



# Singapore

## The Garden City

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REF: ###  
MATRIC: ###

To prospective students...

## I tear open a pouch of Tom Yum flavoured "MaMa" noodles and carefully empty the contents into a pot.

A sour mix of shrimp, chilli, and lime fill the air. It was the smell alone that reminded me of those summer nights in Singapore, simmering the same noodles over the stove, spotting the odd ant on the kitchen counter. As I piece together the different stories and conversations that I had wandering the streets of Singapore, I remember feeling a certain fearlessness, a "foreign invincibility", that perhaps stemmed from the open hospitality of the public, to the shroud of security overhanging every last nook imaginable. Singapore was, after all, notorious for being a *fine* city.

"We are Singapore, Singaporean". The jingle stuck to my head since the beginning of time. As the plane touched down, the sudden reality that I would be returning to my roots hit me, for I was once a Singaporean resident of five years growing up through primary school. I can vaguely remember being handed a study package with the required reading material sealed behind a plastic bag, all this happening in kindergarten, and being assigned to a group colour: "red" it was; only later did I realize that this colour depended on your learning ability.

Every city in Southeast Asia has a certain smell, or a certain quality about the people, architecture, or even traffic signs, that distinguishes it from the rest. Immediately, you notice that the road conditions of Singapore are absolutely immaculate; and if there is one stereotype that holds true, it is the overall cleanliness of the streets -- one can only wonder the amount that the

government must spend on maintenance, possibly rivaling the cost for Toronto to shovel its streets. That being said, you could always catch a street cleaner at every corner sweeping the walks.

The next thing you notice is the, if not, eccentric architecture of the HDBs, Singapore's mass public housing project, with buildings that are freshly painted in yellow, blue, green, and purple -- but then, the overall facade is rather alive, flanking the city skyline. It is practical yet misses subtlety by miles. These are contrasted by condominiums that appear like summer resorts with all the essential amenities you would expect being bathed in luxury: palm trees, giant beach umbrellas, water fountains, bar, lounge, and swimming pool. Only the rich in blood live here, considering a flat could easily cost over millions. Buy a car, say your average Corolla, and wave goodbye to another ninety grand. *It doesn't help with a drinking habit either...*

For buildings located next to the highway, an array of national flags dangle like Christmas lights along the balcony of every flat. Singapore is proud and should rightfully be. The people are proud of her, which can be seen reciprocated in the public from the downright obvious, National Parade, watching paratroopers fall into the center of a stadium and the, very neat, domino of soldiers karate kicking slabs of wood one after the other; to the occasional outburst of *ah ums* (last syllable read strong and hard for old lady) and *ah peks* (old man) seen openly bickering at local affairs or at the government on national television. Singapore was, in itself, a country, but the rules of politics and government are so well intertwined with the public that the slightest execution of command swiftly permeates through all of society and subtle differences are felt. It is certainly a nation that is quick to respond and self-reliant, perhaps a role model for other nations to follow. As one visit north to Jahor Bahru suggest, the difference says it all. Singapore is a nation to be proud of.

In some cases, I would even describe it as "Singapore Fever", an obsession of Singaporean paraphernalia and national image, which include everything from the Merlion (Mermaid-lion, national icon, recently relocated to One Fullerton), durian (prickly fruit shaped like the ball end of a flail that "smells like hell but tastes like heaven", architecturally abstracted into the form of an opera house called the Esplanade), chicken rice (simply addictive), rules and fines (although reasonable during recent times, have become a trademark for high Singaporean moral standards), to developing its own vocabulary, *Singlish*, as a meld of Hokkien and various South Eastern dialects. Then there is Singaporean television, with Asian hosts dominating the sets of Weakest Link and Who Wants to be a Millionaire, variety shows (naturally, found in most Asian countries), comedies ("Oh Carol", corny and unfunny yet amusing), stand up comedians ("Kumar", enough said), and the invasion of Amazing Race with a checkpoint located at the Fountain of Wealth in Suntec City (marketed as the Silicon Valley of Asia). The list goes on. Western culture has undeniably manifested into mainstream Singaporean entertainment, but mixed in a blender so profoundly that its results are, more often than not, hilarious but stand on its own.

