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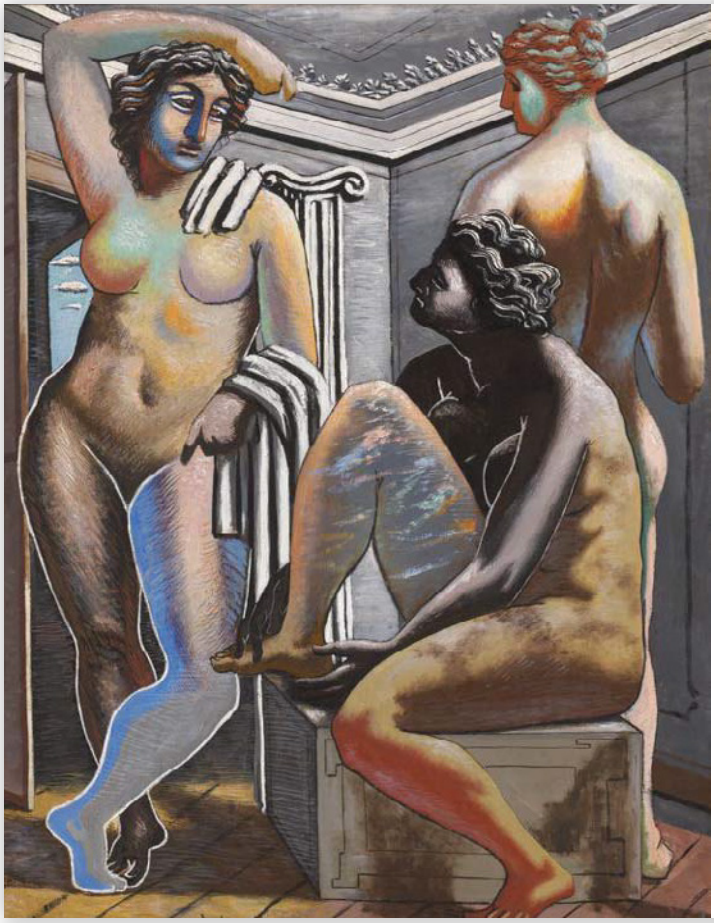
Research: Essay

MODELING ERIK ERIKSON'S DIAGRAM OF PSYCHOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

CENTER 17: SPACE AND PSYCHE/ THE CENTER FOR AMERICAN ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN 2012



MODELING ERIK ERIKSON'S DIAGRAM OF PSYCHOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Elizabeth Danze

Introduction

Created in the 1950s, Erik Homberger Erikson's well-known diagram of psychosocial development (hereinafter the Diagram) illustrates complex interactions and stages in human development using a limited two-dimensional form.[1] Is it possible that for this reason Erikson's Diagram has not been readily or completely understood? In an effort to fully realize its broader implications and applicability, I worked with three colleagues—a psychoanalyst and two architecture graduate students—to develop and apply Erikson's concepts in the design of three-dimensional physical models.[2] By applying graphic and spatial reasoning with architectural modeling and visualization techniques to the Diagram, could we make the Erikson's complex ideas about development visible and comprehensible to a wider audience? Giving us a start, or at least hope, was the fact that Erikson's thought, interdisciplinary by nature, often combined his own artistic inclinations with his ideas of psychosocial development. With our models we tried to continue the examination of human development the way Erikson might have—through the tools of another discipline. For Erikson it would have been art; for us, it is architecture.

Fig. 15 (oposite page) | Giorgio de Chirico, Italian, born Greece, 1888–1978, *The Eventuality of Destiny*, 1927, Oil on canvas, 57 1/2 x 45 in. (146 x 114.3 cm), Gift of Mrs. Frederic Clay Bartlett, 1964.213. The Art Institute of Chicago. Photography © The Art Institute of Chicago.

1 Widely published, the Diagram outlining the eight stages of human development was first presented at the White House Conference on Infancy and Childhood in 1950.

2 Dr. Stephen Sonnenberg, Patrick Winn, and Ruben Ruckman.

Erikson's Artistic Inclination

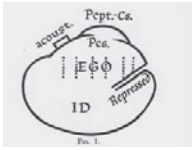
Erik Erikson was a seminal thinker who took the elusive process of human psychological development and searched for ways to articulate its complexity. Drawing on his early training and endeavors as an artist, he found inspiration in interdisciplinary interests. Personal friends anthropologist Margaret Mead and playwright William Gibson, among others, reinforced Erikson's tendency toward lateral and creative thinking.

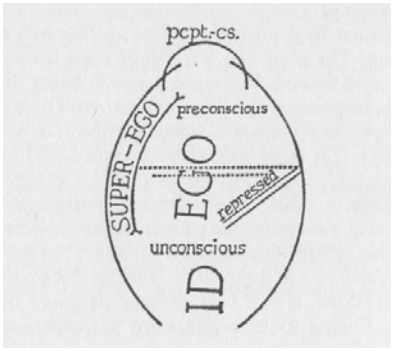
In the opening paragraph of "The Problem of Ego Identity," Erikson attributed his insights to his exposure to fields that were not aligned directly with psychoanalysis. "My use of this term [ego identity]," he writes, "reflected the dilemma of a psychoanalyst who was led to a new concept, not by theoretical preoccupation, but rather through the expansion of his clinical awareness of other fields (social anthropology and comparative education)."[3]

3 Erik H. Erikson, "The Problem of Ego Identity," Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association 4.1 (1956): 56.

Educated as an artist, Erikson was a profoundly visual and spatial thinker who invented novel ways to convey his insights on psychoanalysis and human development. On Erikson's early introduction to professional life as an analyst, Lawrence Friedman writes:

> Anna Freud offered to take him on as a child analyst-in-training for the very low fee of seven dollars a month. She would conduct daily analytic sessions with him, listening to his personal revelations, and would supervise his analytic work with children. . . . [Erikson] hesitated, mentioning that he "was hoping





Figs. 1a, 1b | Freud's Diagrams. Courtesy of the Freud Museum, London.

to be an artist, and I liked teaching children." Ms. Freud replied that he "could combine those interests with psychoanalysis," for such combinations were commonplace. Not long after the training analysis began, he told her that he questioned whether the psychoanalytic profession was for him: "I could not see a place for my artistic inclinations in such high intellectual endeavors that were so very 'intensely verbal.'"[4]

4 Lawrence J. Friedman, Identity's Architect, a Biography of Erik H. Erikson *(New York: Scribner, 1999) 69.*

Teaching children encouraged Erikson that psychoanalysts might accommodate his "artistic inclinations" and that, given what he knew of the artist in Sigmund Freud, it might also accommodate his visual talents at interpreting dreams.[5] Focusing on Freud's artistic qualities, Erikson wrote, "I soon detected in Freud's writings vivid manifestations of an indomitable visual curiosity which sent him hurrying to Italy and through her city squares and museums whenever his work permitted." Friedman adds that Erikson also recalled Freud's waiting room as "'absolutely filled with little antique statues by artists of the archaic Mediterranean,' attesting to a strong visual orientation that he felt preceded Freud's reliance on words and phrases."[6]

5 Friedman 70.

6 Friedman 71.

Freud and Psychic Structure Diagramming

Freud's body of theory relied a good deal on spatial structures in concept and on diagramming and modeling in representation and argument. As a neurologist, Freud was naturally interested in the brain and central nervous system. He believed that psychic structure could be explained neurologically, therefore anatomically, and therefore ultimately in a spatially representable, if necessarily abstract, way. In *The Ego and The Id* he developed what is called the Structural Theory, in which the mind had three parts: the Id (our basic desires), the Super-Ego (conscience), and the Ego (the part that thinks logically, that mediates between conscience and desire—between the demands of the world and the preservation and promotion of self—and that operates the defenses). These he represented as in Figure 1.

Fig. 2 (above) | Erikson's Diagram of Psychosocial Development as published in Erikson, "The Problem of Ego Identity," 75.

7 The publication by Lynn Gamwell and Mark Solms, produced on the occasion of an exhibit of Freud's medical drawings, shows a fascinating transformation in Freud's drawings from anatomical to conceptual and suggests a potential connection to the work of Erikson in the Diagram. From Neurology to Psychoanalysis: Sigmund Freud's Neurological Drawings and Diagrams of the Mind *(Binghamton, N.Y.: Binghamton University Art Museum, State University of New York, 2006).*

Prior to the Structural Theory, Freud had put forward the Topographic Theory: another spatially coded theory in which the Unconscious ("where" desires were repressed, i.e., hidden from view) resides "beneath" Consciousness. Indeed, Freud began a tradition in psychoanalysis where graphic representation, in the form of drawings and diagrams, became a part of how to formulate, understand, execute, and explain complex ideas and theories.[7]

Freud's own theory involved instincts. He believed the mind was coded with a plan and that during the first five years or so of life, the child went from the oral phase to the anal phase, followed by the phallic-Oedipal phase. In each phase, the corresponding part of the body was where people sought instinctual/sexual gratification and satisfaction. At that point, he paid little attention to the role of society and socialization as an influence. It was only later, in such books as *Civilization and Its Discontents* and *Moses and Monotheism*, that he engaged in writing about social psychology. In the earlier *The Ego and the Id*, he writes of parents as representatives of society creating the child's conscience, the superego. But his focus remained on the instincts and on the individual in the family.

This was a problem for Erikson, who, perhaps because of his training in early childhood education or his work as a child analyst under Anna Freud, found Freud's views too narrow on this score. He developed his psychosocial schema in response, and in the Diagram conceptualized a complex set of developmental tasks involving a set of progressive stages in life, in which later stages were dependent on what took place in earlier stages.[8] My team realized that to give a more complete sense of time, the Diagram needed to be recast in three dimensions. A physical, three-dimensional model could do what the two-dimensional diagram could not. How did we know this? We understood what architects know and experience every day at work: that a three-dimensional model can bring complex ideas to life. Most buildings are difficult to fully comprehend in two-dimensional or diagrammatic representations. Like archi-

8 Roberta R. Greene, "Psychosocial Theory," Comprehensive Handbook of Social Work and Social Welfare, Human Behavior in the Social Environment, *eds. Sowers, Karen M. Sowers and Ira C. Colby (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2008) 229–255.*

MODELING ERIK ERIKSON'S DIAGRAM OF PSYCHOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Fig. 3 (above) | Weaving by Joan M. Erikson, with technical assistance by Mary Schoenbrun. Photograph by Richard Schoenbrun. Image courtesy of Professor Thomas Banchoff and Brown University Library.

tects, my team would start with an idea, a sketch, a diagram. In this case, instead of starting with room lists or landscape elements, views or sunlight, we started with Erikson's Diagram (Fig. 2).

