

Urban Design Theory

A Collection of Works

Logan Miller

Table of Contents

001 The Goals of a Liberal Education - William Cronan

Urbanism as a way of Thinking

002 An Urban Frame of Mind - Alex Krieger

003 Traffic in Democracy - Michael Sorkin

The Idea of a Metropolis

004 Helping Students Read Difficult Texts - John C. Bean

005 The Metropolis and Mental Life - Georg Simmel

006 Urbanism as a Way of Life - Louis Wirth

A Body of Knowledge

007 A Typology of Urban Design Theories - Hooman Araabi

008 Companion to Urban Design - Eugenie Birch

009 On Writing - William Zinsser

The Ebb and Flow of City Populations

010 The Fourth Migration - Lewis Mumford

011 The Fifth Migration - Robert Fishman

Ambiguities in Urban Design

012 Ambiguities in Urban Design - Ali Madanipour

013 Why Urban Design - Ali Madanipour

014 Architectural Research Methods - Groat + Wang

Public Space and the Opportunity of Boundaries

015 The Civitas of Seeing - Richard Sennett

016 Building and Dwelling - Richard Sennett

017 The Public Realm - Richard Sennett

The Just City

018 The Just City - Susan Fainstein

019 Rebel Cities - David Harvey

020 Writings on Cities - Henri Lefebvre

The Feminist City

021 City of Men - Leslie Kern

022 Feminist Approach to Urban Design - Kristen Day

023 Gender, Space, and Architecture - Jane Rendell

Urban Design Theory (Weekly Readings):

Reading 001 (1.25.21): *Cronan - The Goals of a Liberal Education*

- What is the central finding of the text or what have I learned from this writer?

Cronan's vision of what a liberal education should result in can be seen as both logical and methodical. His overarching conclusion that a liberal education should celebrate human freedom, as well as nurture the innate talents that a student possesses is predictable. The systematic historical breakdown surrounding the Trivium and Quadrivium, as well as his hypocritical opinion regarding lists, points toward a wandering mind that is searching for the ultimate answer. Having said this, I thoroughly enjoyed the way he presented the information, creating a natural and casual discourse between the author and the reader. The most valuable information taken away from Cronan's article is not the content itself, but rather the connection that is made with the reader through his writing style and vocabulary, which may have been his ultimate intent, to *only connect*.

- Identify one quotation (a Telling Detail) in the text (noting the page number) and why it means something to your own quest?

There are a multitude of quotations within the article that have significant purpose in stretching the limits of one's dreams and imagination, however an author's conclusion is what they as a writer truly want to communicate to the subject, and Cronan is no different. His penultimate sentence states, "Liberal education nurtures human freedom in the service of human community, which is to say that in the end it celebrates love" (Cronan, pg. 6). This is the second mention of the word *Love* within his essay, both of which are located in the final paragraph, ergo reflecting his emphasis on the connection between two people rather than the tangible knowledge produced by a moment. This method of growing as a person is an aspect of my own life that I value tremendously, constantly reminding myself to enjoy those that surround me rather than focusing on an education that teaches students basic facts.

- What is the structure of the text and how does it address a thesis/ research question?

The structure of the text is split up into three distinct parts, each having a defined purpose. All three aspects of the essay contribute to the thesis which circulates around the idea of how a liberal education could be improved for future generations. The first section serves as the introduction as well as the historical analysis, wherein Cronan dissects the origins of a liberal education in order to give the reader a better understanding of how he arrived at his own conclusion. The second portion of the essay explains his interpretation of a liberal education and how its students should utilize their knowledge. The final section, being the conclusion, is the shortest in terms of characters, but the most significant regarding his message to the reader. The conclusion bears the weight in relation to Cronan's research question due to his release of true feelings, making an honest attempt to *connect* with the reader.

- Who is the writer and how does this text fit into their main body of work/ theory/thinking?

William Cronan is a liberally educated historian and writer. His other works revolve around American history and the connection between urban and natural landscapes, focusing on the economical and ecological aspects of each. In all of his writings he is concerned with "striving for critical self-consciousness" (Cronan, *Uncommon Ground*) and how those internal interactions can affect external encounters. His conclusion at the end of *The Goals of a Liberal Education* is aligned with other essays he has written, being that Love is the ultimate connector.

- Can you connect to thoughts of any other writer and if so how?

Cronan's writing is reminiscent of Cecil Balmond's informal style, where they each elevate the importance of emotion and connection over the content of the characters.

- Identify two references that you will follow-up on

Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Place in Nature and *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West*

- Draw a visual aide memoir of the text or of its structure or represent any of its findings/statistics graphically



Image - Miller_Logan

Urban Design Theory (Weekly Readings):

Reading 002 (1.30.21): *Krieger - An Urban Frame of Mind*

- What is the central finding of the text or what have I learned from this writer?

The Urban mindset of historical cultures should not be confused with the ideas utilized in order to create a “new Urbanism”. Interconnecting transportation, water management, and ecological issues with urban planning is essential in order to create a habitable space that is not unilateral. This is to say that the implementation of modernizing the city with infrastructure and urban services is as important as creating and defining the physical place.

- Identify one quotation (a Telling Detail) in the text (noting the page number) and why it means something to your own quest?

Alex Krieger seems to enjoy the historical aspect of experiencing growth in cities through the manifestation of different traditions in the local culture. Krieger states, “To serve an urban world requires a far broader concept of the processes and forms of urbanization than we tend to acknowledge or deploy from our memory bank of good cities” (Krieger, p. xvi). His approach to tackling the urban planning issue at hand by “deploying the memory bank” is a tactic that should be incorporated in all facets of life. However, knowing what to take from each moment in time is what distinguishes an intelligent designer from a genius.

- What is the structure of the text and how does it address a thesis/ research question?

The thesis was to highlight key issues revolving around the evolution, or modernization, of Urban design, and how each issue inadvertently forces change in an urban setting that was potentially unwarranted. His analysis of three different essays, each by leading scholars in the particular field, is meant to dive deeper into these issues, not necessarily resolving them, but more likely to create an open dialogue in order to further the discussion.

- Who is the writer and how does this text fit into their main body of work/ theory/thinking?

Alex Krieger is a research professor in practice of Urban Design at Harvard university. His work has been focused on improving the quality of life in the urban setting, which seems to be at the forefront of his argument in “An Urban Frame of Mind”. The dedication to create a place of comfort for all types of inhabitants, as well as creating an efficient ecosystem that incorporates all levels of the ecological circle is clearly shown throughout the introduction of the essay.

- Can you connect to thoughts of any other writer and if so how?

Krieger mentions several authors in “An Urban Frame of Mind”, which are appropriate to share here as well. Marcus Verro, a first century BC author is one of the Fathers of Urban Planning, and an intricate resource for all designers. Denise Scott Brown, Fumihiko Maki, and Jonathan Barnett, are also mentioned in order to give a “distinct view on the urban world from the view of an architectural planner”. Finally, the inclusion of Michael Sorkin’s work to provide an anti-thesis point of view is truly wonderful in order to conceptualize the issues he is illustrating within the text.

- Identify two references that you will follow-up on

The Figure/Grounds, Cooper and *Recombiant Urbanism*, Shane

- Draw a visual aide memoir of the text or of its structure or represent any of its findings/statistics graphically



Image - Yerka_Jaack

Urban Design Theory (Weekly Readings):

Reading 003 (1.25.21): *Sorkin - Traffic in Democracy*

- What is the central finding of the text or what have I learned from this writer?

Sorkin's "Traffic in Democracy" is centered around the conceptualization of space, as well as human designed interaction within a dense urban environment. His explanation of political freedom requiring a society in order to exist fits in perfectly with his vision of how future cities should operate efficiently. The visionary in Sorkin has concluded that in order to successfully design an urban space, one must find the common ground between *convenient* and *accidental* encounters, something that a linear form of traffic, both physically and conceptually, is not privy to.

- Identify one quotation (a Telling Detail) in the text (noting the page number) and why it means something to your own quest?

The introduction, written by Kent Kleinman, encapsulates Sorkin's imaginative way of approaching urban design into a few consolidated paragraphs. In the fourth paragraph, Kleinman states, "Fantasy is the shared space of dreams and conceits, delusions and visions, all vehicles reaching into the future" (Kleinman, p. 7). The connection between a physical area of space, and the dream to occupy it is unbreakable. This is the founding principle of urban environments, as well as, according to Kleinman and Sorkin, the methodology upon which the United States of America was built. Understanding how to manipulate that connection between space and desire, as well as impose tension between the two, is what leads to an exponential growth in a city's level of efficiency.

- What is the structure of the text and how does it address a thesis/ research question?

The text is structured around a single essay, utilizing images in order to convey the message from the author to the reader in the most efficient way possible. Sorkin's research question is one that revolves around establishing a means for consistent human interaction, without encroaching towards a targeted experience in an urban setting. His analysis of the growing "cyberbia" is the main source of stress that is threatening the necessary transactions between wanderers. Sorkin's solution centered around the idea of de-densification, an attribute that is applicable to all aspects of an urban scene; the environment, vehicular traffic, pedestrian traffic, and everything that occurs in a diurnal or aperiodic cycle.

- Who is the writer and how does this text fit into their main body of work/ theory/thinking?

Michael Sorkin is an architectural and urban critic that circulated the idea of implementing and then maintaining the most efficient form of an urban setting throughout many of his works. The same can be said for "Traffic in Democracy", where it is clear that the well being of all units within a city is more important than anything else when it comes to the design of the landscape.

- Can you connect to thoughts of any other writer and if so how?

Kent Kleinman and Michael Walzer are colleagues and friends of Sorkin, each of them have taken inspiration from one another and used that to propel their own ideas forward.

- Identify two references that you will follow-up on

Joseph Rom's and John DeGraaf's work

- Draw a visual aide memoir of the text or of its structure or represent any of its findings/statistics Graphically



Image - Achoura_Sonia Ben

Urban Design Theory (Weekly Readings):

Reading 004 (2.09.21): *Bean - Helping Students read Difficult Texts*

- What is the central finding of the text or what have I learned from this writer?

