

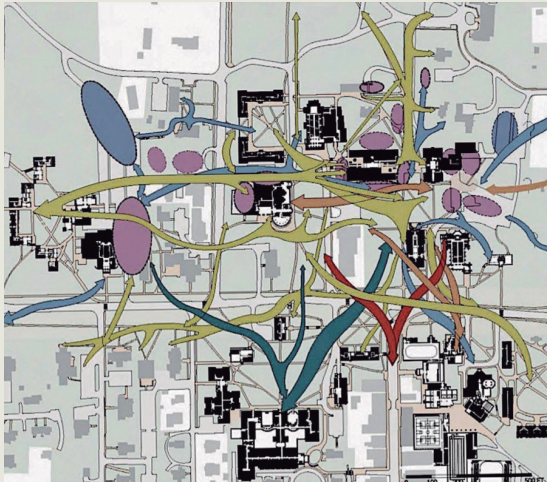
## 03

## Learning from Denise Scott Brown. Beyond Learning from Las Vegas

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'People have learnt from Las Vegas, but they haven't learnt the half of it yet'  
Denise Scott Brown

Denise Scott Brown is one of the contemporary architects who best represents, exemplifies and personifies the necessary revision of what it means to "be an architect" from the perspective of professional practice, teaching, theory or personal experience. That is to say, she represents a way of exercising the discipline that, based on what we can learn from her, should be refocused, among other things, on: the recognition of the changing contemporary urban realities; the need for transdisciplinary work and in conditions of equality, equity and inclusion; the assessment of the differences and specificities of cultures, places and groups; the redefinition of functionalism and its impact on architectural form; the symbolic, the ordinary and the everyday of urban activities and life; the importance of image, new technologies and the use of data; and, also, on the recognition of the cultural thickness of history, in its broadest sense. She is a current and representative figure of a still ongoing approach to architecture and the city.



### DENISE: FROM THE RECOGNITION OF HER TEAMWORK TO INDIVIDUAL RECOGNITION

"For a few years, writers on architecture were interested in sexism and the feminist movement and they wanted to discuss them with me. In a joint interview, they would ask Bob about work and question me about my "woman's problem." "Write about my work!" I would plead, but they seldom did."

Denise Scott Brown has embodied, exemplified and is still the protagonist of, a current reflection on the role of architecture in society and on the exercising of the profession. This is an issue of great depth that is still open and that encloses

many aspects about injustice, exclusion, social and gender differentiation, not only in the association of architecture but also how the role of the architect is seen by society in general. Her famous text: "*Room at the Top? Sexism and the Star System in Architecture*,"<sup>1</sup> was first published in 1989 and became a manifesto through which Denise not only emphasised and clarified the importance of her specific role in the professional work done in partnership with Robert Venturi, but she also spoke of the need to break the stereotype of the hierarchical and pyramidal organisation of work teams, claiming to go beyond the Star System model installed and accepted uncritically, which did so much damage, and still does, to the world of architecture (fig. 02). Issues that all go hand in hand and that are still reproduced in schools or within the profession, and that she considers as an indivisible whole of her experience. With respect to this text, a few years after its publication Denise acknowledged that, although some changes and turns in trends had occurred, the possibilities for change had been shattered, as she herself explains:

"Architecture, too, has changed since I first wrote this essay. However, my hope that architects would heed the social planners' dicta did not pan out, and women did not ride in on that trend. Postmodernism did change the views of architects but not in the way I had hoped. Instead, the cult of personality increased. Architects lost their social concern and the architect as macho revolutionary was succeeded by the architect as *dernier cri* of the art world. This made things worse for women because, in architecture, the *dernier cri* is as male as the prima donna."<sup>2</sup>

The *dernier cri* is the latest of something, the most advanced. This need to "be fashionable," along with the egocentrism so characteristic of the world of architecture and the way of being of many architects, are aspects that Denise Scott Brown openly tackled. In fact, following the thread of this topic, the controversies associated with the recognition of certain roles and figures in the professional context of architecture are quite notorious and much has been said about the controversy surrounding the famous Pritzker Architecture Prize, which in 1991 was only awarded to Robert Venturi. He himself, in his acceptance speech for the award, valued and highlighted as something important the experience of working in pairs, always speaking in plural to emphasise the teamwork with Denise and to emphasise their critical and creative contributions:

