



Dwelling in the Digital: Existential Space and Architectural Presence in the World Wide Web

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This thesis investigates the World Wide Web as a site of existential space, interrogating how digital environments reconfigure architectural notions of dwelling, presence, embodiment, and spatial meaning. Positioned at the intersection of phenomenology, architectural theory, and media studies, the research asks whether virtual environments can be understood as spaces of authentic human experience or whether they remain abstractions detached from embodied spatial consciousness.

Drawing on Martin Heidegger's concept of dwelling, Christian Norberg-Schulz's theory of existential space, and Gaston Bachelard's poetics of space, the study reframes cyberspace not merely as technological infrastructure but as a spatial condition capable of structuring identity, memory, and social interaction. Through a critical analysis of web interfaces, digital environments, and early networked architectures, the thesis explores how thresholds, orientation, enclosure, movement, and temporality are translated or destabilized within the immaterial logic of the web.

The research argues that while the World Wide Web lacks material tectonics, it nonetheless produces spatial metaphors and experiential frameworks that shape contemporary modes of being. Digital "rooms," portals, hyperlinks, and navigational pathways operate as cognitive architectures that influence perception, agency, and sociality. However, unlike traditional architecture grounded in gravity, climate, and bodily scale, digital space oscillates between placelessness and hyper-mediated presence, challenging classical architectural definitions of site and permanence.

By situating the web within architectural discourse, the thesis expands the field's theoretical boundaries, proposing that architects must critically engage with digital environments as emerging territories of spatial production. Ultimately, the study contends that existential space in the digital realm is neither fully authentic nor wholly disembodied; rather, it represents a hybrid condition that reflects the evolving relationship between human consciousness, technology, and the built environment.