

Social Relations and the Production of the Built Environment: What was the significance of BISS?

*Linda Clarke*

The paper assesses the significance of the annual Bartlett International Summer School (BISS) (1979-1992) on the Production of the Built Environment, held across the world and attracting wide participation. BISS was distinct in placing the study of the production of the built environment within its social context, going beyond simply examining the distribution, exchange or consumption of built form. The paper critically assesses the key issues addressed and their relevance for today and the future. 1993 marked a turning point when BISS split, symptomatic of social relations of production in a neo-liberal economy, when architects and planners became further removed from construction, large construction firms became project managers, subcontracting increased, and the possibilities for building workers to progress became narrow - changes documented in the fifteen volumes of Proceedings.

Biography:

Professor Linda Clarke, University of Westminster, is Co-director of ProBE (Centre for the Study of the Production of the Built Environment) and board member of CLR (European Institute for Construction Labour Research) ([www.clr-news.org](http://www.clr-news.org)). She has long comparative research experience on labour, labour history, equality and diversity, and VET in construction.