

PARTICIPATORY DESIGN

BEYOND CONFLICT IN PARTICIPATORY COMMUNITY RESEARCH & DESIGN

THEMATIC ABSTRACTS

Participatory Design

Organizer: Manzo, Lynne (University of Washington). Panelists: Owens, Patsy Eubanks (University of California – Davis, CA); Rottle, Nancy (University of Washington, WA); Rula Awwad-Rafferty (University of Idaho); and Paxson, Lynn (University of Iowa, IA) [Workshop/Working Group]

This workshop will explore whether, how, and in what contexts participatory research and design strategies may be employed for positive community change. In particular we will examine the dynamics, strengths and unique dilemmas of citizen participation in a multicultural context. In what ways is participation used and how can community involvement facilitate community development efforts? How can we employ democratic processes and manage the conflicts that they may create? These questions can be even more pressing in the educational context, as community design studios and grounded action research projects must negotiate competing requirements, timeframes and overlapping but distinct purposes. Consequently, this workshop will consider the pedagogy of community research and design, and how they involve, create and transcend community politics and conflict. Panelists will discuss the dynamics of participation within their own projects, but the workshop aims to foster active participation and discussion by all attendees. Manzo will address the unique challenges and benefits of working with communities that are geographically and/or culturally distant from students' own through discussion of two projects in the Pacific Northwest. One project focused on neighborhood revitalization efforts in Seattle's Chinatown-International District, and the other focused on the development of affordable housing for Latino farmworkers in the Yakima Valley of Washington State. Together, these projects illustrate the complexities of participatory research and design

in a multicultural context, and the challenges of both university-community collaborations and research-design integration. Owens will discuss the redesign of a community park in a culturally diverse neighborhood in Davis, California. As a collaborative effort among the UC-Davis landscape architecture program, local high school students, a design office and the Parks Department, this project illustrates how a design studio can help introduce professionals to a community and introduce the community to a design project. Both university and high school students provided critical information to the consultants that led to a clearer understanding of community concerns and built trust in the consultants' and park officials' design objectives. Rottle will reflect on an interdisciplinary planning studio conducted through the University of Washington, which helped a community in Alaska to redefine its concerns and to find solutions that transcended polarized ideologies. While the "client" asked students to use traditional planning tools to manage growth pressures, in participatory workshops the class heard community concerns about threats to the town's historical identity, agricultural lands, and perceived property rights. The students' outsider status enabled them to propose innovative, conciliatory solutions that residents have embraced, potentially propelling the community beyond conflict. Awwad-Rafferty will highlight a community design and service studio project that became the catalyst for integration of instruction, scholarship, and outreach partnership between Shoshone Bannock tribes and the University of Idaho. The dynamic and powerful nature of this project afforded a canvas for alternative points of view, conflict, innovation, and application of ethics, paradigms, and processes. The research and design of a place to honor veterans and tribes has empowered both students and tribes, and facilitated culturally based problem solving and communication that followed on Shoshone traditions of "learning" and "teaching." Paxson will be the session discussant.