



Environmental & Architectural Phenomenology

Vol. 17 • No. 2

ISBN 1083-9194

www.arch.ksu.edu/seamon/EAP.html Spring • 2006

This issue of *EAP* includes regular features as well as a course outline and two essays. In the past, we have requested materials indicating ways to teach phenomenological topics and methods. We are pleased this issue to publish the syllabus for a seminar on the “Psychology of Place,” taught by Duquesne University Psychology professor Eva Simms. We hope other readers might consider submitting related course materials.

The first essay this issue is by philosophy doctoral student Kascha Semon, who explores the role that shopping mall design plays in consumer behavior. Next, Composer and sound researcher R. Murray Schafer offers an overview of some of the major themes of a “phenomenology of the soundscape.”

Architecture & Phenomenology

The conference **Phenomenology & Architecture** will be held at Haifa’s Israel Institute of Technology Faculty of Architecture and Town Planning (Tech-

nion), 20-24 May, 2007.

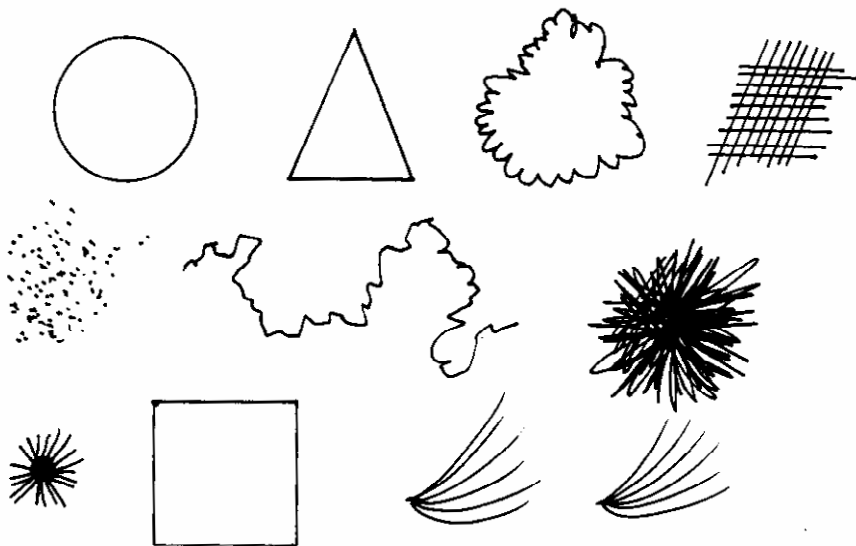
The prospectus reads in part: “Through phenomenological examination of such themes as the relations between subject and object, the state of body in space and place, matter and memory, the ethics and politics of the poetic, and senses of place, we would like to reexamine the significance of phenomenology for contemporary architecture. In the light of current cultural, political, technological and social conditions, how can we think in phenomenological fashion about architectural concepts such as place, space, tectonics, matter, and dwelling? What are the means that phenomenology provides for the architectural discourse and practice today?”

Members of the conference’s advisory committee include: Andrew Benjamin, Ion Copoeru, Kenneth Frampton, Hagi Kenaan, Edna Langenthal, Robert Mugerauer, Eran Neuman, Juhani Pallasmaa, Ariele Peled, Alberto Pérez-Gómez, Antoine Picon, David Seamon, and Dalibor Vesely. Contact: archphen@technion.ac.il

Left: A sound exercise from R. Murray Schafer’s *A Sound Education* (Arcana, 1992, p. 62), a book of “100 exercises in listening and sound-making.”

The aim of this exercise is to find a sound to match the particular shape or texture. Schafer writes: “Can a sound be round or triangular? I once played sounds on a tape to a group of students and found that two very dissimilar sounds were considered round. One was church bells and the other was an air conditioner. You may have your own choices and they should provide material for an interesting discussion” (ibid.).

See Schafer’s “I Have Never Seen a Sound,” p. 10.



Donors, 2006

Since our last issue, additional readers have contributed more than the base subscription for 2006. Thank you all so much.

Andrew Cohill	Aina Barten
Roxanne Bok	Richard Capobianco
Marion Dumont	Steve Halling
Jeff Head	Lance Howard
Sara Ishikawa	Evelyn Koblentz
Jeff Malpas	Mark Miller
Juhani Pallasmaa	Martha Perez
Murray Schafer	Jerome Tognoli
Karen Vitulano	Jan Wright

Conference Session: Alexander's "Nature of Order"

The annual meeting of the International Association for Environmental Philosophy (IAEP) will include a special session on architect Christopher Alexander's *The Nature of Order*, to be held Monday, 16 October, at the Sheraton Society Hill Hotel, One Dock Street, Philadelphia. We hope *EAP* readers in the area might consider attending. Session paper titles and presenters are as follows:

- ♦ "The Human Capacity for Creating Beauty," Karen Kho, Alameda County Planner, San Leandro, California.
- ♦ "Grasping the Ineffable," Jenny Quillien, New Mexico University at Highlands, Santa Fe, New Mexico.
- ♦ "Structures of Wholeness: A Study of Carl Nyrén's Brahe School Library, Visingsö, Sweden," Gary Coates, Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas.
- ♦ "The Architecture of Living Thought," Tim Quick, Independent Scholar, Victoria, British Columbia.
- ♦ "'The Hazard of Emergence': Christopher Alexander's Theory of Wholeness as Genuine Belonging," David Seamon, Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas.

Contact David Seamon for information on the session. For information on the conference, go to: www.environmentalphilosophy.org/

Items of Interest

The Lama Foundation of San Cristobal, New Mexico is sponsoring "**Contemplative Sustainable Design**," a summer workshop, 24 July-12 August, which will integrate academic study, contemplative practices, and hands-on design. Students will help build and renovate straw-bale and straw-clay structures that utilize active and passive solar energy. No prior experience in sustainable design or contemplative practices is necessary. The program is offered through American University in Washington, DC. www.american.edu/sis/summer/institutes/sustainabledesign.htm.

A one-day conference, **The Phenomenology of John Paul II**, will be sponsored by Duquesne University's Simon Silverman Phenomenology Center on Friday, December 1, 2006. Keynote speakers include Avery Dulles, S.J. and George Weigel. Contact: Daniel J. Martino at martino@duq.edu.

