

legal context of other societies. There are, however, also examples drawn from countries whose constitutions, legal systems, and the rights of individuals and communities within them are unknown to me. Cases that fall into this category have been covered because they illustrate a specific procedure that is common to all urban design.

Developing the Argument

The book is divided into four parts. The first part, ‘The nature of urban design and urban designing’, is concerned with defining the nature of urban design as a professional activity. The argument is that urban design deals with enhancing the qualities of the public realm of cities and other urban places. In so doing, it deals with what actually constitutes the public realm and with the role of conflicting public and private interests in shaping it.

It is more important to think of differences amongst urban design projects not in the usual way in terms of the nature of products (new towns, urban renewal, squares, etc.), but in terms of the differences amongst four ways of carrying out a project. In particular, a distinction, as explained in Chapters 2 and 3, is drawn amongst ‘total urban design’ and ‘all-of-a-piece urban design’, ‘piece-by-piece urban design’ and ‘plug-in urban design’. The typology developed in the first part of the book is based on these differences.

The second part of the book, ‘The traditional design professions: their products and urban design’, argues that the design fields tend to look at urban design in terms of product types particular to each. City, or town, planning tends to look at urban design as the distribution of land uses in relationship to transportation systems although this view varies from country to country. In some countries urban design is city planning and to some people within all countries city planning is synonymous with urban design. Landscape architecture tends to look at urban design as the design of the horizontal plane between buildings: streets, parks and squares. Architecture, in contrast, tends to consider urban design to be the design of buildings in context and/or the design of building complexes. The argument in this book is that urban design while recognizing these views encompasses much more.

The heart of urban design work is described in the third part of the book titled, unimaginatively, ‘The core of urban design work: procedures and products’. The four chapters outlining the range of types act as a defence, or a demonstration, of the typology proposed here. The goal is not only to show how the typology frames the field of urban design but also to illustrate the examples of urban design work that can be used as precedents (or should not be used as precedents) for urban design projects of specific types in the future. Some of the examples have already served as precedents for later urban design projects.

The final part of the book, ‘The future of urban design’ is, perhaps, the most important. It addresses a series of questions: ‘What can we learn from the case