Erikson and the Two-Dimensional Diagram

As noted earlier, the Diagram was first published in his work *Childhood and Society* (1950)[9] and later developed in his classic paper "The Problem of Ego Identity" (1956). In it he describes eight stages of human development: Infancy, Early Childhood, Play Age, School Age, Adolescence, Young Adult, Adulthood, and Mature Age. In Erikson's words: "Identity appears as only one concept within a wider conception of the human life cycle, which envisages childhood as a *gradual* unfolding of personality through phase-specific psychosocial crises." Each stage was identified by "a criterion of relative psychosocial health and the corresponding criterion of relative psychosocial ill-health." In each stage, certain issues or "tasks" are to be confronted and mastered, building on the successful (or unsuccessful) completion of the preceding stage. As Erikson wrote:

> Each component comes to ascendance and finds its more or less lasting solution at the conclusion of "its" stage. It is thus *systematically related* to all the others, and all depend on the proper development at the proper time of each; although individual make-up and the nature of society determine the rate of development of each of them, and thus the ratio of all of them.[10]

Those best able to resolve the crises of adulthood were those who best resolved the challenges of childhood development and the identity crises of adolescence.

The Diagram consists of eight rows and eight columns—a "table" in modern nomenclature—with highlighted boxes running diagonally across the center from top left to bottom right. In each of the central boxes, the crisis preeminent at that stage is highlighted and posited in the form of a conflict between polar opposites. Friedman, in *Identity's Architect*, notes that Erikson charted his stages diagonally rather than vertically to show that all of the eight stages, which recorded conflict between polar opposites, were "present at the beginning of life and remain ever present."[11] The idea that the chain of critical developmental stages extended *across* the span of life was graphically better demonstrated this way rather than with a simple vertical column. Each box shown on the chart thus holds a potential relationship either vertically or horizontally to the central diagonal box indicating the dominant conflict. For example, the fifth vertical column in Figure 2 shows the precursors and subsequent developmental iterations of the adolescent identity crisis as they relate to the central challenge of *Identity versus Identity Diffusion*.[12]

Friedman notes that what was important to Erikson was not the time sequence—one stage following another in a progression—but how each stage was similar to and overlapped with the others: "All of 'the later stages are present in the earlier ones' and each concerned the same fundamental problem of mutuality—that is, each involved struggles to move beyond oneself and to become engaged with others."[13]

There are versions of Erikson's Diagram, interpreted and re-created by others, that eliminate the empty squares, compressing and reducing the chart into two vertical columns. Erikson was distressed at these interpretations. They took what was intended as a lattice that could capture the vast complexities and interconnectedness of human development and portrayed it in an overly reductive and definitive manner. "This 'search for measurable definitions' through mechanistic stage-by-stage descriptions," Friedman writes, "precluded the sense of constant flow among all eight stages. . . . Essentially, he felt that he was only beginning to get a sense of the vast complexity of the human life cycle, and he was irritated by popularizers who cast it in an overly finite form."[14]

Erikson's Diagram developed over his professional life as a tool he used to test his newer ideas. He had initially experimented with the diagonal lattice as a means to test his own ideas against Freud's view of psychosexual development. Friedman:

> By the late 1930s, [Erikson] had outlined four developmental stages. . . . His thinking had been close to Freud's on infantile sexual development, and he had hoped to chart the developmental process through all of human life. At the same time he had fashioned a diagram of early pre-genital development that featured eight squares running diagonally across a checkerboard from the bottom-left corner to the top right. Each square represented the intersection of a vertical axis listing bodily erotogenic zones and a horizontal axis listing impulses that activated the zones. Thinking spatially, of course, he had hoped to merge coverage of the full course of human life with a modified eight-square diagonal across a checkerboard-each square standing for a life stage. He sensed that the study of social change and culture might help in this effort, but he did not see precisely how.[15]

However, "he was unable to take the checkerboard chart rooted in Freudian psychosexual . . . development through childhood and beyond."[16]

Joan Erikson and Weaving the Diagram

In the chapter of *Wisdom and the Senses* titled "The Woven Life Cycle," Joan Erikson reinforces the aspect of Erikson's life-cycle theory that had the societal matrix, with all its environmental aspects as playing a tangible role in human development.[17][18] She also reminds us that an important aspect of the Diagram is how its *form*, with its scaffolding and active diagonal, "suggests movement, progress, steps and ultimately destination, in this case, a sense of wisdom." Joan Erikson, an artist and weaver, wanted to "guide our senses as well as our comprehensions by means of texture, content and color" weaving into the black and white diagram.[19] Joan Erikson realized, as did our team, that the Diagram was highly nuanced:

> Naturally I believed that I understood it completely in all of its ramifications. Actually I never really thoroughly *grasped* all of its implications until I rather playfully undertook the process of setting up a warp of eight colors and began to see the blending of these colors as my fingers guided threads of identical color through the warp. The threads themselves had duplicated the black-and-white chart—but in color. For the first time my mind and senses collaborated and made the idea manifest.[20]

Eight different colors depicted the basic strengths as well as the critical stages at which they become more "solid." An equal number of gray threads represented the opposing conflicting elements (Fig. 3).

Joan Erikson needed to *make* the diagram *physical* (a colorful weaving in her case, a physical model made of clear and colored acrylic in ours) in order to comprehend it more fully. In a process imbued with learning through the act of making, she used color to represent and differentiate, and so did we.

The way Joan Erikson worked was similar to the way we would work to build a three-dimensional model, a lattice (although only afterwards were we aware of her

9 Erik H. Erikson, Childhood and Society (New York: Norton, 1950).

10 E. Erikson, "The Problem of Ego Identity," 74–75.

11 Friedman 221.

12 E. Erikson, "The Problem of Ego Identity," 76–77.

13 Friedman 221.

14 Friedman 221–222.

15 Friedman 216.

16 Friedman 217.

17 While Erik Erikson is attributed as "author and theoretical architect," his wife Joan M. Erikson was instrumental in the development and ongoing refinement of the Diagram. Friedman, Identity's Architect *215–220.*

18 Joan M. Erikson, "The Woven Life Cycle," Wisdom and the Senses, the Way of Creativity *(New York: Norton, 1988) 74–112.*

19 J. Erikson, Wisdom and the Senses *75.*

20 J. Erikson, Wisdom and the Senses *78–79.*

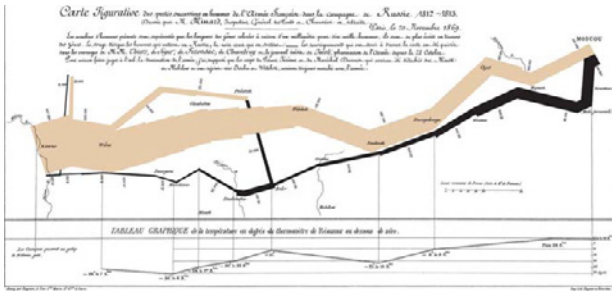


Fig. 4 (above) | Minard's's Table of Napolean's Invasion of Russia. Public Domain via Wikimedia Commons.

process). But first, let us look at how architects and designers have addressed managing complex information in need of clear formal expression.

An Architect's Perspective and Methods of Envisioning Information

As a practicing architect and research fellow with the Austin Center for Relational Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy, I was participating in a discussion section on Erikson's Diagram, led by Stephen Sonnenberg, when we were struck not only by the richness and significance of its application but also by the limits of its two-dimensionality. I was especially sensitive to the potential that lies in the process of drawing, diagramming, mapping, and modeling. I knew that a physical model is an instrument through which an idea can prove itself—in volume, surface, and line. And like weaving, model-*making*—the very measuring, cutting, and gluing—was an artistic act with materials that were more or less cooperative. Although, unlike painters and sculptors, architects do not work directly with the object of their labor—a building—the making of a model communicates almost as much.[21]

Architects understand that different modes of representation and visualization can influence our understanding of information. Architecture typically deals with complex problem solving and the connection of abstract concepts with tangible explanations.

A quick survey of approaches aligned with an architect's approach follow. Each approach is different yet contains at its core a key aspect of what was necessary to make the transformation from two-dimensional diagram to three-dimensional model. The first is a graphic that combines complex sets of statistical data; the second, a three-dimensional model that includes movement and the passage of time; the third, a conventional, albeit condensed, method for designing a building through drawing/diagram, modeling, and construction to a finished building.

The Table of Napoleon's Invasion of Russia

Edward Tufte's numerous books on data visualization are testaments to the brilliance with which the limitations of conventional two-dimensional graphics can be transcended. Tufte is Professor Emeritus of Political Science, Statistics, and Computer Science at Yale University.[22] An interdisciplinary scholar, Tufte frequently cites the 1885 graphic by Charles Joseph Minard depicting Napoleon's invasion of Russia in 1812 (Fig. 4).

The graphic plots multiple variables: "the size of the army, its location on a two-dimensional surface, direction of the army's movement, and temperature on various dates during the retreat from Moscow." As Tufte states, "It may well be the best statistical graphic ever drawn."[23] Erikson's Diagram, like Tufte's example, also has multiple variables but limited graphic means to depict them: Erikson's rather simple use of the grid and diagonal are not enough to demonstrate the complex interrelationships of which he spoke, nor is time clearly seen and experienced.

The Astronomical Orrery

An example of physical, three-dimensional modeling that captures a nearly imperceptible but profound set of conditions is the astronomical orrery: a mechanical device that traces, and indeed predicts, the movements of planets around the sun in the solar system by means of gears and a clockwork mechanism (Fig. 5).[24] Dating from the early eighteenth century, these devices today strike us as delightful gadgets. However, when one considers the apparent motion of the planets, *as observed from earth*, the nature of this system is far from obvious. If one adopts a model of a geocentric universe with earth at the center of celestial motion, the observed movement of the planets across the sky is irregular and epicyclic. Copernicus's *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium*, published in Nuremberg in 1543, challenged the accepted concept of the earth-centered universe. In Copernicus's heliocentric model, the sun resided at the center of the solar system, which radically simplified and regularized the motion of the planets into circular paths.[25]

Because the orrery can be seen moving in its entirety, what we see and understand only partially from looking at the night sky is fully revealed when we see an overview of how it works: it is almost God's view (or so it must have seemed). This is analogous to the Erikson model in the way we can observe space and time as having depth and dimension. Could Erikson help us see the entire human life cycle and all of its stages relative to one another over time?

