2008

ARCH 510 GRADUATE SEMINAR
DESIGNING FOR SUSTAINABILITY

STUDENT EDITORIALS

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Arch 510   Jeremy Smith

A RETURN TO EDEN

JAKE DUNN

When exactly did we lose our connection to nature? Was it when humanity was exiled from the Garden of Eden? When we moved out of caves and into air-conditioned homes? Or was it with the advent of electricity, of industrialized farming? Was it with the rise of the Capitalist machine? Or was it when Paris Hilton starred in that commercial for Carl's Junior? It's hard to pin down the exact date, but at some point along the line of human existence we have lost what David Orr calls, "a sensual connection to nature". We have alienated ourselves from nature that has nourished our needs for over millions of years, which has caused alienation from ourselves. We now live in an estranged environment that dilapidates rather than ages, that wants to be perfect vs. embracing imperfection, and that destroys rather than creates…

But how did this happen? When did we start viewing trees as merely a number of board feet rather than something precious? I mean, aren't we inherently natural beings? The last time I checked there are two forms of life: plants and animals. Since I haven't been able to produce my own food through photosynthesis yet, I would conclude that I'm an animal. Homo sapiens, makes sense right? All that animals are concerned with is eating, sleeping, marking territory, maintaining simple social structures, and procreating with the opposite sex— sounds like the University of Idaho life to me.
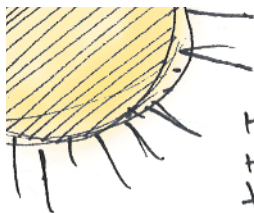
So what's different? Some would say it's that humans are able to engage in *metathought*, or "thinking about thinking" which distinguishes us from the other animals. Heidegger might argue that this simple fact gives man a higher consciousness, therefore excluding him from the natural world. This alienation allows us to view our condition as self-sovereign subjects that are the whole of everything objective, thereby delivering nature over to ourselves as something to be controlled, mastered, and used to our own ends. Our values have shifted from embracing our home to its exploitation for misguided ends. Even just the dichotomization between civilization and the natural world has a proclivity to further estrange us from our environment with negative consequences. Separated from us, the earth and its atmosphere can now be objectified and reduced into distinct parcels of raw material from which to yield to the demand of humans. Now Nature unto itself has no value except for the tangible numbers it represents as resources. This condition has to be true, how else can we slash and burn rainforests? How else can we dump toxic waste into rivers and oceans? How else could we have let unsustainable growth warm the planet to the point of human genocide? Most importantly, how can we still let Dick Cheney hunt animals, or humans, or whatever?

But nature *does* have value, right? Just ask the people of Cuba, whose natural mangrove forests form a natural barrier to the salinization of their inland fresh water resources. Ask anyone whose home is heated with the electricity produced from microbes eating waste in anaerobic digestion tanks. Or just think about why we heal faster in the presence of nature, or why we prefer to work in natural light with a view to the outdoors. As a people who are now largely urbanized, we are evermore fascinated and affected by the natural landscape, is that why the Hamptons are so popular? In some form, we still have an affinity to nature that is deeply ingrained into our DNA.

We need to go back to embracing and *being nature*. We need to go back to designing the built environment as an interconnected ecosystem whose waste streams are reused, recycled, and redistributed within the community. If we spend on average 80% of our lives indoors, then we need to design interiors as habitats instead of disparate homogenized cubes. We need to design the building as part of a larger system that gives back to its site and reinforces social and environmental structures. "Green" Architecture should start to blur the subject/object delineation between inside and outside, machine and organism, building and landscape, civilization and the environment, and promote the idea that *we are nature*. Only through our love for it will we fight for nature's survival, and inevitably our own.

If an abalone can make a ceramic shell as strong as steel without the use of heat, then architects should be able to design a building with proper solar orientation. So we must remember that "green" Architecture is nothing new; actually it means going back to the basics in terms of design. Ever since the Exile, we've lost our innocence, you might say. When we hear green architecture, it doesn't mean forgetting the past, the old and going to the new, embracing the high-tech. "Green" architecture should be something that reconnects us as sensuous creatures evolved over millions of years to a beautiful world. That world does not need to be remade but rather revealed.

…and that will be our return to the Garden.
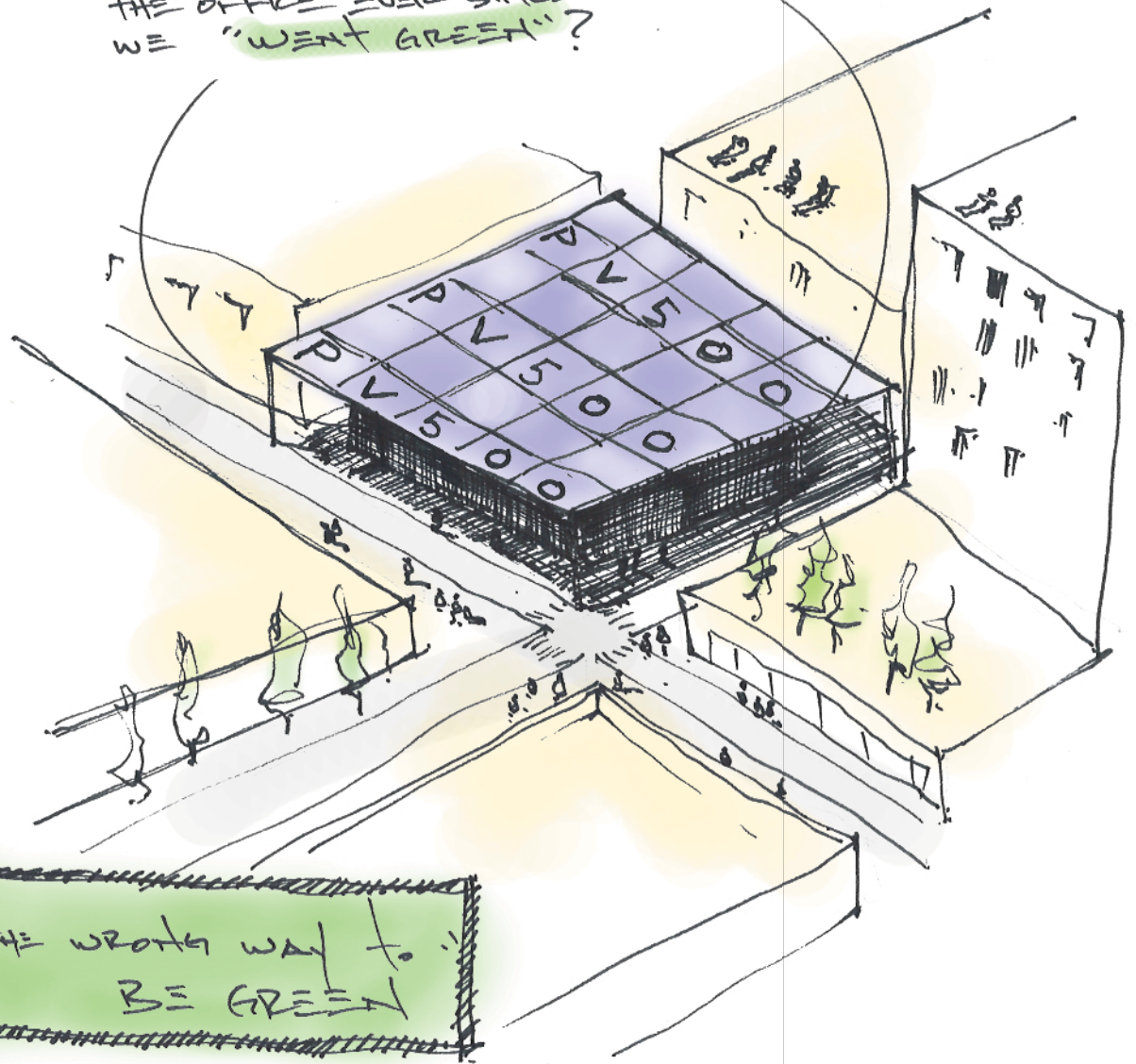
FEAR OF SUSTAINING

KIRSTEN CUMMINGS

Fear is the root of a distinct separation gap between acknowledgement of reality and the inevitable direction of our future sustenance. Fear is defined as "a distressing emotion aroused by impending danger, evil, pain, etc., whether the threat is real or imagined" (dictionary.com). We all have anxiety (an unrecognized fear) towards our futures; will we succeed in life, career, love, and family? The greatest fear we face as an organized society and as individuals is change. As Vinnie Jones puts it, "we are born to change, we sometimes regard it as a metaphor that reflects the way things ought to be, in fact change takes time, it exceeds all expectations, it requires both now and then ".

People fear the unknown, it is human nature. However, the first step to changing your future is acknowledging your fear, but how do you recognize and come to terms with the presence of fear in your lives? Taking a step back and analyzing your life is a very important part in looking at your life subjectively. What is important in life and what would it mean to lose it, does it mean giving up on what has been ingrained in your every step? No, it should be changing a point of view and gaining a new perspective. Change is not completely engulfing, retaining part of the past will be necessary in preparing for the future.

The next task as difficult as it may be is to find an attainable direction. Search through every aspect of your life, in your emotions, physical actions and your environment. To sustain your future you must sustain your environment. Evaluate the way you live your life, do you constantly consume, how do you dispose of possessions, and do you consider environmental repercussions? Coming to terms with the reality of your situation is your first step to acknowledging how you affect your environmental surroundings. Familiarity is the one thing people should fear the most. We are conditioned by the influence of others, facts, statistics, and marketing schemes. Oil companies promote alternative natural resources yet push the use of non-renewable natural resources. In the home we are encouraged to replace our existing light bulbs with CFLs even though the old have not burned out. Are the external factors that influence us, guiding us to consumerism or sustainability? How do we determine what to be influenced by? We fear drying up without replenishing, but are the things we do sustaining? Is fear getting in the way of seeing the "light"?

Upon acknowledging our fears of environmental sustenance, action should be taken. Baby steps though, pushing too hard too soon forms more fear. However, too slow leads to regression and settling. Seeking the larger picture first, not hitting close to home means you are remotely connected to the situation. Start by researching environmental movements and effects that sustainable practice has had on our environment, economy, and individuals. Knowing what is out there helps in understanding people's actions and methodology. When feeling more comfortable with taking action, research methods of recycling waste, modes of alternate transportation, or ways to improve the amount of emissions your house produces.

Not all fears are conquered through action, mentally conditioning yourself to think sustainably will subside feelings of reluctant change. By slowly introducing sustainable practice into your life, a greater sense of belonging will connect you to your environment. Sense of place is what we seek; fear of losing this place will be subsided by our efforts to prolong its life.

