Alexander Castaing and J. A. Celles, August 4, 1866. Courtesy New Orleans Notarial Archives (O45.051).
Figure 26. Evolution of the Camelback Shotgun, footprints drawn from 1876 Sanborn maps. Drawing by Mary Lee Eggart for the Kniffen Lab.

houses for themselves in the new neighborhoods of the Garden District, the Irish Channel, Faubourg Pontchartrain, Carrollton, and elsewhere throughout the American sector. The shotgun grew to four or more rooms deep with rear extensions. Side-Hall and Side-Gallery Shotguns were popular, as were Doubles. Gable fronts replaced earlier hip roofs and abat vents. Elaborate Greek Revival and Italianate entablatures were added to the façades of whole groups shotgun houses, now being built in rows and entire squares. Some were raised a full story on a masonry ground floor or on pillars. Others were built two full stories in height.

The Camelback House: A Technological Transformation

With the spectacular coincident growth of the urban population and the cypress lumber industry in Louisiana in the 1870s and 1880s, the number of wooden houses mushroomed. Growing prosperity among working-class people resulted in a variety of expansions of the shotgun house—the old linear cottage still had a few tricks up its
sleeve. As early as the 1830s, and continuing through the 1870s, it was not unusual for single-story shotguns and doubles to have detached two-story cuisine/garçonnerie service buildings at the rear (Figure 25). The kitchen was on the first floor and the second story functioned for servants’ quarters, bachelor's rooms, and rental spaces. With increasingly inexpensive and convenient cast iron stoves pouring from retooled iron foundries following the Civil War, detached kitchens could be safely brought up and connected directly to the rear walls of the houses, or the two might be joined by an extension (Figure 26). When a two-story kitchen unit is attached directly to the rear of the single-story shotgun or Shotgun Double, the result is the curious and unique Camelback house.\(^4\) Proto-Camelbacks appeared in small numbers in all stages of attachment in the 1876 Sanborn maps, and by the 1896 edition, Camelbacks, fully formed, were commonplace. During Reconstruction, the second-floor bedroom over the kitchen, once a slave quarter or rental unit, was given a new role as the secluded master bedroom. Homeowners had created a new zone of undisturbed privacy in the otherwise very public shotgun house. Soon, the rear kitchen section was fully integrated with the shotgun front, creating the familiar New Orleans Camelback.

A remarkable variety of “Victorian” shotgun forms appeared in the late nineteenth century. Double Shotguns became more popular than single-wide shotguns (Figure 27). The shotgun expanded creatively into two-story Single Shotguns (sometimes called “Duplexes”) (Figure 28), and double-wide versions of these (Fourplexes). The two-story-tall shotgun merged with the East Coast style two-story townhouse so that in many cases it is not possible to tell which form is the progenitor (Figure 29). With the appearance of elaborate but inexpensive machine-manufactured wooden decoration from steam-powered sawmills and sash-and-blind companies, the shotgun was dressed up in Italianate, Eastlake, Queen Anne, and other popular styles of the day. The “bracket style” was also popular in the 1880–1900 decades (Figure 27: Single Shotgun). The last two decades of the nineteenth century witnessed a cultural florescence in which the once humble shotgun enjoyed enormous expansion and decorative variation in every part of the city. It has become an architectural canvas on which every family may paint its own new distinctive autobiography of cultural identity and social success.

In the twentieth century Singles and other varieties of this architectural family continued to be built with more modern materials and techniques. The shotgun adapted easily to the “Bungalow,” or craftsman style. They were built by the hundreds in the newly opened sections in the eastern portions of the city (Figures 3, 30). Singles and Doubles were elevated a full story on a brick “basement.” These survived the floods of Hurricanes Betsy (1965) and Katrina (2005), but for most of New Orleans, World War II and the G.I. Bill finally rang the death knell on shotgun expansion. Beginning in the late 1940s, new national styles of suburban cottages on slabs and ranch houses were constructed by the thousands for returning G.I.s in the newly drained sections of the city, mostly lakeside of the Metairie-Gentilly Bayou ridge. Those who design and build their own houses often continued to adopt the shotgun and Camelback styles in the
This process was abruptly halted by Katrina. Post-Katrina, various schemes for adapting shotgun-like replacements to imperiled low-lying areas of the city are being designed and promoted by architectural firms and by schools of architecture and engineering.

**Interpretations**

The history of the shotgun house reminds us that architectural histories are never neutral. They are, rather, inherently political documents that require close scrutiny. Even in those cases in which the vast majority of the scholarly community appears to agree on a single account of architectural origins, reevaluation is always essential. Indeed, conceptual unanimity amounts to a call to scholars everywhere to test the presuppositions of a master narrative against new ideas and novel perspectives. More socially responsible histories cannot help but result.