For those who were part of the 80's generation growing up in Singapore, the highly recognizable tunes from Stevie Wonder and Michael Jackson still drone on the radio. The feeling of nostalgia is still just as vivid as it was back in the day. The pleather seats and smell of air conditioning have not changed. The sharks swimming in the aquarium below Ngee Ann City still putter about. The corner stalls selling Claypot rice and Laksa are still in business from the past twenty plus years. Beyond the city lights and tourist attractions, it is life as usual. The irony of the situation is that although national identity and image seem clear-cut, I sense yet a continual desire for Singapore to define itself, to create its own

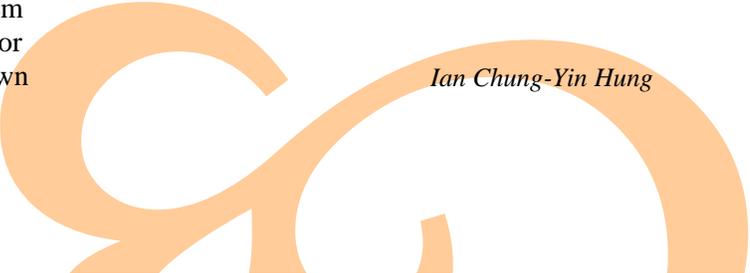
unique stamp of culture. The obsession with image and prestige, namely, anything that begins with "*Raffles*", run deeply, categorically dividing the people by degrees of education and status. The nation unknowingly raises the bar on itself marketing certain institutions as "World Class" in broad strokes. As the hype thins, the question that is asked is, "Who are Singaporeans, really?"

Look no further than the cooky cutter tourist attractions of Sentosa. Dodge the McDonald's and Burger King.

However, do step back, pause, and take a look around. Perhaps it is the idiosyncrasies of daily life itself that define Singaporeans who they really are, not the pocket hungry stalls along Clarke Quay or the glamour of Orchard Road. Singapore encompasses everything, yes, even the tourist attractions and department stores, but especially, the simple harmony from the different blend of cultures that seemingly play so well together. A typical cab driver can speak well over three languages. There is an essence of cultural understanding.

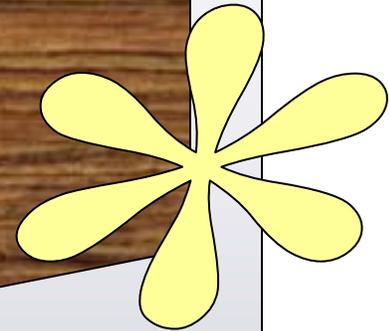
However, there is also a desire to travel back in time and capture the spirit of traditional *Kampung* ways. Post modernist architecture of Bugis Junction aim to emulate classic Singaporean shop houses. At the current pace of development, one can only fear that the Singapore that we once knew would be eventually absorbed into the impending commercial form. The government faces a new challenge to accommodate rising demand for public housing but also strive to retain the nuances from the past. Hence, in the following architectural study, I shall investigate whether there is a correlation between daily activities held within the premises of a typical apartment complex in relation to morale as found in traditional *Kampung* ways.

Ian Chung-Yin Hung

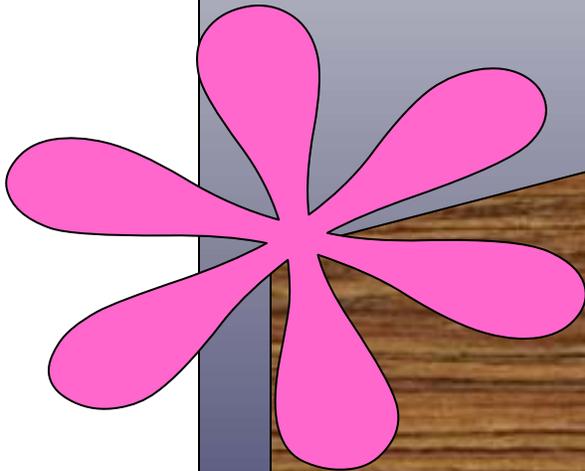


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TEAM ###

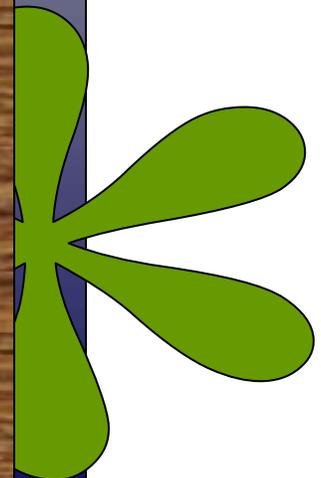
BUKIT BATOK TOWN  
BLOCK 201

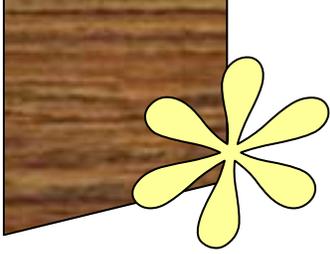


A STUDY OF  
HIGH RISE  
LIVING



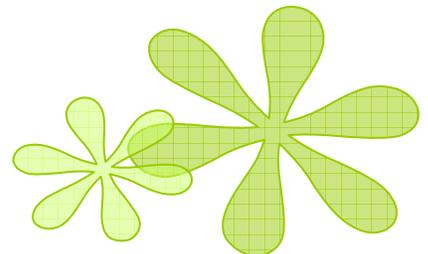
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OCTOBER 30<sup>TH</sup>, 2002





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## 1.0 PURPOSE

Meet Daphne, a middle-aged mother with an uncanny ability to sneak up onto students as they snap photographs of high-rise gardening. After a brief introduction, she warmed up and became so friendly, in fact, gave her phone number in case there were further questions. This is a testament of trust felt in the community.

