

1er Colloque d'Architecture & Comportement au Monte Verità, Ascona, 6-8 avril 1993

Sur l'initiative d'*Architecture & Comportement* une trentaine de chercheurs de neuf pays (avec une forte présence américaine et scandinave) ont discuté (en anglais) pendant trois jours autour du thème "Priorities for Research on Human Aspects of The Built Environment". Il fut effectivement question de l'avenir de la recherche des sciences sociales et tout particulièrement de la psychologie en relation avec l'architecture. Le programme des journées fut intense. La présentation des communications a toujours été suivie de discussions très ouvertes et animées. Chacun relatait ses expériences et intentions dans des contextes culturels et politiques fort variés, mais avec le même espoir et la même conviction de toucher à des thèmes importants de la relation homme-environnement construit.

Le numéro 1/1993 d'*Architecture & Comportement* fut publié pour le colloque et contient les communications qui y furent présentées. Le lecteur peut s'y rapporter. David Chapin et Susan Saegert (de la City University of New York) furent co-responsables de ce numéro et tous les auteurs étaient présents au Colloque (à la seule exception de Claude Lévy-Leboyer, remplacée par Gabriel Moser). Une forte présence scandinave - à l'instigation du Swedish Council for Building Research - et quelques membres du comité consultatif d'*Architecture & Comportement* complétaient la liste des participants. Toute la conférence a été enregistrée.

Nous maintenons notre intention de publier les actes du Colloque sous forme de numéro spécial de la revue ou de livre, mais les ressources financières nécessaires pour la transcription des débats et leur mise au point nous font malheureusement encore défaut. Nous espérons résoudre ce problème d'ici au printemps. Entretemps et après discussion avec plusieurs des participants, nous avons décidé de publier dans ce numéro l'introduction de Kaj Noschis, organisateur du Colloque et rédacteur d'*Architecture & Comportement*, ainsi que les commentaires des intervenants qui ont bien voulu répondre à cette invitation, rédigés six mois après le Colloque.



Ascona, Ticino

Ces réflexions - précédées du résumé du Colloque par Nina Witoszek, une des participantes - permet au moins au lecteur d'avoir une idée du contenu des journées, ainsi que des pensées suscitées par les débats telles qu'elles ont perduré chez les intervenants.

Notons enfin, avec beaucoup de satisfaction pour les organisateurs, que tous les participants furent enchantés par le cadre naturel et construit dans lequel le Colloque s'est déroulé au Monte Verità. L'environnement a marqué favorablement la teneur fructueuse des discussions. Nous tenons par ailleurs à remercier les institutions suivantes qui ont - par leur soutien - garanti la réussite du Colloque:

- *Swedish Council for Building Research*
- *Conseil d'Etat du Canton du Tessin*
- *Conseil des Ecoles Polytechniques Fédérales*
- *Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne*
- *Département d'Architecture, EPFL*
- *Institut de Recherche sur l'Environnement Construit, EPFL et également la direction et le personnel de la Fondazione Monte Verità.*

1st Colloquium of *Architecture & Behaviour* at Monte Verità, Ascona, April 6-8, 1993

At the instigation of *Architecture & Behaviour*, about thirty researchers from nine countries (with a majority from the United States and Scandinavian countries) spent three days discussing the theme "Priorities for Research on Human Aspects of The Built Environment". In fact, the debate focussed on the present and the future of social sciences, and in particular of psychology in relation to architecture and design. The programme was intense, with presentations followed by very open and animated discussions in which all speakers related their experiences and intentions within different cultural and political contexts. However, there was shared hope and a conviction that the themes surrounding the relationship between people and the built environment remain very important.

The first issue of *Architecture & Behaviour* this year (Vol. 9/1) was published for the Colloquium and contained the papers that were discussed. The reader might refer to it. David Chapin and Susan Saegert (from the City University of New York) coedited the issue and all authors were present at the Colloquium (with the exception of Claude Lévy-Leboyer, who had to attend to other obligations and was replaced by Gabriel Moser). A group of Scandinavian researchers - supported by the Swedish Council for Building Research - and some members of the Advisory Board of *Architecture & Behaviour* completed the list of participants. All the debates were recorded.

We still intend to publish the proceedings of the Colloquium as a special issue of our journal or as a book, but the financial resources necessary for the transcription and editing of the debates are unfortunately still lacking. We do hope that this problem will be solved before next Spring. In the meantime and after discussing the question with several participants, we have decided to publish in this issue the introduction by Kaj Noschis, organizer of the Colloquium and Editor of *Architecture & Behaviour*. We also publish the comments written six months after the conference by invited speakers or by participants who accepted our invitation to prepare a text.



Fondazione Monte Verità, Ascona, Ticino (Arch. Emil Fahrenkamp, 1928)

These reflexions are preceded by a summary of the Colloquium written by one of the participants, Nina Witoszek. This will allow our readers to know what the conference was about and provide them with an overview of the debates, with the main points remembered by some of the participants.

It was with great satisfaction that the organizers saw that all the participants were enchanted by the inspiring setting at Monte Verità. It had a fruitful influence on the contents of the discussions. We would also like to express our gratitude to the following institutions, whose support guaranteed the success of the Colloquium:

- *Swedish Council for Building Research*
- *Conseil d'Etat du Canton du Tessin*
- *Council of the Federal Institutes of Technology*
- *Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne (EPFL)*
- *Department of Architecture, EPFL*
- *Research Institute of the Built Environment, EPFL*
as well as the direction and personnel of the Fondazione Monte Verità
(Ascona, Switzerland).

CONFERENCE

Ascona

Monte Verità

Ticino, Switzerland

PRIORITIES FOR RESEARCH ON HUMAN ASPECTS OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

April 6-8, 1993



From left: Roderick Lawrence, Michel Bassand, David Chapin and Oddvar Skjæveland.

MONTE VERITÀ

Between 1870 and 1920 anarchy, theosophy, vegetarianism, pacifism, nudism, dance, art, literature, psychology and mythology are all part of Ascona and Monte Verità. Bakunin, R. Steiner, Gräser, Henry Oedenkoven, F. von Wrangell, Isadora Duncan, Herman Hesse, Otto Gross, Mircea Eliade are part of this story.

The region around Ascona is famous for its natural beauty, the superb view on Lake Maggiore and the surrounding mountains, its flora, its earth magnetism (driving compasses astray), its mild microclimate and its ties with Italian language and culture.

Today the Monte Verità facilities and notably the sanatorium from 1928 have been restored by the Federal Institute of Technology and the Cantone Ticino. It has become a meeting and hotel centre. The other buildings testify partly as museums of the early century activities, located in a large beautiful park surrounding the hill with its magnificent view on the lake.

