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MISSING VOICES IN THE THEORETICAL DISCOURSE ABOUT 20TH CENTURY ARCHITECTURE

CARLA SOPHIA TIETZSCH
Delft University of Technology
Supervisor **J.C. Edens**

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I INTRODUCTION

Diversity is a fundamental aspect of a rich urban environment while built spaces have substantial impact on human health and comfort. Therefore, meeting the diverse needs of all urban inhabitants is crucial for the endeavour to create a suitable urban environment. Increasing inclusivity in urban spaces requires the incorporation of a multitude of voices into the theoretical discourse about architecture and urban planning, as this discourse shapes design strategies and ultimately influences the built environment. In particular, the perspectives of marginalized groups are vital, as they are often affected most by the consequences of dysfunctional urban planning strategies. Thus, marginalized groups possess valuable insights to highlight areas of concern.

In the 20th century, various barriers – such as biased publishers, limited access to professional networks, and economic constraints – disproportionately affected individuals from marginalized groups, as documented in sources such as *Women in Architecture*¹. The intersectionality of barriers, affected by factors like gender, class, and ethnicity, hindered marginalized groups from pursuing careers in architecture and contributing to the theoretical discourse about the built environment, while affecting some individuals like black women stronger than others².

The growing interest in the perspectives of women architects, particularly following the second wave of the Women's Rights Movement in the 1960s and '70s, led to an increasing number of publications exploring the experiences of women and other marginalized groups in the built environment. However, this growing influence was primarily restricted to predominantly white middle-class women, reflecting the prevailing biases within the feminist movement at the time. Consequently, members of other marginalized groups continued to face significant barriers in academia.

This thesis aims to emphasize the general importance of including voices that have historically repeatedly been dismissed in the theoretical discourse about urban space of the 20th century, by asking the questions:

¹ Catja Edens et al., *Women in Architecture: Documents and Histories*, Documents and Histories (Rotterdam: Nai010 Publishers, 2023).

² Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, 'Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics', ed. University of Chicago, *The University of Chicago Legal Forum*, no. 140 (1989), <https://womenwritingarchitecture.org/citation/demarginalizing-the-intersection-of-race-and-sex-a-black-feminist-critique-of-antidiscrimination-doctrine-feminist-theory-and-antiracist-politics/>. 140

HOW DID 20TH CENTURY WOMEN ARCHITECTS DESCRIBE AND ANALYSE THE CHALLENGES FACED BY MARGINALIZED GROUPS WITHIN THE URBAN BUILT ENVIRONMENT? WHICH VALUABLE INSIGHTS CAN THEIR PERSPECTIVES, AS MEMBERS OF ONE OF THE MARGINALIZED GROUPS, OFFER REGARDING THE EXPERIENCES OF THESE COMMUNITIES?

Despite the growing body of literature authored by women architects, the dominance of manifestos by white, male architects and theorists continues to shape the contemporary discourse and architectural education about 20th century architecture. The few women's voices that are incorporated in the discourse are mostly always the same: Jane Jacobs, Zaha Hadid, Denise Scott Brown and Alison Smithson. This thesis seeks to broaden this discourse by examining the available contributions from (predominantly white) women architects in the 20th century and critically assessing which insights they can offer into the experiences of marginalized groups within urban contexts.

The hypothesis guiding this research posited that 20th century women architects, influenced by their own experiences of oppression within urban spaces, possessed a heightened awareness for the experiences of marginalized groups compared to their male counterparts. However, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of the perspectives of predominantly white women architects who are affected by their own bias, as experiences in the urban context are influenced by intersectional factors. Therefore, this thesis aims to emphasize the importance of incorporating diverse voices into the discourse to develop a more inclusive built environment. Nevertheless, as illustrated in the first chapter, the voices of women architects and theorists can offer important critical views on the built environment due to their unique position in the architectural field in the 20th century.

To provide a framework that suits the intended volume of this thesis, the examined sources focus on the urban context of the 'western' world of the 20th century, composed by authors based in Europe and North America. Furthermore, this study will focus on examining publications from the 1970s, '80s, and '90s, a period following the second feminist wave, when a significant number of relevant publications emerged.

The first chapter will delve into the “pioneering work”³ *Women in American Architecture*⁴, edited and supplemented with critical reflections by architect Susana Torre in 1977, offering a compilation of diverse perspectives on the built environment by women architects. Following this, the second chapter will introduce the insights presented in *Making Space*⁵ by the feminist architect collective Matrix in 1984, focusing on women's experiences within urban contexts. Lastly, the third chapter will analyse urbanist Dolores Hayden's examination of power imbalances in the built environment, as presented in *The Power of Place*⁶ in 1995.

In the process of assessing the value of these sources for the theoretical discourse the literary context will be considered, as well as the present awareness for factors like intersectionality in the period in question.

³ Pamela H. Simpson, review of *Review of Architecture and Women: A Bibliography; Architecture: A Place for Women; Julia Morgan, Architect; Eileen Gray Architect/Designer; The Lady Architects, Lois Lilley Howe, Eleanor Manning and Mary Almy, 1913-1937*, by Lamia Doumato et al., *Woman's Art Journal* 11, no. 2 (1990): 44–48. 45

⁴ Susana Torre, *Women in American Architecture: A Historic and Contemporary Perspective* (New York: Whitney Library of Design, 1977), <http://archive.org/details/womeninamericana0000unse>.

⁵ Matrix, *Making Space: Women and the Man-Made Environment* (London: Pluto Press, 1984), <http://www.matrixfeministarchitecturearchive.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/M00008readableS.pdf>.

⁶ Dolores Hayden, *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1995).

II CHAPTER 1: THE '70'S – 'WOMEN IN AMERICAN ARCHITECTURE' BY SUSANA TORRE (1977)

CONTEXT

In the second half of the 20th century, the theoretical discourse about the urban environment was influenced by pressing issues like a growing population, pollutions due to a progressing industrialization, the decay of growing cities and an increasing awareness for the limits of natural resources, as described by the architect Doris Cole in 1973 in *From Tipi to Skyscraper*⁷. Meanwhile, the representation of women in the architectural profession was with only 2% in 1968 extremely low, similarly to the representation in other high-status professions⁸. Thankfully, in the 1960's and '70's, the second wave of the Women's Rights Movement encouraged a growing independence and a stronger stand of women within the professional environment. These developments also impacted the architectural field: The publishing architect Susana Torre described in 1977 how the "status of women in the design professions" was improving and "basic tenets of [the] architectural practice"⁹ were re-examined. A "first wave of feminist critique" of the architectural field was born, "recognizing the important role women have played as consumers, producers, critics, and creators of built space in the modern era"¹⁰. Due to the influence of the Women's Rights Movement, which mainly focused on aspects of the position of women within professional contexts, such as their access to education, most publishing women architects focused on an examination of those aspects as well. The earlier mentioned publication from Doris Cole¹¹ had a similar focus. Nevertheless, some of the upcoming publications contributed to the theoretical discourse about broader architecture and urban planning strategies, and are therefore of special interest for this research.

As a result of the growing awareness for the relevance of women's perspectives, "women's experiences and aspirations in designed and built forms"¹² were increasingly examined. According to Susana Torre, this development led to a "new sense of responsibility towards the

⁷ Doris Cole, *From Tipi to Skyscraper: A History of Women in Architecture* (Boston: I Press, 1973), <http://archive.org/details/fromtipitoskyscr0000unse>. 125

⁸ U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, ed., 'Fact Sheet on Women in Professional and Technical Positions', 1968. Quoted in Cole. 119

⁹ Torre, *Women in American Architecture*. 146

¹⁰ Joanna Merwood-Salisbury, review of *Review of Women in Modernism: Making Places in Architecture*, by Barry Bergdoll et al., *Journal of Architectural Education* (1984-) 61, no. 4 (2008): 144–45. 145

¹¹ Cole, *From Tipi to Skyscraper*.

