

DH Lab Teaching Fellows Grant Report.

Arijit Sen, Associate Professor of Architecture and Urban Studies



Instructor Name: Arijit Sen

Class Number and Name: Arch 650/850 Citizen Architecture Studio

Digital Humanities tools/methods:

- Website production: weebly.com
- Digital Mapping: storymap JS
- Architectural Design: AutoCAD, Adobe InDesign, Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Photoshop
- Architectural Modeling: AutoCAD / 3D Studio, Rhino3D, CATIA

Description of Course:

ARCH 650/850: Milwaukee Environmental Justice Lab 2019 was a graduate and upper-level undergraduate research studio that introduced architecture and urban planning students to methods of reading, mapping, and redesigning the everyday built environment. Our goal was to explore how thoughtful architectural design has the potential to support democratic and equitable access to environmental resources. Students worked with community partners to plan ways to ameliorate conditions of inequality.

Outcomes:

- Final projects: MKEejLAB.weebly.com
- <https://uploads.knightlab.com/storymapjs/68bfe469f701b96f09a8ca90eb690f40/countermapping-sherman-park/index.html>

Assignment:

Students mapped geographies of environmental (in)justice in Milwaukee's Washington Park and Sherman Park neighborhoods. They described and analyzed environmental problems, and located these issues in space. Tiered assignments brought together mental mapping, urban observation, historical and contemporary data on race, and analysis of environmental and infrastructural harms in the city. Ultimately, students created an easily accessible website that identified geographies of (in)justice in Milwaukee and suggested architectural solutions to these problems. Students learnt to use different digital tools to collect and analyze data, solicit community feedback, disseminate design ideas, produce installations and models, and represent their final results. They were expected to have a prior working knowledge of AutoCAD, InDesign, Rhino3D, and other presentation softwares.

1. Mapping the *milieu*: Early in the semester, students selected residential blocks in Milwaukee's Sherman Park neighborhood to identify material elements such as highways, roads, parks, rivers, brown fields, and buildings that contributed to inequitable conditions in these areas. They identified cultural, economic, and institutional assets such as transit, green space, stores, local organizations, public spaces, and food spaces. See examples: <https://mkeejlab.weebly.com/food-justice-in-sherman-park.html>
2. Observing, engaging, and interviewing residents: In subsequent weeks, students worked with community residents to understand the nature and impact of environmental injustice. They collected demographic census data. See examples: <https://mkeejlab.weebly.com/catalyst4.html>
3. Countering injustice: The third part of the semester assignment focused on designing a long-term response to address injustice and inequity. Students created short, mid, and long term architectural solutions to resolve identified problems. See examples: <https://mkeejlab.weebly.com/the-solution.html>
4. Reflections: Each student documented personal reflections listing what they learnt during this project. See examples: <https://mkeejlab.weebly.com/reflection.html>; <https://mkeejlab.weebly.com/journal.html>; <https://mkeejlab.weebly.com/reflections.html>; <https://mkeejlab.weebly.com/reflection.html>; <https://mkeejlab.weebly.com/reflectons.html>; <https://mkeejlab.weebly.com/reflections1.html>; <https://mkeejlab.weebly.com/reflections2.html>; <https://mkeejlab.weebly.com/reflections-jesse-rhodes.htm>
5. Final map: This data is currently being transferred to a StorymapJS site to create an interactive interface that will make all information available to wider audiences. See StoryMap here: <https://uploads.knightlab.com/storymapjs/68bfe469f701b96f09a8ca90eb690f40/countermapping-sherman-park/index.html>

Learning Outcomes

1. Students learnt to "read" the landscape to better understand how socio-political dynamics are embedded and reflected within urban environments. Ethnographic data analysis helped them gain better understanding of how users understand and use buildings.

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2. Students learnt about settlement histories and contemporary geographies of injustice in Milwaukee. They documented uneven distribution of risk within the urban environment.
3. Students developed basic research competencies by learning how to collect descriptive and archival data. They learnt to curate, index, and organize various forms of data.
4. With their design propositions, students applied newly acquired knowledge and learnt to evaluate the efficacy of their projects.



Sample Assignment

Website Review: Friday 30, 2018; Boards Pinup 2: December 7, 2018; Final Review/exhibit: Friday November 14, 2014. This is your final assignment. It is about curating and documenting your work for final reviews.

List of Required Final Drawings (40%)

1. Story + Larger Context boards explaining environmental justice claims and evidence.
2. Physical Character of Place + Affective Qualities annotated visuals.
3. Site Topography and Model.
4. A view of your catalyst-project in perspective showing how you see it being used and how the human body engages it in multiple ways. Also show how you engage culture and community.
5. One or more joint details.
6. The visual process drawing that shows the iterative and circular process of planning, brain storming, prototyping, building, brain storming, erecting on site, and redesigning/adding.
7. Visual program
8. Plans and sections showing layout of street, site, and building
9. 2 perspectival views
10. Five best images of you working on your project.

Digital Documentation

Website: You will need a minimum of 5 pages

1. Project description and your bio. This is your landing page. Your project should have a title and a narrative. The narrative should have 1. your bio, 2. a mug-shot, 3. thesis statement, 4. a project abstract, 5. a claim of environmental justice and 5. a conclusion section explaining how you address/resolve/ameliorate environmental injustice via your final design. You should add youtube/vimeo videos, citations, and hotlinks to introduce your audience to the topic and issue that you are addressing. (20% of Digital Documentation grade)
2. Site. This page will have a site plan, location, a short description of the site, site analysis, existing images of the site. You should add additional hotlinks and videos to enrich the content of this page. You may include soundscapes, smell maps, visual and temporal maps, movement-notation, and oral narratives. This page should give your audience a sense of place and introduce them to the issue of environmental justice in a more visceral and experiential manner. (20% of Digital Documentation grade)
3. Catalyst. This page will describe the engagement process, community event images, a narrative describing your catalyst, and Assignment 2 drawings. Show plans, views, and images of the final layout on site. You should add audio recordings, clips, and other forms of data. (20% of Digital Documentation grade)
4. Your long-term design. This page will have all drawings and data such as a visual program, site and building plans, sections, 2 perspectival views, and images of your final model. (25% of Digital Documentation grade)
5. Reflections. This page is like a blog and will include multiple reflections. Include the date you wrote it (as in a personal diary). (20% of Digital Documentation grade)

Style and Formatting Guidelines

Citations: follow *The Chicago Manual of Style*

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Footnote all sources, and hyperlink within the body of the post to relevant weblinks
Images should have a legend or caption. Provide credit for image if any.

Data Storage:

Find folder T:\FA18-ARCH650850-Sen in the T-Drive.

Find the folder with your name.

Each assignment folder will have sub-folders for Data, Photographs, Assignment Drawings, Text

In Data folder: Add historical, quantitative, demographic data for the city and neighborhood. Add your narratives and descriptions in word format too. Add all reflections here.

In Drawing folder: Add original drawing in jpg, InDesign, or CAD formats, + one in pdf format

In the Text folder: Add all texts written by you for your narratives in a single MS Word document

File Naming Convention: Your_Name_F2018_description_of_content

Formats: jpg; mp3, doc, dxf, psd, packaged Indesign. No pdfs or illustrator files.

