ARCH 544P
The Architecture of Conflict:
Understanding Multi-Levels of Conflict in the Built Environment

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Office Hours: 1 hour before and after class & by appointment

OVERVIEW:

Buildings reflect people. They also reflect in the interactions between people. Thus, understanding how the built environment acts as a manifestation of these interactions is an important skill to have when working in architecture and urbanism urban design?. If buildings reflect how people act and react towards one another in times of peace, then these buildings will also play a key role in times of conflict. Conflict can range from community disputes to armed war, but two of the common denominators before, during, and after are people and architecture.

There is a growing awareness about the role the built environment plays in peace and conflict situations. Understanding the multi-levels of conflict in buildings and cities may mean being able to [re]build for peace more successfully. And, in a century of man-made disaster, knowing that a “one-size fits all’ model of design is not adequate when we have a multitude of people, communities, cities, and societies means creating better designs? to reflect the people they are meant for.

The aim of this course is to explore and discuss how the architecture of buildings and cities affect, and are affected by, multi-levels of conflict. To do so, we will take an interdisciplinary approach to a) studying various theories that underpin the built environment as a reflection of people, and b) the practical application of these theories as they exist in policy, politics, and public opinion on war and reconstruction. Beginning by discussing how the built environment is planned, moving through the contestation of this public and private space, noting the role the built environment plays in various levels of conflict, and ending with how we rebuild socially and physically after tragedy, this course exposes architecture as more than just form but [sic] as a function of identity, culture, and politics.

The format consists of a series of 10 seminar discussions introduced by the instructor and continued by students as an open discussion of the week’s lecture and assigned readings, as well as studio time. These seminars will also be supplemented by two critiques and a student? presentation.

Students will emerge with analytical tools to think and design critically, identify the politics and public policies at play during conflict and reconstruction, and prepare for the design and build procedure (maybe process?) by understanding how to create a policy, process, and project to meet the social indicators of peace and conflict in the built environment.
ASSIGNMENTS:

1. MAP: 10%

Map: Map the built environment using theories and elements discussed in class WITHOUT using any standard mapping technologies or techniques. For example: map the lifecycle of a Chinese food container to understand a particular ethnic geographic and economic group. Map will be presented in class.

2. PAPER + PITCH: 25%

Critical Paper: Discuss how the city would come under attack in a conflict and argue for resiliency measures and next steps. Must include a paper and pitch deck/presentation. This project will build upon your earlier mapping project, using theories and information used in the earlier study of an area – adding who/what/where in conflict.

3. POLICY + PROCESS + PROJECT: 45%

Rebuilding Policy+Process+Project: Imagine the worst has come to pass and the city has emerged from conflict war-torn and in need to rebuilding. Choose a design project, and include the policy and process it must go through, to rebuild. What is needed and why? Must include references to earlier projects and readings.

NOTE: PARTICIPATION: 10%

Attendance at sessions is mandatory. In addition, students are responsible for completing the weekly readings in preparation for class discussions.

OBJECTIVES:

- increase awareness of multi-disciplinary approaches to conflict and the built environment
- identify and understand policies and players that influence building and rebuilding before, during, and after conflict
- enhance research, writing, and analytical skills
- produce documents to aid in presenting projects to public and private audiences
- understand current debates in peace, conflict, and reconstruction
SYLLABUS

Module I: Planning – Note: Readings assigned should not be whole books. Please identify the portion of the book assigned and include page numbers. Be careful about overloading students with too much reading, but don't go too light on them either.

Week 1: Space, Place, and Architecture: *This lecture will introduce the course by looking at key theories that define how we think of spaces as physical and social, how they form meaning for people as sites and “places”, and how we build consciously and unconsciously via these theories and ideas.*


Week 2: The Built Environment I: *This lecture will go into depth on the different variables that impact the built environment, and as a result help to determine the design of its structures and citizens.*


Abraham Maslow’s Hierarchy of Human Needs

TBD : Vancouver policies re : inner city housing, gentrification, on + off reserve First Nations

Week 3: The Built Environment II: *Continuation of last week. This lecture will look at how the issues discussed in the last class create conflicts in cities at every level... and how the escalation of said conflicts leads to war.*

Lefebvre, Right to the City (articles TBD)
TBD: Vancouver debate on GLBT rights to public spaces (ie bathrooms in venues and schools)


Week 4: CRIT = Map

Module II: Destroying

Week 5: Conflicting Space I: *This lecture will discuss how cities are treated in war – how the buildings are viewed: differences between how cultural buildings, industrial infrastructure, and housing are treated differently under laws and acts of war.*

Geneva Conventions

TDB : differing policies/hisotry of policies protecting architecture in cities


TBD : Articles on Cities in conflict = Dubrovnic, Sarajevo, Dresden

Week 6: Conflicting Spaces II: *This lecture will building upon last week's discussion of cities in war to discuss the illegalities of war and how spaces and buildings are designed above, around, and outside of law, politics, and ethics*


“Lawfare in Gaza: Legislative Attack” (March 2009)
http://www.opendemocracy.net/article/legislative-attack

TBD: articles re Guantanamo and illegal detainment

Week 7: CRIT = Paper Presentation
Module III: Rebuilding

Week 8: Architecture for Humanity: This lecture will look at the phenomenon and practice of “architecture for humanity” and to what degree humanity is taken into account, what are the pros and cons of designing for aid, and how does it help or hinder the recipient. This phenomena shapes, and is shaped by, policy and perception of “humanity”.


Humanitarian Coalition of Canada

TDB: comparative responses in aid re country of conflict

Week 9: Rebuilding Process I: This lecture will look at the rebuilding process that is put in place by international organizations and how countries and architects comply.

Article 25: Building Solutions to Global Problem (website). http://www.article-25.org/


Week 10: Rebuilding Process II: This lecture will discuss the common problems with rebuilding, including the desire to erase and rebuild, or replicate and continue on, thereby creating various versions of a city in memory and reality.


Week 11: Architectural Influences: This lecture will discuss the various powers that influence how a city is [re]built. It will return to earlier themes and look at them in a new light, focusing on the stakeholders and funding that is important to projects as they move forward in the redesign of the built environment.

Invoking Lefebvre's 'right to the city'in South Africa today: A response to Walsh M Huchzermeyer - City, 2014 , Vol 18 Issue 1

Kim Dovey, Becoming Places: Urbanism/Architecture/Identity/Power (New York: Routledge, 2010),


TBD : websites re funding schemes (Word Bank, UN Habitat, etc.)

Week 12: Class Review: This lecture will be determined in-part with the students to discuss key issues they feel merit more attention.
COURSE BIBLIOGRAPHY


http://architectureandmorality.blogspot.com/.


______. *For Space*. London: Sage, 2005


Pred, Allan. “The Social Becomes the Spatial, The Spatial Becomes the Social:


______. “Lawfare in Gaza: Legislative Attack” (March 2009) [http://www.opendemocracy.net/article/legislative-attack](http://www.opendemocracy.net/article/legislative-attack)