The text is a guide for both students and teachers in order to change a reader's approach toward a piece of literature, tackling issues on the speed of reading, as well as the overall approach to a text. Bean is able to do so by creating several easy-to-follow lists that break down the content in a rudimentary manner. His overall conclusion, one that I share as well, is that students are not taught how to comprehend and digest different forms of literature properly, nor how to distinguish alternate writing styles used by various authors. The difference between a learned and a novice reader is the recognition to know when to read slowly, with precision, with speed, or to simply not read at all. These shifts in reading modes are often not taught in the educational system.

- Identify one quotation (a Telling Detail) in the text (noting the page number) and why it means something to your own quest?

Bean does an excellent job breaking down his thoughts to their core ideas, an example being his fourth reason why students struggle to grasp the information presented to them. He states, "No matter what the author really means, students translate those meanings into ideas they are comfortable with" (p. 135). Subconsciously, people, myself included, consolidate information being presented to them into a simplified manner, a manner that may leave out the entire intent of the author. The fear of not understanding a thesis or an idea is what creates the innate response to dumb down the migrating data to a level where the reader feels comfortable with the subject of the paper. However, a true scholar and student should never shy away from a task due to localized fear, once one submits to their doubts they have lost the will to progress further.

- What is the structure of the text and how does it address a thesis/ research question?

The text is compiled into two forms of lists: one that is a straightforward numbered list, and another that is a compilation of instructions, or recommendations, on how to fix the problems presented earlier in the essay. The paper first presents the reasons why students struggle with advanced literature, and then utilizes the remainder of the essay to resolve those issues with an array of solutions.

- Who is the writer and how does this text fit into their main body of work/ theory/thinking?

John C. Bean is a professor of English at the University of Seattle, and has written several other texts that deal with composing an educational paper, as well as being able to effectively read one. Most of his other essays center around the philosophies of how to write properly, but as he mentioned in *Helping Students read Difficult Tasks*, one must be learned at writing and reading in order to excel in each region.

- Can you connect to thoughts of any other writer and if so how?

I have associated Bean's writings with Dr. Seuss (Ted Giesel), in the way that each of them takes a larger concept and breaks it down into manageable parts in order to clarify the author's intent for the reader. For example, in the story of *The Lorax*, Suess is able to weave the concept of deforestation in a way that is more easily understood by a child.

- Identify two references that you will follow-up on

Francoz, 1979 and Drenk, 1986

- Draw a visual aide memoir of the text or of its structure or represent any of its findings/statistics Graphically



Image - Svanegaard_H

Urban Design Theory (Weekly Readings):

Reading 005 (2.09.21): *Simmel - The Metropolis and Mental Life*

- What is the central finding of the text or what have I learned from this writer?

Simmel is concerned with the internal and external battles regarding individuality as it pertains to a metropolitan atmosphere. He mentions that man is dependent on differences, but cities by nature strip those unique traits away from the city dwellers, manifesting a rigid machine that is built on consuming the tangible products of the environment. The argument here, according to Simmel, is that urban scenes are constructed from a rational point of view, and only thrive through "purely rational methods". Stripping the irrational from an individual tips the scale to an unhealthy degree in favor of mindless work with no apparent relationships or emotions - a perfect formula for an efficient city.

- Identify one quotation (a Telling Detail) in the text (noting the page number) and why it means something to your own quest?

The removal of all emotion between the place and the consumer is what leads to the greatest monetary turnout, which is what concerns urban societies the most. Simmel discusses the relationship between producer and consumer fairly early on into the essay, stating, "The modern city, however, is supplied almost exclusively by production for the market, that is, for entirely unknown purchasers who never appear in the actual field of vision of the producers themselves" (p. 12). Essentially, the author is reiterating the idea that due to the lack of connections, whether it be face to face or through other relationships, all that the producer and the consumer care about is the product itself, as well as the return investment from the purchase. Simmel interconnects a small town and an ancient agora scenario later on in the passage, essentially a hypocrite to his own argument, in order to pinpoint the issue revolving around the lack of personal interest due to the scale of the marketplace.

- What is the structure of the text and how does it address a thesis/ research question?

The author categorizes the essay into a single block of text, spewing out information uncontrollably like an unmanned fire hose. The thesis surrounds the question of how to alter the way in which a city operates and transforms those who live inside. However, he concludes that although one can babble and complain, it is best to watch what occurs rather than attempt to change the innate nature of a metropolitan society.

- Who is the writer and how does this text fit into their main body of work/ theory/thinking?

Georg Simmel was a German sociologist born in the 1800's, who laid the ground work for sociological anti-positivism, which is abundantly clear given his dismal outlook on the urban landscape, as well as his lack of interest toward fixing the problems. His rational way of thinking, as well as breaking down human traits and emotions into "forms" and "inevitable repeating data points" is inhumane, and ironically irrational. His statement on page 15 sums up how he feels, " We see that the self-preservation of certain types of personalities is obtained at the cost of devaluing the entire objective world, ending inevitably in dragging the personality downward into a feeling of its own valueless."

- Can you connect to thoughts of any other writer and if so how?

David Harvey, both are concerned with the economic side of the urban landscape, portraying the overall future of urbanism in a gloomy way.

- Identify two references that you will follow-up on

There are no additional references cited in this paper.

- Draw a visual aide memoir of the text or of its structure or represent any of its findings/statistics Graphically



Image - Karcz_Michal

Urban Design Theory (Weekly Readings):

Reading 006 (2.09.21): *Wirth - Urbanism as a Way of Life*

- What is the central finding of the text or what have I learned from this writer?

Wirth utilizes *Urbanism as a Way of Life* in order to explain the ramifications of an urban lifestyle, and how it differs from a rural form of living. He quantifies the essence of urbanity into different subtitles, essentially breaching the collective in order to simplify and streamline the circulating data revolving around urbanism. Categories such as "Urbanism as a form of social organization", "Urbanism in an Ecological Perspective", and "The relation between a theory of Urbanism and Sociological Research" all help to disperse the vast amount of information into digestible portions. His conclusion is based on factual evidence, stating that urbanism as a way of life needs to become a "unified body of reliable knowledge" in order to forgo the historical speed bumps of declining internal populations, the lack of familial social significance, and the unbalanced degree of heterogeneity. However, since the overwhelming majority of the population living in a city tends to be at the prime of their lives, in contrast to a rural setting, the majority of the cognitive roadblocks can be overcome. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for the concept of universal cohesion.

- Identify one quotation (a Telling Detail) in the text (noting the page number) and why it means something to your own quest?

Wirth begins a section of the essay titled "Urbanism as a form of Social Organization" with an all-encompassing clause. He states, "The distinctive features of an urban mode of life have often been described sociologically as consisting of the substitution of secondary for primary contacts, the weakening of bonds of kinship, and the declining social significance of the family, the disappearance of the neighborhood, and the undermining of the traditional basis of social solidarity" (p. 21). Wirth is essentially saying that with the impending explosion of an urbanistic way of life, the core values that many people consider to shape the boundaries of humanity, such as kinship and the inclusion of one into a neighborhood, would be abolished.

- What is the structure of the text and how does it address a thesis/ research question?

The text is structured into several subgroups, each with their own title and subject. Each of the subsections continue to contribute to the overall focus of how an urbanistic way of life will alter the way in which the world is perceived, while addressing a set of niche facts that require more detailed attention in order to fully comprehend.

- Who is the writer and how does this text fit into their main body of work/ theory/thinking?

Louis Wirth was an American sociologist that thrived in Chicago and was interested in how both minority group behavior and mass media could influence the overall way of living in both urban and rural areas. *Urbanism as a Way of Life* is no different, as he was known to take a tested data approach to his arguments, rather than speculating or predicting what sort of outcome a way of life would have in a designated region.

- Can you connect to thoughts of any other writer and if so how?

David Harvey and George Simmel, both writers are concerned with urban economics, each displaying different views as they are observing the world from opposite sides of the 20th century.

- Identify two references that you will follow-up on

De la Division du Travail Social by Durkheim and *Die Grossstadte und das Geistesleben* by Simmel

- Draw a visual aide memoir of the text or of its structure or represent any of its findings/statistics Graphically