"And last, you will notice during this loosely chronological description I have used more and more the first person plural, that is, "we" –meaning Denise and I. All my experience representing appreciation, support, and learning from, would have been less than half as rich –without my partnership with my fellow artist, Denise Scott Brown. There would be significantly less dimension within the scope and quality of the work this award is acknowledging today –including dimensions theoretical, philosophical and perceptive, especially social and urban, pertaining to the vernacular, to mass culture, from decorative to regional design – and in the quality of our design where Denise's input, creative and critical, is crucial."<sup>3</sup>

It is also notorious that years later, support was added from Venturi himself and prominent architects, as well as students, associations and entities,<sup>4</sup> to the initiative of a rectification of this award so that the work of the Venturi-Scott Brown team was recognised, which ultimately failed. The letter, dated 14 June 2013, written by Lord Peter Palumbo, Chairman of the Jury for the Prize, clarified that "Ms. Scott Brown has a long and distinguished career of architectural accomplishment. It will be up to present and future juries to determine who among the many architects practicing throughout the world receives future awards."<sup>5</sup> A poor approach to the problem associated the claim of the award with individual recognition, when what was intended was the evaluation of the teamwork.

Having given a shared award a posteriori, and making a rectification of the 1991 result, could have been a way to

send a valuable signal: to rate the teamwork and to make visible Denise's specific contribution that gave importance to places, to people, everyday, ordinary, as well as urban; topics in which she had developed a specific and recognisable work, as a teacher, as a professional and as a photographer. And also, it could have been a form of recognition of activism against sexism traditionally installed in architecture. Despite the pressure and evidence, the jury reaffirmed its decision on the grounds that it could not award retroactive awards for the impossibility of invalidating decisions made by other jury members.<sup>6</sup>

There are many examples of professional couples in which it is difficult to identify the work of each one: this is the case of Ray and Charles Eames or Alison and Peter Smithson, who managed to influence together with their work architectural thought and production. Recognition for collective work and in couples, such as the recent Pritzker Prize 2021, to Anne Lacaton and Jean-Philippe Vassal, shows that there is a positive and significant evolution, although much remains to be done to highlight the work of some architects, whose role has left little visible or has been undervalued. Few female architects have appeared in the books of architecture, although in recent years there are beginning to abound more and more recognitions and studies that highlight the contributions of important women for the evolution of the discipline.<sup>7</sup>

#### LEARNING FROM...

Aside from the controversy and claims for greater recognition, Denise herself has been charged with talking about her work. In fact, in a very representative text, "Architecture as Patterns and Systems. Learning from Planning," published in the book co-authored with Venturi: "Architecture as Signs and Systems for a Mannerist time" from 2004, the architect reviews her career highlighting in a specific way her interests, as a lecturer at several universities in the USA, as a theorist and writer alone or as a co-author, as a professional and partner of Venturi Scott Brown Associates/VSBA (fig. 03). Denise recognises from the outset the influence that several remarkable events had on her personal view towards the architecture and the city: her own experience between diverse and very contrasted geographic and cultural realities; discussions about the city with colleagues and teachers like Louis Kahn or the Smithsons; as well as the collaboration with professionals from various disciplines such as sociologists, economists, computer scientists and engineers.

Denise Scott Brown has been a great traveller, with a complex life that affected her particular approach to architecture and the city: Denise Lakofski,<sup>8</sup> was born on 3<sup>rd</sup> October, 1931 in what was once Northern Rhodesia. She studied at the University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa and then at the Architectural Association in London, she gained a master's degree in architecture and urban planning from the University of Pennsylvania, and then began a long relationship with that university and the city of Philadelphia where she settled down and lives today. In her teaching work, as an academic and educator, she developed countless research projects, including the study carried out with students, "Learning from Las Vegas,"<sup>9</sup> the result of which was published in the book of the same name in 1972 (with a revised edition in 1977), along with Robert Venturi and Steven Izenour, which became a revolutionary book and with an international diffusion. Venturi himself acknowledged that Denise had made him discover Las Vegas,<sup>10</sup> and that this work made visible not only Denise's particular and original view of *The Strip* of this iconic American city, but also, and at the same time, a whole set of methods and techniques of analysis, which would be added to those of other studies already performed. In his acceptance speech for the Pritzker Prize, Venturi acknowledged Denise's contribution to the work of Rome and "Learning from Las Vegas:"

