THE WALLS WE PUT UP - LONELINESS AND BELONGING IN URBAN CO-LIVING

Richard Rozewski
Virginia Commonwealth University

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THE WALLS WE PUT UP

LONELINESS AND BELONGING IN URBAN CO-LIVING

RICHARD ROZEWSKI, 2019
What should young people do with their lives today? Many things, obviously. But the most daring thing is to create stable communities in which the terrible disease of loneliness can be cured.

- Kurt Vonnegut
ABSTRACT

Concurrent issues of social isolation and loneliness have long been recognized as problems that affect seniors but it is also being proven to affect young people as well, specifically with the rise of new technologies and a perception of connectedness. Co-living provides one alternative design solution to traditional housing models which can unlock a range of social benefits.

MOTIVATION

Loneliness is an unfortunate reality of modern life and it is something that most people experience at least once in their life (Cacioppo & Patrick, 2008). A study carried out by Berguno, Leroux McAinsh, Shaikh (2004), showed that 80% of young people and over 40% of adults over the age of 65 experienced loneliness in the course of life. Good housing plays an important role in building community and strengthening social interaction and bonding. Co-living is a residential structure that accommodates three or more biologically unrelated people (Bothell, 2015; Tummers, 2015). It is commonly contained within a single dwelling, sub-divided into a combination of public and private spaces (Scott-Hanson & Scott-Hanson, 2005). Co-housing, community living, or co-living in particular may be one possible solution for the endemic loneliness and social isolation challenges that we face.

PROBLEM

In many American cities, traditional housing forms are not meeting those needs and as our population increases, it is crucial to find replicable and sustainable methods of creating an inclusive urban fabric that meets the social and physical needs of all inhabitants (Darling, 2017). It is increasingly clear that there is a lack of understanding of the realities of co-living spaces and that this limits the application of the co-living model. While co-housing has traditionally been established in rural or suburban contexts, there are benefits to urban co-living (Kim, 2017). To experience the full ecological, economical and most importantly social benefits of urban co-living, research must be performed to understand how residents share, experience, and inhabit space.

METHODS

This project will respond by applying design thinking, a human centered design approach, and collaborative exploration methods to produce case studies for an urban co-living development in the US. Workshops, observations, literature reviews, and interviews will build a foundation of contemporary knowledge. Key themes identified in the literature on social isolation and loneliness will be used to inform a discussion on the potential for housing to help alleviate these problems. There will also be a rigorous case study analysis of recent precedents emerging in the field of collective housing.

PRELIMINARY RESULTS

The design of a flexible living space that explores isolation and connection at the scale of the individual and the collective in an existing building is an overarching goal of the design. It offers future users and designers the opportunity to learn and experiment towards a better understanding of how residents use space as well as examining loneliness and isolation as it relates to a design solution.

CONCLUSION

The success of the project, and its theoretical outcome, will show the role design can play in contemporary research, positive change, and sustainable development. The result will have implications for co-living providers, researchers, and designers supporting sustainable lifestyle alternatives.
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Q: Reflect on why you are studying design…. 
A: I am interested in the intersections of design, environmental psychology, social impact, and historical context. I have taken steps to educate myself on the history of art and architecture while trying to understand the broader context of social justice and activism that impact the human experience in the built environment and beyond. As a formative experience, I remember visiting construction sites with my grandfather and father who were masons in Cleveland, Ohio. Ever since, I have been fascinated by the construction of space, and how we as individuals relate to our environment and each other.

Q: What do you believe is important in design? Why?
A: It’s not purely aesthetic, nor wholly analytical and functional. When considering the design of projects, you must think about how everything fits together in harmony - some would call this a holistic approach, but it’s really the only practical way to approach design problems, as I see it.

Q: What ethics should a designer have? Why?
A: Design has a huge influence on how people behave and live their lives. As designers, we are trained to solve problems and make people’s lives better. Rarely do we consider what ‘better’ actually is. It is important to understand that what we design is not neutral. In fact design is an inherently ethical activity. That’s why designers should know about ethics and learn to incorporate it in your design work. And for that, you’re in the right place.

Q: What should the ends of design be? Why?
A: From a solely practical perspective, over the last two decades, the construction industry has been subject to dramatic changes, paving the way for a future in which traditional spatial concepts are no longer valid. Now, compost is being used for building materials, crowdfunding and collaborative design have become increasingly popular approaches to architectural projects, there is a focus on the importance of green infrastructure and energy efficiency, and the line between private and public space is becoming increasingly blurred.

Q: What compels you in your pursuits of design? Why?
A: Through an interdisciplinary approach, in my creative research I attempt to integrate design thinking, Queer theory, and methods of visual communication to explore themes of scale, adaptive reuse, material speculation, human centered design, and the philosophies of aesthetics.

1.2 IDEALS:
01. Self-expression
02. Structural, functional and material honesty
03. Nature and organic design value
04. Human Centered Participatory
05. Democratic design
06. Re-use and modification
07. Vernacular / Regional Respect
08. Minimalism
09. Modularity
10. Pushing aesthetic pedagogy

1.2 DESIGNERS AND THEORISTS:
Norman Potter
Marika Shioiri Clark
We Should Do it All
Bjarke Ingels
Robert Venturi
Anthony Vidler
Aaron Betsky
Beatriz Colomina
Eva F. i Gilabert
Jimenez Lai
Teddy Cruz
Jeanne Gang
Rem Koolhaas
Louis Kahn
Alvar Aalto
Oscar Niemeyer
Norman Foster
Gut Gut
PART 1 - RESEARCH

It’s a challenge to develop and design the physical spaces we share. Although there are a variety of projects that demonstrate how we can share spaces better, there is a real need to build capacity and knowledge among professionals in the world of architecture and construction. By sharing the successful examples and showing what is possible by employing visionary thinking and design, it becomes more within reach for communities, architects, developers and planners to bring more projects to life.

At the heart of human-centred and sustainable shared living is design. Although a community is, in a sense, intangible – and can be facilitated through, for example, activities and online platforms – the physical, practical world of spaces and objects is essential. At the end of the day, the practical layout of a home defines how we live. Are we capable of sharing a meal? Are we naturally inclined to meet people or do we have to make an effort? Can a spatial design balance the need for privacy and the desire to socialize?

