Queensborough Baptist Church, Shreveport, Louisiana
Architect: FREY ASSOCIATES—Shoemaker - Colbert - Brodnax, Architects-Engineers

Modern Gothic for a new Shreveport church ... inspired by prestressed concrete

For the new Queensborough Baptist Church, a roof system of precast, prestressed concrete "Y" beams effectively expresses the architect's design and provide an exposed interior ceiling of unusual beauty. Nineteen of the "Y" units of variable width and depth, approximately 80-ft. long, transcend into cast-in-place Gothic arches on the facade. Exposed concrete proved to be most functional for the roof framing of the fan-shaped auditorium, which has space for about 1,100 main floor seats and some 600 balcony seats.

To complement the design of the auditorium, a 75-ft. high, three-columned spire rises from a dish-shaped fountain pool on the entry terrace. The lower portions of the spire legs were precast and, prior to erection, two sides of an expanding Gothic vault shape were cast onto one end of each leg. Prestressing greatly simplified the spire construction and made possible its slender design.

More and more, architects turn to prestressed concrete to express the sheer drama inherent in church design.

pca 1966 50th year

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403 INTERNATIONAL TRADE MART, NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA 70130
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LEGISLATIVE REPORT

editor

While outlooks can change quickly, at this writing our legislative program is doing quite well.

Several of the LAA Chapters have assigned architects to maintain liaison with their legislators, and when I have called on their help, we've had noticeable results in Baton Rouge.

A small taste of success achieved by your LAA in defeating the ill-advised "Residential Designers Bill" (H-865) hopefully will encourage others to participate in legislative matters of concern to this noble profession.

In addition to the contacts, friendships and goodwill established by this office, we need the persuasive power which comes from a broad base of voters and community leaders who will voice their opinion to the men who represent them. If you've never discussed legislation with any of your representatives then why not do so this weekend?

If you prefer expressing yourself through a letter there's no better time than now, and here's a subject worth considering:

> H 856—(drafted by the LAA and the CEC) is designed to remove the selection of architects and engineers from politics, by giving the state agency which will actually use the project a voice in the selection. The bill has the following provisions:
>
> —a guideline for the using agency to follow in determining qualifications of architects and engineers.
>
> —an opportunity for architects to appear and state their case before the officials who will make the final selection.
>
> —clearly defined authority for the primary architect or engineer to select his own consultants.

When you fail to speak out for good government you loose your right to complain about bad government, but each time you exercise your right to be heard you become a better man and a better American.

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John L. Webb

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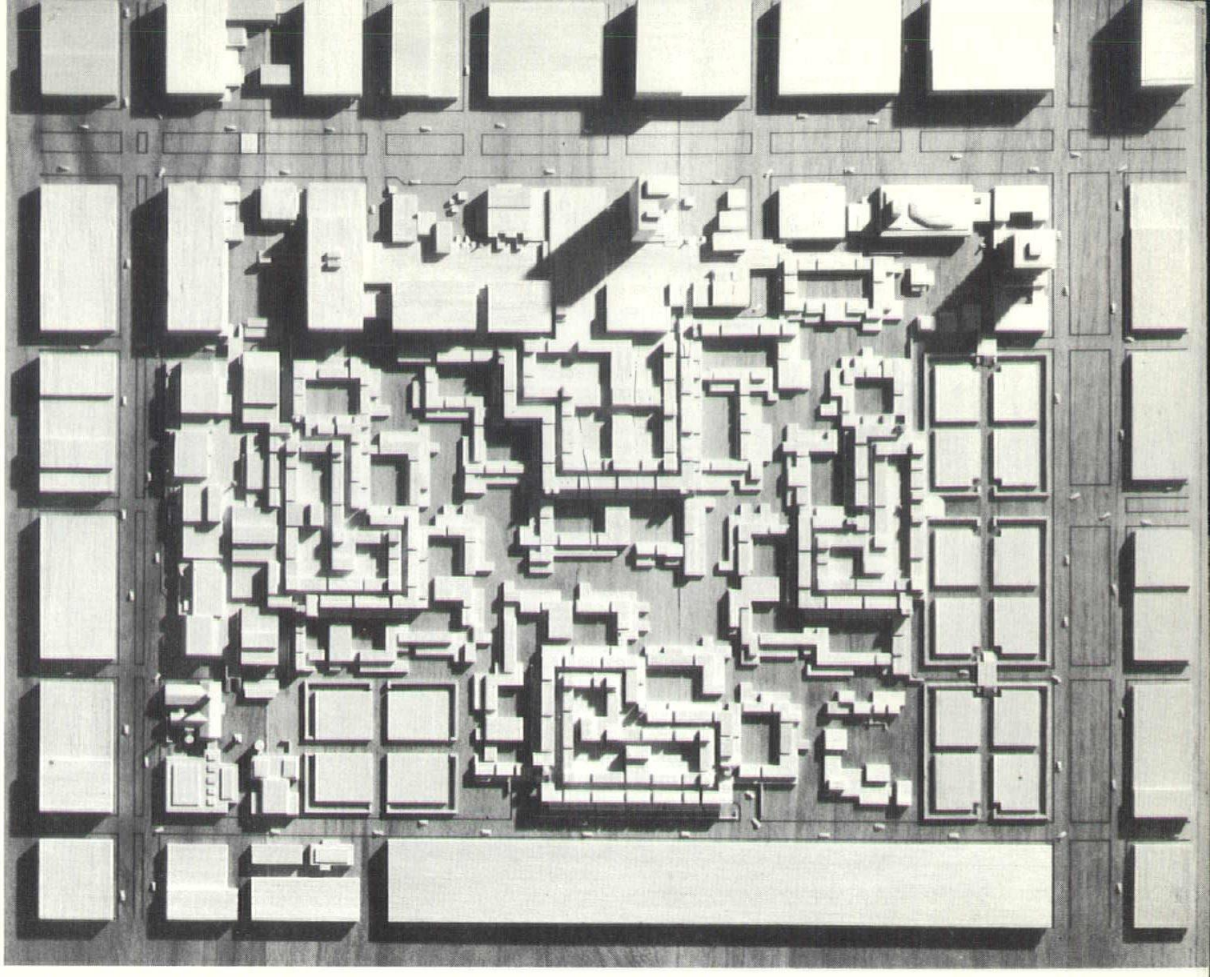


