Design Activism:

L ARCH 571 Community Design Research

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Course Website http://courses.washington.edu/activism/

How can designers and planners become active agents in making positive changes in the world? How can design and planning be part of a movement for social and environmental justice? How can activism reinvigorate the social practice of architecture, landscape architecture, urban design, and planning? 'Design Activism' encompasses a wide range of socially and environmentally responsible actions in design and planning. From community advocacy in American inner cities and the tsunami relief efforts in South Asia to proposed alternatives to Seattle's waterfront planning, the involvement of design and planning professionals testifies to the significance of design activism in making positive social and environmental change.

This seminar examines the dialectic connection between activism and design/planning practice as well as the politics and ethics of engaging in activism in the context of design and planning. The course covers both theoretical frameworks and practical knowledge of citizen movement and social/environmental activism. Discussion will be informed by cases studies from Seattle and abroad. Guest speakers will include design and planning professionals and activists currently engaged in grassroots movements. The seminar will complement L ARCH 503 Community Design Studio, which provides the grounded experiences for reflection and discussion during class.

Course Objectives –

- To familiarize with theories and literature that inform design activism
- To learn from experienced activist/designers about the practice of design activism
- To develop a critical knowledge and viewpoint on the practice of design activism
- To complement the 503 studio process

Readings – Each lecture has a set of required readings. You are required to complete each set of readings and be prepared to discuss the readings in class (see Course Schedule). The readings (including supplemental resources) are available through UW Library's electronic course reserves—https://eres.lib.washington.edu/eres/coursepass.aspx?cid=6836. Some of the articles appear in the required textbook: "Expanding Architecture: Design as Activism," edited by Bryan Bell and Katie Wakeford (Metropolis Book, 2008), available at the University Bookstore.

Assignments & Grades* –

1. Class discussion & participation: (30%) sign up for one of the sessions to lead a discussion of the assigned readings for that day.

2. Case study presentation: (30%) research a case of design activism and present your findings in class using the frameworks and concepts introduced in earlier sessions.

3. Final paper: (40%) develop your case study into a full paper, complete with proper citations. At the minimum, a case study should include the following information: place, time, context (social, institutional, physical, political), actors, issues, strategies/tactics, outcomes, illustrations, and evaluation.

Direct Actions Option – In lieu of the case study presentation and full paper, you may select this option: as an individual or group (2-3), identify an issue and an opportunity in which design activism can bring about positive change. Develop and implement a course of actions to address the identified issue. The individual or group shall engage in analysis of the context, actors, and issues (using frameworks introduced in class) and formulate strategies and tactics toward addressing the issues. Present your outcomes or work-in-progress in class and submit a memo outlining the process, methods, and outcomes as your final deliverable.

Optional: You are highly encouraged to participate in the MLK Day of Service activities coordinated through the UW Carlson Center. To find out how to participate in this one-day event, Visit the UW Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service web site - http://www.depts.washington.edu/mlkjr, where you can register for a project as an individual or as a group. Sign up today! The final registration deadline is Thursday, January 15, 2009.

*Late submission of assignments is subject to reduction of grades

Course Schedule – (subject to change)

Week	Topics	Readings
1	1/5 **Course overview**; precedents: a history of activism	Olmsted, Frederick Law. 1870. Public Parks and the Enlargement of Towns. In Larice, Michael and Elizabeth Macdonald (eds.), *The Urban Design Reader*, pp. 28-34. New York: Routledge. Stohr, Kate. 2006. Humanitarian Design. In Architecture for Humanities (ed.), *Design Like You Give a Damn!* pp. 33-55. New York: Metropolis Book.
	1/7 **Can revolution be designed?**	Rule, Alex. 2008. Revolution will not be designed. *In the Times.* Fisher, Thomas. 2008. *Public-Interest Architecture: A Needed and Inevitable Change.* In Bell, Bryan and Katie Wakeford (eds.), *Expanding Architecture: Design as Activism,* pp. 8-13. New York: Metropolis Books.
2	1/12 **Designer vs. Activist** -- critique of the technocratic rationalist paradigm	ASLA. 2007. ASLA Code of Professional Ethics (Amended 2007). Davidoff, David. 1965. Advocacy and Pluralism in Planning. Journal of the American Institute of Planners. Francis, Mark. 2004. Habits of the Proactive Practitioner. Feldman, Roberta M. 2004. Activist Practice: the Risky Business of Democratic Design.
	1/14 **Social movement theory** + Case of Union Point Park	Hou, Jeffrey and Michael Rios. 2003. Community-driven Placemaking: the Social Practice of Participatory Design in the Making of Union Point Park. McAdam, Doug, McCarthy, John D., Zald, Mayer N. 1996. Introduction: Opportunities, mobilization structures, and framing processes—toward a synthetic, comparative perspective on social movements.
3	1/19 **Holiday**	