"Do you think we have enough wind energy to power our oil rig?"
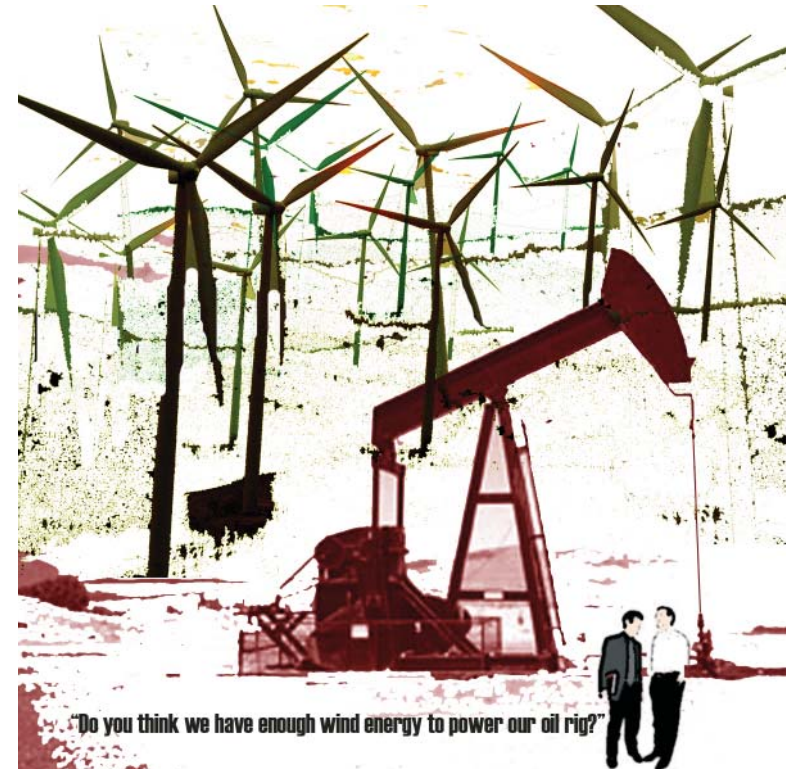
THE IMPORTANCE OF PUBLIC ART

AARON DORN

If you had to choose a career as either a businessperson or an artist, which one would you choose? What factors affected your decision? There seems to be a trend in developed nations to lean more towards business than art. The biggest reason is usually finances. People are familiar with the phrase "starving artist", but you don't really hear the phrase "starving businessperson".

But art is a valuable asset to society. If you imagined your ideal city where you would want to spend the rest of your life, do you see factories, offices and retail stores? Surely they play into the equation, but more often, scenes of street life, parks and even public art pieces come to mind. A bustling town is made more impressive when it incorporates public art. Seattle is a great example of this. Driving into the city on Interstate-90, you come upon concrete barrier walls that have large leaf-prints embedded into them; you see a school of fish swimming on an overhead pass; you see fountains in the river shooting water into the air. While it can be rationally argued that you don't need these projects and that money could have been better spent, you definitely get a feel for the city from these art works.
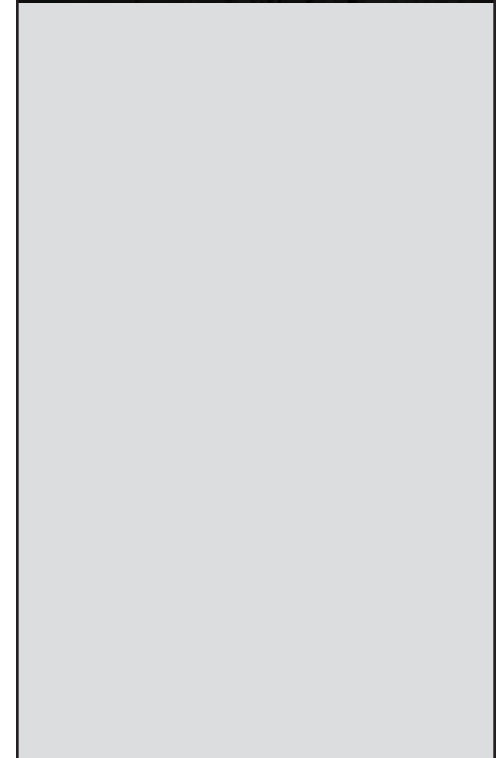
And while not all art pieces become major art works for the world to see, they do become something that people can resonate with; and, should you attempt to remove those pieces, you find yourself facing resistance. When the Seattle Public Library went under renovation during the beginning of the 21st century, there was a fountain that the architect of the new library wanted discarded, but the city was furious about this attitude towards their fountain and, eventually, the architect had to find a place for it in the outdoor plaza.

The pleasant thing about art, is that it isn't limited to major cities. There is a small town in Idaho called Craigmont with a population of around 550 people. While the town's make up is nothing extraordinary, it is a pleasure driving through it. Under on overpass, someone painted murals celebrating Craigmont, the public garbage cans have children's paintings on them, and they even have a garden celebrating Idaho's centennial. This helps establish a enjoyable heart to a town with contrasting industrial edges. You can argue whether or not those public art pieces help retain the steady population, but if you imagine the town without those images, it would be a drier life.
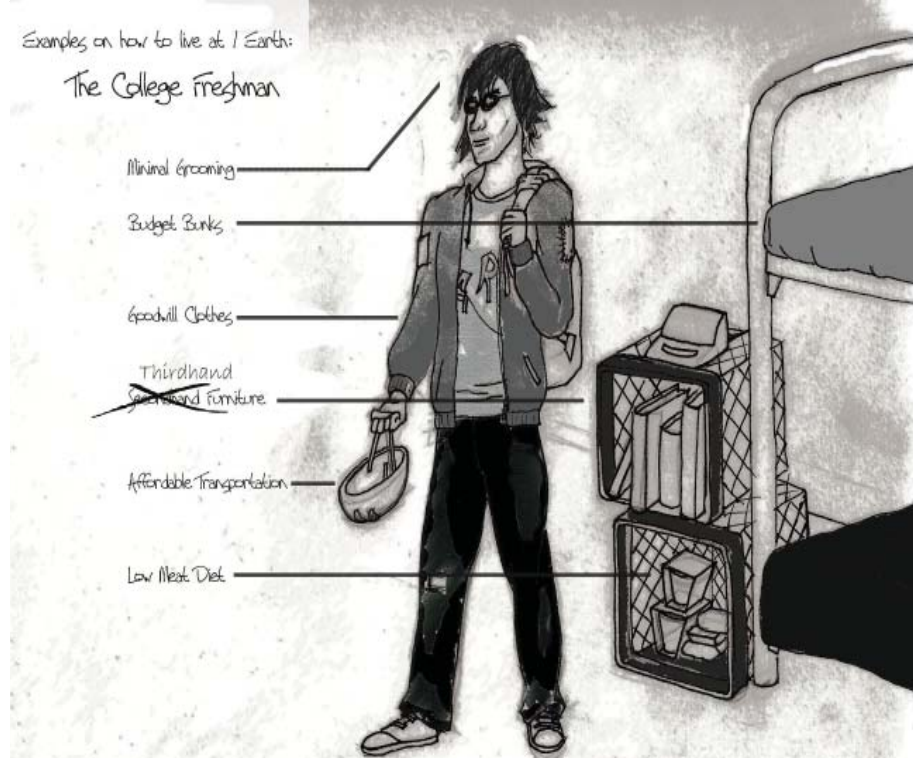
Artists create the ability to relate with their works, for better or worse, that would be lacking if they were removed or censored. A person can look at a picture and see it is pretty. They might not know why, or what exactly the artist was getting at, but they appreciate it, and in turn, appreciate themselves more in turn. It is also possible for an art piece to be provocative in order to get the general population to wake up their sleepy minds and reengage in their surroundings.

Without the valuable role artists play, our world would be harsher to bear. It is the artists' talents to reveal the world to our eyes in ways we forgot or not yet realized.

Examples on how to live at 1 Earth:

The College Freshman

Minimal Grooming

Budget Bunks

Goodwill Clothes

Thirdhand ~~Secondhand~~ Furniture

Affordable Transportation

Low Meat Diet

A BRIGHTER FUTURE DEPENDS ON YOU...IDIOT

JOE WINKLER

What has our society come to in the year 2008? In the United States alone, fuel costs for gasoline fluctuate around $4.00, an economic recession is currently underway, bank agencies are filing bankruptcy, and one out of every 464 households received a foreclosure filing in July of 2008, up 55 percent from the same month last year (The Press Enterprise). We find ourselves plummeting down a slope in which everyone fears—a depression. It has no longer become a matter of pointing fingers at one another, which we, as Americans, have such an easy time usually doing. Yes, we all once thought that it was the government, corporate America, or even the "annoying neighbor that no one seems to even know" who propelled our country to this point. What happened to accountability? When confronted about a problem, the last thing anyone wants to do is admit that they were at fault. Even when admitting a fault, it is common that this fault is not changed or corrected in any significant way. Why? If there is no significant effect or benefit from it then why would we? These trends often continue until a dramatic consequential occurrence begins to erupt, such as mass distinction rates of animals and plants alike, but even that doesn't seem to stop anyone, simply because it doesn't affect the average human being to an extent that they notice it. The one thing that every average American is affected by is the fluctuation of the economy. One way to solve this economic crisis as well as provide a cleaner environment is simply to use less fossil fuel energy and begin to make a massive change over to alternative energies, regardless of the prices for them right now.

The problem that has arisen in the last few years was caused by us, the average person. "Well, what are we supposed to do though? It's not like we can really do anything about it…" IF everyone personally went through a clean and efficient economy intervention in America, it would lead to over 3 million new jobs, add billions of dollars in personal income & retail sales, & produce up to 284 billion dollars in net energy savings (We). "I have little knowledge of alternative energy, why hasn't there been more information on it for me, the average American?" It's your own responsibility to be informed, don't depend on the government to just do everything for you. As a society, we have become so lazy that we no longer want to work for anything. If people took more action and initiative in being informed on important topics going on in the world then there probably wouldn't be a problem right now in the first place. The technology is out there, as it has been for the last few decades, and it is simply a matter of getting off the couch, and taking some time for the common person to understand and implement it. Solar, Wind & Geothermal energy methods are all examples that are continuously improving and becoming more efficient for the common user to apply to his/her buildings. (We).

Solar Photovoltaic Panels could be implemented not only on new construction, but also on many of the existing buildings we have today. Solar PV's can now be integrated into roof tiles, have no moving parts, and even produce electricity on cloudy days. It is expected that the installations of Photovoltaic Panels around the world will jump 800% in the next ten years. In addition, wind power, when connected together through a national grid, could provide at least one-third of our total electricity needs in America if were to be used to its full potential (We).