High-rise living and public housing projects are often regarded as alienating [1] and impersonal. The myriad number of clones does not exude character or individuality. Yet, how is this block any different from public housing projects elsewhere?

It is trust. What is the source for this sense of trust in the context of architecture? By investigating the elusive patterns of space, and the different types of activities and interaction that befit them, perhaps the heart of this solution may be revealed.

## 2.0 DESCRIPTION OF SELECTED BLOCK

Bukit Batok Town was the designated area of study. The town covers 800 hectares of land with 35% occupied for residential use [2]. Buildings constructed in this town range from the early 1980's to recently erected high-rises. There are 31000 units of flats, with the majority being 4-room or 3-room types. In addition, there are 2700 executive flats. Overall, 111000 residents are served.

Block 201 is selected for study. The residence lies in the northeast junction of Bukit Batok Avenue and Bukit Batok East, and is within walking distance of the MRT, bus terminal, and shopping complex. Other public facilities include a park, swimming pool, temple, as well as primary and secondary schools. There is a local mini-mart, canteen, medical clinic, beauty salon, day care, bbq deck, playground, and clock tower nearby.

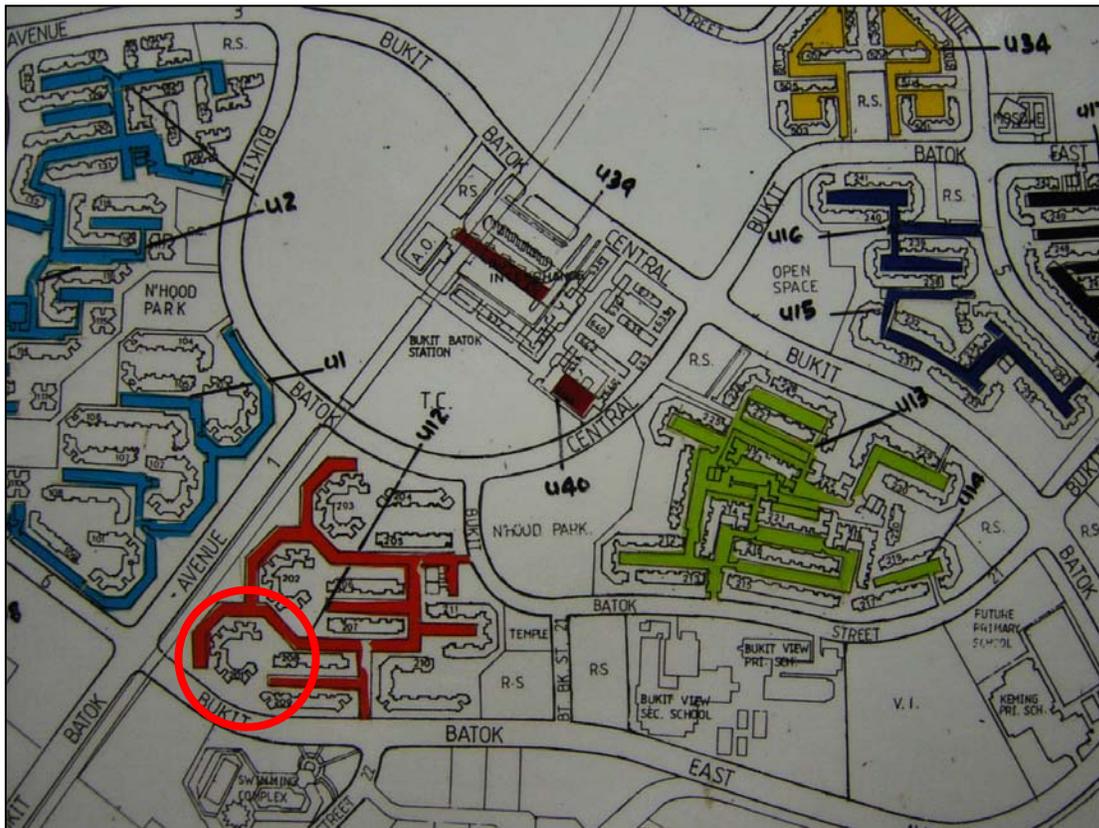


Figure 1: Area Map (Source: Bukit Batok Town Office) 3

The building is over 18 years old and houses 132 units. There are three sections to this building joined together in the form of a horseshoe. The tallest section is 25 storeys high, with four units per level (Figure 2). Units are arranged along the letter 'W', positioned around the central elevator shaft. The void deck below embraces a mailbox, stone checkerboard, and area for garbage disposal. The two other sections of the building are 4 storeys tall and follow the same trend minus the lift (Figure 3). Most notable are the units that lie along the ground floor that encircles the garden in front. The block was chosen because of its peculiar combination of high and low-rise housing and diverse life that best represent typical public housing blocks of Bukit Batok Town.