Previous attempts at writing the architectural history of New Orleans's historic neighborhoods have been too narrow to account for the rich complexity of transformation that characterizes their development. The linear cottage introduced new forms of architectural adaptation, which proved to be incredibly successful. In pre-Katrina New Orleans alone, shotgun variants survived in the order of 60,000 units, far beyond the level of any other architectural family. Single linear cottages similar to those from the earliest stages of introduction are still to be found in significant (though diminishing) numbers throughout the city and, indeed, across Louisiana and beyond. They have been built continuously from the time of their introduction about 1800 until the present, a period of more than two centuries. They are an essential ingredient of any interpretation of the development of the cultural landscapes of New Orleans. Yet, their history has been badly neglected, raising the question of how such an uneven architectural history became established.

Édouard Glissant and the créolité writers have described resistance strategies as one of the principal mechanisms in the development of creolized societies such as New Orleans. Since forms of material culture have rarely been interpreted from the perspective of resistance, it is...
appropriate that we raise the obvious question of how architectural forms might function as survival techniques under the severe economic and social limitations imposed on subjugated racial and social classes.48

It is useful to divide strategies of resistance into two categories: subversive and circumventional. Most scholars have focused on forms of subversion, but during the latter years of the Spanish colonial regime, as formal education became available to the children of freed persons of color, new forms of resistance arose in New Orleans. Emerging new strategies were expanded dramatically with the massive influx of Caribbean Creole afrachis from Saint-Domingue between 1791 and 1810. It was particularly the immigrant free people of color who redefined Afro-Creole society, providing an expanded repertoire of creative strategies.49 Drawing heavily from their own cultural patrimony from Saint-Domingue, they struck out on their own, redefining both themselves and their architectural symbols in creative ways.50

The Caribbean-style linear cottage functioned as a vehicle of cultural survival and adaptation to changing forces and circumstances. It empowered the Creole population and assisted it to survive and even prosper more successfully than it might otherwise have done under the hegemony of growing social and legal constraints of the Republican and Antebellum eras, and under the institutionalized racism of Reconstruction and Jim Crow segregation.51 Afro-Creoles and African American builders specialized in the construction of a house type well suited to both working-class and middle-class incomes and to Louisiana’s cypress-rich, low-lying tropical, environments. In the process of becoming the favored house type for tens of thousands of African American residents, it also became an emblem of the Creolized vernacular neighborhoods of the city.52

Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of this family of houses has been their adaptability. At each stage of its development, the Creole linear cottage adapted successfully to different social, cadastral, legal, economic, and constructional exigencies, always incorporating new patterns, styles, and geometries to meet the demands of New Orleans’ residents. Apart from cuisine, this writer is hard-pressed to identify a more successful form of Creole material culture in the
United States. In Louisiana, for example, far more people live in shotgun-style houses than speak a Creole language.31

Whether the continuous reinvention of the shotgun can be accounted for by the hegemonic forces of “brutality, domination, and violence” is another question. As Tremé, the Esplanade Ridge, and Marigny were being populated, the shotgun became a symbol of establishment and identity for an important segment of society. For the most part these residents were not slaves, though many enslaved people lived among them. Rather, they were mostly members of the middle caste of New Orleans society, struggling to carve out a successful niche for themselves in a highly competitive and increasingly racially stigmatized environment. Free Creoles of color creatively reformulated elements of their heritage in building a new urban landscape. This was at heart a circumventional form of resistance, one that succeeded by contributing successfully within the system and that profited from it instead of subversively attempting to damage it through numerous small acts of defiance. “One of the salutary elements of Creoleness is its invasive logic, that is, its ability to invert and convert the logic of the hegemonic sphere into the symbolic capital of cultural difference.”34

In that it inserted novel, uniquely creolized, rather than locally received patterns into the existing cultural mix, Creole architectural practice remained closer to resistance than to compliance. It was a form of positive symbolic defiance that molded and reformulated earlier cultural forms in the direction of novelties more symbolic of French Caribbean colonial identity. To those with roots in the colony of Saint-Domingue, the refugees were reconstituting architectural identities of a now lost but previously self-sufficient Creole society. In Creole New Orleans, they had discovered a new and tentatively receptive environment for this endangered culture. To Louisi ana residents without experience in the former colony of Saint-Domingue, the new architectures represented, perhaps, simply a curious and unsophisticated reworking of earlier local French colonial forms adjusted to the practicalities of an increasingly crowded urban environment.

Each time the shotgun was endangered by rigidity and stagnation, another set of historical events launched it on a new trajectory. It crossed racial and class boundaries with ease. As a changing form of cultural adaptation central to domestic life, it helped the people of New Orleans to undermine and redefine externally generated authoritarian preconceptions of racial identity and social place. Enlisting an entire society into the advantages of what was originally an Afro-Creole symbol of cultural identity, it became the cutting edge of a tactic far more subtle and successful than any of the multiple subversive forms of resistance that might have been adopted. As with other forms of Afro-Creole culture, the people of the Creole faubourgs enticed the entire society to imitate them and to participate with them in its sensuality and practicality. The linear cottage legacy was adopted by white French Creoles, African Americans, Anglo-Americans, and European immigrants, all of whom continued to use and to expand on it. Indeed, many of its most exuberant subsequent expressions were the creations of other ethnic groups. In the Big Easy, the shotgun played an important role in providing bridges for uniting all of its races and classes under the big tent of Creole culture identity.

