

ARCH 306 Shelter

Fall 2017_4 units_Fridays_10:00am-12:50pm

Location: Watt 212

Instructor: Lauren Matchison, Associate Professor of Practice

Office: Harris Hall 208

Office Hours: by appointment

Contact Info: lmatchis@usc.edu

Course Description

“We shape our buildings: thereafter they shape us.” Sir Winston Churchill

This course asks a seemingly simple question – what is shelter? The answer however, is quite complex. Understanding shelter involves untangling many important and influential contextual factors, which we will study throughout the semester.

It is typically thought that people design domestic shelter based on physical opportunities and constraints (i.e. climate, materials, construction, etc). However, reliance on physical factors alone to create shelter is a gross oversimplification. Humans are social beings, operating within complex belief systems, family structures, social classes, gender relationships, etc. This course posits that it is these powerful social and cultural factors, rather than the physical factors, which truly drive the creation of shelter and provide a framework for value and order.

Professional architects do not create the majority of domestic shelter throughout the world – everyday people do – and they do it well. This course exposes the conflict between the priorities of traditional architect-guided works (which take considerable money and time to develop) with those shelters and settlements designed by everyday people (with scarce resources or time and little to no training). Understanding the nature of this clash of priorities allows for a more nuanced education in architecture. By critically examining and analyzing user-generated shelter and settlements (emergency housing, refugee camps, tent cities, slums, etc.) we will uncover basic ideas of humanity and shelter and will become more sensitive and engaged citizens as a result. Further, students will learn how humans endure throughout time and space; and find ways not only to survive, but also to thrive.

Topics of Study

- I. Placemaking and Shelter
- II. Sustainable Shelter and Social Responsibility
- III. Shelter in Emergent and Impoverished Conditions

Learning Objectives

1. To critically evaluate shelter as the manifestation of social and cultural influences at the scale of the personal and the communal. Students will recognize the specificity of context and place and their impact on domestic shelter.

2. To engage history as a lens through which to reveal fundamental insight into the basic nature of shelter and its intimate relationship with culture. Students will apply the lessons of history to expand their own social awareness as they examine man's endless struggle to create shelter in various conditions across the world.
3. To gain a clearer understanding of user-generated shelter and informal settlements around the world in order to better realize the underlying psychological issues humans infuse into domestic shelter.
4. This course relies heavily on critical thinking. Students will focus on reading, thinking, discussing and writing critically and with purpose.
5. To gain familiarity in writing persuasive essays.
6. The improved ability to competently participate in group discussion. Students will gain confidence by preparing and presenting their own ideas and opinions verbally.

Course Notes

To further facilitate learning, this course utilizes Blackboard online. Log in using your USC username and password at: <https://blackboard.usc.edu/>

Twitter feed: follow @ShelterUSC for current events relevant to course work.

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

Course Reader

All students are required to purchase the course reader - it will be necessary to have your own reader for the midterm and final exam (sharing will not be permitted). Course readers can be purchased online at: <http://www.universityreaders.com/> (click the Student "Buy Here" button on the top right side of the page).

Recommended Texts (these titles are recommended for further reading, but not required)

Al-Sabouni, Marwa. *The Battle for Home: The Vision of a Young Architect in Syria*. New York: NY: Thames and Hudson, 2016.

De Botton, Alain. *The Architecture of Happiness*. New York, NY: Pantheon, 2006.

Rybczynski, Witold. *Home: A Short History of an Idea*. New York, NY: Penguin, 1987.

Description and Assessment of Assignments

Reading Assignments

Readings will be assigned weekly. Students will write a *minimum 500-700 word critical response each week*. Writing about what you have read will help you understand difficult readings and synthesize ideas. Writing will also help prepare you to do well on the midterm and final exams. In addition, you will come to class ready to engage articulately in class discussions.

Weekly Class Discussions

Students must be prepared to discuss and critique the readings aloud in class each week. Participation will include asking and answering questions and being actively engaged in the

discussion. To earn full points, a student must attend class regularly and *always contribute* to the discussion by raising thoughtful questions, analyzing relevant issues, building on others' ideas, synthesizing across readings and discussions, expanding the class' perspective, and appropriately challenging assumptions and perspectives.