Ethics, Place and Environment is an international peer-reviewed journal publishing research, scholarship, and debate on "all aspects of geographical and environmental ethics." Contact: Prof. Tim Unwin, Editor: tim.unwin@rhul.ac.uk.

The **International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Health and Well-Being** is a new journal headquartered in Sweden. The editors welcome contributions from various disciplines at both theoretical and applied levels. Contact Editor Lillemor Hallberg at: Lillemor.Hallberg@hos.hh.se.

The Senses and Society is a new journal examining the human senses in culture and society. The editors are planning a special issue devoted to "Sense and the City," with particular emphasis on the sensorial experiences of the city. Contact: Dr Mags Adams, Acoustics Research Centre, University of Salford, Salford M5 4WT UK. m.d.adams@salford.ac.uk.

Lexington Books announces a new book series, **Toposophia: Sustainability, Dwelling, and Design**, edited by philosophers Gary Backhaus and Robert Mugerauer. The series is dedicated to "the

interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary study of place.” Contact: drbobm@u.washington.edu.

News from Readers

Geography master’s student **Karen Vitulano** writes: “I’m alone in my studies in phenomenology, and my master’s thesis advisors in the Geography Department here at San Francisco State University have no background in the approach. I wonder if there might be an experienced individual out there, perhaps a graduate student or someone with the time and interest, to serve as a mentor in my master’s thesis study, possibly even serve on my thesis committee. Contact: kv@peoplepc.com; 415-947-4178.”

Vitulano’s thesis is tentatively titled “Above Fort Funston: A Phenomenology of Place,” and the proposal abstract is as follows:

This study uses a phenomenological framework to explore the meanings and perceptions of place and the natural world. I focus on the experiences of hang gliders that fly at San Francisco’s Fort Funston, an area of coastal cliffs that are part of the Golden Gate Natural Recreation Area. Data will be collected through in-depth interviews with hang gliders using a semi-structured format. The study also hopes to explore the potential that phenomenological methods offer for providing alternative conceptions of nature and the human-environment relationship.

Philosopher **Jeff Malpas** sends the following report on the recent Australian “Senses of Place” conference:

The Senses of Place Conference took place here in Hobart, at the University of Tasmania’s School of Art, on March 6-8. From my own perspective, it was exciting to see so many people from so many different fields gathered together around the concept of place. I think the Conference was a wonderful demonstration of just how important the concept is in contemporary research and practice.

Professor Ted Relph from the University of Toronto was our keynote speaker. The weather itself put on a bit of a show with a real taste of winter and even some snow on the Mountain. The collaboration with the Mountain Festival, together with the National Museum and the University, seemed to me to add something important and distinctive to Conference proceedings in that we were able to connect with the wider Tasmania community more than otherwise. This also meant that there was an important artistic and creative side to proceedings (here special thanks should go to Jonathan Holmes for his

wonderful exhibition on Tasmanian landscape art) and that the Mountain itself was present in a particularly salient way.

As a result of the conference, a primary objective in the coming months will be to establish a more effective website for the Network. I also intend to explore other possibilities that were discussed—the establishment of an association with a journal, the possibility of an association structure and so on.”

To be added to the Place Network listserve, contact: Jeff.Malpas@utas.edu.au.

Jane Jacobs

Urban critic **Jane Jacobs** died 25 April, 2006, in Toronto, where she had lived since 1968. She was 89 years old. Her 1961 *Death and Life of Great American Cities* is a remarkable account of how real-world cities work. The book can fairly be called an implicit phenomenology of the city and the urban lifeworld. She wrote:

The way to get at what goes on in the seemingly mysterious and perverse behavior of cities is, I think, to look closely, and with as little previous expectation as is possible, at the most ordinary scenes and events, and attempt to see what they mean and whether any threads of principle emerge among them (p. 13).

Note that Jacobs intimates here two key features of phenomenological effort: first, allowing the thing—in this case, citiness—to reveal itself in the course of everyday, taken-for-granted life; second, using what one sees as the starting point for understanding more general principles and structures that make the city what it essentially is.

For Jacobs, the essential structure of the city is a small-scaled functional and physical diversity that generates and is fed by what she called the “street ballet”—an exuberance of place and sidewalk life founded on the everyday comings and goings of many people carrying out their own ordinary needs, obligations, and activities. Out of the individual human parts arises a greater environmental whole.

In true phenomenological fashion, Jacobs recognized that urbanites and their urban environment are not separate but meld in a robust “being-in-the-world” grounded in four conditions: small blocks; a range in building types; a high concentration of people; and a mixture of primary uses—i.e., anchor

functions like residences and workplaces to which people must necessarily go.

What is perhaps most striking about *Death and Life* is the effortless connection it makes between understanding and practice. To see the intimate linkage among diversity, street ballet, and the four conditions is to know what planning and design can do in terms of kindling and sustaining diversity and street ballet—i.e., facilitating and strengthening the four conditions. As she explains:

In our American cities, we need all kinds of diversity, intricately mingled in mutual support. We need this so city life can work decently and constructively, and so the people of cities can sustain (and further develop) their society and civilization.... [M]ost city diversity is the creation of incredible numbers of different people and different private organizations, with vastly differing ideas and purposes, planning and contriving outside the formal framework of public action. The main responsibility of city planning and design should be to develop—insofar as public policy and action can do so—cities that are congenial places for this great range of unofficial plans, ideas and opportunities to flourish, along with the flourishing of the public enterprises. City districts will be economically and socially congenial places for diversity to generate itself and reach its best potential if the districts possess good mixtures of primary uses, frequent streets, a close-grained mingling of different ages in their buildings, and a high concentration of people (p. 242).

In other words, formal urban structures presuppose and are founded on a vibrant informal structure that is exuberant street ballet grounded in diversity that sustains and is sustained by the four conditions. Jacobs' argument offers an extraordinary commingling and folding over of its various conceptual and real-world parts. There is a compelling interconnectedness that is a hallmark of the best phenomenology, even though Jacobs had no direct familiarity with the approach.

As we find over and over again in editing *EAP*, the finest phenomenological work sometimes gets done by people who have never heard the word. In *Death and Life* (as well as in her other books on the city), Jacobs offers one of the most comprehensive examples.