PROGRAMME**Tuesday, April 6, 4-7 pm.**

- Registration of participants and dinner

Wednesday, April 7

Morning, 9-12 am.:

* Opening of the Conference; Messages from

- Conseil des EPF

- G. Barbey, Department of Architecture/EPFL;

- M. Bassand; IREC/EPFL.

* K. Noschis: Introduction

* D. Chapin: "History of environmental design research in the U.S. and Europe"

* B. Olofsdotter (Swedish Council for Building Research):

"Priorities for forthcoming research in Sweden"

* Discussion

Lunch, 12-2 pm.

Afternoon, 2-5 pm.: Conferences:

* A. Ward, New Zealand:

"Resistance or Reaction? The Cultural Politics of Design"

* C. Cooper Marcus & D. Chapin, USA

"Design Guidelines: Reflections of Experience Passed"

* L.H. Schneekloth & R.G. Shibley, USA:

"The Practice of Placemaking"

* Discussion

Dinner, 6.30 pm.

Evening:

* 7.45.: D. Jauch, welcomig address from Cantone Ticino,

* 8 pm.: "The History of Monte Verità" and visit of the Museum

* 9 pm.: Musical programme:

Igor Longato, piano; Roberto Valtancoli, violin

(Debussy, Ravel, Stravinsky)

Thursday, April 8

Morning, 9-12 am. : Conferences:

* S. Saegert, USA :

"Charged Contexts: Difference, Emotion and Power in Environmental Design Research"

* G. H. Winkel, USA:

"Environmental Design Evaluation as a Change Oriented Research Process"

* M. Nordström, Sweden:

"The Fundamental Importance of Outdoor Space in the Experience of the Built Environment"

* G. Moser, France:

"New Trends in Environmental Psychology"

* P. Thompson:

"Politics in the Community Development Process"

* H. Ryd:

"Voices on Research about Needs and Demands People Associate with the Built Environment"

Lunch, 12-2 pm.

Afternoon, 2-4 pm.

* Final discussion: Directions for research

4 pm. End of the conference



Musical programme: Igor Longato, piano; Roberto Valtancoli, violin.



From left: Oddvar Skjåveland, Laura, Anthony Ward, Robert Shibley, Ingela Söderbaum, Mårgareta Gavatin, Dayna Thompson, Maria Nordström, Karla Werner, Phillip Thompson and Kaj Noschis.



From left: Gabriel Moser, Britt Olofsdotter, Clare Cooper Marcus, Gary Winkel, Athony Ward, Nina Witoszek and in front the back of Robert Shibley.



From right: David Chapin, Liisa Horelli, Roderick Lawrence, Gilles Barbey, Bill Michelson, Kaj Noschis, Susan Saegert, Dayna Thompson and Ingela Söderbaum.

Introduction to the Colloquium: Human Beings as Poets — Advocating Complexity

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My introduction has two parts. I will first say a few words about the origin of this colloquium, thus hinting at what we hope to gain from the debates. Secondly, I shall make a couple of suggestions on how we might inject something new in the way we view the relationship between design and research from the social sciences.

1. Origin of the Colloquium

A double impulsion moved us to organise this two day meeting. On the one hand, we were inspired by the Swedish Council for Building Research's decision to explore new theoretical approaches and angles for environment-behaviour studies. This option implies a quest for alternatives to the natural science paradigm, within a broad perspective concerned with human "malaise", social problems and the consequent economic losses for society and, conversely, with the aim of promoting health enhancing environments. The natural sciences paradigm's inadequacy stems from its limits when tackling environment-behaviour studies in a complex perspective. The question is: Are there alternatives within an academic research frame?

On the other hand, and as a second impulsion, as you may verify by looking at the journal's contents and editorials in the last ten years, *Architecture & Behaviour* has constantly attempted to relate social science research with architectural or design practice. It would not be right to claim that we have been very successful in this endeavour. *Architecture & Behaviour* remains a small journal, now respected by the scientific community, but still foreign to design professionals. The articles that we receive are mostly traditional research reports without any particular intention of addressing an audience of design practitioners. We have been trying to reach for the architectural community; some of our issues have found a wide distribution among architects, but they have not become our subscribers. Although today you will find the journal in most academic libraries and institutions as well as in the hands of some researchers, it is not being read by design professionals. This may obviously be considered "a sign from the market", but it also shows that we have not been successful enough in trying to bring social science studies closer to the architect. Incidentally, this situation is reflected in our still very tight budget. This should be a reason for us to question what we have done so far and this is why we felt very positive about the possibility of organizing this colloquium to discuss these issues together. Since *Architecture & Behaviour's* inception we have tried to bring social sciences closer to designers through what I call a "suggestive approach". We have hoped that the articles published would make the

architects think in a more questioning and comprehensive manner about the user or dweller and encourage them to see that their concerns go far beyond functional ones. Yet our publication policy may be challenged on several grounds. And it could be that the formulation of critical views will allow us to discover new ways of facing these challenges.

2. The User as Story-Teller

As a first step into our theme let me briefly use my privilege as a speaker and share with you a few ideas that I have been trying to develop in order to move further on the path that I just mentioned, that of the relationship between social scientists and designers.

Some of the following comments have their roots in a paper that I presented a couple of years ago at another conference (Noschis, 1989). It was a conference about creativity and the audience was made up of architects. I drew a parallel between Alvar Aalto's architecture and the Finnish national epic - the mythological poem - called the Kalevala. My aim was to say something about how Aalto took the user, or dweller, into account in his architecture. I now want to use the same mythological images and take them a little bit further, to explore the possibility that these images could be used to teach us something about how the user gets into a creative designer's project. More specifically, I have come to believe that this may also be something for the social scientist to meditate on.

In the Kalevala the Daughter of the Air (Ilmatar) is tired of being in the air and descends to the water and to let herself be woven by the waves. There is a tempest, waves envelop her and she becomes pregnant. For 700 years she remains in the sea without delivering her child. Finally she addresses herself to the sky and asks the old God (Ukko) to deliver her from her pregnancy. A duck is passing by - the word *sotka* stands for an aquatic bird -, looking for an unlikely spot on which to nest. The Daughter of the Air raises her knee above the water while remaining in the sea and the duck builds its nest on the knee. The duck then sits on her eggs and, as a consequence, the Daughter of the Air's knee gets warm, then hot, then too hot and she straightens her leg. The eggs fall into the water and one egg is broken. Part of the shell becomes the vault of heaven, another part the earth; the yolk produces the sun, the white of the egg becomes the moon, the clear fragments of the shell become stars, the unclear fragments become clouds. The Daughter of the Air spends nine further years in the water and then she begins to shape the world. By moving her hands, feet, back and sides she shapes coasts, islands and gulfs. But she is still pregnant. We learn that she carries a man in her womb, the bard (poet) Väinämöinen, now 700 years old. He has himself called for help from the sun, the moon and the stars to get out of the womb but, in the end, he must break out on his own. He then falls into the water, where he still has to swim for 8 years before reaching the shore. At this point Väinämöinen starts singing life into nature and into the human beings who are going to inhabit the earth.

