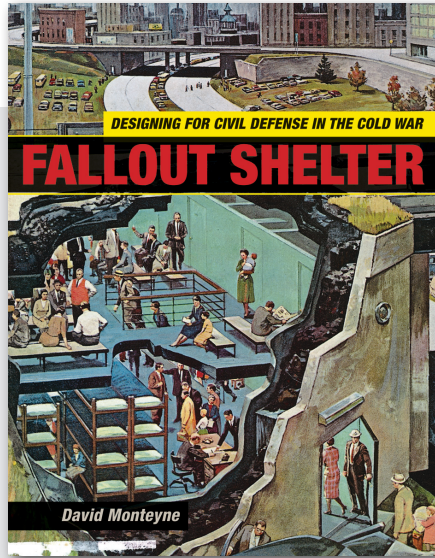


Fallout Shelter

Designing for Civil Defense in the Cold War

David Monteyne



David Monteyne traces the partnership that developed between architects and civil defense authorities during the 1950s and 1960s. Officials in the federal government relied on architects and urban planners to demonstrate the importance and efficacy of both purpose-built and ad hoc fallout shelters. For architects who participated in this federal effort, their involvement in the national security apparatus granted them expert status in the Cold War. Neither the civil defense bureaucracy nor the architectural profession was monolithic, however, and Monteyne shows that architecture for civil defense was a contested and often inconsistent project, reflecting specific assumptions about race, gender, class, and power.

Despite official rhetoric, civil defense planning in the United States was, ultimately, a failure due to a lack of federal funding, contradictions and ambiguities in fallout shelter design, and growing resistance to its political and cultural implications. Yet the partnership between architecture and civil defense, Monteyne argues, helped guide professional design practice and influenced the perception and use of urban and suburban spaces.

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