Reading Discussion Leader

In addition to general reading discussion, each student will be assigned a specific reading and asked to present a critical and interpretive response to the reading and lead the class in a subsequent discussion.

Design as Mitigation: Group Project Documentation & Presentation

In groups, students will research recent design projects that purport to improve the common good of a place, a people or a cause. These projects are not Architecture-with-a-capital-A projects. Rather they are works deeply connected to a place and culture and often built with the help of the people who will use them everyday. Many of these projects have been built in parts of the world where basic health, safety and survival are everyday concerns. By critically examining and analyzing these modest buildings, students will uncover basic ideas of humanity and methods of shelter, as well as ideas about the role of purposeful architecture in improving communities and lives. Further, students may become more sensitive and engaged citizens as a result.

Students will research and present factual information (background of the project and the designer/organization; identification of the problem to be solved; methods used to solve the problem; discussion of how the solution was implemented; results of the solution, etc) and a critical assessment of the process and results (successes and limitations of the project; viability, sustainability, reality, and reproducibility of the project.)

Midterm Exam

Written exam and essay covering all topics, lectures, readings, etc. up until this date.

Final Exam

Written exam and essay covering all topics, lectures, readings, etc. given after the midterm exam.

Grading Breakdown

Reading Assignments & Reading Discussion Leadership (25%)
Participation in Weekly Class Discussion (10%)
Design as Mitigation: Group Project Documentation & Presentation (15%)
Midterm Exam (25%)
Final Exam (25%)

Grading Scale

Course final grades will be determined using the following scale

A	95-100
A-	90-94
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	59 and below

Additional Policies

Late Work Policy

Late assignments: late reading assignments will be accepted one class period late (for excused absences only) and will be marked down one letter grade

Missed reading discussion or reading presentation: no credit will be given, no exceptions

Missed exam: no credit will be given, no exceptions

School of Architecture Attendance Policy

A student may miss the equivalent of one week of class sessions (in this case, **one excused** absences are permitted) without directly affecting the student's grade and ability to complete the course. An excused absence is a confirmed personal illness, family emergency, or religious holiday. For each absence over the allowed number, your grade can be lowered by 1/3-letter grade. If additional absences are required for a personal illness, family emergency, pre-approved academic reason/religious observance, you must discuss the situation with your faculty member immediately.

Any student not in class within the first 10 minutes is considered tardy, and any student absent (in any form including sleep, technological distraction, or by leaving mid class for a long bathroom/water break) for more than 1/3 of the class time can be considered fully absent. If arriving late, a student must be respectful of a class in session and do everything possible to minimize the disruption caused by a late arrival. It is always the student's responsibility to seek means (if possible) to make up work missed due to absences, not the instructor's, although such recourse is not always an option due to the nature of the material covered.

Cell Phone and Laptops

You will be asked to turn off (set to silent or vibrate mode) and put away your phones during all lectures. You may NOT use your laptop during lectures. I find that it can be too tempting to start checking email/going on facebook/surfing the web when you have your laptop in class. No laptops or other digital devices will be allowed during lecture.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct:

Plagiarism – presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Part B, Section 11, "Behavior Violating University Standards" <https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct: <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

Support Systems:

Student Counseling Services (SCS) - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

<https://engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling/>

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1-800-273-8255

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org>

Relationship & Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-4900 - 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp/>

Sexual Assault Resource Center

For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: <http://sarc.usc.edu/>

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX compliance – (213) 740-5086

Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. <https://equity.usc.edu/>

Bias Assessment Response and Support

Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. <https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support/>

Student Support & Advocacy – (213) 821-4710

Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. <https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa/>

Diversity at USC

Tabs for Events, Programs and Training, Task Force (including representatives for each school), Chronology, Participate, Resources for Students. <https://diversity.usc.edu/>

Religious Holidays

The University of Southern California recognizes the diversity of our community and the potential for conflicts involving academic activities and personal religious observation. The University provides a guide to such observances for reference and suggests that any concerns about lack of attendance or inability to participate fully in the course activity be fully aired at the start of the term. As a general principle, students should be excused from class for these events if properly documented and if provisions can be made to accommodate the absence and make up the lost work. Constraints on participation that conflict with adequate participation in the course and cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the faculty and the student need to be identified prior to the add/drop date for registration. After the add/drop date the University and the School of Architecture shall be the sole arbiter of what constitutes appropriate attendance and participation in a given course.

