

Introduction

Sociologists have long shown interest in the way the physical environment relates to people. Nevertheless, sociology of the built environment has not, until recently, developed into a distinct field of study. When social scientists applied social research to decision-making about physical environment they often overlooked architectural problems, working instead at a larger scale on planning problems. The trends are now changing. A group of social scientists is working to establish a new specialty of environmental sociology; some of these people focus their attention on applying social research to architectural design. This paper outlines roots of this development in sociological theory and research and then analyzes more recent work to show how one gap has been bridged between social research and architectural design.