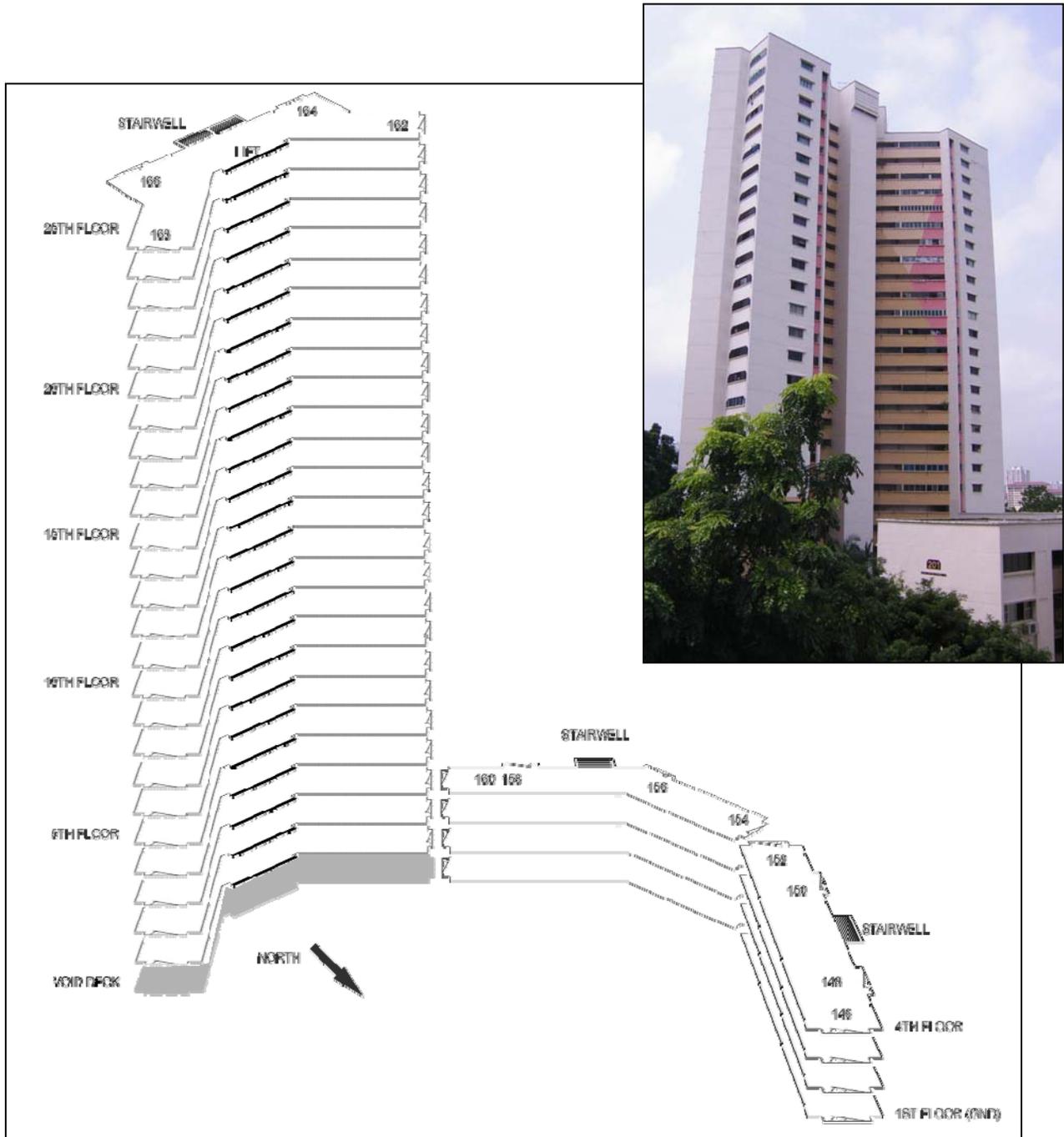
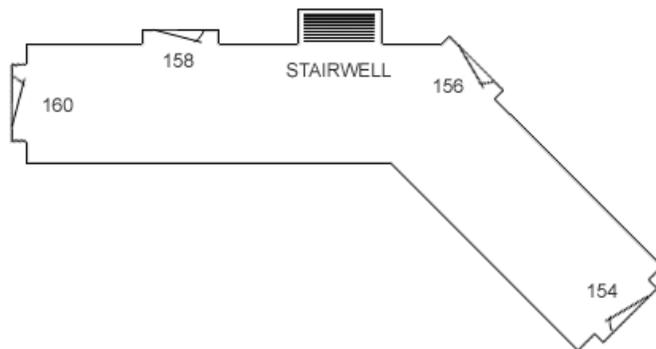
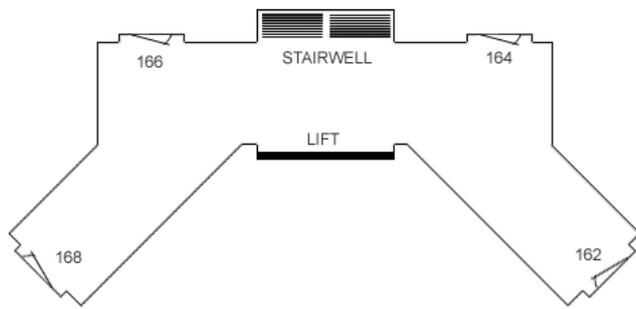