These projects by students in the School of Architecture during the past two years are symptomatic of our growing concern for the world's number one environmental problem — the provision of adequate housing for our growing population with contracting earth resources. It is even so in the United States though not generally recognized.

The design of housing is far and away the most difficult of all problems to which the architect can address himself and at the same time the most rewarding. If there is reason to regret the forfeiture of design control of the individual detached house by architects today, there is the hope that architects may not be found wanting again as the investigation into new life styles on an ever greater scale becomes a matter of dogmatic urgency.

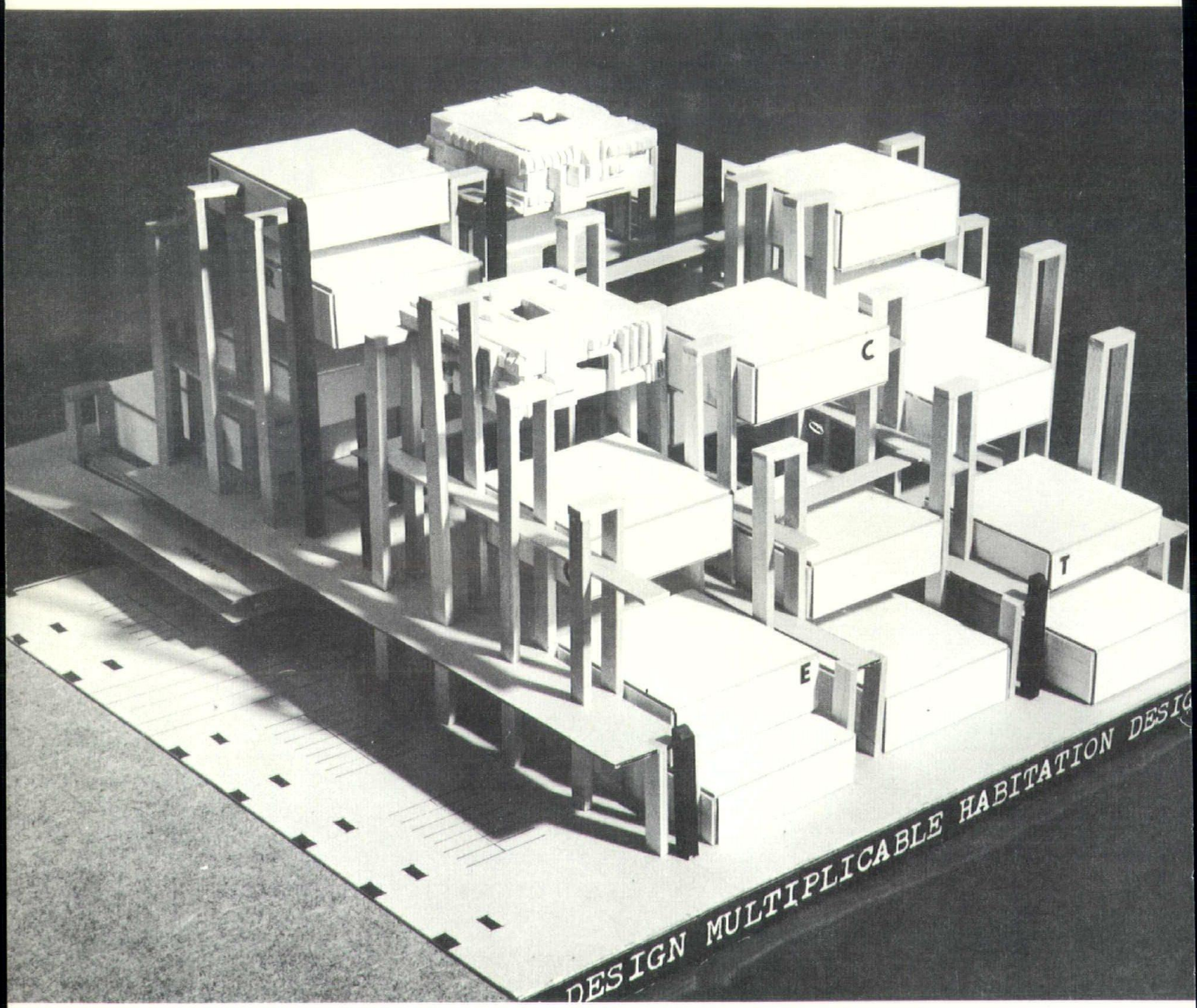
The dynamics of twentieth century urbanization strongly suggest that the individual house is obsolescing quickly to the point where Serge Chermayeff's view that "it no longer can be considered architecture at all" takes on new and more comprehensible meanings. These studies and others not shown here begin to suggest that the problem of "limited multiplicity" is solved not through the repeating unit but rather through a flexible repeating element capable of adjustments to that variety necessary for human beings of differing requirements.