—David Seamon

Citations Received

Simon J. Charlesworth, 2000. *A Phenomenology of Working Class Experience*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

This sociologist examines “the personal consequences of poverty and class” as seen in the everyday lives of residents of the working-class town of Rotherham in South Yorkshire, England. A major focus is “the social relations and experiences of a distinct but largely ignored social group.” For his conceptual framework, Charlesworth draws on the work of Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Pierre Bourdieu. Disappointing because Charlesworth uses Bourdieuan concepts like class, capital, reproduction, and inequality to “sociologize” phenomenological insights and principles.

Birgit Cold, ed., 2001. *Aesthetics, Well-being and Health*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate.

The 17 short essays of this volume “investigate the relations between aesthetics and well being and aesthetics and health. Contributors include David Canter, Kim Dovey, Roderick Lawrence, Kaj Noschis, Juhani Pallasmaa, and Perla Serfaty-Garcon.

Constance Fischer, ed., 2005. *Qualitative Research Methods for Psychologists: Introduction through Empirical Studies*. NY: Academic Press.

Fourteen chapters presenting various qualitative research methods, including phenomenology, conceptual encounter, and grounded theory. Study topics include: joy, forgiveness, and the life of mystics. Fischer is one of the founders of the Duquesne University's program in phenomenological psychology.

Karen Franck & Quentin Steven, eds., 2006. *Loose Space: Possibility and Diversity in Urban Life*. NY: Routledge.

The chapters of this edited collection are said to be “about physical spaces, their capacity to shape and support behaviour.” A focus is how “design might address those parts of the built environment that are undersigned or underdesigned.”

Brian Hayes, 2005. *Infrastructure: A Field Guide to the Industrial Landscape*. NY: Norton.

Including exceptional photographs, this book examines current industrial-landscape types organized thematically by agriculture, resources, energy, communication, transportation, and waste.

"The World in Its Live and Living Being"

Phenomenology recovers the order of truth as residing *in* things. It is not hidden, it does not lie under or behind or beneath things, and hence does not require Depth Theory to wrinkle it out. It is what is manifest (what shows) in things and *how*. If this is very obvious (as it *must* be) it yet requires a particular way of seeing and understanding in order to grasp it, for it can simply be not-seen at all.

If phenomenology sees the world differently, that difference is not particular to philosophy or its concerns. Indeed, phenomenology's way of seeing is returning to the world in manifold ways today. In the last century it began to be systematically covered over. This covering over (and all its consequences) was most clearly pointed up by Dickens in the celebrated opening schoolroom scene of *Hard Times*:

"Girl number twenty," said Mr. Gradgrind, squarely pointing with his square forefinger..., "Give me your definition of a horse."

(Sissy Jupe thrown into the greatest alarm by this demand.)

"Girl number twenty unable to define a horse!" said Mr. Gradgrind, for the general behoof of all the little pitchers. "Girl number twenty possessed of no facts, in reference to one of the commonest of animals! Some boy's definition of a horse. Bitzer, yours"...

"Quadruped. Graminivorous. Forty teeth, namely twenty-four grinders, four eye-teeth, and twelve incisors. Sheds coat in the spring; in marshy countries, sheds hoofs too. Hoofs hard, but requiring to be shod with iron. Age known by marks in mouth." Thus (and much more) Bitzer.

"Now girl number twenty," said Mr. Gradgrind. "You know what a horse is."

Bitzer 'knows' everything about horses but knows nothing; Sissy Jupe 'knows' nothing but knows everything (her father belongs to the 'horse-riding'—a circus—and she lives and works with horses). The order of knowing that pertains to Bitzer epitomizes the reification of truth into knowledge-as-facts. The order of knowing that pertains to Sissy Jupe preserves truth as understanding of being—the being of horses. For Bitzer to get to the kind of knowledge he has depends upon treating things as Things; mere stuff, inert, dead, object-matter that can be weighed and measured and counted and taken to bits and known in this way.

Modernity's world is dead. It was not God that was killed in the course of modernization but the world. Is not that the greatest treason and the greatest anguish of modernity? Against what Bitzer stands for, Sissy Jupe (who knows the truth of animals existingly) is a marginal figure in a triumphant world of Facts.

The order of truth that shows in her (what she *knows*) is being-in-concern. In being-amidst and being-with animals—and in so being carefully—Sissy *knows* them through and through. What she knows (what Bitzer *cannot* ever know) is their live and living being. The order of truth that shows through Sissy Jupe is the world in its liveness which is open to her through her own being-open to it, and which is closed forever to Bitzer and his world.

The truth that is recovered through what is here called phenomenology is nothing more (or less) than the truth of the world in its live and living being. It sees the same world that modernity sees—the same things in the same spaces at the same time—but it sees the world existingly.

To see the world in such a way is what art has always expressed and what it tried to hang on to, even *in extremis*, throughout the historical epoch of the reification of the world from which we are beginning to emerge at the end of the 20th century. This re-emergence 'frees' the world from the frozen grip of instrumental reason as exercised by 'worldless' subjects.

—from Paddy Scannell, *Radio, Television and Modern Life: A Phenomenological Approach*. London: Blackwell, 1996, pp. 169-71.

Stephen R. Kellert, 2005. *Building for Life: Designing and Understanding the Human-Nature Connection*. Washington, DC: Island Press.

Written by a human ecologist, "this book explores and defends [the view] that nature—even in our modern urban society—remains an indispensable, irreplaceable basis for human fulfillment. It examines how degrading healthy connections to the natural world impoverishes our material and moral capacity. Finally, it addresses how through deliberate design we may restore the basis for a more compatible and even harmonious relationship with nature."

Andrew Light & Jonathan M. Smith, eds., 2005. *The Aesthetics of Everyday Life*. NY: Columbia University Press.

Eleven essays dealing with various aspects of "the domains of everyday life not covered by such previously existing fields as the aesthetics of art, the aesthetics of nature, and the aesthetics of mathematics." Topics include "The Aesthetics of Weather" (chap. 9) & "The Aesthetics of Smells and Tastes" (chap. 10).

Paddy Scannell, 1996. *Radio, Television & Modern Life: A Phenomenological Approach*. London: Blackwell.

This media and communications scholar offers "a reinterpretation of radio and television as part of the foreground and background of a common world that they contribute to bringing into being, day by day and every day, for everyone." Scannell offers "a careful historical analysis of how programmes mean; how they are produced in such ways as to be found as sociable, sincere, authentic, eventful, and so on, by any viewer and listener." The box, left, reproduces a passage detailing Scannell's perceptive understanding of phenomenology.