¹² Torre, *Women in American Architecture*. 146

specific needs of women as users of the [built] environment”¹³. The new interest in the perspectives of women enabled an increasing number of publications by women architects in the ‘70s. Nevertheless, the research for this thesis showed that the available sources from that period are still very limited, compared to publications by male authors. Moreover, women architects’ practice was still mostly restricted to domestic designs¹⁴, which resulted in a similar focus in their observations about built space, as visible in *The Ideal City*¹⁵ from Helen Rosenau.

Susana Torre however incorporates wider critiques of the built environment that exceeded the bounds of domestic architecture in her book *Women in [Northern] American Architecture: A Historic and Contemporary Perspective*¹⁶, published in 1977. She observes the role of women architects in the architectural field, criticizes dominating architectural practices and highlights aspects of architectural and urban planning strategies. According to Pamela H. Simpson’s review from 1991, Torre’s work “represented the first efforts to document the historic roles of women in architecture”¹⁷. In 1978 Georgia Bizios describes Torre’s work as “the first major publication on the history of women in architecture” and “the most thorough investigation on this topic [...] so far”¹⁸. Torre’s observations mainly focus on aspects that affected marginalized groups, even though she did not use that term at the time.



Jack Beal, *The Architect*, 1972-73, Oil on linen, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian. Quoted in Susana Torre, April 12, 2024, <https://www.susanatorre.net/biography/Portrait-of-Susana-Torre>

The book *Women in [Northern] American Architecture: A Historic and Contemporary Perspective* collects the findings of an exhibition with the same title, conceived by a group of women in the mid-‘70s, originally convened by Reggie Goldberg¹⁹. As Marvin Trachtenberg summarizes the presented analysis in 1988: “[W]omen were far more active and had more

¹³ Torre. 147

¹⁴ Cole, *From Tipi to Skyscraper*. 107

¹⁵ Helen Rosenau, *The Ideal City: Its Architectural Evolution* (Harper & Row, 1975), <http://archive.org/details/idealcityitsarch00hele>.

¹⁶ Torre, *Women in American Architecture*.

¹⁷ Simpson, ‘Review of Architecture and Women’. 45

¹⁸ Georgia Bizios, review of *Review of Women in American Architecture: A Historic and Contemporary Perspective*, by Susana Torre et al., *JAE* 31, no. 3 (1978): 32–32, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1424451>. 32

¹⁹ Rosalie Genevro and Anne Rieselbach, ‘A Conversation with Susana Torre’, *The Architectural League of New York*, 2013, <https://archleague.org/article/susana-torre/>.

influence than was previously thought”²⁰. Exhibition and book were developed in New York, which explains the focus on northern American Architecture.

Particularly interesting is the book due to the included large collection of texts authored by different women architects that illustrate a variety of criticisms on the modern urban planning strategies, complemented by passages written by Torre herself. After examining these different views on modern architecture by women architects, Torre illustrates how the unique position that women incorporate within the architectural field, can benefit their accuracy when it comes to criticising dominating practices and design strategies.

WOMEN’S VALUABLE POSITION IN THE ARCHITECTURAL FIELD

Torre emphasizes in her book that 20th century women architects offer valuable perspectives, because their outsider status in the architectural circles enables them to be less bound by the “architectural patronage and buddyism of their architect-colleagues”²¹. According to her, women architects worry less about deviating from a certain school of thought or losing a commission from a colleague which allowed their criticism to form a “critical consciousness much needed in America’s euphoric growth of the fifties and sixties” at a time when “the modern movement was often promoted uncritically by their [male] colleagues”²². Consequently, publications by women architects from the 20th century should not be dismissed in the theoretical discourse about architecture and urban space.

Furthermore, north-American figures from 1977, presented by Elizabeth Wilson in 1992, demonstrate that the majority of inhabitants of urban spaces are women²³, thereby underlining the relevance of the examination of women’s experiences in the urban context during that period. By collecting several voices from the ‘50s and ‘60s and using her reach in the ‘70’s, Torre allowed these voices to be heard louder, in a time when they could gain more interest.

The example of Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, portrayed by Torre, illustrates perfectly, how the role that women played (or didn’t play) in the circles of the architecture field in the ‘50s allowed them

²⁰ Marvin Trachtenberg, ‘Some Observations on Recent Architectural History’, *The Art Bulletin* 70, no. 2 (1988): 208–41, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3051117>. 215

²¹ Torre, *Women in American Architecture*. 143

²² Torre. 143

²³ Signs, 1980 Quoted in Elizabeth Wilson, *The Sphinx in the City: Urban Life, the Control of Disorder, and Women* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), <http://archive.org/details/sphinxincityurba0000wils>. 118

to voice their opinions more freely about projects by well-known architects, without having to worry about the ties that might be broken as a consequence²⁴. For instance, she harshly criticized Walter Gropius and Mies van der Rohe, as illustrated later, who were held in high esteem and rarely questioned at the time.

Ada Louise Huxable serves as the second example: according to Torre, she followed no “particular school of thought” and stated that none of them really take all present problems into account²⁵. In an interview from 1974 (presumably with Susana Torre), Huxable elaborates: “the original strength of a movement at one period may eventually become its weakness during the next”²⁶.

Torre illustrates how both Sibyl Moholy-Nagy as well as Ada Louise Huxable could benefit from their independent positions, which granted them a great influence already in their time and allowed them to criticize aspects of projects of well-known architects that their male colleagues did not dare to question. This aspect makes their contributions to the theoretical discourse about architecture highly valuable to this day. As Torre concludes: “As women in a period that would have presented innumerable obstacles to their affecting architectural thought through actual practice [...], the role of the critic permitted proper latitude”²⁷. Torre elaborates that the part of the architectural field, where the theoretical discourse occurs, is “accessible regardless of the extend of education, age, or sex”²⁸. While the ‘accessibility regardless of the extend of education’ is highly questionable, the increasing accessibility of this specific part of the architectural field clearly allowed women to provide a critical voice in the discourse. The value of their contributions will be examined in the following.

CRITIQUES ON STANDARDIZED ARCHITECTURE

Torre collects a variety of voices, while a few critiques reappear in several of the texts, emphasizing their relevance for publishing women architects.

²⁴ Torre, *Women in American Architecture*. 140-141

²⁵ Interview with Ada Louise Huxable, January 1974. Quoted in Torre. 142

²⁶ Interview with Ada Louise Huxable, January 1974. Quoted in Torre. 142

²⁷ Torre. 143

²⁸ Torre. 143

Catherine Bauer, born in 1905 in New Jersey, dedicated her architectural career to low income and public housing projects²⁹. To provide low-cost housing opportunities she advocates standardized construction, until the pitfalls of ‘superblocks’ become apparent to her in the ‘50s³⁰. While her approaches strongly influence the following architectural developments with her focus on affordable solutions, standardized housing designs are harshly criticized in the following decades, last but not least by Torre. Jane Jacobs, who examines the built environment not as an architect but as a journalist, argues in 1961 according to Torre that those “high-rise apartments [...] pluck their occupants from the well-functioning matrix of social relations that kept crime down and bolstered community pride”³¹.



Catherine Bauer, early 1940s. Photograph by Roger Sturtevant.

Torre, *Women in American Architecture*. 136



Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, India, 1968. Photograph by Dileep Purohit. Courtesy Sibyl Moholy-Nagy Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Torre, *Women in American Architecture*. 140

As stated by Torre, Sibyl Moholy-Nagy criticizes Mies van der Rohe’s apartments from 1951 for their “uniformity, lack of privacy, lightless, airless bathrooms and kitchens, impassable dining bays, and living quarters that faced each other”³². Torre further elaborates how Nagy “mistrusted the Bauhaus beliefs in modular (prefabricated) assembly” and predicted “that architecture values would die a ‘cheap, fast and totally uniform death’ under the thinking pushed by Walter Gropius”³³. Nagy even describes functionalism as “lethal harvest” and the Bauhaus masters (e.g. Walter Gropius, Mies van der Rohe and Marcel Breuer) as “the Johnnies who spread the appleseed” in an article from 1968³⁴.

