SAANZ 2020: The Isolation Edition

Wednesdays 4 to 5:15 pm

Oct 28th to Nov 25th

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Session Three: November 11th - 4pm
Reimagining Building Praxis

Chair: Tiina Vares

Casimir MacGregor - BRANZ

Beyond behaviour change? The epistemic and social practice foundations for 'behaviour change' in the context of the transition to a net- zero carbon economy

The transition to a net-zero carbon economy involves a socio-technical change that requires a systemic turn. Central to this process will be 'behaviour change' – changing how people act, talk and interact with each other and the material environment. By examining the epistemic and social practice foundations for 'behaviour change,' I consider how diverse forms of participation and engagement with science, policy and behaviour change interrelate in wider systems. In this paper I take stock of these advances and the challenges of developing a framework for change to address climate action. The framework for change is illustrated through ethnographic research of the Superhome Movement- a collective of high-performance designers, architects and builders who seek to create healthy, sustainable, low carbon buildings. This provides insights into system wide challenges of using epistemic and empirical social science to redefine policy and industry problems and identify new avenues for social and environmental change that is accessible for those seeking to intervene in everyday life.

Orin Lockyer - BRANZ

Expectation and Trust: A practice-based analysis of communication between builders and clients during the new build process

Communication between residential new build clients and their builders can often lead to tension during the construction process. Previous research at BRANZ has identified that new build clients often report that their builders perform poorly when it comes to communication. However, the process in which builders communicate with clients and how it can lead to poor outcomes is currently unexplored. Drawing on the results of a mixed methods study on the builder client relationship in New Zealand, this paper applies insights from the sociology of consumption (Warde, 2005) and practice theory (Schatzki, 2011), to help understand the practice of communication during the build process. Findings show that the building site, in this context, is better understood as a nexus that is made up of a multitude of practices that are not easily integrated. Clients and builders each have a different expectation of how communication practice should occur during the build process, which, if not managed through mutual trust, can led to conflict during the build process. This paper seeks to help the building and construction industry identify best practice solutions for communication with clients during the build process and contributes to wider sociological discussions on the practice of consumption.

Michael Nuth - BRANZ

Earthquake prone public buildings: balancing safety risks and community costs

The Canterbury earthquakes have heightened awareness of New Zealand's vulnerability to seismic hazards. Consequently, territorial authorities across New Zealand are increasingly assessing public buildings as 'earthquake-prone'. This has resulted in the closure of key community infrastructure and services, causing significant social and economic impacts. However, it is uncertain how councils, acting as public building owners, are evaluating life safety risks associated with a seismic event within a geological timeframe (i.e. thousands of years) alongside the immediate socioeconomic impacts of public building closure. Some councils rapidly close buildings (in some cases even prior to earthquake prone decisions being made), while others keep buildings with lower seismic ratings open. The Building (Earthquake-prone Buildings) Amendment Act 2016 provides timeframes withinwhich an earthquake prone building should be remediated but does not dictate or anticipate that earthquake prone buildings be immediately closed. Anecdotal evidence suggests that some local authorities' decisions to close public buildings are made subjectively and are based upon the perception of the severity of the risk to the safety of the public and council staff. This research seeks to understand how the immediate socioeconomic impacts of public building closure are currently being, or could be better, balanced against the possible physical and human impacts of an earthquake.