"Las Vegas, which I learned from via the perspective of Rome and through the eyes of Denise Scott Brown, where we could discover the validity and appreciate the vitality of the commercial strip and of urban sprawl, of the commercial sign whose scale accommodates to the moving car and whose symbolism illuminates an iconography of our time. And where we thereby could acknowledge the elements of symbol and mass culture as vital to architecture, and the genius of the everyday, and the commercial vernacular as inspirational as was the industrial vernacular in the early days of Modernism."<sup>11</sup>

These issues are very current today, and Denise herself has been in charge of remembering them in a recent participation, in the debate *Dialogues on Learning from Las Vegas*,<sup>12</sup> where she invited all participants to continue learning about Las Vegas, but from a contemporary perspective and from our times, as well as giving importance also to the ordinary and apparently small relevant aspects, which may hide fundamental social forces for planning.<sup>13</sup>

It is not easy to determine Denise's specific legacy, due to the impossibility of defining her contributions and also, of measuring the relevance and impact of her personal reflections and ideas. In fact, it is not necessary to do so. But we can approach her facet as a writer and co-author of several texts considered key within her extensive production. In the theoretical field, Denise and Robert were among the first to question the hegemony of modern western architecture in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, both with the publication of *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* (1966, by Venturi), and with *Learning Las Vegas* (1972, with Venturi and Izenour). Among other writings, of the large amount she has done, *The View from the Campidoglio* (1986, with Venturi) and *Having Words* (2010), hold a determining value to highlight Denise's particular approach to architecture and the city.<sup>14</sup>

In the 17 selected essays that make up the book *A View from Campidoglio: Selected Essays, 1953-1984*, her approach is made explicit in a sequence of actions: "they look, analyse, synthesise through writing, synthesise through design, and then they look again." A fairly accurate description of what Denise's ongoing work also represents. To look, you need interest; to analyse, goals, hypotheses, methods; to synthesise, through writing and design, knowledge, reflection and concretion of ideas. Furthermore, added to all this, is to look again, to establish a cyclical and open process. Nothing more similar to the city and architecture as a continuous, dynamic and unfinished project. *Having Words* is a compilation of her own essays, with a selection of texts written between 1969 and 2007, which speak precisely of the importance of writing about architecture. The essays compile the ideas that govern Denise's work, which are the conceptual basis of her projects and which continue to be nurtured and disseminated also after Venturi's death in 2018. All this corroborates the importance of thinking about Denise's architectural culture and also her professional capacity as an architect.

It is indeed paradigmatic that in her speech at the reception of the Soane Medal award in 2018,<sup>15</sup> Denise Scott Brown puts forward an argument about her personal and professional career, in the manner of a particular reasoned autobiography, in which she intertwines moments and phases of her life with places and learning (fig. 04). She sums up her journey through the relationship she established with a selection of various places: "Learning from Johannesburg," "Learning from London," "Learning from Italy," "Learning from Philadelphia" and "Learning from Las Vegas." Far from being an explanation of a professional curriculum to use, which shows the successes achieved, through a mixture of images, concepts and life experiences, Denise makes a clear explanation of what architecture is for her and what she is herself. The "learning from ..." the continuous learning of something or someone, is one of the great teachings of Denise.

