

THE REPRESENTATION OF THE WELFARE CITY PROGRAMME FOR THE SEMINAR ON 15 AND 16 FEBRUARY 2024

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This seminar is the last in a series of four events that aim to critically discuss the representation of the welfare city. In this context, the term ‘welfare city’ refers to the concept for urban areas developed in Scandinavian countries during the second half of the twentieth century. The seminar is conceptualized and organized by the transdisciplinary international IRFD-funded research network The Representation of the Welfare City. Hosted by knowledge- and culture-bearing institutions such as the National Museum of Denmark in Copenhagen, ArkDes in Stockholm, and the Department of Culture and Language at the University of Southern Denmark in Odense, the previous events have embraced discussion on museums, archives, and collections, as well as on canons, history, and historiography as a construction. More specifically, however, they have raised questions about how and why to present and represent architecture. With a focus on mass media as a primary site for developing architectural discourse, the events have reflected on these media and their mediatic characteristics. They have included photography and architectural drawings/renderings in the daily press, magazines, journals, books, and exhibitions, as well as films and television programmes.

The research network The Representation of the Welfare City wishes to stimulate interaction between researchers and promote research exchange, with the aim of bringing forward new

perspectives and knowledge that can contribute to development in architectural research.

Seminar 4: The History of the Welfare City and Its Historiography

The idea of urbanity and the city is inseparable from its narrative forms. Society's perception of architecture and its discourse is conditioned by the media and the epistemology through which society understands it. The Danish welfare model is internationally renowned; it is a concept and a commodity that has been distributed globally. This also applies to Danish architecture from the middle of the twentieth century. Different media and types of representation (e.g., photography and books) have played a crucial role in this distribution process.

In recent years, much research has been carried out on the welfare city and its World War II legacy. Astonishingly enough, however, not much attention has been paid to the representation of the welfare city in mass media. This field of knowledge has so far been largely ignored by architects, architectural historians, and theoreticians. It calls for a study that, more generally and in a historical perspective, looks at which collective images and narratives we as a society attach to the welfare city, exploring how they are constructed, how they work, and in which ways they circulate, are exchanged, and handed over by people and institutions, such as museums and universities.

Hosted by the Aarhus School of Architecture, this seminar poses the question: How do histories and historiographies work as representations, and what do they represent? The seminar will discuss different welfare architecture histories and historiographies. It will reflect on discursive positionings, theoretical approaches, and genres, and investigate how the history of the welfare city and its architecture has been written. Who wrote it, and in what way? What is included in the history/histories, and what is left out? More specifically, we want to look into the normative narrative in the history of the Danish (and Nordic) welfare city and its architecture. Along these lines, we will also pursue the role of illustrations—for instance

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drawings and photographs—in the textual presentation of the histories and discuss how they work as representations.

Programme

Thursday, 15 February 2024

Venue: Arkitektskolen Aarhus

09:30 Coffee and tea

10:00

Welcome by Anne Elisabeth Toft, PhD, Associate Professor, Aarhus School of Architecture

Panayotis Tournikiotis, Professor Emeritus, National Technical University of Athens, School of Architecture: *The Historiography of Modern Architecture*

Questions and discussion

Jannie Rosenberg Bendsen, PhD, postdoc, Aarhus School of Architecture: *Untold Stories on Women in Danish Architecture: On Writing Architectural History with a Focus on Women*

Questions and discussion

12:30

Lunch break

13:30

Pirjo Sanaksenaho, Associate Professor, Aalto University: *The 1950s and 1960s Modern Home: Magazines as Research Material*

Questions and discussion

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Karen Olesen, Associate Professor, Aarhus School of
Architecture: *The Double Life of Robin Hood Gardens*

Questions and discussion

Coffee and tea break

Claus Peder Pedersen, PhD, Professor MSO, and Anne Elisabeth
Toft, PhD, Associate Professor, Aarhus School of Architecture:
The Discourse of the Institut for Skalakunst

Questions and discussion

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17.00

End of programme

18.00

Dinner

Friday, 16 February 2024

Venue: Arkitektskolen Aarhus

09:00

Welcome and introduction to programme, Anne Elisabeth Toft,
PhD, Associate Professor, Aarhus School of Architecture

Søren Kolstrup, PhD, previous associate professor at the center
for welfare research: *How should one understand the Danish
Welfare State in past and present. Approaches, theories and
black spots in research*

Questions and discussion

Laura Berger, DsC (Architecture), Postdoctoral Researcher, Aalto
University: *Local and International – The Finnish Prefabricated
Timber Houses*

Questions and discussion

Tom Nielsen, PhD, Professor, Aarhus School of Architecture:
Music and the Representation of the Welfare City

Questions and discussion

12:00

Lunch break

13.00

End of seminar and goodbye

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The Representation of the Welfare City

The international research network *The Representation of the Welfare City*, a transdisciplinary project funded by the Independent Research Fund Denmark (IRFD), was initiated in 2021 by Anne Elisabeth Toft, PhD (Network Project Leader), Associate Professor, AAA; Jannie Rosenberg Bendsen, PhD (Network Coordinator), Independent Researcher, AAA; Tom Nielsen, PhD, Professor, AAA; Claus Peder Pedersen, PhD, Professor MSO, AAA; Morten Nielsen, PhD, Professor, National Museum of Denmark; Thordis Arrhenius, Professor, KTH; Michelle Provoost, PhD, Professor, Crimson Architectural Historians / Institute for New Town; Karen Olesen, Associate Professor, AAA; and Anders Troelsen, Professor Emeritus, AAA. The network aims at investigating the welfare city's image in society and how it is constructed. It will uncover and discuss the major factors that are at play in this context.