²⁹ Torre. 136

³⁰ Catherine Bauer, ‘Dreary Dreadlock of Public Housing’, *Architectural Forum*, May 1957, 140-144ff. Quoted in Torre. 137

³¹ Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York: Random House, 1961). 373. Quoted in Torre. 139

³² Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, Quoted in Torre. 140

³³ Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, ‘Modular Assembly’, *Progressive Architecture*, 1958. 20 Quoted in Torre. 140

³⁴ Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, ‘Hitler’s Revenge: The Grand Central Tower Project’, *Art in America*, 1968. 42-43 Quoted in Torre. 141

In 1977 Torre strongly criticizes the further developed approach of standardization in housing projects, advocated by Le Corbusier. She argues that the measurements that influenced those standardizations (Modulor) were based on “the male body”³⁵, which completely disregards the needs of the majority of the population, including women, children and the elderly³⁶. Torre therefore criticizes this as a misled approach which totally fails to reach its goal of creating an architecture that is adapted to the human needs and creates a pleasant spatial experience for its users.

These critiques of standardized architecture and low life qualities within low-cost dwellings target aspects of the architectural field that mostly impair the life of members of what could be defined as marginalized groups.

CRITICALLY OBSERVED URBAN DEVELOPMENTS

While focused on dwellings, Catherine Bauer also examines the development of the urban fabric as a whole. According to Torre, Bauer warns that urban renewal would result in the displacement of inhabitants from existing deprived neighbourhoods³⁷. Fending for the interest of what can be understood as marginalized groups, she demands “relocation efforts”, an encouragement of “low-scale community facilities” and an “inclusion of private space outdoors” in her publications, as stated by Torre³⁸. The influence of Bauer’s ideas to provide shared facilities are clearly visible in the solutions later proposed by other women architects, like Dolores Hayden.

As Torre illustrates, Bauer and Jane Jacobs both “criticized the polarization of cities for the poor and suburbs for the wealthy”³⁹. Helen Rosenau presents similar arguments in 1972 in her book *The ideal city*⁴⁰, when she criticizes the segregation between poor and rich⁴¹. Rosenau also denounces the neglect of “the human element”⁴² in modern architecture, again similar to Jacob’s

³⁵ Torre. 163

³⁶ Torre. 164

³⁷ Catherine Bauer. Quoted in Torre. 137

³⁸ Catherine Bauer. Quoted in Torre. 137

³⁹ Torre. 139

⁴⁰ Rosenau, *The Ideal City: Its Architectural Evolution*.

⁴¹ Rosenau. 157

⁴² Rosenau. 157

observations, who emphasized the importance of the human scale and criticized the “governmental monumental” style taking over the Washington DC in 1956⁴³.

CRITISIZED ZONING STRATEGIES

One of the most significant critiques on the urban planning strategies, that was voiced by several women architects in the ‘70s, was the critique of dominating zoning strategies.

As one of those voices, Helen Rosenau claims in 1972 that “over rigid zoning” breaks up the “continuity of life”⁴⁴, amplifies the segregation between poor and rich⁴⁵ and leads to “problems of transportation”⁴⁶. While her analysis stays on a rather superficial level, Susana Torre’s observations in *Women in American Architecture* seem to analyse the problematics a lot more thorough. She illustrates how intersectional factors like class, race and gender determine what experience people have in a certain space. According to her, built space “reinforce[s] inequality and perpetuate[s] patterns of culturally sanctioned behavior”⁴⁷, mostly by spatial segregation. Influenced by her own perspective, she focuses on gender-inequalities and emphasizes how “space segregation according to sex” has banned women from the public and thereby “prevented women from free and inhibited enjoyment of so-called public spaces”⁴⁸.

EVALUATION OF TORRE’S FINDINGS

Susana Torre collected a variety of important voices of women architects, criticizing modern urban planning and architectural strategies. She emphasizes the relevance of those voices, who have barely been considered before the second wave of the Women’s Rights Movement. As a review by the ‘Art Journal’ of the exhibition and the book *Women in American Architecture* summarizes in 1977: “Clearly, the show and its publication are a milestone in the neglected sea of architecture by women”⁴⁹.

⁴³ Jane Jacobs, ‘Washington: Twentieth Century Capitol?’, *Architectural Forum*, 1957. 140-142ff. Quoted in Torre, *Women in American Architecture*. 138

⁴⁴ Rosenau, *The Ideal City: Its Architectural Evolution*. 156-157

⁴⁵ Rosenau. 157

⁴⁶ Rosenau. 162

⁴⁷ Torre, *Women in American Architecture*. 168

⁴⁸ Torre. 171

⁴⁹ ‘Exhibitions’, *Art Journal* 37, no. 1 (1977): 52–54. 53

Therefore, highlighting the contributions of various women architects was an important step towards an inclusive urban planning process. Nevertheless, voices of members of other marginalized groups were still completely absent from the theoretical discourse. Torre's illustrations appear to be strongly influenced by the feminist's focus on the experiences of mostly white, middle-aged women in the '70's, neglecting other influencing factors like race and class. Even though she mentions those factors in the process of her elaborations, she does not further examine any intersectional mechanisms. In general, it seems like her analysis is lacking an awareness for the influences of intersectionality. Although it is significant, that her examinations focus on elements of the architectural practice, which mostly influence members of marginalized groups (mostly lower class), even if she does not use that specific term.

III CHAPTER 2: THE '80'S – 'MAKING SPACE' BY MATRIX (1984)

CONTEXT

During the '80s the theoretical discourse about architecture and urban planning strategies is influenced by a “growing criticism of modern architecture”⁵⁰. The downsides of a standardized manufacturing of living spaces and the creation of a ‘dehumanized’ architecture, already criticized by Nagy and Torre, are becoming more apparent. This influences the development of new movements, which focus on examining how modern architecture impairs the quality of life and developing new approaches to the design of built space. In the meantime, the progressing Women’s Rights Movement encourages an increasing number of women architects to publish their perspectives on the built environment.

Dolores Hayden for instance explores alternative housing solutions and questions the division between public and private spaces 1980 in her book *What Would a Non-sexist City be like?*⁵¹. 1981 Leslie Weisman publishes *Women’s Environmental Rights: A Manifesto*⁵² and takes a stand against the “man-made environment”⁵³.

Three years later, this term is picked up by ‘Matrix’, a collective of “feminist designers”⁵⁴ as they call themselves, consistent of seven women architects: Jos Boys, Frances Bradshaw, Jane Darke, Benedicte Foo, Sue Francis, Barbara McFarlane and Marion Roberts. Based in London, they collectively wrote the book *Making Space: Women and the Man-Made Environment*⁵⁵, which delivers a “cogent”⁵⁶ analysis of the interdependencies between social inequalities and the built environment. In their argumentation they focus on the example of women, as one of the marginalized groups, to illustrate those interdependencies⁵⁷. The problematic of disregarding other groups’ experiences will be examined at the end of this chapter. Meanwhile, the authors are aware of their own bias, claiming: “Even though we hope to speak of all women's experience, we are directly limited by our own history”⁵⁸. Their formulated goal is to “develop

⁵⁰ Matrix, *Making Space*. 6

⁵¹ Dolores Hayden, *What Would a Non-Sexist City Be Like? Speculations on Housing, Urban Design, and Human Work*, vol. 5, 1980, <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/10.1086/495718>.

⁵² Leslie Weisman, *Women’s Environmental Rights: A Manifesto* (Heresies, 1981).

⁵³ Weisman. 1

⁵⁴ Matrix, *Making Space*. preface vii

⁵⁵ Matrix.