#### THE VALIDITY OF A SET OF PROJECT PRACTICES: CAMPUS AND CITY

As a partner, and later also as a director of Venturi, Scott Brown & Associates (VSBA), Denise Scott Brown has been responsible for the area of urban planning

and has directed numerous projects and urban plans, as well as master plans, including many aimed at Campus university students. She has also participated, among others, in the design of buildings such as the National Gallery, Sainsbury Wing (1991) in London; the Mielparque Nikko Kirifuri Hotel and Spa (1997) in Japan or the Provincial Capitol Building, (1999) in Toulouse, France.<sup>16</sup> Denise herself comments:

"We ourselves cannot tease our contributions apart. Since 1960 we have collaborated in the development of ideas and since 1967 we have collaborated in architectural practice. As chief designer, Bob takes final design responsibility. On some projects, I am closely involved and see many of my ideas in the final design; on others, hardly at all. In a few, the basic idea (what Louis Khan called the what) was mine. All of our firm's urban planning work, and the urban design related to it, is my responsibility; Bob is virtually not involved with it, although other architects in the firm are."<sup>17</sup>

We will focus on highlighting here the work on universities, an important core of her professional practice, which in addition to being linked to teaching, one of her personal facets, represents the approach to intermediate-scale spaces where Denise defines approaches, methods and instruments that range from urban analysis to the design of public space and buildings. Three Campuses are very representative of their approach to the project: the "Campus Master Plan of the University of Pennsylvania" in Philadelphia (1989-1994); the "Campus Plan of the University of Michigan" in Ann Arbor (1997-2002) and the "Planning for Campus Life" from Brown University in Providence (2004), cases of very diverse problems and solutions, which share the same methodology. "These are three examples in which planning, urban design and building projects obey three different strategies. In the "Campus Master Plan of the University of Pennsylvania" in Philadelphia, the proposal is based on promoting a "linear urban park," which connects the heart of the Campus and the city centre. In the "Campus Plan of the University of Michigan" in Ann Arbor, it is more of an "urban complex with an inner street," as a centrifugal place and catalyst of activities. And finally, in the "Planning for Campus Life" at Brown University in Providence, a "distributed and interconnected network of spaces is established."<sup>18</sup>

In all the projects, the idea of Campus as "a whole" is approached in a broad, cross-cutting and complex way that should strengthen its links with the environment, the community, the city and the landscape. They are urban and architectural strategies to provide legibility and to enhance, improve and promote a system of relationships and patterns that exist, that are weak or that are not interconnected. Denise uses methods of mapping analysis of circulation, uses or activities, and produces graphic syntheses that reveal, locate and measure problems. Furthermore, they reveal opportunities and potentials, while identifying options and defining solutions (figs. 05, 06, 07). The keywords used for each of the studies clarify, in a strategic, traced and localised way, which are the most important variables and the aspects of the context that must be taken into account: the character and "ethos" of the Campus; areas; circulation networks (pedestrian and of vehicles); connections and access (both from the Campus and from each building through the "Nolli" maps and urban sections); desire lines; distances in time; landscape reading (topography and buildings) or vegetation classification (romantic, iconic, symbolic, common).<sup>19</sup>

For Denise: "The University encourages involvement in a medley of activities outside classes because "the educational experience extends to all aspects of students' lives and.... the academic mission and program of the University have an important complement in the broad educational framework that students find outside the classroom."<sup>20</sup> Therefore, "the range of activities on- and off campus, the resources and the spaces, are all understood as a rich and complex educational whole."<sup>21</sup> Topics that the architect feels

very close to herself, as when she vindicates her ideas that emerged in conversations with Kahn, explaining: "[...] was surprised (and flattered) to hear Lou present as his own, thoughts that I had shared with him: "Campus architecture should be kickable,"<sup>22</sup> she said, thus highlighting one of the basic themes of these Campus professional commissions, developed from an interscalar approach and from the user, in which city and architecture merge.