The study of the history of the shotgun carries important implications for architectural theory. It shows us that the established architectural histories of the shotgun house have been both right and wrong, but mostly they have been unimaginative and incomplete. It suggests that architectural historians need to critically reexamine the implications of the strategies they adopt in the telling of their tales. They might wish to consider how circumventional processes of identity formulation and cultural resistance might be more central to the history of architectural forms. More importantly, we need to adopt a broader vision of the place of our architectural histories in the marketplace of political ideas.35 We are compelled, for example, to dramatize the real tragedy of the loss of so much of the shotgun crescent. It is not so much the disappearance of specific shotgun houses, as numerous as those losses are, but rather the potential loss of an entire cauldron of Creole cultural creativity that is at stake.
Before Katrina, the shotgun-rich neighborhoods of New Orleans were no object for tourist veneration and commodification. They were, rather, creative, living generators of an almost infinite variety of new cultural forms. It is those cultural forms that made New Orleans world-renowned. They were the gifts of New Orleans to America. It was in and around these houses and on their front porches that a unique culture flourished. Here jazz and the blues sprang to life, local Creole French continued to be spoken, and folk Catholicism and Afro-Caribbean spirituality were practiced. Here, too, Creole percussion, dance, cuisine, and craftwork, and the public performances of Mardi Gras and second lines and jazz funerals were celebrated. After the houses have disappeared, their supporting social networks and shared cultural practices may never be reestablished. When their creative base is lost, architectural history will bear some of the responsibility for that loss. Although the Road Home Program of support to homeowners affected by Katrina and Rita ended September 2008, perhaps there is still time to revalue and reinvigorate the Afro-Creole and multicultural nineteenth-century neighborhoods of New Orleans and to restore at least some of them to levels of social viability. In this, traditional vernacular architecture will function as an essential foundation for recovery. The shotgun house, although currently imperiled, has been difficult to annihilate in the past. Perhaps it should not yet be written off. Although it will change again, it may well outlive Katrina and disasters yet to come.

NOTES
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1. Fred B. Kniffen, “Louisiana House Types,” Annals of the Association of American Geographers 26 (1936): 179–93. “The folk-term here employed is commonly used in Louisiana to designate a long, narrow house. It is but one room in width and from one to three or more rooms deep, with frontward-facing gable.” This definition has been expanded since Kniffen’s time. A shotgun house may have either a hip or a gable roof. Its narrow front must face a street, path, or waterway, if one is present. The roof ridge always runs perpendicular to the front of the building. A shotgun may or may not have a front porch. If present, the porch may be either in-set under the main roof, or it may be attached to the façade of the building. A shotgun may or may not be elevated above grade on pillars, cypress blocks, or a chain wall. The shotgun is not necessarily an urban form. Many thousands of shotguns in Haiti, Cuba, and Louisiana are set in rural places. The early Single Shotgun evolved through no less than eleven distinct architectural types, each represented by dozens or hundreds of examples in New Orleans. In this paper, named types of the shotgun family are capitalized (i.e., Camelback Shotgun). The entire collection of house types genetically descended or influenced by the shotgun is referred to as the Shotgun Family.


3. The Shotgun Crescent: a nineteenth-century zone of the city extending from historic Uptown...
neighborhoods of West Riverside, Audubon, Carrollton, Broadmore, and Girt Town, into the “bowl” of Mid City, Bayou St. John, upper Tremé, and the Esplanade Ridge, and eastward through the Seventh Ward, St. Roch, St. Claude, and back to the river below the French Quarter in Bywater and Holy Cross.


7. Sam Wilson Jr. et al., New Orleans Architecture: The Creole Faubourgs (Metairie, La.: Pelican Press, 1984), 71. The argument that the shotgun form originated as the result of expansion of the Creole cottage into long, narrow lots is cast into question through historical and comparative perspective. Many hundreds of shotguns employed as quarters houses on Louisiana plantations are sufficiently widely spaced to permit the use of alternate forms. The earliest shotguns on the fringes of the Creole faubourgs in New Orleans were not confined to narrow lots (Figures 9 and 13). In both Haiti and Cuba, the free-standing, shotgun-style cottage antedates the development of densely occupied towns (Figure 10). John Michael Vlach refers to this argument in an article on the shotgun in his edited collection The Afro-American Tradition in Decorative Arts, chapter 8, “Architecture” (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1990), 128–29.


10. The painter was the sailor Pierre Caillot. The French town of Les Cayes was established in 1726 on the location of a previously destroyed Spanish settlement. See Priscilla and John Lawrence et al., Common Routes: St. Domingue—Louisiana (New Orleans: The Historic New Orleans Collection, 2006), 94 (Acquisition No. 2005: 11).


