

Undergraduate Research Symposium May 17, 2013 Mary Gates Hall

Online Proceedings

POSTER SESSION 1

Commons West, Easel 33

11:00 AM to 12:30 PM

Imagining a World of Gender Equality: Margaret Atwood's Feminist Fiction and the Constructed Environment

Bryn Taylor (Bryn) Kepler, Senior, Architectural Design
Mentor: Louisa Iarocci, Architecture, University of Washington, Seattle

Imagine a world of social and gender equality- what does it look like? Can social justice be achieved through the real-world production of such an environment? While drawing and other visual art mediums are considered to be the primary communication tool to depict the imagined constructed environment, language and the written word are powerful methods of spatial description that are often overlooked. As a means of constructing an imaginary environment, or an environment that has political and emotional associations tied to it, fiction literature is an especially compelling tool for creating environments with social implications. Thus, through spatial analysis of fiction pieces by Margaret Atwood, a noted contemporary author of feminist and dystopian literature, I am examining the role of the constructed environment in issues of gender inequality within the writing. How does the built environment impact women's role in society in the novels? Does Atwood depict a new type of environment that provides more opportunities for gender equality? I will be reading *The Edible Woman* (1969), *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985), and *Oryx and Crake* (2003), and comparing Atwood's language used in constructing the novels' settings to academic writings on gendered spaces. I will also be comparing each of the novels' commentaries on the state of women's rights and gender equality with the historical timeline of second and third-wave feminism in North America. I expect this research to show new links between the constructed environment and feminist and architectural theory, with the aim of incorporating such knowledge into modern day architectural design that supports current efforts against gender inequality.

SESSION 1C

HISTORIES OF POWER, SOCIAL DIFFERENCE, AND COMMUNITY FORMATION

Session Moderator: Ileana Rodriguez-Silva, History
228 MGH

1:15 PM to 2:45 PM

* Note: Titles in order of presentation.

In between the House and the City: The Architecture and Social Responses of Housing Projects in Theory and Practice

Angela Yang, Senior, Architectural Design
Mentor: Jennifer Dee, Architecture

"It is useless to consider the house except as a part of a community owing to the interaction of these on each other." This was the opening sentence to the Doorn Manifesto written by Team 10, a collective of architects in the 1950's who discussed the future of modern architecture and the modern city. My research begins with delving into Team 10's theories on urbanism and Aldo van Eyck's writings on the architect's role on modernization and the relationship between a house and a city. With those theories as the driving force of my research, I delve into the development of housing projects as architectural responses to political and social impacts and modernization. I begin with the rise of housing projects in Algeria and Morocco as colonialism has made Northern Africa the experimentation grounds of new architectural types that differ from the traditional casbah and impoverished bidonvilles. From there, I move to France and investigate the banlieue as a reaction to post-war migration into the city and how the architecture has fallen to the banlieue's socio-economic image. Using Team 10's utopian ideals, I address the successes and failures of the housing projects up to this point and examine how architecture can act as a solution instead of a reaction to urbanization and modernization.