#### ARCHITECTURE FROM THE INSIDE OUT. MAPPING SYSTEMS, "PATTERNS" AND "LINKAGES"

Faced with the question: What do you need to understand so as to intervene in the city through architecture? Denise Scott Brown, raises a series of approaches, methods and instruments that would help her to see, abstract, analyse, synthesise and specify her proposals (fig. 08). In the text already cited, "Architecture as Patterns and Systems, Learning from Planning," she addresses the importance of activities as patterns, the redefinition of functionalism, the role of context in architecture, but also concludes with a sentence about Mannerism, the fact that you cannot follow all the rules of all the systems all of the time. And so, in the midst of questions regarding the definition of functions and functionalism, she concludes:

"We have seen that the definition of functionalism has wide ramifications and can be extended in many directions; that functional change is pushed by change in the social, technological, and urban dimensions of our world; and that these, in turn, exert demands on buildings to accommodate changing activities over time. Cogent issues of definition remain: function in architecture is defined by whom, from whom, and when?"<sup>23</sup>

The mapping thus becomes a cross-sectional and interscalar analysis tool from the building to the street, the neighbourhood, the city and the territory. Very useful for understanding systems, relationships and patterns, as something that transcends the strictly physical and skilfully articulates between the morphological and topological, as she learned together with the Smithsons, or between inside-outside relationships, as she learned from Kahn. A verification carried out also through the use of data and that also presents us with an integral idea of architecture very close to the current ecological and sustainable vision:

"Today urban mapping is fashionable among architects, but they don't use its real capacities. They superimpose distributions [...]. The distributions serve as heuristics for form-giving, but their content, the relationships they represent, is irrelevant. We map urban relationships: activities [...] and economic patterns that show linkage between activities or growth; also social and population variables and natural patterns of slopes and water. Then we relate the activities of our building program to them. So our designs become, on one level, interpolations and extrapolations of our maps. And this holds not only for urban and site planning but also for the plans of buildings. We apply ideas from land use and transportation planning to the layouts of laboratory buildings, and our activity patterns flow from inside to outside and vice versa."<sup>24</sup>

Denise Scott Brown understands architecture as a way of "making the city," from seeing and understanding, so as to improve or reform based on what already exists (fig. 09). Thus, she guides her actions to order relationships and developments, proposing forms and designs, establishing positive dialectics between built and empty spaces, attending to social behaviours and aspirations. For her, architecture is defined by asking herself by who, for whom and when. This requires "thinking before acting," a systemic and strategic vision of what exists when it comes to proposing an architectural form in the city. A holistic approach that has allowed her to propose methods to identify and make visible urban and human relationships to intervene in buildings, streets, public spaces or plan cities and university Campuses.

For the time being, we are left with a balance, and with an ironic and groundbreaking position, through the speech that Denise herself gave on the occasion of the reception of the Soane Medal in 2018,<sup>25</sup> when she provocatively challenged Robert Moses who, with *the approval of hundreds of projects, had altered the image of New York* (figs. 10 a, 10 b):

"After I took the photographs of Bob, he took my portrait, not as a faceless person aligned with other monuments but as a woman staring back at the camera. Today, when I look at this image and myself then, confidently standing there, hands on hips, I see someone who is happy with her professional life and happier still with her personal life. I also see someone who is feeling triumphant and daring anyone to say otherwise. But irony is there too, for in my mind was a poem, 'I am monarch of all I survey', and I was also spoofing Robert Moses."<sup>26</sup>

A legacy of learning, which clearly defines Denise's specific contribution as an architect and urban planner, which is valid both as a reference for study and for contemporary professional practice. Today Denise, who will be 90 years old in October, continues to work, and dedicates most of her time and her strength to writing her memoirs.

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## Notes

**01.** SCOTT BROWN, Denise: "Room at the Top? Sexism and the Star System in Architecture," page 37. <https://www.mascontext.com/issues/27-debate-fall-15/room-at-the-top-sexism-and-the-star-system-in-architecture/> Originally published as SCOTT BROWN, Denise: "Room at the Top? Sexism and the Star System in Architecture," in *Architecture: A Place for Women*, ed. Ellen Perry Berkeley and Matilda McQuaid, Washington, DC, Smithsonian Institution Press, 1989.