15. The historical research described in Vlach’s dissertation does not push the origins of the shotgun much further back in time. “The earliest shotgun house appearing in these records was located on Bourbon Street near St. Philip, in the French Quarter and was sold in November, 1833” (Vlach, *Sources of the Shotgun House*, 1:63–64, 77). Other early shotguns discovered by Vlach in the records of New Orleans Notarial Archives date to the 1830s and 1840s. Even this research comes in for criticism by the New Orleans architectural historians. In fairness to the New Orleans architectural historians, some of Vlach’s titles seem to overstate his case for African influences on the shotgun: for example, “The Shotgun House: An African Architectural Legacy.”


19. Based on a detailed examination of 1933 aerial photography of Orleans Parish. Most of the completed shotgun HABS projects are little more than a few photographs developed for salvage documentation projects. There are only two sets of plans, one from a set of photocopied blueprints. The report on the 1923 Alton Lear house at 2016 Louisiana Avenue states that 48 percent of the building stock in the Uptown Historic District’s 10,716 buildings “adopt a shotgun form” (Goodwin & Associates for HABS survey LA 36, 1996). This proportion is higher in much of the shotgun crescent.

20. Through the nineteenth century, New Orleans enjoyed the peculiar combination of French inheritance law and trained artists employed by the city government to record properties for sale. In order to determine the market value of a property at the death of an owner, it was auctioned publicly and the proceeds distributed equally among the heirs. Each sale entailed drafting an attractive, watercolored advertisement poster (*affiche*), based on an onsite survey. The large-format posters included a great deal of architectural and dimensional detail. About 1,600 that include architectural “indications” are archived in the New Orleans Notarial Archives’ historical section. No other American city enjoyed such an abundance of contemporary architectural surveys in the nineteenth century. Notaries’ records including thousands of property-transfer records and many hundreds of building contracts are housed in the same location. Even this excellent historical record identifies only a tiny proportion of the buildings that stood in the 1800–1840 period. Numerous buildings of each specific type that never appeared in the historic record also existed, particularly smaller vernacular structures. Given the extreme loss and replacement of smaller buildings from the pre-1840 period, we can assume that for every ten linear cottages that were sufficiently fortunate to be documented in
19. The earliest linear cottage in the database is a service building on Bourbon Street dated 1790. It opens onto the street, but each of its three rooms functions as a separate apartment opening on the courtyard. In addition, it has a flat or “terrace” roof, conforming to the antifire zoning ordinances of the period (Database No. 107, NONA: 015:030). Recognizing that gaps exist in the legal records, at some later date information of the historic shotgun database should be augmented by more complete chain-of-title information and cross-checked with other sources such as the building contract data, wills, city directories, and legal cases.

20. Appentis is pronounced “apénti.” See, for example, NONA 090.014 for another classic 1830s freestanding appentis cottage.

21. Twenty-two examples, or 15.7 percent of the shotgun database, are appentis cottages.

22. Notable among them are Carlos Trudeau, land surveyor (from 1793); Barthélémy Lafon, architect, surveyor, and land speculator (active 1805 to about 1815); Gilie Joseph Pilié, city surveyor of Orleans Parish (1808–1836); Jules Allou d’Hemecourt (active 1809–1832); Jacques Tanasse, architect, cartographer, and surveyor (1810–1818); Jean Mager, commission merchant and land speculator (from circa 1814), and Jacques Tinchant (with Pierre Duhart [h.c.l.]), Haitian carpenter turned builder and land developer, active in the 1830s. On the history of the Tinchant family, see Rebecca J. Scott, “Public Rights and Private Commerce: A Nineteenth-Century Atlantic Creole Itinerary,” *Current Anthropology* 48, no. 2 (2007): 237–36.

23. Roger G. Kennedy, “Barthélémy Lafon: True Tales of the Pirate Architect of New Orleans,” *Architectural Digest* 50 (1993): 102, 104, 112, 114, 115; Barthélémy Lafon, personal survey books 1 and 2 [mostly property surveys and maps for the Comté d’Orléans, Territorie d’Orléans (1803–1812)], Historic New Orleans Collection MSS 408, acquisition no. 92-51-L. So numerous and important are these property surveys that it is difficult to describe the early nineteenth-century history of New Orleans without reference to them. Yet, for some reason, they have seldom if ever been used as evidence by the New Orleans architectural historians.


25. Small structures labeled “Old Shanties” and “Old” in the form of tiny shotgun houses are to be found on several of the 1876 Sanborn maps, in the French Quarter and in Faubourg Marigny: 1876 Sanborn maps courtesy Southeastern Architectural Archive, Tulane University Library. No specific mention or description of such shanties seems to survive in the legal records of the parish. Five Single shotguns: Database nos. 80, 81.


27. The visual similarities between the “Federal” maisonnets of the French Quarter and the hip-roofed townhouses of post-1803 Cap Haitien (Le Cap, Haiti) are closer to one another than they are to North American Federal decor, in my opinion. The early Spanish colonial domestic architecture of Saint Domingue was influenced by Italo-Spanish early Renaissance vernacularized Tuscan styling. This included simplified flat pilasters at the edges of façades, steep hip roofs covered with tile or slate, and multiple doors facing the street—features all shared with the shotgun maisonnets of 1820s New Orleans. Jay Edwards, “The Origins of Creole Architecture,” *Winterthur Portfolio* 29, nos. 2/3 (1994): 155–89; Christian Goguet with Frédéric Mangones, *L’architecture de la ville historique du Cap Haitien* (Cap Haitien, Haiti: Schema directeur du centre historique de la ville du Cap Haitien, 1989).

