# Archiblog: Introducing a research project by Norman Fellows

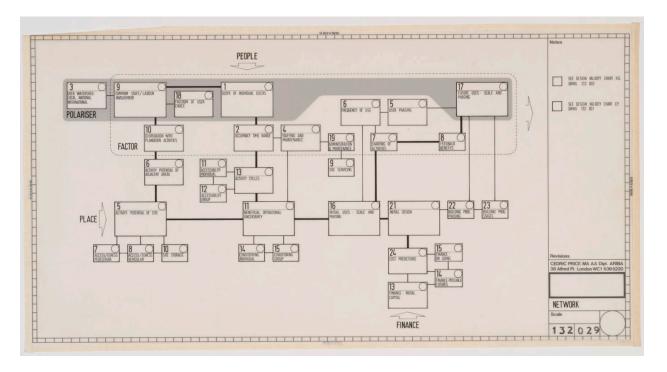
### **Synopsis**

- 1.1 Archiblog directs our attention towards a basic question about this area of research i.e. what do we know? After tracing its origins back to the 1960s and its development through into the 1970s, Archiblog focuses on a seminal project, namely, Cedric Price's Generator.
- 1.2 Archiblog draws on a growing collection of key literature represented here by an annotated bibliography. From this the main theme i.e. the *digital now* is defined by Abha Daweshar and the sub themes of *architecture* and *intersectionality* are defined by Cedric Price and Kimberlé Crenshaw respectively.
- 2.1 Archiblog asks a fundamental question concerning the role and the nature of values, of value judgements, and of valuation i.e. why do we care? Some of the key literature on classism and racism and sexism is referenced and the critical need to make good the shortfalls in the body of key literature in this area of research is addressed.
- 2.2 In focusing on Generator as perhaps the project addressing the relationship between 'architecture' and 'intersectionality' within the context of the 'digital now', Archiblog points out the significance of the siting of the project on an old rice plantation, noting the inclusion of the Slave Bothy on the drawings, and draws on the collaboration of John and Julia Frazer as essential.
- 3.1 Archiblog asks one last question i.e. what can we do? Cedric suggested in Works II that in some projects "the continuously updated report or Design Validity Chart replaces static drawings as a design generator of other people's action".
- 3.2 My own engagement with this area of research began with my correspondence with Cedric and the introduction of drawing 132/029, which represents an incomplete picture of Cedric's ordering. Archiblog therefore proposes that we should do our own <u>digital</u> ordering, both individually and collectively.

### **Outline**

#### What do we know?

- 1.1 We know firstly from the literature:—
  - ...that the history of this area of research can be traced back to the 1960s where we learn, for example, "Architect Cedric Price placed maximum emphasis on electronic technology as he amassed a Kit of Parts for a decentralized education system..." (Cannady, 1968, p.24);
  - ...that the 'ordering' Cedric developed through from Fun Palace to Generator culminated in his drawing 132/029 [1]:—



• initial design network showing three starting points – people 1, place 5, and finance 13

### Thus we know:—

• ...that this area of research is not simply a 'given' but has been developed by Cedric and others, including myself, over a period of more than 50 years.

### https://archiblog.wordpress.com/outline/2/

1.2 Secondly, we also know from my bibliography:—

• ...that the 'digital now' has been defined by Abha Dawesar as:—

(something) with no distinction left between the past, the present and the future, and the here or there, we're left with this moment everywhere. [2]

• ...that 'architecture' has been defined by Cedric Price as:—

that which, through a natural distortion of time, place and interval, creates beneficial social conditions that hitherto were considered impossible. [3]

• ...that 'intersectionality' has been defined by Kimberlé Crenshaw as:—

a metaphor for understanding the ways that multiple forms of inequality or disadvantage sometimes compound themselves and they create obstacles that often are not understood within conventional ways of thinking about anti-racism or feminism or whatever social justice advocacy structures we have. [4]

Thus this research proposal focuses on the relationship between 'architecture' and 'intersectionality' within the context of the 'digital now'.

### https://archiblog.wordpress.com/outline/3/

### Why do we care?

- 2.1 We care, firstly, and most obviously:—
  - ...because we value equality as a basic human right and completely reject the values which define classism and racism and sexism;
  - ...because so little has been written about the relationship between architecture and intersectionality in the context of the digital now.

Leonard Bachman and Christine Bachman, for example, have written: —

- ... Intersectionality helps explain institutionalized oppression and links to the theme of complexity;
- ... For architects ... intersectionality links design to issues of social oppression, policy development, and class discrimination; [5]

and have treated intersectionality as a problem to be solved.

Cedric, however, has written:—

Instantaneous architectural response to a particular problem is too slow. [..] Architecture should have little to do with problem solving. [6]

Architecture is slow and therefore requires anticipatory design. [ib.]