**02.** *Ibid.*, p. 36.

**03.** VENTURI, Robert, 1991 *Laureate Acceptance Speech. The Pritzker Architecture Prize*. The Hyatt Foundation. <http://www.infolio.es/11infolio/scottbrown/pritzkerprize.pdf>

**04.** In 2013 two students from the Women in Design Association of the Harvard Graduate School of Design, Arielle Assouline-Lichten and Caroline James, started a Change.org petition to gather massive support for the petition to award the Pritzker Prize, retroactively, to Denise Scott Brown. The petition received more than 18,000 signatures including that of Harvard's Dean at the time, Mohsen Mostafavi and all faculty members. <https://www.gsd.harvard.edu/2013/09/student-activism-women-in-design-wid/>

**05.** Text taken from the letter signed by Lord Peter Palumbo "A Letter from the Chair of the 2013 Jury of The Pritzker Architecture Prize on Behalf of the Jury," sent on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2013 in response to the request of the two students of the Harvard School of Design. <https://www.architecturalrecord.com/ext/resources/archives/news/2013/06/Pritzker-Letter.pdf>

**06.** *Ibid.*

**07.** As an example of awards, or studies that value and emphasize the contribution of women in architecture, Denise Scott Brown won the Jane Drew Award 2017, an award that recognizes the architect who has "raised the profile of women in architecture" through her work and commitment to excellence in design, as part of the *Women in Architecture Awards of The Architectural Review* (AR).

<https://www.architectural-review.com/today/denise-scott-brown-wins-the-2017-jane-drew-prize>

**08.** In a recent interview Denise Scott Brown herself explains:

Q: Your maiden name was Denise Lakofski. Why was it never Denise Venturi? A: I once looked for articles by an American sociologist, Ruth Durant, and I realised that she was missing. Then I started reading another woman who wrote similar things, but her name was Ruth Glass. I put two and two together and I guessed that she had married. When Bob and I got married, I was a teacher at Berkeley and I had already published articles. I remembered this sociologist and I thought there was no point in losing what was done. Giving up my last name would have meant giving up my work.

Q: Scott Brown is the last name of her first husband. A: Yes, Robert was the last in his line. We had studied architecture together and when he died at the age of 28 I wanted to keep his name. I'm not sure his parents were amused. But I wanted to. However, the main reason was the writings. Calling me Venturi I couldn't have done anything. Interview carried out by ZABALBEASCOA, Anaxtu, "En la arquitectura hace falta menos ego y más miedo," 2013/07/23 *El País*. [https://elpais.com/elpais/2013/04/23/eps/1366712866\\_157748.html](https://elpais.com/elpais/2013/04/23/eps/1366712866_157748.html)

**09.** The book *Learning from Las Vegas: The Forgotten Symbolism of Architectural Form* (1972) by Denise Scott Brown, Robert Venturi and Steven Izenour, was the result of the systematisation of his teaching at the Yale School of Architecture in 1968 and shows the authors' interest in the landscape of American urban life, and more specifically, in the architecture, signs and elements of the shopping mall in Las Vegas called *The Strip*. Prior to this work, Venturi and Scott Brown had already written "A Significance for A & P Parking Lots, or Learning from Las Vegas" (1968) which formed the basis of the course programme and the publication that was developed after. <https://introtomodernart.files.wordpress.com/2020/04/venturi-and-brown-the-significance-of-ap-parking.pdf>

**10.** VENTURI, Robert, 1991 *Laureate Acceptance Speech. The Pritzker Architecture Prize*. The Hyatt Foundation. <http://www.infolio.es/11infolio/scottbrown/pritzkerprize.pdf>

**11.** *Ibid.*

**12.** Between 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> November, 2020, the Touriscape2 congress was held in Barcelona in virtual format, where the roundtable "Dialogues on Learning from Las Vegas" was held, with the participation of Jeremy Tenenbaum, Carolina Vaccaro, Eva Álvarez, Miguel Mayorga and M. Pia Fontana. <https://youtu.be/ic9iPb9LdnQ>.