⁵⁶ Joni Seager, review of *How to Put Women on the Map*, by David R. Lee et al., ed. Old City Publishing, Inc., *The Women’s Review of Books* 2, no. 5 (1985): 9–10, <https://doi.org/10.2307/4019637>. 10

⁵⁷ Matrix, *Making Space*. 39

⁵⁸ Matrix. 10

an understanding of how we are 'placed' as women in a man-made environment"⁵⁹. In the following their findings will be examined and evaluated.



Annie Howard, *Matrix Feminist Design Co-Operative*, photograph, AIA Architect, April 15, 2024
https://www.architectmagazine.com/aia-architect/aiafuture/the-matrix-feminist-design-co-operative-was-ahead-of-its-time_o
(From left to right: Matrix Design Co-operative members Barbara MacFralane, Anne Thorne, Susan Francis, Julia Dwyer, Cath Taylor and Kate Baker.)

THE MAN-MADE ENVIRONMENT

Matrix begins their analysis of the status quo with an elaboration on what they understand as a “man-made environment”⁶⁰ in a collectively written introduction. According to them, the *man-made environment* is part of a bigger systematic issue, as men occupy most “positions of power [...] [and] own or control most wealth”⁶¹. As distribution of wealth correlates with influence over newly built spaces, this imbalance affects the built environment. Matrix further refers to a survey from 1978 showing that 95 percent of architects are male⁶², illustrating the male dominance over spatial design. Matrix summarizes: “Women play almost

⁵⁹ Matrix. preface viii

⁶⁰ Matrix. 3

⁶¹ Matrix. 2

⁶² Michael Fogarty, Isobel Allen, and Patricia Walters, *Women in Top Jobs 1968-1979* (London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1981). 223, Quoted in Matrix. 2

no part in making decisions about or in creating the [built] environment. It is a man-made environment”⁶³. This is an unacceptable imbalance according to Weisman, as “women constitute over 50 percent of the users of our environments”⁶⁴.

According to Matrix the design of private and public spaces embodies “dominant values in our society”⁶⁵. “They contain ideas about women, about our 'proper place', about what is private and what is public activity, about which things should be kept separate and which put together”⁶⁶. As Weisman concludes in 1981: “The built environment [...] is neither value-free nor inclusively human”⁶⁷. Stereotypes, values, ideals and imbalances of power, grown and imprinted over centuries, are preserved by the built space, which consequently reinforces the status quo. Or as Weisman states: “The man-made environment [...] reinforce[s] conventional patriarchal definitions of women’s role in society”⁶⁸. According to her a “lack of awareness by professionals have created conditions which reflect and reinforce women’s second-class status”⁶⁹.

The Matrix collective illustrates how a built environment, who’s design is dominated by one particular group and a therefore narrow perspective, is problematic, because its designers “may not have considered whether different sections of the population have different environmental needs”⁷⁰. One example illustrating how this “lack of consideration”⁷¹ can create an unwelcoming environment are public buildings that are not sufficiently accessible for people with wheelchairs or prams⁷².

To thoroughly evaluate the arguments of *Making Space*, the specific critiques that Matrix brings forward will be dissected in the following.

⁶³ Matrix. 3

⁶⁴ Weisman, *Women’s Environmental Rights: A Manifesto*. 4

⁶⁵ Matrix, *Making Space*. 9

⁶⁶ Matrix. 10

⁶⁷ Weisman, *Women’s Environmental Rights: A Manifesto*. 4

⁶⁸ Weisman. 1

⁶⁹ Weisman. 2

⁷⁰ Matrix, *Making Space*. 3

⁷¹ Matrix. 3

⁷² Matrix. 3

CHALLENGING ARCHITECTURAL PRACTICES

Attacking the root of the problem, Matrix challenges conventional design practices. Matrix claims that designers of built spaces often lack a crucial understanding for the needs of building users, due to a lack of contact during education and professional life⁷³. Meanwhile, the prevalent middle-class background of architects⁷⁴ amplifies the “tremendous gap between architectural [...] intentions and social and political realities”⁷⁵, especially for social housing projects. In the second chapter Jane Darke concludes: “Architects may ritually acknowledge the importance of the needs of building users, especially those who are most disadvantaged, but in the absence of understanding, contact and empathy with a wider range of people, this remains pious intention”⁷⁶. This criticism not only applies to the experiences of women, but to all groups of society who are not sufficiently represented in planning committees and boards.

CRITICIZING URBAN DESIGN STRATEGIES

In their analysis the collective challenges modern urban planning strategies that were developed to solve emerging problems resulting from an increasing urbanization. Matrix harshly criticizes rigid zoning strategies which strictly segregate public and private⁷⁷, as they showcase a “narrow view of social needs and aspirations”⁷⁸. Matrix claims that “the forms of buildings were influenced by economic and political pressures rather than social needs”⁷⁹.

According to Jos Boys, author of the fourth chapter, the strictly segregating modern urban planning strategies were designed to suit the “‘norm’ of individual mobility”⁸⁰, which was adapted to the needs of the “male, white, middle-class ‘norm’”⁸¹. Similarly to Torre, she criticizes the neglect of needs of other members of society. Boys further explains: “zoning [...] approximated stereotypical ideas about man's use of the environment”⁸², based on the ideal of a 100% access rate to cars. She illustrates how modern cities have been designed to separate

⁷³ Matrix. 12

⁷⁴ Matrix. 14

⁷⁵ Matrix. 38

⁷⁶ Matrix. 24

⁷⁷ Matrix. 9

⁷⁸ Matrix. 5

⁷⁹ Matrix. 5

⁸⁰ Matrix. 41

⁸¹ Matrix. 41

⁸² Matrix. 38

different aspects of life, like work and leisure⁸³, resulting in long distances between housing and working areas, connected by widespread networks of roads, making access to a car the condition for sufficient mobility, while “the difference in women's access to cars was ignored”⁸⁴. As Weisman notes, limited access to cars affected not only women, but also “the aged, minorities, and low-income workers”⁸⁵. Boys concludes that members of society with less frequent access to cars were left in a rather immobile position⁸⁶, as public transport was often inefficiently designed, resulting in impacted job opportunities⁸⁷.

WOMEN’S RESTRICTED ACCESS TO PUBLIC SPACES

In 1981 Weisman states: “The kind of spaces we have, don’t have, or are denied access to can empower or render us powerless.”⁸⁸ In her analysis of urban planning strategies, she criticizes the segregation between public and private spaces according to sex⁸⁹. Matrix depicts how the mobility of women within the urban context is affected by factors that may not be recognized by male designers. They illustrate how women suffer from limited access to public buildings in the company of young children⁹⁰, while Weisman states that this limited access is created by “both physical and cultural barriers”⁹¹. Jos Boys adds that women, influenced by the stereotypical role of the caregiver, are proportionally more responsible for taking care of immobile members of society like children and elderly people⁹², making them more vulnerable to impractically designed footpaths, as depicted in the image on the next page.

⁸³ Matrix. 40

⁸⁴ Matrix. 39

⁸⁵ Weisman, *Women’s Environmental Rights: A Manifesto*. 2

⁸⁶ Matrix, *Making Space*. 40

⁸⁷ Weisman, *Women’s Environmental Rights: A Manifesto*. 3

⁸⁸ Weisman. 4

⁸⁹ Weisman. 2

⁹⁰ Matrix, *Making Space*. 4

⁹¹ Weisman, *Women’s Environmental Rights: A Manifesto*. 2

⁹² Matrix, *Making Space*. 41



Our city and town planners lack consideration for the least mobile, Matrix, Making Space. 43

7. No woman is invited by a blind alley;
from An Introduction to Housing Layout.



GLC, Introduction to Housing Layout. Quoted in Matrix. 50

In addition, the mobility of women is impaired by “notions about 'proper' settings for women which come directly from the nineteenth century”⁹³. Boys elaborates how “stereotypical ideas about the appropriate 'mobility' of girls and women” influence the urban design, which therefore reinforces those stigmas. Boys also mentions that members of other marginalized groups are restricted in a similar way “by what are considered 'proper' places for them to be”⁹⁴. She further illustrates how the mobility of women is impaired by a restricted movement after the dark, due to fear of sexual harassments and how that influences their perception of arrangements of public spaces, which seemed unproblematic to the most male designers⁹⁵.