Course Outline

The Psychology of Place

Dr. Eva Simms
Department of Psychology
Duquesne University
Pittsburgh, PA
simms@duq.edu

Course Description

We live in buildings all the time. We take for granted that others share our experiences of landscapes, cities, and houses. We move daily through a history of architecture as it is sedimented into the city around us without giving it a second thought.

This course explores the psychology of place: What does it mean to dwell in a particular place? How do we experience the natural environment and the built environment? How are architectural elements entwined with the personal and social lives of the people who dwell there?

The class format will be a **seminar**, i.e. instead of lectures, we will have a structured discussion of the assigned texts. This course is designed to give you the greatest amount of participation, be it through exercises, discussion of your special places, as well as through careful reading and engaged discussion of selected texts. I expect you to read, think, and speak for yourself. There will also be time for walks and field studies. The course has four parts:

1. Introduction: How do children experience their special places and their neighborhoods?
2. Dwelling, place, environment: The philosophical foundations of a psychology of place.
3. Children's lives in small urban spaces.
4. Roofs, porches, pueblos and villages: The symbolic language of the built environment.

Course Outline & Reading

JAN 10 - 26: How do children experience their special places and their neighborhoods? We will look at children's experience of spatiality in our and other cultures and explore our own childhood places.

1. **Langeveld, M.** (1983). The stillness of the secret place. *Phenomenology and Pedagogy*, 1(1), 11-17.
2. **Langeveld, M.** (1983). The secret place in the life of the child. *Phenomenology and Pedagogy*, 1(2), 181-191.
3. **Benswanger, E.** (1979) AA contribution to the Phenomenology of Lived Space in Early Childhood@ in *Duquesne Studies*, Vol. III. Pittsburgh, Duquesne Univ. Press.
4. **Chawla, Louise** (2003) Special place—what is that? Significant and secret spaces in the lives of children in a Johannesburg squatter camp. In Goodenough, E., *Secret spaces of childhood*. Ann Arbor, Michigan University Press.

JAN 31–MAR 2: Dwelling, place, environment: The philosophical foundations of a psychology of place. We will explore Heidegger's thoughts on dwelling and, with the help of Relph, move into our study of places by looking at the geography of Pittsburgh and the human-made places in this city.

5. **Heidegger, M.** (1971) Building, dwelling, thinking. In *Poetry, language, thought*. New York, Harper & Row.
 6. **Relph, E.** (1989), Geographical experiences and being-in-the-world: The phenomenological origins of geography. In Seamon, D. & Murgerauer, R. (eds.), *Dwelling, place, and environment*. New York, Columbia University Press.
- Relph, E.** (1976) *From Place and placelessness*. London: Pion; read the following chapters in Relph:
7. "Space and place" (chap. 2).
 8. "The essence of place" (chap. 3).
 9. "On the identity of places" (chap. 4).

MAR 12–23: Children's lives in small urban spaces. We will explore Jacobs' notion of the "sidewalk ballet" and Whyte's studies of life on urban streets, and look at children's city roaming spaces in Pittsburgh's Hill District. We conclude

this section by looking at the urban experiences of blind children.

10. **Jacobs, J.** (1961/1993) Excerpts from “The use of sidewalks” from *The death and life of great American cities*. New York: The Modern Library.
11. **Whyte, W.** (2000) “From *The social life of small urban spaces* (1980)” in *The essential William H. Whyte*. LaFarge, A. (ed). New York: Fordham University Press.
12. **Simms, E.** (2005) Growing up in the hood: Sixty years of childhood in an American inner city neighborhood. In Forneck, H.J. & Retzlaf, B. (eds.) *Kontingenz—Transformation—Entgrenzung. Über Veränderungen im pädagogischen Feld*. Rostock: Ingo Koch Verlag.
13. **Allen, C.** (2004) Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology and the body-in-space encounters of visually impaired children. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, vol. 22 pp. 719-735 (we will read excerpts only).

MAR 28–APRIL 27: Roofs, porches, pueblos and villages: The symbolic language of the built environment. We will follow the symbolic language of architecture from its basic structures through cultural variations towards a study of Pittsburgh’s sacred architecture.

- 14-16 from Seamon, D. (1993) *Dwelling, seeing, and designing: Toward a phenomenological ecology*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.
14. **Harries, Karsten**, Thoughts on a non-arbitrary architecture.
15. **Silverstein, Murray**, The first roof: Interpreting a spatial pattern.
16. **Mugerauer, Robert**, Toward an architectural vocabulary: The porch as a between.
17. **Seamon, D.** (2007) Interconnections, relationships, and environmental wholes: A phenomenological ecology of natural and built worlds. In D. Martino (ed.), *Renew the face of the earth: Phenomenology and ecology*. Pittsburgh, The Simon Silverman Phenomenology Center, forthcoming (we will read excerpts only).
18. **Violich, F.** Towards revealing a sense of place: An intuitive “reading” of four Dalmatian towns.
19. **Saile, D.G.** Many Dwellings: Views of a Pueblo world (last two in in Seamon, D. & Mugerauer, R. (eds.),

(1985) *Dwelling, place, and environment*. New York, Columbia University Press.

Learning Objectives and Evaluation

1. To become familiar with the major ideas and theories that contribute to a psychology of place. This requires from you to attend all class sessions and study the assigned texts.

Evaluation: 1 page summary/discussion of each assigned reading, due by the end of the week (no extensions!) (20 % of final grade). Out of the assigned summaries you can miss four.

2. To apply the material learned from lectures and textbook to your own observations and experiences. To prepare a presentation of your findings and enrich the classroom discussion. The success of the class depends on your participation and ideas, and your willingness to be thoughtful and creative in your class contributions.

Evaluation: Weekly 1 page written reflection on classroom discussion, reading or other assignment, e-mailed to Dr. Simms. I expect at least one reflection per week, and altogether 10 (which means you can miss 2 reflections). At the end of the term these reflections will be gathered, and you are expected to write a 3-5 page paper based on your reflections. (20% of final grade).

3. To be able understand and apply the concepts studied, and discuss and write about them in a coherent and insightful way.

Exams: there will be two written exams, a midterm and a final exam, which each will be worth 30% of the final grade. Exams will be based on the reading assignments, lectures, and class discussions.