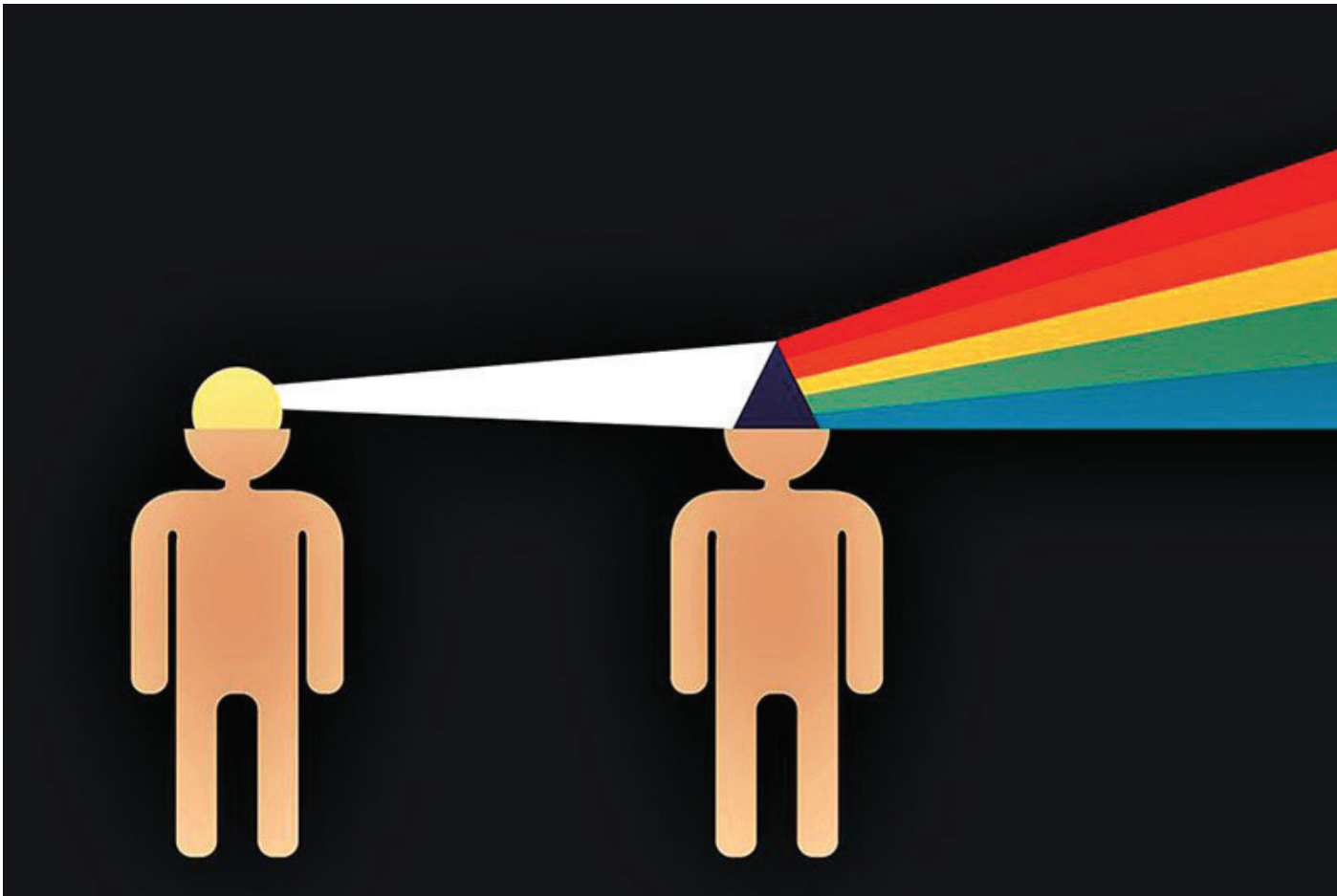


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Urban Design Theory (Weekly Readings):

Reading 007 (2.15.21): *Araabi - A Typology of Urban Design Theories*

- What is the central finding of the text or what have I learned from this writer?

Araabi constructs his essay around a multitude of scholarly texts, each built around the premise of cultivating an educational discourse surrounding the theory of Urban Design. The main conclusion that he draws is in order for the theory of urban design to continue to be successful, the research and documentation of data must be accessible to the masses. The strength of his thesis is not necessarily in the information displayed in the essay, but rather the ease of access for which it allows readers to obtain additional information. Ergo, Araabi effectively achieves his goal in distributing information to a larger number of people in order to drive the blade of efficiency deeper into the body of Urban Design.

- Identify one quotation (a Telling Detail) in the text (noting the page number) and why it means something to your own quest?

The article's purpose is to promote the circulation of information regarding the theory of urban design. Araabi quotes Inam when he himself is discussing the importance of a shared network of knowledge. Inam states, "One of the reasons for mapping bodies of knowledge is to enable the asking of critical questions" (p. 9). Breaking down informative data and mapping it into an easy-to-understand way allows the information to be consumed more efficiently, theoretically allowing the field of urban design to progress faster than normal. Applying this to my own quest, simplicity and efficiency are the two methods of being that will transport a generation of dreamers above all others, if executed correctly.

- What is the structure of the text and how does it address a thesis/ research question?

The text is structured into two parts, the first being typology. Here, Araabi outlines three distinct types of urban design theory in literature. These being, in sequential order, "Theories about the subjects within the Urban Design", "Theories about the Object of Urban Design", and "Theories about the knowledge of Urban Design". These three subsections are used as a series of layers to simplify the content of each paper relating to theory. The second portion of the paper, the shared body of knowledge, is a collection of articles and work that completes his essay, *A Typology of Urban Design Theories*.

- Who is the writer and how does this text fit into their main body of work/ theory/thinking?

Hooman Foroughmand Araabi is a self-proclaimed critical and creative thinker who submerged himself in the intricacies of Urban Planning and Design. He is a senior lecturer at the University of Bristol, and has released several publications, all circulating around the theory of Urban Design, as well as general methods of research and education. *A Typology of Urban Design Theories* fills the role of educating students by presenting an extensive list of resources, as well as portraying his own approach when it comes to the field of urban design.

- Can you connect to thoughts of any other writer and if so how?

Steve Reiss is an author dedicated towards building efficient resources for students preparing for life-defining exams. Araabi's work is similar, and reads in a comparative way to Reiss.

- Identify two references that you will follow-up on

The City of Tomorrow and its Planning by Le Corbusier and *Garden Cities of To-Morrow* by Howard Ebenezer

- Draw a visual aide memoir of the text or of its structure or represent any of its findings/statistics graphically



Image - Peres_Luis

Urban Design Theory (Weekly Readings):

Reading 008 (2.15.21): *Birch - Companion to Urban Design*

- What is the central finding of the text or what have I learned from this writer?

Birch is concerned with the problems facing urban societies as the world continues to evolve, specifically looking at how new ways of thinking can re-invigorate the priority for individual needs in a cityscape. She concludes that a unification of several theories introduced within the essay will bring integrated engagement to the urban landscape for an extended period of time. Her analysis of how different urban designers began to shift their focus from a broad view to that of designing individual places, such as a sidewalk, is what gathers all of her arguments into a cohesive thesis. Furthermore, the extensive amount of citations organized within the essay, used to promote differing points of view on the same topic, was a breath of fresh air.

- Identify one quotation (a Telling Detail) in the text (noting the page number) and why it means something to your own quest?

The essay *Companion to Urban Design* is exactly what it claims to be - an in depth document that refers to numerous historic moments in urban design theory, which prepares the reader for the future of the field. Midway through the essay she writes, "...the natural and social factors that shaped cities" (p. 13). The mention of natural factors at this point in the essay is revolutionary, as many theorists during the 19th and 20th centuries saw the integration of naturally-occurring spaces as a blockade for the true urban state of being. Toward the end of the paper, Birch emphasizes the importance of including historical concepts as well as new ways of thinking that did not sprout from the mechanical mindset, but rather were more tailored to the human aspects of urban life. The trend toward non-standardized city schemes is an idea that I personally attempt to incorporate in various facets of design. Each city or project should have a different approach, and therefore, a different result, in a way manifesting an idiosyncratic space.

- What is the structure of the text and how does it address a thesis/ research question?

The essay is segmented into different periods of time and thinking as it relates to Urban Design Theory, primarily the "The Pioneers" and "The Developers". The first portion of the text introduces the theories leading up to the modern day, followed by "The Developers" taking the majority of the text. It is here that the author incorporates additional references and elaborates on the visions of the pioneers, while inserting her own philosophies into the conversation. Birch allows the reader to form their own opinion, albeit altered by her way of thinking, due to the volume of external resources that are provided, as well as an explanation of each to provide context. Incorporating the different ideas surrounding urban design into a single document addressing her thesis outright. Her overarching goal is to push inclusive thinking into practice rather than just theory.

- Who is the writer and how does this text fit into their main body of work/ theory/thinking?

Eugenie Birch is a professor at the University of Pennsylvania. The majority of her work and interests lie in Urban planning and the theory of general assembly. Her approach to writing is largely based on her own personal opinions and experiences, while still being heavily supported by a voluminous amount of research, which is also representative of *Companion to Urban Design*.

- Can you connect to thoughts of any other writer and if so how?

The form of writing is reminiscent of Laura Wilder, where both authors illustrate their thoughts in a clear and attention-grabbing way. The context that both authors are fascinated on addressing is similar as well, with Laura being focused on the rural development during the early 20th century, and Eugene on the urban side.

- Identify two references that you will follow-up on

The Functional City CIAM, 1933 and *Evolving Concept of the Urban Core* by Bacon M.

- Draw a visual aide memoir of the text or of its structure or represent any of its findings/statistics Graphically



Image - Zbukvic_Joseph

Urban Design Theory (Weekly Readings):

Reading 009 (2.15.21): Zinsser - *On Writing*

- What is the central finding of the text or what have I learned from this writer?

The ability to write a clear sentence that conveys its message without additional clutter is the mark of an established writer. Zinsser's essay, *On Writing*, bluntly portrays his view on the difficulty of creating a simple sentence. His analysis of his own work, showing the relentless repetition of condensing each draft until it is closer to perfection, is an eye-opening process. He displays an honest truth about the life of a writer, immediately making his own work relatable, and therefore more enjoyable for the reader. After all, the purpose of a text is to create a conversation between the author and the reader.

- Identify one quotation (a Telling Detail) in the text (noting the page number) and why it means something to your own quest?

The entire book of "On Writing" could be used as a quotation, however Zinsser's statement in his chapter about clutter is especially telling. He writes, "A clear sentence is no accident" (p. 14). A simple six word sentence, acts as both a lesson for the reader as well as an example of its own precise meaning. The fascinating side of this incredibly simple sentence is that the author more than likely had half a dozen drafts before this final result. The shortest sentence in the chapter, perhaps even the book, is also by far the most compelling and successful.

- What is the structure of the text and how does it address a thesis/ research question?

The book is divided into chapters, each rather short in order to retain the attention of the reader throughout each portion, staying on course with the narrative of the book as a whole. The way in which the author writes and explains his writing from personal experience is the entire thesis. In order to be a good reader, one must be a good writer, and in order to be a good writer, one must make it as easy as possible for the reader. He executes the ideas that he illustrates flawlessly.

- Who is the writer and how does this text fit into their main body of work/ theory/thinking?

William Zinsser was an author and literary critic, as well as a professor at Yale for several years. He wrote several essays dealing with the ability to read and write properly, discussing how each skill directly affects the other. *On Writing* could be the zenith of Zinsser's work, given how the narratives of his other texts and lectures center around this particular essay.

- Can you connect to thoughts of any other writer and if so how?

Zinsser's elucidative writing style is easy to get absorbed in, an attribute that many of the distinguished novel authors share. Jordan Peterson and Markus Zusak write similarly, explaining the entire context of the sentence in such a way that all levels of readers can happily be included in the discussion.

