

## **Julie Homchick**

Center for Environmental Justice and Sustainability: Faculty Fellowship Final Report

---

### **Project: Rhetorical Architecture: the Bullitt Center and Arguments for Sustainability**

In order to better understand how persuasion and sustainability can work together, I pursued this project with the Center for Environmental Justice and Sustainability to examine how Seattle's Bullitt Center embodies a deliberative message that offers an argument in favor of changing attitudes and behaviors through its spatial and material design. Ultimately, I found that the Bullitt Center modifies our understanding of the persuasive power of architecture and its role in environmental advocacy.

### **Progress since Midterm Report**

---

#### ***Data Collection***

Since my mid-term report, I was able to complete several interviews with designers and architects connected to the Bullitt Center which complemented my existing collection of qualitative data. I interviewed individuals from the construction management team to current tenants of the buildings as well as design consultants. In doing so, I added a robust qualitative approach to my work that not only included visual and media analyses, but also the voices of those involved in the project.

#### ***State of the Field***

After reading more articles on environmental communication and visual communication, I identified a strong need for work that addresses spatial and architectural modes of advocacy in environmental discourse. Most research that examines the connection between visuals and the environment look at the meaning and impact of photography, film, representations of data and other two-dimensional depictions on the environment. My work asks us to consider how spatial and architectural elements shape our experiences of nature and potentially change attitudes, behaviors and policy.

#### ***Projects from this Research***

##### *Teaching*

In a course I teach on environmental communication, I teach students about how environmental issues need to be understood through attention to language and communication. I have now integrated a unit into this course on architecture specifically and have students tour the Bullitt Center during one of our class days.

##### *Research Presentations*

I was able to share my work during the spring CEJS social in spring of 2016 as well as other informal research groups in my discipline.

##### *Publications*

The project is currently under review at the journal *Environmental Communication*. Some of the work will also be integrated into a co-authored book titled *Rhetorical Haunts*.