Final Grade: Midterm: 30%, Final: 30%, Summaries: 20%, Reflections & final paper: 20%.

© 2006 Eva Simms

Insidious Design: The Silent Salesman and the American Shopping Mall

Kascha Semon

Semon is currently a doctoral student in philosophy at Boston College. She completed her master's in Philosophy at Stony Brook University where, under the direction of Edward Casey, she wrote a thesis examining the influence of Heidegger's *Being and Time* on architectural theory. semonk@bc.edu. © 2006 Kascha Semon.

Recent architectural theorists consider the American shopping mall as part of a vernacular landscape that evolved as product of large social movements and nonprofessional buildings that can be read for “popular social meanings and uses from the stylistics of the built environment” (Dyer 2003, p. 263).

The American shopping mall, however, *did* evolve from a structure originally designed by an architect, not from a vernacular culture. In addition, while all of the mutations and variations in the 50 or 60 years of mall architectural history may not have been produced by definitive acts of design, quite a number of these variations were carefully instituted.

The subtle implementation of design elements such as the “Silent Salesman” and their equally subtle effects on consumers provide an excellent case study for examining how the built environment quietly conditions behavior.

Cherry Hill Mall: A Case Study

Stephanie Dyer (2003) has analyzed the development of New Jersey's Cherry Hill Mall. Her research places this mall's design in relation to vernacular/folk architecture and to urban/suburban planning. The study explains that “instead of the product of the folk, such areas are the contested product of many actors—architects, real estate developers, retailers and tenants” and that the meaning of such spaces are not fixed at the moment of their physical creation, but are continually renegotiated” (ibid., p. 263). In fact, “many shopping centers of the postwar period were created by well-respected architects who also worked on more esteemed forms of commercial building” (ibid., p. 264).

Built in 1961, Cherry Hill Mall is a good study model because its “design and management pedigree preclude it from being considered vernacular in origin” (ibid., p. 264). Cherry Hill's designer, Victor Gruen, researched the social problems accumulating in post-war American suburbia; he presented his mall design as a palliative to the new American malaise. Gruen believed his mall would:

create additional attractions for shoppers by meeting other needs [i.e. other than simply consumption] which are inherent in the psychological climate peculiar to suburbia. By affording opportunities for social life and creation in a protected pedestrian environment, by incorporating civic and educational facilities, shopping centers can fill an existing void. They can provide the needed place and opportunity for participation in modern community life that the ancient Greek Agora, the Medieval Market Place, and our own Town Squares provided in the past (Gruen & Smith 1965, pp. 29-30).

As is evident from Gruen's comments, Cherry Hill's structure arose not from mere unprofessional, vernacular coincidences but through an intentional design process. Cherry Hill, as the first enclosed regional mall in the northeastern United States, served as a template for many other malls across the country. While other subsequent malls may have been constructed by developers based on pre-existing plans, they derived from a carefully and professionally designed complex.

Gruen, in fact, invented the “peculiar introverted architectural design that became the basis for the classic regional shopping center” (Dyer 2003, p. 264). The introverted design would allow suburbia to “overcome the ‘vulgarity’ of sprawling highway strips” (ibid., p. 265).

At the time, its New Jersey community welcomed Cherry Hill as a necessary supplement to the rapidly developing suburbia. Gruen and the mall's manager, like others responsible for malls around the country, honestly believed that the particular configuration of this work of architecture would enact social change. While Gruen cannot be blamed for failing to foresee the entire devolution of suburbia, one can now see how such un-integrated and enclosed design inherently distances itself from the problems mounting in the surrounding area rather than solving these problems.

The Silent Salesman

Gruen's ideology and the needs of the Cherry Hill community help to clarify the initial impetus in the construction of the mall, but other designers and communities refined the mall's particular configuration. After the initial round of mall construction after World War II, designers gradually permutated and refined mall design to meet the changing needs of consumers and retailers. Consumers were *learning* to shop at the mall, an activity different from previous methods of shopping and demanding subtle change in the physical environment.

Increasingly, elevators and staircases grew in size and stature to become "the celebratory centerpieces for the design statement" (Israel 1994, p. 56). Such spaces "were deemed essential, even if they subtracted from profitable selling areas for impulse merchandise at 100 percent traffic locations on several floors" (ibid., p. 56).

The escalator-atrium configuration became the iconographic and circulatory center of the mall, controlling the movement of shoppers throughout the complex. Designers and management decided whether customers should "have the convenience of riding up or down continuously to their vertical destination" or whether they should "be forced to walk around" (ibid., p. 121). Designers and mall owners understood that the configuration of the building was easily exploited to manipulate the consuming habits of the shoppers.

One refinement was the "Silent Salesman," an element of interior design within the building. Under pressure to reduce the number of actual salespeople in stores, retail stores developed set-ups designed to help people shop effectively on their own:

The self-selection fixture, the gondola, was called "silent salesman." It was designed to make the shopping experience and final sales transaction more comfortable, faster and more efficient. The entire nation gradually became accustomed to shopping and purchasing as an individual action without the pampering and pressured cajoling of salespeople" (ibid., p. 20)

This marvelous invention is simply the now-familiar sales rack which includes a model wearing the promoted set of clothing framed by a series of shelves with a variety of options. The shopper looks at the model who suggests, perhaps, a particular shirt, pant and belt combination; he then peruses the surrounding racks for the color and size he wants.

Via the Silent Salesman, designers replaced actual people with the built environment. Such mechanization is a familiar trope in industrialization: what was once accomplished by several people is now accomplished by a single technological object. This construction now seems so obvious as to be contiguous with the act of shopping, but it in fact represents a trend toward individualization of the shopping experience. Rather than being attended by numerous employees who suggest to one what one ought to buy this month, the building itself guides the shopping process. The mall itself tells one what one ought to buy.

What "one ought to do" is indicated not by the behavior of human assistants but via the built environment. The Silent Salesman conditions the behavior of the visitor while under the guise of "mere architecture." Certainly, such conditioning is not unique to the design elements identified above or to the mall in general. In fact, the pervasiveness of such conditioning is its most striking feature.

Excavating Design Elements

While many thinkers in various disciplines harp on the intertwinement of technology and behavior, philosophers rarely extend their analysis to the level of architecture. Architecture, by virtue of its association with the arts (in which affecting behavior and experience is expected) or by its association with daily life and the vernacular (in which it is roughly assumed that form follows function), escapes such criticism.