Let me now look at this mythological story as a source of images describing the creative design process. After all the myth is a cosmogony so it is creation and design *par excellence*. The first task is to accumulate information and to look for ideas. Symbolically speaking, air is the place for ideas and associations ("light and just flying around"). In the myth these get connected with the sea, after the Daughter of the Air settles in the water, in "the depth of the unconscious". And this is where she gets

pregnant; the project is getting into a phase of maturation. It is a very long process, 700 years: we know that, in the Christian tradition, 7 stands for a time unit tied to the Creator. In fact in the myth there is now a second creative process, symbolized by the duck sitting on her eggs on the pregnant woman's knee. The Bible also tells two stories about the creation of the world. In the Kalevala, the actual creation of the world is a sudden and accidental process. From the history of ideas we know that intuition plays a major role in creativity - and each of us has probably experienced this with our own small ideas. Suddenly we have the solution: it just "is hot" and "pops up"- in the same way as the vault of the sky and the earth come from the broken eggshell. Many architects have spoken about the main idea or image of their projects in a similar vein. After a natural cycle of nine years, the Daughter of the Air begins to shape the coastline - she is really a designer and what I find especially interesting is that she does this while she is still pregnant with Man. The human being exists - he is even 700 years old, but he is still in the womb of the Creator. It is only when the earth is going to be inhabited that Man appears, having had to make his own way into the created project. Until then Man is only implicitly present in the designer's project, but he is present. A parallel with the design process is easy to draw. But my excitement about this parallel between myth and design process comes mainly from the image that follows. Väinämöinen, the bard or poet, *sings* life into the world. He brings life and fertility into vegetal, animal and human life by *singing* upon the shaped ground. If you have ever heard a traditional folk-singer - a bard - you know that it is really the story that counts - the story gives content and melody to the singing. Not that the story needs to be particularly logic: one episode sort of triggers the next in the mind of the bard himself.

This is where I believe that much of current design and social sciences is missing the point. Human beings are poets, they tell and sing life into the world, and these stories and the story telling process are crucial if we want to understand the user, but also if we want to relate design to social science research. I want to add a few words about this to make my point a little more explicit.

Generally the human being referred to in design, or for that matter in most sociological and psychological studies related to the built environment, is not very poetic. He is a functional being opening doors, looking out from windows, arranging stuff in wardrobes, sleeping and, nowadays, watching TV.

This is obviously an important aspect of the user of space, of the dweller, but it is not the aspect that I am referring to when I say that the user is a poet. As the myth suggests my user is a storyteller. The dweller tells stories, these stories get related to the built environment, become part of it, that is, they become "the life of the built environment". The stories are related to the use of space but, even more so and more simply, to what happens within the built environment. The stories become the "instructions for use" that are informally transmitted from one user to the other, from one generation to the next. But they are also the "collective memory" of the site, in other words its meaning. And I believe that an awareness that such stories exist is a condition for successful design in two respects. On a general level, spatial settings may be more or less "story-prone" - more or less open to memorable happenings. On a specific level, knowing about the stories tied to the setting in which a design project is supposed to be developed is equally essential. In his remarkable novel *The Songlines*, Bruce Chatwin (1987) tells how Australian aborigines know their way across their territories by singing while walking. The song tells them where they are, whose territory

it is, what there is and how to move on. In our own way we all know such songs about the places where we live, if these are places that are important to us. Let me give an example about this, an example that I am not very proud of since it concerns my own stupidity, but never mind... Where we live, we have a small garden that is part of a larger courtyard. Recently my wife and I decided to replace part of a large bush with a smaller plant, so that we would have more light. When our three children realized what had happened they were very upset. In fact our youngest, 12 year old son, wept most of the night. So I talked a lot about this with him. He told me that he used to play a lot with the other children hidden in this bush. I answered that this was years ago, that he didn't do it any more. He replied "but I love this bush, because *we used to play in it*". I said that I was sorry, that I hadn't realized that it was still so important for him. My son answered me "*That is precisely why I am so unhappy, that you don't realize that you get to love things because they carry secrets*". You can imagine that this struck me. I cannot tell you today how this will end, but at the moment we are sharing a participatory process with all the children who are connected to the courtyard, trying to redesign the place into something appropriate for carrying new stories. Yet, I also believe that this example has a more general value about what a place is for the user, something that I had grossly forgotten and that I believe is fairly often forgotten in design.

So this is my hint for design - make "settings that are able to carry stories". In fact all settings will by necessity carry stories, but there are settings that make us love them, as my son put it, and these are the ones I am referring to. But this is also my point about social science research as related to the built environment. We might view social scientists as such story collectors and transmitters. However, if we adopt such a perspective we may have reasons for pondering about the methodology to be used for this purpose, and about the way to order such knowledge so that it is useful for the creative designer. I would like to formulate just one concrete suggestion. I believe that Post-Occupancy Evaluation studies are important and may teach us quite a deal about the built environment today. However, if such studies concentrate on what works and what doesn't, they will not listen to the "songlines" necessarily related to that environment once it is used. It may also be useful for future design to know what happened in a particular spatial setting once, for example, it has to be accepted that the common laundry room is inadequate and that people will have to decide together what to do. Because this is where stories appear to be built into the environment and space becomes part of these stories.

I will end with another - short - version of the myth that I already told you. In this version, it is the Daughter of the Air who descends on the water to deliver Väinämöinen - the bard - after 700 years of pregnancy. So far we know it. But then Väinämöinen is swimming around and a duck looking for a place to nest sees the knee of Väinämöinen and sits on it. When Väinämöinen moves his knee because it is too hot, the egg - in this case a golden one - falls into the sea and goes to pieces. Then the poet sings and from the shell of the egg comes the sky and the earth, day and night.

So in this version Väinämöinen, the poet, *creates everything* - but even in this case he does it *by singing, by telling a story*. My point is that story-telling is very important. If we get used to using poetry as an analogy for the designer's creativity, we can also talk about the user as the one who "sings life into settings". In fact my hope is that during these two days we might be able to suggest something about how stories should be collected - or, for that matter, about how they are built and told - and to

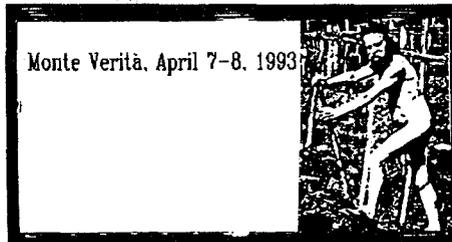
recognize that here might be common ground for social scientists as well as architects. And I do hope that we shall also get connected to the stories of Monte Verità!