CRITIQUE ON HOUSING DESIGN STRATEGIES

In her Manifesto from 1981, Weisman criticizes the lack of low-cost housing opportunities for “widows and displaced homemakers” who are often disqualified from “federally subsidized housing programs”⁹⁶. In 1980 Dolores Hayden had made a similar demand, emphasizing the importance of housing opportunities for ‘atypical’ family constellations, like single-parent families⁹⁷. Consequently, in chapter six of *Making Space* Sue Francis criticizes modern housing building strategies as designed for “Mr and Mrs Average and

⁹³ Matrix. 44

⁹⁴ Matrix. 39

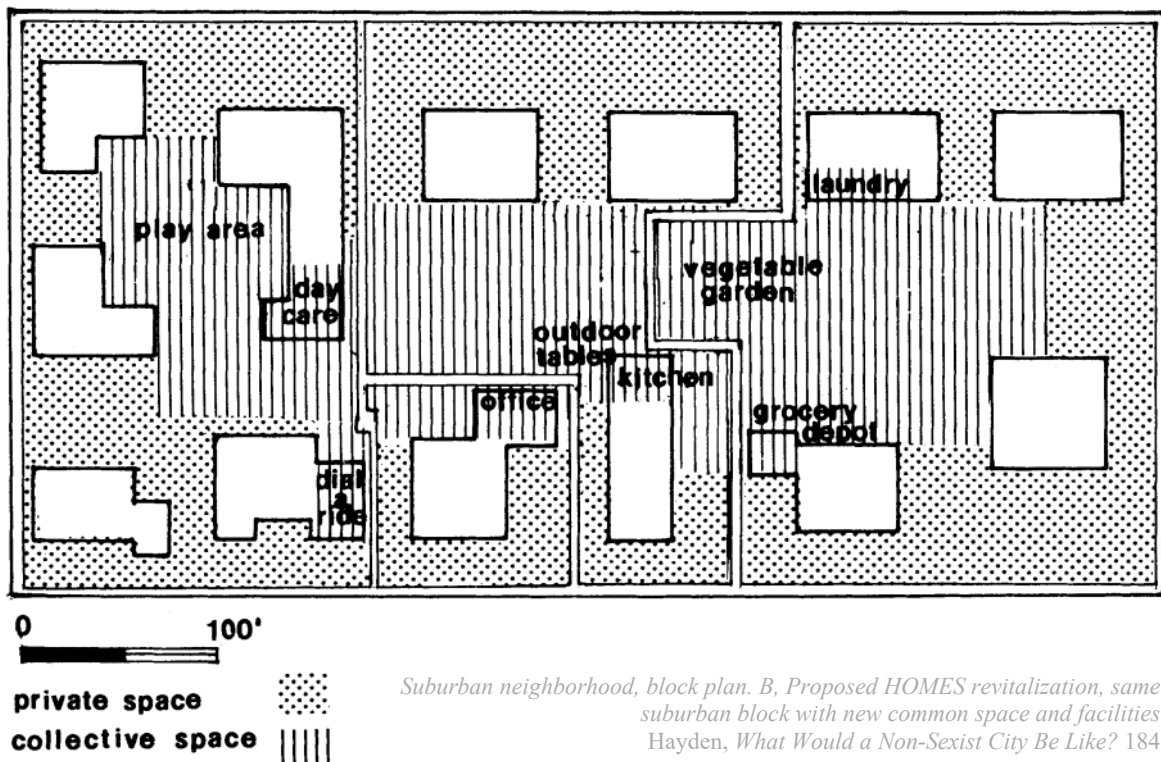
⁹⁵ Matrix. 49

⁹⁶ Weisman, *Women's Environmental Rights: A Manifesto*. 3

⁹⁷ Hayden, *What Would a Non-Sexist City Be Like?* 174

their children”⁹⁸. She elaborates: “This design guide definition of the family excludes many people - single parent families, communal households, old people”⁹⁹. This resonates with Torre’s scepticism towards the standardization of housing designs. Francis also remarks that the “roles are described in a very conventional way”¹⁰⁰, thereby reinforcing a traditional separation of tasks between men and women. Weisman argues in a similar way that housing design often “reinforces sex-role stereotypes and subtly perpetuates traditional view of family”¹⁰¹.

Francis and Hayden both criticize the lack of communal facilities in the built compartments of single-family housing units in the modern urban areas. In consequence of her observations, Hayden proposes the establishment of housing complexes called ‘HOMES’ that include a variety of housing configurations as well as shared community facilities for necessities like day-care, laundry and food supply in 1980¹⁰².



⁹⁸ Matrix, *Making Space*. 84

⁹⁹ Matrix. 85

¹⁰⁰ Matrix. 85

¹⁰¹ Weisman, *Women’s Environmental Rights: A Manifesto*. 2

¹⁰² Hayden, *What Would a Non-Sexist City Be Like?* 182

In the meantime, Jos Boys questions the effectiveness of new housing strategies that try to solve the lack of community within present modern housing facilities¹⁰³ by creating “village-like rural settings”¹⁰⁴. While Boys applauds the awareness for isolation of many women in individual homes, she claims that this isolation “is not necessarily relieved by the mere proximity of other women in the same position”¹⁰⁵. She illustrates how the ‘Introduction to Housing Layout’¹⁰⁶ by the Greater London Council Department of Architecture and Civic Design from 1978 “make[s] spatial and architectural metaphors of social interaction which ignore the actual realities for women”¹⁰⁷. According to her this misled approach originates from a lack of understanding of the actual needs of the inhabitants. She further claims that the same issue leads to semi-public ‘in between spaces’, designed for an aesthetic ideal, which are not coherent with the reality of the users and the density of the present population, eventually resulting in a lack of maintenance¹⁰⁸.

PROPOSED STRATEGIES

In consequence of all these findings, the author auf the third chapter Barbara McFarlane demands: “Feminists need to find new ways of organizing and designing houses to meet women's needs without reinforcing oppressive roles for us within the home and family”¹⁰⁹. Coherent with that statement, Sue Francis urges architects to develop “designs that reflect the richness and value of women's experience”¹¹⁰. As Joni Seager notes in her review from 1985, Matrix’ analysis of the built environment is very thorough, while it is lacking a sufficient presentation of “empowering alternatives”¹¹¹. To offer some solutions, Jos Boys refers to the Greater London Council's Women's Committee who proposed the establishment of “safe, convenient and cheap public transport [...], safe streets and the design of public space accessible to all, including the disabled, older people and parents with children”¹¹². In the

¹⁰³ Matrix, *Making Space*. 44

¹⁰⁴ Matrix. 44

¹⁰⁵ Matrix. 45-46

¹⁰⁶ Greater London Council Department of Architecture and Civic Design, *Introduction to Housing Layout: A GLC Study* (London and New York: Architectural Press, 1978). Quoted in Matrix. 44

¹⁰⁷ Matrix. 46

¹⁰⁸ Matrix. 47

¹⁰⁹ Matrix. 36

¹¹⁰ Matrix. 88

¹¹¹ Seager, ‘How to Put Women on the Map’. 10

¹¹² Greater London Council’s Women’s Committee, *Woman and Planning Working Group*. Quoted in Matrix, *Making Space*. 54

meantime, Weisman presents a clear list of demands for the future architectural developments in her manifesto:

“Day-care centers, displaced homemakers’ facilities, and women’s resource centers are vitally necessary if we are to eliminate existing and potential barriers to employment for all women. Battered women’s shelters are essential if we are to provide women and their children with a safe refuge from their abusers [...]. Emergency housing is needed for women runaways and victims of rape. Halfway houses ought to exist for prostitutes, alcoholics, addicts, and prisoners. [...] We need decentralized and convenient health care facilities for women. We need to build safe and available abortion clinics. [...] These places and spaces represent new architectural settings which reflect both radical changes in our society as well as glaring evidence of women’s oppression and disenfranchisement.”¹¹³

Jos Boys predicts that “new ways of defining categories of home and work, caring and paid employment” will influence “the physical arrangement of facilities and the spaces in between” in the future¹¹⁴.