Yet increasingly, architects employ more advanced technologies from built-in plasma screens to

glass of changing opacity to refine their control over the range of experience of the user. In a consumer environment in particular, critics and philosophers should excavate such buried design elements to assess their effects. This is not to say that these elements are “bad” any more than that technology is “bad” but simply that the critic should recall them for evaluation.

References

- Dyer, Stephanie, 2003. Designing “Community” in the Cherry Hill Mall. *Constructing Image, Identity, & Place: Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture*. A. Hoagland & K. Briesch, eds. Knoxville: Univ. of Tenn. Press.
- Gruen, Victor & Smith, Larry, 1960. *Shopping Town USA*. NY: Rheinhold.
- Israel, Lawrence J., 1994. *Store Planning/Design: History, Theory, Practice*. NY: Wiley.

I Have Never Seen a Sound

R. Murray Schafer

Murray Schafer is a frequent contributor to *EAP*. He is a Canadian composer and author of *The Tuning of the World*, a seminal work on the history of the soundscape. The material in this essay was originally presented as a keynote address at the 12th International Congress of Sound and Vibration, held in Lisbon, Portugal, in July, 2005. Schafer notes in his accompanying letter that he is “trying to get the acoustical architects and engineers to come back to sound as sound, rather than the graphic projections that dominate most of their thinking today.” To order his books and music, write to: Arcana Editions, R. R. 2, Indian River, Ontario K0L 2B0 Canada. © 2006 R. Murray Schafer.

To begin, I must give a brief account of the word “soundscape,” how it came into existence, and the many ways it has developed, since not everyone may be familiar with this term.

In 1967 I was teaching in a communication department at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver. Noise pollution was an issue, especially around airports, since the introduction of jet aircraft during the 1960s. I decided to give a course in noise pollution. It was not successful. The students considered the subject negative and felt that anything they might do to resist noise increases would be futile. Moreover, many students were enjoying rock music, which emerged in the same decade as jet aircraft and was performed at similarly high intensities.

How could I turn the course into a positive subject of research? It occurred to me that we should be studying the total acoustic environment, its evolution through history, and its variations around the world. We needed a word to describe this new re-

search, and that’s how the word “soundscape” (“*paysage sonore*”) was introduced.

Of course, the word is derived from “landscape,” a subject that has been intensively researched for centuries. Geologists study landscape formations. Geographers study landscape in its relationship to society. Architects and engineers restructure landscapes, and painters have painted them. And since photography, we have all been introduced to the appearance of divergent landscapes from around the world.

But who had systematically studied the evolving soundscape? The answer was no one. Yes, of course, work has been done in building acoustics. And we can deduce some patterns of the acoustic environment from the history of music, since musicians have often imitated environmental sounds in their compositions and improvisations. But that is about all. So I decided to try to develop projects that would analyze the evolution of the soundscape from past to present.

The first thing to realize is that the soundscape is dynamic. It is constantly changing both in time and place. And every sound commits suicide—it will never be heard again.

I asked “Where are the museums for disappearing sounds?” At that time, there were almost none. So I sent my students out to record the sounds of Vancouver, the city in which we lived. Every sound recorded was to be accompanied by a card indicating the time and place recorded, the history of the sound object, and any social observations that might be significant. From this research we produced our first document, *The Vancouver Soundscape*, comprised of two LP records and a book analyzing the recordings and providing historical context.

Recordings, however, tell us nothing about soundscapes before recording was possible. To know past soundscapes, we would have to study documents by a variety of observers: historians, writer, inventors, painters, photographers, commentators—ear-witness accounts by people who listened carefully.

This became the subject of my *Tuning of the World* (Knopf, 1977), which attempted to show, in general terms, the evolution of the soundscape from ancient to modern times. As the book is available in several languages, I don’t need to describe it here, but I will mention how researching it affected my attitude to the acoustic environment and that of an increasing number of other interested individuals.

I imagined the soundscape as a huge musical concert that is running continuously. The tickets for this concert are free, and we are all listeners. But we are also performers because we make sounds. To a certain extent, we could also aspire to be composers and conductors, shaping and designing its events.

Since we are condemned to listen to it, why not try to improve it? It seemed inevitable to think this way because we are always at the center of the soundscape, listening out. That is exactly contrary to the visual environment of which we are always outside, looking in.

In short, visual awareness is not aural awareness. Visual awareness faces forward, while aural awareness is centered.

This inclusiveness of the soundscape reminds us of the medieval theologians’ definition of God as a “presence whose center is everywhere and whose circumference is nowhere.” When we go back in history or mythology, we discover the voice of God or the gods in the sounds of nature everywhere: in thunder, in wind, in waterfalls—even in the quiet trembling of leaves. To the prophet Elijah, God’s voice was heard as a gentle breeze (Kings I:19). In those days, the natural soundscape was just as full of miracles as the electronic soundscape is today.

The amazing thing about this natural soundscape is that none of these sounds or divine voices will harm your hearing. God was a first-rate acoustical engineer. Listen to the sounds of your own body—how quietly you can move your arms and legs. Then imagine how you might sound if you were designed by General Motors.

I have been accused of being a dreamer in attempting to restore some of the features of the natural soundscape to modern life. But the word “ecology,” new at the time we began our research, inspired us to believe that one day we might think in terms of acoustic ecology, restoring the balance between living creatures and the natural environment. The establishment of the World Forum for Acoustic Ecology is the beginning of a movement that in 1970 was only a dream.

Of course, there were loud sounds in the past and the loudest were the sounds of warfare and religion: the beating of drums and shields in warfare and the rattling of sacred bones and the ringing of bells in religion. Reflecting on this acoustic pattern, I formulated a theorem: Wherever you find the loudest noise or noises in a society, you have a center of power, which I called the “Sacred Noise” because these sounds were immune to proscription.

Every society has its Sacred Noises. In the Middle Ages it was church bells that rang constantly, to which was later added the organ, the loudest machine on earth prior to the Industrial Revolution. During the early part of the 19th

century, however, the Industrial revolution replaced the churches, and railroads carried industrial noise throughout the countryside. Sensitive people disliked railroads: Flaubert hated their noises as did Dickens, Zola, and Wagner.