Figure 2: 3-Dimensional Overview of Public Housing Block



*Figure 3: Corresponding Floor Plan of Public Housing Block*

### 3.0 STUDY OF DAILY ACTIVITIES

The majority of residents have occupied their unit since the mid-eighties. Most families have at least one child and few have elderly living among them. Given an age distribution biased towards middle-aged families, activities are often in-tune with homemaking than child supervision, as most have already grown away from the corridors. Yet, playgrounds are filled with children of younger families and become a hub of gossip among mothers. In this instance, activity reflects the age of families and provides an opportunity for social interaction.

Space is seen to encourage certain activities; subsequently, these activities encourage certain interactions. Table 1-0 illustrates this point.

*Table 1 - 0: A Study of Daily Activities within Various Semi-Private and Public Spaces*

Daily Activity	Time of Day	Days of Week	Frequency of Interaction	Opportunity for Intimate Interaction	Comments from Interviews
<b>Corridor / Space In-front of Unit</b>					
Gardening	☾	☾	○	●	Plants are watered as often as every evening
Laundry Cleaning	○	☾	○	●	Laundry is hung at least once every three days
House Cleaning (Front Door)	☾	●	○	○	Rarely seen
Children Playing	☾	○	○	●	Kids occasionally play in the corridor after school
Worshipping	○	☾	○	○	Rarely seen
Indulging Hobbies	●	●	○	●	Rarely seen
Lounging	○	○	○	●	Despite existence of bench, seat is used more often to tie shoes
<b>Elevator / Stairwell Access</b>					
Leaving / Returning to Unit	○	○	○	○	Small talk rarely occurs
<b>Void Deck</b>					
Group Studying	☾	○	●	●	Occurs after school
Children Playing	○	○	●	●	Soccer played early morning before school
Lounging	○	○	●	●	Occupied by teenagers and elderly
<b>Parking Lot</b>					
Car Washing	○	●	○	○	Rarely seen
<b>Playground / Daycare</b>					
Children Playing / Parent Supervising	○	○	●	●	Occurs every recess
<b>BBQ Deck / Shelter</b>					
Giving Parties	☾	●	○	●	Rarely seen
Lounging	○	○	●	●	Occupied by elderly
<b>Strip Mall</b>					
Grocery Shopping	○	○	●	●	Mostly accomplished by homemakers
Canteen Eating	☾	○	○	○	Food is terrible; Prefer eating at West Mall
Hair Styling / Cutting	☾	○	○	●	Friendly conversations with barber
<b>LEGEND</b>	<p><b>Time of Day Criteria:</b> Time for greatest occurrence of activity. Morning (○), Afternoon (☾), Evening (●)</p> <p><b>Weekend Criteria:</b> Days of week for greatest occurrence of activity. Weekday(○), All Days(☾), Weekend(●)</p> <p><b>Frequency of Interaction Criteria:</b> Judgment is based on the frequency for social interaction to occur. An activity has high frequency of interaction if it is probable for social contact to occur. Low(○), High(●)</p> <p><b>Opportunity for Intimate Interaction Criteria:</b> Judgment is based on high or low opportunity for intimate interactions to occur. Intimacy of interaction is defined by the length and depth of conversations. Low(○), High(●)</p>				

### 3.1 Observations

Within the corridor, the probability of interaction for any single activity is slim but significantly raised when considered as a whole. Most social interactions occur in the morning of any given day when such activities are at its peak. Activities are performed mutual exclusively. An individual does not water plants and hang laundry at once. Some activities require more space than others. Laundry occurs mainly by the inner units, closest to the stairwell, where space is abundant. Laundry is only hung along the balconies of 4-storey flats. Evidence of religion is seen in levels below the ninth floor where most reside in the 4-storey flats.

The void deck is bright and cheerful with the stone checkerboard frequently occupied by teenagers and elderly. The space provides the highest probability for social contact. The environment is welcoming and capable of accommodating meaningful interaction. Similarities in social pattern are prevalent in the playground, shelter, and BBQ deck. In these spaces, many activities are regulated by time of day. Children play in these areas early morning during recess.



