

A bridge between research and practice

Many in the profession view research as something of marginal importance to architecture. In fact, research informs architecture all the time. Whenever we investigate products, assess details, evaluate a design, document a site, or develop a program, we engage in research. What our profession lacks is a tradition of systematically documenting this work or of communicating the results of our investigations to our peers. As **arq** Editorial Board member Michael Crosbie has said, 'We still act like a trade that keeps secrets rather than a profession that shares knowledge.'

An equally common misperception in universities is that architecture has little to offer research. That stems, in part, from our equating research with the methods of science. As Ernest Boyer argued in his book *Scholarship Reconsidered*, the research community has elevated one form of investigation, what he called 'the scholarship of discovery', over all others, limiting our knowledge. Boyer and others have, instead, proposed broader definitions of research, including what he called the 'scholarship of application' and 'the scholarship of integration'.

Here, architecture has much to contribute. Our field may not discover much new knowledge, but we do apply existing knowledge every time we build. And if Boyer is right – that research into the consequences of knowledge has as much value as its discovery – then the evaluation of the built environment becomes centrally important, a way of gauging the meaning and value of ideas of all sorts, beyond those strictly architectural.

Likewise, architects have a role to play in the scholarship of integration. To make buildings, we synthesise knowledge from many disciplines, so much so that we almost take the process for granted. A more concerted effort of analyzing how we think and what value that brings to the world would benefit not just our own profession, but many others in search of integrative methods in a time of hyper-specialisation.

arq, we hope, can serve as a bridge between research and practice, between the scholarship of discovery and that of integration and application. But we need your help to construct that span. Share your knowledge, document your investigations, report your evaluations, analyse your thinking – in **arq**.

THE EDITORS

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