Sample Bibliography

- Agrest, Diana, Patricia Conway, and Leslie Weisman. *The Sex of Architecture*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1996.
- Al-Sabouni, Marwa. *The Battle for Home: The Vision of a Young Architect in Syria*. New York: NY: Thames and Hudson, 2016.
- Aquilino, Marie Jeannine. *Beyond Shelter: Architecture and Human Dignity*. New York, NY: Metropolis, 2011.
- Bachelard, Gaston. *The Poetics of Space*. Boston: Beacon, 1969.
- Ban, Shigeru, and Kartikeya Shodhan. "Disaster Relief: Ahmadabad." *Perspecta* 34 (2003): 150-61. *JSTOR*. Web. <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/1567332>>.
- Berke, Deborah. *Architecture of the Everyday*. Ed. Deborah Berke and Steven Harris. New York: Princeton Architectural, 1997.
- Bristol, Katharine. "The Pruitt Igoe Myth." *Journal of Architectural Education* 44.3 (1991): 163-71. *JSTOR*.
- Davis, Ian, ed. *Disasters and the Small Dwelling*. Oxford: Pergamon, 1981.
- De Botton, Alain. *The Architecture of Happiness*. New York: Pantheon, 2006.
- Dean, Andrea Oppenheimer, and Timothy Hursley. *Proceed and Be Bold: Rural Studio after Samuel Mockbee*. New York: Princeton Architectural, 2005.

- Douglas, Gordon. "Do-It Yourself Urban Design In The Help-Yourself City". *Architect Magazine*, August 2012,
- Echanove, Matias Sendoa. "Urban Information Systems and Public Participation: Learning from Mumbai, Tokyo and the World Wide Web." The University of Tokyo, 2007. Yoshimi Lab, The University of Tokyo, May 2007.
- Friedman, Alice T. "Not a Muse: The Client's Role at the Rietveld Schroder House." *The Sex of Architecture*. By Diana Agrest, Patricia Conway, and Leslie Weisman. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1996. 217-31.
- Gans, Deborah, and Matt Jelacic. "Displacement: The Realpolitik of Utopia." *Perspecta* 34 (2003): JSTOR.
- Glassie, Henry. "Architects, Vernacular Traditions, and Society." *Traditional Dwellings and Settlements* 1 (1990): 9-21.
- Griffin, Toni L. "American City Interrupted: What Spontaneous Interventions Can Teach Us About Taking Back The City". *Architect Magazine*, August 2012.
- Halprin, Anna. "Rituals of Space." *JAE* 29.1 (1975): 26-27. JSTOR.
- Hayden, Dolores. *Redesigning the American Dream Gender, Housing, and Family Life*. Boston: W. W. Norton &, 2002.
- Hosey, Lance. "Toward a Humane Environment: Sustainable Design and Social Justice." *Expanding Architecture: Design as Activism*. Ed. Bryan Bell and Katie Wakeford. New York: Metropolis Books, 2008. 34-40.
- Humanity, Architecture For. *Design Like You Give a Damn Architectural Responses to Humanitarian Crises*. New York: Metropolis, 2006.
- Inskeep, Steve. *Instant City Life and Death in Karachi*: Penguin, 2011.
- Jencks, Charles, and Edwin Heathcote. *The Architecture of Hope: Maggie's Cancer Caring Centres*. London: Frances Lincoln, 2010.
- Lancaster, John. "Next Stop, Squalor." *Smithsonian* Mar. 2007: n. pag. Web. <<http://http://www.smithsonianmag.com/people-places/squalor.html>>.
- Lang, Jon. "The Built Environment and Social Behavior: Architectural Determinism Reexamined." *VIA: Social and Culture Vision* IV (1980).
- Levinson, Nancy, ed. "Recovering." *Places* 21.1 (2009): n. pag.
- Menin, Sarah, ed. *Constructing Place: Mind and Matter*. New York: Routledge, 2003.
- Moudan, Anne Vernez. "The Changing Morphology of Suburban Neighborhoods" in Petruccioli, *Typological Process and Design Theory*, (Cambridge, MA: Aga Kahn Program for Islamic Architecture at Harvard University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology). 1998
- Neuwirth, Robert. *Shadow Cities A Billion Squatters, A Urban New World*. New York: Routledge, 2006.
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- Ockman, Joan. "Mirror Images: Technology, Consumption, and the Representation of Gender in American Architecture after World War II."
- Oliver, Paul. *Dwellings*. London: Phaidon, 2003.
- Pallasmaa, Juhani. *The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses*. Chichester: Wiley, 2012.
- Rapoport, Amos. *House Form and Culture*. Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 1969.
- Rybczynski, Witold. *Home: A Short History of an Idea*. New York, NY: Penguin, 1987. Print.
- Stohr, Kate. "100 Years of Humanitarian Design." *Design Like You Give a Damn Architectural Responses to Humanitarian Crises*. Ed. Architecture For Humanity. New York: Metropolis, 2006. 32-55.
- UNHCR. *Handbook for Emergencies*. 3rd ed. Geneva: UN High Commissioner for Refugees, 2007.
- United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT). *State of the World's Cities 2008 - 2009: Harmonious Cities*. London: Earthscan, 2008.
- "Urban Poverty in India: A Flourishing Slum." *The Economist* 19 Dec. 2007: n. pag. Print.
- Verderber, S. "Five Years After - Three New Orleans Neighborhoods." *JAE* 64 (2010): 107-20.
- Wesley, Richard. "The Idea of a House." *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 34 (1998): 118-27.
- Zumthor, Peter. "A Way of Looking at Things." *Architecture + Urbanism* (1998).