- Identify two references that you will follow-up on

The Elements of Style by E.B. White and *The Mystery of Memory* by Will Bradbury

- Draw a visual aide memoir of the text or of its structure or represent any of its findings/statistics graphically



Image - Miller_Logan

Urban Design Theory (Weekly Readings):

Reading 010 (2.22.21): Mumford - *Fourth Migration*

- What is the central finding of the text or what have I learned from this writer?

Mumford discusses the history of urban sprawl in America, pointedly dissecting the major moments in time that define the modern city. His conclusion is that in order to facilitate a bright future of urban environments, designers and theorists need to have a tangible goal. The author wrote the essay in 1925, near the beginning of the self-defined fourth migration, a concept that he heavily promoted. Mumford is an early 20th century writer consumed with addressing the negative outlook on the world - an overwhelming theme for many of the leading urban theorists for the time. He emphasizes optimism, however, elaborating on the fact that even though previous generations created a disruptive and decentralized situation, there is always an opportunity to right their wrongs and positively alter the future.

- Identify one quotation (a Telling Detail) in the text (noting the page number) and why it means something to your own quest?

Mumford's optimistic outlook on the future of the urban landscaped is heavily shrouded in his dismal perspective of reality. Having said this, several sentences throughout his essay on the *Fourth Migration* seep through the oppressive veil of truth, with an example being "But the mold of America has not yet been set" (p. 8). The author will continuously circle back to this idea of a dynamic future, proclaiming that it is malleable. America has been working in the wrong forge, according to Mumford. The idea that an individual has the ability to redirect the future of a nation is beautiful indeed, a concept that has helped define my own ambitions.

- What is the structure of the text and how does it address a thesis/ research question?

The *Fourth Migration* is separated into four distinct sections, each one addressing one of the four major migrations that helped shape 20th century America. The First Migration, the clearing of the continent, is represented by a covered wagon. The Second Migration, the industrialization of the continent, is referenced through an iron horse. The Third Migration details the explosion of the financial centers, while The Fourth Migration addresses the technological revolution. All four migrations help to create a clear story of America in 1925, and how it developed. The history leading up to The Fourth Migration is what defines his outlook for the early 20th century, thereby directly altering his thesis for urban design theory.

- Who is the writer and how does this text fit into their main body of work/ theory/thinking?

Lewis Mumford was a sociological urban critic, who also served a large role in both literary and philosophical fields. Most of his work centered around *organic humanism*, a term he coined that emphasizes the quality of natural goods while limiting the amount of human capability. His theories espoused the concept of nature and technology co-existing, as it pertains to urban design, in order to create a healthier and more efficient civilization, something that he realized is closer to science fiction than reality.

- Can you connect to thoughts of any other writer and if so how?

Lewis Mumford's work can be compared to Herman Melville and Ernest Hemingway, mundane and methodical, yet effective.

- Identify two references that you will follow-up on

Dinosaur Cities by Clarence Stein and *Elements of the Region* by Ralph Pearson

- Draw a visual aide memoir of the text or of its structure or represent any of its findings/statistics graphically



Image - Zhiyong_Li

Urban Design Theory (Weekly Readings):

Reading 011 (2.22.21): *Fishman - The Fifth Migration*

- What is the central finding of the text or what have I learned from this writer?

Fishman's *The Fifth Migration* is a riposte to Mumford's *The Fourth Migration*, where he criticizes the latter's failure to recognize the inevitable integration of cultures into the densest spaces of a city, revealing that the fifth migration begins in the revitalization of the urban house. Fishman wrote this essay in 2005, 80 years after Mumford's *The Fourth Migration*, however, Fishman repeatedly references different quotes and articles by Mumford in the 1960's, after his theories about the fourth migration failed to come true. In other words, Fishman is consistently abusing a rudimentary hypothesis long after the years and urban growth patterns have passed, not unlike beating a dead horse. As opposed to Mumford's concealed optimistic outlook on the future of urbanity, Fishman is complacent with the idea that the fifth migration is a predetermined fact, displaying no desire to attempt to alter the future, but rather content to watch it unfold from afar.

- Identify one quotation (a Telling Detail) in the text (noting the page number) and why it means something to your own quest?

Mumford and Fishman share the ideology that previous generations have abused the urban scene in order to absorb more power and money. Each author is dissatisfied, to differing degrees, with the current state of America at the time their articles were written (1925 and 2005 respectively). Fishman's fifth migration is built on the back of re-urbanizing the central hub of the city, pumping life back into the nexus of America's global showcase. He emphasizes the difficulty of this action when he states, "A fundamentally fragmented environment is relatively poor at creating sites with unique identities" (p. 5). Comparable to every pessimistic urban theorist before him, Fishman points the finger at previous generations, blaming them for the issues at hand, rather than providing a calculated solution. Having said this, Fishman is still accurate in regarding the difficulty in building a functioning society on suboptimal foundations, a way of thinking that should be applied to most areas of my own life.

- What is the structure of the text and how does it address a thesis/ research question?

The essay is built into two main segments, the first discussing the history and relevance of Mumford's *Fourth Migration*, and the second, which applies Fishman's thoughts to a modern day scenario. Fishman utilizes Mumford's fourth migration to propel his own thoughts regarding the fifth migration to the forefront, discrediting the initial theories presented by Mumford. It is at this point that the author focuses on the importance of re-urbanization within the city center, pushing the agenda of intermingled neighborhoods with a focus on investing in a balanced housing plan in recovering areas. Fishman doesn't necessarily address his own thesis, but rather explains the current situation and what he believes is going to continue to happen.

- Who is the writer and how does this text fit into their main body of work/ theory/thinking?

Robert Fishman is a professor at the University of Michigan, specializing in the historical outlook of urbanization and its affect on the future. The majority of his texts address the connection between urban centers and suburbia, as well as the expansion and inevitable reclusion that follows.

- Can you connect to thoughts of any other writer and if so how?

Lewis Mumford's *The Fourth Migration* identified itself an impactful piece of literature for Fishman, in both the theoretical and methodology of writing sense. Jane Jacobs' work can also be compared to that of Fishman's, where both take an analytical approach from previous urban theorists, then applying their ideas to the modern setting.

- Identify two references that you will follow-up on

The Urban Prospect by Lewis Mumford and *The Language of Landscape* by Spiro, A.

- Draw a visual aide memoir of the text or of its structure or represent any of its findings/statistics graphically



Image - Falciano_James

Urban Design Theory (Weekly Readings):

Reading 012 (3.01.21): *Madanipour - Ambiguities of Urban Design*

- What is the central finding of the text or what have I learned from this writer?

The essay *Ambiguities of Urban Design* is tailored to relieve the confusion surrounding the purpose and effects of Urban Design Theory. Madanipour focuses on the visual, spacial, and social concerns, with an emphasis on the effects of scale regarding urban societies. He generates a philosophy that both the macro and micro scales in an urban setting cannot thrive both simultaneously and indefinitely, as one will inevitably falter, detracting from its counterpart. Furthermore, he implies that this fear of producing an imbalanced urban design is what is responsible for many modern day planners capturing their ideas exclusively in a visual medium. The author elaborates on this concept, emphasizing the importance of developing a spatial relationship that transcends the visual realm, allowing other means of representation to shape the urban space. He comes to the conclusion that in order to create an elevated urban experience, thus providing clarity to the genre as a whole, equal attention must be diverted to both the process as well as the end product.

- Identify one quotation (a Telling Detail) in the text (noting the page number) and why it means something to your own quest?

Madanipour rambles on excessively about the various topics of urban design theory that need clarification, ironically pumping more ambiguity into their definitions. However, there are moments of simplicity in his writing where his intentions are clear. In one of these instances he states, "Urban Design, therefore, is a process that is interested in its product, the built environment" (p. 12). The author's simplified definition of urban design here is more telling than anything else in the entire essay, revealing his two main thoughts by classifying urban design as both a process and a product. This idea is an excellent reminder that there is ultimately another invisible layer to everything, as well as another way of approaching a subject or a problem.

- What is the structure of the text and how does it address a thesis/ research question?

The author outlines several key points regarding Urban Design Theory that he wants to analyze, thereby reducing any pre-existing ambiguity surrounding the subject. These ideas can be summarized in six subgroups: the scale of urban fabric, the visual/spacial/social aspects, the relationship between process and product, the relationship between different professionals, the affiliation between private and public sectors, and the design as an objective-rational or an expressive-subjective process. The author is able to effectively answer all of the questions that he presents within the essay, although he does so encumbered with such clutter that he himself is working against his own thesis of resolving ambiguity.

- Who is the writer and how does this text fit into their main body of work/ theory/thinking?

Ali Madanipour is an Urban Design Professor at the Technical University of Vienna. Many of his writings focus on the manipulation of space and theory regarding urban planning. *Ambiguities of Urban Design* falls in line with his other works, although it serves the purpose of a manuscript rather than an argumentative piece.

- Can you connect to thoughts of any other writer and if so how?

The urban design theories presented by Lefebvre in many of his works can be seen throughout Madanipour's essays, in both writing style and intent for the future. In other words, a logical transition of ideas between one theorist to the next.

- Identify two references that you will follow-up on

The Urban Design Source Book by Billingham, 1994 and *The Production of Space* by Lefebvre, H.

- Draw a visual aide memoir of the text or of its structure or represent any of its findings/statistics graphically



Image - Gafanhoto_Daniel

Urban Design Theory (Weekly Readings):

Reading 013 (3.01.21): *Madanipour - Why Urban Design*

- What is the central finding of the text or what have I learned from this writer?

This short essay highlights the growing appreciation of how urban design theory is applicable to the organization of space as well as the visual appearance of a city. Madanipour discusses how it is the urban theorist's job to create the relationship between public and private spaces, projecting said relationship surrounding spatial organization onto the metaphorical body of society. He elaborates, stating that urban design theory was initially conceived in order to make connections between space and society, but recently that connection has been fragmented.

- Identify one quotation (a Telling Detail) in the text (noting the page number) and why it means something to your own quest?