The built environment can either support or diminish our everyday sense of well-being. Making well-designed spaces can create the framework for a safe, affordable, vibrant, active and healthy community, thus reinforcing the importance of design. How can we bring neighborhoods and buildings into being that are more organic and less machine-like and to what end? In the cases of Songpa Housing in Seoul and R50 in Berlin, people are engaged to finalize parts of the design and construction themselves. This can both reduce construction costs and offer the chance to creatively customize the design for sharing (Szylvian, 2016).

However, the amount of shared-living projects being realized is still very limited in comparison with “standard” housing models. The current market situation does not produce innovation at scale in the built environment. There is a need to expand the number of architecture and construction professionals who have the knowledge and experience to address this need (Szylvian, 2016).

The result of the last decades’ predominant mode of planning and market-driven developments are generic buildings and urban areas, fit for the (existing) mass market of “standard families” and commercial activities. Many of these have become rather sterile environments, where people are not thriving and communities fail to form.

Not only do we see growing concerns about loneliness and mental health, we are also witnessing an increasing lack of local connectivity and community. Though architecture alone cannot remedy all of society’s pathologies, the design of our everyday surroundings can have a great impact.

A well-designed, inspiring space is proven to encourage behaviors, where residents are more considerate and committed to their surroundings and the people they share it with. Community living, or co-living in particular may be one possible solution for the endemic loneliness and social isolation challenges that we face.
PART 1 - LONELINESS AND BELONGING

The story about loneliness is one we think we know. It revolves around a caricature - older people, often widowed in retirement, often living in houses that were once family homes, and in communities that were once close-knitted where neighborliness is in steady decline. It’s a powerful story – partly because it’s one we fear for ourselves. But it’s not the whole story.

Nationally, it is young people who are more likely to say they are lonely than older people. In many parts of the country the housing market leaves most young adults with limited choices in making a home. As shared homes are losing their living rooms, and prices send millennials to the cheaper and sleepier suburbs, the social life of the city is not what it once was [Ruiu, 2016].

The popular image of the millennial generation is that they are incessantly sociable - Instagramming pictures of their avocado-fueled brunches to their friends. But the visibility of sociability can create a taboo around loneliness. Ipsos Mori data shows 27% of millennials in NYC say they would be embarrassed to admit to feeling lonely – compared to 12% of over 55s, while 68% of millennials in the Washington, D.C. report they often feel isolated, versus 49% of over 55s (2018).

There have been recently expressed concerns that societies are getting lonelier and that the emphasis placed on individualism within contemporary culture increases people’s sense of insecurity [Hanlon, Carlisle, Hannah, & Lyon, 2012]. This is also related to a more general observation that increased wealth has not brought greater happiness to Western societies, but rather an artificial maintenance of happiness has been achieved through prescription drugs [Layard, 2005; Dworkin, 2007]. Interest in loneliness also stems from its health consequences, which have been compared to the effects of smoking and aging [Hawkley & Cacioppo, 2007]. Loneliness can result in unhealthy behaviors, such as overeating and reliance on alcohol, which cause stress and sleep deprivation and affect the immune and cardiovascular system [Cacioppo & Patrick, 2008; Capiocco et al., 2002].

Two recent studies have reported high, and increasing, levels of loneliness in industrialized countries. A survey by the U.K. Mental Health Foundation (MHF) conducted in 2010 reported that very few U.K. adults were unaffected by loneliness and that the number of people reporting loneliness “often” or “sometimes” was higher among those in their 30s and 40s than among those in their 50s or older. Moreover, nearly half the sample (48%) considered that “society is becoming lonelier in general” [Griffin, 2010]. Similarly, Australian research, using a national survey over a 10-year period, reported that the num
ber of people moving in and out of loneliness had increased over the first decade of the 21st century (Baker, 2012), and that the incidence of episodes of loneliness over time, affecting one-in-three people, was far higher than the prevalence of loneliness at any point in time.

Although the research and policy interest in loneliness among older people continues (Donaldson & Watson, 1996; Cattan, White, Bond, & Learmonth, 2005; Victor & Bowling, 2012; Beaumont, 2013), and there is a growing interest in loneliness among other groups, such as students (Ebesutani et al., 2012; Salami & Bozorgpour, 2012; Binder, Roberts, & Sutcliffe, 2012; Pamukcu & Meydan, 2010) and internet users (Amichai-Hamburger & Ben-Artzi, 2003; Stepanikova, Nie, & Xiaobin, 2010), there has been little research into loneliness among deprived communities, despite evidence that mental health and well-being, variously measured, are worse in poorer populations (McManus, 2011). This may be an important gap given that many of the health consequences of loneliness are also of major concern in deprived areas in particular (Audit Scotland, 2012). Thus, if contextual factors are associated with loneliness among deprived populations, this may be an important addition to our understanding of the constellation of factors that contribute to poor health and unhealthy behaviors in poorer communities.

In their study concerning the question of how the quality of people's neighborhood affect their feelings of loneliness, Prieto-Flores, Fernandez-Mayoralas, Forjaz, Rojo-Perez, and Martinez-Martín (2011) said that "the influence of residential satisfaction on the experience of loneliness has received little attention." This is surprising given the extensive research on the relationships between place and health. Macintyre and others have shown how the characteristics of places can affect both health and health behaviors in several ways: (a) by providing (or not) "opportunity structures" through material infrastructure and resources (Macintyre, Ellaway & Cummins, 2002); (b) through psychosocial characteristics such as area reputations; and (c) through collective social and cultural practices (Macintyre 1997).

Kawachi and Berkman (2003) explain that there are complex interdependencies between compositional and contextual explanations for neighborhood effects on health because the characteristics of individuals and places are partly, and simultaneously, a function of each other; it is, therefore, hard to maintain "that poor people freely choose to behave poorly" ([DePaulo, B. M., 2015]). The same might be said about loneliness, especially if one adopts what Cummins, Curtis, Diez-Roux, and Macintyre (2007) call a "relational perspective" on place and health, not only to examine physical health and health behaviors as they do, but also to consider psychological health.