EVALUATION OF THEIR FINDINGS

While the editors Darling and Whitworth, authors of *Women and the Making of Built Space in England, 1870–1950*¹¹⁵ describe the contributions of Matrix to the studies of English women’s environments as “highly important but much underrated”¹¹⁶ in 2007, it is important to highlight the aspects the authors of *Making Space* did not consider.

In 1989 Kimberlé Crenshaw, pioneer on intersectionality and author of the article ‘*Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics*’ criticizes the focus on patriarchal imbalances: “When feminist theory attempts to describe women's experiences through analyzing patriarchy, sexuality, or separate spheres ideology, it often overlooks the role

¹¹³ Weisman, *Women’s Environmental Rights: A Manifesto*. 4

¹¹⁴ Matrix, *Making Space*. 53

¹¹⁵ Elizabeth Darling and Lesley Whitworth, eds., *Women and the Making of Built Space in England, 1870–1950* (London: Routledge, 2019), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315233826>.

¹¹⁶ Darling and Whitworth. 5

of race.”¹¹⁷ This is an important note, as it was not only a ‘man-made’ but also a ‘white-made’ built environment as illustrated in the next chapter.

Strongly influenced by the second wave of the Women’s Rights Movement and their own perspective, Matrix’ analysis focusses mainly on the experiences of “white, middle-class”¹¹⁸ women, as one of the marginalized groups. While aware that individual experiences in built space vary “according to factors such as class, race, personality and sexual preference”¹¹⁹, they choose to use their own perspectives of predominantly white women to illustrate mechanisms of built space that reinforces a variety of inequalities¹²⁰.

Crenshaw explains why such a narrow focus can create a problematic analysis: “The value of feminist theory to Black women is diminished because it evolves from a white racial context that is seldom acknowledged. Not only are women of color in fact overlooked, but their exclusion is reinforced when *white* women speak for and as *women*.”¹²¹ She further criticizes that “struggles are [often] categorized as singular issues”, which thereby “undermine[s] potential collective action” and “reinforces the status quo”¹²².

The two main problems of the architectural practice, highlighted by the members of Matrix, are a dominating lack of consideration, due to a blindness towards other members of society, and a lack of understanding of the needs of others, even by those with good intentions. In the end, the analysis of the ‘man-made’ built environment by the authors of *Making Space* suffered from the same mechanisms. The needs of other members of society are not sufficiently considered and the understanding of the experiences of women in the urban context is limited by their own “white, middle-class” bias. This proves the importance of the inclusion of a variety of voices in the design process of built spaces, not only of white women, but also of POC, people with restricted financial opportunities, people with disabilities, elderly, children, and many more.

¹¹⁷ Crenshaw, ‘Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex’. 154

¹¹⁸ Matrix, *Making Space*. 10

¹¹⁹ Matrix. 12

¹²⁰ Matrix. 39

¹²¹ Crenshaw, ‘Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex’. 154

¹²² Crenshaw. 167

IV CHAPTER 3: THE '90'S – 'THE POWER OF PLACE' BY DOLORES HAYDEN
(1995)

CONTEXT

With the beginning of the '90's, the Women's Rights Movement increasingly supported an awareness for the complex intersectionality of social imbalances in the society and urban environment. As one of the pioneers in the examination of intersectional experiences, Elizabeth Wilson states in *The Sphinx of the City* in 1992, that the "situation of women in cities is strongly determined by class"¹²³ and that the pleasures and dangers of the city are not evenly distributed. While her focus is still influenced by her feminist perspective, Wilson widens her focus from the repressed role of women in the urban context towards the experiences of other marginalized groups like POC, people with a 'different' sexual orientation and members of the lower class¹²⁴. According to her, thanks to the "grassroot struggles in the 1960s and 1970s", the "public recognition of the many problems women (and blacks) face in the urban environment" was growing¹²⁵. She examines how minorities started to form subcultures and ghettos, which created a special "vibrancy"¹²⁶ in many cities, but also made these groups more "vulnerable [...] to surveillance and containment"¹²⁷. Furthermore, she highlights how factors like colonialization resulted in an uneven distribution of wealth and an enduring imbalance of power between countries¹²⁸ – a topic which had been rarely touched before. According to Sharon M. Keigher's review from 1993, Wilson's "provocative"¹²⁹ analysis of the built space is "directed at the roots of today's urgent urban problems"¹³⁰.

As a result of the growing interest in intersectionality, urbanist Dolores Hayden contributes a thorough examination of the interdependencies, between the variety of imbalances in our social fabric and the built environment, to the theoretical discourse with her publication *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History*¹³¹ in 1995.

¹²³ Wilson, *The Sphinx in the City*. 119

¹²⁴ Wilson. 119

¹²⁵ Wilson. 119

¹²⁶ Wilson. 120

¹²⁷ Wilson. 120

¹²⁸ Wilson. 123

¹²⁹ Sharon M. Keigher, review of *Review of Discrimination by Design: A Feminist Critique of the Man-Made Environment.*; *The Sphinx in the City: Urban Life, the Control of Disorder, and Women.*, by Leslie Kanés Weisman and Elizabeth Wilson, *Contemporary Sociology* 22, no. 2 (1993): 173–75, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2075723>. 174

¹³⁰ Keigher. 175

¹³¹ Hayden, *The Power of Place*.

INTERDEPENDENCY BETWEEN BUILT SPACE AND SOCIAL INEQUALITIES

To emphasize the relevance of the interdependencies between built space and social inequalities Dolores Hayden refers to Henri Lefebvre, who claimed: “Space is permeated with social relations; it is not only supported by social relations but it is also producing and produced by social relations.”¹³²



Yale University, Dolores Hayden, photograph, Yale Architecture, April 14, 2024
<https://www.architecture.yale.edu/faculty/560-dolores-hayden>

In her following examination, similarly to the train of thought of *Matrix* from 1984, Hayden illustrates the power of the built environment more explicitly when she states: “One of the consistent ways to limit the economic and political rights of groups has been to constrain social reproduction by limiting access to space”¹³³. She emphasizes her point by highlighting how “the claustrophobic experiences of immigrants living for decades in crowded, unhealthy space (as part of the reproduction of the labor force) are conveyed by the building”¹³⁴. Elizabeth Grosz makes similar claims in the book *Postmodern Cities and Spaces*¹³⁵, edited by Sophie Watson and Katherine Gibson, from 1995. Here Grosz states: “The organization and management of space [...] have very serious political, social and cultural impact”¹³⁶. According to her, spatial design has been used in the past “to colonize, to appropriate, to measure, to control and to instrumentalize”¹³⁷. Grosz further claims that male designers used their influence to “define and utilize a spatiality that reflects their own self-representations”¹³⁸, resulting in the “containment of women within a dwelling which [...] was not [...] built for them”¹³⁹.

¹³² Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 286 Quoted in Hayden. 41

¹³³ Hayden. 22

¹³⁴ Hayden. 33-34

¹³⁵ Sophie Watson and Katherine Gibson, *Postmodern Cities and Spaces* (Oxford, UK ; Cambridge, Mass. : Blackwell, 1995), <http://archive.org/details/postmoderncities0000unse>.