The badge we carry (see below) is a picture of Raphael Salomson, who became the accountant of the Monte Verità community at the turn of the century after having worked as a commercial attaché in an Embassy. While staying in Monte Verità, when he wasn't bookkeeping and gardening he would walk in the nude around Ascona, selling a postcard on which it was written: "Shame has got clothes on us, honour will make us nude again". Today that saying has become part of the folklore of Monte Verità and as such it is only a funny anecdote. But somehow, I am wondering if we cannot relate to the idea that by simply being here and walking around on this hill, we might get some feeling-connection to other memories of this place. We would probably not write shame and honour on a postcard today, "beyond appearances" being perhaps a more contemporary expression. So, to conclude my tribute to imagination, let me suggest that whenever it appears to be of interest, we should not hesitate to venture beyond the appearances of academic respectability.

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Coffee break on the terrace — Maria Nordström and Bill Michelson.



From left: Harriet Ryd (back), Ingela Söderbaum, Maria Nordström & Bill Michelson, Marja Montserrat.



From left: Ingela Söderbaum (back), Harriet Ryd, Margareta Gavatin, Dayna Thompson, Robert Shibley and Lynda Schneekloth.

Notes pour un résumé du Colloque

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But

Le but de la conférence était de passer en revue et discuter la recherche actuelle sur l'environnement, liée au comportement social, à l'architecture et à la planification, ceci dans une perspective interdisciplinaire. La discussion a été basée sur l'expérience de chercheurs en sciences sociales, d'architectes et de représentants d'institutions subventionnant la recherche. Un objectif était aussi de rapprocher les institutions qui subventionnent la recherche des architectes et des chercheurs dans ce domaine et d'indiquer des axes pour une meilleure communication entre différentes disciplines.

Les présentations ont abordé une variété d'approches: de la recherche sur la planification de l'environnement construit, à la psychologie et à la socio-psychologie de l'environnement, à la politique des décisions sur l'environnement, jusqu'à l'administration des fonds alloués pour la recherche.

Déroulement de la Conférence

Il y a eu en tout dix présentations que l'on peut, de manière un peu grossière, regrouper en cinq approches thématiques:

1. *L'idée et les stratégies de la "fabrication de places" ("place making")*. Une optique "construction sociale de la réalité" pour analyser les places et la fabrication de places était soutenue par Kaj Noschis dans son exposé introductif. En s'appuyant sur l'ancienne mythologie finlandaise, Noschis a suggéré que notre perception de l'environnement et des places dépend des histoires que nous créons à leur propos, du langage que nous utilisons et des mythes que nous activons. L'approche théorique de Noschis peut-être contrastée avec l'orientation pratique dirigée vers la solution de problèmes par Lynda Schneekloth et Robert Shibley, deux praticiens de la "fabrication des places" ("place making"). Ils ont partagé leurs expériences avec l'auditoire en discutant de leurs rôles d'intervenants et de médiateurs entre occupants, responsables et commanditaires en cas de désaccords sur des interventions spatiales.

2. *Approches idéologiques dans la recherche et dans l'intervention sur l'environnement dans un contexte urbain*. Ici, les présentations ont souligné la façon dont la lutte de pouvoir et la structure sociale déterminent la politique culturelle de la planification spatiale. L'expérience d'Anthony Ward en Nouvelle Zélande et l'analyse de Susan Saegert à propos de "contextes chargés", ainsi que la critique de Phillip Thompson à propos de la politique municipale liée à l'environnement construit ont servi d'illustrations concrètes.

3. *L'évaluation des choix pour les plans d'architecture et les guides de planification*. Une présentation conjointe de David Chapin et Clare Cooper Marcus, de leurs expériences en tant qu'auteurs de manuels sur le design de l'environnement a lancé un débat sur cette question. Il a été relayé par les commentaires de Gary Winkel sur les

difficultés d'évaluation de caractéristiques physiques et sociales dans un contexte réel, avec ses propres contraintes.

4. *La recherche psychologique sur les attitudes humaines à l'égard de l'environnement physique et la façon dont elles influencent la qualité de la vie, l'identité et le bien-être.* Maria Nordström a présenté une contribution sur l'importance de l'espace extérieur pour les enfants dans leur expérience de l'environnement construit. Gabriel Moser a formulé des remarques sur les difficultés de choix méthodologique et la valeur relative des résultats dans les études de cas en psychologie de l'environnement.

5. *Rappel de l'histoire de la recherche sur l'environnement urbain.* Britt Olofsdotter a présenté l'histoire de la recherche financée par le Swedish Council for Building Research. Elle a illustré les principaux problèmes liés à la subvention, à la formulation de programmes, de stratégies, et à la recherche de réponses à de nouveaux défis.

Commentaire général

La conférence a été un événement fructueux. Il a permis à des spécialistes internationaux de s'exprimer et a créé un forum de débat sur les approches variées de la recherche concernant les aspects humains de l'environnement construit.

Parmi les moments intenses de la conférence, je noterai les présentations conjointes (telles que celles d'un architecte avec un psychologue ou d'un planificateur avec un responsable de planification urbaine). Ces contributions ont confirmé que la recherche sur l'environnement construit est un domaine très complexe qui demande et suggère une collaboration étroite entre représentants de disciplines diverses.

Notes critiques

1. La conférence a été dominée par les architectes et les psychologues. Les discussions ont manqué de points de vue d'anthropologues sociaux et de sociologues, alors qu'ils sont certainement indispensables dans ce domaine de recherche. La participation d'un groupe plus vaste de chercheurs et praticiens aurait peut-être mieux éclairé les priorités de recherche et aurait permis d'indiquer de façon plus précise les problèmes de communication qui existent actuellement entre les différentes disciplines.

2. Il y avait un certain déséquilibre entre l'approche européenne orientée vers la solution de problèmes de l'environnement et l'approche idéologiquement teintée et radicale de représentants américains très politisés.

3. Les présentations ont été prioritairement dirigées vers l'environnement construit, avec peu ou pas d'attention à l'environnement naturel et à sa signification pour les habitants des villes. A l'exception de la présentation de Maria Nordström, la nature et son rôle dans l'ensemble de l'environnement ont été négligés.

