

## A City Campus Heterotopia ((0048)

Elizabeth Nelson<sup>1</sup>, <sup>1</sup> *University of Wales, Newport, Newport, South Wales, United Kingdom*

Heterotopia, literally meaning 'other places', is a diverse concept that describes a world misaligned with respect to normal or everyday space. Foucault (1967) theorises heterotopias as places where the technologies and disciplines of social orders are out of sequence or momentarily suspended, then re-sequenced or reconstructed to generate new spaces where microcosms of society are transformed and cosseted. Heterotopia is a space where the public-private distinction is blurred. This could be a conceptual or physical borderline separating heterotopia from ordinary life, a contingent of systems, rules, practices and regulations that are distinct within heterotopia and that offer a sense of shelter or sanctuary. A particular kind of community develops articulated in inclusion/exclusion or insider/outsider distinctions.

This paper will be an exploration into Foucault's notion of heterotopic space and will attempt to contextualise the University of Wales, Newport's move to the City Campus by discussing new forms of public space situated within private space, for collective use. The transformation of Newport School of Art, Media & Design and Newport Business School within this new building will re-outline the contours of collective space bringing together a hybrid of public and private areas and an emergence of new working practices.

In a 1967 architectural lecture Foucault introduced the term heterotopia to describe an assortment of spaces, places and institutions where everyday society crossed the boundaries of normalcy in terms of their ordinary characteristics to interrupt stability; alterity enters the familiar. For Foucault the application of the term is bound up with the concept of time, where "the present epoch would perhaps rather be the epoch of space. We are in the epoch of simultaneity; we are in the epoch of juxtaposition, the epoch of the near and far, of the side by side, of the dispersed." (Foucault 1967, p.14) Long before Castells (1996) depiction of the network society and its space of flows, Foucault had developed his own entrenched pathway for life as a network of connecting dots and traversing points. The City Campus has been designed to become the juxtaposition between the different ideologies of the Arts and the Business schools (BDP 2007). Its aim is to bring the disparate together to produce new interdisciplinary and entrepreneurial working practices. Heterotopia is seen by some as being the preliminary construct for the *network society* (Dehaene 2008, p.14) and Castells depiction of space is indeed transparent in its relation to the purpose of the City Campus. Castells, like Foucault rejected the idea that space itself will disappear as we create a worldwide city because space acts as "the material support of time sharing social practices" the space of flows then becomes "the material organisation of time-sharing social practices that work through flows" (Castells 1996, p.147).

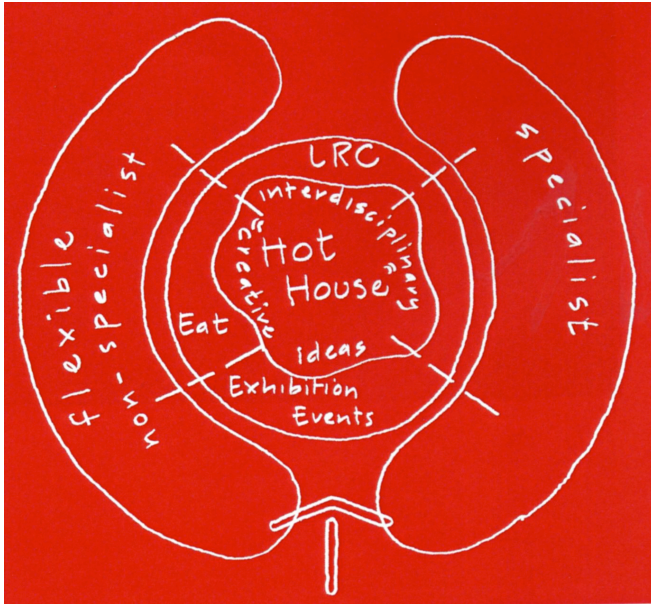


Fig 1 - an architects draft flow of the building (BDP 2007, p.4)

For Stickells, the network society has led to the concept of a *heterotopia of flows* exploring the notion of “smooth spaces of urban mobility that generate new forms of public space” (2008, p248). The internal space of the City Campus has been conceptualised to enable various different forms of interaction with the building and to shape the circulation of different users through the building, with a focus on mobility. Designed to flow both spatially and temporally with the public/private dimension also mobile, the formation of space will be predicated on activity, speed, traffic and flux rather than representing the more traditional forms of static occupation.