In the final analysis the problem always remains that of finding a civilized way to the front door.

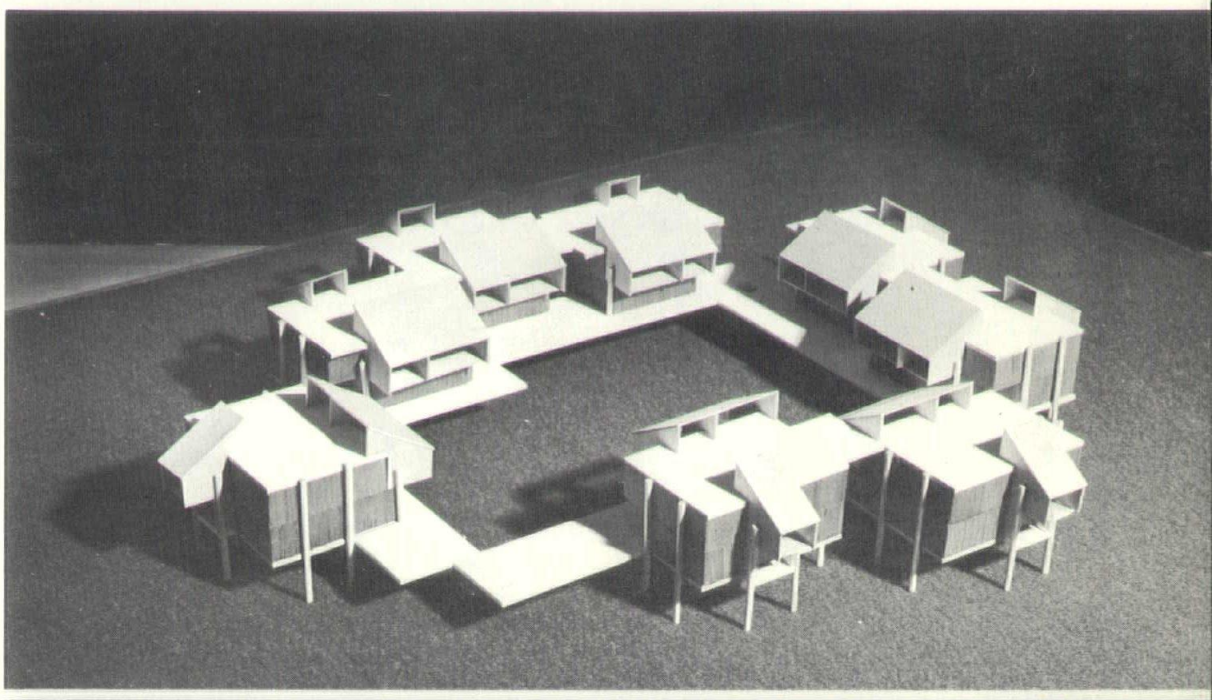
John W. Lawrence, FAIA
Dean

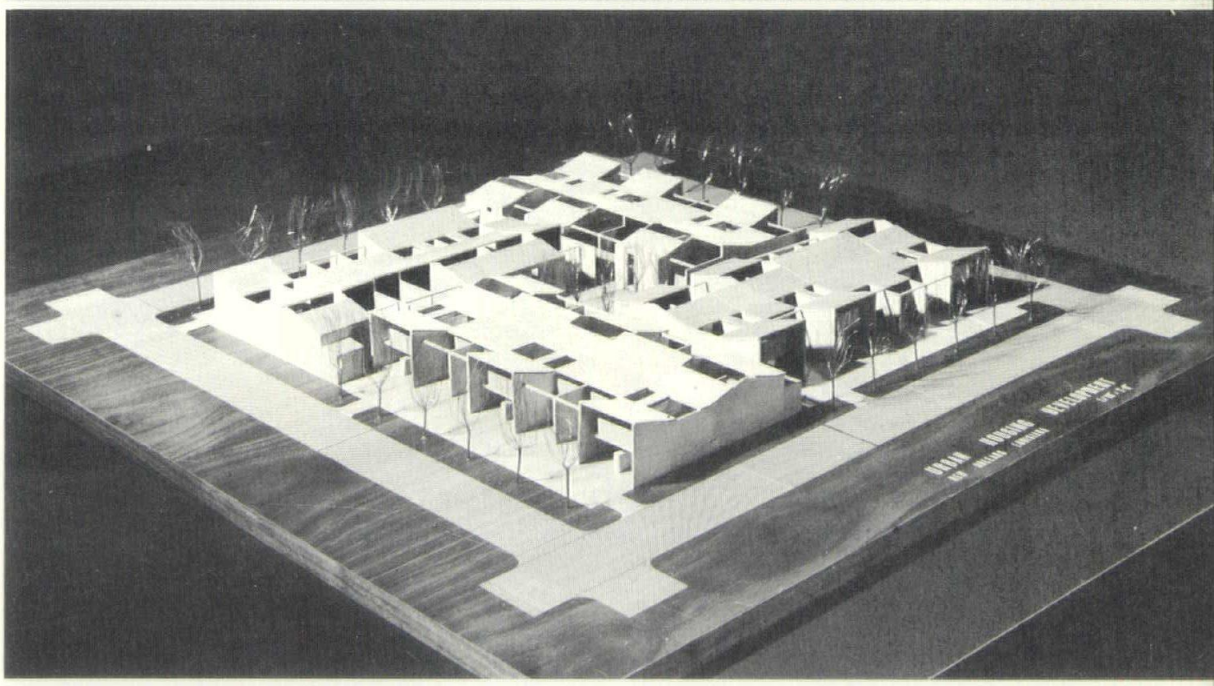