The Seattle Public Library

Designed by the Office of Metropolitan Architecture (OMA), led by architects Rem Koolhaas and Joshua Ramus-Prince, the Seattle Public Library is perhaps the largest example of a building based on a diagram, an abstraction of the functions of the library, starting with its physical needs and crossing into the organization of books and subject matter. Section, plans, study models, and building were all shaped by the same set of data. Research informed a conceptual platform that included a core set of principles and programmatic requirements upon which the eventual building would be built. An early model shows the library's basic form, which did not change significantly as the project evolved past the research phase. "The starting point for this (distorted) form came from OMA's characteristic and graphically led method of functional analysis."[26] A series of color-coded bar charts were created by the architects to clearly show the size and interrelationships of each part of the library's complex program—Headquarters, Books, Assembly, Store, and Parking. The bar charts were then arranged vertically and became a way to understand the cross-sectional organization of the building. Simply put, the two-dimensional bar charts, by design, *became* the three-dimensional building. The program boxes, each a core library use derived from the bar chart, were stacked and staggered and wrapped in a diagonal skin. The result is a "new form to a well-established institutional type" (Figs. 6–8).[27]

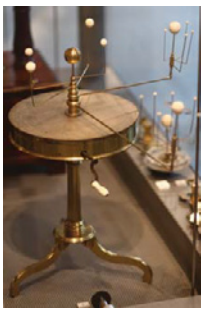


Fig. 5 (above) | Astronomical Orrery by Benjamin Martin in London in 1766, used by John Winthrop to teach astronomy at Harvard, on display at the Putnam Gallery in the Harvard Science Center. Public Domain via Wikimedia Commons.

21 Robin Evans, "Translations from Drawing to Building," Translations from Drawing to Building and Other Essays *(London: Architectural Association, 1997) 153–193.*

22 "Edward Tufte," Yale University. *12 Aug. 2010. Web. 18 Jul 2012. <http://www.yale.edu/polisci/people/etufte.html>.*

23 Edward R. Tufte, The Visual Display of Quantitative Information *(Cheshire, CT: Graphics Press, 1983) 40–41.*

24 Christian Huygens published plans for a geared heliocentric planetary machine in 1703. A working orrery was built around this time by George Graham and Thomas Tompion and presented to Charles Boyle, 4th Earl of Orrery, from which the device takes its name. Rodney Carlisle, Scientific American Inventions and Discoveries *(Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2004) 189.*

25 We know now, of course, that planetary orbits are elliptical and do not lie in exactly the same plane.

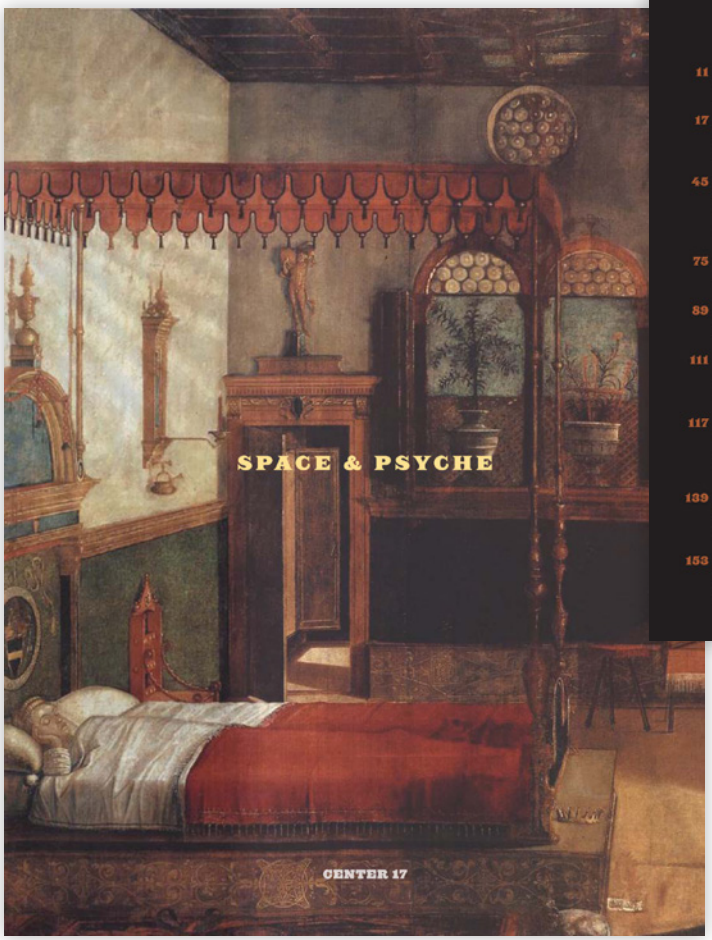
26 Karen E. Steen, "The Making of a Library," Metropolis *October (2004): 97–115.*

27 Rob Gregory, Key Contemporary Buildings: Plans, Sections, and Elevations *(New York: W.W. Norton, 2008) 114.*

Research: Edited Journal (with Stephen Sonnenberg MD)

CENTER 17: SPACE AND PSYCHE

THE CENTER FOR AMERICAN ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN 2012



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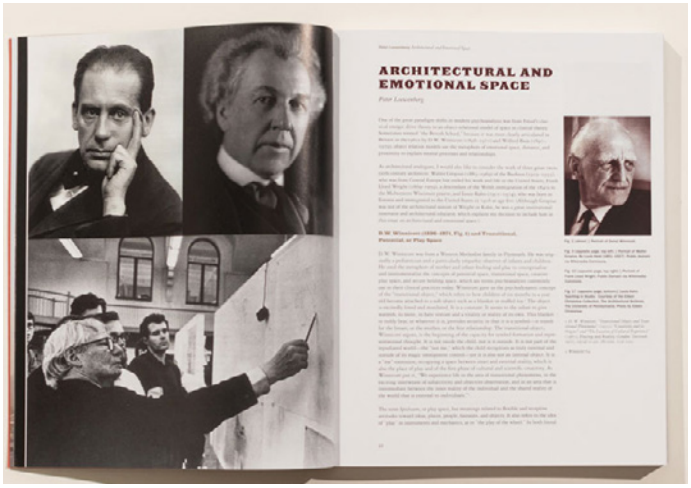


photos courtesy Dyall and Partners

Excerpt from Introduction by Elizabeth Danze and Stephen Sonnenberg

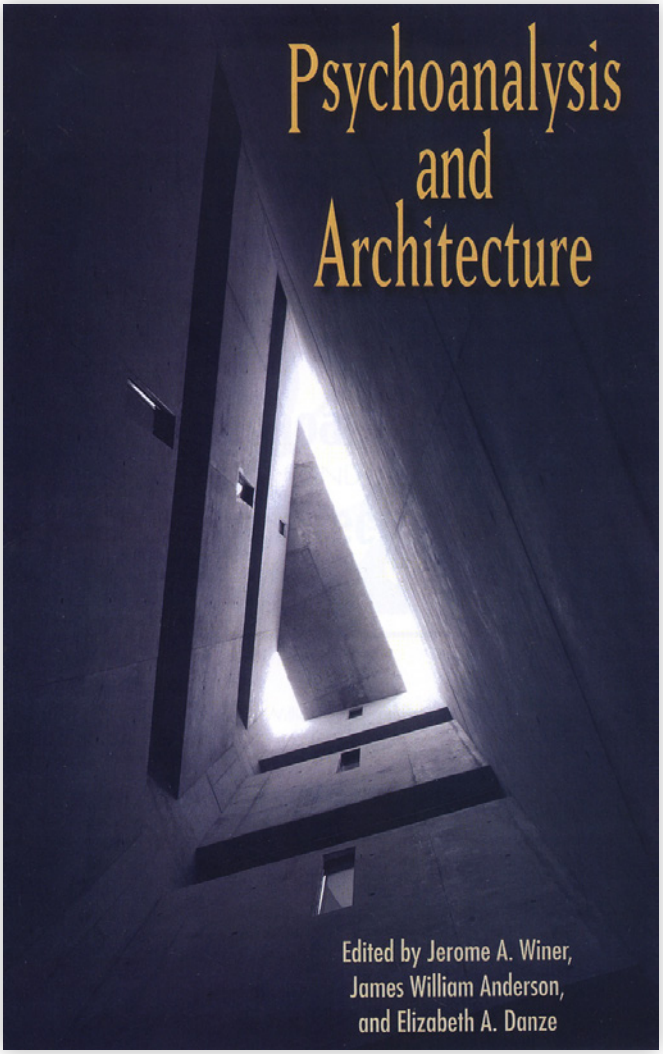
Buildings are inert objects, but our experience of them transcends the physical realm and extends into our deepest consciousness. Architecture, in particular, which moves beyond mere building, strives to enhance the human condition and promote emotional well-being through the manipulation of space, light, material, and form. Psychoanalysis is concerned with many things, among them, the means by which places enter our psyches and become a part of who we are. Both psychoanalysts and architects care about people's identities and memories, hopes and dreams. These human constructs are replete with spatial, architectural images, images of safety, danger, permanence, enclosure, and reflection, as well as with a full range of emotions.

Within the overlap of psychoanalytic and architectural discourses lies the emotional tonus of real and imagined places, whether at the scale of the city or the scale of the house, and it is this area of mutual concern that inspired the current volume of *CENTER*.

Research: Edited Journal (with Jerome A. Winer MD and James Anderson PhD)

PSYCHOANALYSIS AND ARCHITECTURE

The Annual of Psychoanalysis, Vol. 33 / Mental Health Resources, Catskill, New York 2006



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At the core of architecture is our experience of it, while psychoanalysis is the study of that inner experience. *Psychoanalysis and Architecture* is a collection of essays in four sections, the first written by psychoanalysts, each giving an account of an individual's inner confrontation with architecture. The second section of the book is written by architectural scholars who in varying ways-from examining the work of architectural critic Adrian Stokes, to the ways the room where analysis takes place impacts the unfolding treatment- bring the two disciplines together. One of the most celebrated and controversial architects, Frank Lloyd Wright is written about from a psychoanalytic point of view and is the subject of the third section of the book while the last section ranges from a psychoanalytic study of the Bauhaus to the way the Jewish Museum in Berlin and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial foster the process of mourning.