Examining the evidence around mental health and well-being is useful both because we know that loneliness can contribute to mental health problems such as depression (Olds & Schwartz, 2008) and anxiety (Cacioppo & Patrick, 2008), and because many of the commonly used measures of mental health include questions about social functioning and connections to other people. Thus, the evidence about mental health and well-being may indicate what aspects of the residential environment may also be worth investigating in relation to loneliness.
Living together is about more than inhabiting the same physical space. According to projections of climate change, humans will need everything in our everyday life to be more efficient, and to use our resources more sensitively. In the wake of the global real estate and financial crisis which led to stalling economies and soaring unemployment, a younger generation called, Generation Y (20 to 37 years old) or Millennials, started to look for alternative ways of life based on sharing goods and services. In a generation of 78.6 million, any preference of even a small percentage constitutes a lot of consumers. Generation Y represents the largest source of new demand for rental housing and first-time home purchases.

Our entrenched housing challenges are a big part of the story. It is the generation currently coming to live on their own for the first time who need new answers to old questions. On a typical college graduate salary the affordable options often boil down to a kitchen-in-the-bedroom studio, or having your living companions. No wonder 40% of millennials still live at home (Kim, 2017).

We are sharing more goods and services than ever before and many of us use the sharing economy in our day-to-day lives – from ordering a taxi to finding a room for the night. Subscription models like Spotify, Netflix and SnappCar have also had a massive impact on traditional models of ownership. Instead of owning things, we are now accustomed to subscribing to services that provide us with music, movies and transportation.

Urban life as such is about sharing: we share our streets, restaurants, parks, waste handling and energy systems. But modernist planning, based on industrial production, urban development, infrastructural changes and car transport, has significantly challenged more communal modes of organization. Beyond the practical and economic reasons, the rise of the sharing economy reflects our craving for human connection.

People are brought together through these services, turning digital connections into real meetings and new ways of living together. Although the first phase of the sharing economy might have started to fizzle out, emerging technologies might soon resurrect it in a more radical form. As you can now easily turn your car into a taxi or your house into a hotel, in the future you might be able to turn any type of asset into a productive piece of capital. Considering the sharing economy’s predicted growth, and the technological advances influencing behavior among young people (where many now value experiences over ownership), the sharing economy could lead to a drastically different housing market.
Shared living is by no means a new phenomenon; it has been practiced across different cultures throughout history. The single-family one-unit home is a fairly recent phenomenon. Throughout history humans have lived collectively for many reasons and purposes. The American boarding houses of the 19th and 20th centuries were a transitory step between family life and independence. In Japan, the sharing of sanitary facilities has been practiced since the beginning of the 17th century when small-scale, densely populated, mixed-use districts were the center of urban life. Medieval people did not have designated rooms for sleeping, just a single living space for all. Of course, they put up with a lack of privacy because of a lack of alternatives and a need to preserve vital resources. We saw the re-emergence of collective and communal living in the 1960s and 1970s as a way to upend traditional family roles and break with convention (DePaulo, B. M., 2015).

Tens of thousands of years ago, all living was communal, but through the ages, people have been looking for ways to share houses and communities, responding to the societal challenges and needs of the time. It is only relatively recently that we have moved away from communal living. In the last 200 years we have seen new ways of co-housing emerge, from the 19th-century boarding houses to the Kibbutz movement and the more recent co-housing movement of the 1960s. Today, a new co-living movement is developing, with examples of urban cohabitation that are partly driven by rising housing costs in cities, but are also thought to be based around the notion that more sociable living will create better, happier communities (DePaulo, B. M., 2015).

With ordinary people struggling to find affordable accommodation, shared living and co-living spaces have grown in popularity, particularly in cities such as London and New York, where the housing crisis is especially acute. Shared living today comes in many shapes and sizes, from huge collaborative co-housing projects to small-scale community initiatives. The most recent co-living trend started in the US, where startups like WeLive and Common tapped into a market of under-35s who wanted the sociability and convenience of sharing property, but lacked the means to find good-quality accommodation. Many recent projects are associated with businesses such as cafes, shops, shared cars or co-working spaces. The concept has since spread to many other countries (Friedman, 2017).
This way of living together is changing the way we approach housing. It can take many forms, from private homes that share services and facilities to a complex of a few hundred, like The Collective Old Oak in London, which is now the world’s largest co-living facility. Shared living is not only practiced in Europe and the US, but also in Asia. In Guangzhou, China, an old Colgate factory has been transformed into an open, airy and well-lit co-living space operated by YouPlus.

There are two notable trends within shared living. On the one hand, there are standardized commercial projects like WeLive, Common and The Collective, which target young creatives and are generally fairly expensive. They tend to offer an “all inclusive” model that sees residents more as passive receivers of services – closer to the idea of serviced apartments, just with shared amenities. This model can be great for some, but it seems limited to a certain demographic and does not offer any real co-creation, ownership or diversity, in terms of its business model, design or management (Kim, 2017).

On the other hand, there are the more community-organized, bottom-up shared-living concepts, notably found in Northern Europe. These come in many forms and sizes, but are most often initiated by residents themselves. However, the process of bringing a shared-living concept to life is still incredibly complex and hard to realize. Today, most community-initiated shared-living projects fail to materialize because the process can be extremely long and include difficulties such as securing land and financing (Kries, 2017).

While new models of living are seeing a huge interest, shared living is still insignificant compared to standard single-unit housing concepts. Although we see many interesting experiments, ideas and concepts, bottom-up initiatives have difficulty when it comes to replicating or scaling them up. My research suggests that new models of financing, organization and design could potentially drive sharing forward.
Co-living is a residential structure that accommodates three or more biologically unrelated people (Bothell, 2015; Tummers, 2015). It is commonly contained within a single dwelling, sub-divided into a combination of public and private spaces (Scott-Hanson & Scott-Hanson, 2005). Its practice is built around shared values and objectives, and justifies compromises on some personal freedoms, to accommodate the needs of the group and the rights of others. The “co” has been proposed to mean ‘Collaborative’, ‘Communal’ and ‘Collective’, and thus includes a wide variety of practices (Tummers, 2012; Vestbro, 2010).