STUDIES IN HOUSING - SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE, TULANE UNIVERSITY

Iberville Housing Project, N. O., La.
Victor Stillwell, Jack Hepting



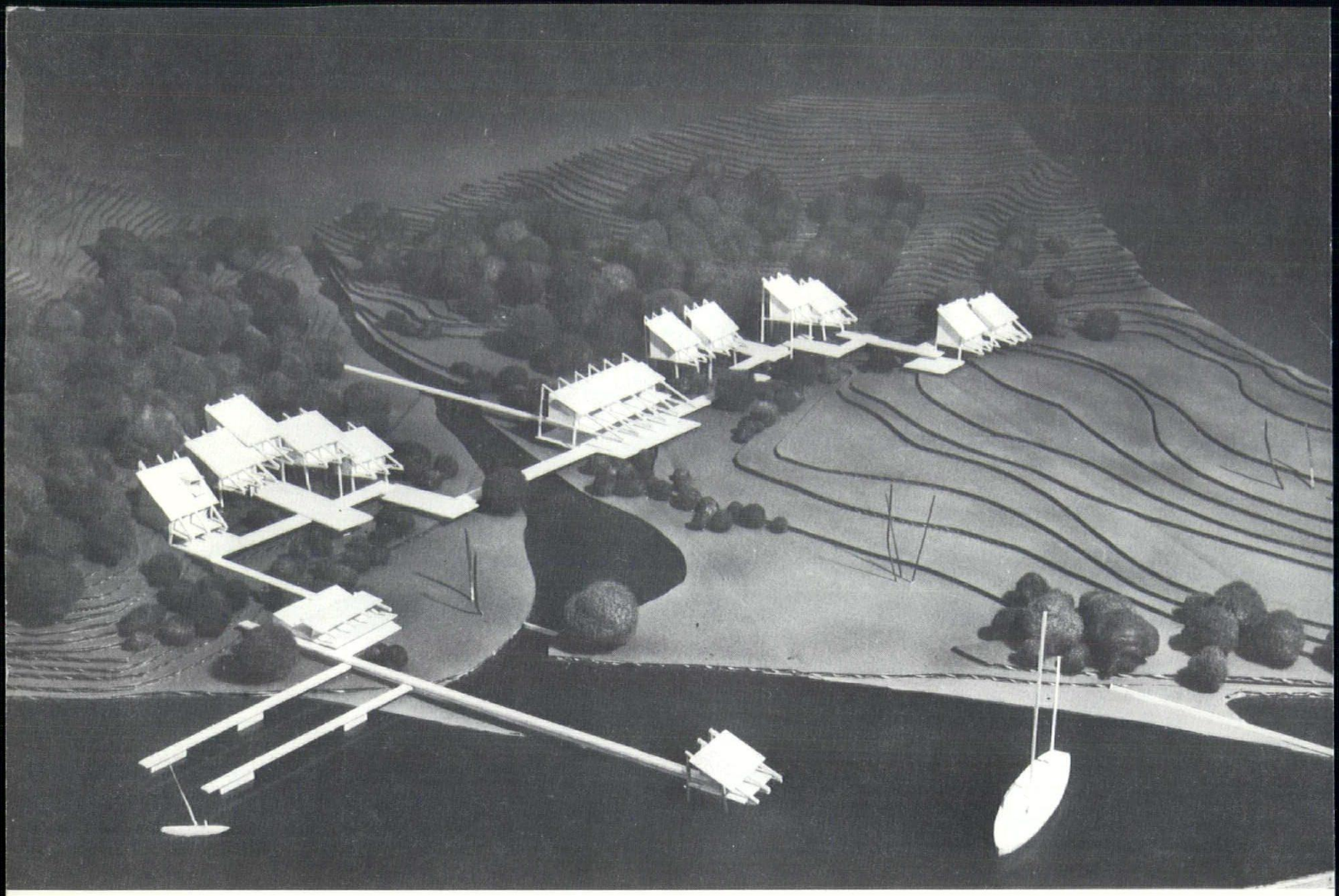
Housing Cluster, Neighborhood Redevelopment
Theis, Terry, Lard and Lott