Although it was known that industrial noise was ruining the health and hearing of workers, nothing was done about it. You cannot prosecute or curb a Sacred Noise; you can only wait for its power to pass. And that is, of course, what happened. By the middle of the 20th century, Societies for workmen's compensation were set up in most civilized countries, and programs of aural hygiene were established in factories.

At the same time the factory ceased to be the dominant community noise as the aviation industry took over and the entertainment industries erupted. Today, with each generation of jet aircraft showing a reduction of a few more decibels, enthusiasm for flying is diminishing; but the boom-boxes of films and popular music remain un-assailed.

Over the last few centuries, increasing numbers of people have left the countryside and moved to the cities. Aside from losing the sounds of nature, in what other ways have their listening habits been affected? One of the most conspicuous differences between urban and rural listening is that in cities there is no distant listening—all sounds are close. There is also little distant viewing because buildings block views.

In the rural environment, important information comes from the distance and may come from any direction. Where I live, on a farm in Ontario, a hunter can tell whether his dog is in pursuit of a deer or a rabbit by the sound of his barking. The deer runs in a straight line; the rabbit in circles. Generally, an intruder in the rural environment will be heard long before he is seen, his presence announced by barking dogs passing the news from one farm to the next.

This leads me to suggest that the rural inhabitant listens in a more unfocused manner than the urban dweller. We speak of peripheral vision when we view a Chinese landscape painting,

with a cloud in one corner, a mountain in another and a waterfall somewhere else. Perhaps there is something like peripheral hearing in an open environment where one overhears rather than focuses consciously. Urban life requires much more focused listening where one is surrounded by sounds requiring quick response: voices, telephones, bells, buzzers, horns, and the like.

The density and demands of the urban soundscape make for a *lo-fi* environment in contrast to the *hi-fi* soundscape of the countryside, where there is less noise and clearer signals. Each season brings a different soundscape, and the changes are often signals for changes in agrarian work. The Greek poet Hesiod, in his long poem *Work and Days*, tells us that the time for planting was when the cry of the crane was heard overhead (line 451). And where I live, the time to stop tapping maple trees for their syrup is when the frogs begin to be heard in the ponds. Then the ice has melted; the sap darkens and is of inferior quality.

Urban sounds are distinguished in another way: many of them are owned by someone, and copy-righting of sounds appears to be definitely on the increase. Disputes are reaching the courts as they did when the motorcycle manufacturer Harley Davidson sued Honda for attempting to duplicate the sound of its motor.

A few years ago, I recall an invitation from the engineers at BMW in Munich to suggest ideas for a distinctive sound for their new automobile. "What we would like, Mr. Schafer, is to produce a vehicle that, when heard coming down the street, would cause listeners to say, 'Ah, I hear a BMW'."

"The only crime in visual art is the straight line," claimed the Austrian painter Hundertwasser, because it is not found in nature. Sounds prior to the Industrial Revolution were discrete and interrupted, and rarely are droning sounds found.

In great contrast, the internal combustion engine brought into the soundscape the "flat line," which was followed by many other generators of low-information, high-redundancy sound: ventilation, heating, electrical systems and, of course, aircraft.

With the increase of these heavy, droning noises, the soundscape thickens into an infrasonic drone.

Sometimes, with a class of music students, I have done a relaxation exercise that culminates in asking the class to sing the tone of “prime unity”—the tone that seems to arise naturally from the center of their being. In North America this usually turns out to be B natural. In Europe it is often G sharp. What is the significance? B natural is 60 cycles and G sharp is about 50 cycles. They are memory traces of the electrical frequencies of two continents.

We listen to the environment and echo it back in language and music. In ancient times, people did not visualize the auditory experience. There were no texts or notations. Every sound was a new creation. It was magical.

The creation story in the Bible, is typical of that era when sound generated everything. God spoke and the world appeared. Notice the order: sound precedes sight. This is also the pattern in countless other creation stories where sound is the first force.

To make sound is to participate in the original urge to shape the world. God created the universe with his mouth, and the fastest way to get action today is still verbal. As civilization developed, however, vocalizing gradually gave way to visualizing as the primary means for storing and transmitting information.

Sound cannot be known the way sight can be known. No sound can be repeated the same way twice, not even your own name. And a sound heard once is not the same as a sound heard again. Interesting fictions have been invented for weighing and measuring sounds: alphabets, music scripts, sonograms. But everybody knows that one can't weigh a whisper or count the voices in a choir.

In contrast, seeing is analytical and reflective. It places things side by side and compares them. Thus Heraclitus said that “the eyes are more exact witnesses than the ears,” and Aristotle preferred sight as “the principal source of knowledge.”

Sights are knowable. Sights are nouns.

Sounds are actions; they move and change. Sounds are verbs.

Sight separates and isolates. Sound fuses.

The graphing of sound goes back a long way—to the ancient Greeks, even to Mesopotamia, both in the form of musical notation. Musical notation is a mix of graphic and symbolic elements, but the graphic matrix adopted by the ancient Greeks, with time flowing from left to right and frequency indicated vertically, has remained both in musical notation and in the graphic analysis of sound.

I am merely drawing your attention to the fact that this approach to notation is a habit and has nothing to do with the nature of sound itself. Elaborate sound scripts have made many things possible.

For instance, the architectonic structure of a Beethoven symphony could not have been conceived without notation, nor would advanced work in acoustics or psychoacoustics be possible (though I seem to recall that Wallace Clement Sabine set the sound decay curve of Boston's Symphony Hall, still probably the best hall for orchestral music in America, using only a shotgun and some pillows).

We don't know how the magic behind the acoustics of the Asclepius theatre at Epidauros was created, nor do we know whether the seven echoes directly under the main cupola of the Shah Abbas Mosque in Isfahan were intended or were, instead, a surprise accident. In the Ali Qapu palace, also in Isfahan, there was a room (now destroyed) in which sounds were reputed to live forever.

Forever? Obviously, the boundless, directionless, horizonless, and terrifying world of sound in which people once lived, and millions around the world still live, was remarkably exploited in the ancient world without much in the way of instrumentation to assist their creators.

What would be the benefits of a more phenomenological approach to acoustics—that is, an approach that uses the naked ear as a guide rather than instruments and visual projections? In his *Philosophical Dictionary*, Voltaire writes: “God has put truth into your ears and error into your eyes... When your attentive ear hears: ‘You are beautiful; I love you,’ it is very certain that the words are not ‘I hate you; you are ugly.’”