Notes for a Summary of the Colloquium

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Purpose

The aim of the conference was to review and discuss current research perspectives on environmental aspects of social behaviour, architecture and city planning from interdisciplinary perspectives. The discussion was based on the experience of social scientists, architects and representatives of research-funding institutions. An important objective was to close the gap between funding institutions, designers and researchers in the field and to outline strategies for a better communication between various disciplines.

The presentations touched upon a variety of approaches, from environmental design research, environmental psychology and sociopsychology, environmental politics to the administration of funds devoted to research of environmental aspects of architecture, design and city planning.

Structure of the Conference

There were altogether ten presentations at the conference, which could be roughly divided into five thematic groups:

1. *The idea and strategies of "place making"*. The "social construction of reality" approach to place and place making was proposed by Kaj Noschis in his introductory lecture. Using the old Finnish mythology, Noschis demonstrated how our perception of landscape and place depends on the stories we create about them, the language we use and the myths we activate. Noschis' theoretical approach was contrasted with a practical, problem-solving orientation of Lynda Schneekloth and Robert Shibley, two "placemaking" practitioners (or environmental consultants). They shared their experience as an intervening party in place-disputes between occupants, managers and communities.

2. *The ideological readings of environmental research and practice in the urban context*. These contributions showed the way in which power struggle and social structure determine the cultural politics of design. Anthony Ward's experience from New Zealand, Susan Saegert's analysis of "charged contexts" and Phillip Thompson's critique of municipal policy with regard to built environment belonged to this group.

3. *Environmental design evaluation and guidelines*. The contributions in this group included David Chapin's and Clare Cooper Marcus' joint presentation of their experiences with regard to environmental design and Gary Winkel's comments on the assessment of the physical and social characteristics of a setting.

4. *Psychological research of human attitudes to physical environment and the way it affects the quality of life, identity and welfare*. Here the main contributions were Maria Nordström's analysis of the importance of outdoor space in children's experience

of the built environment and Gabriel Moser's comments on the choice of methodologies and case studies within environmental psychology.

5. *The presentation of the history of environmentally oriented research in the field of urban studies by the representatives of funding institutions.* Britt Olofsdotter's account of the history of research financed by the Swedish Council for Building Research illustrated the main problems connected with funding, formulation of programmes, strategies and response to new challenges.

General comments

The conference was a fruitful meeting of international specialists and a forum for debate on the various approaches to the research on human aspects of the built environment.

One of the interesting challenges at the conference were team-presentations (such as an architect and a psychologist, or a designer and a city planner). These contributions showed that the environmental research of built environment is a highly complex field which demands and invites close collaboration between members of various disciplines.

Critical notes

1. The conference was dominated by architects and psychologists. The discussions revealed a lack of social-anthropological and sociological insights which are indeed indispensable within this research field. A participation of a wider selection of social scientists and practitioners in the field would perhaps illuminate better the "research priorities" and reveal more accurately the existing communication problems between the various disciplines.

2. There was a certain imbalance between the problem-oriented "European" approach to the environment and the ideologically charged, radical perceptions of the progressive, politically aware American team.

3. The presentations were dominated by the analysis of the built environment with little or no attention paid to the *natural environment* and its meaning for urban dwellers and city planners. With the exception of Maria Nordström's presentation, nature and its role in the built environment was an almost entirely neglected issue.



Susan Saegert and Kaj Noschis.

CONFERENCE AFTERTHOUGHTS

Comment I:

Susan Saegert:

The strongest impression was of several simultaneous conferences integrated most strongly by the congenial, beautiful and evocative setting.

Scandinavian, Swiss, New Zealand and United States participants seemed at times in different planes of reality, differences that were complicated but not eliminated by multi-cultural biographies. The differences in national context were reflected in the recent history of participants' work and in expectations for the future. Coming from the United States, the positive assumptions about applications of knowledge through government intervention seemed long ago and far away. In contrast, Europeans and Scandinavians were suddenly facing a less secure future in this regard, but living amidst examples of thoughtful, if bureaucratic, efforts at enhancing the common welfare.

Different discourses also derived from the professional context of researchers. Here sometimes the same people participated in more than one kind of conference: design focused, process/political change focused, or psychologically/spiritually focused. Interestingly these different foci did not seem to conflict but rather to fold in and out of each other, depending on context. Likewise old dichotomies of qualitative versus quantitative research, theoretical versus applied research seemed irrelevant. Perhaps under the sway of the nudist vegetarian ballet-dancing anarchists who previously inhabited the site, the conference seemed characterized by an acceptance of an irreducibly divergent and protean analysis of human-environment relations. Thus conversation was easy and a sense of shared missions possible.

In this new configuration, as I perceived it, partnerships among professionals and communities in many cases replaced client/expert relationships. Issues of who would become who's partner were related more to the presence or absence of shared values and goals with a specific place and time than to discipline or professional role. The importance and difficulty of defining a consensus on values and goals became a significant problem to be addressed. For some, definitions of values required confrontation of oppression within disciplines and the larger society. Others espoused a search for and nurturing of a potentially valuable core of human nature. Or perhaps others shared my experience of the tumultuous coexistence of the two positions and the trickiness of figuring out when each applied.

Lastly, the relationship of knowledge to action received every possible interpretation: knowledge serves the interest of the powerful and as such is a distortion of truth discoverable only through self-directed actions of the less powerful, knowledge exists primarily in action as it unfolds in time, accumulated scientific knowledge is the best guide to effective action, each actor knows differently and knowledge unfolds in the enactment, action is illusory and knowledge sits apart from it, etc. The upshot of this

was to place "Architecture" and "Behaviour" in a temporal, spatial and cultural context but within a discourse that crosses each of these dimensions.

It was a pleasure to think back on the conference. I would very much like to see the comments of other participants on the conference! Best regards,

*Susan Saegert
Environmental Psychology
The Graduate School and University Center
of The City University of New York*



Robert Schibley, partly hidden by Phillip Thompson, Liisa Horelli, Lynda Schneekloth and Dayna Thompson.

Comment II:

Lynda H. Schneekloth and Robert G. Shibley:

The researchers, practitioners and academics gathered at Ascona discussed new challenges to our collective work in support of making places for people. One aspect of the discussion focused on the national research institutes which are under pressure to be more effective, more accountable and demonstrate cost effectiveness in a situation where direct results are difficult to measure. The questions under consideration were if, and how, traditional research institutes can be transformed to accommodate changes in economic and national priorities. Will this require a reevaluation and possible modification of the original goals of such institutions? Will it be critical to examine the traditional ways of working through the methods of science?