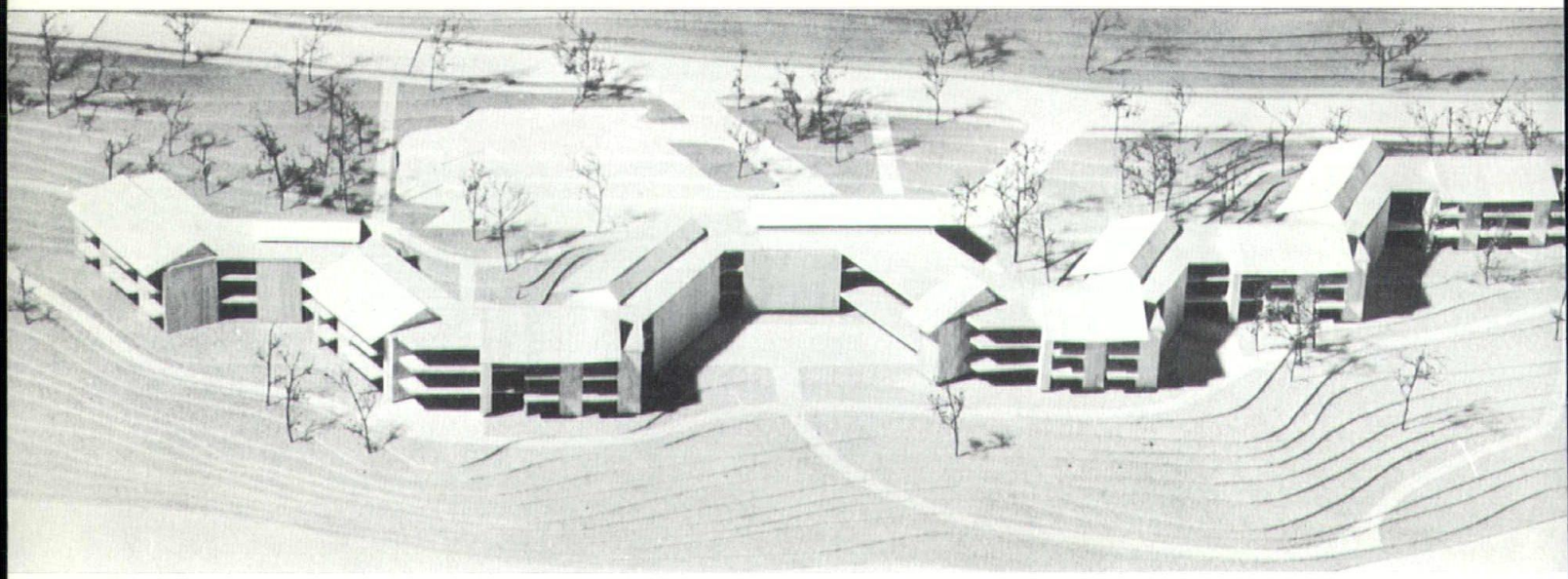




Housing, Joseph Lavigne

Urban Housing Development, Gus Pelias





Resort, Honduras
Fleetwood Joiner

Housing for Elderly
Joseph Johnson

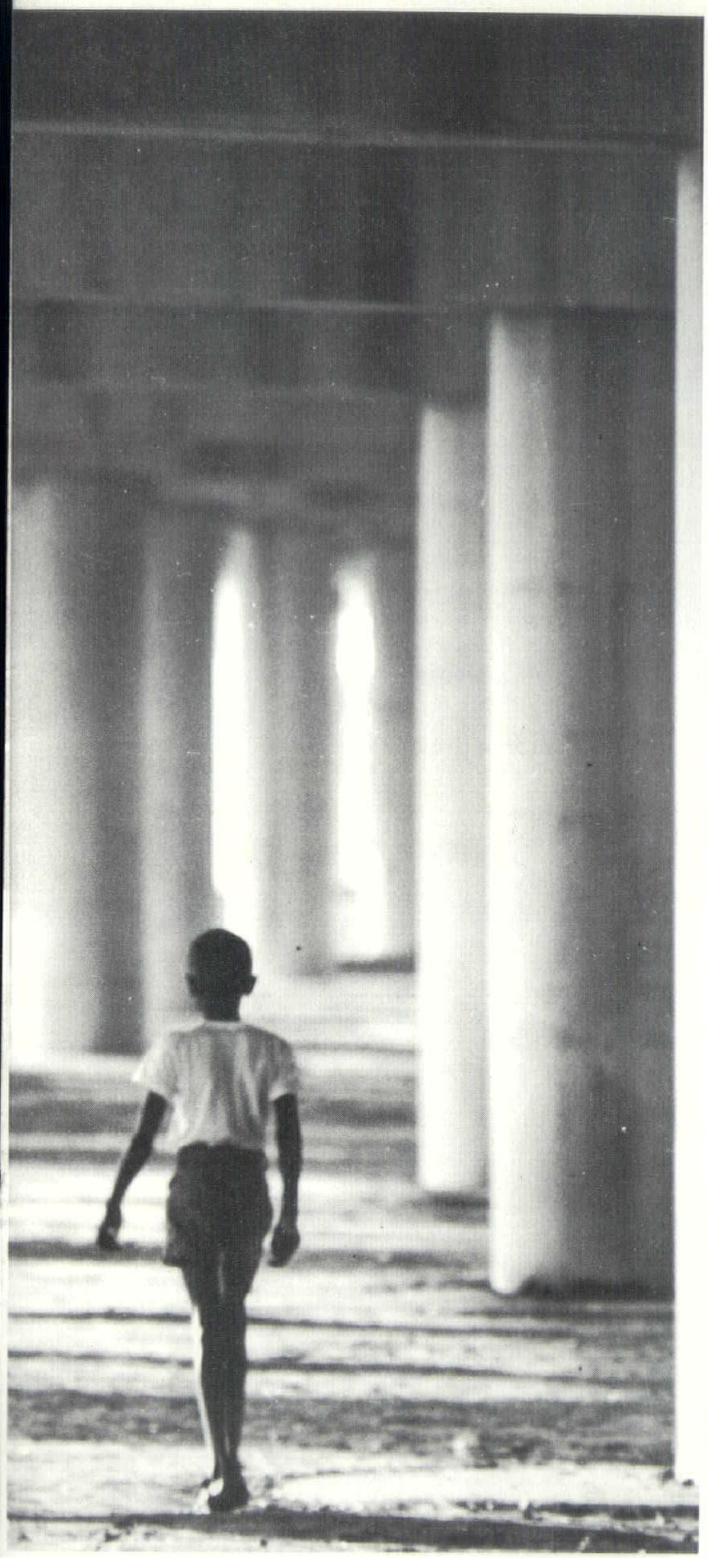


PHOTO - DAVE GLEASON

" . . . his inability to cope with what seems simple, his ability to accomplish the difficult . . . "

MAN'S MIND-MADE ENVIRONMENT

by C. M. DEASY, FAIA

A paper presented at the 15th Annual Gulf States Regional Conference of the American Institute of Architects. April 14, 1966, Hot Springs, Arkansas.

I have a special bias, a conviction that many of the architectural problems we deal with on an intuitive basis as "design decisions," are really matters of established fact that we happen to be unaware of. There are aspects of architecture that must be dealt with in wholly intuitive terms and are outside the scope of any science I know about. As a profession, we have tended to concentrate on these aspects and have only recently realized the tremendous importance of the scientific data being assembled on environment.

If we are seriously interested in understanding the intricate relationship between human beings and the world in which they live, we will have to shift our emphasis to objective observation of man in action. Introspection, contemplation, and opinion are not good enough.

The study of environmental factors as a special field of knowledge is only beginning. It is not without resources, however, for it draws on the findings of the many scientific disciplines that have long been making brilliant contributions to our knowledge of humanity. Enough is know to make it possible for man to survive, and perform with great skill, in the bleakness of outer space. Enough is known to indicate quite clearly that coping with the forces that constitute our natural environment is no longer our most difficult problem. It is becoming increasingly apparent that architecture and planning are intimately involved with the most difficult problems of all, man's social and psychological environment.

There is no simple way that we, as a profession, can understand the new insights of the behavioral sciences and employ them in our work. The researchers commitment ends with the compilation of data. They have no obligation to promote their product and distribute it with prescriptions for use. There are no handbooks on these subjects and there probably never will be. We will have to make our own effort to understand.