28. In Goguet and Mangones’s book, note particularly the sketches on pages 31, 40, 43, 49, 53, 72a, and 121, and the photos on pages 93, 145, 147, and 159. *Abats vents* also survive occasionally on the townhouses of Le Cap, as depicted on pages 44 and 47 of Goguet and Mangones.

29. Classic shotgun maisonnets from the 1820s are found at 1024 Gov. Nicholls and 819 Burgundy Street, in the French Quarter. One dated circa 1831, with a Greek Key door surround, existed at 928 Gov. Nicholls. Others were to be found in the 900 block of Tremé Street and the 800 block of St. Claude, before they were demolished to make room for Armstrong Park: Toledano and Christovich, “The Role of Free People of Color,” 66, Figures 9A, 9B.

30. On May 16, 1830, the French sketch artist and naturalist, Alexandre Lesueur, standing near the present-day intersection of Moss Street and Grand Route St John, looking west, made two sketches of the same
The origins of the double shotgun may be seen in the development of the four-bay linear cottage in the 1810s. Some of the earliest examples exhibit a transitional plan halfway between a Creole cottage and a double shotgun. Houses like the Philippon Cottage, 1016/18 St. Phillip Street (razed), consist of two square rooms facing the street, with another two- or three-room module set asymmetrically and perpendicularly behind the first, and a side hall or side gallery filling in the remainder of the cottage width (Figure 19). From the street, these houses appear exactly like four-bay maisonettes or double shotguns with hip roofs and abat vents. See NONA 044.039.

32. Sam Wilson believed that essentially all of the forms of “Creole” architecture in New Orleans were derived specifically from French sources and French inspiration. Most other architectural historians, and specifically the “Friends of the Cabildo” group, have followed his lead on questions of origins. In New Orleans, the term “shotgun” has carried a connotation of the gable-fronted wooden cottages of the 1840s and thereafter. In roof form and in construction technology, the maisonettes of 1810–1830 are similar to the hip-roofed, double-wide Creole cottages of that period, though they happened to be turned with their narrow ends toward the street. In the NONA database under the category “type,” early linear cottages with shotgun and shotgun double plans are classified under a variety of titles, including “cottage,” “single Creole cottage,” “frame cottage,” “maisonette,” and only occasionally “proto-shotgun” or “shotgun” (including a few that are not shotgun-related house types).

For the Friends of the Cabildo perspective on classification of historic vernacular types, refer to Tolédano and Christovich, “The Role of Free People of Color,” 143; Wilson et al., New Orleans Architecture, 52 (Figure 35) and 42 (Figure 8). The Creole cottage classification is based on the model of the much-reproduced two-room-wide, two-room-deep cottage with gallery or abat vent in front and with a cabinet-loggia range behind (ibid., 101, plate 8). On both single and double “Creole cottages” with the roof ridge perpendicular to the street, it is unclear whether they are better referred to as hip-roof shotgun bungalows or Creole cottage maisonettes. Those located on corner lots typically have doors on both the narrow side and the long side, further conflating the categories of shotgun and Creole cottage (ibid., 82–83, plates 3 and 4).

33. In all, eleven gable-fronted linear cottages predating 1840 (roughly 8 percent) appear in the database.


35. “Many fine women with brunette complexions, are to be seen walking the streets with the air of donnas. They wear no bonnets, but as a substitute, fasten a veil to the head. As they move it floats gracefully around them. These are termed quadroons, one quarter of their blood being tinged with African. Some of the finest looking women in New Orleans are quadroons. . . . They certainly have large, fine eyes, good features, and magnificent forms. James Register, New Orleans Is My Name (written 1834–35; Shreveport, La.: Mid South Press, 1971), 28. See also La Chance, “The Formation of a Three-Caste Society,” 273–78; Daniel E. Walker, No More, No More: Slavery and Cultural Resistance in Havana and New Orleans (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004), 61–63; Harriet Martineau,
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36. Martin, “Plaçage and the Louisiana Gens de Couleur Libre,” 67; Walker, No More, No More, 82; Cossé Bell, Revolution, Romanticism and the Afro-Creole Protest Tradition, 112; Kmen, “The Quadroon Balls.” According to historian Gayarré (“The Quadroons of Louisiana”), high-status free women of color knew that their best chance for family advancement lay in permanent or long-term arrangements with wealthy and socially prominent white men. Their fathers generally encouraged such relationships and devoted no little expense toward their educations. Some were sent to France for that purpose. The young women were always mindful that their plaçage liaisons could be easily dissolved and that they had no legal protection. Thus, they “exerted themselves to the utmost to please their illicit partners.” They paid great attention to both beauty and character. Indeed, they were the “knockout” women of the city. They dressed regally and from the time they were girls they were educated in the arts of entertainment, language, and social skills. They cultivated the art of making themselves pleasing to their partners and “indulged them in all of their whims and caprices.” In their attractiveness as mates, white women seldom could compete. Many quadroons succeeded in binding their mates for life, and even if the white man kept two families simultaneously, the plaçé often acquired considerable wealth through the arrangement. Gifts on the dissolution of a partnership or on the death of the male partner sometimes saw $100,000 or more transferred to the plaçée, often through the use of a trusted third party who “whipped the devil around the stump.” Litigation by wives and collaterals of the white male decedent sometimes went to the Supreme Court of Louisiana. The testimonies recorded in these cases are wonderfully illustrative of the lives and character of quadroon women. Often, the plaçée successfully defended against such suits. Creole quadroons are described as litigious and sophisticated concerning both their legal rights and extralegal protections. See, for example, Macarty et al. v. [Eulalie] Mandeville [f.c.l.]. Docket No. 626, Supreme Court of Louisiana, New Orleans 3 La. Ann. 239, 1848. La. Lexis 128. Original briefs and witness testimony held at the Louisiana Room of the University of New Orleans Library. On the changing economic standing of free people of color, see Paul F. Lachance, “The Limits of Privilege: Where Free Persons of Color Stood in the Hierarchy of Wealth in Antebellum New Orleans,” in The Louisiana Purchase Bicentennial Series in Louisiana History, vol. 11, ed. Vincent, 428–46.