¹³⁶ Watson and Gibson. 54

¹³⁷ Watson and Gibson. 56

¹³⁸ Watson and Gibson. 55

¹³⁹ Watson and Gibson. 56

SPATIAL SEGREGATION

Hayden continues to elaborate on a variety of mechanisms that reinforce social inequalities through built space, for instance spatial segregation, similarly to the arguments of other women architects presented in the earlier chapters. Yet Hayden's analysis of this phenomenon is more thorough, when she illustrates "patterns of ethnic and racial division"¹⁴⁰ with the example of segregation of People of Colour¹⁴¹ in the USA in the 19th and the earlier 20th century. To highlight the intersectionality of the different factors influencing spatial segregation, Hayden examines the following photograph from the 1880's, depicting the segregated seating order of an audience of a class of a state university. The photograph "shows the men and women sitting separately. It is equally important to ask if there appear to be people of color present, segregated by gender and race, sitting at the very back of each group"¹⁴².



Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan. Quoted in
Hayden, *The Power of Place*. 26

Even though this scene illustrates a very specific aspect of spatial segregation – the (in-) accessibility of education – it still demonstrates how intersectionality influences the experiences of black women, compared to those of a white woman or a black man. Hayden concludes: "to understand the intersecting segregation of race, class, and gender, the spatial dimensions of traditional 'woman's sphere' have to be studied in combination with the spatial limits imposed by race or class"¹⁴³. This approach applies the demands of Kimberlé Crenshaw from 1989, who claims that discriminating mechanisms should not be examined as individual problems, but rather as intertwined¹⁴⁴.

¹⁴⁰ Hayden, *The Power of Place*. 34

¹⁴¹ Hayden. 24-25

¹⁴² Hayden. 27

¹⁴³ Hayden. 24-27

¹⁴⁴ Crenshaw, 'Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex'. 167

STUDYING THE EXPERIENCES OF OTHER MARGINALIZED GROUPS

While acknowledging the relevance of “studying how territories defined by gender, class, race, ethnicity, sexual preference, or age affect people's access to the urban cultural landscape”¹⁴⁵, Hayden admits that examining those interlocking factors can be quite challenging. Nevertheless, she emphasizes that in order to create a “sense of cultural belonging”¹⁴⁶, the public culture, and thereby the built public space, has to respect and acknowledge diversity. As a consequence, her formulated goal is to accumulate methods that allow a collection of evidence, studying the experiences of marginalized groups in the urban context with their intersectional complexity.

As one of those methods Hayden presents cognitive mapping, an approach developed by Kevin Lynch, illustrated in his book *The Image of the City*¹⁴⁷ from 1960. According to Hayden, he “studied mental images of the city by asking people to draw maps or give directions”¹⁴⁸ and hoped to thereby gain insights into their perception of the city.

In the following, Hayden presents a study of Los Angeles from 1971¹⁴⁹, which made use of the cognitive mapping method. The produced maps compare the perceptions of residents of the different neighbourhoods of Los Angeles, segregated by intersectional factors like race and class. Hayden concludes: “the maps are striking images of inequality of access to the city”¹⁵⁰ as the apparent size of the city varies drastically. It is striking that the residents of the predominantly Latino and African American neighbourhoods Boyle Heights and Avalon seem to have a much smaller radius than the residents of the predominantly “affluent white”¹⁵¹ neighbourhood Westwood.

¹⁴⁵ Hayden, *The Power of Place*. 23

¹⁴⁶ Hayden. 8-9

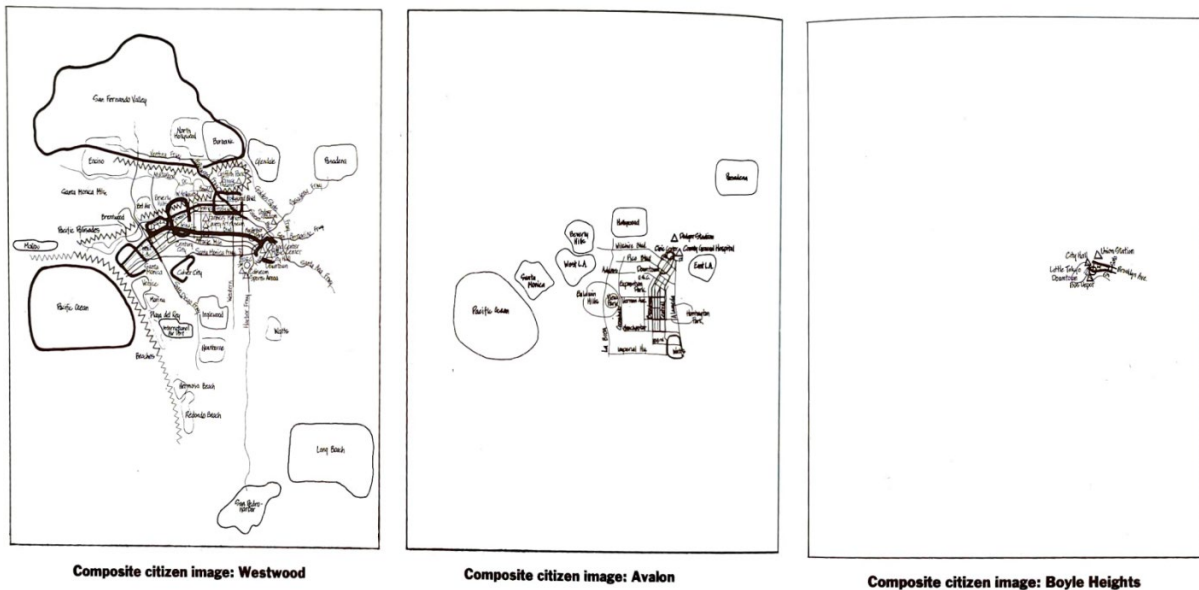
¹⁴⁷ Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1960). Quoted in Hayden. 27

¹⁴⁸ Hayden. 27

¹⁴⁹ Los Angeles Department of City Planning, *The Visual Environment of Los Angeles*, 1971. Quoted in Hayden. 28

¹⁵⁰ Hayden. 27

¹⁵¹ Hayden. 27



Cognitive maps of Los Angeles as perceived by predominantly Anglo-American residents of Westwood, predominantly African American residents of Avalon, and predominantly Latino residents of Boyle Heights.
Los Angeles Department of City Planning, *The Visual Environment of Los Angeles*, 1971, 9-10. Quoted in Hayden, *The Power of Place*. 28

In her efforts to develop a more inclusive architectural practice, Hayden demands that designers should approach a community with “a willingness to listen and learn from members of the public of all ages, ethnic backgrounds, and economic circumstance”¹⁵². She emphasizes that “it is about giving respect to members of a community”¹⁵³ and treating them as equals. With this approach she challenges “the top-down thinking of traditional professionals”, as described by James M. Lindgren in 1996¹⁵⁴. She specifically presses the importance of those strategies for urban designers, who need to gain information about “places whose significance is invisible to outsiders”¹⁵⁵, to enable a design strategy which will be accepted by the present residents. To achieve the goal of an inclusive design process, Hayden proposes to incorporate methods like interviewing, mapping and open public meetings¹⁵⁶. She hopes that “with acceptance of diversity can come a new sense of place”¹⁵⁷.

¹⁵² Hayden. 235

¹⁵³ Hayden. 229

¹⁵⁴ James M. Lindgren, review of *Review of The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History*, by Dolores Hayden, *The American Historical Review* 101, no. 3 (1996): 937–38, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2169606>. 938

¹⁵⁵ Hayden, *The Power of Place*. 231

¹⁵⁶ Hayden. 229

¹⁵⁷ Hayden. 237

EVALUATIONS OF HAYDEN'S FINDINGS

The analysis of *The Power of Place* by illustrates an increased awareness for intersectional factors like race and class in the theoretical discourse about urban space towards the end of the 20th century. In 1996 James M. Lindgren describes *The Power of Place* as a “timely and important book”¹⁵⁸. Meanwhile David Chase criticizes in the same year, that Hayden’s examination is lacking an analysis of the actual built space¹⁵⁹. Instead, she emphasizes the importance of methods that can help architects gain insights into different perceptions of the urban environment.