Understanding isn't simple. One of the first hurdles is the language barrier. Daniel Carson, Professor of Psychology at the University of Michigan describes man as a "non-stationary open system, undergoing continuous interchange with his environment." This is hardly the kind of information that will sustain us when we return to our drawing boards. Behaviorists are prone to discuss the problems of an "information-rich environment," "information overload," and "noise" that has nothing to do with sound. They speak of resolving "uncertainty" by "information coding." "Non-object-oriented visual scanning" is their term for what you and I know as the age-old custom of girl-watching.

To make matters worse, they say that man's environment is not a series of discrete influences but a continuum with various elements in constant interaction. As a final blow, they hold the view that man carries much of his environment with him, not on his back, but in his head. To a large extent our environment is made in our minds.

It would be tempting to ignore all this as some type of senseless jargon, designed to mystify and impress, were it not for the fact that these terms refer to everyday matters of great concern to architecture. This is a language we may have to learn.

Discussing environment as a continuum rather than a series of discrete influences may be fruitful for a social scientist but is is hard to relate to our world of building codes, union jurisdictions, and construction budgets. While it may seem bizarre to a cultural anthropologist, and bears no relationship to the scientific disciplines of the academic world, I have attempted to subdivide our subject in a way that would be relevant to architecture. As designers, we are accustomed to working with dimensions as design parameters. We are constantly involved with the physical dimensions of the human being. I think it is a useful concept to assume that man actually has several sets of dimensions, all of which are as important in architecture and planning as the physical dimensions we are so familiar with.

They are the Physical, Physiological, Social Psychological, and Cultural dimensions that define man.

Relating architecture to man's physical dimensions is an old story for us. We do it pretty well. Human beings come in a wide variety of shapes and sizes, some quite peculiar and some quite delightful. The range, however, is finite. Adults are seldom taller than seven feet or shorter than four feet. We can easily infer from this data that if we design a doorway five feet high we are going to annoy a lot of people.

We know how far a man can reach, the length of his foot, and the space occupied by his gluteus maximus when he sits down.

Man's physiological dimensions are also familiar to us. After all, in its simplest terms, architecture is essentially the result of man's desire to control the cosmic forces that cause him discomfort: wind, rain, heat, and cold. We have a long way to go, however, in understanding and applying all that is known on this subject. The gap between knowledge and practice is enormous.

The techniques for controlling gross noise are widely known to the profession and used consistently. In this sense we have contributed to an improved environment. If the control of gross noise was the only important aspect of our sonic environment we could close the book on that subject and concentrate on other matters. This is far from the case. Physiologists have established a great deal of precise data on aural responses that we have not yet begun to apply. Our ears have an invaluable capacity to discriminate between sounds of different pitch and intensity with great accuracy. This was a priceless asset to man in the jungle and it remains a priceless asset to man in the city. Our present approach to sound control tends to hinder the operation of one of our most useful senses. We are using a meat-axe technique on a subject that deserves the precision of a lancet.

The same thing applies to other aspects of our bodies' sensing systems. The whole range of tactile sensations, underfoot, in our hands, or on our skins is unexplored territory for the design professions but not to the physiologists. We work hard at resolving the problems of heating and air-conditioning and do improve these systems but avenues of application remain that are totally unexploited. How should we handle the tantalizing information that the presence of negative ions in the air has a definite effect on our well-being, or that a pulsating temperature produces a more "perfect" environment for human beings than the uniform temperatures we try so hard to maintain. The field of vision has seen some of our more notable contributions to an improved environment as well as our most spectacular failures. The operation of the human eye is no mystery. It has been carefully and precisely explored by generations of researchers. These findings have made it possible to establish the several conditions for optimum seeing rather exactly. Some of this information, that on illumination levels, is employed very conscientiously in building design. For some reason the equally important consideration of contrast or glare is widely ignored. This may be the single most exasperating oversight of which any of us can be guilty.

THE BROWN PAPER REBELLION

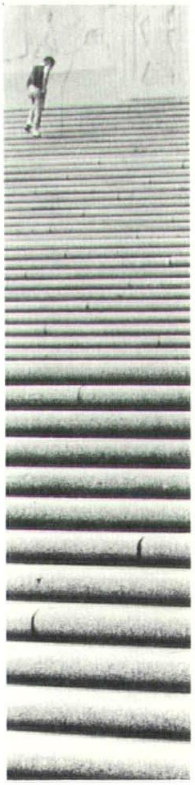
The designer has ample cause for concern with physiological factors. These are the dimensions most directly involved when we talk of environment in traditional terms. We ignore them at our peril.

You, too, may have been startled, on visiting some landmark of modern architecture, to find cardboard deflectors wired to the air-conditioning outlets, a snarl of wires and bare light bulbs dangling from the ceiling, and brown paper pasted on the windows. It is the result of a commitment to an abstract design ideal that ignores the real environmental needs of man. The architects for these buildings may feel outraged at the liberties taken with their work, but the brown paper makes a point we should heed: man is prone to be very impatient with anyone who dismisses his needs as unimportant. He fights back.

