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Feminist Practices: Interdisciplinary Approaches To Women In Architecture



Synopsis

Women continue to be extremely under-represented in the architectural profession. Despite equal numbers of male and female students entering architectural studies, there is at least 17-25% attrition of female students and not all remaining become practicing architects. In both the academic and the professional fields of architecture, positions of power and authority are almost entirely male, and as such, the profession is defined by a heterosexual, Eurasian male perspective. This book argues that it is vital for all architectural students and practitioners to be exposed to a diversity of contemporary architectural practices, as this might provide a first step into broadening awareness and transforming architectural engagement. It considers the relationships between feminist methodologies and the various approaches toward design and their impact upon our understanding and relationship to the built environment. In doing so, this collection challenges two conventional ideas: firstly, the definition of architecture and secondly, what constitutes a feminist practice. This collection of up-and-coming female architects and designers use a wide range of local and global examples of their work to question different aspects of these two conventional ideas. While focusing on feminist perspectives, the book offers insights into many different issues, concerns and interpretations of architecture, proposing through these types of engagement, architecture can become more culturally, politically and environmentally relevant. This 'next generation' of architects claim feminism as their own and through doing so, help define what feminism means and how it is evolving in the 21st century.

Book Information

Paperback: 400 pages

Publisher: Routledge; 1 edition (October 12, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1138270725

ISBN-13: 978-1138270725

Product Dimensions: 7.7 x 1.2 x 9.7 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.4 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

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Customer Reviews

'The essays in *Feminist Practices: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Women in Architecture* illuminate the variety of contemporary design and critical responses inspired by feminism(s) and acknowledge the spatial component of all social relationships. This way, the very definition of architecture is enriched and expanded beyond the question of professional advancement for women in the design disciplines.' Susana Torre, architect and editor/curator of *Women in American Architecture. A Historic and Contemporary Perspective* 'Feminist Practices provides a welcome relief to the hegemony in architectural discourse. From personal investigations of the body in space, to explorations of the social, political, cultural context of design, this provocative book reveals the benefits of feminist analyses to both understand and guide the design of the built environment. Power dynamics in architectural practice, theory and criticism are revealed. Serious and carefully researched, diverse and ever-changing models are proposed in lieu of absolute assertions. And evocative exhibit installations and research projects give voice to the underrepresented and disempowered, whether by gender, class and/or race.' Roberta M. Feldman, co-author with Susan Stall of *The Dignity of Resistance: Women Residents' Activism in Chicago Public Housing*, and Founding Director of the University of Illinois' City Design Center, USA. 'Feminist Practices: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Women in Architecture explores what it means to employ feminism in design, but can the exposed design methods really be considered radical? Improvised, not-for-profit, tactical, self-reflexive, playful, ephemeral, collaborative, non-Cartesian, instinctive, interdisciplinary, embodied: just a few of the terms describing Feminist Practices excerpted from the collection of articles that make up Lori A Brown's edited volume of the same title.' --The Architectural Review

Lori A. Brown, Associate Professor, School of Architecture , Syracuse University, USA

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