Figure 4: Examples of Semi-Private (First Row) and Public Spaces (Second Row)

### 3.2 Analysis

Space defines activities. For example, the narrow conditions of the first and last units do not provide room for laundry, unless projected over the balcony (*Figure 5*). Thus, space appears to guide activity and their execution.

Space in both semi-private and public areas is crucial for residents to gain visual familiarity. These spaces complement each other in improving communal relationships. The corridor becomes an extension of one's home without being screened by walls. Activities performed in these premises are private in nature. For this reason, neighboring parties are able to glimpse into each other's lives and familiarize themselves with adjacent residents. This is also complemented by encounters in common pathways from the elevator to void deck. These areas provide high frequency of social contact thereby improving familiarity in general.

Different spaces allow varying degrees of intimacy. Interestingly, under close conditions, interviewees have regarded small talk as being awkward within the elevator; due in part to the brief period of time a conversation may develop. Likewise, space beyond the restrictions of the elevator suggests similar patterns. From grocery shopping to eating at the canteen, depending on the situation, residents generally do not engage in meaningful conversations. In contrast, *semi-public* spaces, including the void deck, shelter, and playground, encourage conversations of greater depth. Space in this comparison is thus seen to accommodate interaction of varying intimacy.



Figure 5: Example of Semi-Private Space of 4-Storey Flat

#### 4.0 STUDY OF GARDENING

To understand the relationship between space and interaction deemed trust-building is to measure the *value* of social contact, which can be very complex. From this study, semi-private settings provide a balance of intimate interactions that effectively build positive relationships. Therefore, activities such as gardening deserve a closer look, since they seemingly gauge the intimacy of relationships. Table 2-0 and 2-1 illustrate this point.

*Table 2 - 0: Study of Gardening in 4-Storey Section*

Storey	Unit Place	1*	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total Plants	
1	Corridor / Unit Front	11	5	0	33	6	13	5	0	73	
	Balcony	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Windowsill	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>76</b>	
2	Corridor / Unit Front	0	8	3	9	0	7	6	4	37	
	Balcony	0	4	4	0	0	2	5	0	15	
	Windowsill	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>58</b>	
3	Corridor / Unit Front	0	3	2	3	15	5	6	8	42	
	Balcony	0	4	3	0	0	2	3	0	12	
	Windowsill	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>54</b>	
4	Corridor / Unit Front	2	0	5	2	27	3	5	9	53	
	Balcony	0	0	4	2	0	7	2	0	15	
	Windowsill	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>68</b>	
<b>Total no. of units with plants/%</b>		<b>27/ 84%</b>	<b>Total no. of Units in block</b>					<b>32</b>	<b>Grand Total plants</b>		<b>256</b>
No. of units with plants in corridors, space front of unit/%		<b>27/ 84%</b>	No. of units with plants in balcony /%					<b>12/ 38%</b>	Average no. of plants per unit with sign of plants		<b>256/ 32 = 8</b>
No. of units with plants in interior visible from exterior/%		<b>2/ 6%</b>	No. of units with plants in other areas (incl. Windowsill)/%					<b>2 / 6%</b>			

*\*Respectively, numbers 1 - 8 denote actual house numbers 146,148,150,152,154,156,158,160*

*Table 2 - 1: Study of Gardening in 25-Storey Section*

Storey	Unit Place	1*	2	3	4	Total Plants
1	Corridor / Unit Front	6	7	0	0	13
	Balcony **	5	0	0	0	5
	Stairwell	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>18</b>
2	Corridor / Unit Front	0	8	12	4	24
	Balcony	0	0	0	0	0
	Stairwell	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>24</b>
3	Corridor / Unit Front	0	0	0	0	0
	Balcony	0	0	0	0	0
	Stairwell	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
4	Corridor / Unit Front	3	2	0	0	5
	Balcony	0	0	0	0	0
	Stairwell	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>
5	Corridor / Unit Front	5	10	21	3	39
	Balcony	5	0	0	0	5
	Stairwell	0	4	0	0	4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>48</b>
6	Corridor / Unit Front	3	11	3	0	17
	Balcony	0	0	3	0	3