Madanipour directs his attention toward infusing new life into neglected public spaces, stating that urban design should be a means for articulating the common ground. He says, "Urban design is a vehicle to develop place-based visions and strategies" (p. 4). Madanipour is illustrating the necessary drive for developing an intense connection between the private and public realms, utilizing physical space as the messenger between the two. The interplay between interior and exterior space is an attribute that can redefine how the public realm functions, a concept that contributes to my own way of thinking.

- What is the structure of the text and how does it address a thesis/ research question?

Why Urban Design is a short essay, comprised of a simple question with a brief, but elaborate answer. Unlike *Ambiguities of Urban Design*, the author streamlines his resulting thoughts in this text by focusing on two topics, society and space.

- Who is the writer and how does this text fit into their main body of work/ theory/thinking?

Ali Madanipour is an Urban Design Professor at the Technical University of Vienna. Many of his writings focus on the manipulation of space and theory regarding urban planning. *Why Urban Design* supports his overarching narrative, operating as an argumentative piece surrounding the questions of functional space within an urban environment.

- Can you connect to thoughts of any other writer and if so how?

The urban design theories presented by Lefebvre in many of his works can be seen throughout Madanipour's essays, in both writing style and intent for the future. In other words, a logical transition of ideas between one theorist to the next.

- Identify two references that you will follow-up on

Madanipour does not reference any other texts in this essay

- Draw a visual aide memoir of the text or of its structure or represent any of its findings/statistics graphically

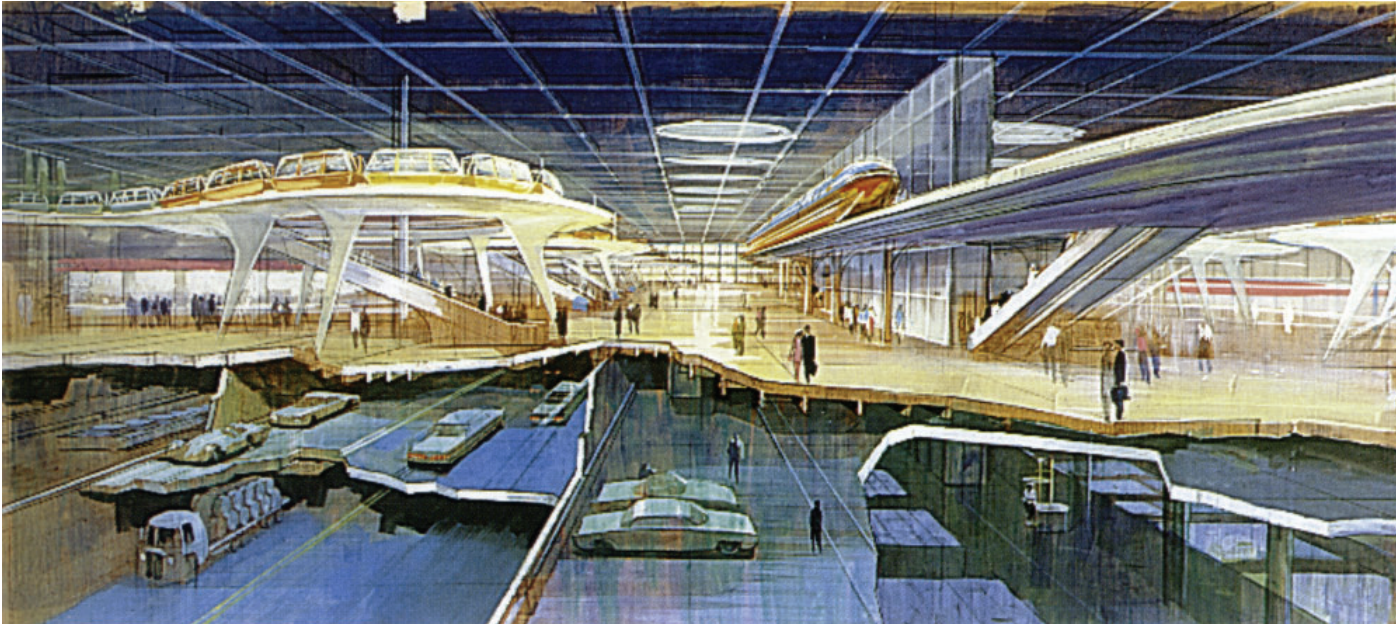


Image - Mcginnis_Ryman

Urban Design Theory (Weekly Readings):

Reading 014 (3.01.21): *Groat + Wang - Architectural Research Methods*

- What is the central finding of the text or what have I learned from this writer?

In *Architectural Research Methods*, Chapter 5 (What is Your Question) discusses the importance of an organized research plan when preparing an annotated bibliography or a literature review. The authors encourage students to hone in on developing literature awareness, how to synthesize their research texts, and the creation of original research questions that aim to fill a void in their field of study. Groat and Wang produce several diagrams, such as flow charts and matrices, intended to give students a guidance on where to begin research projects. Each diagram is a product of the authors' methods and findings, collectively acting as a self-generated thesis.

- Identify one quotation (a Telling Detail) in the text (noting the page number) and why it means something to your own quest?

Developing an original research question can be difficult in the sense of knowing where to look and what to ask. Groat and Wang endeavor to simplify the problems that arise when seeking out a question, by elevating the student's literature awareness. In the authors' discussion they state, "A benefit of knowing a body of literature is having a sense of the gaps, of what looks like a potential contribution, and what ideas can open up new lines of inquiry" (p. 151). Comprehending how a text is written and what the author is attempting to convey to the reader will put the reader in a position to critique the author, leading to a deeper understanding of the material and identifying where more research could be helpful. Having the ability to pinpoint a problem and pursue a solution is a requirement in any field that is immersed in critical thinking, certainly applicable to architecture.

- What is the structure of the text and how does it address a thesis/ research question?

Architectural Research Methods is a guided textbook, divided into chapters that are meant to instruct, rather than simply inform. When considering Chapter 5 specifically, the authors explore how to develop a research question rather than answering one themselves. Achieving a thorough understanding of what attributes comprise an original research question signifies that Groat and Wang have succeeded in their goal.

- Who is the writer and how does this text fit into their main body of work/ theory/thinking?

Linda Groat is a professor at the University of Michigan, focused on environmental studies within the urban design scene. Her work in the practical field as well as the educational side of urban design theory places her in a unique and eminent position. Many of her other texts are influenced by the practical and educational, providing a critique, ensuring that the reader easily comprehends the subject at play. David Wang is a professor at Washington State University, with a focus on the technical aspects of urban design theory. His statistical approach toward the subject compliments Groat's educational method, resulting in an overall balance.

- Can you connect to thoughts of any other writer and if so how?

The ease of reading in *Architectural Research Methods* reflects Zinnser's writing style, where the author presents information and then thoroughly discusses the topic in order to ensure complete comprehension by the reader.

- Identify two references that you will follow-up on

The Critique of Judgment by Kant and *Geography of Nowhere* by James Howard Kunstler

- Draw a visual aide memoir of the text or of its structure or represent any of its findings/statistics graphically



Image - Road_Henry

Urban Design Theory (Weekly Readings):

Reading 015 (3.08.21): Sennett - *The Civitas of Seeing*

- What is the central finding of the text or what have I learned from this writer?

Sennett discusses the definition of “public space” in *The Civitas of Seeing*, with the intent of forming a discourse surrounding the idea of why public work in cities is a positive attribute when conducted in a public setting. The author breaks down the phrase “public space” into its Greek origin, *synoikismos*, in order to better define what the coming together of people should entail. His conclusion being a space where people of opposing beliefs can mingle and share their differences via verbal discussions. He believes that forming a public connection through political discourse will impart a sense of importance and moral meaning into a space, justifying its existence beyond a spot on the map where people shop, live, and raise their families.

- Identify one quotation (a Telling Detail) in the text (noting the page number) and why it means something to your own quest?

The Civitas of Seeing deconstructs the current understanding of how a public realm *should* operate, inviting the clash of opposing beliefs. Sennett doubles down on the inefficiencies of the modernistic approach to public space when he states, “we can’t really think of forms of the public realm that are, as it were, appropriate to the pains of our society” (p. 2). Personally, the train of thought that the author is bringing to the discussion, embracing the positive and negative aspects of life is an idea that needs to be more heavily implemented in general, not only in the container of urban design workshops. Allowing the harsh reality of society to play its intended role in terms of altering the daily life of an individual is more beneficial than artificially shielding those negative, or opposing, discussions.

- What is the structure of the text and how does it address a thesis/ research question?

The text is a short essay, physically compact, yet rich with understanding. Sennett explains the problem that he believes exists within public space, and presents a solution in an efficient manner. His knowledge of the subject speaks for itself in the concise nature of the paper, reducing the draft to exclusively include the important points of the argument without any additional fluff. In doing so, he gains the attention of the reader, forming an immediate connection, thereby effectively delivering the idea of how public space should be approached in an urban setting.

- Who is the writer and how does this text fit into their main body of work/ theory/thinking?

Richard Sennett has written extensively about the social life within urban environments, the alterations in social labor, and the overall theory surrounding social behavior. All of his essays are backed by thorough research as well as personal opinions from first-hand experiences. His longevity and persistent attitude in the urban design field are the primary reasons he is perceived through a distinguished lens, providing a unique solution to many contemporary social issues in urban space. *The Civitas of Seeing* is a short work that is highly representative of the way in which Sennett views and works in the urban environment.

- Can you connect to thoughts of any other writer and if so how?

Sennett’s writing is full of warmth and integrity, two aspects comparable to C.S. Lewis. The text has an even flow between the author and the reader, comfortably making a conversation between the two.

- Identify two references that you will follow-up on

Justice and the City (Chapters that have not yet been read) by David Harvey and Jaquelin Robertson’s work

- Draw a visual aide memoir of the text or of its structure or represent any of its findings/statistics graphically



Image - Renshaw_Ryan

Urban Design Theory (Weekly Readings):

Reading 016 (3.08.21): *Sennett - Building and Dwelling*

- What is the central finding of the text or what have I learned from this writer?