A clean energy economy has to begin with the blue-collar citizen. One individual won't do it, but an ever growing group of influential people through example, action, and determination can create the type of world that we once formerly lived in, if not better. If the everyday American chose to use passive methods along with new solar and wind technologies in their own personal residences a little at a time, it would become an inevitability for the multi-billion dollar corporations to support clean energy technologies. I grew up reading and listening about how America gained such prominence and prestige through its innovation and determination. Clearly America is at a point in which change is inevitable. The technology and innovation is right in front of us; it is merely a matter of a unified determination to create a clean, economically thriving world as a whole, and that determination must come from you and I.
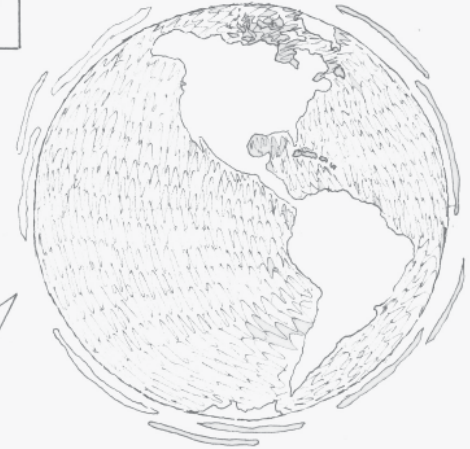
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Work Cited: "We Can Solve The Climate Crisis," http://www.wecansolveit.org/content/solutions
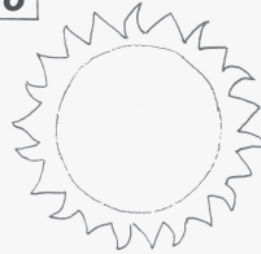
EDITORIAL CARTOON 2008 — JOE WINKLER
ARCHITECTURE 510 - GRADUATE SEMINAR — PROF. HAGLUND
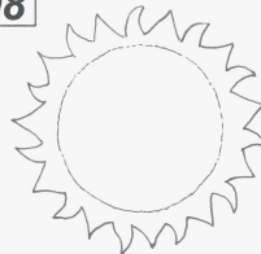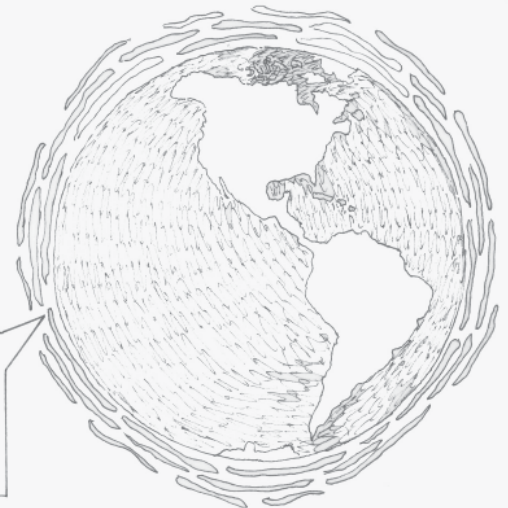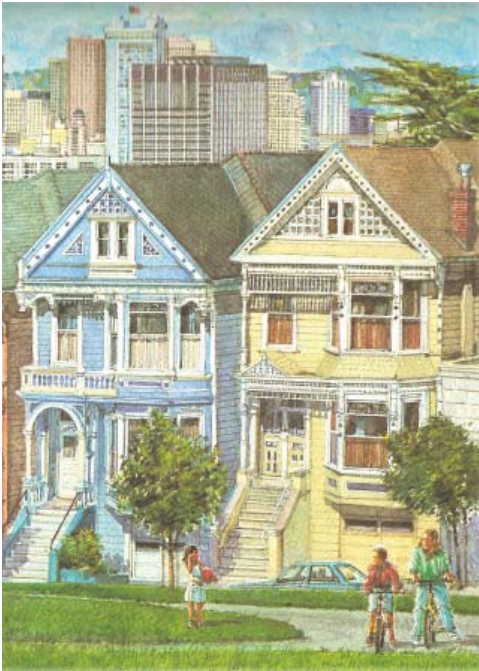
PARADIGM SWITCH FROM MODERN GREEN TO HISTORICAL GREEN

MAURA MARTIN

There is no question that the green building revolution is here to stay. LEED registered public sector and nonprofit buildings in the US are approaching 10 percent of the annual new construction value of new buildings, while commercial green buildings are approaching 5 percent of the total new construction (Yudelson p.7). The numbers may seem small but they are a clear indication of the growing acceptance of green architecture in the U.S. building industry. The implication is clear, architecture itself is changing, and so must the designers who are creating it.

The goal of green design is not to make the most points, but to design the best structure. As part of that goal, user comfort is a vital component. An integrated design approach, one that examines all the possibilities and then carefully chooses the options that best fit both the need and is compatible with all the other building systems, is the ideal. Most of the time, green design is beautiful, comfortable, and a point winner. There are many examples of excellent green architecture, designs that have been plastered each month on a plethora of architectural magazines. I will readily admit, that I believed great green design meant new and shiny, a glass tower rising above the simple less "sophisticated" structures of our past. Therefore, when I heard Morphosis was going to design a new federal building for San Francisco my excitement was boundless. Morphosis is a firm with a reputation for avant-garde modern design, just the sort of firm to do green design at its best, or so I thought.

For the past couple of summers I have dutifully visited and documented the construction of this iconic structure. I have waited with baited breath for its grand opening so I could finally see this magnificent structure from the inside. In 2007, Thom Mayne gave a lecture in San Francisco touting the great design of this building. Every design student in the audience hung on every word he said, including me. It was as if green design had finally reached an apex of perfection. Green design is a modern glass tower! We all knew it.

In 2007, the building was finally occupied by city employees. I was shocked and disappointed at the rumblings I heard from people who both worked in the building and those that knew people who would work there. There seemed to be a general discontent with not only the building itself but the psychological implications of the design. I was both dismayed and curious, how could this be? It was as if a child had been told mom and dad buy the Christmas gifts and Santa's nothing but a pretty illusion. So, I started my investigation into the mystery of what is the model of green design. As all investigative reporting begins, I started with the people I knew who had the closest reach to the building, namely friends and family who both lived and worked in the city full time. From them I learned that the building wasn't as perfect as planned. The first great revolt came when the newly planted occupants discovered the interior workspaces weren't placed correctly and therefore it was an awkward space to work in. Further investigation revealed that indeed, the brand new Steelcase work units were not fitted properly and had to be reinstalled no less than 2 times. This seemed a small inconvenience with an eventual solution. But then I heard the architectural design itself was not up to the occupants taste. Morphosis, in their quest to find a better vertical solution had designed a series of levels that could only be reached by stairs in a convenient manner. This was in an effort to get all those hefty city employees to slim down, but just like the fat guy sweating and swearing to a Richard Simmons exercise tape the novelty of it all was short lived. The workers didn't appreciate the long walk up stairs no matter how healthy it was supposed to be and they longed for the day when the architects didn't care much how fat they were. One of my sources boldly told me flat out that "every department is unhappy" I asked why? Why would anyone not like to work in a brand new building designed and built just for them and the betterment of the environment? His answer seemed so odd to me at first, "Everyone liked their old buildings more". I discovered that before the arrival of Morphosis San Francisco scattered many of its departments around the city. They were all located in a general area but for the most part each department had its own building. I was also told most of these city buildings were older historical structures with "character", something the new building seems to lack. It was in the cities great thinking that in our post 9/11 reality it would be more secure if all the departments were located in one space, plus if they consolidated all the departments to one space and made the new space green the city would save money. To the workers this didn't make sense, they liked being separated from what they believed to be the more "violent" departments. Departments such as Human Resources didn't care to be in close proximity to Departments such as tax collections which has a greater reputation for patron discontent. It seemed some departments didn't like their new cubicle buddies and they weren't shy about saying it. They liked the psychological feeling of owning

their own space and being in control of that space, Al Queda be damned! They further didn't see the thinking of having everyone in one place, wouldn't that just make Al Queda's job easier? I was told that the city had specified to Morphosis to build a highly secure structure which in essence meant a fortress from the outside world. This was supposed to ensure worker safety, instead of having several scattered unsecured structures the thinking was lets have one big monster building instead, according to the city of San Francisco and Thom Mayne size does matter. To further incite the workers it was discovered the building contractor specialized in jail construction hence the concrete and steel design. The city not only wanted green but they wanted a fortress, and to many workers the result felt more like a jail then a welcoming work place. They longed for their bright and sunny city jewels, that little space they could call their own. The older buildings provided a sense of place and comfort plus to many they were plenty green and this new building wasn't necessary. The workers were given all the usual green tag lines, the concrete is for thermal mass, the operable windows automatically react to the outside environment, the work spaces are individually controlled, and on and on, but still something vital was missing. The workers didn't care for the cold grey steel and concrete they had a nice warmer version of thermal mass in their old structures (masonry), and they had great windows and perfectly comfortable interiors before thanks to old fashioned good siting and building/window orientation. To the workers the new Morphosis building is a waste of money and their not happy. My perfect green building seemed to be nothing more than a testament to one designers ego and the ever growing design process to build with a check list and fear. The fear of every city of not having at least one gigantic glass modern green building to call its own. I really wanted to love this structure not only because it will forever own a piece of the skyline of a city I love so much but because of what it represented to me, green at its best. To finally realize my icon of green was more a failure than a success because it completely ignored the end users and what they wanted was heart breaking. The lesson learned from the federal building is the use of green technologies for user comfort should always be at the top of every designers list of "to do's". LEED certification is impressive but should never be the sole reason behind a design. End user comfort is why these structures are built in the first place. I believe Morphosis completely missed the boat on this one because the structure itself is to house workers where efficiency and comfort is vital to productivity. To completely ignore these important aspects of the design was outrageous. Examples of great green design is evident in the smaller older buildings the workers originally occupied, not the fortress they now call home. Most of these structures were built in the late 1800's and early 1900's way before the modern green revolution and somehow they managed to be icons of green anyway. In my estimation, Morphosis wasted a golden opportunity to create something of value and significance and instead decided to ride the tide of their past success and design yet another modern green style creation coupled with the cities fears. Newer is not always better.
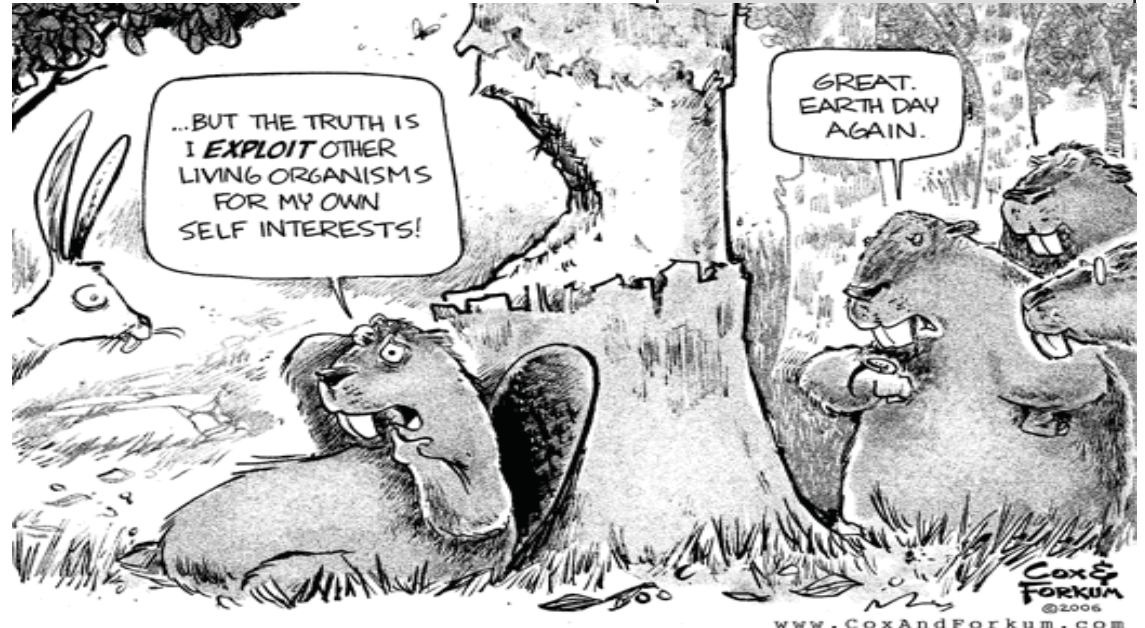
BASEBALL, THE ROMAN COLISEUM, AND SUSTAINABILITY