The papers presented and the discussions surrounding them were concerned with the possibilities of locating and situating new insights into the organizational goals and structure of research institutions. One of the major themes that emerged was the attempt by many to rethink the traditional role of science as the sole method of work. For example, historical analysis was presented as a way of learning about the struggle to situate insights from research into building programs, and we have much to learn

from the struggles of others to be both accountable and effective. In addition, insights from recent work on the theory of knowledge and on feminist critiques of science demonstrate the inherently political nature of all work, including science. There was much discussion and how this might be useful in both understanding the current threat to research institutes and in offering additional service agenda for such organizations.

Other participants explored the idea that practice itself is a form of knowledge generation that uses intervention and construction as forms of inquiry. This way of working requires engaging the messiness of the world to effect change even while reflecting on the work, and learning how to both intervene and situate more general knowledge in new contexts. Practice as a form of research simultaneously demands a systematic reflection and the attitude of constant repair and adjustment. Further, the question of design guidelines as a translation of research into a form useful to design professionals was discussed, along with their benefits and limitations.

One broad category of new research initiative suggested by much of the discussions involves a challenge to investigate the processes by which knowledges are created and situated in the practice of making places. Such a challenge confirms the role of building research institutes as one of the few places able to capture insight from many acts of public and private sector construction. It extends the range of their investigations to the realm of practice per se. The knowledge they return to their constituencies involves technical and rational insight into building practices and, perhaps more importantly, provides ways to use the making and management of a national building stock part of larger national programs of social justice and emancipation.

These are but a few of the propositions engaged at the conference, all of which suggested the possibility of reframing building research in the context of a broader theoretical and political agenda. Situating the work about people and places into a new discourse offers the possibility of continued insights into quality places for people, and also of creating new forms of work that will, by their practice, allow us to see the process of worldmaking anew.

Thanks so much for your efforts to continue the dialogue of the Ascona conference. It is appreciated. It was difficult to decide just what aspect to write about since the papers and conversations were so rich and diverse. Sincerely,

*Lynda H. Schneekloth and Robert G. Shibley
School of Architecture and Planning
State University of New York at Buffalo
and The Caucus Partnership, Buffalo, New York*

Comment III:

David Chapin:

First in my memory was the great pleasure of being face to face in a well organized setting with people who brought quite different experiences and strong ideas to share. And, as an extension of the formal meetings, the informal exchanges were memorable as some of the otherwise unspoken political issues emerged and lively personalities surfaced. This face to face quality was particularly poignant for me because, as co-editor of the Special Issue, I had been "faxing" (and repeatedly "faxing") many of the authors who, until the conference, seemed somewhat abstract.

Thinking back also reminds me of things that I did not say, and that which I need to learn more about, both at the conference and in the writing in the Special Issue. For instance: (as Britt Olofsdotter pointed out) how women have been centrally important to the historic development of environmental social science. And this is especially true of especially feminist women; that for this field to have meaning other than mere replication of existing male-dominated power relations requires the recognition of this contribution of women who have had and continue to have the courage to find a path beyond the existing order of things.

This page is my Conference impressions, actually much shorter than would be appropriate to the impact of the event. Sincerely,

*David Chapin
Environmental Psychology
The Graduate School and University Centre
of The City University of New York*



Britt Olofsdotter and Anthony Ward, at the table, Maria Nordström and Bill Michelson.

Comment IV:

Anthony Ward:

Rereading the papers which were included in the first issue of the 1993 edition of *Architecture & Behaviour*, and upon the dialogue which took place around their presentation at the colloquium in Switzerland in April, reminded me of how difficult it had been to draw conclusions which might be of immediate use and interest to the sponsors, the Swedish Council for Building Research. In her own presentation, Britt Olofsdotter had painted a convincing picture of the difficulties facing the Council, as it responded to economic pressures, and to proposals that it move its sphere of interest into a University environment. She showed a real concern for the future of building research in Sweden, and looked to the participants to suggest some possible answers.

I feel that few of the papers, including my own, actually dealt with this issue very well at the time - partly because we did not have the opportunity to hear the critical nature of these concerns until all of the papers, including Ms. Olofsdotter's, were presented. It is now possible to reflect more constructively, perhaps, with hindsight.

It seems to me now that the issue faced by the Council, as by the entire Swedish community, is one which is not unique to them, but is (as I alluded at the time) the effect of significant changes in what has been called the era of late capitalism, in which the economy of the built environment has been shifted from use value to exchange value, and where buildings now operate as an essential component in the creation of capital accumulation. This shift has been accompanied by a parallel movement towards the wholesale privatisation of public space. It is not only that the role of the State in public life is being reduced (as conservatives acknowledge) but that the public space of community is being appropriated by private interests, and the sustenance and reproduction of community life itself is being systematically eroded. As designers, we carry a significant weight of responsibility to resist and prevent this destruction of civic life. Whereas, under a protective Welfare State it was possible to conduct environment/behaviour research with a degree of pragmatism, largely exemplified in work with a methodological bias (issues historically characterised by the papers of David Chapin and Clare Cooper Marcus on the pros and cons of design guidelines as well as Gary Winkel's on design evaluation and change), I believe it is less possible, in the hegemonic shift from the public to the private, to remain so dispassionate. As the disparities in material well-being between the "haves" and the "have-nots" continue to increase globally, designers are reflectively confronted with their complicity in the production and reproduction of regimes of social and economic oppression (to be blunt). Supposedly neutral research, separated from the need to address and change these disparities becomes, under such circumstances, an obscenity. In its place we must construct and defend a form of participatory or action research which dialogically includes its subjects as equal participants in the process of transforming their world. The paper by Lynda Schneekloth and Robert Shibley suggested some ways in which this might be approached, based upon their professional experience of *Placemaking* in the United States.

The proposal in Sweden to move Building Research into a University setting and to terminate its state funding clearly parallels the privatisation process we have already described. It means, for instance, that research will henceforth be funded primarily from

private sources and that research findings will be used to further the economic interests of those paying for the research. When this happens, as has largely happened in New Zealand already, it can be expected that certain things will follow:

1. Only those kinds of research which can eventually turn a profit will be funded.
2. Those areas of research which speak, instead, to ameliorating human suffering will be marginalised or ignored.
3. Theory will develop to the exclusion of any relationship to practice, since practice will now be in the hands of those paying for the research.
4. Economic concerns will displace social and community concerns as valid areas of research.
5. The needs of subordinated minority cultural groups will be ignored, and their cultural identity will be expunged under universalising notions of assimilation.

