

the satisfaction of all the mutually ignorant and faintly hostile actors who are involved in the form-production process. We do not always find property developers making spectacularly low profits. Nor are our prisons or psychiatric hospitals full of architects who have blown up their buildings or had nervous breakdowns. Indeed, property developers sometimes make very handsome profits, and it seems that these are not necessarily achieved at the cost of unbearable angst amongst the architects involved. Quite the contrary: the evidence suggests that architects on the whole enjoy their work. In Britain, for example, they are willing to undergo a seven-year period of professional training, in order to join one of the worst-paid and least-respected professions in the country.

The compensation is a high level of job-satisfaction; and when we ask where this comes from, we find that it stems from the 'creative design' aspect of the work. Studying 600 German architects in 1965, for example, Bolte and Richter found that the statement 'my chosen profession should give me the opportunity to do creative work' was chosen as the most important of a number of alternative views by 66 per cent of the architects involved;²³ whilst Salaman – questioning 52 London architects in 1970 – found that for 63 per cent of them 'creativity plus design enjoyment' gave the major part of their work satisfaction.²⁴ If anything, this orientation may be strengthening. In her 1979 study of over 400 architects in 152 Manhattan firms, for example, the sociologist Judith Blau found that 'of the architects interviewed 98 per cent mentioned creativity as the distinctive feature of architecture when compared to other professions'.²⁵

On the face of it, all this is hard to understand. Patrons cannot themselves design, and have difficulty in controlling the efforts of those who can. And yet, in most instances, their complex interests seem to be satisfied, at least to an extent they can live with, through the creative efforts of architects and other professional advisers who, when not actively hostile to those interests, are primarily concerned with other issues altogether. In reaching this point, we have gone as far as the various strands of the 'problematic of action' can take us. We have seen that though human action is central to the form-production process, we cannot understand that process entirely as the outcome of the actions of heroic individuals, nor as the result of orders handed down from masters to servants, nor through the co-ordinating effects of market signals. Far more convincing is the more complex understanding offered

by the 'battlefield' problematic, in which actors deploy their resources of economic or political power, valued knowledge or cultural capital, in more or less adroit ways, in attempts to make things happen as they want.

Even this more sophisticated problematic, however, has only taken us so far. Eventually it has left us with an apparent paradox: it seems as though something 'above' all the various actors must be co-ordinating their actions. But . . . it is not plausible to imagine that built form is determined by factors 'outside' human action. How can individual actions be co-ordinated by something which is not outside themselves? If we are to move forward, that is the question which must be addressed.

Notes

1. Rand, A., *The Fountainhead*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1943.
2. Rand, A., *The Fountainhead*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1994 (1943).
3. For discussion see Cadman, D. and Austin Crowe, L., *Property Development*, London, Spon, 1978.
4. Rand, A., *The Fountainhead*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1994 (1943), 714.
5. Phillippo, G., *The Professional Guide to Real Estate Development*, New York, Dow Jones, 1976, 87, cited in Rabinowitz, H., 'The Developer's Vernacular: The Owner's Influence on Building Design', *Journal of Architectural and Planning Research*, Vol. 13, No. 1, 1996, 36.
6. Morton, R., 'Professional Ideologies and the Quality of the British Environment', in *Proceedings of the Bartlett International Summer School*, London, London University, 1992, 10.
7. MacKinnon, D., 'The Nature and Nurture of Creative Talent', *American Psychologist*, 7/171, 1962.
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9. Hershberger, R.C., 'A study of meaning in architecture', in Sanoff, H. and Cohn, S. (eds), *Proceedings of the First Annual EDRA Conference*, Raleigh, North Carolina State University, 1969; Devlin, K., 'An Examination of Architectural Interpretation: Architects Versus Non-Architects' *Journal of Architectural and Planning Research*, 7 (3), 235–44, 1990; Groat, L., 'Meaning in Post-Modern Architecture: An Examination Using the Methodological Sorting Task', *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 2 (1), 3–22, 1982.
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11. Morton, R., 'Professional Ideologies and the Quality of the British Environment', in *Proceedings of the Bartlett International Summer School*, London, London University, 1992, 11.
12. Rueschemeyer, D., *Power and the Division of Labour*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1986, 108.