Co-living can be traced back to the origins of society as a pragmatic response to a need for safety, security, and social opportunity. As a housing typology, it has been able to respond, over centuries, to cultural and community development, changing economic climates, and increasing global mobility. Despite this, with increasing value placed on individual space, property, and ownership, co-living vastly decreased in popularity.

For a brief time in the second half of the 20th century, co-living re-emerged in Denmark and progressed into other western, developed countries, as a way of challenging social norms and actively living out a political agenda (Davis & Warring, 2016). These spaces were created as utopias, built upon the egalitarian principles of sharing, equality, and participation.

These utopian communities referenced the ancient co-living model but with a unique focus on socio-political needs and ecological sustainability. In Sweden, for example, the feminist movement in the 1960s introduced co-living as a way to balance gender roles (Morell & Vestbro, 2011). This period of exploration in housing towards sustainable development is the last successful application of the co-living model (Krokfors, 2012).

Dolores Hayden, in 1979, explored seven utopian communities to observe their use of space and document the built environment. Her findings identified the role of architecture not only as a means to organize physical space, but as way of representing a community attitude and collective identity (Hayden, 1979). At a similar time, Kanter identified physical design as an influential factor in the success and failure of the co-living model in practice (Kanter, 1972).

More recently, Fromm explored the architectural features and planning process of contemporary co-living developments in the USA. His findings showed the value of what he called “intermediate space” in creating active communities (Fromm, 2000). His work, like Kanter’s, found that design plays a vital role in the success, or failure, of a co-living space, and identified a need for further work to understand and map out the realities of resident experience and needs (Fromm, 2000).
PART 1 - CASE STUDIES

01  Carmel Place

02  Songpa Micro Housing

03  Moriyama House

04  r50 Baugruppe
Case Study 1 - CARMEL PLACE

LOCATION - NEW YORK, NY
DENSITY - URBAN
YEAR - 2013
DESIGNER - nARCHITECTS
UNITS - 55
RESIDENTS - 55
TOTAL UNIT AREA - 35,000 sq ft

nARCHITECTS’ design goals for the unit interiors was to achieve a sense of spaciousness, comfort and efficiency, even while shrinking their footprint. To achieve this goal, the architect-developer team increased the size of everything except the floor area: 9’-8” ceilings result in a volume that is close to or exceeds that of a regulation 400sf apartment, which, coupled with the abundant daylight made possible by 8’ tall sliding windows and Juliet balconies.

Each studio residence has been pre-fabricated in the Brooklyn Navy Yard, and assembled on site. The efficiently designed studios include over nine foot ceiling heights, floor-to-ceiling windows, Juliette balconies, and ample storage. Tasteful finishes are complimented by Italian cabinetry, stainless steel appliances, and Hansgrohe fixtures.

Extra storage space is located in the added height above the bathrooms. nARCHITECTS also worked with Resource Furniture to source flexible built-in furnishings that integrate storage, couch and bed into the layout of almost half of the units. The building’s five basic micro-unit types vary in size and configuration, thereby broadening the spectrum of choice for households.
In addition to being the first micro-unit apartment building in New York City, Carmel Place is – at the time of writing – the tallest modular building in Manhattan, and one of the first multi-unit Manhattan buildings using modular construction. Construction of Carmel Place consisted of fabrication, transportation and stacking of 65 individual self-supporting steel framed modules; 55 of which serve as residential micro-units, while the remaining 10 serve as the building’s core. The modules were pre-fabricated locally in the Brooklyn Navy Yard at the Capsys factory, while the foundation and ground floor were built on site. The completed modules were then transported over the Manhattan Bridge and stacked on site ready for installation of appliances and interior finishes. Dividing the construction process reduced on-site construction noise and neighborhood disruption, while the controlled environment of the factory allowed the team to control quality and maintain critical interior dimensions. The project completed construction Spring 2016.
Case Study 2 - Songpa Micro Housing

LOCATION - SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA
DENSITY - URBAN
YEAR - 2014
DESIGNER - JINHEE PARK / SSD
UNITS - 8
RESIDENTS - 11
TOTAL UNIT AREA - 5543 SQ FT

Songpa Micro-Housing provides a new typology that extends the limits of the housing unit to also include semi-public circulation, balconies, and the thickness of walls. Like the ambiguous gel around a tapioca pearl, this ‘tapioca Space’ becomes a soft intersection between public/private and interior/exterior, creating social fabrics between neighbors.

Fourteen ‘unit blocks’ allow residents to either claim a single space, or in the case where a couple or friends desire to do so, recombine the blocks for larger configurations. This flexibility accommodates changing live and work situations allowing residents to occupy the building longer and therefore more sustainably. Further generating the idea of community, exhibition spaces on the ground floor, basement, and second floors are spatially linked to the units as a shared living room. The open ground plan is also used to pull pedestrians in from the street and down a set of auditorium-like steps, connecting city and building residents to the exhibition and cafe spaces below.
The ground floor becomes an open-program area that allows gatherings, expansion of interior spaces, and parking. The micro-theater doubles as an entry to the cafe and toy gallery below grade. Micro-auditorium and cafe: During the day, the micro-auditorium doubles as a living room/cafe that residents and the public can share. The ‘building blocks’ of units can easily be converted to gallery or other uses. Micro-units are easily converted to galleries to allow for innovative curation as well as extend the life of the living units above.

The 2nd floor can be used as apartments: even though there are only 2 unit types, differing relationships can be set up for differing personalities. The 120sf basic unit allows all aspects of daily life through efficient operable walls. Clerestory windows bring in light and perceptually extends the ceiling plane.
Case Study 3 - Moriyama House

LOCATION - TOKYO, JAPAN
DENSITY - URBAN
YEAR - 2005
DESIGNER - SAANA ARCHITECTS
UNITS - 6
RESIDENTS - N/A
TOTAL UNIT AREA - 2830 SQ FT

Designed by (SAANA) Ryue Nishizawa, the Moriyama House is one of a series of residential projects by Nishizawa and sometime partner Kazuyo Sejima in which the building is exploded in some fashion – the volume dispersed into small boxes, pasta squiggles or Tetris blocks – to maximise the surface area and allow the intertwining of inside and outside. The Moriyama House resembles a miniaturised section of the city, the boxes separated by little lanes and courtyards.