Graham Foundation Publication Grant, $5,000, 2004

An Architect's View of Introspective Space The Analytic Vessel

ELIZABETH A. DANZE

The room is his space, not mine. It has his things in it and I look at it almost every day. After a while they start to become mine, too, but not in the same way they are his. I don't know their history and I don't know his, but I start to overlay mine onto them. The primitive, handmade sculptures connect me to him, to those who made them, to other places around the world, outside and beyond myself, while I look deeply inside. They are his things, but they belong to all of us; our pasts, our present, and the future somehow are coalesced in this room. If the natural light is diffused, the room has a dreamy quality. If it is bright, I'm less in touch with my feelings and more aware of what I'm thinking. The shadows cast by the blinds are beautiful. The stillness of the room is interrupted by this reminder of our ancient attachment to the universal and fundamental qualities of the earth and our humanness in it. It is a simple reminder, too, of the passing of time. The blanket on the couch is soft, but durable, and has an open weave; obviously hand woven, it is reassuring. It was designed to protect the couch, but because I touch it, I am holding the hand of the weaver. The window lets me escape when I am resistant to the work. The visual relief quells anxiety borne of the intimacy and closeness of the analyst. The room is reassuring and consistent when I need it to be and it is an open box of treasures stimulating memories and feelings.

—Anonymous analysand

If we believe the essence and objective of psychoanalytic work is personal transformation, then the exchange, and over time the relationship, between analyst and analysand is the milieu by which this transformation takes place. This personal

becomes the explicit and specific territory of this uniquely formed relationship. There is no other architectural space that has precisely the same programmatic demands as this one. All five senses are engaged in this intimate and sublime relationship and place.

By interrogating the physical and spatial qualities of the analytic room from one point of view—in this case, that of a designer and architect—ideal architectural and spatial circumstances for the work of a specific psychoanalysis might be made more evident. The couch, itself a powerful physical object in the room, has been accepted and established as an indisputable part of psychoanalytic treatment to the point of being taken for granted (Moraitis, 1995, p. 275). Why then should we not speculate about the optimal physical and architectural characteristics of the entire setting for analysis?

The analyst's office can be intimidating for some because it is spatially perceived by the patient as the analyst's territory. It is the setting in which the patient reveals and exposes the full range of human emotion, inner thought, vulnerabilities, and circumstances. Like the creation of an analysis that seeks to transform the patient, the actual, physical creation of a space and building involves enormous powers of transformation. The creative act of making *architecture* is, out of necessity, violent. The earth is ripped and rended. The ground and vegetation are often uprooted and displaced. The analytic room and the working construction site each confront and hold a multitude of powerful natural forces. The construction site is a literal scene of the transformative power of creativity; the new architecture changes the existing place and sometimes the very essence of the previous site forever. Like a construction site, the analytic setting is vibrantly active, messy, and thrillingly alive with some degree of simultaneous predictability and *un*predictability. This change may be slight or radical, but any provocation of change will—whether in the internal or external world, the construction site, or the analytic room—be met with some degree and measure of resistance. In the case of analysis, the room may appear as a physical counterpart to the inevitable appearance of emotional resistance and transference. The analytic space is then both a natural witness and powerful participant in the psychoanalytic relationship.

Several specific conditions occur in the design of the analytic space. These may seem mundane, yet are charged with architectural meaning and consequence for analysis: the couch or chair; the relative positions of the analysand to the analyst; and the design of the room itself specifically with regard to objects, windows,

FIGURE 1. Sigmund Freud's study, Freud Museum.

The Couch and the Space between Analyst and Analysand

The conventional physical position of the analyst and the analysand is for the analysand to be lying on one's back on the couch and for the analyst to be seated behind, out of view. There are many valid reasons for the patient not to face the analyst directly during the work of analysis. In regard to this Sigmund Freud (1913) writes that

> it is the remnant of the hypnotic method out of which psycho-analysis was evolved. But it deserves to be maintained for many reasons. The first is a personal motive, but one which others may share with me. I cannot put up with being stared at by other people for eight hours a day (or more). Since, while I am listening to the

> to influence him in what he tells me. The patient usually regards being made to adopt this position as a hardship and rebels against it, especially if the instinct for looking (scopophilia) plays an important part in his neurosis. I insist on this procedure, however, for its purpose and result are to prevent the transference from mingling with the patient's associations imperceptibly, to isolate the transference and to allow it to come forward in due course sharply defined as a resistance [pp. 133–134].

From an architectural point of view there exists perhaps another reason, a *spatial* one, why this direct looking between persons may not be the most beneficial configuration for analytic work. When two people sit face-to-face in contact and conversation, they create a focused, defined, condensed space between them. This space is intimate yet limited; but when the analysand is looking up, out, or over, and looking not at any particular focal point, there is made to exist a spatial openness, an implied spatial potential for infinity. This applies to and is true for the analyst as well. Space, and hence *relational opportunity*, is expanded, enhanced, limitless, and open-ended. The relationship is not bound by the physical space between them. Each is a free-floating object, surrounded by a bubble of space, gazing independently. The two exist in the room together yet are able to roam imaginatively and psychically, freely apart. The *edges* of the room then contain the analysand and analyst together and independently simultaneously (see figure 1).

Traditionally the analyst usually sits above and behind the analysand, looking *down* on the patient, situated to observe facial expressions. Disregarding all other factors, the relative position of the parties in the room establishes a particular kind of spatial hierarchy. We might say the analyst is privileged from a very specific position of *prospect*, much like a surveyor, a voyeur, or a judge. Assessing, looking, and judging, without being seen in return by the analysand, is a particularly powerful spatial position to hold. From the point of view of the patient being watched, it can be a particularly alarming and disconcerting spatial alignment. This spatial configuration is blatantly nonsymmetrical and reinforces a nonsymmetrical relationship. The belief that the analyst and analysand are learning together, that theirs is a shared experience with transference and countertransference, is potentially compromised by this physically dynamic condition. A spatial equivalency does not exist in the relationship of the analyst's chair to the couch, and the effect is felt both consciously and unconsciously. Once hierarchical arrangements have been introduced, they tend to be self-perpetuating. There are many ways of interpreting this physical relationship. It is reminiscent of a chef leaning over the stove, creating

"repairing" a broken object. The image of "working on" or fixing what is broken by an ever-present, omnipotent figure is particularly powerful and formidable. The space, then, between the analyst and analysand, regardless of fantastic imagery, is much like the space between perception and reality. The analyst provokes dreaming and ultimately the reorganization between perception and reality and does so from this very specific spatial location.

The Couch

It is in the beginning of an analysis, while the analysand is sitting, that rules of engagement are laid out and agreements are established. Once the analysand is invited to lie on the couch, in the reclining position, disorientation, reconfiguration and instability all naturally and fundamentally ensue. The shift from being grounded, upright, mobile and physically in control, from being in command of one's physical location, to being passive, at rest, in the posture of the observer, an observer of one's self, is one of the most subtle and powerful physical adjustments that initiates transformation. Whether adjacent to or touching a wall, or floating, surrounded by space, the couch induces in the analysand a state of suspension. "As soon as we become motionless, we are elsewhere; we are dreaming in a world that is immense. Indeed, immensity is the movement of motionless man. It is one of the characteristics of quiet daydreaming" (Bachelard, 1964, p. 184).

Significantly, the word *attitude* is defined both as a feeling or emotion toward a fact or state as well as the arrangement of a body or thing in space. This double meaning applies to the analysand and the couch. The physical shift in *attitude* (position) initiates and encourages awareness and change in attitude (feeling and emotion). In this new position on the couch, the analysand hovers in space and place, transferring and alleviating a sense of gravity and of the "weight of the world." The experience of hovering and suspension is profound and this new position and point of view transforms the space of the room from a passive container to a full participant in the work.

The Active Room

The room itself has the power to initiate and sustain a shift in the analysand. By examining some of the room's special spatial and sensual qualities—characteristics of proximity, separation, materials, sound, and light—we see how the room actively participates (Frank and Lepori, 2000, p. 57). The room is envelope and backdrop

containing and holding the patient. The room is a constant, much like the shared relationship between analyst and analysand; the stability of the room then holds the stability of the relationship.

The architectural space and its essential character of *muteness* is an essential backdrop offering literal resistance and a familiarity. Yet the room is not neutral; rather, it is a biased container invested with personal interpretation.

Donald W. Winnicott (1975) describes the setting of Freud's work:

> This work was done in a room, not a passage, a room that was quiet and not liable to sudden and unpredictable sounds, yet not dead quiet and not free from ordinary house noises. This room would be lit properly, but not by a light staring in the face, and not by a variable light. The room would certainly not be dark and it would be comfortably warm. The patient would be lying on a couch, that is to say comfortable, if able to be comfortable, and probably a rug and some water would be available [p. 285].

The description suggests certain qualities of the setting, specifically that the analysis should occur in a *room*, a space with a sense of *place* and stability rather than transience. Also, the statement "not free from ordinary house sounds" suggests a familiar setting, certainly not one that is sterile or institutional:

> The intimacy of the room becomes our intimacy. And correlatively, intimate space has become so quiet, so simple, that all the quietude of the room is localized and centralized in it. The room is very deeply our room, it is in us. We no longer *see* it. It no longer *limits* us, because we are in the very ultimate depths of its repose, in the repose that it has conferred upon us. And all our former rooms come and fit into this one [Bachelard, 1964, p. 226].

The size of the room, the position of the furniture in the room and the space between objects in the room, establishes the sense of intimacy, familiarity, and safety. Every room has spatial hierarchies, reinforced by the width and height of ceilings, doors and windows—all elements which define the structural or architectural envelope. Partitions, furniture, and objects establish secondary sets of horizontal and vertical relationships with the two bodies measuring and defining the scale: "Understanding architectural scale implies the unconscious measuring of an object or a building with one's body, and projecting one's bodily scheme on the space in question. We feel pleasure and protection when the body discovers its

from the analysand's existing world and the outside. The room is, after all, the center of the world, managing separateness between analyst and analysand the way that an architectural loggia creates a space of simultaneity—of exposure and refuge, inner and outer sanctums, mediating the physical and the psychic.