Course Schedule (subject to change)

I. PLACEMAKING AND SHELTER

“All architecture proposes an effect on the human mind, not merely a service to the human frame.”

-John Ruskin

WEEK 1_Friday, August 25

Introduction: Review of syllabus, course expectations, and course introduction
Reading 1 assigned

Lecture: **Space/Place_Center/Boundary/Ritual**
Themes: dwelling, ritual, geometry; Vitruvius' Myth of Origin; primitive place types; the hearth; fundamental architectural elements

WEEK 2_Friday, September 1

Lecture: **Fundamental Ideas of Body and Architecture: Human body and nature as designer for psychological order and well-being**
Themes: ordering systems and measuring space; anthropomorphism and primitive cultures; Vitruvius, Aristotle; rituals; ethnic domain; case study: UNESCO World Heritage Site: Koutammakou, The Land of the Batammariba, Togo, Africa

Discussion: Reading 1 due for discussion; reading 2 assigned

WEEK 3_Friday, September 8

Lecture: **The Persistence of the Primitive Hut**
Themes: architectural implications; hut in myth, literature and folklore; hut as art, spectacle, commodity

Discussion: Reading 2 due for discussion; reading 3 assigned

Film: *TINY: A Story about Living Small*, directed by Mueller and Smith, 2013.

WEEK 4_Friday, September 15

Lecture: **Architectural Determinism: Fact or Fiction?**
Themes: built environment and human behavior; architecture as a tool to improve economic conditions of a neighborhood; architecture and health, architecture and its effect on social class and status; case study: Maggie's Cancer Centre's and Los Angeles' Innercity Arts

Discussion: Reading 3 due for discussion; reading 4 assigned

II. SUSTAINABLE SHELTER AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

“Architecture, more than any other art form, is a social art and must rest on the social and cultural base of its time and place. For those of us who design and build, we must do so with an awareness of a more socially responsive architecture. The practice of architecture not only requires participation in the profession but it also requires civic engagement. As a social art, architecture must be made where it is and out of what exists there. The dilemma for every architect is how to advance our profession and our community with our talents rather than our talents being used to compromise them.”

-Samuel Mockbee

WEEK 5_Friday, September 22

- Lecture:** **Suburbia and Its Architectural Implications**
Themes: historical context and response to the modern city; the rise of the American suburb; racial exclusivity and gender stereotypes; urban theories and new urbanism; architectural alternatives; suburb as cultural product; one-size-fits-all housing and its shortcomings
- Discussion:** Reading 4 due for discussion; reading 5 assigned
- TED Talk:** Dunham-Jones, E. (2010). *Retrofitting Suburbia*.