### 2.2 Secondly, we care:—

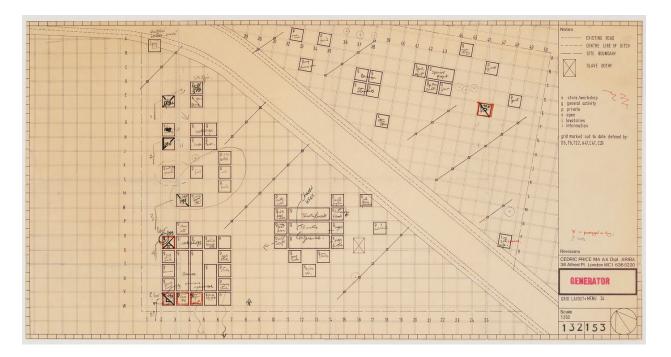
• ...because Cedric has created a project which does address the relationship between 'architecture' and 'intersectionality' within the context of the 'digital now', namely, Generator.

Molly Wright Steenson has written in the 'architecture' category of her weblog:—

The technical ideas behind Price and the Frazers' collaboration on Generator have still not been largely realized.[7]

Thus we care:—

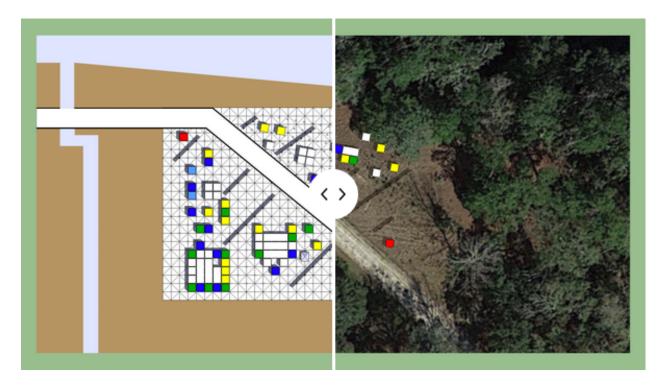
• ...because Generator is an incomplete architectural response to the challenge of what can we do:— cf. drawing 132/153.



• Generator: grid layout and Menu 24 - note the inclusion of the Slave Bothy

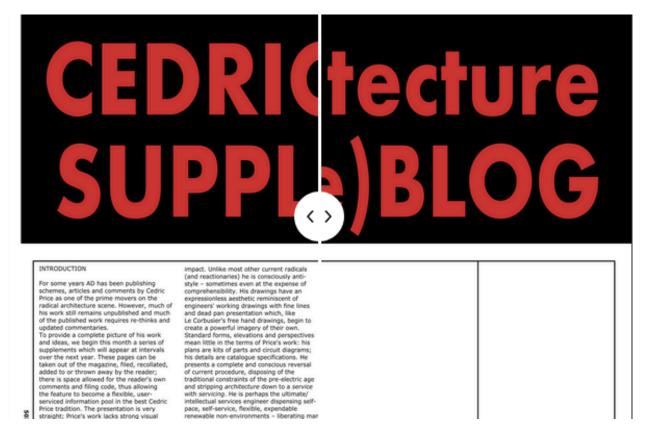
### What can we do?

- 3.1.1 ...we can begin by helping people to understand that we have a shared interest in 'the commons' i.e. the set of resources to which the community has, or should have, free and equal access. This is not confined to education, but includes other areas of integration such as health, pleasure, learning, energy, information, shelter and movement and to which we must now add the world wide web.
- 3.1.2 ...we can enable people to focus on the relationship between 'architecture' and 'intersectionality' within the context of the 'digital now' by making information about the areas of integration comprising the commons available in a continuously updated and updatable form on the web.
- 3.2.1 ...we can collectively assemble an intersectional discourse on digital design which recognizes that architecture requires anticipatory design.
- 3.2.2 ... we can complete Generator as <u>the</u> seminal project in this area of research by drawing on the Frazers' contribution.



• Screenshot showing site model on White Oak Plantation - before+after geolocation

- 3.3.1 ...we can publish continuously updated reports i.e. architecture weblogs and design validity charts to replace Cedric Price's static drawings as a design generator of other people's actions. [8]
- 3.3.2 ...we can therefore do our own <u>digital</u> ordering, both individually and collectively, using for example:—
  - a free blogging platform and content management system i.e. wordpress.com;
  - a free and open-source vector graphics editor -i.e. Inkscape;
  - a 3D modeling computer program i.e. Sketchup; and
  - a free computer program that renders a 3D representation of Earth based primarily on satellite imagery i.e. Google Earth.