The Window and Natural Light

The defined and bounded space of the room makes clear the dialectics of inside and outside. The window lets in the outside space of the *immeasurable* while reinforcing the intimacy of the inside. The intimate space of the room becomes familiar and known while the space outside, especially the space through the window of the long view, to the horizon, is undetermined. Lying on the couch and being *aware* of the window in the room is a tangible reminder of the analysand's unique position, that of looking both inwardly and outwardly. The window mediates the interior and the exterior, as does the analyst with the patient.

The wide, external view, if too expansive or too wide, may risk losing the sense of the room as a safe nest. A window that is too large may also be visually distracting. At the same time the presence of a crack, an opening, or evidence of the outside world where distance is brought near and the near is extended, may be reassuring. Seeing the horizon or a distant view tangibly introduces the feeling of infinity while the closeness of the interior reminds us of the finite and tangible. Every polarity, after all, requires the other for fulfillment. The window and the view out is the fulfillment of the close, inward-looking view. To be positioned in a place of prospect highlights the closeness of the analyst—literally looking out, but from a position of safety and refuge:

> Our gaze strokes distant contours and edges, and the unconscious tactile sensation determine the agreeableness or unpleasantness of the experience. The distant and the near are experienced with the same level of intensity. The eye is the sense of separation and distance, whereas touch is the sensation of nearness, intimacy and affection. During overpowering emotional states we tend to close off the distancing sense of vision; we close our eyes when caressing our loved ones. Deep shadows and darkness are essential, because they dim the sharpness of vision and invite unconscious peripheral vision and tactile fantasy. *Homogeneous light paralyzes the imagination in the same way that homogenization eliminates the experience of place*" [Pallasmaa, 1994, p. 34].

Natural light is desirable in most habitable spaces, but it may be particularly poignant in the analytic setting (figure 2). The quantity of light is not as important

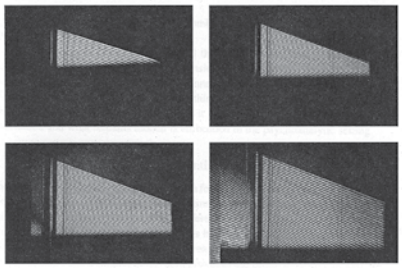


FIGURE 2. Change of light on wall over the course of an analytic session.

as the *quality*. Variations of light, from the brightest light to the deepest shadows, bring out shape, texture, and stimulate our senses (Rasmussen, 1962, p. 189). The temporal quality of natural light is by its very nature transformative. The room, through the quality and changeability of light over the course of an hour, a day, and a year, bears the recognition of time. Watching a shadow cast and formed is a particularly potent marker of time and a reminder of constant, slow-moving change: "The perceptual spirit and metaphysical strength of architecture are driven by the quality of light and shadow shaped by solids and voids, by opacities, transparencies, and translucencies. Natural light with its ethereal variety of change, fundamentally orchestrates the intensities of architecture and cities. What the eyes see and the senses feel in questions of architecture are formed according to conditions of light and shadow" (Holl, 1994, p. 63).

Returning to the same room repeatedly and over time has a particular and special effect—it takes on a special familiarity, an ownership, and a special connectedness for both analyst and analysand. "For not only do we come back to it, but we dream of coming back to it, the way a bird comes back to its nest or a lamb to the fold. This sign of return marks an infinite number of daydreams, for the reason that human returning takes place in the great rhythm of human life, a rhythm that reaches back

across the years and, through the dream, combats all absence" (Bachelard, 1964, p. 99).

And yet the room does not divulge all that it contains. There exists a secret, hidden component to the room, an inner tension, not overtly expressed, but present and perhaps intuitively understood—the inner forces of weight, gravity, bearing, and holding that reside and are resolved within the walls of the room. We know it is there, we feel it, but we do not visually see it. This balance of what is revealed and understood and what remains hidden is embedded in the psychoanalytic setting.

Acoustic Intimacy

The room functions primarily as a safe haven for the analysand. There are advantages to the acoustic quality of the room being primarily mute or a least safe from sudden noises. "Differently shaped rooms and different materials reverberate differently" (Rasmussen, 1962, p. 224) and the sound is hard or soft, reflected or absorbed, in response to them. The room activates daydreaming while protecting and sheltering the daydreamer, and a simple, quiet room provokes the primitiveness of refuge. By experiencing the primitiveness of refuge we "return to the field of primitive images that had perhaps been centers of fixation for recollections left in our memories" (Bachelard, 1964, p. 30). As Pallasmaa (1994) notes,

> the most essential auditory experience created by architecture is tranquility. Architecture presents the drama of construction silenced into matter and space; architecture is the art of petrified silence. After the clutter of building has ceased and the shouting of workers has died away, the building becomes a museum of waiting, patient silence. . . . An architectural experience silences all external noise; it focuses attention on one's very existence. Architecture, as all art, makes us aware of our fundamental solitude. At the same time, architecture detaches us from the present and allows us to experience the slow, firm flow of time and tradition [p. 31].

Adjacent sounds, far or near, pose questions of proximity, safety, and threat. The sounds of the surrounding street, voices in the office or room next door, the waiting room—all stimulate the imagination:

> One who has half-risen to the sound of a distant train at night and, through his sleep, experienced the space of the city with its countless inhabitants scattered around its structures, knows the power of sound to the imagination; the nocturnal whistle of a train makes one conscious of the entire sleeping city. Anyone who has

SPACE & MIND

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE, CENTER FOR AMERICAN ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN, 2007

In 2007, Danze co-organized – with Sonnenberg and Professor Michael Benedikt – the symposium Space and Mind at the School of Architecture, sponsored by the Center for American Architecture and Design. The symposium was based on the belief that architecture, beyond mere building, is vitally concerned with promoting mental health and emotional well-being through the creation and manipulation of space and material and the conveyance of a sense of identity, security, and atmosphere. Psychological and psychoanalytic discourse is replete with spatial metaphors and observations of the emotional tonus of real places. Environmental conditions, both physical and social, are matters of concern common to both disciplines as they contribute to health, education, contemplation, reflection, nurturance, security, and even the stimulation of creative endeavors. The symposium examined potential parallels, connections, and common concerns between these disciplines in the interest of promoting a dialogue that would enrich both fields. In attendance and also participating were students, academicians and practitioners in both psychology and architecture.

Research: International Conference

BUILDING AS CURE: THE EVOLUTION OF ARCHITECTURE FOR THE MENTALLY ILL

THE CULTURAL ROLE OF ARCHITECTURE, LINCOLN ENGLAND, 2010

"The treatment of the insane is conducted not only in, but by the asylum."
William Dean Fairless, 1861

EXCERPT

Dr. Thomas Kirkbride and the Kirkbride Asylums

The archetypal American insane asylum was once a common sight at the edges of American towns. Approximately three hundred were built in the United States before 1900, the design of almost all influenced by one man, Dr. Thomas Story Kirkbride.

Dr. Kirkbride was a psychiatrist, architectural advisor, author, asylum administrator and advocate for the mentally ill. He believed that the physical design of asylums could have a curative effect on patients by giving form to his belief in "moral treatment." This concept emphasized self-control, predictability, order and a connection to nature. The asylums were designed to reinforce this control by giving careful attention to every detail to promote a healthy environment. In 1854 Dr. Kirkbride wrote *On the Construction, Organization and General Arrangements of Hospitals for the Insane*, a tremendously influential treatise. In addition, he was a tireless self-promoter who employed public opinion and exposure to the press to further his influence and his cause.

The middle of the nineteenth century was a period of optimism and reform. Typical treatment of mental illness prior to this time was generally deplorable, inhumane and frequently consisted of so-called "madmen and lunatics" being shackled and perpetually confined (Yanni, 2007). In response to this, Kirkbride believed his proposed "moral treatment" could be embodied in the design and configuration of an ideal mental institution. To him, architecture was unequivocally thought to have the power to heal. A commonly held belief at the time was that progress and modern life, as embodied in the squalor of cities, was a major cause of insanity. A connection to nature was seen as restorative and healing (Yanni, 2007).

The typical Kirkbride asylum configuration consisted of a symmetrical, stepped, or echelon-shaped linear plan with an expressed central core where men occupied one wing and women the other. The articulated central element, where visitors met patients in parlors, established the building as civic in scale, and was typically marked with a portico or similar feature. The symmetry and straightforward design conveyed order, stability, and structure. Each step in the echelon constituted a "pavilion" or ward. (Figure 2). These allowed patients to be placed according to the severity of their disease, with the loudest most disruptive patients moved to the outer wings. This also served as an incentive system; being moved outward was punishment and inward a reward, as the inner wards were usually better maintained and tended (Yanni , 2007). The superintendent and his family lived on-site as did many of the staff and their families. The ideal building consisted of 250 patients so that the superintendent and his wife could visit each patient every day, according to the paternal model.

Research - National Conference (with John Blood, AIA)

ARTIST/SCHOLAR IN RESIDENCE SEMINARS

100TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE AMERICAN PSYCHOANALYTIC ASSOCIATION
NEW YORK, 2012

Integrating the Creative Process with the Analytic Space: Its Visual and Spatial Qualities

By focusing on the setting and in particular the spatial qualities of the space in which psychotherapy takes place, this session considered the impact that the physical environment has on the unfolding treatment. The discussion sought to sensitize analysts to examining their patient's visual and spatial experiences and enhance awareness of their shared surroundings. The exchange between psychotherapist and analysand occurs in a shared and inherently intimate space, and its role in that interaction is frequently overlooked. This issue was described in a peer reviewed paper by Danze in *The Annual of Psychoanalysis,* Volume 33, 2005, and was further elaborated upon by Danze and Sonnenberg, in *Space & Psyche*, 2013. This seminar examined how the design of the room is not a passive but rather a full participant in the creative work of analysis, and how participants can improve their professional competence with increased awareness of this concept.