As a resistance to these pressures and tendencies, it is important that researchers work increasingly and directly with the wider community they serve, so as to continually bring to the centre of academic discourse issues of power, difference and voice, and to help form coalitions of support and empowerment for community groups whose needs might otherwise be overlooked. I believe that research into the role played by the environment in the formation of cultural identity is perhaps the largest and most fruitful area of possible study at this point in time (as events globally so well indicate). Women, the elderly, ethnic minorities, gays and other distinct social categories provide a fertile source of empowering work through which the apparently inexorable tendencies towards social, cultural and personal alienation might be resisted and eventually reversed.

I look back on that all-too-brief visit in Ascona with great warmth and affection. I hope that before too long we will be able to spend somewhat more time exploring the important issues that were raised at the colloquium. Very best wishes

*Anthony Ward
School of Architecture
The University of Auckland*

Comment V:

Maria Nordström:

It has struck me at conferences of environmental psychology that the place of the conference has rarely been taken into account of by the environmental psychologists and that conference arrangers have shown little, if any, interest in "incorporating" the place of conferences into their discussions. This, I believe is a mistake. The first time I clearly recognized this mistake was some years ago at a conference in the for me exotic as well as unknown city of Kyoto in Japan. Our seminars were held in a rectangular whitish room with covered windows so that we could not even look out. As few of the scholars in the room were Japanese and English was spoken, there was little which differed from being in a room anywhere in the Western world. For those of us who had just arrived to the conference after having flown there from the other hemisphere and who had not had time to get to know the city beforehand, there was an uneasiness in the situation due to this fact. For environmental psychologists not to recognize the importance of place in their own experiences as well as in their discussions is not only a mistake but also a missed opportunity. I was pleased in Ascona that the arrangers of the conference made it clear to us that place matters.

This was the theme of the conference both in the speeches by the arrangers and in their insistence on showing us the "spirit of the place". Monte Verità, our location, was so full of stories and memories of past events that we could not but see our gathering as part of a tradition, whose very meaning was confirming the importance of place to various pleasurable experiences. "Meeting" a place as strong in its identity as Ascona and Monte Verità evokes pleasure but of course in different ways for different individuals depending on where you come from.

Coming from Moscow, where I live at present, Ascona was an aesthetic and sensual shock. It was like stepping into a world of colour, variety and complexity as well as order. The shadow of 70 years of conformity and withheld expression is still over Moscow. Though the mess is greater today than previously - indicating the cracking of totalitarian era - the city does still not speak back to you. There is little to turn your attention to. You might find decayed century old jewels hidden in heaps of junk and dirt, if you eagerly and persistently try to find them. The Moscow environment, then, is one from which you will have to drag out the positive qualities.

Being a foreigner in such a place it is difficult to experience it as communicating with you. I often think of Svetlana Allilujeva, Stalin's daughter, who described how her personal belongings were taken away when she was a child because these belongings could influence her negatively. For a person at home in a place or a city without "personal belongings" - something to support your identity with as well as to sharpen it against - must be like living in a void. From developmental psychology, perceptual psychology and clinical psychology - among other branches of psychology - we know that it is of vital importance to us as humans to get an answer back and it is clear from environmental psychology that places can answer us as well as human beings. It is also clear, I think, that today in cities all over the world activities are arranged to strengthen the identities of the cities - festivals, carnivals - age old ways to evoke the spirits of places. And today in the Western world this is done with the object of attracting people's purchasing power and of stimulating their economic spending.

This is a matter we should become more clearly aware of in our work as environmental psychologists and incorporate into our professional perspective. At the conference two different roles for environmental psychologists were expressed. One is that of the environmental psychologist working along with physical planners to mediate between different groups in conflicts over space in order to suggest solutions of compromise acceptable to set goals and to the people involved. The other role is that of the traditional researcher whose work is directed towards developing knowledge about how people in different ages and with different background experience and use space. Both these roles are dependent on each other and could profit from interaction much like clinical psychologists/therapists make benefit of basic psychological research and basic psychological research profits from observations and experiences made by clinicians and therapists. The link between these different areas of creative activity is the sensitive environmental psychologist herself taking her own experiences and reactions to places seriously. But we need also as a professional group make it a good habit of taking the opportunity of reflecting on our reactions and experiences, to interpret them and use them creatively in our work.

It seems to me that architects and other physical planners - at times very clearly - behave in this way, only that they don't reflect on the question of the representativeness of their own experiences. Being psychologist we more easily can become aware of differences between our own experiences and those of others. This fact should however not keep us from recognizing our experiences and let them speak to us, personally and professionally; rather this should be the starting point for recognizing the reality of differences in experiencing the "same" physical place and for using this recognition in our professional work as practitioners and researchers in environmental psychology. Perhaps more than in any other respect this is how we differ professionally from other people involved with studying and handling space and place.

Viewing the Ascona conference and its participants from the perspective of what was said during the seminars and what had been written, the differences in the researchers' background made themselves evident. To European researchers this is not surprising as we from our history have been made conscious of the fact that across nearby borders people live with different languages and histories. Now, American researchers seem to share this perspective. Integrating this perspective within the theoretical body of environmental psychology seems to me a most valuable accomplishment to work for in future studies on human aspects in the built environment. This is a theme to be elaborated on in many ways. I myself have chosen a life-cycle perspective but there are many more. Having chosen a "basic facts"-perspective - like the life-stage - we still need to supplement it and be on our look out for how it is mediated through social, cultural and historical conditions. The confirmation of the importance of such conditions often appears in the above mentioned valuable reflections of oneself in a particular place.

Enclosed is my contribution. A lot of interesting thoughts (re)appeared and it was a pleasure taking the time to write them down. With best regards,

*Maria Nordström
The National Swedish Institute
for Building Research
Lund*

Comment VI:

Gabriel Moser:

L'idée de ce colloque est venue de la constatation d'un décalage croissant entre la réflexion des architectes et les travaux des chercheurs en sciences sociales, mettant en avant des difficultés de dialogue entre les bâtisseurs et les chercheurs. Kaj Noschis se demande dans l'introduction, si l'architecte n'est pas en quelque sorte en marge de ce dialogue, alors qu'il est primordial de reconnaître la complexité de l'usager et donc de s'appuyer sur une approche pluridisciplinaire et globale de la relation entre l'homme et l'environnement construit.

La nécessité de prendre en compte les valeurs, les désirs et les attentes des personnes pour qui l'on façonne l'environnement a été d'une façon ou d'une autre soulignée par l'ensemble des participants: Anthony Ward amène de ses vœux une participation créative de la part des utilisateurs. S. Saegert veut encourager un type démocratique et égalitaire de prises de décision. Gary Winkel souligne la nécessité d'identifier et de répondre aux valeurs de ceux qui utilisent l'environnement. Lynda Schneekloth et Robert Shibley préconisent une implication par l'action. En d'autres termes, il y a actuellement un net consensus entre chercheurs et bâtisseurs, sur le fait que la satisfaction de l'habitant n'est possible que si celui-ci a une certaine maîtrise sur son environnement immédiat. Et en impliquant les usagers, les architectes peuvent utilement contribuer à créer un environnement vivable.