37. Gayarré, “The Quadroons of Louisiana,” 8–9. For a similar statement, see Martineau, Society in America, 183.

38. Register, New Orleans Is My Name, 27.

39. George Washington Cable, Creoles of Louisiana (New York: Scribner’s Sons, 1910), 273; Richard Campanella, Geographies of New Orleans (Lafayette: Center for Louisiana Studies, 2006), 13; William J. Nelson, The Free Negro in the Ante-Bellum New Orleans Press, PhD diss., Duke University, 1977: 114–16. In 1850, the occupations urban of free negroes as listed by Nelson are as follows: carpenters 335; masons 278; laborers 179; shoemakers 92; merchants 64; barbers 41; cabinet makers 19; architect 1; for a total of 1,029.

Pierre Roup, h.c.l., arrived in New Orleans in 1805 from Haiti (Roup is often spelled Roux in New Orleans documents and is sometimes confused with the homonymous French family of that surname—see, for example, Figure 14). The Sacramental Records of the Roman Catholic Church of the New Orleans Archdiocese state that Roux was a “native of Gonayuv Island [sic. Gonaïves City] in Santo Domingo.” See Charles Nolan, Sacramental Records of the Roman Catholic Church of the Archdiocese of New Orleans, 1824–1825, vol. 16 (New Orleans: Archdiocese of New Orleans, 1991), 350. Roup became a builder and land developer in New Orleans almost immediately. On the 1808 Joseph Pilié map of property owners in the French Quarter, Roup (spelled Roux) is listed as owning properties in VC square 107 at the corner of Rampart and Hospital (Governor Nichols Street) (presently 1031–1041 Governor Nicholls Street) and also in VC square 106 at 1011/1013 Ursulines. Joseph Pilie, Plan de la Ville de la Nouvelle Orléans, Avec les noms des propriétaires (1808: “true copy” in New Orleans Municipal Library). In a private property survey conducted by Bartholomew Lafon, Arpenteur-général des territoires Sud du Ténèse (4/10/1808: microfilm copy in Historic New Orleans Collection), Roup is listed as
the owner of another property in Square 106 facing l’Hôpital (1020–1022 Governor Nicholls Street). The building on this property appears to be a linear maisonette. In 1816, Roup bought several lots of land in Faubourg Pontchartrain (adjoining Bayou St. Jean) from Mr. Jean Blanque (NONA: Philippe Pedesclaux, notary, Vol. 73, October 15, 1816). Roup also built a house at 1035 N. Rampart (NONA: Book 40, Folio 11). In the same year, he was paid fifty dollars by the city of New Orleans for work done by two of his enslaved carpenters on the public works over the period of one month (Macarty, record of expenditures of the city government, December 2, 1816, Southeastern Architectural Archive, Tulane University). In an 1819 survey by Joseph Pilié, Roup is still listed as the owner of a house and land at 1020–1022 l’Hôpital (Governor Nicholls Street, Tax Assessment Lot no. 23155). He apparently purchased the adjoining Junonville Villiers property in Square 106 shortly thereafter, and subdivided the 70 pieds (foot of Paris) wide lot into two narrow lots (now 1024 and 1028 Governor Nicholls Street). Probably in 1823 he sold the 1024 side to Helen Le Page, a free woman of color, cutting a nine-foot-wide swath of his own (1022 Governor Nicholls Street) property near the rear of the lot to add to hers. The still extant maisonnette-style shotgun cottage at 1024 Governor Nicholls Street “was built for Helene Le Page, a free woman of color, in 1823.” “The record says this house was erected by Pierre Roup, a builder-carpenter-machinist, according to the directories, who did other structures in this square at the same time.” Edith Elliott Long, “Along the Banquette: Case of Neglect: 1024 Gov. Nicholls St. New Orleans,” *Vieux Carré Courier*, December 9, 1966, 2. The “record” referred to is NONA (Felix de Armas, Notary) 10435, March 17, 1836. Although we have evidence of shotgun-style houses going back to 1803, the Helene Le Page house is now the oldest (known) surviving Single Shotgun house in the French Quarter and probably in the nation.