Integrating Right and Left Brain Activity in the Creative Process

This session explored the need to recognize the connection between right brain thinking and visualization processes used by artists, architects, and designers and left brain processes usually used by analysts who emphasize the use of language in their clinical work. This session encouraged analysts to examine their visual and spatial experiences to improve and enhance communication with patients by blending the use of words and visual associations. Lecture, readings, discussion and short exercises were used to engage and stimulate the visual part of the mind and to improve understanding of the connection and integration of spatial and visual thinking into verbal, logical, and analytical reasoning. Integrating visual, spatial and nonverbal thinking into the process of psychoanalysis enriches the potential exchange between analysts and their patients



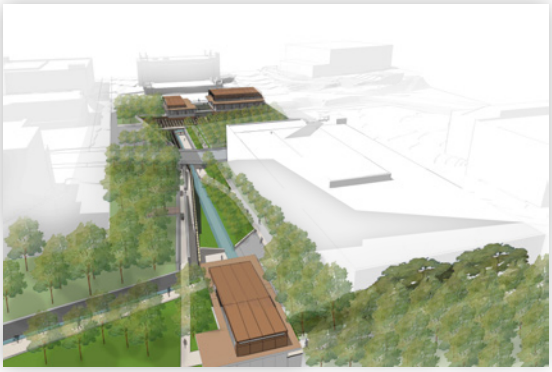


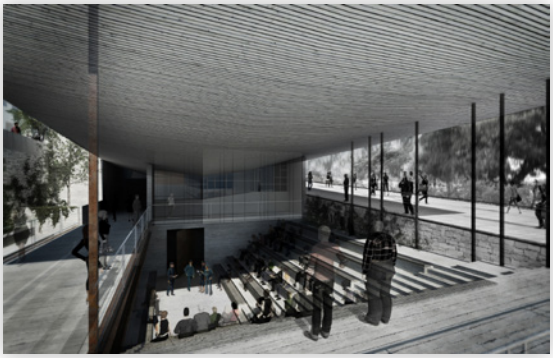
Teaching: Advanced Design Studio

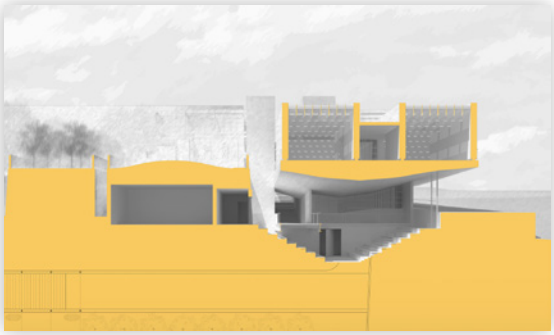
THEATRE OF WAR/THE VETERANS PARK AND PAVILION PROJECT

ADVANCED DESIGN ARC 560R/ARC696 Fall 2013

Elizabeth Danze, John Blood, Stephen Sonnenberg, MD







The work of this studio is a direct response to a critical disconnection between the veteran and civilian communities. Students explore the role of architecture in creating a place of healing, engagement and connection and develop a prototype building that merges architecture and psychoanalysis to improve the experience of military veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan.

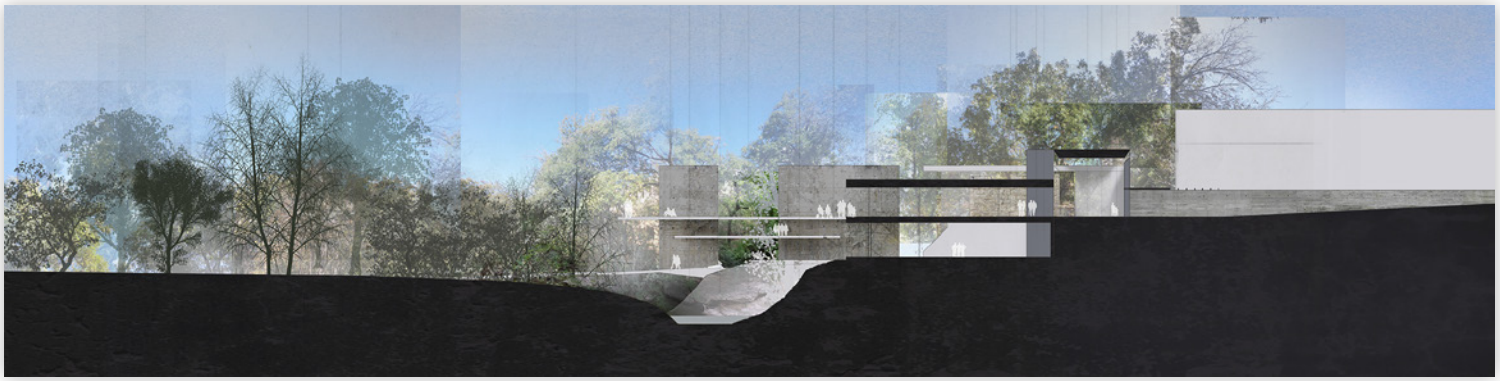
Historically, several societies successfully reintegrated combat veterans and healed the collateral psychological wounds of the community. The ancient city of Athens was at war for more than 100 years, and provides a model of a community healing the wounds of war. The Theater of Dionysus is one example of a sanctioned environment where the trauma of war was communally assuaged for combatants, veterans, and citizens. Here, veterans and active duty soldiers acted in dramas set in wartime settings, written by playwrights such as Aeschylus and Sophocles (themselves veterans of military campaigns) and were witnessed by other veterans and members of the citizenry.

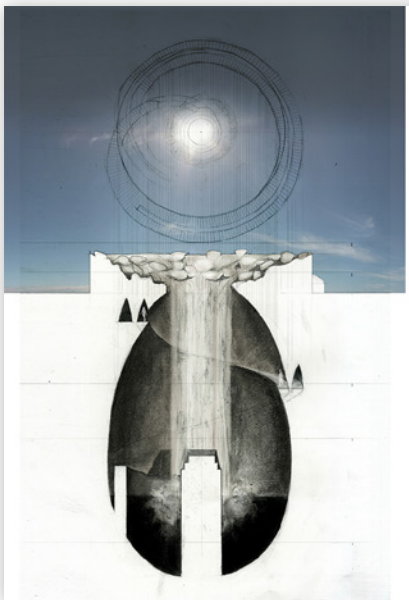
By merging architecture, psychology and the arts, students developed a prototype that draws on historic examples and the origins of theater to address severe post-conflict psychological problems pf both veterans and the broader community, which must accommodate its traumatized veterans. Citing innovative programs such as The Telling Project provide a setting for cathartic and ritualized communal conversation where veterans speak directly to their own communities concerning their experiences, humanizing and making immediate what are otherwise abstract and polarizing ideas and issues.

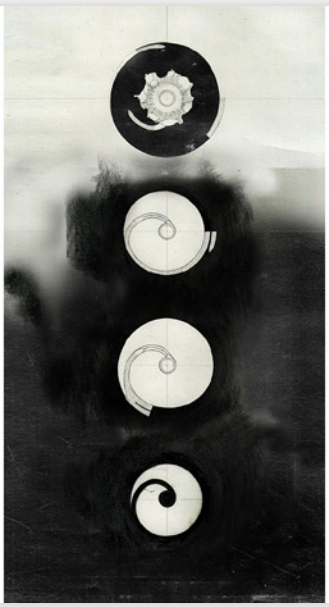
The design proposal is a place where soldiers, veterans, and members of the community come together for a wide range of planned as well as spontaneous activities. It is not a memorial, but rather a setting that supports an active process of collective healing. The project is founded on the shared belief that such a sanctioned public forum provides a model for healing that integrates architecture, psychoanalysis, theater, and the arts. Guidelines and objectives for the prototype were developed with input from veterans and military leaders, psychologists and psychiatrists, filmmakers, authors, artist, architects and students.

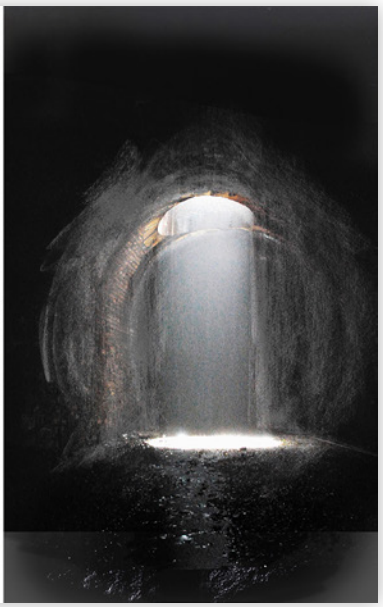
Through a series of short projects, lectures and presentations by guest speakers the studio asked how is theory is embedded in design? What are different ways of approaching design research? And, how might psychoanalysis and psychology (steeped in theory) inform our thinking of architecture and design? Specific intentions and methods of and for making will be examined through a series of analysis, programmatic organization and formal composition of individual and multi-unit spaces. Introspection and reflection will be both subject of and method for design.

THEATRE OF WAR









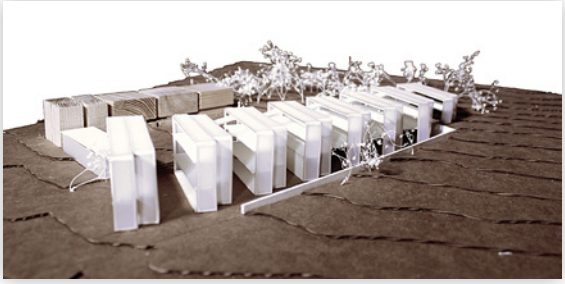
Teaching: Advanced Design Studio

HOUSING HOMELESS FAMILIES

ADVANCED DESIGN ARC 560R/ARC696 Spring 2013

Elizabeth Danze, Stephen Sonnenberg, and Sarah Dooling with Overland Partners Architects

Above: Haven for Hope, San Antonio, by Overland Partners; below: student work



Through a series of short projects, lectures, readings and field trips this studio's work concerned itself with the purposeful inquiry of design research and design in several forms, contexts and scales all related to and surrounding issues of homelessness. Students designed housing options and social services centers for homeless families. They collaborated with local institutions in identifying the social and cultural challenges of homelessness facing the city of Austin. Through the process of design, students compared two approaches to locating, distributing and configuring housing and services – high density, concentrated and low density, intermixed. The designs focused on the physical and cultural contexts of selected sites, design strategies developed with an understanding of the psychological experiences of homelessness for parents and children in order to create spaces of mental health well-being, and the regulatory constraints and opportunities for constructing housing within local cultural, political and economic contexts.

The course also examined how the field of psychoanalysis and psychology (steeped in theory) inform our thinking of architecture and design. Assignments included reading essays from Space & Psyche (Bachelard, Benedikt, Danze, and Sonnenberg) and other authors such as Leatherbarrow and Pallasmaa and looking to films such as *Into Great Silence* and *Wings of Desire* as part of the seminar component of the class.