Mais, comme le note David Chapin, si l'on est parti essentiellement de l'habitant et plus particulièrement du logement dans les savoirs et les utilisations de ces savoirs, il semble que l'on en soit resté là, malgré les tentatives de l'étendre à la prise en compte de l'environnement immédiat (cf. la contribution de Maria Nordström). Or, tout comme l'architecte doit se soucier de la structure de l'environnement urbain bâti dans lequel s'insère son projet, et donc prendre en compte la dimension urbanistique, le chercheur en sciences sociales doit intégrer des points de vue psychologiques, géographiques, économiques et sociaux, pour que les réponses ne soient pas trop parcellaires. Dans la mesure où l'on ne peut pas bâtir les villes à la campagne, il est nécessaire d'imaginer des compromis qui soient les meilleurs possibles. Il ne suffit pas de bien se sentir dans son appartement ou même dans son quartier, encore faut-il que les liens avec la vie économique et sociale de l'agglomération soient assurés correctement (transports domicile/travail; commerces; lieux de loisirs). Or ces aspects ont été singulièrement absents de ce colloque. Et ce n'est pas uniquement le fait des architectes, le chercheur en sciences sociales, qui n'intègre pas dans sa réflexion les multiples aspects de l'environnement dans son ensemble, est tout aussi bien en marge du dialogue que l'architecte.

S'appuyer sur une approche pluridisciplinaire et globale de la relation entre l'homme et l'environnement construit est bien à l'heure actuelle une nécessité. Encore faut-il que l'ensemble des acteurs aussi bien architectes que chercheurs soit conscient du domaine et des limites sur lesquels doit porter la prise en compte des différents savoirs. Le dialogue architectes/urbanistes/aménageurs du territoire et chercheurs ne doit pas nécessairement être global d'emblée, mais doit s'insérer dans une vision d'ensemble. Les architectes en charge d'un ensemble de logements doivent certes se soucier de l'implantation physique et sociale dans le quartier, mais ils s'appuieront essentielle-

ment sur les modes d'appropriation du logement et de son environnement immédiat, et ne se soucieront qu'accessoirement des contraintes de transports et d'approvisionnement, qui devraient davantage interpellier les urbanistes. Si l'on veut rendre la vie dans l'environnement bâti plus "vivable", le dialogue doit se faire à tous les niveaux, mais en tenant compte de l'échelle des problèmes à aborder et qui sont susceptibles d'être résolus par les interlocuteurs concernés.

Gabriel Moser

Laboratoire de Psychologie de l'Environnement

Université René Descartes-Paris-V

Comment VII:

Harriet Ryd:

Stadig är Ostadigheet (Impermanence is permanent).¹

Monte Verità: A Search for "True Research"

Kaj Noschis' introduction from the Finnish national epic "Kalevala" set the main theme of the conference. The saga on the creation of the world pointed towards *opening up* environmental planning to people's creativity. This means opening research in architectural psychology to the tacit knowledge, implemented in an artistic gestalt of Humanity's life-space. It also means *opening* ways for unconventional research which stimulates a discussion between environmental planners and all those who fill the environment with life; remodelling through all events taking place there. "Place-making is the relationships between people-people and people-place" and "Environment is temporal" are examples of statements that demonstrate this view of the provisional nature of environmental knowledge. Research never reaches the end of the road and can only aim at a visionary goal. "A new paradigm has emerged —holistically based — seeking awareness rather than knowledge" was a pointer towards the goals currently in the distance. Research ought to inspire the architect to "pay attention to emotions in creating places", as one of the participants expressed this ideal of knowledge.

What does this research look like? It may inspire the architect to be open to people's creativity. It regards environmental planning as an ongoing activity, staged both by experts and by users of the environment. "Design is a constant process as part of history." Research should show how users can acquire a voice in discussions on physical planning and how they can contribute to the continuously ongoing changes to what is built. It can be characterised as research *in* the interplay between people and environment. It differs from the more traditional research *on* the interplay between people and environment, in that here the researcher stands "with all his fingers in the pie". On the basis of a metatheoretical analysis of the construction of a research paradigm², one

¹ Quotation from a poem "Swijklige Wärldens oundwijklige Öd-Dödsliheet Sorg-Tröstande Liiksang" written in the 1660s by the Swedish poet Lasse Lucidor.

² Törnebohm, H. (1977), Paradigm i vetenskapsteori (Metatheoretical Analysis of Paradigms), Rapport nr. 91, Avid, för vetenskapsteori, University of Gothenburg, Sweden.

can describe the changes as concerned with the researcher's image of the world, scientific ideal, research perspective, researcher's role as well as view of the ethics and aesthetics of research.

Image of the world: "Impermanence is permanent", nothing is static, all is transient, we must be prepared for change. We must recognise the multicultural reality and see everything in its context. Thinking in terms of sustainable circulation is vitally important.

Scientific ideal: Research must create consciousness about the understanding of the voices of the neglected and tone down the demand for generalisability. This does not entail sloppy research, but demands sound theory on people's way of creating meaning in their lives and on the role of the physical environment in this process.

Perspective of research: It should not provide recipes for how experts should deal with objective facts concerning people's needs and demands. The research approach is emancipatory, it interprets, puts forward diverse opinions and is a channel for neglected groups. Here, two important perspectives are the feminist and the marxist ones.

Ethics: State your own position and help develop people's own sense of responsibility. Adapt the message to the need for knowledge that participants, both experts and users, have in various stages of the processes of building and maintenance.

Aesthetics: Create research information that "has a genuine ring" to the recipient of research, regard it as important to inspire both the architect in the conceptual phase and the user to become involved.

What was the result of the search for a "true" research? The answer naturally is that there is no single truth - research should have a multipersonal and multicultural approach. This is easy to say and difficult to do in a harmonious manner. The only advice that could be given to researchers, experts and users was: Be open to inspiring angles of approach, create space for open discussions, be mindful that "impermanence is permanent".

Harriet Ryd
Department of Architecture / Form and Environment
Royal Institute of Technology
100 44 Stockholm
Sweden



From left: Lynda Schneekloth, Robert Shibley, Ingela Söderbaum, Margareta Gavatin, Dayna Thompson, Maria Nordström & Karla Werner partly hidden, Phillip Thompson, Michel Bassand, Susan Saegert, Kaj Noschis, and Liisa Hörelli, David Chapin, Dagfinn As and Harriet Ryd.