TIMOTHY CONRAD

So each of these things in my title does not really have any strong relation to one another, but yet it is the best I could come up with. The charge to me was to write an editorial on something preferably related to sustainability and a very important project. What was I going to write in regard to sustainability? Well therein lies a bit of a problem; I am not sure if sustainability is something that I can write passionately about. However if we start talking baseball, oh baby, now there is a sport that for me rivals all other sports. No one has the amazing amount of stats that baseball does and there is lots of wonderful strategy involved in playing a game. To get back on topic, maybe I can relate baseball to sustainability. Does that look like anything? Maybe it looks like Barry Bonds. One could argue that his suspected doping is sustainable for baseball because he can play well into his old age and thus we can all cheer for our favorite stars longer. Then there is the other side that would say the records achieved by those hyped up guys are a mockery of the hard work done by those who did not use anything but skill, a bat, and a glove. Well, actually, sustainability and baseball makes me think of the Roman Coliseum. Mainly based on the fact that sports stadiums follow in form very often after the form of the Coliseum, round, large, and open. You are probably asking what does this have to do with sustainability, because I still am avoiding the suggested point of this editorial; well here is the tie to that important project I mentioned earlier and to the Coliseum. The vernacular style of climatic regions is something that has been pushed aside to make way for often costly and cumbersome fans, chillers, and heaters to maintain our indoor environments. While the Coliseum does not really showcase any great vernacular example as something from ancient Nordic or North American Indian cultures, the point is looking back to and taking a hint from the way we used to do it. What I am advocating is not to ignore the advances and abilities that technology has allowed, but that when we create the built environment we take step one which has been established and refined for the past few thousand years by humans. That step is to use vernacular styles to create our inhabited spaces, which means mass in some places, courtyards in others, and breeze ways for some. Just as Barry Bonds in not sustainable to baseball history so it is with the human race. Just because we have things that enhance our abilities to great levels does not mean that they are always beneficial. We should be sustainable to ourselves by using the methods that years of trial, error, and discovery led to prior to the development of air conditioning and fans. After we take a step back and reassess our methods, then when a little more is needed we can add the things that our current knowledge and discovery has allowed us to create.

So in conclusion the Greeks should fix up the Coliseum, add some rainwater catchment system, throw on a few PV panels around the top and play baseball. And also LEED could add a vernacular section.
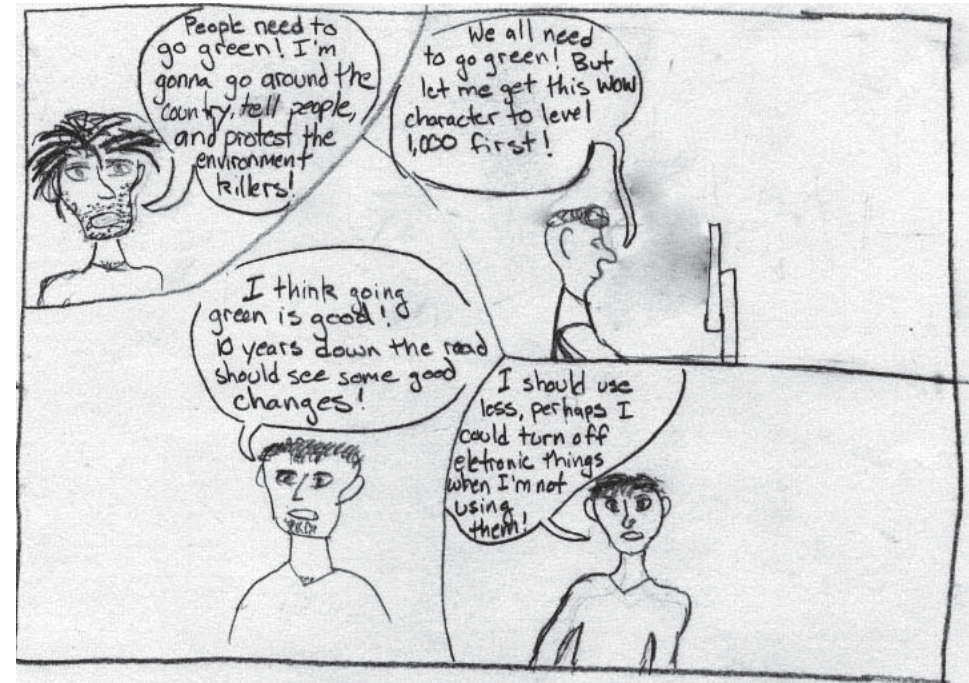
DAYS GONE BY

AMANDA KOOMPIN

Driving through American Falls this past summer I couldn't help but feel a little depressed. My hometown is dying and I have yet to determine why. I use to be able to get everything I needed, maybe because I was only eight or nine when a lot of the shops closed, but I like to think it's because we actually had stores back then. We had clothing stores, places to buy any kind of candy a kid could imagine, and we could rent movies that weren't "clean flicks". Now we have empty buildings that would be condemned if anyone cared enough to do so. The few occupied buildings look deserted or are painted sea foam green (another mystery I've yet to solve). There are at least three buildings that no one knows for sure if they are open or not, the windows are blacked out or boarded up but an open sign remains, perhaps only because it too has been forgotten.

What is happening to our small towns? Do people really love Wal-Mart so much that they will drive thirty minutes for their rollback prices? I love low prices, being a college student with no desire to get a job, but occasionally I am willing to spend that few extra bucks so I don't have to drive clear across town. I thought the rising gas prices would help American Falls. I figured people would realize that they were saving money paying a little more for bread in town than they would using gas to drive to Pocatello for a cheaper loaf. I was mistaken. Whenever I would drive through town I was lucky to see more than one other car on the road. I know working in Pocatello, a thirty minute commute each way, didn't help the problem. Believe me if I could have worked in American Falls I would have, but does a town of 4,000 people really need a full time architect on hand? Maybe that is part of the problem; a town of 4,000 can't support the kinds of professions that might actually be able to make a difference.

We need to look long and hard at our small towns and the people that live there.   A majority of the problems come from people who don't care about their hometown, like people that feel stuck in American Falls and have no desire to see it become a better place. People don't realize that if they would put some effort into fixing the problem, they wouldn't have that empty or stuck feeling. An awakening needs to happen to the people in American Falls but the real problem is how to awaken them. Is it money, time or some other source that keeps people from fixing a town? The sad thing is that the problem with American Falls and small town America in general is deeper than the average individual is willing to dig.

Look how GREEN I am!
I had this old plane trucked
clear across the country
so I could reuse it to build
my house!
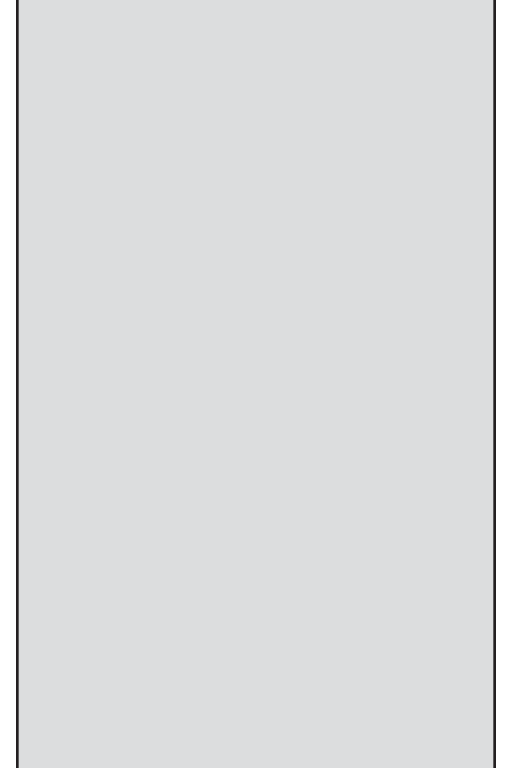
SUSTAINING THE SOUL

BRENT BEAUDOIN

With the issue of sustainability being high on everyone's list, I have started to question what exactly people are trying to sustain. The reason for anything to be sustained is the humans need for it to exist. In that respect, sustainability is simply the protection of what we have deemed valuable. Throughout the history of mankind, out of an act for survival, specific needs have been given hierarchy. According to Abraham Maslow's Theory of Human Motivation, humans' needs fit into five levels: physiological, safety, love and belonging, esteem, and self-actualization. These levels must be achieved in their specific order and continuously maintained if all five levels are to be reached. A dissection of these categories reveals that they can actually be seen as needs for the body, mind, and soul.

Patterns can be seen in Maslow's list where certain needs are actually techniques used to sustain a previous need. For example, as soon as a person achieves their physiological needs, they work towards safety or how to essentially maintain and protect those physiological needs: sustaining the body. After that they will look for love and upon achieving this level will use the esteem level to guarantee that this need for mental health continues to exist: sustaining the mind. Finally, according to Maslow, humans will reach self-actualization and begin to realize their full potential. However, in order to follow the existing pattern, the hierarchy of needs cannot end here. A final level awaits the human race. A level that will ensure humans' ability to achieve their highest potential: sustaining the soul.

Why does one need to sustain the soul? First of all, the soul is the essence of the human being and is where the passion to create and pose questions derives from. It is the fundamental quality that allows humans to reach their potential. If this passion was to fade, what would become of the world? We wouldn't have any Monet's, Da Vinci's, Mozart's, or Einstein's. Instead life would become a monotonous, day in and day out struggle to survive in a world that had reached its peak and offered nothing new. Something that holds this much importance deserves at least a little consideration on how to protect it.