	Stairwell	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>7</b>	Corridor / Unit Front	0	10	9	0	19
	Balcony	1	0	0	3	4
	Stairwell	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>8</b>	Corridor / Unit Front	0	0	11	0	11
	Balcony	0	0	0	0	0
	Stairwell	0	0	31	0	31
	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>9</b>	Corridor / Unit Front	7	2	4	0	13
	Balcony	0	0	0	0	0
	Stairwell	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>10</b>	Corridor / Unit Front	4	0	6	1	11
	Balcony	0	0	0	0	0
	Stairwell	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>11</b>	Corridor / Unit Front	0	1	5	7	13
	Balcony	0	0	0	0	0
	Stairwell	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>12</b>	Corridor / Unit Front	1	0	12	9	22
	Balcony	1	0	2	0	3
	Stairwell	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>13</b>	Corridor / Unit Front	0	5	13	8	26
	Balcony	0	0	0	0	0
	Stairwell	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>14</b>	Corridor / Unit Front	2	7	3	5	17
	Balcony	0	0	0	0	0
	Stairwell	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>15</b>	Corridor / Unit Front	0	2	4	3	9
	Balcony	0	0	0	3	3
	Stairwell	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>16</b>	Corridor / Unit Front	0	0	0	0	0
	Balcony	0	0	0	0	0
	Stairwell	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>17</b>	Corridor / Unit Front	0	10	15	17	42
	Balcony	0	0	0	0	0
	Stairwell	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>18</b>	Corridor / Unit Front	0	0	0	0	0
	Balcony	0	0	0	0	0
	Stairwell	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>19</b>	Corridor / Unit Front	9	4	3	0	16
	Balcony	0	0	0	0	0
	Stairwell	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>20</b>	Corridor / Unit Front	5	10	15	28	58
	Balcony	0	0	0	0	0
	Stairwell	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>21</b>	Corridor / Unit Front	0	0	15	21	36
	Balcony	0	0	0	8	8
	Stairwell	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>22</b>	Corridor / Unit Front	6	8	4	8	26
	Balcony	0	0	0	0	0
	Stairwell	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>23</b>	Corridor / Unit Front	0	0	0	0	0
	Balcony	0	0	0	0	0
	Stairwell	0	0	0	0	0

	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>24</b>	Corridor / Unit Front	0	6	0	13	19	
	Balcony	0	8	0	0	8	
	Stairwell	0	0	0	0	0	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>27</b>	
<b>25</b>	Corridor / Unit Front	0	0	0	0	0	
	Balcony	0	0	0	0	0	
	Stairwell	0	0	0	0	0	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>Total no. of units with plants/%</b>		<b>59/ 59%</b>	<b>Total no. of Units in block</b>		<b>100</b>	<b>Grand Total plants</b>	<b>510</b>
No. of units with plants in corridors, space front of unit/%		<b>57/ 57%</b>	No. of units with plants in balcony /%		<b>9/ 9%</b>	Average no. of plants per unit with sign of plants	510 / 100 = <b>5</b>
No. of units with plants in interior visible from exterior/%		<b>10/ 10%</b>	No. of units with plants in other areas (stairwell)/%		<b>2/ 2%</b>		

\*Respectively, numbers 1 - 4 denote actual house number 162, 164, 166, 168.

\*\* Balcony refers to overhanging plants

#### 4.1 Observations

Heavily forested levels engulf the 25-storey flat under no apparent pattern (59% of units). Plants hug along the walls and do not impede traffic (*Figure 6*). Some sit above stools and appear clean and well maintained. The existence of plants appears to be all-or-nothing. Gardening spreads throughout the floor where occupied while empty floors remain bare. Likewise, proliferation of plant growth appears to rub off on neighbors, as they contribute their own thick share. Due to the height of the building, there are no observable plants along the windowsill or balcony since this may be hazardous.

The density of plant life is far greater in 4-storey flats (84%). Pots sit along the windowsill (6%) unlike the high-rise. On ground, gardening also extends across the sidewalk. However, no plants are recorded along the stairwell due to lack of sunlight.

Differences in height result in significant differences in statistics. Although the 25-storey high-rise nearly double the number of plants (510), the number is attributed to patches of dense population versus even gradation of growth observed across floors in the 4-storey flat. The ratio of gardening along balconies is also greater for the 4-storey flat (38%).



Figure 6: Example of Gardening

## 4.2 Analysis

Gardening is therapeutic [3]. The organic presence demolishes the solitude of concrete. High-rise gardening gives a cheerful daffy appearance and reaches the point of overwhelming hilarity in some instances. It also forms an excuse for elderly to escape from their homes to pass time and loneliness. Environmental benefits include reduction in temperature and natural purification of air.

Gardening also provides a sense of identity and building pride. Symbols of self-identity exist in over half of the homes, the same homes that possess at least one plant, be it a toy, bike, wind chime, or door sign (*Figure 7*). When viewed as a whole, the sum of these charms suggests that residents have prided themselves in the act of decoration.

Space is partitioned by means of gardening. Territorial boundaries are clearly distinguished by rows of plantation, or strategic placement of pots. In extreme cases, a short picketed fence, jutting from the hall, encloses the home within (*Figure 8*). A bench or stool accompanies the majority of such systems. The entire setup is reminiscent of a verandah or backyard. Not only does this extend household activities beyond the confines of home, but offer a sense of security as well. Daily activities occur only within the boundaries established by such pattern of gardening. Consequently, halls without gardens neither conduct laundry nor show any signs of activity happening externally at all.