**13.** Denise Scott Brown wanted to share some ideas about *Learning from Las Vegas* with conference attendees and she did so through Jeremy Tenenbaum, Director of Marketing and Graphics for VSBA in Philadelphia, in two emails in which she passed on her thoughts and comments. In the first one she Denise said: "To everyone at the Touriscape 2 Symposium: Hello and welcome. You ask, "What did you learn from Las Vegas?" An early answer was: "What did you learn from the Parthenon?" –meaning what we learned is not easy to define. Another was that we learned to update architecture's precepts –its good precepts– for today, just as our forbearers, the early Moderns, learned to roll with the punches and changes of their society and devised a new beauty. I've re-asked the question throughout my life and answers include that communication is one of the functions of architecture and with it comes symbolism. And that agonized beauty and laughing rather than crying are an essence of architecture. How will you answer the question? Think about it during the symposium and prepare to discover and add your own principles. I've said nearly all I have to say, but you can work on learning for your time from Las Vegas" (Denise Scott Brown, 5<sup>th</sup> November, 2020. Philadelphia). In the second email, after the symposium Denise sent another reflection: "Somewhere in both my recent and earlier writings I have described how people didn't learn from Las Vegas, that is, the unimaginative follow up studies

they have done –for example, the lifting wholesale of our Las Vegas work programs and applying them unchanged to a Thames Valley study. I described what planners taught about study design and the Britton Harris critique of the whole principle of research. I feel the time is ripe for this to reappear and be republished. The people at that conference would know what to do with it. The journey to discovering "salient variables" starting with a "learning from" study and continuing, very broadly, from there with studies and mapping, of sociocultural and economic variables, plus detective work –i.e. personal, canny, on-site, private eye observation, the kind that helped me discover they were going to build an expressway on the Memphis cobblestones. And learning that a salient variable in Memphis was the location of jazz clubs and that they should have a map of their own showing all else they related to. This discovery of the unique for each study is a step toward economy –by not studying something irrelevant. It's also one of the joys of doing that type of urban planning. And because it relates to the way they think, it's a help to architects in creatively conceiving physical plans from social forces." (Denise Scott Brown, 9<sup>th</sup> November, 2020. Philadelphia)

**14.** VENTURI, Robert, *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*, Museum of Modern Art-New York / Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies of Fine Arts-Chicago, New York, 1966. Translated to Spanish with the title: *Complejidad y contradicción en la arquitectura*. SCOTT BROWN Denise, VENTURI, Robert, IZENOUR Steven, *Learning from Las Vegas*, Cambridge, MIT Press, 1972. Translated to Spanish with the title: *Aprendiendo de Las Vegas*. VENTURI, Robert, SCOTT BROWN, Denise, *The View from the Campidoglio: Selected Essays 1963-1984*, Australia, HarperCollins, 1986. SCOTT BROWN, Denise, *Having Words*, London, AA Publications, 2010.

**15.** SCOTT BROWN, Denise, *Soane Medal Lecture 2018*. The Soane Medal is a prize awarded annually by the Sir John

Soane's Museum in London. To see the video of the talk by Denise: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PyRp-maHzK4>. It is also worth highlighting that Learning from ... is very evident through the photographs and reports made by Denise in different cities and in the many trips she made throughout her life: <https://www.soane.org/soane-medal/2018-denise-scott-brown>

**16.** All the projects and writings by Venturi and Scott Brown are filed in the website of VSB <http://venturiscottbrown.org/>. This site is a thematic and chronological archive and an indispensable source of consultation for any research on her work.

**17.** SCOTT BROWN, Denise, Denise Scott Brown: "Room at the Top? Sexism and the Star System in Architecture," *op. cit.*, p. 31.

**18.** MAYORGA CÁRDENAS, M.Y.; FONTANA, M.P.; ARBOIX ALIÓ, A. *Towards a green, inclusive, sensitive and healthy Campus*. A: Llop, C.; Cervera, M.; Peremiquel, F. (eds.). "IV Congress ISUF-H: Metropolis in recomposition: perspective projects in the 21st century: Urbis shape and metropolitan territories, Barcelona, 28<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2020." Barcelona: DUOT, UPC, 2020, p. 1-19.

**19.** *Ibid.*

**20.** VSBA Architects and Planners. Brown University, Planning for Campus Life. <https://www.vsba.com/projects/brown-university-planning-for-campus-life/>

**21.** *Ibid.*

**22.** SCOTT BROWN, Denise, "A Worm's Eye View of Recent Architectural History," in *Architectural Record*, n. 2 1984 February, pp. 69-80.

