

Open Form

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COLUMN A

<https://podcampus.de/nodes/pybyj/res0720.mp4>

Peck, Dominique, Christopher Dell, Bernd Kniess, and Marko Mijatovic. 2016. "Open form on site." Basics: Project Management in Urban Design. Hamburg. CC BY-SA 4.0

ABOUT COLUMN A

<https://podcampus.de/nodes/RrjXk/res0720.mp4>

Dell, Christopher, Dominique Peck, Bernd Kniess, and Marko Mijatovic. 2017. "Open Form." Basics: Project Management in Urban Design. Hamburg. CC BY-SA 4.0

As a person interested in managing urban design projects, you will most likely be aware of the distinction between the city as a passive and controllable matter - the closed form - and the city as a contemporary and future urban society in the practice forms of co-production and permanent reproduction - an approach to the city as an open form.

Since this differentiation has far-reaching consequences but is easily overlooked and misinterpreted, I would like to illustrate this key aspect of project management in urban design as a regime of practices of living with and in projects.

We begin with the relationship between epistemology and ontology. The epistemology of space at the general level deals with the nature and extent of knowledge about space. This concern is closely intertwined with the ontology of space, since the "what" - the vision of the occurrence and definition of something - can be difficult to separate from the "how" - the way we get to know the "what" (Hollis 1994). This relationship between the "what" and the "how" of space is not fixed but is constantly evolving (Massey 2005).

When dealing with form in general, open form emerges as a possibility that often remains unrealized. The source of knowledge - how and why do we know what we know? - does not lie in the pure aesthetics of form, but in the relationship between form and material. It is the aesthetic of open form that undermines the reduction of form to its naked product when it mobilizes and

supports a process that deals with its potential values. These are composed of material constellations of a situation and thus give the appearance of a form. We can only call the form an open form if we can ensure the mobilization and continuous support of a process. Project management in the field of urban development aims to reunite knowledge - how and why - in the relationships of actors and situations in the process.

Project work must address the problem of the disappearance of the process behind the product. Therefore, as an integral part of project management in urban design, research not only aims to educate the designer about the city, but is a reflective exploration of our own perspectives, lenses and membranes that construct the city as an object of research and design. This is not meant to discredit urban processes such as DIY building efforts, urban social movements or organizational improvisations as informal, but aims at looking at their ontological principle from a different perspective. The earlier we open forms, the easier it is to deal with the potential values of the city. This ultimately opens up political aspects of project management in urban planning: the question of values in urban development projects is structurally significant, since the epistemology and ontology of form represent a hegemonic order of things. The process of opening form through project management in urban design enables the de-naturalization and renegotiation of this mandate.

REFERENCES

Hollis, Martin. 1994. *The Philosophy of Social Science: An Introduction*. Cambridge England; New York, NY, USA: Cambridge University Press.

Massey, Doreen. 2005. *For Space*. London; Thousand Oaks, Calif: SAGE Publications Ltd.