*Figure 7: Example of Unique Symbols Promoting Self Identity*



*Figure 8: Example of Partitioning within 25-Storey Flat*

Gardening is thus an outward projection of trust. The garden is vulnerable to public scrutiny, vandalism, and theft. To build a garden, conduct your laundry, and leave your bike unguarded, is a statement of trust and mutual respect.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

Though imperfect, there are certain cons and shortcomings of the design. Not every floor exhibits some form of activity. Not every resident exploit the void deck or provided shelters. Not every person bothers engaging in conversations. This does not mean interactions are less significant nor does it imply the development of trust. So long as space is allocated in future designs that fulfill fundamental amenities of providing sunlight, fresh air, and adequate room for semi-private activities that effectively build positive relationships, it becomes a definite requirement. Recommendations follow along the possibility of incorporating a verandah. The necessity of partitioning as an extension of personal activity and means of social interaction must be realized.

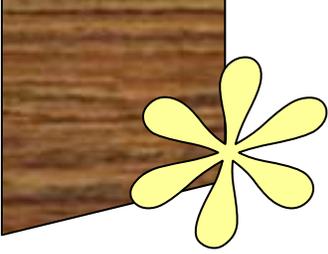
The study of daily activities has discussed the idea of space encouraging certain activities; subsequently, these activities encourage certain interactions. As well, the ideas of space providing visual familiarity, improving communal relationships, and offering interactions of varying intimacy are also introduced.

The study of gardening extends the understanding of interaction further in the context of developing trust. The therapeutic benefits of gardening are important to note. Gardening provides a sense of identity and shared building pride. Gardening also establishes boundaries for semi-private activities (*Figure 9*). Ultimately, gardening becomes the outward projection of trust that encompasses the ideals of familiarity, friendship, and mutual respect, the resulting consequence of both semi-private and public spaces.

So, let there be space. Let there be gardening. Let there be people like Daphne.



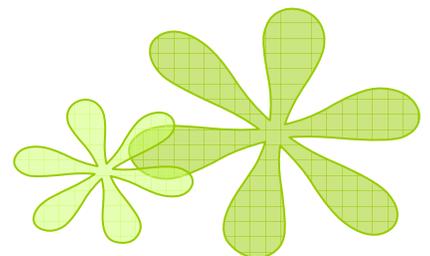
Figure 9: Example of Partitioning by Gardening of 4-Storey Flat

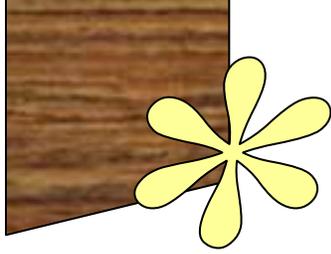


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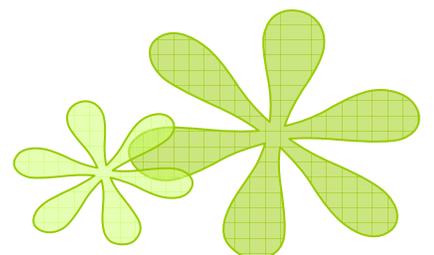
All pictures and illustrations are created by the author unless otherwise stated.





APPENDIX:

ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHS





*Figure 10: Picture of Empty Corridors of the 25-Storey High Rise  
The halls appear cold, unhappy, and unpleasant. One must wonder whether these units are even occupied. Yet, the addition of plant life suggests otherwise, as such life cannot be sustained if left uncared for. The scene sharply contrasts the jungle-like bushes of other corridors.*



*Figure 13: Picture of Typical Items Found. There is a line of non-existent pots of plants. The shoe rack convenient holds a variety of black leather shoes that one may decide to snatch if there was an intention. Since the corridor is slightly too narrow for an entire laundry apparatus shown in Figure 12, laundry is ultimately hung along the balcony, like a national flag. Broom sticks and other cleaning supplies are the norm.*



*Figure 11: Picture of Row of Plants. It is difficult to distinguish the ownership of certain plants. As one lady mentioned, there are cases where neighboring residents become inconsiderate and horde as much room as possible, perhaps neglecting somebody else's turf.*



*Figure 12: Picture of Typical Items Found along the Corridor. We see a workout system, laundry hanger, shoe rack, children's three-wheeler. Nothing out of the ordinary in Block 201!*



Figure 14: Picture of the Building Façade

*The void deck is popular among teenagers and elderly. Other than appearing slightly bleak, the stone checkerboard is well lit and a resting place for grocery shoppers.*

*Closer inspection reveals a tendency for residents, living on the ground floors, to monopolize the space in front of their homes. You can clearly see where the string of pots begin and end, clearly marking the space conquered by each resident.*

*Laundry is seen overhanging the balconies on the shorter 4-storey flats to the right. Oppositely, nothing is seen hanging from the edge of the 25-storey apartment... Perhaps a building policy or safety measure?*



Figure 15: Picture of the Mail Box stands alone. There is no significant interaction occurring here.