Building and Dwelling is an essay concentrated on the role that a crowd plays in an urban setting, as well as the different approaches toward the inherent qualities of a crowd of people. Sennett discusses two opposing views, one by Gustave Le Bon, a reactive writer basing his opinions on the French revolution, and another by George Simmel, surrounding the meaning of feeling crowded. In short, the former discusses how a mob removes the sense of individuality, allowing people to act in an extreme way. The latter theory applies more anxiety and intensity to the urban way of life, producing an invisible cage held together with feelings of claustrophobia. Sennett expands upon Simmel's point, stating that the addition of sidewalks create a buffer between the street and facades of the buildings, alleviating some of the cluster that one might feel in an urban space. However, he then argues that an urban setting necessarily clumps people together, further theorizing that a sidewalk is a physical tool for compressing people. As opposed to a street with no setbacks, which applies a feeling of density by removing any outlets of escape, a sidewalk is an allocated space for circulation. This concentrates the level of social density, relieving the feeling of being crowded, while retaining the natural urban tendencies to clump together.

- Identify one quotation (a Telling Detail) in the text (noting the page number) and why it means something to your own quest?

The author creates an interesting dialogue around the role of an individual within an urban environment, or rather the lack of individuality that comes as a result of living in an urban space. While Le Bon offers that a mob of people eliminates the personal identity of everyone involved, the same can also be said of any crowd. A lack of individuality increases the degree with which one is integrated into the urban space, as Sennett says "Impersonality can protect the self" (p. 5). Removing each individual's unique attributes in regards to the public eye equally minimizes the singular person, allowing an urban setting to operate as an efficient machine. A philosophy that I strive to avoid.

- What is the structure of the text and how does it address a thesis/ research question?

Building and Dwelling is a short essay with a brief synopsis of how cluster impacts the social and physical spaces in a city through historical and opposing viewpoints, followed by Sennett adding his own interpretation. The author does not necessarily present a thesis, but rather a topic of discussion.

- Who is the writer and how does this text fit into their main body of work/ theory/thinking?

Richard Sennett has written extensively about the social life within urban environments, the alterations in social labor, and the overall theory surrounding social behavior. All of his essays are backed by thorough research as well as personal opinions from first-hand experiences. His longevity and persistent attitude in the urban design field are the primary reasons he is perceived through a distinguished lens, providing a unique solution to many contemporary social issues in urban space. *Building and Dwelling* is a piece that operates as a case study when compared to his other works, referencing historical ideas and applying them to modern situations.

- Can you connect to thoughts of any other writer and if so how?

Sennett's writing is full of warmth and integrity, two aspects comparable to C.S. Lewis. The text has an even flow between the author and the reader, comfortably making a conversation between the two.

- Identify two references that you will follow-up on

The Crowd by Le Bon and William H. Whyte's work

- Draw a visual aide memoir of the text or of its structure or represent any of its findings/statistics graphically



Image - Lbr_Andy

Urban Design Theory (Weekly Readings):

Reading 017 (3.08.21): *Sennett - The Public Realm*

- What is the central finding of the text or what have I learned from this writer?

The Public Realm is an essay wherein Sennett discusses the future of urban planning, along with the current issues that are plaguing modern cities across the world. He begins by stating that the concept of urbanity is progressing through an unstable evolution, which can be perceived through two different lenses. The first of these being a closed system, or one that places urbanism in a state of "harmonious equilibrium", but paralyzes the natural desire to expand and seek new forms of urban design. The alternative view being an open system, prone to inviting amateur ideas across a multitude of subjects in order to loose the defining restrictions placed upon urbanism. The author's contention with the modernist approach to developing a city is the lackluster energy surrounding anthropological culture, as well as the short shelf life of buildings (35 years for a new skyscraper in New York). The consistent demolition of architecture within an urban space is costly in terms of efficiency, resource management, and a sense of identity for the city. Sennett also mentions the importance of implementing borders rather than boundaries, wherein borders act as a magnet for social enterprise and boundaries as a barrier for the mutual exchange between two persons. Modern perspectives on urban architecture have created a notion that buildings are meant to be admired from a distance, acting as a boundary. However, in Sennett's opinion, buildings should act as an invitation to venture inside, serving as the border between interior and exterior. The creation of more borders will ironically produce a fluid environment, appealing to the idea of incomplete forms, leading to adaptable architectural.

- Identify one quotation (a Telling Detail) in the text (noting the page number) and why it means something to your own quest?

Richard Sennett states "Indeterminate is equated with impractical" (p. 12) near the end *The Public Realm*. This short sentence is incredibly telling, as he is discussing the way in which the modern world defines and accepts ideas. Sennett argues that incomplete projects do not rely on "specifications", and have the opportunity to flourish in urban environments. The lack of information regarding how long a building will last, or for the program in consideration, will inject flexibility into the space, thereby increasing its life-cycle and possible use of said space. Developing anti-rigid forms is incredibly important in order to progress technologically. Sennett likens the idea to the invention of computers, where engineers did not have a restrictive set of tasks that they envisioned the computers would be able to accomplish, rather they designed a piece of technology that could be used for an infinite amount of projects. I too, like Sennett, believe that in order to truly progress as a society, rigid structures and intransigent ideas cannot prevail over "unfinished objects".

- What is the structure of the text and how does it address a thesis/ research question?

The essay presents the thesis of what a city should be very early in the passage. Sennett then breaks down specific terms that he feels are influential when defining what a city should be, or what it shouldn't be. His explanations answer the questions around what modern urban environments are doing incorrectly, as well as his approach towards fixing them and turning them into ideal forms.

- Who is the writer and how does this text fit into their main body of work/ theory/thinking?

Richard Sennett has written extensively about the social life within urban environments, the alterations in social labor, and the overall theory surrounding social behavior. All of his essays are backed by thorough research as well as personal opinions from first-hand experiences. His longevity and persistent attitude in the urban design field are the primary reasons he is perceived through a distinguished lens, providing a unique solution to many contemporary social issues in urban space. *The Public Realm* can be classified as one of his quintessential essays, a well-rounded argument with a logical answer to the thesis.

- Can you connect to thoughts of any other writer and if so how?

Sennett's writing is full of warmth and integrity, two aspects comparable to C.S. Lewis. The text has an even flow between the author and the reader, comfortably making a conversation between the two.

- Identify two references that you will follow-up on

The Human Condition by Hannah Arendt and *The Fall of the Public Man* by Richard Sennett

- Draw a visual aide memoir of the text or of its structure or represent any of its findings/statistics graphically



Image - Ahmed_Ali

Urban Design Theory (Weekly Readings):

Reading 018 (3.31.21): *Fainstein - The Just City*

- What is the central finding of the text or what have I learned from this writer?

Fainstein approaches her discussion on potential alterations to the future of the urban environment in an unapologetically biased manner. She emphasizes the importance of elevating the role of justice within a city, even if that compromises overall efficiency and cost-benefit ratios. The citation of numerous 20th century authors influenced by Marxist ideologies, herself included, paint a predetermined resolution to the problems discussed in the essay. The foundation of her concept is sound, that being how space within an urban setting can be manipulated in order to provide a higher average standard of living. The methods, however, to achieve a state of equality can be described as socialist groupthink, plagued by a distorted vision of utopia. Fainstein expresses her thoughts on how the ideal form of justice reaches beyond distributional issues and uneven development planning. In doing so, she ironically celebrates the lack of justice by assuming that there are impactful "levels" of equality within the judicial system. Her perseverance when it comes to injecting ideas and policies that produce the "greater justice" force the reader to take what she has to say with a grain of salt, even though she presents several competent ideas, such as the "difference principle".

- Identify one quotation (a Telling Detail) in the text (noting the page number) and why it means something to your own quest?

Fainstein presents a highly argumentative essay, engaging with a multitude of authors in order to bolster her point of view for the future of cities. Unfortunately, she fails to insert a believable ebb and flow into her discussion, overloading *The Just City* with an overwhelming number of like-minded quotations, suffocating the reader with literary peer pressure. A majority of the work is centered around providing absolute equality, as well as improving the overall level of justice in the city for minority groups specifically. These two goals are contradictory. During an early discussion surrounding inequality in the urban setting, the author states, "...failing to take into account the impacts of policies on minorities and its blindness to questions of distribution" (p. 7). Fainstein is arguing for the distribution of resources, policies, and space in an equal manner, thereby raising the minimum level considered to be the standard of living in an urban environment. However, she fails to understand that the connection between justice, her main thesis, and equality, her primary argument for justice in the city, is anything but a cohesive link. Her stance on the public realm is cemented with good intentions, ideas that I would promote, but her unmistakably biased take on how to implement her ideas results in an entire upheaval of the concept itself, according to my interpretation.

- What is the structure of the text and how does it address a thesis/ research question?

The Just City is written in blocks of discussion, each with a plethora of citations from homogeneous authors. Fainstein's structure of the essay works well in delivering her perspectives of how to elevate the importance of justice within the city. Woefully, her ideas are flushed away through her combative choice of words, leading to literary fluff, diminishing the relevance of her concepts.

- Who is the writer and how does this text fit into their main body of work/ theory/thinking?

Susan Fainstein is a professor at the University of Harvard's graduate school of design. The majority of her works have centered around the ideas of distribution within the urban environment, and how large scale projects can alter the modern day city. *The Just City* is a traditional work, written later in her career (2013), but still illustrates her frame of mind and approach to handling spacial and societal problems in the urban context.

- Can you connect to thoughts of any other writer and if so how?

Fainstein's writing is that of a radical nature, indirectly seeking violence in exchange for a shift in society. Jean-Paul Marat's work during the French Revolution in the 18th century is the same in that regard, where both authors are driving their ideas' into the reader with a bruising force.

