Introduction

PARTICIPATORY DESIGN AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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Since Whitney M. Young Jr. admonished the AIA for its thunderous silence and complete irrelevance in 1968, a number of "alternative" design approaches have been utilized in response: community design, participatory design and planning, democratic design, social architecture, co-design, public interest design, and others. All have slight nuances but generally strive for the same goal: those who are to be impacted by design should be involved in the process.

Today, still, participatory design or even the act of engaging communities in the discussion of design is viewed as a fringe, alternative, or "other" practice, making it wildly fitting for inclusion within the American School's "renegade" stance. However, we argue it should not be some alternative renegade practice, since before simply "solving" physical design problems, we must work alongside clients, end users, and communities to first understand and discover what their social and cultural needs are in a project, which may entail the need for more holistic outcomes than just a building.

In rethinking design pedagogy around engaging stakeholders and/or the public in the design of their environments, this session sought to explore how to teach students not to forget how to see their neighborhoods and talk with their communities. How can we temper the enculturation process of the design professions so that students still retain a connection of lived experience to those outside the design disciplines as well as recognize the expertise of those who live, work, learn, and play in such places? How can we prepare our students to understand the context, not just the physical, but the social, cultural, racial, historical, and political? How do we instill in them this openness so that it carries through with them into their chosen professions?

From very different scholars and practitioners, these papers provide a diverse array of perspectives across many spectrums focused on participatory design and community engagement. In general, we heard from very experienced practitioners to instructors approaching the subject for the first time with their students. The authors offer a wide-angle lens into some of the many types of participatory design and community engagement practices, such as urban design, community design, participatory design, social impact, and public interest design. The authors also make a clear call for the need to focus on and further develop the soft skills (e.g., empathy and communication) of students just as explicitly as the hard skills (e.g., drawing and building).

Specific to the content of the papers, Michael Carriere and David Schalliol's "Engagement as Theory: Architecture, Planning, and Placemaking in the Twenty-First-Century City" offers an expanded model of placemaking integrating community design theory and methodology. Awilda Rodríguez Carrión's "Hidden Ground: Native American Intercultural

Relations" demonstrates how participatory design equipped students to better understand the cultural values of the Pawnee Nation.

A couple of papers provide the perspective of community-engaged work as professional practice. Shannon Criss and Nils Gore's "Igniting Community through Engaged Teaching" provides a view of a community-engaged practice led by the professors through their Dotte Agency, which integrates their practice with academic teaching. Jodi Dubyoski's "Putting Participation into Practice: Strategies for Evolving Architecture" serves as a self-reflective piece speaking to what she has been able to create and sustain in professional practice through her organization, FORM Coalition. The paper offers a glimpse into how a student can be influenced by community-engaged pedagogy, shaping their future approach as a practitioner.

Benjamin Peterson and R. Kyle Warren offer a curious take on teaching pro-active problem solving in their "Contested Territories: Evaluating the Limits and Liberties of Design (and Designers) in Public Space." They speak to teaching students to dig deeper into the understanding of contested territories by immersing themselves into data. They believe that students should learn to solve problems they self-define as opposed to waiting for someone to come to them with a problem to solve. Such thinking is typically regarded as being in opposition to participatory design and community engagement work. Also, set in a university context, Shawn Michael Schaefer's "Community Engagement and Service-Learning Reciprocity" speaks to the work of a university-based urban design outreach studio using a reciprocal community engagement and service-learning model.

Reflecting the tumultuous time within which the conference and proceedings were organized (pandemic and protests), Trudy Watt offers us a lone view into social justice design in her paper, "Oblique Pedagogical Strategies: Improv and Speculative Realism in Support of Social Justice Design Education."

This session brought scholars and practitioners together to continue moving the goals and methods of participatory design and community engagement into conventional practice, through future practitioners, so that buildings and landscapes are not viewed as just transactional products (physical) but, more importantly, as manifestations of impactful outcomes (sociocultural). Despite the many challenges of balancing service outcomes with learning objectives, community-engaged pedagogy is effective to those ends. Perhaps if we began to teach participatory design and engagement to students in "regular" and "traditional" studios, the practice would not be perceived as so "alternative." Most participatory design work, when labeled as such, is oriented toward underserved communities, through university-affiliated community design centers. However, participatory design itself is a neutral term, and the practice of participatory design does not need to be limited to work with underserved communities. At all scales and budgets, participatory design can be a valuable tool, one worthy of teaching all students how to better listen to, and relate to, their fellow human beings.

For such a year as we have had, it was heartening to find that participatory design, actually engaging users and the public, was a common thread among presenters in the other three sessions as well. The timing of the conference and subsequent proceedings clearly provided some shifts in perception. Scholars proposed and presented in March, pre-pandemic, but papers were being written during the pandemic as well as connections kept through the Renegades' "Summer School" virtual panel sessions organized post-conference. Perhaps, in the future, we will hear more about the impact of the pandemic and protests

both on and in pedagogy in the still very relevant and timely practice of participatory design and community engagement.

Note: You may view a selection of "Participatory Design and Community Engagement" paper presentations online here: <u>https://youtu.be/GPyYuGNVXxY</u>

Proceedings Papers

Not all authors submitted papers for inclusion in the conference proceedings; below are additional papers accepted into this session.

"EDIT [Engage, Design, Implement, Transform]: Lessons Learned During Ten Years of Participatory Design and Community Engagement" (Milagros Zingoni, Arizona State University)

"Design with People: Adapting Interdisciplinary Surrogate Models of Participatory Design" (Matthew Kleinman, University of Kansas)