WEEK 6_Friday, September 29

- Lecture:** **The Existence and Value of Contemporary Vernacular**
Themes: social sustainability; environmental sustainability; the work of Glenn Murcutt in the Australian Outback; social class and the 'Black Belt' of the Southern US; student architects serving low-income families; the work of Samuel Mockbee and the Rural Studio
- Discussion:** Reading 5 due for discussion; reading 6 assigned
- TED Talk:** Kere, D.F. (2013). *How to Build with Clay...and Community*.
Sinclair, C. (2010). *My Wish: A Call for Open-Source Architecture*.
- Film:** *Citizen Architect: Samuel Mockbee and the Spirit of the Rural Studio*, directed by Sam Wainwright Douglas, 2010.
- Other:** Design as Mitigation Project assigned

WEEK 7_Friday, October 6

- Review:** **Midterm Review**, midterm essay and in-class exam discussed
- Film:** *Urbanized*, directed by Gary Hustwit, 2011.
- Work Session:** Design as Mitigation group project

WEEK 8_Friday, October 13

Exam: **Midterm Exam** (in-class exam AND midterm essay)

III. SHELTER IN EMERGENT AND IMPOVERISHED CONDITIONS

“For good or ill, we live in an interdependent world. We can't escape each other. And while we have to fight our enemies, we can't possibly kill, jail or occupy all of them. Therefore, we have to spend our lives trying build a global community...”

-Bill Clinton

WEEK 9_Friday, October 20

Lecture: **The Projects: The Death of Modern Architecture?**
Themes: history of public housing in the US; architectural precedents in public housing design; the role of modernism in public housing; social, economic and demographic factors; the failure of high-rise high-density housing for low-income families, Pruitt-Igoe

Discussion: Reading 6 due for discussion; reading 7 assigned

TED Talk: Aravena, A. (2014). *My Philosophy? Bring the Community into the Process.*

WEEK 10_Friday, October 27

Lecture: **Homelessness in the US: Then and Now**
Themes: causes for homelessness; who are the homeless; Hoovervilles and tent cities; permanent supportive housing; homelessness in LA; UN-Habitat, Skid Row Housing Trust

Discussion: Reading 7 due for discussion; reading 8 assigned

TED Talk: Cruz, T. (2013). *How Architectural Innovations Migrate Across Borders.*

Design as Mitigation: Group presentation

WEEK 11_Friday, November 3

Lecture: **Emergency and Refugee Shelter – An Architect's Role**
Themes: UNHCR, definition of refugee; global scale of refugees, surface structure vs deep structure; guidelines for encampments; permaculture and incremental housing strategies; Shigeru Ban and paper tubes; Rwanda, Kobe

Discussion: Reading 8 due for discussion; reading 9 assigned

TED Talk: Ban, S. (2013). *Emergency Shelters Made from Paper.*
Parvin, A. (2013.) *Architecture For the People By the People.*

WEEK 12_Friday, November 10

Lecture: **Slums – Fatally Flawed or Model of New Urbanism?**
Themes: definition of slum household and slum area; user-generated settlements; reasons for slum development and growth; slum rehabilitation plans; lessons learned from informal settlements, Dharavi, Kibera

Discussion: Reading 9 due for discussion, reading 10 assigned

TED Talk: Murphy, M. (2016). *Architecture That's Built to Heal*.
Neuwirth, R. (2005). *The Hidden World of Shadow Cities*.

Design as Mitigation: Group presentation

WEEK 13_Friday, November 17

Lecture: **In Real-time: Students Out There Doing It! Jean Yang**
Themes: Case Study: Kibera, the largest slum in Africa; effects of extreme poverty, tribal factions, lack of resources; gauging the success of UN and non-profit interventions

Discussion: Reading 10 due for discussion

Design as Mitigation: Group presentation

WEEK 14_Friday, November 24

Holiday: **Thanksgiving Break**

WEEK 15_Friday, December 1

Review: **Final Exam Review**

Design as Mitigation: Group presentation

In-class assignment: Design games

WEEK 17_Monday, December 11

Exam: **Final Exam, 8am-10am**