In architecture focused on intertwining interior and exterior. These volumes are independent from one another and are scattered across the site creating a series of connected individual gardens, open to the surroundings. Currently the spaces are rented creating a small community of little dwellings.

This group of individually proportioned buildings establishes an independent landscape and atmosphere all its own. In this house, the user is given the freedom to decide which part of this cluster of rooms is to be used as residence or as rental rooms. He may switch among the series of living rooms and dining rooms or use several rooms at a time according to the season or other circumstances.
The main focus is on the people who live in the city, and the spaces are based on the notion of collective forms for them. A basis for collective living (=the reason for the existence of a city) is something for which there is a serious need in contemporary society. The state of the city’s smallest structural units, the houses which support people’s lives in Tokyo, is undoubtedly changing in order to provide the optimum solutions. Through the small, personal matter of dwelling units, the city, with its dual extremes of massive authority and capital, seems to be undergoing a grand reorganization.

Nishizawa wanted “a house with plasticity, not flexibility (as) the ability to change positively and drastically, rather than simply adapting to environmental changes. A house that fuels “the courage to continue the process of destruction and creation, without compromising to the present situation.” As Nishizawa says, “The structures turn into a cluster and a concept of the environment or landscape begins to emerge.” Writing in The Japanese House, Florence Ostende describes the logic of the Moriyama House in its setting: “Undoing the property generated a form of continuity with the urban fabric rather than a division. The house becomes an environment.”
R50 – cohousing is a joint building venture project in Berlin-Kreuzberg. It was initiated by the architects during the course of a concept-based award procedure for building plots and implemented in close cooperation with the clients. The building proposal is founded on a clear urban design position, robust and precisely architectural design, and both a collective and individual process of occupancy. The concept is based on a collective compact and efficient structure with carefully detailed connections on different scales.

It is based on a concrete skeleton with one access and two service cores, an independent timber facade and a suspended steel construction for the all around balconies. A sunken basement level provides access to the building and merges private and public spaces.

Each apartment and additional community spaces were developed by an intensive process of consultations, discussions and design. Based on the structural framework the sizes of apartments could be determined and individual requirements accommodated in the floor plans.
R50 – cohousing is a new model typology for low-cost and affordable housing offering a maximum capacity for adaptation and flexibility throughout its lifetime. Social, cultural, economic and ecological aspects have been considered equally to define a contemporary sustainable approach to urban living. A common standard for fixtures and fittings was developed and defined, which has resulted in a collective approach to interior fittings, the use of materials and some surfaces left unfinished, while allowing individual layouts of the apartments. This kind of structured yet open design process has not only allowed for extensive participation, self-directed design and self-building, but has also led to mutual agreement on the type, location, size and design of spaces shared by residents. This includes the generous urban garden, which naturally blends into the landscape of the surrounding 1960s residential neighborhood, an access ramp leading to a covered area in front of the basement, a laundry, a workshop and a roof terrace with a summer kitchen and a winter garden. The all-around balconies accompany the bright interior spaces and connect the apartments on each floor.
PART 2 - SITE ANALYSIS

KEY PLAN

LEGEND
1 - Site, 923 W Franklin St
2 - VCU Kearney House
3 - VCU Crenshaw House
4 - VCU Bowe House
5 - VCU Raleigh Building
6 - Private Residence
7 - Private Residence
8 - Private Residence
9 - Private Residence
10 - VCU Pollak Building
PART 2 - SITE ANALYSIS

EXISTING PATHS

EXISTING AXIS'
PART 2 - SITE ANALYSIS

SOLAR PATH

SOUND
Building Exterior Photo Collage Looking North on Franklin St.
In 1817, the Fan was plotted as the village of Sydney on land formerly owned by William Byrd II. Primary development of the Fan occurred after the Civil War through about 1920. Streetcar lines leading from downtown influenced development; the nation’s first electric streetcar system was inaugurated in Richmond in 1888. As development increased from downtown at the turn of the 20th century, Franklin street became a fashionable “West End” address (Culhane, 1997).

A desire for a West End address drove rapid real estate development of the area, changing the area from rural tobacco fields in 1880 to being almost fully developed land by the 1920s. As development accelerated, the University of Richmond (then located on Lombardy Street) was moved west to a more rural location (its present Westhampton location). During the Great Depression, many of the single-family homes in the area were converted to apartments. The term “the Fan” was coined in the mid 20th century by a Richmond Times Dispatch editorial, as the appellation “West End” no longer applied (Culhane, 1997).

The Fan is a district of Richmond, Virginia, so named because of the “fan” shape of the array of streets that extend west from Belvidere Street, on the eastern edge of Monroe Park, westward to the Boulevard. However, the streets rapidly resemble a grid after they go through what is now Virginia Commonwealth University. The Fan is one of the easterly points of the city’s West End section, and is bordered to the north by Broad Street and to the south by VA 195, although the Fan District Association considers the southern border to be the properties abutting the south side of Main Street.
The western side is sometimes called the Upper Fan and the eastern side the Lower Fan, though confusingly the Uptown district is located near VCU in the Lower Fan. Many cafes and locally owned restaurants are located here, as well as historic Monument Avenue, a boulevard featuring enormous equine statuary of Civil War Confederate generals and a statue of tennis icon Arthur Ashe (Culhane, 1997).