So how can this be done I ask you? How can Maslow's level of self-actualization be preserved so that it will always be there to feed the soul? One must first understand that the world offers energy sources that are exactly what the soul needs. The key is learning how to locate and harness this power. With the age of machines and technology at hand, it is often easy to misinterpret where this soulful energy comes from. Sure a man sitting in his smog covered, fifteenth story apartment, staring out at a million miles of concrete can flip on his computer and produce images of a utopian paradise only seen in his dreams. But how long will this last? How long will the little box he lives in compel him to create? Until his miracle machine decides to malfunction and ends up smashed against the wall into a million pieces? Perhaps.

Ultimately the soul needs much more than a bunch of wires and microchips encased in a hard plastic shell. We must step out into the world and discover the places and moments that refresh and energize us. It is those moments where the power of the world seems to consume your entire being and places you in a field of energy created by that exact second in time. It is when you lay in the middle of a hay field and


"Sustainability is the coolest thing right now! I just tore out all my old cupboards and replaced them with these cupboards made from recycled cork, tires, and the lint found in your pocket. Yep, just my way of helping save the planet."

listen to the music of grass moving in the breeze. Or when you stand with the great giants of the forest and let their leaves float around you as you take in a deep breath of the crisp autumn air. And when you sit on a mountain top and witness the radiant view of the sun kissing the hillside at dusk. All these things create a bond between nature and humans which triggers emotions that characterize the soul.

Now the bond I speak of is not just about nature and is in fact seen in the built environment as well. I mean no one can argue that standing in the nave of a great cathedral is anything less than incredible. The point I make is that these experiences intimately connect human beings with something much larger in this universe. A connection that offers new insight into our lives that can lead to a greater understanding of our mere existence.

It is easy to state examples of this power but much more difficult to really define. Essentially it is places that heighten specific human senses and by doing so fulfills us with an extraordinary energy. The question is do we as small, helpless, humans actually have any control of these experiences? For the most part I would say we do a pretty good job of paving over and destroying most of them. However, through careful design and consideration these experiences can be emphasized and brought to a level that guarantees their use by humans. Places can be created that focus on establishing these connections with humans and compelling them to examine themselves closely so that they can continuously reach their full potential. These places will establish the intimate bond required to fulfill a human need. That need is ultimate sustainability or sustaining the soul.
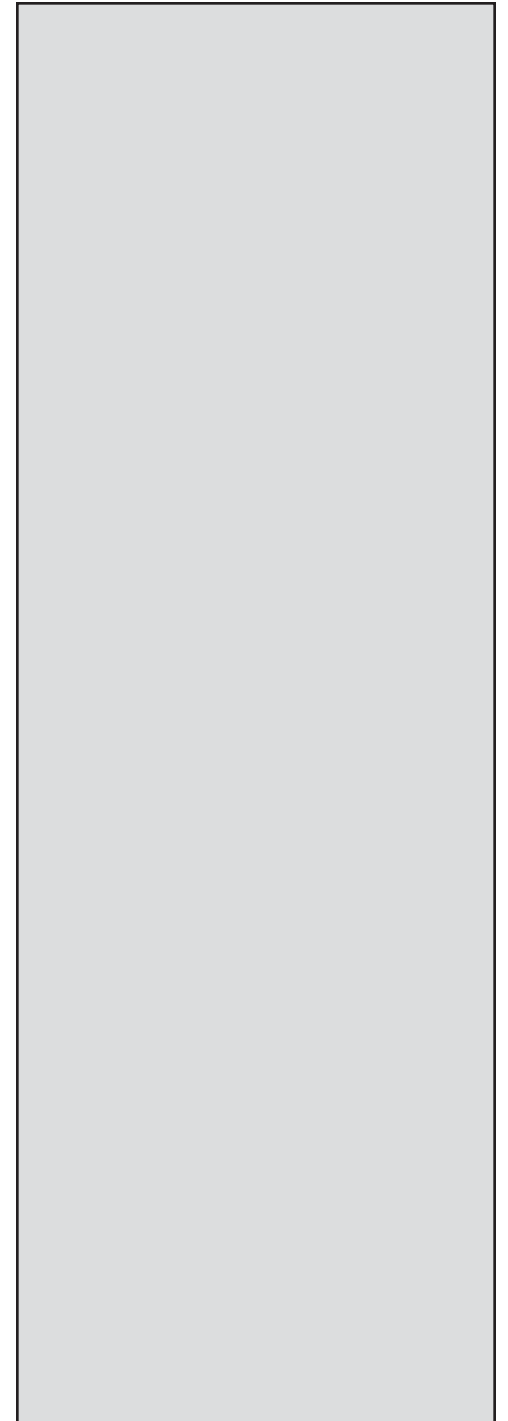
OVERCOMING THE BRAINWASHING

COREY PATAKY

Over the past half-century, Americans have been swept off their feet and quickly came to believe that the way we live is the only and best way we could ever live. With consumption per person at an all time high, we are running out of everything, fast: food sources (with our homes wiping them out), energy resources, water, land, and air. We require more resources to account for our endless traveling, more things to account for our squandering of wealth, and we always seem to be short on time. There seems to be not enough of anything. As everyday citizens, it is not our fault we have been lead to a consumer-heavy country. Following a long and brutal war, growth flourished, and many families began. Along with this growth, the car came into its own and thus, the suburbs were born in America. Ever since, things have been forgotten and things have been created in reaction to the post-war boom.

This was a time of flourishing for America, things rolled at freeway speed with little control. Few considered the repercussions that would follow such dramatic changes in our country. Our cities were hit the worst by these changes. With consumerism on a steep climb, it became a goal of the vast majority of citizens to own their personal plot of land. Upon this land would be their oversized, poorly designed home within which they would isolate themselves. These homes were not built to last and until recently have degraded in quality since. During this time, these suburban homes really were all that was available; and there were a lot of them, so they were cheap. How perfect, the normal citizen could own their private land and house and enjoy the rest of their lives in peace. Buyers were, of course, quick to fall into this trap and ever since there has been an overload of these developments going up and a massive export of residents retreating to the edge of our once thriving cities. Like said before, the average American isn't to blame and really no one is either. Who could have foreseen the consequences of the majority of Americans moving to the outskirts of the cities?

Little do they know, they have been aiding in the death of our urban centers and the planet as we know it. Not only that, but they are subjecting themselves to a time-consuming life of isolation and stress too. Residents of edge cities are forced to drive hours a day to and from their destinations and when at home are separated from any resources they may need including their neighbors next door. Simply put, we have been brainwashed of the exciting life available within the city and in traditional neighborhoods.

Now that this problem is evident, things need to be done to fix it. Instead, suburban homes are still being cloned across the nation regardless of the known problems. It is time for the country to be freed from this blindfold. The suburban dweller and builders needs to be told and become self-aware of the countless cons of living where they do and building what they do. Once we understand, things can start to change. Great changes that will eventually reform our country and largely reduce the amount of resources required for the suburbs to thrive.

First, all the codes, rules, and regulations that have been written and strictly enforced allowing for only suburban type developments to be built need to be rethought and rewritten. This will accommodate for many varieties of new construction. Mixed-use will be seen more and more throughout the country. That will happen more naturally as things change. More important, what is to happen to the thousands of suburbs that are already built and suffering? Innovative adaptation and renovation of the house on a large scale needs to happen and will be an important step. Improvements to make them last longer, be thermally and energy efficient, and improve ventilation and daylight need to be implemented.

Change brings new ideas. With these ideas, as a nation, we can retransform our country to make it a far better place than it has ever been. The rising problem of the car, consumption, and sprawl need to be understood on a national level first for anything to change. From there, a vast redesign of the suburbs and the homes within them must be pushed for.
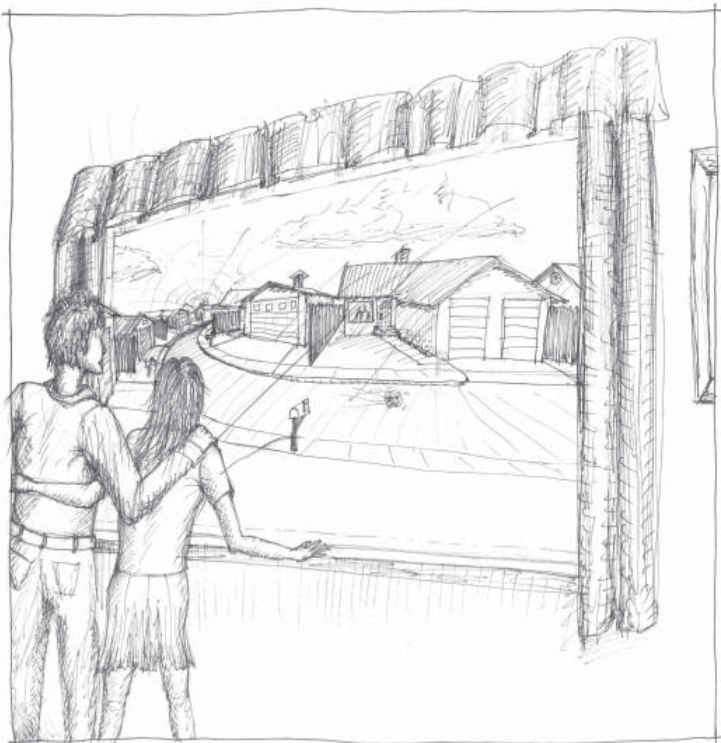
"THIS IS SUCH A GREAT NEIGHBOURHOOD, AND I LOVE OUR NEIGHBORS"
"HONEY... WE DON'T KNOW ANY OF OUR NEIGHBORS..."

HOME

ALEN MAHIC

I do not want to discuss politics. This necessary societal element is the underlying crutch of my hometown and its nation, which always finds its way into critiques of the status quo, without exception to the topic being critiqued. Instead, I am engaging in a more personal exploration of some ideas that the philosopher Martin Heidegger brings up in relation to home and how we perceive this concept.

My own feelings, pertaining to Mostar, can be defined as confusion, for the most part. I've been isolated from this atmosphere for more than two-thirds of my life. However I have always had strong memories that tie me to this place, and they tend to be the most vivid when I reflect on my past. In this way, I believe it is our memories that give us a sense and longing for home; but, at the same time, our journey is to move forward in search of it when, in fact, it is already behind us, out of our ontical reach. This is why we can never find the home. It is the reason we will always remain in a state of motion, only moving in the opposite direction of what we see and long for as home. Thus we will always remain homesick and not-at-home. This is a somewhat hopeless outlook on life and in turn a source of anxiety for most. "Homesickness is the fundamental phenomenon of human existence and philosophy. We are not now and may never be at home," says Heidegger. There is no model of home for us to discover, only to invent as a way to ground ourselves ontically. Ontologically, we leave home the moment we experience it, perhaps unwillingly, whether that has already happened, is happening or will eventually happen.