According to city directories, Roup and his family lived at 179 l’Hôpital between 1823 and 1835. Roup eventually owned property at Esplanade and North Rampart. He became a city assessor for the Third District and, with Claude Gurlie, was coappraiser of the Jean Phillipon estate (Fazende linear four-bay cottage, built circa 1812, at 831 St. Philip [Figure 17], and J.-B Hardy linear double cottage, built circa 1812, at 1016 Dauphine [Figure 18], both owned by free men of color): inventory of the Jean Phillipon estate, October 15, 1827, copy in the Historic New Orleans Collection. Roup owned houses on the Bayou Road (Governor Nicholls Street) at Marais and a second home on St. Claude between Barracks (called rue Quartier) and Esplanade.

Roup rose to become one of the most respected and well-connected free persons of color in the city. For many years he was a high-ranking officer in the racially integrated Masonic Lodge Number 4, called “Pépêvéance,” which he and other Saint-Domingue refugees founded in Faubourg Tremé at the corner of St. Claude and Dumaine. On March 19, 1825, he married Catherine (called Coralie) Lafitte (f.c.l.), the daughter of Jean Lafitte’s brother, Pierre and Pierre’s quadroon mistress, Marie Louise Villars: Nolan, *Sacramental Records*, 16:350; Cossé Bell, *Revolution, Romanticism and the Afro-Creole Protest Tradition*, 182–83.

40. On Pierre Roup’s last house (Figure 22) see NONA 089:024. The numerous commissions that these free men of color built are absent from the NONA database of building contracts. An interpretation of the family of Jacques Tinchant, *h.c.l.,* was recently published by the legal historian Rebecca J. Scott (“Public Rights and Private Commerce”). Tinchant was also born in Gonaïves, settled in New Orleans following the Haitian revolution, and began buying land and building houses on “deep, narrow lots for a variety of purchasers, many of the them men and women of color. Blaise, dit Blaise Léger, nègre libre, for example, paid four hundred dollars for a lot in Faubourg Franklin measuring 34 feet on Washington Street and 117 feet on Morales Street”: Scott, “Public Rights and Private Commerce,” 240. “Tinchant is a carpenter turned builder and developer, transforming white-owned rural land on the edge of the city into house lots and houses for a multiracial clientele.” He is listed in the 1838 *Gibson’s Directory* for New Orleans as a builder, living on Craps Street (Burgundy in Marigny, a neighbor of Pierre Roup).

41. Because the old city fortifications had been five-sided, “the Ramparts” probably extended several squares beyond the French Quarter into faubourgs Tremé and Marigny. Martineau, *Society in America*, 182; Lyle Saxon, *Lafitte the Pirate* (New York: Century Company, 1930), 57.

42. A typical statement from Rouhac Toledano, a member of the Friends of the Cabildo: “One of the earliest shotgun-type houses in the city, dating from before 1846, is at 920 Spain Street [in Faubourg
Marigny], the J. B. Bordenave [h.c.l.] house." It is a frame shotgun decorated in the Greek Revival style of the 1840s. National Trust Guide to New Orleans (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc. 1996), 52; Wilson et al., New Orleans Architecture, 173, 71.

43. The research problem is to acquire reliable comparative cost data for linear cottages and Creole cottages for the same time period, based on approximate square footage, but it has not been possible to do this with precision. Building contracts for the early nineteenth century (mostly in French) do not clearly describe houses as Creole cottages or linear cottages, and the word shotgun was unknown. Floor plans are generally not attached to the contracts, though cost of building is always specified.


45. The growth of shotguns differs from place to place. Geographer Peirce Lewis described a pattern of “superblocks” in the uptown section of the city: New Orleans: The Making of an Urban Landscape (Cambridge, Mass.: Ballinger Publications, 1976), 44–46. Mansions were built for whites along the major boulevards separated by ten to twelve squares, while shotguns for working-class and domestic employees, both white and black, were set in the middle areas between the boulevards. However, Sanborn maps and early aerial photography reveal that entire sections of the city—the Irish Channel, Central City, Uptown, and Carrollton—are crowded with Singles, Doubles and Camelbacks to the exclusion of other types. Notarial Archive images from the 1840s and 1890s show that more elaborately decorated Greek Revival and Italianate shotguns—the dwellings of reasonably prosperous families—are being built in the American Sector. In both their inventories and their illustrations, studies by New Orleans architectural historians on these sections of the city numerically underrepresent shotguns in favor of mansions and multistory townhouses. Twenty-five, or about 18 percent of the total shotgun database, are drawn from this area of the city.