But when you see the sun ... appearing about two feet in diameter, it is not demonstrated that it is a million times larger than the earth."

It would be interesting to make a list of researchers whose work combined both sound and visual studies. One figure would be Thomas Young, who argued convincingly that the wave theory applied to both sound and light (1802). Young's previous work had been in visual studies (he was the first person to measure astigmatism) and in the decipherment of Egyptian hieroglyphs. Another such researcher was Christian Johann Doppler, who formulated the explanation of the effect that bears his name in a work (*Concerning the Colored Light of Double Stars*) that demonstrated the bending of both sound and light waves.

Evidently, the Doppler Effect had not been noticed consciously by previous listeners. What then was the sound that moved with sufficient velocity to attract Doppler's attention? Intriguingly, it was the locomotive. In fact, Doppler verified his theory by placing trumpet players in a speeding train and measuring the pitch change as it passed.

The Doppler Effect applies to both light and sound waves, but it would be wrong to presume that all discoveries are transposable. Rather, I am arguing that the visual nomenclature of many researches in sound may be moving us further away rather than closer to the essence of the aural experience, which is always phenomenological and unique.

It is probably going too far to say that in any aural culture, science, especially physics and mathematics and their dependents—statistics, physiology, empirical psychology, drafting, demography, banking, and so forth—would disappear. Rather, it is probably enough to say that in purely aural cultures these modes of being don't appear in the first place.

Have I got off track? I was saying that everything in the world was created by sound and analyzed by vision. God spoke, first, and then saw that it was good, second.

But what happens if the thing created is not good? Then God destroys with sound. Noise kills. War. The Apocalypse. The Flood. In the Epic of Gil-

gamesh, we read: "The world teemed with people and bellowed like a wild bull. The uproar of mankind was intolerable; so the gods let loose the deluge."

John of Patmos in Revelation (the Bible's last book) and Mohammed in the Qur'an also say that the Apocalypse is ear-splitting. All traumatic events maintain sound as their expressive medium: war, violence, love, madness. Disease alone is silent and leads to analysis.

Come with me now and sit in the grandstand of life. The seats are free and entertainment is continuous. The world orchestra is always playing: we hear it inside and outside, from near and far. There is no silence for the living. We have no ear lids. We are condemned to listen.

Most of the sounds I hear are attached to things. I use sounds as clues to identify these things. When they are hidden, sounds will reveal them. I hear through the forest, around the corner, over the hill. Sound gets to places where sight cannot. It plunges below the surface. It penetrates to the heart of things. Everything in this world has its sound—even silent objects. We get to know silent objects by striking them. The box is empty, the glass is thin, the wall is hollow.

Here is a paradox: two things touch but only one sound is produced. A ball hits a wall, a drumstick strikes a drum, a bow scrapes a string. Two objects: one sound. Another case of one plus one equals one. Nor is it possible to join sounds without them changing character. Zeno's paradox: "If a bushel of corn turned out upon the floor makes a noise, each grain and each part of a grain must make a noise likewise: but, in fact, it is not so."

In acoustics, sums are differences.

Sounds tell me about spaces, whether small or large, narrow or broad, indoor or outdoor. Echoes and reverberation inform me about surfaces and obstructions. With practice, I can begin to hear "acoustic shadows," just like the blind.

In *Emile*, his book on education, Jean-Jacques Rousseau wrote: "I would have plenty of games in the dark.... If you are shut up in a building at night, clap your hands. You will know from the sound

whether the space is large or small, if you are in the middle or in one corner.”

You cannot control or shape the acoustic universe. Rather the reverse. This is why aural societies are considered unprogressive, they don't see straight ahead. If I wish to order the world, I must become “visionary.” Then I close my ears and create fences, property lines, straight roads, walls, maps and diagrams.

As developed in the Western world, all major themes of science and mathematics are silent (the space-time continuum of relativity, the atomic structure of matter, the wave-corpuscular theory of light). Instruments developed for their study—the telescope, the microscope, the equation, the graph, and, above all, numbers—are likewise silent.

Statistics deals with a world of quantities presumed to be silent. Philosophy deals with a phenomenal world presumed to be silent. Economics deals with a world of commodities assumed to be silent. Even religion deals with a God who has become silent.

Western music is also conceived out of silence. For two thousand years it has been maturing behind closed doors. Walls drove a wedge between music and soundscape. The two fell apart and became independent. Music within; pandemonium without.

But everything ignored returns. The vehement obscurity of the soundscape pushes back to confront us as noise pollution. As an articulated problem, noise belongs exclusively to Western societies. It is the discord between visual and acoustic space. Acoustic space remains askew because it can't be owned. It becomes disenfranchised—a sonic sewer. Today we view the world without listening to it, from high-rise apartments and glassed-in towers.

In an aural society, all sounds matter, even when they are casually overheard. Some sounds are

so unique that once heard they will never be forgotten: a wolf's howl, a loon's call, a steam locomotive, a machine gun. In an aural society, such sounds can be brought forward and mimicked in song and speech as easily as visual society can draw a picture or take a photograph.

The musicologist Marius Schneider, writing of primitive music in the *Oxford History of Music*, says: “One must have heard them to realize how extremely realistically aboriginals are able to imitate animal noises and the sounds of nature. They even hold ‘nature concerts’ in which each singer imitates a particular sound (waves, wind, groaning trees, cries of frightened animals), ‘concerts’ of surprising magnificence and beauty.”

What is the secret of this “art form”? Repetition. Repetition is the memory medium for sound. Repetition is the means by which sounds are retained and explained. Repetition is the medium by which the events of the world are remembered and affirmed. Repetition is what produced the *Iliad* and *Kalevala*—either by one author or more likely by many authors.

Repetition never analyzes but merely insists. Repetition makes the listener participate not by comprehending it but by knowing it. “It is written but I say unto you....” And I will say it again and again, because Hearing is Believing.

As the grip of the visual-analytical world weakens and is replaced by intuition and sensation, we will begin to discover again the true tuning of the world and the exquisite counterpoint of its voices.

We will find the center. Then the whole body will become an ear, and all sounds will come to you, the known and unknown, the sweet, the sad, and the urgent. And in the obscurity of the night, all sounds enter my consciousness of their own accord, unhurried, strangely blended, the light-toned and dark. Before I sleep, I say to myself, “I will never see a sound.”