So we build walls, floors and roofs in order to calm this anxiety of not-at-home, when, in fact, all we accomplish is imprisonment in un-natural, fixed dwellings that fight our natural motion toward that which we consider home. At this point, you might be wondering how one is supposed to bring this idea into the built world, and I would be lying if I proposed a definite answer. The only comfort I can provide is simple observation. Take, for example, structures such as cathedrals and coliseums. They serve and celebrate a specific purpose – gathering. People attend these gatherings, sometimes out of a sense of obligation and other times desire. They marvel at the physical forms that these structures take, rejoice as their purpose is fulfilled, and mourn the inevitable dissolution of the gathering. This is the essence of the home. It is a temporary experience that occurs in the appropriate place, at the appropriate time. It cannot be constructed directly, but it can be evoked by the construction and occupation of space. We build to dwell, and in order to truly dwell we cannot solidify or immobilize that which is temporal in nature, in this case, the home. Though, the fear of losing it is reason enough to do so and pretend it works.

We have a special relationship with time and are able to let things change as we change. Once we reduce home to a building, a fixed structure, this temporal aspect disappears and it ceases to be at all. Man's destiny is to not remain at home, this is why we build. And the priority should be building experiences that become, not a prison, but a pause along our journey.

BUILT FORD GREEN
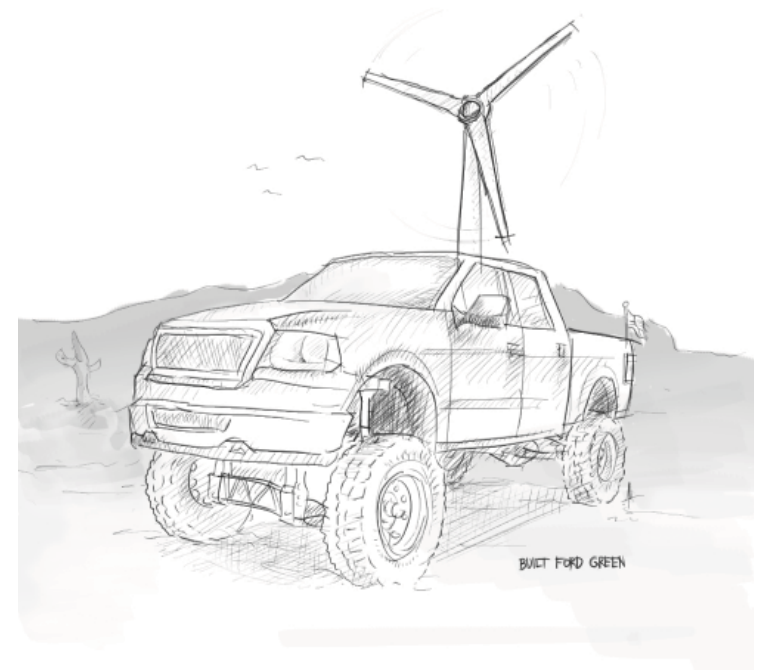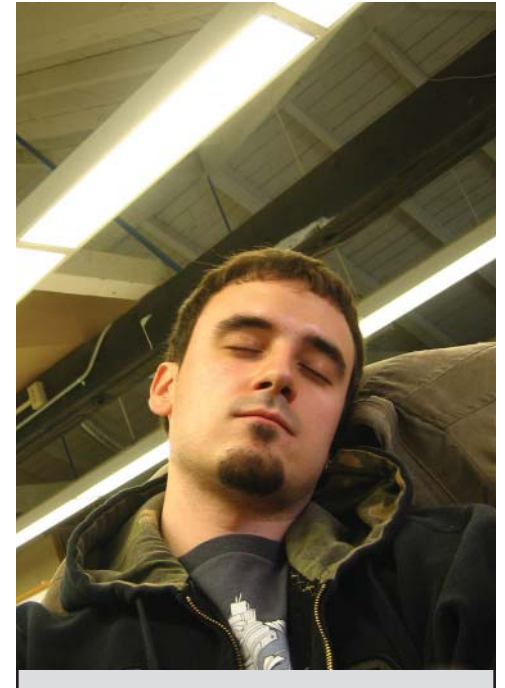
RECYCLE ME?

HEATHER BERGE

So many people in this world buy products labeled as green or sustainable, purely because it is marketed as the "better" product for the environment. Is buying these so called eco-products really providing a solution to the destruction of our natural resources? These recycled products, more than anything, provide a warm fuzzy feeling for those who buy them and merely prolong the material's inevitable end in a landfill.

Many companies are capitalizing on this new fad in green products. You can buy products that are made from recycled materials. In all reality this "planet saving" tactic is really just producing more CO_2 and waste. A coke can wasn't intended for being anything else, and the paint is not removable. When this product is melted down in order to become a new product, the paint is melted in with the metal. This new product, which is now a combination of metal and paint, is a lower grade product and in order to get it to this lesser state, it took fires, coal and gasoline, the materials which are destroying our planet. While it is argued that no new resources were used to create this recycled product; that is not necessarily the case. Was the same gasoline used to melt the metal as the time before? No, it is not a renewable resource, so in order for the coke can to become something it was not meant to be, we have to utilize many of the same resources if we were to make the can from new. And due to the lack of quality, often times new materials need to be added in order to make the product usable.

By recycling in this manner the products being created are of a lesser quality, and still will end up in the dump at some point. This cycle could be termed "downcycling" because every time the product is recycled, it is not nearly as good as before, and it will continue on this downward cycle until it meets the city dump. The true point behind recycling should be using something over and over again, and its lifecycle will never end up in a landfill. As many times as you try to save a product from the landfill by recycling it, eventually it will end up there, whether it be this year, ten years from now or a hundred years from now. There is no way under our current society to permanently recycle something.

Instead of using this idea of sustainability that has been popularized all over the country, we need to find real solutions. There needs to be a way that new resources do not always need to be used and old resources do not need to be downcycled. Instead of building things as a single unit, what if things were built to be disassembled. Products could be built with minimal resources, then at the end of that product's lifecycle, the product can be disassembled, and each of its components can be used else where. Take for example a computer, it is built of many components which were assembled to form a machine nearly everyone has. Every year, if not more often, manufacturers come out with new parts, which helps make the computer run better. If the first version of this part is compared to the second version of the same part, there would be virtually no difference. One example is the hard drive of a computer. It contains pieces that could be taken apart, and placed on to a brand new hard drive, things like the metal casing do not effect the efficiency of the product, and could be used product to product. This provides a new idea of recycling. Pieces being used for what they were designed for, but instead of only once, over and over again. Not only will the reuse of products in their form increase sustainability, the job of disassembling them will create jobs which in turn boost the economy. This is more than just product sustainability.

While in the case of products, this idea seems far out there, no company is thinking of the idea of recycling computer pieces, however in buildings recycling components becomes more realistic. Buildings are beginning to be torn down piece by piece, and the old materials are utilized in the construction of the new building. This not only helps keep costs down, but also allows for fewer products to be produced and shipped there. Though this is good, and becoming more popular, reusing materials in the same state should become the standard for all buildings. The reuse of materials can even be taken farther to say that instead of designing buildings and pretending they will be there for all eternity, design a building to be deconstructed. The building itself should be able to be deconstructed in the same manner it was built, and the pieces, either wood, concrete or steel could then be used to create another structure on the same site, or a nearby site. Perhaps buildings could be designed where parts are deconstructed and then are biodegradable, giving nutrients back to the earth. This is, however, questionable, because the life expectancy of biodegradable products is unknown yet. That having been said, it is definitely something that could be tested and brought forward as an idea for future construction.

By looking more in depth at recycling as we know it, it is visible that hauling soda cans to the recycling center might not be all that they were intending it to be. Instead we need to take this information, and realize we are inevitably sending products to the dump, it is just a matter of how long until it gets there. It begins to get confusing with all the "green products" and "recycled products" being flashed about. We are tricked into thinking that these products are just as good as others, and they will last just as long, and, in turn, these products will never end up in the landfill. Realistically a change needs to be made. Instead of trying to fit a worn out material into a new mold, we need to make products to be disassembled, and reused for their original purpose. That way these products can truly be recycled. This not only needs to be a part of products but of buildings as well. Every building should be designed as though someday it will be torn down, and it should be able to be deconstructed in its pieces. These pieces then will form a new building. If we can look at design in this manner then our future world can be far more effective in our use of recycled materials.
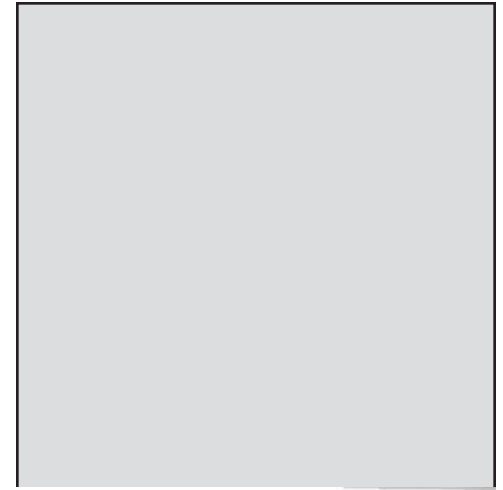
MORE THAN JUST BUILDINGS

ROBERT MARKLEY

All things in life cannot be saved. All things do not live forever. You and I are this way. Today all things have a life expectancy, but things that are utilized and cared for seem to stay with us longer. We are all aware of how our childhood toys or the favorite blanket has withering beyond repair as we have grown older becoming adults. What happens to our childhood toys or blankets is similar to our buildings and neighborhoods replacement by new, cleaner or updated models. Eventually, it becomes okay to dispose of toys or even buildings as no one notices. We move on, forgetting their existence as other things become more important or bigger and better.

The new and improved versions continue to diminish natural resources at exorbitant costs. Clients and/or designers continue to push for the unique, individualistic or even exotic structures, buildings or spaces for that purpose alone. This is counter productive. Axel Soma, a French writer on architecture, wrote of our contemporary buildings today, "Promising intensity and presence, they claim to be fugitive, evanescent, temporary, short lived. They are completely indicative of the logic of our times. They are spectacular, but they hold the field for only a short time." i Perhaps in time, as the aura wears off, they too, shall return to dust.

Within once great, thriving neighborhoods are many neglected and forgotten spaces and memories. In many cases, these buildings are not ready to be removed, but could use a smiling face, a helping hand and someone to tell their story to. Old buildings within large and small inner cities are just like older people   no longer perfect but still useful and can't wait to share a smile and a story.   Somehow, it is these people and spaces that we can and have forgotten. While some hope to contribute within society as a provider of shelter, hope and dreams, others look forward sharing what little that remains via stories or materials. Nonetheless, all should be embraced for what they are and want to be. Reuse these resources in which our neighbors and forefathers labored to create.