46. “The single-story shotgun” cottage at 819 Burgundy street has a relatively intact two-story kitchen building of masonry construction with small patio in the rear. Originally this two-story kitchen also separated from the main house by a court which has been filled in around 1940 with a two-story wooden addition” (MS. report on the Baker Cottage, Vieux Carré Commission, 1982).

In the 1870s the process of Camelbackization of shotguns occurred simultaneously in all sections of the city, both in working-class neighborhoods and in those of the well-to-do, in both predominantly black and white neighborhoods. This indicates that rather than cultural diffusion from a specific point of origin, the Camelback resulted from a citywide technological and economic transformation. This is revealed on the 1896 and 1908 series Sanborn maps. The Camelback was built in increasingly fewer numbers in those sections of the city developed after circa 1900, when internal kitchens had become commonplace.

47. Resistance was first viewed as a form of cultural practice common to enslaved populations on plantations, and perhaps marginally in urban environments. Sociocultural adaptations to difficult hegemonic conditions, including patterns of resistance, have been special interests of Caribbeanists. An important point about the process of creolization is that it is multidimensional, referring both to a form of “ethnogenesis specific to plantation contexts” and to an adaptive reinterpretation of colonial material forms and the local products of domestication. See Charles Stewart, “Creolization: History, Ethnography, Theory,” in Creolization: History, Ethnography, Theory, ed. Charles Stewart, 1–25 (Walnut Creek, Calif.: Left Coast Press, 2007); James A. Delle, “The Material and Cognitive Dimensions of Creolization in Nineteenth-Century Jamaica,” Historical Archaeology 34 (no. 3: 2000): 56–72.

48. Under a developed political hegemony the dominating power structure generally cannot be attacked directly. Indirect forms of resistance are called for. Notable among these are evasion; mimicry; masking (literal and figurative); false flattery; foot dragging; reinterpretation of received forms; obfuscation and opaqueness; subversion through counterdiscourse, dissembling, sabotage, and expropriation; the abrogation of established cultural standards; and even humor.

49. James C. Scott, in Weapons of the Weak, defines resistance as: “any act(s) by member(s) of a subordinate class that is or are intended either to mitigate or deny claims . . . made on that class by superordinate classes . . . or to advance its own claims . . . vis-à-vis those superordinate classes” (290). The rejected claims may include conventional values, appropriate forms of material culture, or characterizations of relative status or legal standing.

With respect to New Orleans in the Republican period, three typical tactics of resistance are worthy of note: (1) rejection of received categories bearing heavy burdens of Gramsian conceptual hegemonies (example: rejection of the rules of racial separation in St. Louis Cathedral by Father Père Antoine Sedella; (2) rewriting of, and blurring of, the established boundaries of separation and objectification (example: intermittent use and incorrect assignments in the application of stigmatized racial categories such as h.c.l. and f.c.l. on legal documents as required by law of priests and notaries); (3) a rapid replacement of accepted but stereotyped conceptual tools and material forms associated with disadvantage and powerlessness and their replacement with entirely novel forms not bearing old social stigmas (example: the definition of a new self-identifying social class, “we Creoles” placed between blacks and whites). In this, the linear cottage played a significant role in celebrating the identities of economically independent free people of color. These and similar strategies helped to destabilize the dominant system of racial classification prior to the establishment of the new racial hegemony in American politics (the passing of the Kansas-Nebraska Act and the reaction of the South to the rise of the Republican Party) in the Antebellum period. See Cossé Bell, Revolution, Romanticism and the Afro-Creole Protest Tradition, 65–97.

50. They founded self-interest societies (la Société des artisans, Masonic lodges). They initiated newspapers (le Libéral, Revue de Louisiane) and other outlets of artistic and political expression. They founded businesses and speculated successfully by taking control of land resources. They played a major role in sugar- and tobacco-related businesses, where they excelled in importing and exporting. Refer to Cossé Bell, Revolution, Romanticism and the Afro-Creole Protest Tradition, 89–144.

51. For example, the Caribbean-style linear cottage was a comparatively inexpensive mechanism for raising rental income. On the (losing) struggle for racial equality, see, for example, Stephen J. Ochs, A Black Patriot and a White Priest (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000); Violet Harrington Bryan, “Marcus Christian’s Treatment of Le Gens de Couleur Libre,” in Creole: The History and Legacy of Louisiana’s Free People of Color, ed. Sybil Kein, 42–56 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000). Although now somewhat dated, for references to essays on race, class, economics, and politics in Antebellum and Reconstruction New Orleans, see the essays referenced in Light Townsend Cummins and Glen Jeansonne, A Guide to the History of Louisiana (Westport Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1982), 27–49, 85–93.


53. Speaking a Creole language was formerly taken as an important mark of Creoledom in Louisiana.

55. In a recent Buildings & Landscapes article (“Viewpoint: Vernacular Architecture and Public History, Buildings & Landscapes 14 [2007]), Edward A. Chappell called for an expansion of vernacular architectural studies from a previous emphasis on heritage and patrimony to one that engages cultural, social, and public policy issues. He might have paraphrased Claude Lévi-Strauss, “Buildings are good to think with” (3).