

Palaces of Learning?

How school buildings work

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The social context of work buildings

- The design and construction of offices and schools:
 - Reflect the values and priorities of the wider society.
 - Influence the way we organise ourselves with their walls.
 - Influence how the building is *experienced* by its occupants.

How do buildings work?

- Function – does it do what it was designed to do?
- Symbol – what signals does it send to those inside and outside the building?

The ambient environment

- Temperature – Too hot? Too cold?
- Air quality – Stuffy? Dry? Draughty?
- Noise – Internal, external
- Lighting – General and task lighting
- Spatial comfort – Enough workspace or overcrowding?

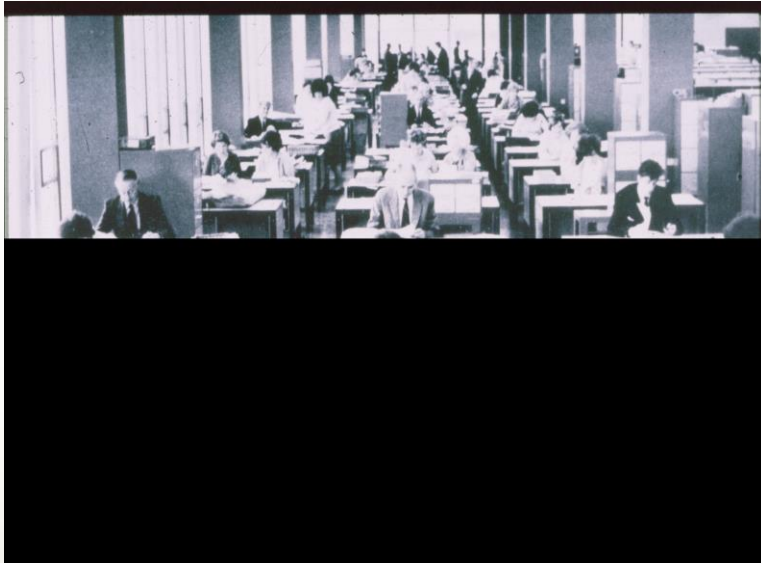
Problems in environment control

- How to cater for individual differences in comfort (including ASN).
- Lack of localised control.
- Architects' lack of detailed knowledge of the types of teaching/learning activities that have to be supported (and changes over time).
- Other goals built into school design (e.g. energy saving)

The social organisation of the school space

- Physical layout
- The degree of personal space
- Rules and codes of spatial behaviour

Early C20 spatial organisation



Late C20 spatial organisation



Navigating in school space

- Which entrance to use?
- Which playground to use?
- Which toilets to use?
- What are the no-go areas?

The daily message

‘We’re a bit special’

‘We’re scum’



Discussion

- What can the school do to ensure, as far as possible, that the built school environment supports *every* child?
- What can the school do to ensure, as far as possible, that the built school environment supports its teaching?