By theorising the City Campus as a *heterotopia of flows* the building may invoke a space where the prospect of urban phenomenology (Bachelard 1992) could be realised. The two key phenomenological ideas of insiderness and outsiderness are immediately recognisable in the continuous arc of the roof that flows from interior to exterior. This is significant because it sets up an immediate relationship of synthesis between people, environment and space “creating a strong identity and promoting a sense of visual openness with the city context” (BDP 2007, p8). However, within this environment there is also the possibility of anxiety arising regarding the occupation of the space, with the physical and cultural location of users to be emergent through use. Spaces exploited purely for mobility and speed are often found to be lacking in terms of character and engagement. The concern here is that the multiplicity and changeability of spaces within the City Campus and the widening networks of public activity could lead to more demands for static space.

Emplacement is also an important suggestion within Foucault’s text; how the space is defined in terms of its relationship and correlation between existing physical and demographic points; “we are in an epoch in which space is given to us in the form of relations between emplacements” (Foucault 1967, p.15). The City Campus aims to create an “outward facing University Campus which visually and physically links with the

wider city.” Its architectural language offering physical transparency and inclusion, and its emplacement determined by and in support of the city’s urban regeneration plans. It’s aim of being at “the heart of the regions social, economical and cultural development” (newport.ac.uk) consciously mirrors a return for the arts school to the city centre. This hierarchical emplacement is also key in terms of widening access and engagement with the public, creative and business communities.



Fig 2 - CGI image of City Campus



Fig 3 - CGI image of Cit Campus in situ

We often attach contradictory allegiances to space; public space and private space. We differentiate between “family space and social space, between cultural space and useful space, between the space of leisure and the space of work” (Foucault, 1967, p.16) these delineations can be conceptual or physical and are rarely the same from person to person. We learn from Bachelard’s application of phenomenology to architecture in *The Poetic’s of Space* (1992) of the psychological affects that the domestic space we live in, spaces loaded with qualia, have on our creativity. The space of our consciousness and the spaces of our primary existence are held together by qualities that seem intrinsic. Within the City Campus consideration for creativity and productivity must be given to whether the space we inhabit is a truly transparent flowing space or an encumbered static space.

Heterotopias often replicate and challenge. In terms of the City Campus this reproduction of two existing schools alongside the challenge offered by the shared space and proposed and premeditated expectation of interaction leads to questions of power. Not in the articulation but in the predicament of confrontation and contravention that follows. It could be said that Foucault’s depiction of heterotopia mirrors his wider concerns with complex power relationships. The requirement becomes the avoidance of strengthening what your trying to breakdown. The City Campus’s vision of interdisciplinary working practises and public/private spaces will be reliant on the equilibrium of power and heterotopia goes some way to offering an intangible spatial setting to overcome this problem of resistance.

With regard to the buildings emplacement we are delivered into the physical proximity of the city and its binding elements. For a building based on free movement the city often offers an expression of diversity and collectivity. The layered effect of the public and private spaces offered within the same location may bring altercation. However, with that contact, conflict and communication comes the avoidance of isolation, the

beginnings of plurality and “an additional space on which members of different, more limited publics talk across lines of cultural diversity” (Fraser 1992, p.126). Heterotopia can be a set of conventions inseparable from the dominant ideological arrangement but they can also augment and deflect from it. In my view the City Campus will become a heterotopia, a space for collective educational, intellectual, public and economic use. The extent of the building, its internal arrangement and architectural design, will become signs of its power structure through culturally pre-determined societal relationships.

## List of Figures

- Figure 1                    BDP, 2007. *University of Wales, Newport: City Centre Campus, Phase 1, Architectural Stage D Report*. Doc No: P2001443/A/REP/003 Rev A, p4.
- Figures 2 & 3            *University of Wales, Newport: City Centre Campus, Phase 1 CGI flythrough*. 2007 [DVD] BDP. London

## Bibliography

AUGE, M. 1995. *Non-places: Introduction to an anthropology of supermodernity*. Trans John Howe. London: Verso.

BACHELARD, G. 1992. *The poetics of space*. Boston: Beacon Press.

BAUDRILLARD, J. 1988. Simulacra and Simulations. In POSTER, M. Ed. *Selected Writings*. USA: Stanford University Press.

BDP, 2007. *University of Wales, Newport: City Centre Campus, Phase 1, Architectural Stage D Report*. Doc No: P2001443/A/REP/003 Rev A

BLOOM, H. 1973. *The anxiety of Influence: A theory of poetry*. New York: Oxford University Press.

BOYER, C. The many mirrors of Foucault and their architectural reflections. In DEHAENE, M & De CAUTER, L. 2008. *Heterotopia and the City: Public space in a post civil society*. Oxon: Routledge, pp 53-75.