Following a succession of owners, an architecture museum, the Virginia Center for Architecture, took occupancy in 2005 of Branch House on Monument Avenue, a residence designed in the Tudor style by the firm of John Russell Pope in 1914. The Fan is often incorrectly described as significant for having one of the longest intact stretches of Victorian architecture in the United States, but most of it was actually built after the end of the Victorian era and is arguably more Edwardian and Revival in style. Almost all of the housing stock was constructed in the first decades of the twentieth century and exhibits the pared back victorianism of Edwardian architecture. Colonial Revival and American Craftsman architecture is common as well, with Revival architectural types arguably the most common (as was common to the time period) Revivalism (architecture) (Culhane, 1997).
1909 drawings for the Berkeley Apartments indicate that the original building was only to rise three stories in keeping with the scale of its immediate neighbors. (It is not yet known when or why the plans were modified.) As it was built, the three bay wide, brick Colonial Revival building at 923 West Franklin Street rises five stories at the corner of Franklin and Harrison (Culhane, 1997).

The Berkeley Apartments was the fourth apartment house on West Franklin, following the much larger Chesterfield (901 West Franklin Street; Muhlenberg Brothers with Noland and Baskervill, 1902), Raleigh (1001 West Franklin Street; Aubrey Chesterman, 1907) and Gresham Court Apartments (1030 West Franklin Street; Carneal & Johnston Architects, 1909).

The rusticated first floor is capped with a molded brick belt course, above which rises three floors accented with brick quoins; another belt course runs between the fourth and fifth floors. The 12/1 hung windows are surmounted by keystoned limestone jack arches, and the entablature consists of a dentil frieze and modillion cornice. The portico, with its full entablature and dentil cornice, is supported by four ionic columns and fluted pilasters; A balustrade atop the portico is fashioned out of overlapping circles and square recessed-panel supports. Other notable exterior features are the wrought iron balconies on the west side of the building.

The interior of the building has been entirely “modernized” and retains none of its original character. There are remnants of pilasters in the entry hall, but the ceilings have been lowered cutting off the segmental arches that would have accompanied them. The old elevator cage also remains in its shaft, though it has been welded shut as a precautionary measure.
PART 2 - EXISTING CONDITIONS

The building currently serves as VCU as Scherer Hall houses the academic units of the L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs as well as the VCU Center for Public Policy.

The property class is B-General Office and the Zoning District is classified as R-73 Residential Multi Family. The parcel is .1112 acres or 4,875 square feet. The City of Richmond currently says that the building is in “normal” condition for its age (Richmond.gov).

The majority of the building is office space with lobby and corridor spaces, a break room, conference rooms. Mechanical rooms with air handlers exist on all three floors and on the roof and on the south side of the building.

The following pages document the various features, exterior, views and modernization of the interior of the building.
PART 2 - PHOTOGRAPHIC STUDIES

Building Exterior Photo Collage Looking South on Franklin St.

Building Exterior Photo Looking South on Harrison St.
PART 2 - PHOTOGRAPHIC STUDIES

Exterior Photo West on Harrison St.

Exterior Photo Window and Facade Detail on Harrison St.

Exterior Photo Typical Front Window on Franklin St.

Exterior Photo Front Lights on Franklin St.
PART 2 - PHOTOGRAPHIC STUDIES

Interior Photo Looking Down Main Corridor on First Level

Interior Photo of Emergency Stair on First Level

Interior Photo of Typical Window on Second Level

Interior Photo Looking Down Main Corridor on Third Level
PART 2 - PHOTOGRAPHIC STUDIES

Interior Photo of Elevator Shaft on First Level

Interior Photo Looking Towards Harrison on Fifth Level

Interior Photo of Elevator Shaft on Third Level

Interior Photo of Elevator Shaft on First Level
PART 2 - PHOTOGRAPHIC STUDIES

Interior Photo Looking Towards Harrison on Third Level

Interior Photo Looking Towards Franklin on Fifth Level

Interior Photo Looking Towards Harrison on Fourth Level

Interior Photo Looking Towards VCU on Fourth Level
DOMESTIC DETACHMENT:

they exist in complacent isolation, from which they can only be managerial eyewash.‘

Flexibility is key.

Co-living doesn’t reflect young people being slow to reach methods. Co-living doesn’t reflect with anticipated growth in the

issue in Richmond as it leads

on an old idea, imagined by a millennial generation that values sustainable lifestyle alternatives.

Conclusion

methods to produce case studies for an urban co-living development

Motivation:

40% of adults over the age of 65 experienced loneliness in the course

Demand for remodelers and things. It is generating new

provides one alternative design solution to

problems that affect seniors but it also co-living, research must be performed to understand how residents

strengthening social interaction and bonding. Co-housing, community

The success of the project, and its physical outcome, themes identified in the literature on social isolation and loneliness

40% of adults over the age of 65 experienced loneliness in the course

Q: What ethics should a designer have? Why?

Q: Reflect on why you are studying design….

Architects, painters and sculptors must learn a new way of seeing ‘Design at its best has an honorable history; affirmative, questioning,
PART 3 - CONCEPTUAL REFLECTION

01
Pattern Language
- Alexander

02
On Weaving
- Albers

03
Intertwining
- Holl
This project relied heavily on the book "A Pattern Language" by Christopher Alexander, which outlines a philosophy that, in designing their environments people create 'languages,' which allow them to articulate and communicate an infinite variety of designs within a formal system which gives them coherence.

In the book, "patterns," the units of this language, are answers to design problems: how high should a window sill be? How many stories should a building have? How much space in a neighborhood should be devoted to grass and trees?

Alexander’s world combines psychology, construction materials, and the layout of space. His writing provided a framework for moving from the urban district scale of a street, sidewalk or park and row-house to the interior scale of a sill, bench, ledge, or handle.
PART 3 - ON WEAVING

Anni Albers (1899–1994) was a textile designer, weaver, writer, and printmaker who inspired a reconsideration of fabrics as an art form, both in their functional roles and as wallhangings.

Albers created a wall covering that behaved like a wall, whose weave of cotton, chenille and Cellophane not merely reflected light but absorbed sound: “textile engineering”, as she said. The odd but brilliant Bauhaus student Siegfried Ebeling had recently rethought the wall as a membrane, “porous... formal, but not substantial” (Darwent, 2018). If male Bauhäusler could make walls membranous, Albers would come at the problem from the other side. She would make membranes that were wall-like.