The first short project used memory as a way of starting with personal experience as a guiding constraint. The primary project investigated the contemporary 'asylum/refuge/sanctuary' as defined by the student. Students were defined relationships between the institution and the individual, and applied methods, theories and research explored earlier in the semester to the scale of a small building. The final project included the design of all support functions on a specific site.

Water was introduced as a medium and issues of publicity and privacy, boundary, threshold and bodily sensation and spatial phenomena were examined. Students examined access and confinement- the explicit or implied ability to cross a physical or notional boundary -and separation. All of this in the pursuit of degrees of intimacy- a property or value used to calibrate spatial zones and their thresholds.

Each discreet project was interconnected by the student as part of their personal concern, with materiality and construction added as an integral concern. Analysis, evaluation and means of reporting and revealing information included extensive descriptive studies done in drawing, photographs, models and other media, both virtual and physical. Students examined design values within issues concerning psychology, sociology, materiality, technology and construction and the way they shape and make architectural form.

HOUSING HOMELESS FAMILIES

Dining Room | Chapel

Blake Naumann

Upward Mobility | Approximately 34% of Austin's homeless population is chronically homeless, which means they are constantly un-housed and unable to support themselves without assistance. Once an individual becomes homeless, they are likely to follow a divergent path from that of regular society, taking them further and further into isolation. Chronically homeless individuals are uncomfortable around other members of society, and members of society are not comfortable around chronically homeless. Both often go to great lengths to avoid the other.

According to the Erikson model of development psychosocial development happens as the natural result of successful relationships. The purpose of Street Eats is to provide a safe environment for both chronically homeless and regular individuals to engage socially as well as economically. By participating in Street Eats, the homeless receive a portable shelter and work their way through a program which teaches them social skills, personal hygiene, initiative, and basic business skills. Street Eats provides not only a temporary shelter, but also a means of re-entering society as a functioning individual.

AUSTIN GIRLS' SHELTER

Blake Naumann

Safety & Autonomy | According to the International Justice Mission 27 million children, women and men are enslaved now- more than any other time in history. Of the estimated 100,000 individuals who live in slavery in the United States, 20% pass through Texas.

A shelter for human trafficking victims requires an environment that both provides a sense of safety as well as encourages its residents to work towards independence. According to psychologists who have worked with these women and girls, their psychological development freezes at the first incident of abuse. This lack of psychological development has significant implications in terms of the way girls interact with and understand the world around them. In addition to a stunted psychological development, girls' abuse and trauma leads them to fear autonomy and making decisions for themselves. They are taught to live in submission, accepting what they are given without expressing their opinion. A successful shelter meets the immediate needs of the girls while helping them understand their value and ability to create beauty.

COMMUNITY LIBRARY

Russell Beaumont

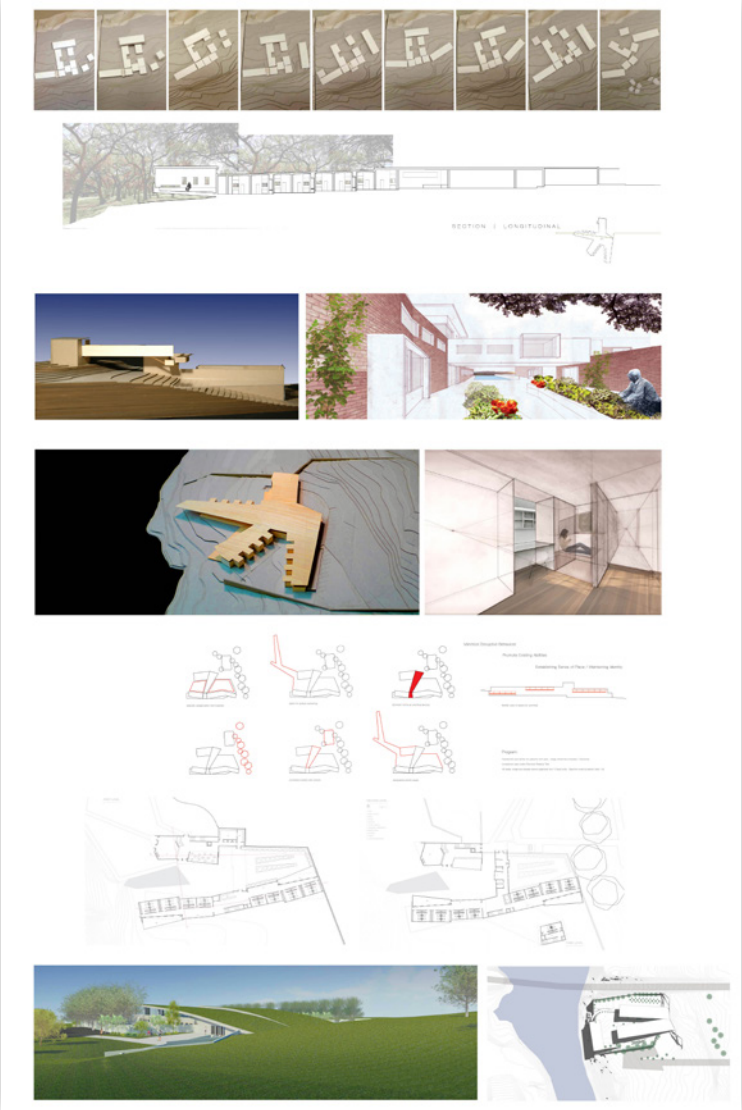
Openness | Initial investigations studied the qualities of successful libraries and successful chapels. This research found that succesful libraries generally have large open spaces, bright lighting, limited connection to the outside, and both unfocused and individual seating. Chapels generally have natural materials, ornamentation, sculpted light, mystical atmosphere, a control of surroundings, focused seating, and symmetry.

A community space that functions as a library and chapel must successfully combine these qualities without diminishing the power that they create. The resulting space is open yet controlled, light yet firm, organized yet not restrictive. Materials are carefully selected and taken advantage of. The strength and solidity of the cast concrete foundation and walls lends to a sense of permanence and security. The delicate and sculptural quality of the wood covering, on the other hand, provides a playfulness and sense of hope to the space.

Teaching: Graduate Architectural Design Studio

ASYLUM/REFUGE/SANCTUARY - BUILDING AS CURE: ARCHITECTURE FOR MENTAL HEALTH/ILLNESS

Poster Session Presentation
99th ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGIATE SCHOOLS OF ARCHITECTURE
MONTREAL, CANADA, 2011



Alain de Botton in *The Architecture of Happiness* states, "Belief in the significance of architecture is premised on the notion that we are for better or worse, different people in different places - and on the conviction that it is architecture's task to render vivid to us who we might ideally be." The exploration of how current approaches to psychiatric treatment and contemporary architectural expression affect our understanding of mental illness and its impact on culture continues. As we look forward, we ask: What is architecture's future role in the dialogue between patient and society and how will buildings both manifest and nurture our ideal selves? The word asylum's original usage is defined as "refuge and sanctuary" and is defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as "a benevolent institution offering shelter and support." As both building type and institution, the asylum and its successor, the psychiatric hospital, mediate between the individual and society.

This graduate design studio examined two disparate arenas: that of architecture—the outer, material world of tangible places—and that of psychology—the inner world, the realm of the human mind. Connections between the two can be poetically elusive and obscure. Specific historic and contemporary case studies of architectural environments designed for treating the mentally ill reveal insight into our fundamental ideas of what architecture is, and can be, and what our understanding of mental illness and health is, or could be. Architecture is both container of and medium for health, creating a therapeutic environment that participates in the healing process. Introspection and reflection are both subject of and method for design.

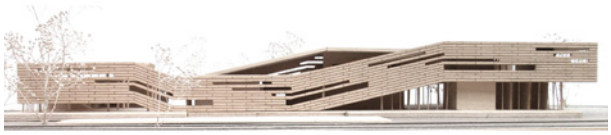
Through a series of readings and exercises that examine specific, fundamental issues of mental health, the studio undertook design exercises at a range of scales, beginning with the examination of historic and current precedents. The first project was the design for a particular space in which therapy (an analysis) takes place. Major concerns were issues of separation and levels of controlled access and contact between the interior and exterior. A short second project examined the potential of water as the medium for therapeutic healing. Issues of publicity and privacy, boundary and threshold, as well as bodily sensation and spatial phenomena were examined. Students also explored the marriage of the experiential and physical to the psychological.

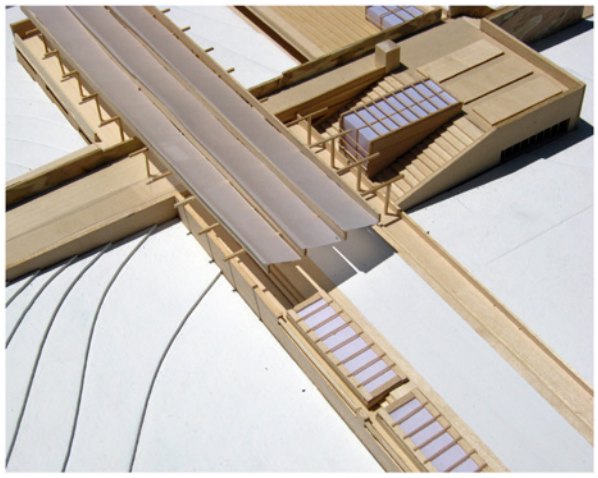
The final project investigated the contemporary 'asylum' where the mentally ill are treated in wellness/treatment center. Students defined the relationship between the institution and the individual; the therapist and the patient; and the city and the building. They addressed concepts of access and confinement—the explicit or implicit ability to cross a physical or notional boundary—and separation—a physical or conceptual boundary between elements that emphasizes their differences. Students worked with practicing members of the psychiatric and psychoanalytic care community through a series of projects. The practitioners presented case studies to the students, met with them individually, and attended the design presentations.

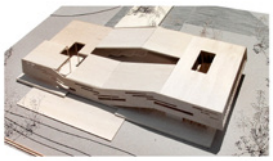
Teaching: Advanced Architectural Design Studio

BUILDING AS HOPE: ARCHITECTURE AND THE IDEAL SELF

Lecture - International Conference
ARCHITECTURE LIVE PROJECTS PEDAGOGY SYMPOSIUM
OXFORD, ENGLAND 2012







Co-taught by Danze and Stephen Sonnenberg, M.D., this graduate design studio utilized psychoanalytic developmental sensibilities in examining and connecting the realms of **architecture**—the outer, material world of tangible places—and **psychology**—the inner world of the human mind.

