INTRODUCTION
PUSHED TO THE EDGE? MARGINALIZATION AND THE CONSTRUCTED INTERIOR

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Many humans live on the edge each day, pushed to where the possibility of success or simply a small step forward is unattainable. For these individuals, families, and cultures, life on the edge or in the margin does not represent the thrill of stepping into the unknown but is instead simply the unknown. Where will they sleep, when will the next meal occur, what violence might they face?

Framed by both historic and contemporary social values, marginalization is entrenched such that victims find themselves unable to engage in community activities; participate in political processes; or achieve parity in matters such as educational attainment, home mortgage rates, and quality healthcare access. The people impacted are as diverse as the limitations themselves. Women; children; immigrants and migrants; individuals with different political or religious views; victims of human trafficking; members of the LGTBQ community; people with developmental, physical, or mental differences; and incarcerated or unemployed individuals are just a few of those impacted by these laws and practices. Many individuals find themselves, because of the intertwined nature of these demographic characteristics, confronting double or triple exclusion (American Psychological Association, 2018).

The World Health Organization explains that marginalization is a "dynamic, multi-dimensional process driven by unequal power relationships interacting across four main dimensions—economic, political, social and cultural—and at different levels including individual, household, group, community, country and global levels. It results in a continuum of inclusion/exclusion characterised by unequal access to resources, capabilities and rights" (World Health Organization, 2018). It is significant to our broader understanding of marginalization to identify two distinctly different perspectives. First, marginalization is the intentional outcome arising from discriminatory attitudes and beliefs. Second, and most often overlooked, marginalization is born in a vacuum where the attitudes and beliefs fostering inclusion have not been intentionally incorporated.

This special issue, *Pushed to the Edge? Marginalization and the Constructed Interior*, examines conditions of inequality by challenging the status quo within the built environment. The work of the scholars published in this special issue enables us to better understand the role of designers and the environment as agents of social change. These articles further challenge each of us, as designers, practitioners, educators, students, and citizens, to rethink the role we play in the continuation or the eradication of inequity.

The issue opens with the Perspective of Beth Tauke, Associate Professor in the Department of Architecture and Project Director in the Center for Inclusive Design and Environmental Access, and Korydon Smith, Professor and Chair of Architecture and Co-Director of the Community for Global Health Equity, both of the University at Buffalo. In *Marginalized by Design*, they show a world today where children, immigrants, older adults, people with disabilities, and individuals with mental illness confront daily challenges that many of us imagined dissolved long ago. By contrasting the past with the present, Tauke and Smith force us to recognize the work yet to be done, and they further highlight the embedded nature of discrimination and injustice at the

heart of our current design standards and building codes. Optimistically, they also offer a way forward, inviting each of us to join efforts and become leaders of inclusive design.

Kutty, in *Sanctuaries Along the Street: Security, Social Intimacy, and Identity in the Space of the Storefront Church*, emphasizes the role of citizen designers in confronting marginalization. Experiencing a lack of fit and with few resources, these small communities came together to create worship spaces that fulfill spiritual and social needs without the aid of the professional design community. Interior spaces engage with the streets and the communities in specific and calculated ways, responding uniquely to the organizational mission, spiritual needs, physical setting, and social belonging.

In *Creating and Testing a Sensory Wellbeing Hub for Adolescents with Developmental Disabilities*, Park, Nanda, Adams, Essary, and Hoelting demonstrate the investigative and creative contributions of designers addressing inclusion in educational settings. Education is the foundation of success, leading to financial stability, resources, independence, and self-fulfillment. The design and testing of an affordable, customizable, and adjustable environment that facilitates the participation of teenagers who are neurodiverse demonstrates the power of design.

McLane and Pable's article, *Architectural Design Characteristics, Uses, and Perceptions of Community Spaces in Permanent Supportive Housing*, illustrates the impact of socially enabling space for adults experiencing homelessness. Accessing community spaces that foster social engagement "reduces self-imposed isolation, facilitates access to support services, and contributes to the development of interpersonal skills for these individuals." Research that directly informs design standards is required to end socially sanctioned marginalization.

Economic divides, political unrest, cultural conflict, and gender-based abuse continue to feed existing power inequities around the world. Together, we can transform human existence and create spaces and places where individuals, families, and entire cultures can live, work, and play without fear or discrimination. Design affects people at times of crisis and on a day-to-day basis. Design affects people of all ages, identities, experiences, and abilities. It is my most sincere hope that the work of these scholars will help each of us realize the meaning, purpose, and impact of our own work.

The contributions of authors, published and unpublished; the reviewers; the Editor-in-Chief Dr. John Turpin; and the JID staff who brought this issue to fruition are to be commended. Their work is a critical step in eliminating marginalization in our built world.

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BIOGRAPHY

Jennifer Webb, Ph.D., FIDEC, is an Associate Professor of Interior Design in the Fay Jones School of Architecture and Design at the University of Arkansas. Her professional work has been in the corporate and healthcare sectors, and this experience has directly influenced her teaching and research efforts. Dr. Webb has written journal articles, books, and book chapters about the interaction of the interior environment on human behavior, particularly that of people experiencing a diverse range of human functioning. She was recognized with the Joel Polsky Prize for contributions to Just Below the Line: Disability, Housing, and Equity in the South *(Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2010). Dr. Webb has also made contributions to the* Universal Design Handbook, 2nd Edition*. She is a passionate advocate of design and its role in improving lives. Her goal is to improve users' health, safety, and welfare in interior settings through teaching and research.*