This idea of building by stealth would stay with her. In the interview mentioned above, she compares weaving not to art but to architecture. “Painting is applied on to something,” Albers reasons. “Sculpture uses a given material... [Weaving] is closest to architecture because it is a building-up out of a single element, building a whole out of single elements” (Darwent, 2018).
PART 3 - INTERTWINING

Steven Holl has continued to gain international prominence and fame for his architectural ideas. Holl is one of the most important and dynamic architects practicing today.

In his text, Intertwining, the aim is to enlarge the argument for particular architecture that intertwines: idea, phenomena, and site. An individual idea drives the design for each project in a unique way of realizing a building and its site.

“The phenomenal experience of light, overlapping perspectives of space, material textures, or sound; the phenomenology of architecture is worth a reflection in advance of particular sites and ideas that are clarified in each project description” (Holl, 1998).

Holl’s text and diagrams influenced the way I started to think about architectural weaving and creating spaces with these philosophical underpinnings kept in mind.
PART 3 - 15 DAYS

We were asked to develop fifteen conceptual studies in preparation for thesis in 15 days with the following parameters:

- 30 minutes: minimum time investment in each
- 30 square inches: minimum footprint
- 10 three-dimensional studies/physical models minimum
- 5 studies must integrate at least 15 words of text
- 5: maximum number of solely computer generated/digital works
- 5: minimum number of digital/analog hybrid works
- 5: minimum number of different media to be used

DAY 1 -
DAY 2 -
DAY 3 -
DAY 4 -
DAY 5 -
DAY 6 -
DAY 7 -
DAY 8 -
DAY 9 -
DAY 10 -
DAY 11 -
DAY 12 -
DAY 13 -
DAY 14 -
DAY 15 -
PART 3 - INTERTWining StAir & RAMP

Hand Sketch on Trace Articulating Ramp and Stair
SHARED RESTROOM (450 SQ FT)

WELCOME BAR (1,252 FT)

PODS (1,126 SQ FT)

LOUNGE (1,676 SQ FT)

COMMUNITY KITCHEN (2,496 SQ FT)

CIRCULATION (3,840 SQ FT)

TITLE (3,871 SQ FT)

MICRO APARTMENTS (4,983 SQ FT)

QUIET REST AREA (1,760 SQ FT)
Interior Massing - Stacked Units & Large Community Space
Interior Massing - Woven Units Into Small Community Space
Program and Circulation - Section Perspective Looking South on Harrison St.
Second Level Axon Drawing

Third Level Axon Drawing
Fourth Level Axon Drawing

Fifth Level Axon Drawing
Third Level - Corridor Study - Drawing

Small Unit ADA - Drawing
PART 4 - CODE + PROGRAM

PROGRAM STATS

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Category</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Residential</th>
<th>Community</th>
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<td>16,992 sq ft</td>
<td>5,765 sq ft</td>
<td>11,226 sq ft</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Private</td>
<td>7,576 sq ft</td>
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<td>4,759 sq ft</td>
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<table>
<thead>
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<th>Unit</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Residential</th>
<th>Community</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>XS Unit (5)</td>
<td>2,817 sq ft</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>SM Unit (11)</td>
<td>3,532 sq ft</td>
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<tr>
<td>LRG Unit (3)</td>
<td>1,227 sq ft</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

CORE: 7,051 sq ft

CONSTRUCTION TYPE:
2, R-1

GROSS AREA:
Total: 24,612 sq ft
Total p. floor: 4,102 sq ft

NET AREA:
Efficiency Ratio: .7
Total: 16,709 sq ft
Total p. floor: 2,849 sq ft

PLUMBING:

Unit:
1 p. person: restroom fixture (ADA)
Common Space:
1 p. 75 persons: restroom fixture (ADA)
1 p. 75 persons: water fountain

CODE:
Residential: 200 sq ft gross per occupant

STAIRS REQUIRED:
2 Egress Stairs

GRAPHIC PROGRAM

COMMON
- Residential
- Community

PRIVATE
- XS Unit
- SM Unit
- LRG Unit

PUBLIC

RESIDENTIAL
A pocket park is a small landscaped space that provides a sitting or recreation area. Usually constructed on a vacant or underutilized lot. Pocket parks, while little and often hidden, can increase surrounding home ownership values, fill in an irregular plot of infrastructure, and provide a convenient solution to finding usable open space in a dense urban area.

Concept development depicts a moment where public meets private and the two wind together. The ramp and stair nodding to the axis shift of the urban fabric defines the intertwining of shared and private spaces in through a woven staircase which brings together interior “park” through benches in areas for rest and conversation.

POCKET PARKS - URBAN BENCHS

- Scuffletown Park
- Paradise Park
- Meadow Park
- Lombardy Park
This co-living space will engage the surrounding community on the street level and continue the sense of neighborhood culture on the residential floors. The public areas of the 1st and lower level start an axis shift which fans a primary circulation ramp past an existing elevator shaft and through the building, establishing a thread in which shared spaces are arranged around and integrated in informal seating arrangements.
The lower level of the building serves primarily as additional meeting space, work and lounge areas for the greater community. The large gathering stair, which carries the language of the bench studies from surrounding community pocket parks, opens the lower level to sunlight as it is part of the initial start of the six story atrium and light well. The spaces in the lower level do not have fixed program and are meant to flex as different needs of the community present themselves. The larger meeting rooms can be broken into smaller spaces for conversation or group needs.
BENCH STUDIES

Living together is about more than inhabiting the same physical space. We need everything in our everyday life to use our resources more sensitively. We are sharing more goods and services than ever before and many of us use the sharing economy in our day-to-day lives – from ordering a taxi to finding a room for the night. Co-living encourages a social lifestyle within the building as a whole, with a larger focus on the shared spaces throughout the building. The shared space gradually becomes more and more intimate in scale as you are moved up the winding staircase.