- Identify two references that you will follow-up on

The Contested City by J.H. Mollenkopf and *Searching for the Just City* by P. Marcuse

- Draw a visual aide memoir of the text or of its structure or represent any of its findings/statistics graphically

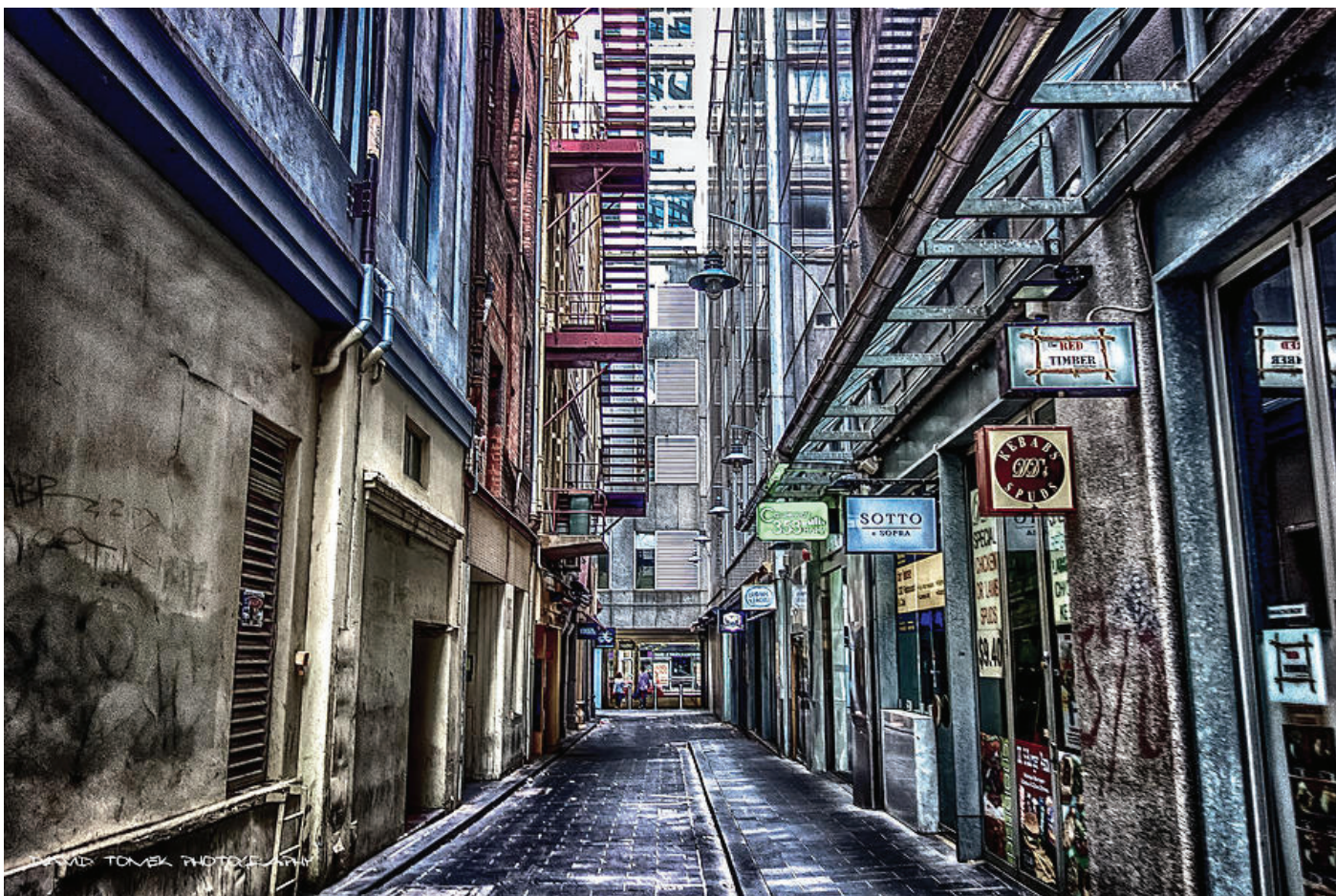


Image - Tomek_David

Urban Design Theory (Weekly Readings):

Reading 019 (3.31.21): *Harvey - Rebel Cities*

- What is the central finding of the text or what have I learned from this writer?

Harvey's *Rebel Cities*, specifically the first chapter "The Right to the City", is focused on the innate entitlements that the people should have in an urban space. He, along with urban sociologist Robert Park, contest that the city is mankind's opportunity to "remake the world he lives in more after his heart's desire" (p. 3). Harvey spends an exorbitant amount of time discussing the role of the city as it pertains to capitalism in order to illustrate how the right of the city has been stripped from the people for centuries. He concludes that for proper reform to prevail, in terms of allocating resources and space to the afflicted, unified global urban revolution is the only solution.

- Identify one quotation (a Telling Detail) in the text (noting the page number) and why it means something to your own quest?

Harvey outlines a substantial list of ideas that failed to return the right of the city back to the people, each idea emerging from a different theoretical background. One of these being Marxist values, the author states, "...where the special economic development zones policy now favored by central and state governments is leading to violence against agricultural producers, the grossest of which was the massacre at Nandigram in West Bengal, orchestrated by the ruling Marxist political party, to make way for large-scale Indonesian capital that is as much interested in urban property development as it is in industrial development." (p. 38). The Nandigram massacre, as well as other noted examples, such as Seoul in the 1990's and modern day Rio de Janeiro, are self-classified as "progressive movements", and continuously fail to achieve their goal of equalizing the distribution of space, money, and food in an urban environment. Harvey's considerable outline of the history of urban centers highlights the importance of knowing the impact of a decision based on relevant historical context. An idea that has allegedly escaped some 20th century urban design thinkers such as Susan Feinstein and, ironically, himself, but a concept that continues to serve a fundamental role in my approach to life.

- What is the structure of the text and how does it address a thesis/ research question?

Rebel Cities' first chapter, "The Right to the City", is a single protracted thought. The chapter is largely encompassed by historical moments, more often than not, resulting in revolution, highlighting why certain ideas do not function appropriately in the urban scene. Harvey does not necessarily present a thesis, rather he signifies the importance of bestowing rights to the people in an urban context in order to avoid certain circumstances demonstrated throughout the essay.

- Who is the writer and how does this text fit into their main body of work/ theory/thinking?

David Harvey is a British Marxist economic geographer and lecturer at the City University of New York. The majority of his essays circulate around the people and their right to the city, making *Rebel Cities* a staple of his work.

- Can you connect to thoughts of any other writer and if so how?

Harvey's inspiration from Karl Marx is obvious, his writing is reflective of this, along with other 19th and 20th century Russian writers, such as Ivan Bunin. These types of authors are captured by old methodologies that have been proven to not function as intended in modern society.

- Identify two references that you will follow-up on

Teetering on the Rim by Leslie Gill and *Inventing Local Democracy* by Rebecca Abers

- Draw a visual aide memoir of the text or of its structure or represent any of its findings/statistics graphically



Image - Tumlet_Peter

Urban Design Theory (Weekly Readings):

Reading 020 (3.31.21): Lefebvre - *Writings on Cities*

- What is the central finding of the text or what have I learned from this writer?

Lefebvre's chapter "The Right to the City" in *Writings on Cities*, stresses the importance of reaching toward a new urbanism, a new way of life, and a new connection between the people and the urban setting. The author is fixated on the idea that urban environments are successful spaces that elicit true happiness and should be driven down the throat of future generations. He explains that there are numerous methods to constructing a successful city, all of which vary in terms of culture and location. However, Lefebvre points out that there are unquestionably better concepts for urban settings to thrive, and through "experimental verification", the science of the city of the future can be reformed into social practice.

- Identify one quotation (a Telling Detail) in the text (noting the page number) and why it means something to your own quest?

Writings on Cities takes a balanced approach toward arguing for a deeper connection between the people and the urban context as a whole, up until the end of the chapter "The Right to the City". At this point, Lefebvre reveals his extremist nature when he states, "It does not matter whether the urban fabric encloses the countryside and what survives of peasant life, as long as the 'urban', place of encounter, priority of use value, inscription in space of a time promoted to the rank of a supreme resource among resources, finds its morphological base and its practico-material realization." (p. 168). The author's monomania toward the development of an urban-centric society has completely removed all rural characteristics that contribute to the success of modern cities. This lack of respect for other ways of life is a mode of thinking, in my opinion, that does not belong at a practical level.

- What is the structure of the text and how does it address a thesis/ research question?

The book *Writings on Cities* is divided into chapters, with this analysis specifically looking at chapter 14 "The Right to the City". The majority of this section is convoluted with an excessive amount of information that does not further his argument. Having said this, the main premise for Lefebvre's thesis is to "experiment" and "try new things" in order to see if his urban-centric theory is valid.

- Who is the writer and how does this text fit into their main body of work/ theory/thinking?

Henri Lefebvre was a French Marxist philosopher and sociologist. Many of his works deal with the way in which people can be productive in social spaces, with special interest during periods of alienation. He has written over sixty books and 300 essays, with *Writings on Cities* being one of his most famous and telling works.

- Can you connect to thoughts of any other writer and if so how?

Lefebvre's work is of the same mindset as David Harvey, but is written in a more complacent tone. The more casual approach towards Marxism in urban values is reminiscent of Karl Marx himself as well.

- Identify two references that you will follow-up on

The Foundation by Azimov and *Opus* by Jean-Clarence Lambert

- Draw a visual aide memoir of the text or of its structure or represent any of its findings/statistics graphically



Image - Zoltowski_Lucas

Urban Design Theory (Weekly Readings):

Reading 021 (4.07.21): Kern - *City of Men*

- What is the central finding of the text or what have I learned from this writer?

"City of Men" is the introductory chapter of Kern's *The Feminist City*, a book written with the intent to reshape how modern urban environments are visualized in order to provide more opportunities for women. The author argues that women have been oppressed by a systematic patriarchal urban system for centuries, theorizing that the built environment is a physical representation of masculinity. Her resolution for creating a feminist space, indirectly invoking the desire to express unique identities, begins by developing a safer environment. She advocates, for example, constructing spaces such that women feel safe walking home alone at night, or making public transportation *feel* safer. She recognizes that changes may come with repercussions, such as increased policing of "communities of color" in order to produce the desired level of safety.

- Identify one quotation (a Telling Detail) in the text (noting the page number) and why it means something to your own quest?