• Screenshot comparing Cedric Price Supplement cover and an Archiblog "blank" - before+after

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#### Date: between March 1993 and September 2020

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### **Notes - see Outline**

- 1 Drawing 132/029 from Cedric Price fonds [1]
- 2 Videotaped talk from Abha Dawesar at a TED Conference in 2013 [2]
- 3 Audiotaped talk from Cedric Price [3]
- 4 Videotaped talk from Kimberlé Crenshaw [4]
- 5 Paper by Leonard Bachman and Christine Bachman [5]
- 6 Quote by Cedric Price taken from 'Cedric Price Works II' [6]
- 7 Quote by Molly Wright Steenson taken from 'Cedric Price's Generator' [7]
- 8 Annotated scrapbooks for a series of continuously updated reports [8]

## **Biography**

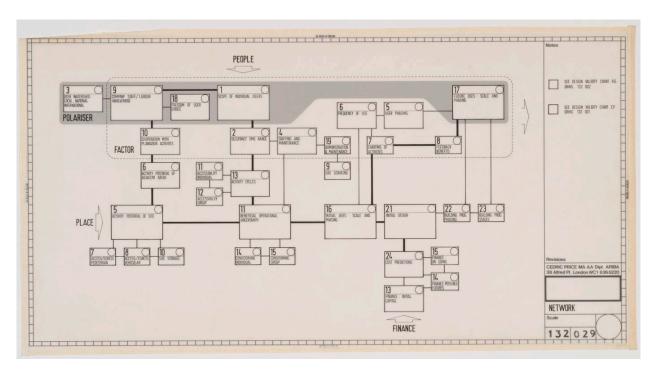
### **Date: between 1967 and 1978**

My engagement with this area of research began in August 1967 when I obtained a copy of Architectural Design featuring Cedric Price's Potteries Thinkbelt. It continued over the years until eventually I wrote to Cedric on 15 October 1977 asking for his help and enclosing my early bibliography. I received a letter dated 8 November 1977 saying that:—

...(Cedric) has noted your interest. As it is so wide he thinks you should concentrate rather on aims than objects and then investigate the validity of the resulting objects.

and suggesting "perhaps you could telephone and arrange to meet" (my emphasis).

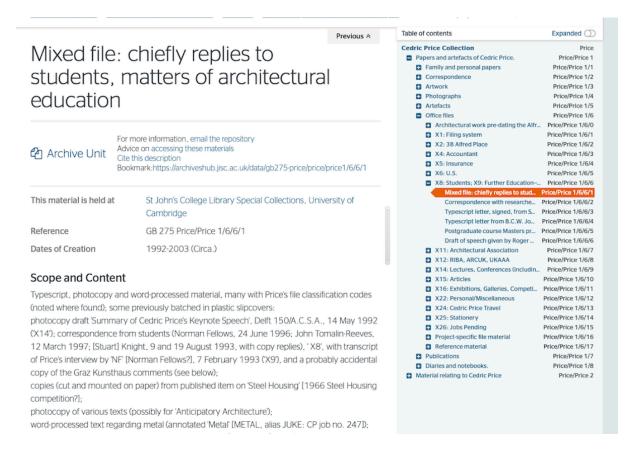
Thus my engagement with this area of research entered a new phase continuing at our meeting on 10 January 1978 when Cedric introduced drawing 132/029:—



• initial design network showing three starting points - note reference to drwg 132/001

### **Date: between 1978 and 1993**

In addition to having learnt about Cedric's initial design network, I emerged from our first meeting with a copy of the 'AA Social Institutions Bibliography 1978'. It included 'Complexity' which was already listed in my own bibliography. This introduction to the concept of 'intersectionality', albeit by another name, prompted me to study the intersecting issues of class and race and gender in a variety of Open University courses effectively culminating with a series of three structured interviews of Cedric which I conducted, audiotaped and transcribed:—



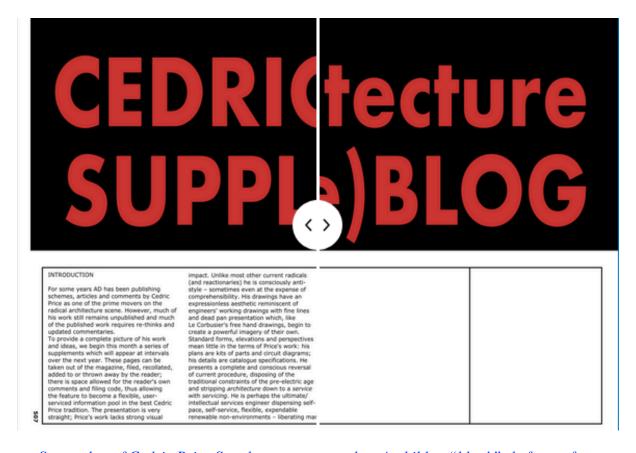
• transcript archived in the Cedric Price Collection at St. John's College, Cambridge

### **Date: between 1993 and 2020**

During the first structured interview, I asked Cedric if he was content to leave his ideas for others to pick up and take forward. Cedric replied that:—

...it's your duty to make it available but not make it available as a panacea but as a starter or one of the starters for new work by someone else.