Architects need to take a stronger role in conserving not only the natural resources and costs, but also other values such as our history, character and environment. We must continue to develop our communities through the strengthening of city's older regions where many have faltered in recent years. These regions are full of useful natural resources ready for another go with civilization. Many outlive their life expectancy, but a slow and agonizing decay and crumbling bring them upon ruins, because no one desires to watch or care for them. While they have dents in their armor, many still stand gracefully, quietly awaiting the opportunity to shine again. Within revitalization, not all will survive, but hopefully as architects educate their neighbors, friends and family, a few more will survive for another round of life. It is not just buildings we create, but communities and therefore the people within. If they are not appointed a positive direction or given a use, they may be gone tomorrow.

1 Sowa, Axel. "Editorial." L'architecture d'aujourd'hui Vol. 367 Nov.Dec. 2006: 36 37.

ATTAINING REAL SUSTAINABILITY

SATARA ROSE-EWEN

In recent years, the concept of sustainability and use of the term "green" to refer to a person or product's environmental impact has been growing in popularity. While many people are trying to "go green", or live more sustainably, they may not really be doing the right thing to help the environment. This could be because they simply do not know what actually helps. A great deal of people are attempting to get involved in this "green" movement simply because it is trendy. The concepts of "going green" or being sustainable are concepts that are currently being capitalized on, by corporate companies, private businesses, individuals, and even the government and political parties. It is important to ask whether these people are actually doing something that will help the environment.

To be sustainable can mean that something is "capable of being maintained at a steady level without exhausting natural resources or causing ecological damage" (the free dictionary). This is usually the way it is defined when used in the context of sustainable development. Many of the sources that are claiming to be sustainable or to practice sustainable methods are not quite reaching the description of the word. For example, consider hybrid cars. They are indeed reducing their consumption of gas with greater gas mileage depending on the model, however some of them are no better, or in some cases, worse than some non-hybrid vehicles. Some people who own such vehicles boast about how they are doing something good for the environment. It is quite possible that they may be driving many more miles than a person with a traditional vehicle, and resulting in actions that could be using the same levels of fossil fuels. Changing the type of car that you drive may be one of the least sustainable methods available. There are many other types of transportation out there, especially if one lives in a larger city.

If a person is willing to make an effort, there are some ways to significantly reduce the negative impacts that they are making on the Earth. One of many good places to start and get a general idea of the damage they are currently causing is to look at their ecological footprint that they are leaving behind. A person's ecological footprint is calculated based on many things: diet, country of residence, extent of travel, methods of transportation, water conservation, etc. From this, the number of Earths that would be needed if everyone on the planet were to live the same lifestyle is calculated. The number of earths needed depends on the manner in which an individual or family is living. Figuring this all out may seem like a daunting task, however, it does not have to be. There are many web sites dedicated to informing people about their personal ecological footprint. Once an individual knows the impact they are making on the Earth they can make informed changes about how to lessen their environmental impact. Most of the web sites not only offer quizzes to find your ecological footprint, but they also offer numerous ideas on how to improve your living habits. There are simple things such as turning off the light when you leave a room and installing energy efficient lights and appliances, when your current ones die, to more involved things like installing photovoltaic panels to your home or increasing the thermal mass and insulation. These steps and many more can be implemented to improve the overall performance and consumption of your entire lifestyle and home.
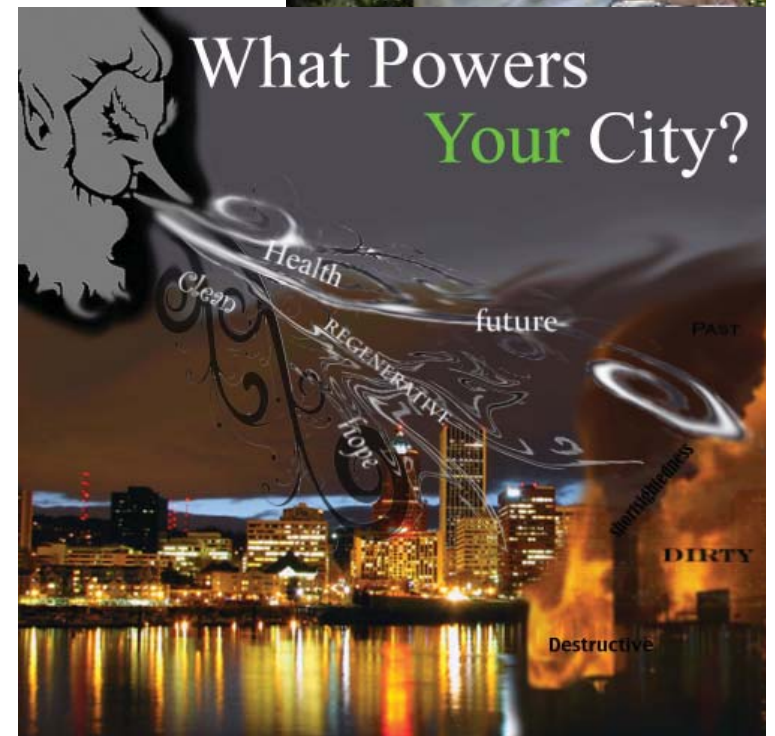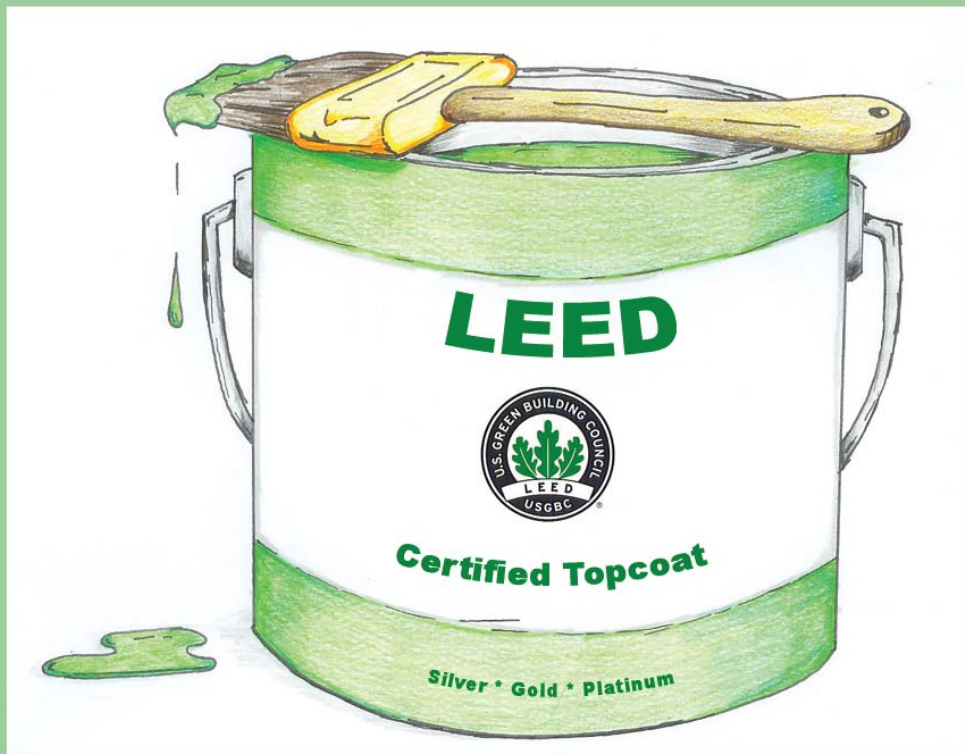
GATEWAY DRUG

JEREMY SMITH

Driving between Moscow and Pullman the road parallels an obvious route, a natural course created by Paradise Creek. This channel carves a passage in the hills between the two cities and creates a green belt in what would otherwise be dry land most of the year. While not the cleanest of water, it still lends itself to a place of beauty. Along the creek, in the area that was formerly a rail road track, man has built a path that can be walked, ran, biked, and purely enjoyed by everyone using it. On this six mile stretch between towns, there are a couple businesses, many fields, and a few homes. For the most part they maintain a pleasant coexistence with the water course, or they are located far enough away that they do not intrude upon the creek's vegetative area. However, a new monster has arrived born of blacktop, built up plot surfaces, and product placement. It blocks the view of the creek, it covers up the green areas with impermeable surfaces, and worse yet it heralds other businesses to do the same.

James Toyota is moving their business from Moscow to a new location on the Paradise Creek. Currently the site is an unsightly pile of graded crushed rock and a half finished office and sales building. On its south side, the property borders the pedestrian path that runs the length of the creek. Ironically, the purpose of this business is to sell cars. The car, in quantity of the US scale, is one of the largest contributors of anthropogenic greenhouse gasses in the air. In essence, a place where man has successfully promoted and reestablished nature is now being used to house the tools of the apocalypse. It is not just the selling of fossil fuel consuming vehicles that has earned this business the seal of disapproval; it is their location, their lack of support in the local economy, and their apparent disregard for all things not monetary in origin.

My wife and I, riding our bikes on Paradise Creek Path, recently went by James Toyota's new location. What did we see? Used building materials and construction refuse strewn about the entire site. Waste insulation had blown not only down to the path, but across it toward Paradise Creek where it had been stopped by an outcropping of cat tails and wild grasses. Trucks, leaking oil, were parked where ever the contractor felt appropriate. If the owner doesn't care enough about what practices are used by the construction crew, it can only lead one to speculate what the plan is for pollutants coming off the impermeable surfaces of the car lot once finished. There are no bio-swales or retention ponds to separate and filter the water coming from the James Toyota site as it travels toward Paradise Creek. Why was the environment not a consideration when this building was designed? The answer appears to be: build it fast, cheap, and get to making money as soon as possible, the environment be damned.

Their actions also point toward the same attitude when it concerns local economy. James Toyota's new location is now out of Moscow city limits. In fact, it is no longer even in the state of Idaho. Property taxes generated by the business will go to Whitman County, not the city of Moscow. Taxes generated by employee wages will continue to go to the state of Idaho, if they live in-state, but the business itself will pay taxes to Washington, which will never reach Moscow. They are abandoning a leased lot in Moscow, thus providing less income to another Moscow business. By moving their location out of town, they are still trying to maintain Moscow citizen buyer base, but they have removed themselves from actually aiding the community economically and any responsibility therein. They want our business, but they don't want help the city prosper. They did not choose a site that offers any kind of monetary exchange that could directly benefit the people they claim

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Jeremy Smith

to serve. James Toyota built on that site because they wanted their building to be visible, not the creek, not the greenery or the pathway, just their business and the products they sell.

When I contacted them to speak about their site and their plans they seemed unwilling to reveal information; in fact, I am still waiting to hear back from them. It appears that concerned citizens do not warrant any explanation from the business owners and operators of James Toyota. We are merely a tool for their bottom dollar, not members of their community.