"City of Men" is directed at re-forming the pre-existing structure of urban spaces, cities that have been dominated through patriarchal decisions, according to Kern. During her discussion on the degree to which the urban world caters to the male body, she inserts a thought that should be considered obvious, but contains more implications than what is shown on the surface. Kern states, "...that built environments reflect the societies that construct them." (p. 43). Her argument here is that the city itself is representative of masculine ideals, observing that even the materials (stone, glass, brick) are physical messengers meant to "shape the range of possibilities for individuals and groups". Her statement that the built environment reflects the constructing society is important to understanding how the urban world should be visualized in terms of the future of humanity. Plugging strong-willed ideas into my work is essential for developing the next epoch of humanity when it comes to the efficiency of space within the urban context.

- What is the structure of the text and how does it address a thesis/ research question?

The introductory chapter for *The Feminist City* is linear in the sense of debuting her thesis for the book, followed by an explanation with sources for why she believes change is needed. Kern explains her resolutions in depth later on in the book, but gives a sample in the introduction for how the imbalance between genders can be addressed, as in the further safety precautions for public transportation.

- Who is the writer and how does this text fit into their main body of work/ theory/thinking?

Leslie Kern is a professor at Mount Allison University for gender and geography/environment of women's studies. She is a self-identified feminist, academic, and urban philanthropist, with *The Feminist City* being a cornerstone for her other works such as *Selling the 'Scary City'*.

- Can you connect to thoughts of any other writer and if so how?

Leslie Kern's writing is subtle and powerful, seeking change through historical stories. Apart from the gap in culture and content, her work resembles that of Khaled Hosseini, in terms of providing the reader with confidence that the author is well versed in their topic of discussion.

- Identify two references that you will follow-up on

Selling the 'Scary City' by Leslie Kern and *Situated Knowledges* by Donna Haraway

- Draw a visual aide memoir of the text or of its structure or represent any of its findings/statistics graphically



Image - Hati_K.

Urban Design Theory (Weekly Readings):

Reading 022 (4.07.21): Day - *Feminist Approaches to Urban Design*

- What is the central finding of the text or what have I learned from this writer?

Day's approach to feminism in the urban environment comes from the viewpoint of empowering spaces in order to cater to the needs of women, specifically single mothers. She argues for a social system that elevates the lives of both women and men, drifting away from the current structure that attaches power to masculine attributes. Her recommendations in order to improve the lives of females in cities would be to implement urban spaces with easy access to schools, daycares, essential stores, and fitness centers. Day argues that this change in the physical landscape is the first of two fundamental alterations needed in order to create cities that are "more equitable for women" (p. 150). Having said this, she realizes that different cultures, as well as men and women, perceive public spaces through different lenses. In response to this, she pushes toward developing a network of spaces with meaningful characteristics rather than a larger single space with no boundaries or borders. This viewpoint, however, leads to an issue of segregation and lack of mingling between the two genders, pushing a reality based in disconnect rather than cohesive growth. Day's ideas are tuned towards shifting the public perception of women in the city as assertive users rather than victims of the environment.

- Identify one quotation (a Telling Detail) in the text (noting the page number) and why it means something to your own quest?

Feminist Approaches to Urban Design is a well written and balanced essay on why the urban context needs to be more supportive of women in the future. However, Day exposes a radical side when discussing the need to challenge gender norms in physical space when she states, "Examples might include women's health centers and women's bookstores." (p. 151). This sentence is a precursor to her idea of creating a network of spaces that each operate independently from their male counterparts, but one must ask the question, what will a woman's only bookstore or fitness center provide other than the promotion of segregation? This concept seems to be formed irrationally, a rigid idea that contains rough edges. Creating fluid thoughts that are adaptable to a variety of circumstances is essential to developing a way of thinking that has the potential to impact the future in a drastic way, an abstraction used frequently in my own workflow.

- What is the structure of the text and how does it address a thesis/ research question?

Feminist Approaches to Urban Design is an essay in a collection of essays titled 'Companion to Urban Design'. Day breaks the text up into subsections, making it easier for the reader to develop an understanding for the issues she is addressing. Her thesis is to create an urban space that elevates the lives of everyone, but women specifically. She provides multiple methods, such as restructuring the built environment to cater to the needs of a woman, that could work toward bringing that goal to fruition.

- Who is the writer and how does this text fit into their main body of work/ theory/thinking?

Kristen Day is a professor at New York University for the Culture and Society Urban Initiatives program. The majority of her work is focused on women, the public space, and the built environment, and how the three of those attributes can co-exist to improve the lives of people in an urban context, a concept that *Feminist Approaches to Design* directly addresses.

- Can you connect to thoughts of any other writer and if so how?

Day's balanced style of writing is reminiscent of Nathan Heller's approach to challenging subjects plaguing modern day society.

- Identify two references that you will follow-up on

Environment and Behavior by B. Fisher and *Campus Open Space: An Underutilized Potential* by Marcus Cooper

- Draw a visual aide memoir of the text or of its structure or represent any of its findings/statistics graphically



Image - Bishop_Keith

Urban Design Theory (Weekly Readings):

Reading 023 (4.07.21): *Rendell - Gender, Space, and Architecture*

- What is the central finding of the text or what have I learned from this writer?

Rendell's introduction on gender is fixed on defining the terms of sex, gender, and feminism through leading critiques in their respective fields. She discusses how the disconnect between postmodernism and feminism has likely led to the extreme advocates of feminine superiority, rather than promoting equality. Her concerns with the topic of gender come from the belief that social norms and preconceived notions of what a woman should be are being utilized to oppress women in positions of power.

- Identify one quotation (a Telling Detail) in the text (noting the page number) and why it means something to your own quest?

The author presents a wide variety of views from a multitude of references on the topic of gender, drowning out her own opinion of feminism in the world of architecture. In a statement that seems to advocate a future direction of urbanism, Rendell says, "...to challenge the opposition itself by showing that the feminine and female sexuality exceed the complementary role that they have been assigned in." (p. 4). The author is arguing for a shift in the way in which women are currently viewed publicly, that being as a "complementary" role to men. Her goals aim to equalize the social hierarchy, essentially redefining how spaces are designed and organized by removing the historically dominant patriarchal system. Inserting initiatives to promote equality between genders is a step in the right direction, however, in my opinion, the majority of fourth wave feminists strive for a position of dominance over the male gender, rather than equality.

- What is the structure of the text and how does it address a thesis/ research question?

The introduction, 'Gender', is a brief outline for Rendell's book, *Gender, Space and Architecture*. She treats the introduction as an extended abstract, referencing key words and authors, while preparing the reader for how the rest of the book will support her thesis, that being how to elevate the status of women in meaningful fields of work.

- Who is the writer and how does this text fit into their main body of work/ theory/thinking?

Jane Rendell has been a professor of architecture at the University of Nottingham, with a particular interest in architectural history and critiquing cultural essays. She has over a dozen published works, all of them interacting with architecture, and only a few entering the debate of gender and feminism, one of those being *Gender, Space, and Architecture*.

- Can you connect to thoughts of any other writer and if so how?

Matthew Butcher, a colleague of Rendell, has a similar writing style and purpose. They both seek to redefine architecture and how it is perceived through different cultures and genders.

- Identify two references that you will follow-up on

The Unhappy marriage of Marxism and feminism by Heidi Hartman and *Philosophy of Man* by Andrea Nye

- Draw a visual aide memoir of the text or of its structure or represent any of its findings/statistics graphically

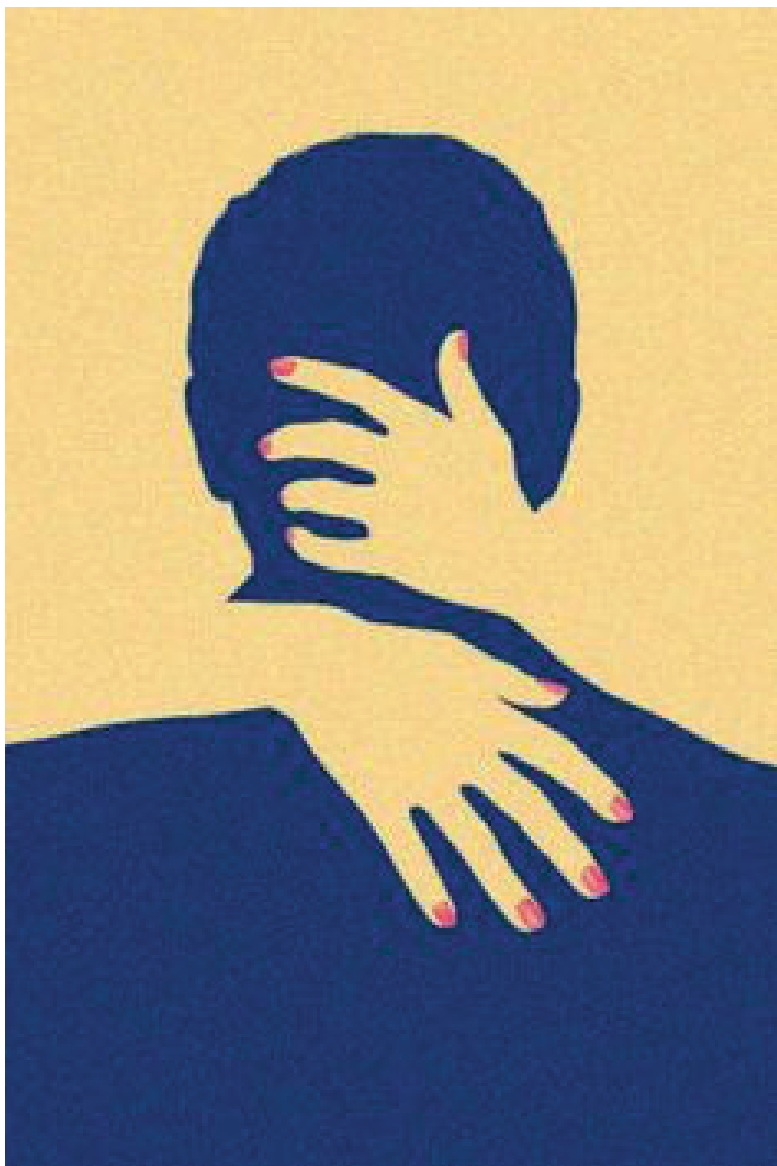


Image - Allen_Woody

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