While in college in 1968, Bill Strickland founded the Manchester Craftsmen's Guild to bring arts education and mentoring to inner city youth in his neighborhood. Today this organization serves public school students as well as adults in transition by offering courses in ceramics, design, digital and photography studios and more recently the culinary arts and sciences. Strickland's psychoanalytically oriented approach influences the way the program integrates art, architecture, and psychology. His philosophy is simple: The environment shapes people's lives. By constructing an empowering atmosphere of art, light, and music and guided by staff that strive to realize the genius in everyone, the program enables its students to become productive contributors to society.

The primary project was the design of a multi-disciplinary arts and learning center that fosters a sense of belonging, interconnectedness, and hope within the urban community. The studio directly involved Bill Strickland, president and CEO of Manchester Bidwell and the National Center for Arts and Technology and members of his staff as clients and colleagues. Strickland, a MacArthur Fellowship recipient, has most recently been appointed by President Obama to his White House Council for Community Solutions. Students explored the program, investigated and discussed the client/architect relationship, identified potential sites for locating a facility, and designed a prototype infused with personal and community motivation.

BUILDING AS HOPE: ARCHITECTURE AND THE IDEAL SELF

The studio posed and explored questions from an analytical and psychoanalytic point of view, defining the relationship between the institution and the individual, between artist and the medium, between the city and the building. The psychoanalyst/architect team helped students understand psychoanalytic principles by assisting with self-observation and discussing readings on the relationship between architecture and psychoanalysis. A goal of the studio was to help students recognize how growth is plastic, and how the design process promotes growth in the designer, even as it creates an environment that encourages growth in the users of a new space or building. Like many architectural design projects the challenge to the designer is to understand what the users of the building require, and to empathize with the user. The studio work engaged inquiry of two concerns: the identity and use of an educational institution as embodied in its physical environment based on psychoanalytic principles, and psychoanalytic developmental sensibilities—including self-observation—in both the user and designer.

Architecture was considered the container of, and medium for, personal empowerment, freedom and growth. The goal was to create an environment where the architecture participates in and promotes this process. Similarly, introspection and reflection were both subject of, and method for, design. Students studied projects that operated as primary participant in providing well-being, awareness and growth of the individual.

The initial phase of the project involved looking simultaneously at both the large and small scale. Specifically, this involved analysis, evaluation, and response to an existing building, as well as the design of a series of short, interconnected exercises examining specific elements of the building as a way to initiate the building design. The first of these involved the design of a pottery studio, the second a gallery for the display of artwork. Students examined the intentions for making building form through a series of analyses, typological precedents, programmatic organizations, and formal composition of individual and multi-unit spaces. Issues of publicity and privacy, boundary, threshold, bodily sensation and spatial phenomena were examined as well as the marriage of the experiential and physical to the psychological.

T3 PARKING STRUCTURE

DANZE BLOOD ARCHITECTS, AUSTIN, TEXAS, 2013

Excerpt of article by Stephen Sharpe, *AIA Architect*, April 11, 2014

It's well-established that the built environment can affect a person's emotional state. On one end of the spectrum, fast-food restaurants exemplify this idea, with purposefully designed interiors where harsh colors and lighting subtly encourage a rapid turnaround of customers.

At the opposite end of the spectrum are spaces intentionally imbued with a sense of calm, places in which occupants may feel removed from everyday distractions and involuntarily moved toward self-reflection. There is Louis Kahn's Salk Institute or Alvar Aalto's Paimio Sanatorium, both designed by AIA Gold Medalists and celebrated as architectural masterworks that help reinforce the connection between meditative space and superlative design. Indeed, architecture's psychological affect can be profound. Yet only within the last few years has its impact been the subject of detailed academic study.

Design psychology in action

Having spent many years researching the connection between architecture and psychology, Danze seeks opportunities to apply her research findings to her architectural work for Danze Blood Architects, the firm she leads with Blood, her husband. Their most recent project, a parking garage in Austin for T3, an advertising and integrated marketing firm, proved to be an ideal case.

The helical concrete structure organizes its four parking levels around a central elliptical light well. On the steel screens attached to its exterior, vines grow and soften the sometimes intense sunshine. The garage's open structure allows ample air to circulate within. The T3 Parking Structure received a 2013 Design Award from the Texas Society of Architects as well as an Honor Award last year from AIA Austin. Jurors in both competitions recognized the project as commendable for reimagining a building type that seldom transcends the mundane.

"The garage is designed so that the users have a pleasurable and enriching experience as they arrive and leave the garage every day on their way to and from work," Danze says. "Unlike most parking garages—anonymous, utilitarian structures that are frequently dark and unpleasant places to be—the hope here is that the regular routine of arriving at work is both visually and spatially engaging and inspiring. The open structure lets in ample light, which is filtered through plantings, casting dappled light patterns through the space. The multi-floor parking is configured in a continuous helical ramp—the simple act of arrival evokes a positive and literally elevating phenomenological experience as the sense of movement is heightened."

Awards

2014 International Parking Institute Awards of Excellence
2014 Architizer A+ Awards, finalist
2013 Texas Society of Architects Design Award
2013 AIA Austin Honor Award

TWIN VALLEY HOUSE

DANZE BLOOD ARCHITECTS, AUSTIN, TEXAS 2002

(Subject of *Commonalities,* "Bridging the Gap: Architecture and Psychoanalysis" and "Psychoanalysis and Architecture," The Muriel Gardiner Program in Psychoanalysis and the Humanities)

Awards

2005 American Institute of Architects, Small Projects Practitioners Knowledge Community Design Award

2005 Merit Award, *Custom Home*

2004 AIA Austin Honor Award

Select Publications

"Vue sur la Vallée," *Votre Maison*, Numéro 19, 2013

Twin Valley House, "Seminar: Architectural Criticism as a Resource" *Platform*, Summer 2007

"Twin Valley House," *Architectural Record*, House of the Month, Jan. 2006

"Texas, Residence," *Custom Home*, Sep/Oct 2005

"Working Together," *Eco-Structure*, Jul/Aug 2005

"Pivotal Decision," *Custom Home*, Nov/Dec 2004

"Wide Open Space," *Austin Monthly*, Sept. 2004

"Schematic: Cat Mountain View," *Tribeza*, Oct. 2003

Research: Publication

50 SHRINKS

Sebastian Zimmermann
Foreword by Elizabeth Danze, Spring 2014

Excerpt of Foreword by Elizabeth Danze

Sebastian Zimmermann's photographs introduce us to a wide range of psychotherapists and convey a compelling combination of intimacy and connection with their subjects. Simultaneously revealing and enigmatic, they are a testament to both Zimmermann's talent as a photographer and his insight as an analyst and observer. The photographs provide a glimpse into a world most of us do not often see or truly understand. These are not public spaces, they are intensely intimate and personal, and each enables a world that remains distinctly private. But, through Zimmermann's images, we feel a sense of connection with the analyst and, in viewing these photographs, we can easily imagine stepping into the role of the patient.

Set in each analyst's office, these portraits illuminate the personalities of the subjects they portray. Diversely occupied with personal objects belonging to each, these settings are as varied as their subjects. What do the objects in the room tell us about the person who chose them? The smallest detail—whether an aspect of the room or an object within the room—can serve as a gateway to another world. Likewise, the smallest of observations, magnified, enables the possibility of seeing what was not there before.

During the process of therapy, these objects provide potent opportunities for association. Perhaps the patient's memories, feelings, and thoughts are laid out similarly to the items in the room, to be mentally scrutinized, contemplated and reconstructed. Pieces of art, as well as ambiguous objects are invitations to dream and imagine. The items are conveyors and representations of imagination: first the imagination of the maker, and then the imagination of the viewers. For the patient, there is the purity that these objects hold, having no previously known specific and no personal story attached; they are ripe for symbolic interpretation. The objects and pictures are blurred of their original meaning. They hold great potential for provocation, but at the same time might be seen as emptied and mute—a void waiting to be filled.

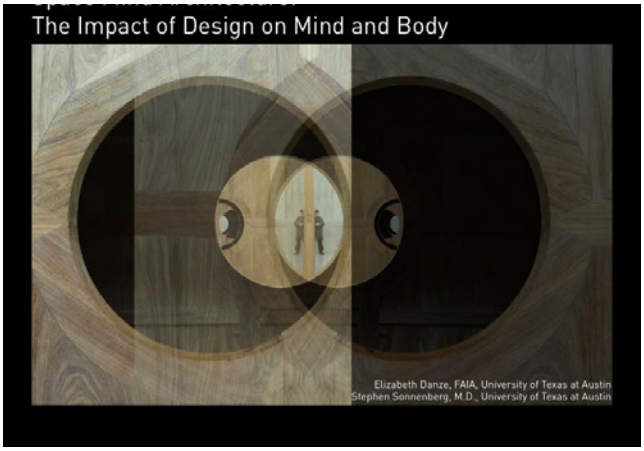
As an architect, I have long been fascinated by this sanctum. I consider the role of the room neither tacit nor passive, but rather active in the creative work of analysis. It is an amalgamation of office, examination room, confessional, and nest. Each room conveys a sense of sanctuary, protection, and safety, but it need not be neutral or inactive. It may advocate for, and even provoke, introspection, awareness, and growth, as well as be a supportive participant in the therapy that occurs within its walls.

The personal transformation that occurs through psychotherapeutic work is as charged as the site where this exchange occurs. No other type of architectural space performs in quite the same way. These rooms are detached floating vessels, places of sanctuary and protection, healing and reconciliation. They are shaped by space, material, texture, and light to elucidate the characters and stories that reside within.

RESEARCH: Lecture (with Stephen Sonnenberg, MD)

SPACE MIND ARCHITECTURE:
THE IMPACT OF DESIGN ON MIND AND BODY

TEXAS SOCIETY OF ARCHITECTS 74TH ANNUAL CONVENTION, FT. WORTH TEXAS, NOVEMBER 7, 2013



This lecture drew on interdisciplinary research to examine how the allied fields of psychoanalysis and psychology might inform – and possibly transform – thinking of architecture and design. What do we know of the built environment's effect on the physical and mental well-being of its users? How does what architects design influence the psychology of the people who interact with their buildings? The session explored key ideas and concepts connecting the relationship between the physical design of space and its effects on mental health and well-being through case studies and projects at the scale of the individual, the building and the city.