Columbia University                                                    GSAPP
A6853  Advanced Architecture Design Studio                              AAD
500 Avery: M, W & F (2:00-6:00pm)                              Summer 2015
Studio Professor: Phu Hoang (pdh4@columbia.edu)
Studio TA: Kamilla Csegzi (kc2842@columbia.edu)

# In Service Of…

Culture of Service at Work and Play



Office Floor Plans- Seagram Building, Burolandschaft, HSBC Bank

*"Amazon's workforce is made up mainly of computer engineers and warehouse workers, but when you think of Amazon you don't picture either one (and there aren't many photographs to help your imagination). What you see, instead, is a Web site with a button that says "ADD TO CART" and a cardboard box with a smile printed on the side."*

*-  George Packer, "Where Have All the Workers Gone?"*

**Objective:**
The studio is based on the notion of service and its changing form in architecture, urban and, of course, social domains. Service is defined as the performance of work or activity for another—in cities, it is in the form of high speed broadband internet, hotel concierge information, or even architecture work. In the global capital of New York City, a robust service economy takes many different forms as it continues to replace manufacturing as the city's main economy. The technologically driven growth of New York's financial, hospitality, media and creative services has produced a "culture of service" that is simultaneously omnipresent and invisible. New York City, transformed into a service city, physically manifests "work" in the food delivery cold rooms of luxury condominium towers, the communal workspace of boutique hotels, and the Amazon delivery lockers embedded within nameless local delis.

The studio will investigate this "culture of service" to rethink the definition of work in architecture—in doing so, replace the late-modernist categorization of servant and served program organization. Championed by the late modernist architects Louis Kahn, Cedric Price, Richard Rogers and Norman Foster, the utopian project of modular construction and flexible spaces was predicated on a social division between those who are served and their "servants" (workers). This social hierarchy is slowly been replaced with a "culture of service" in which collaborative work and peer-to-peer sharing embeds itself throughout all aspects of

urban life—most recently with the growth of Uber and AirBnB networks. It is increasingly difficult to determine who the "other" is in the service economy and its latest incarnation, the sharing economy. The studio will intersect two different forms of service—the city's "culture of service" with architecture's building services—in order to rethink the role of service and "work" in architecture. The studio will ask the essential questions: What is the sharing economy's boundary between the "work" performed by building services and the workers in the architectural program? If the technologically driven sharing economy is questioning the basis of an "ownership society," how will building services—as well architecture—adapt and transform with it?

**Project Description:**
The studio will be a "research and design" format in which the "culture of service" will form the conceptual ground for architecture projects. It is suggested that students work in groups (individual work is also allowed). Each group or individual will propose radical scenarios in which their argument about a "culture of service" will be tested in the design of a co-working office combined with an additional program—a co-working school, co-working hotel or co-working storage facility. Each group or individual's research argument will guide their programmatic argument and develop unique design methodologies for the mixed-use project.

The "culture of service" that is integral to the office, school, hotel, and storage typologies addresses recent developments in the programs of work, education, tourism and containment. The sharing networks of companies such as TaskRabbit, ShareDesk, ZipCar and SnapGoods have transformed urban lives by co-opting existing infrastructure as well as building services. Workplace peer-to-peer collaboration has radically transformed the terms work and play. Work is no longer synonymous with labor in the "culture of service." Between the walls, the building services that are at "work" to deliver people, air, water and information have been slow to respond to the new social infrastructure. The studio will advance arguments and designs for a "culture of service" that transforms and innovates with building services. The roles and boundaries of these radicalized building services will be manifested in new architectural organizations and forms.

**Program:**
The studio program is to be determined by each group or individual. All of the projects must include a co-working office. Each project will synthesize this form of contemporary workplace with another service program—either a school, a hotel or a storage facility. The growth of the "culture of service" has steadily diminished the presence of the archetypical office worker while also transforming the architecture of the workplace, the school, the hotel and the storage facility. The drivers of this social transformation cannot be overlooked as it has the potential to alter architectural programs, forms and building systems—as well as the service of architecture discipline. The studio will develop new forms of mixed-use programs that capitalize on some of these social changes.

**Site:**
The site for the studio will be near the Flatiron District in Manhattan. This neighborhood has been recently been dubbed "Silicon Alley," since several high-technology firms are located in the area. The area also is home to numerous businesses in creative industries (including architecture) as well as other forms of urban service. The studio's focus on contemporary service and its potential for transformative impact on building services will be tested in a site in the Flatiron District.

**Schedule:**
Project 01: Service Research (10%)
*(Review on June 22nd; 14 days)*
Research of urban and building services will be initially conducted on an individual basis. This architectural and social "live research" will occur in the site's neighborhood. Using low-tech research methods as well as mobile technologies, the research will establish an argument towards the project site and its surroundings. This research must be iteratively explored for its potential in formulating a concept argument towards the "culture of service."

Project 02: Mid-review (20%)
*(Mid-review on July 10th, 3 weeks)*
Each group or individual will present at the mid-review the "culture of service" research and the preliminary design for a co-working school, hotel or storage facility based on radicalized building systems. The iterations should clearly and precisely define the project's argument relative to both site and program.

Project 03A (15%)
*(Pre-final review on July 27$^{th}$, 3 weeks)*

Project 03B (25%)
*(Final review on August 3$^{rd}$, 1 week)*

**Grading Policy:**
In general, grading for the semester will proceed as follows:
30%         Material presented at the mid-review
40%         Material presented at final review
30%         Development of the work through the semester

Evaluation in this course will adhere to University guidelines as outlined in the student handbook. Grades will be given in relation to the student's ability to meet the course deadlines, deliverables and course objectives.

Students are entitled to one unexcused absence. A second unexcused absence will result in the lowering of your final grade one full letter. Three absences are grounds for unofficial withdrawal. Absences will be excused in accordance with university policy and will require a note from a physician. Please notify your instructor in advance if you know that you will not attend class for any reason.

**Studio References:**

1. Abalos, Inaki and Herreros, Juan. "Tower and Office: From Modernist Theory to Contemporary Practice", 2005.
2. Packer, George. "Where Have All the Workers Gone" in The New Yorker, February 4, 2014.
3. Rutes, Walter, Penner, Richard and Adams, Lawrence. "Hotel Design: Planning and Development", 2012.
4. Sample, Hilary. "Maintenance Architecture" in Praxis: Journal of Writing and Building, Issue 6, 2004 (pgs. 106-113).