

Arch509 **Architecture & Urbanisms of Sociality**

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“[Society is] that curiously hybrid realm where private interests assume public significance.”
Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 1958

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The “social life” produced by and of urbanism has long been a subject of study by social scientists, philosophers, and others seeking to understand the distinct ways in which individuals form community, divide or share resources, and build institutions, infrastructures, and domestic spaces in support of urban life. As such, “sociality”—the desire to come together in association with others—is a necessary project of the architect and urban designer. While urban scholars of the turn of the twentieth century such as Lewis Wirth and others of the “Chicago School” of Sociology focused on the ways in which the urbanization produced by industrialization had broken ‘...bonds of kinship, of neighborliness, and sentiment’ (to paraphrase), sociologists and others who followed such as Richard Sennett and Iris Marion Young celebrated the ways in which urban residents, initially “strangers” to one another organized to form communities not tied to family, religion, race, or ethnicity. In the twenty-first century, as the social spaces of the city have become fodder for neoliberal accumulation and consumption, design theorists and activists, from feminists of the 1980s such as Dolores Hayden to architects such as Andrés Jaque, have begun to develop new new architectures and urbanisms built on principles of social relationships that challenge capitalism and/or propose new ways to come together in urban space.



Images: Idea Store, Adjaye Associates, Whitechapel, 2005; Sweetwater Foundation, Chicago.

Our explorations will move back and forth between theories and definitions on the one hand—e.g. social infrastructure, commoning, collectivity, and cosmopolitanism—and specific case studies of traditional and newly created spaces and practices—e.g., library vs. idea store, social settlement vs. media lab, art gallery vs. art block, urban park vs. urban farm. The overarching question of the semester will be how we design inclusive architectures and urbanisms to reimagine institutional and urban space in support of diverse constituencies.

FORMAT

This seminar will run in person, meeting for 2.5 hours most weeks and for the full 3 hours the first week and weeks when assignments are due. The additional .5 hour of assigned meeting time will take place asynchronously/remote to account for extra time to watch films or videos, listen to podcasts, or engage with other media. Assignments will allow for a variety of presentation formats and will build on one another.