Floors 2-5 are made up of a series of different suite options for residents. XS micro suites that encourage residents to congregate in a community kitchen; semi-private SM units feature a kitchenette within the space as well as a more traditional 2 bedroom (LRG unit); allows residents to have choice in their individual living arrangements within the larger shared whole. Private shared spaces are found on floors 4-5 feature meditation pods and a respite lounge for wellness and shared regeneration.

INDIVIDUAL SPACES
The light well was created from an existing elevator shaft that is no longer in use but completely preserved. The light well acts as a node within the building to connect all six levels through an atrium space that becomes smaller and more private as you move up the building. The light fixture is made up of a series of led lights that engage each level, starting with the brightest at the base of the building and the dimmest at the top of the building where there is more meditative and contemplative space surrounding the light well.
A rooftop "treehouse" and terrace invites people up to enjoy views of both Downtown Richmond and the Fan District and engage with the community. There are a variety of types of spaces for interaction that range from an indoor meditation space with equipment storage, an outdoor meditation garden, to an event terrace with adjacent kitchen.
VIEW OF XS UNIT

UNIT INFO:
- 247 sq ft
- 5 units
- shared eating
- minimalist

RESIDENT 1
SETH CARTER
- 32
- Bartender
- $30,000 p year

VIEW OF SM ADA UNIT

UNIT INFO:
- 300 sq ft
- 11 units
- private eating
- extra storage

RESIDENT 2
JULIA SMITH
- 26
- Designer
- $40,000 p year
Finish inspiration is drawn from the Fan District. Textures emulate the moment of contrast where city sidewalk meets, organic landscapes, and the contrasting vernacular of the densely packed town-homes of the neighborhood meet. On the first floor, a concrete ramp emulates the fanning of the streets in the urban plan, and transitions into textured wood flooring to signify a shift to the social “pocket park” spaces. The color palette is bright with tones to emulate the individuality of the homes found in the residential areas of the district.
**SELECTED FINISHES & FF+E**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RECEPTION</th>
<th>RAMP</th>
<th>LOUNGE</th>
<th>UNITS</th>
<th>TREEHOUSE</th>
<th>CORRIDOR</th>
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<tr>
<td>1.1 FLOOR</td>
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<td>3.1 FLOOR</td>
<td>4.1 FLOOR</td>
<td>5.1 FLOOR</td>
<td>6.1 FLOOR</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.2 ACCENT WALL</td>
<td>2.2 WET WALL</td>
<td>3.2 WET WALL</td>
<td>4.2 WET WALL</td>
<td>5.2 ACCENT WALL</td>
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<td>5.3 ACCENT PAINT</td>
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<td>1.5 SEATING</td>
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<td>4.5 SEATING</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**LIGHTING:**

- Foster meaningful relationships.
- Through light and color this space challenges traditional apartment living through physical forms that good as the people we surround ourselves with.
- Co-living is a concept for urban dwellers that offers communal areas and the private spaces of the users.
- Living space will reflect a stark contrast between the communal and private areas of the users.

**MATERIALS:**

- 1.1 SEALED CONCRETE
  - Product Name
    - 2.1 DALTILE
      - Keystone Seals
    - 1.3 FILZ FELT
      - Red Flat Wallcovering
  - 1.4 FLOS
    - Globe Pendant
  - 1.5 BLU DOT
    - Daily Task Chair

**CONCRETE**

- 3.1 METRO
  - Oak Herringbone

**TILES**

- 2.2 DALTILE
  - Keystone Concrete
  - 2.3 3D ART TEXTURES
  - White Threads
  - 2.4 FLOS
  - Linear LED
  - 2.5 BERNHARFT
    - Remix Chair

**FABRIC**

- 3.1 METRO
  - Oak Herringbone
  - 3.2 DALTILE
  - Keystone Black
  - 3.3 BENJAMIN MOC
    - Beau Green (004-3)
  - 3.4 MUUTO
    - Multi-Pendant
  - 3.5 WEST ELM
    - Nest Chair

**CARPET**

- 4.1 METRO
  - Oak Herringbone
  - 4.2 STONESOURCE
    - Green Feltbrick
  - 4.3 BENJAMIN MOORE
    - Gardenvia (AF-110)
  - 4.4 BLU DOT
    - Hive Pendant
  - 4.5 ALL MODERN
    - Weston Murphy Bed

**WALLCOVERING**

- 5.1 CHIEF WICH
  - Tile Floor Covering
  - 5.2 CHIEF WICH
    - Sisal Wallcovering
  - 5.3 BENJAMIN MOORE
    - Metropolitan (AF-640)
  - 5.4 FLOS
    - Floor Pendants
  - 5.5 BERNHARFT
    - Zip Floor Chair

**WALLS**

- 6.1 METRO
  - Oak Herringbone
  - 6.2 CHIEF WICH
    - Sisal Wallcovering
  - 6.3 B. MOORE
    - Gardenvia (AF-118)
  - 6.4 MUUTO
    - Glow Sconce
  - 6.5 WEST ELM
    - Jute Cushion
STUDY MODELS

Looking South On Harrison Street - Facade

Looking South East On Franklin Street - Woven Stair
DEDICATION

To Jessica Keegan!

To my past design mentors, Paul Cattaneo, Karen Nelson, Eleni Glekas, Dak Kopec, and many others who encouraged me to head back to academia and do this program.

To my family Richard and Susan Rozewski, James Rozewski and Brooklyn Ramos for being amazing and supportive family members and encouraging me to pursue my passions.

To my VCUarts faculty, Roberto Ventura, Sara Reed, Sandy Wheeler, Christiana Lafazani, Camden Whitehead, and Emily Smith.

To my ENV and NBBJ teams, for helping me through the process and giving me some serious skills.

To my VCUarts / academic extended family, Justin Doromal, Thomas Kennedy, Jun Chen, Jason Adkins, Adele Bell, An Liu, Tyler Harris, and Rob Smith, for alumni and outside of studio design support and guidance.

To my classmates, Abby Barras, Maggie Davids, Tia Goode, Tashi Scott, and Angiline Troilo for all the growth, hard times, healing, learning, fun, and joking; I am so grateful for you all.

Thank you, thank you, thank you!
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Unless noted below, all photos and drawings are by Richard Rozewski.

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