	1/21 **Guest lecture:** Milenko Matanovic, Pomegranate Center	http://www.pomegranate.org/ Matanovic, Milenko. 2005. Involving Community in the Creation of Gathering Places. In Hou, Jeffrey, Mark Francis and Nathan Brightbill (eds.), *(Re)constructing Communities: Design Participation in the Face of Change*, pp. 169-174. Davis, CA: Center for Design Research.
4	1/26 **Public vs. Publics:** Design Activism for Whom?	Young, Iris Marion. 2002. The Ideal of Community and the Politics of Difference. In Bridge, Gary and Sophie Watson, eds. *The Blackwell City Reader*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing. Umemoto, K. 2001. Walking in Another's Shoes: Epistemological Challenges in Participatory Planning. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 21, 17-31.
	1/28 **Guest lecture:** Brice Maryman, Parks for All	http://parksandgreenspaceslevy.ning.com/
5	2/2 **Participation vs. Empowerment:** asset-based approach	Hendler-Voss, Amanda and Seth Hendler-Voss. 2008. Designing with an Asset-based Approach. In Bell, Bryan and Katie Wakeford (eds.), *Expanding Architecture: Design as Activism*, pp. 124-131. New York: Metropolis Books. Alinsky, Saul D. 1971. Rules for Radicals: A Practical Primer for Realistic Radicals. New York: Vintage Books. [Excerpt]
	2/4 **Guest lecture:** Jim Diers, author & former director, Seattle Department of Neighborhood	Diers, Jim. 2004. *Neighbor Power: Building Community the Seattle Way.* Seattle: University of Washington Press. [Introduction]
6	2/9 **Design Assistance vs. Design Activism:** humanitarian design	Freire, Paulo. 2000. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed.* New York: Continuum. [Excerpt] Sinclair, Cameron. 2006. Introduction: I Hope It's a Long List… In Architecture for Humanities (ed.), *Design Like You Give a Damn!* pp. 11-31. New York: Metropolis Book.
	2/11 **Guest lecture:** Ben Spencer, Assistant Professor, UWLA	
7	2/16 **Holiday**	
	2/18 **Case study:** Saving Chiku & Black-faced Spoonbill	Hester, Randolph T. 2005. Design Activism…For Whom? *Frameworks*, 1:8-15. Berkeley: College of Environmental Design, University of California, Berkeley. Hou, Jeffrey. 1999. From Activism to Sustainable Development: the Case of Chigu and the Anti-Binnan Movement. In Hester, Randolph T. and Corrina Kweskin (eds.), *Democratic Design in the Pacific Rim:*

		Japan, Taiwan and the United States, pp. 124-133. Mendocino, CA: Ridge Times Press.
8	2/23 **Activist Design vs. Design Activism**	Roberts, John. 2008. Community Activism vs. Community Design. *Places: Forum of Design for the Public Realm*, 20(2): 80-84. Hood, Walter J. 2008. Reimagining Center Street. *Places: Forum of Design for the Public Realm*, 20(2): 85-87. Hood, Walter. 1999. Opening Day is Not Everyday. In Hester, Randolph T. and Corrina Kweskin (eds.), *Democratic Design in the Pacific Rim: Japan, Taiwan and the United States*, pp. 116-123. Mendocino, CA: Ridge Times Press.
	2/25 **Case study:** Rebuilding Pongso-no-Ta'u	Hou, Jeffrey. 2008. Traditions, Transformation, and Community Design: Making of Two Ta'u Houses. In Bell, Bryan, and Katie Wakeford (Eds.), *Expanding Architecture: Design as Activism*, pp. 74-83. New York: Metropolis Books. Liu, John K-C. 1999. Tawo House: Building in the Face of Cultural Domination. In Hester, Randolph T. and Corrina Kweskin (eds.), *Democratic Design in the Pacific Rim: Japan, Taiwan and the United States*, pp. 64-77. Mendocino, CA: Ridge Times Press.
9	3/2 **Alternative Practices**	Peterson, John. 2008. Mobilizing Mainstream Professionals to Work for the Public Good. In Bell, Bryan and Katie Wakeford (eds.), *Expanding Architecture: Design as Activism*, pp. 94-103. New York: Metropolis Books. Curry, Rex. 2004. Community Design Centers. In Bell, Bryan, ed., *Good Deeds, Good Design: Community Service through Architecture*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press. Ball, Scott. 2004. Expanding the Role of the Architect. In Bell, Bryan, ed., *Good Deeds, Good Design: Community Service through Architecture*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press.
	3/4 **Case study presentations**	
10	3/9 **Case study presentations**	
	3/11 **Service vs. Learning:** reflection on studio + seminar	Hou, Jeffrey. 2007. Community Processes: the Catalytic Agency of Service Learning Studio. In Salama, A. and Wilkinson, N. (Eds.), *Design Studio Pedagogy: Horizons for the Future*. Urban International Press, UK.