**23.** VENTURI, Robert & SCOTT-BROWN, Denise, *Architecture as Signs and Systems: For a Mannerist Time*. Cambridge, Belknap Press, 2004. p. 172.

**24.** TAMAS, Andrea, *Interview: Robert Venturi & Denise Scott Brown*, published by Sebastián Jordana in *ArchDaily*, 25<sup>th</sup> April 2011. Interview carried out in August 2009. <https://www.archdaily.com/130389/interview-robert-venturi-denise-scott-brown-by-andrea-tamas>

**25.** Extract from texts by Denise Scott Brown pronounced on the occasion of the Soane Medal Lecture, in 2018. <https://www.soane.org/soane-medal/2018-denise-scott-brown>

**26.** MARTIN, Sphen, "Moses visit, 2019 1<sup>st</sup> October, Blog Friends of the Ruin: "This photograph is considered the most famous image of the New York Master Commissioner Robert Moses (1888-1981). The New York Times describes the scene. Robert Moses, "president of the Triborough Bridge and Tunnel Authority - just one of his many titles - standing on a red I-beam suspended over the East River, arms on hips and a scroll of drawings in his hand: the foreman at work. Behind him, on the opposite bank, is the United Nations complex, one of hundreds of projects that altered the city and that Moses captained between the 20s and 60s, decades in which, having consolidated political power thanks to his genius for drafting laws, he shaped New York City. The scene was captured by the famous photographer Arnold Newman (1918-2006) on a sunny Thursday afternoon in June 1959. The context shows that the photograph was taken on the south shore of Roosevelt Island." <https://www.theruin.org/blog/2016/9/20/robert-moses-on-roosevelt-island-pop7b>

## Images

**01.** Plan with schemes and diagrams representative of urban analyses. Campus Williams College 1975. Williamstown, Massachusetts, United States. VSBA Architects. Source: <http://venturiscottbrown.org/>

**02.** Cover and front page of the essay: Room at the Top? Sexism and the Star System in Architecture. Source: <https://www.mascontext.com/issues/27-debate-fall-15/room-at-the-top-sexism-and-the-star-system-in-architecture/>

**03.** Some notable books by Denise Scott Brown. The covers of *Learning from Las Vegas* (Venturi, Scott Brown and Izenour, 1972); *A View from Campidoglio: Selected Essays, 1953-1984* (Venturi and Scott Brown 1984), *Architecture as Signs and Systems: For a Mannerist Time* (Venturi and Scott Brown, 2004) and *Having Words* (Scott Brown, 2011).

**04.** Denise Scott Brown in 2018. Source: <https://arquitecturaviva.com/articles/soane-medal-2018>

**05.** Urban strategy and project. "Campus Master Plan of the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia" (1989-1994). A linear urban park: continuity between the heart of the Campus and the city centre: <https://www.vsba.com/academic/>

**06.** Urban strategy and project. "Campus Plan, University of Michigan." Ann Arbor, Detroit. 1997-2002. An urban complex with an interior street as a centrifugal place and a catalyst for activities. Source: <https://www.vsba.com/academic/>

**07.** Urban strategy and project. "Planning for Campus Life, Brown University." Providence, Rhode Island. 2004. Network layout and new plan of uses and activities to revitalise the urban life of the Campus. Source: <https://www.vsba.com/academic/>

**08.** Denise Scott Brown, explaining the Fairmount cultural landscape in Penn 1983. Regional-scale social and cultural mapping that incorporates signal systems, urban green spaces, transportation, and residential elevations. Source: <http://www.arpajournal.net/studio/>

**09.** Interscalarity in projects. Washington Avenue Revitalisation Plan. Miami Beach. Venturi, Scott Brown and Associates, Inc. 1978. Source: <http://venturiscottbrown.org/pdfs/MiamiBeachFLRevitalizationPlan01.pdf>

**10 a.** Denise Scott Brown Las Vegas style, Bob style, and Magritte style, with mannerist games of scale. Photo: Robert Venturi (1966).

**10 b.** Robert Moses (1888-1981) commissioner of New York. Photo: Arnold Newman (1959).