My engagement with this area of research could not have progressed beyond Cedric's initial design network, however, without my ability to use the digital:—



• Screenshot of Cedric Price Supplement cover and an Archiblog "blank" - before+after

### $\mathbf{CV}$



• Norman Fellows

- Born November 1946
- Qualifications MA (Open), Dipl. Arch (Leeds)
- 1972 Founded Practice Norman Fellows
- 1988-2000 Part-time teaching, Matthew Arnold, Oxford and Sawston Village College, Cambridge
- 1999-2006 Part-time administrating, University of Cambridge International Examinations and the Assessment Qualifications Alliance, UK
- 2001 Founder on Blogger of Archiblog (Experimental Practice)
- 2008 Founded Edukit World Educational System

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2017	Coursera How to Change the World		Passed with a grade of 98.20%		
		sera Community Mentor and Training Course		Course Certificate	
		A Academy/SDSNEDU The Age of Sustainable Development		Certificate of Proficiency with Distinct	
2000	UCLES	ES/CIE  Quality Training Programme		Certificate of Completion	
1999	RIBA/University of Cambridge AutoCAD Foundation Course		Certificate of Attendance		
1990-1996	96 The Open University E835 Educational Research in Action			Part A of the Doctorate in Education (includes E333, E325, EP851, E823 and E8	
1990-1994	The Open University E823 Technology Education E817 Education, Training and Employment			Master of Arts (includes E333, E325 and EP851)	
1990-1992	0-1992 The Open University EP851 Applied Studies in Educational Management			Advanced Diploma in Educational Manageme (includes E333 and E325)	
1987	Bradf	Ford/Ilkley Communit RSA Typing First (			
1986-1987	Leeds	Leeds School of Education PGCE Course (Secondary)		Post Graduate Certificate in Education	
1985-1991	The Open University D102 Social Sciences: A Foundation Course T241 Systems Behaviour T244 Managing in Organizations E333 Policy-making in Education E325 Managing Schools			Bachelor	of Arts
1978	Self-	study/AA Social Institution	ns		
1975-1976	Leeds	School of Town Pla Post-Graduate Cour			
1965-1972	Leeds	S School of Archited Diploma Course (RI		Diploma	In Architecture
1958-1965 Regis School, Wolverhampton GCE Courses			oton	2 'A' Levels 8 'O' Levels	

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2002-2006 AQA,	Harrogate	Various	Various temporary administrative posts		
2005-2005 Come	t, Harrogate	Shop Ass	Shop Assistant - Christmas		
2001-2004 Pers	onal Preferences	Temporar	Temporary Worker - Research, Administration		
2001-2001 UCLE			Temporary Office Worker (CIE) - Fixed term po		
2001-2001 Adec		-	Temporary Worker - Customer Services		
	ton Village College		Teacher (Design & Technology; Mathematics)		
2000-2000 UCLE			Subject Officer (CIE) (Art & Home Economics)		
1999-2000 UCLE			Clerical Marker/Transcription Checker (EFL) Teacher (D & T; Science; Art)		
	ton Village College (formerly SEG)		Assistant Examiner (Design & Technology)		
	hew Arnold, Oxford		Teacher (Technology; Art; IT)		
	s City Council		Supply Teacher		
1983-1986 Hill	-		Assistant Manager (Twilight Team)		
	ael Lyell, Bradford		Assistant - Housing		
1975-1976 Silv	erline Taxis, Ilkley	7 Taxi Dri	Taxi Driver		
1974-1974 Robe	rtshaw Nelson, Leeds	. Assistan	Assistant - Leisure Centres		
1973-1974 Twis	t & Whitley, Wetherh	oy Assistan	Assistant - Schools		
1972-1973 Gill	inson Barnett, Leeds	. Assistan	Assistant - Offices		
1972- Norm	an Fellows (now NFA)	Anti-arc	Anti-architect		
1970-1970 West	s, Morley	Architec	Architectural Assistant - Housing		
1969-1969 Twis	t & Whitley, Leeds	Architec	Architectural Assistant - Schools		
1969-1969 Tate	Trucks, Leeds	Driver			
1968-1968 Co-o	p Architects, Manche	ester Architec	Architectural Assistant - Shops		
	d Hotel, Manchester				
	all Borough Architec		Architectural Assistant - Civic Buildings		
	fordshire County Arc		Architectural Assistant - Schools		
	and Counties, Wolver	-	Milkman  Temporary Worker - Christmas		
1963-1966 GPO,	Wolverhampton	Temporar	y worker - Christmas		
			MA (OU) Dipl. Arch (Leeds) ARCHIBLOG @normanfellows.com Skype: Archiblog		

• NF CV Professional - click here to see large image