

Graduation Plan

Master of Science Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences



Graduation Plan: All tracks

Submit your Graduation Plan to the Board of Examiners (Examencommissie-BK@tudelft.nl), Mentors and Delegate of the Board of Examiners one week before P2 at the latest.

The graduation plan consists of at least the following data/segments:

| Personal information | |
|----------------------|-------------|
| Name | Elisa Heath |
| Student number | |

| Studio | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| Name / Theme | Veldacademie – Resilient Delta | |
| Main mentor | Jaques Vink | Architecture (A) |
| Second mentor | Frank Schnater | Architectural Engineering and Technology (AE+T) |
| Argumentation of choice of the studio | <p>The emphasis on practical research was the main factor in deciding the Veldacademie studio. Combining a theoretical approach of architecture with empirical evidence based research of target groups seemed like the right way to end my masters, further developing who I want to be as an architect. I was interested in taking on a project in Rotterdam, as the issues are personal and familiar. Through this, I felt like I had the possibility to come to a design project that sheds light on current critical issues and have the space to really get to the bottom of the needs of the people you are designing for.</p> | |

| Graduation project | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Title of the graduation project | Motherplan; Housing with collectivised household labour for in(ter)dependent mothers |
| Goal | |
| Location: | Oud-Charlois, Rotterdam |
| The posed problem, | <p>Independent (i.e. single) mothers are stuck in a trifold of problems regarding housing, resources and labour after divorce, separation or unwedded childbirth. These mothers are forced to balance work and home life by themselves in housing that is based on the concept of the nuclear family and privatised family life. The lack of adequate permanent one-parent family housing puts them in a vicious circle of structural disadvantage. The inequality of opportunity that this results, has to long term effects on the mother's sense of self, her parenting</p> |

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| | style and the opportunities for her child(ren), who is more susceptible to end up with the same problems. |
| research questions and | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the spatial and social needs of an independent mother as it pertains to housing? - What entails the domestic labour and which ones, and to what extent could these be collectivised? - What socio-spatial lessons of housing and collective spaces (pertaining to household labour) can we learn from shelter? - What socio-spatial lessons of housing and collective spaces (pertaining to household labour) can we learn from non-traditional living arrangements? |
| design assignment in which these result. | The research will be discussed through a feminist framework, in order to imagine a residential housing complex with collective functions for household and childrearing labour for independent mothers. Taking the burden of domestic labour off of the individual households will save time and stress, which will aid in mitigating the tri-fold problem independent mothers often struggle with. The co-reliance that is created through this form of housing will in turn promote equality of opportunity outside of the home for both mother and child. Through collectivity the housing can be made affordable, flexible, will have a 'homelike'-feeling and will need less intensive professional resources in the long run. |

Process

Method description

Through the works of Dolores Hayden (1978, 1980), a feminist framework is set up from which the literature, the case study and the practical study are approached and further developed upon. The nuclear family and household labour are central themes.

The socio-spatial needs of the independent mothers are gathered through both literature study and semi-structured interviews with empirical experts and care workers involved with independent mothers.

The sheltered environment is analysed through a photo analysis of site visits and semi-structured interviews with professionals, including an architect and care workers.

The non-traditional living arrangements are analysed through literature and a case-study, that will analyse the socio-spatial aspects regarding functions, routing, privacy, and private housing units. Each project included is a different form of living.

All literature study, case study and practical study will be combined and discussed through the feminist framework, in order to come to a design brief of how, and to what extent collectivised household labour could be implemented into housing for independent mothers.

Literature and general practical references

Anthony, Kathryn H. "Housing the Single-Parent Family ." Essay. In *Design Intervention: Toward a More Humane Architecture*, 11–36. New York: VanNostrand Reinhold, 1991.

Hayden, Dolores. "Two Utopian Feminists and Their Campaigns for Kitchenless Houses." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 4, no. 2 (1978): 274–90. <https://doi.org/10.1086/493607>.

Hayden, Dolores. "What Would a Non-Sexist City Be like? Speculations on Housing, Urban Design, and Human Work." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 5, no. S3 (1980). <https://doi.org/10.1086/495718>.

Haas, Linda. "Role-Sharing Couples: A Study of Egalitarian Marriages." *Family Relations* 29, no. 3 (1980): 289. <https://doi.org/10.2307/583848>.

Feng, Huichao. "Cultural Architectural Assets: A New Framework to Study and Continuity of Dwellings of Mosuo Tribes in Transitions," 2019.

Gelbspan, Anne. "Brookview House: A Home for Mothers and Children." Essay. In *Design Intervention: Toward a More Humane Architecture*, 37–50. New York: VanNostrand Reinhold, 1991.

Jarvis, Helen. "Pragmatic Utopias." *Routledge Handbook of Gender and Environment*, 2017, 433–46. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315886572-30>.

Kroska, Amy. "Investigating Gender Differences in the Meaning of Household Chores and Child Care." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 65, no. 2 (2003): 456–73. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2003.00456.x>.

Pickerill, J M. "Building the Commons in Eco-Communities." *Space, Power and the Commons*, 2015, 43–66. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315731995-9>.

Pothukuchi, Kameshwari. "Non-Traditional Living Arrangements: Beyond the Nuclear Family." *Women, Shelter and Development* 18, no. 2 (1994): 107–8.

Sear, Rebecca. "The Male Breadwinner Nuclear Family Is Not the 'Traditional' Human Family, and Promotion of This Myth May Have Adverse Health

Consequences." Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences 376, no. 1827 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1098/rstb.2020.0020>.

Reflection

1. What is the relation between your graduation (project) topic, the studio topic (if applicable), your master track (A,U,BT,LA,MBE), and your master programme (MSc AUBS)?

The studio topic of the Veldacademie Studio is about resilience and well-being. My topic aims to lay out about the structural disadvantages independent mothers face, which inhabits their overall health and well-being, and how it is related to the current system on which the built environment is based. The studio is part of the master track of Architecture, during which I have tended to courses that are involved in critically questioning how we do architecture (e.g. Theory thesis) and telling the stories of the unheard (e.g. Building Stories Elective).

2. What is the relevance of your graduation work in the larger social, professional and scientific framework.

My graduation work aims to shed a light on the current socio-spatial problems independent mothers in the Netherlands have to deal with, which lead to structural economical and health disadvantages for both themselves and their children. These mothers are often overlooked, and not cared for until their situation hits rock bottom. With my project I hope to destigmatise these women and contextualise how their situations are a product of the patriarchal system they are part of.

Using precedent studies and literature which I view these through a feminist lens, I aim to reimagine a new housing concept for independent mothers, that can help them with the problems they currently face.

Through practical research and interviews, I am adding to the limited data available in the scientific field as it pertains to housing needs for independent mothers, and amplifying the voices of these mothers.

With this, I want to further expand the current housing (crisis) discussion and emphasise the importance of both distinguishing and including one-parent families by adding another layer of different ways to think about housing, collectivity and care.