While Hayden’s insights into the experiences of members of other marginalized groups are limited by her own perspective as a white middle-class woman, she broadens the approach of Matrix by accumulating methods to generate insights into experiences in the urban environment that exceed her own. She proposes cognitive mapping, a respectful exchange with users through open meetings and interviews and encourages an incorporation of such an exchange in the design process. This effort marks an important development towards an inclusive theoretical discourse which can eventually result in an inclusive architectural practice.

Hayden’s ambitions are loudly applauded by most of her critics in the following years. Barbara Allen praises her contributions to “the feminist and cultural studies of architecture” that “fill a void in the architectural history literature”¹⁶⁰ in 1996. Although the critics cannot seem to agree on whether those ambitions are successful in practice. According to Bradley Queen in 1997, Hayden’s book manages to make “the invisible visible”¹⁶¹ by establishing a shared authority. Meanwhile, Allen claims that Hayden applied the idea of truly “participatory community processes”¹⁶² described in her book so far only on a rather superficial level in her own practice. Carl Abbott questions the implementation of Hayden’s ambitions into her own work in a similar way in 1997¹⁶³.

¹⁵⁸ Lindgren, ‘Review of *The Power of Place*’. 937-938

¹⁵⁹ David Chase, review of *Review of The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History*, by Dolores Hayden, *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 55, no. 1 (1996): 85–86, <https://doi.org/10.2307/991060>. 86

¹⁶⁰ Barbara L. Allen, review of *Review of The Power of Place: Claiming Urban Landscapes as People’s History*, by Dolores Hayden, *Journal of Architectural Education (1984-)* 50, no. 2 (1996): 131–32, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1425364>. 131-132

¹⁶¹ Bradley Queen, review of *Review of The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History*, by Dolores Hayden, *H-PCAACA, H-Review*, June 1997, <https://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=1056>. 1

¹⁶² Allen, ‘Review of *The Power of Place*’. 131

¹⁶³ Carl Abbott, ‘Los Angeles Revisualized’, ed. Dolores Hayden, *Reviews in American History* 25, no. 2 (1997): 332–36. 335

V CONCLUSION

HOW DID 20TH CENTURY WOMEN ARCHITECTS DESCRIBE AND ANALYSE THE CHALLENGES FACED BY MARGINALIZED GROUPS WITHIN THE URBAN BUILT ENVIRONMENT?

The analysis of the three main sources illustrated a development of an increasing awareness for the importance of needs of other marginalized groups and a growing interest in accumulating the necessary knowledge about the different perspectives towards the end of the 20th century.

While Susana Torre's analysis still focused a lot on the mechanisms that influenced women's positions in the architectural field, her collection of voices already highlighted important aspects of the built environment that mainly impacted marginalized groups. Catherine Bauer, one of the in *Women in American Architecture* presented women authors, criticized the displacement of deprived neighbourhoods in consequence of urban developments, a process today labelled as 'gentrification'. Furthermore, she observed a progressing segregation between poor and rich, thereby highlighting aspects that mainly affected members of marginalized groups. Torre herself illustrated how standardized architecture disregards the needs of the majority of the population and how zoning strategies reinforce social inequalities. Although, she was not yet aware of the mechanisms behind the reinforced imbalances of power by the built environment, her collection still offers an interesting perspective on the built environment present in the 1970's.

As the elaborations of the Matrix collective in the 1980's focused on the experiences of women in the built environment, they did not offer many insights into the experiences of other marginalized groups in the built space. Nevertheless, their examination of mechanisms that restricted women's access to public space and influenced their experiences within the built environment was quite thorough, while some of the findings could be transferred, as they also influenced members of other marginalized groups. The authors of *Making Space* illustrated how mechanisms that result in an environment that reinforces inequalities can be divided into two categories: According to their analysis, malfunctioning built space is either created by a lack of consideration for the needs of others by the designer, or by a lack of understanding, which results in wrong assumptions by architects with good intentions. Matrix illustrated how design strategies that were adapted to the needs of white, middle-class men and their use of space, discriminated members of society with less access to cars, who suffered from social restrictions,

and with reduced access to public buildings. They proposed a number of interventions, which would not only be beneficial for women but also for other marginalized groups, such as cheap, sufficient public transport, availability of necessary facilities like child-care centres, and improved accessibility to public spaces. Last but not least, they demanded more variety in available housing options, which were currently adapted to the ‘typical’ family-configuration, reinforcing gender roles. The Matrix collective made an important step towards an inclusive discourse, when they recognized their own bias and made the reader aware of their own limited perspective. Although, they do not attempt to broaden that limited view by accumulating knowledge about the perspectives of other members of society, which could result from the focus of the Women’s Rights Movement on the experiences of women in society at the time.

This next step was done in the following decade by Dolores Hayden, who’s examinations show a greater understanding for the intersectionality of factors influencing experiences within the built space. She emphasized the interdependency between spatial design and social inequalities and illustrated how spatial segregation reinforces imbalances of power and can be used to control and repress minorities. Furthermore, she showcased how accessibility of urban spaces is influenced by intersectional factors like class, race and ethnicity. Most importantly she presented a collection of methods that allow designers to acquire knowledge about the often dismissed or misunderstood needs of the actual users. She proposed the use of the Kevin Lynch’s cognitive mapping method, a respectful approach of residents and the incorporation of interviews and open meetings with users into the design process. Her elaborations illustrate the increasing interest in accumulating knowledge about experiences of actual users in the ‘90s, investigating methods to acquire information about the needs of other marginalized groups. Thereby her contribution to the theoretical discourse was an important step towards an inclusive discourse, opening the discussion to other voices. Nevertheless, those other voices then also have to be included in the discussion in the next step, to achieve a truly diverse discourse.

WHICH VALUABLE INSIGHTS CAN WOMEN ARCHITECTS’ PERSPECTIVES,
AS MEMBERS OF ONE OF THE MARGINALIZED GROUPS, OFFER
REGARDING THE EXPERIENCES OF THESE COMMUNITIES?

As illustrated by Torre in the first chapter, the historically often dismissed voices of women architects offer interesting critical views on the built environment, influenced by their unique, partially excluded, position within the professional field, as their criticism is often

sharper than their male colleagues'. As the theoretical discourse about 20th century architecture is still dominated by manifestos of male, white architects and theorists, an incorporation of voices of women architects marks an important step into the right direction on the path towards a more diverse discourse. Due to the immense impact, that the theoretical discourse has on the built environment and the affects that built space has on human health, an inclusive discourse is essential in the future development. Thanks to the developments of the second wave of the Women's Rights Movement, voices of women architects were gaining an increasing influence from the '70s onwards. Nevertheless, their publications are still earning a lot less recognition than the ones from their male colleagues. Therefore, an analysis of their contributions, highlighting valuable findings, is hoped to create a more diverse discourse.

As members of one of the marginalized groups, the presented women architects offered perspectives that were influenced by a greater awareness for the needs of women and individuals of other marginalized groups, which makes their observations valuable to an inclusive discussion. Nevertheless, their predominantly white perspectives were limited by their own bias and should therefore not replace the voices of members of other marginalized groups, like People of Colour, members of lower classes, or people with disabilities. To create a discourse that can incorporate the intersectionality of factors like class, gender and race, the discourse has to be opened for members of as many different subgroups of our society as possible. As illustrated by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989, compartmentalizing different forms of discrimination as singular issues keeps the different movements from cooperating and fusing their powers. Therefore, an awareness for the needs of other marginalized groups is crucial for the achievement of an inclusive and diverse built environment.

In the future developments of the theoretical discourse about built environments it would also be desirable to achieve a discourse that includes observations that are not limited to the 'western' world, thereby enabling a more diverse input suitable for our present urban landscapes, shaped by diverse inhabitants.

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