The understanding then is this: why support their business by purchasing a vehicle from them, if they are not going to reciprocate and support the economy and people of Moscow? They care nothing for the impact of their site on Paradise Creek, and are basically acting as the open gate that encourages all manner of businesses move from Moscow to Washington. No good will come of it. Moscow will become a collection of brown fields as more green land is consumed and wasted along the Paradise Creek by moving businesses. A drive from Moscow to Pullman will be drive down a corridor of billboards, ugly buildings, and in-your-face business plans. The natural corridor will be redefined as a rural street.
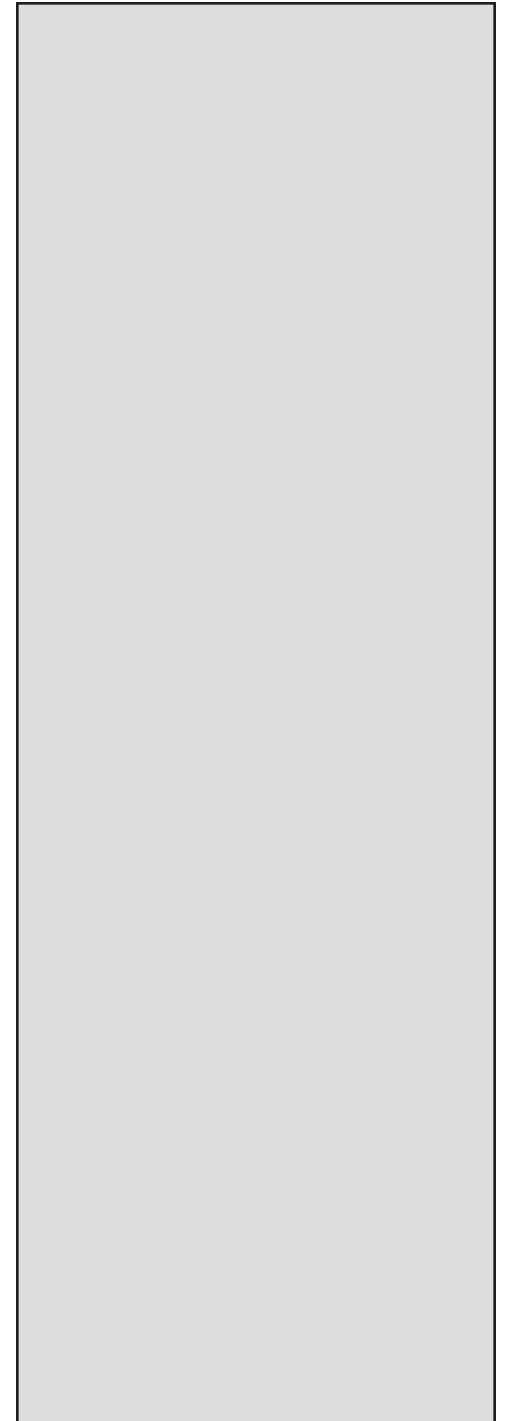
GOT DIRTY COAL? GET CLEANING!

JORDAN CASH

Everyone's heard about clean coal. It's on the TV, its on the news, the presidential candidates seem to talk about it more and more as they talk more and more. It seems that the solution to the environmental crisis is well within our grasp; all we have to do is clean the coal before we burn it to create the life-sustaining juice we call electricity. It's that easy…… Right?

Wrong. "Clean" coal is a myth. Some people argue that we have the technology to stop the harmful carbon emitted by the factories that burn coal and contain it underground, delaying its release into the atmosphere. Technically this is true, but this only transfers pollutants from one waste stream to another; we can stuff the carbon in the earth as much as we want, but the truth is that it won't simply disappear. The problems lie in the cost of this carbon retention and the act of mining the coal itself.

One of the leading institutions against this Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) is Greenpeace. In a document titled False Hope: Why Carbon Capture and Storage Won't Save the Environment, Greenpeace outlines the reasons why this isn't feasible in our day and age. One of the biggest problems brought to light in this document is the fact that we are simply too late to begin implementing CCS technologies and retrofitting existing coal plants. Environmental scientists agree that the steps that need to happen to mitigate our impact on the environment should be happening now. The technologies for CCS would not be implemented on power plants until the year 2030. By this time it would be much too late for us and for our Earth. CCS is basically used as an excuse for power companies to push ahead and keep building more coal-fired plants that they deem 'capture ready'. The idea here is that after the power plant is built, the means would exist for it to be retrofitted to be able to capture the carbon emissions "when the necessary regulatory or economic drivers are in place". Uh, is it me or does this sound pretty vague? Yup. It's vague for a reason. Under the idea of being "capture ready", pretty much any power plant could fall into this category, which is a clever way of sweeping it under the rug to be forgotten.

Even if CCS technologies were feasible and did actually do the job they promise, that wouldn't change the fact that the act of mining for coal is destructive to nature and to the workers doing the mining. Jeff Biggers, author of "The United States of Appalachia: How Southern Mountaineers Brought Independence, Culture and Enlightenment to America", wrote an article in the Washington Post in which he interviewed an old coal miner. According to this article, more than 104,000 miners have died in coal mines since 1900, with twice that number having died from black lung disease. Pollutants such as mercury leak into the air and our water table. In the areas of the Appalachian mountains, an estimated 750,000 to 1 million acres of hardwood forests, not to mention 470 mountains and their surrounding communities, an area roughly the size of Delaware, has been erased in the name of coal mining.

And the problem still remains: the general public seems to think that it is an issue when in fact it's basically impossible to achieve 'clean coal'. Both John McCain and Barack Obama, along with their running mates, mention it in their addresses to the public and each other. This worries me. Are they just saying what we want to hear (which is typical of politicians)? Or do they actually believe that 'clean' coal can be achieved? I believe that the true underlying problem is that the general public lacks awareness of the issue. I challenge you, American public, to go out and learn as much as you can about the issue. Form your own opinions, speak with your own voice, whatever it is, just don't buy into this oxymoronic idea of 'clean coal'. The idea may sound legitimate on paper, but what it all comes down to is one simple fact: it will remain a nice-sounding idea and that is it.

Further reading: Free download of False Hope: Why Carbon Capture and Storage Won't Save the Environment found at: http://www.greenpeace.org/raw/content/australia/resources/reports/climate-change/false-hope-why-carbon-capture.pdf

"CARBON IS AN ATOM… HOW CAN IT HAVE A FOOTPRINT?"

REVITALIZE BEFORE WE SUSTAIN

KEVIN THIBAULT

A rural city is something unique, the intersection of an agrarian past and an urban forefront. Many rural cities have phased through times of success, vacancy, and decay. There are several of these cities spread throughout the western United States and Twin Falls, Idaho is a perfect example of one. These cities have lost their core and in order to move forward and make them more sustainable we must first revitalize their organs. Ask yourself, is it plausible to continue building on greenfields or should we replenish life where it once was?

Located in Southern Idaho, Twin Falls is a fertile river valley that historically has been used for farming and ranching. With the growth of the community and an ever struggling way of life, the economy has evolved into a more developed system. The small city has developed without an identity. Twin Falls is no longer solely known as an agriculture area, yet it has failed to develop another supportive market which it can claim as its catalyst. Twin Falls is the epicenter of what is known as the Magic Valley. It currently has a population of nearly 50,000 people. The city, like most in America, suffers from suburban sprawl. It offers many different services to the outlying towns, but lacks an identity in a larger regional context.

For the last 65 years people have been moving from the downtown area and into the "picturesque" farm house with a green yard and picket fence. This scenario has become a problem nationwide; it has made our cities hollow and led to the abuse of fossil fuels. It has stolen the culture from the downtown areas and spread it so thin that neighbors rarely speak or intermingle with one another in their "cookie cutter" subdivisions.

Ignoring the problem further, citizens are moving into these subdivisions from other towns, regions, or states and they are focused on one thing… financial gain! Perhaps this is a larger societal issue; it seems that we have surely crossed a bridge into a time where people cannot relate to tradition and historical value. The people of Twin Falls seem to be so entranced in their everyday lives that they fail to remember how the area was originally founded and what principles have shaped it.

In the end, large cities have a way of surviving and small towns are simply small towns. I would argue, the cities that have from 25,000 -100,000 people are those which are vulnerable to suburban sprawl. As a designer, I believe these types of communities are going to be the root of some great design problems. As architects and professionals we face the challenge of working with these communities to develop a sense of place by increasing the density and diversifying the city without neglecting history and culture. We must understand this challenge as a struggle for a community, not just for a building. We must strive to revitalize the sustainability of a city in respect to its environment, economy, and culture. The time has come, once again, for architects to serve not only individuals but communities as well.

FILLING A GAP

TERESA HEITMANN

The rural Idaho city of Moscow is growing, but in all the wrong ways. Low-density single-family housing and high-density student housing developments are extending to the far corners of the city boundaries, in the form of subdivisions or large apartment complexes. Rolling hills, which were once farmed, are being capped with high-end homes that overlook "economy housing" – in our case, older apartment complexes and mobile home villages. The housing market has an abundance of homes for sale; however, the prices are too high for the average, working citizen. Ironically, the people who keep this city running struggle to find adequate housing. The new "affordable" housing projects being built are looking at new ways to lower the cost of housing, but are not targeting the income group most in need of affordable home ownership. Moscow needs housing that is affordable to the middle-class working family, and that remains affordable, even after the first buy-and-sell cycle.

Being a college town, Moscow has a plethora of rentals available. Unfortunately, student residents are often short-term and seasonal and contribute minimally, if at all, to the local economy during the summer months. What about the long-term residents who wholeheartedly participate in the community thru working, volunteering, voting, and raising children who attend the schools? Where is the housing for a family who wishes to own their home but doesn't make more than the regional median income? It is very limited. Renting a home works for a temporary situation; however, in the long term, owning a home gives the sense of belonging, ownership, and pride in the city you live in. If the residents of Moscow have this sense of belonging, they will be more likely to settle in and invest in the community. It makes sense, then, for the city to invest in its people. It is time to be proactive and fill the gap in the housing market.

I am an example of what Moscow's housing market has created. My husband and I live in Viola, a small town north of Moscow. It really isn't a town at all, except by name and zip code. The only business is a post office, which employs two people. So, like our neighbors, we commute into Moscow each morning to be employees, students, and consumers. Viola is a peaceful place to sleep, but it lacks consumer amenities and the ability to economically support its residents. Moscow is the city we support and depend on; however, when we were looking for a home to buy, there were only mobile homes in our price range. The only permanent housing available to us, in our current financial state, was in Genesee, Viola, Potlatch, Palouse, Troy, and Deary. These towns are full of people who contribute to Moscow but cannot afford to live there. If the commuters are willing to drive back and forth daily -in good weather and bad - to hold a job, participate in the community, and support the local businesses, shouldn't Moscow make an effort to provide affordable accommodations for them within the city?

I would argue that sustainable design also covers this facet of community planning – of providing housing for those who sustain the community and culture of a city. Finding a solution would decrease the amount of commuting from outlying towns, possibly infill underused sites within the city limit, and keep money circulating in local businesses.