CASTELLS, M. 1996. *Rise of the network Society*, v.1. Oxford: Blackwell.

CENZATTI, M. Heterotopias of difference. In DEHAENE, M & De CAUTER, L. 2008. *Heterotopia and the City: Public space in a post civil society*. Oxon: Routledge, pp 75 – 87.

CRAMPTON, J. W. & ELTON, S. eds. 2007. *Space, Knowledge and Power; Foucault and Geography*. Hampshire, England: Ashgate Publishing House.

DEFLEM, M. 1991. Ritual Anti-Structure and Religion: A discussion of Victor Turners Processual Symbolic Analysis. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 1991, 30 (1): 1-25.

DEHAENE, M & De CAUTER (a), L. Heterotopia in a postcivil society. In DEHAENE, M & De CAUTER, L. 2008. *Heterotopia and the City: Public space in a post civil society*. Oxon: Routledge, pp 3 - 9.

DEHAENE, M & De CAUTER (b), L. The space of play: towards a general theory of heterotopia. In DEHAENE, M & De CAUTER, L. 2008. *Heterotopia and the City: Public space in a post civil society*. Oxon: Routledge, pp 87 – 103.

FAUBION, D. J. Heterotopia: An Ecology. In DEHAENE, M & De CAUTER, L. 2008. *Heterotopia and the City: Public space in a post civil society*. Oxon: Routledge, pp 31-41.

FOUCAULT, M. 1967. Of Other Spaces. Trans, De Cauter, L. & Dehaene, M. In DEHAENE, M & De CAUTER, L. 2008. *Heterotopia and the City: Public space in a post civil society*. Oxon: Routledge, pp 13-31.

FOUCAULT, M. 1980. Space, Knowledge, Power. In FAUBION, J. D. ed. 2000. *Essential Works of Foucault 1954-1984, Volume 3: Power*. New York: New York press.

FOUCAULT, M. 2000. *Power: Volume 3*. New York: The New Press.

FRASER, N. 1992. Rethinking the public sphere. In CALHOUN, C. ed. *Habermas and the public sphere*. Cambridge MA: The MIT press.

GOODMAN, P. & GOODMAN, P. 1947. *Communitas: Means of Livelihood and Ways of Everyday Life*. Chicago: Chicago University Press. (Available at Jstor <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2771317?origin=JSTOR-pdf> )

HEGEL, G. W. F. 1991. Elements of the Philosophy of Right. ed, WOOD, A. W. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

HEYDEN, H. Heterotopia unfolded? In DEHAENE, M & De CAUTER, L. 2008. *Heterotopia and the City: Public space in a post civil society*. Oxon: Routledge, pp 311 – 315.

JAMESON, F. & SPEAKS, M. 1990. Envelopes and enclaves: the space of post civil society – an architectural conversation. *Assemblage*, 17: 32-7.

JOHNSON, P. 2006. Unravelling Foucault's 'different spaces'. *History of Human Sciences* 2006, 19: 75. (PDF supplied by author but can be found on line at <http://hhs.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/19/4/750> )

McLEOD, M. 1996. Everyday and "Other" Spaces. In COLEMAN, E., DANZE, E & HENDERSON, C. eds. *Architecture and Feminism*. New York: Princeton Architectural press, pp. 1-37.

*New Developments and the City Campus* [WWW]

[http://www3.newport.ac.uk/displayPage.aspx?object\\_id=8059&type=SEC](http://www3.newport.ac.uk/displayPage.aspx?object_id=8059&type=SEC) (7 April 2010)

OCKMAN, J. 2001. *Book review of 'The poetics of Space'*. [www]

[http://www.gsd.harvard.edu/research/publications/affiliated\\_publications/hdm/back\\_issu es/6books\\_ockman.pdf](http://www.gsd.harvard.edu/research/publications/affiliated_publications/hdm/back_issu es/6books_ockman.pdf) (31 March 2010)

PAWEL, Z. 2008. Tocqueville on Civillian Society: A romantic vision of the dichotomic structure of social reality. *Archiv fur Begriffsgeschichte*. Felix Meiner Verlag, 50.

SORKIN, M. ed. 1992. *Variations on a Theme Park, the new American City and the End of Public Space*. New York: Hill & Wang.

STICKELLS, L. The heterotopia of flows. In DEHAENE, M & De CAUTER, L. 2008. *Heterotopia and the City: Public space in a post civil society*. Oxon: Routledge, pp 248-257.

TURNER, V. 1969. *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*. Chicago, Illinois: Aldine.