The catalogue of our sensory systems and our physical dimensions is rather complete and concise. Certainly there is enough to justify the effort of putting it all in a form that we could use in making design decisions. Unfortunately, we have nothing like this precise data in regard to our other dimensional sets.

Information developed in the behavioral sciences is not in the form that would be most useful to us. Instead of being specific, it is diffuse and general, concerned with statistical averages rather than precise statements. Whatever its awkwardness for our use, we will have to take it as it is. We need it badly. In my view, it is not too much to say that the course of architecture in the near future will be largely dedicated to applying the findings of the behaviorists to the solution of our environmental problems.

One of the great advantages it can bring us is the ability to more accurately predict human reactions to the physical world. One thing the apprentice architect soon learns in organizing building sites is that there is no point in putting arrows on plans to indicate his desires concerning water flow. Water doesn't read. It obeys inflexible laws of its



" . . . There is no simple way . . . "

own, and contrary to our wishes, will blithely flow through the living room on its long journey to the sea if we fail to consider its special needs. Human beings behave in much the same way, and it is a rare architect who has not discovered that writing "conversation area" or "assembly area" on a plan has little effect on human actions. People do read, but they much prefer to behave in a manner of their own choosing, and seem to feel no obligation to perform as the architect may have intended.

The Director of Housing at one Mid-western college has reported, rather ruefully, on his bruising experience with human perversity. He and his architect had painstakingly developed the perfect arrangement of furnishings for a new dormitory and awaited with some impatience the universal acclaim of the student body. It never came. The students actually used eight different configurations of furniture, none of which resembled in any way the intended plan.

There is no point in being annoyed at this kind of behavior anymore than there is in being annoyed at the ways of water. The intelligent course, in both cases, is to understand the forces at work and plan accordingly. We need to know what the behaviorists know.

The social dimensions of man are many and complex. Fortunately we are only involved with a limited number. These are largely concerned with group dynamics, the way in which individuals relate to each other and to the group. A few examples will have to suffice for a whole library of knowledge.

When an architect designs a classroom he has many objective criteria to meet: number of pupils, subject matter, structural and budgetary limitations. None of these take into account the remarkable fact that the amount of learning that takes place in a classroom is directly related to the teacher-pupil distance. This would seem to be data of great importance to us since it suggests the desirability of entirely different configurations than these in current use.

The relationship between leaders and followers is directly affected by their physical grouping. The space that is ideally organized for the Chairman who wishes to dominate his Board of Directors would seriously impair the operation of a seminar that was supposed to encourage the participation of everyone present. We are currently designing a project with a large conference room and grappling with the apparently unsolvable problem that optimum individual performance requires that no one sit next to anyone else.

SITE PLANNING AND SOCIAL BEHAVIOR

Organizing large site plans offers even tougher problems of group relationship. The organization of housing units has a direct bearing on the opportunities individuals have for meaningful social contacts, and thus, in a very real sense, affects the content of their lives. To the sociologist, these contacts are the foundation for well adjusted community life.

You would be astounded, I think, by the great difference between their view of the important elements of community planning and ours. We tend to deplore the monotonous sameness of tract housing and inadequate lot sizes, factors which in their view are of little importance. They are more concerned with the fact that our traditional street patterns severely limit the opportunities for social contact. An architect's concept of an ideal neighborhood would be one in which all the services a family might need would be readily at hand. The sociologists point out that such a neighborhood eliminates the need for neighborliness: the borrowing across the back fence, the sharing of baby-sitting chores, the sense of involvement with an identifiable group. These, they contend, are the real dimensions of man's social needs, not abstract concepts of order.

Seen in this light, many of our basic assumptions about our urban environment seem inappropriate. Corbusier's vision of the Radiant City may have a tremendous intellectual appeal but it bears no relationship to the real needs of social man.

The degree of difference between our assumptions regarding social behavior and the observable facts is nicely described by Robert Gutman, Professor of Sociology at the Urban Studies Center of Rutgers University. In an unpublished paper titled *Site Planning and Social Behavior*, he observes, "The history of contemporary building is full of examples of areas set aside for parks which have never been used for this purpose. The children who were supposed to play in the grassy space can be found tumbling in the adjoining sandlot; instead of sunning themselves on the benches, the men are gossiping in the saloon around the corner."

If you want to see these factors at work, stroll from the seething action of Rockefeller Center to the elegant but deserted plaza at the Seagram Building. Whatever the reasons or the intent, is is apparent that the architects for Rockefeller Center provided an environment that the people of New York enjoy.

Many of the observations I have offered about our social dimensions apply equally to our psychological dimensions. It is true that architects have been aware of and long employed many of the visual phenomenon of psychology in their work. Distortions of perspective, of scale, and of proportion to create special visual effects were employed in architecture for centuries before the discipline we know as psychology existed. We still employ them.

Our interest in psychology, however, has not extended much beyond this special class of phenomenon. It is a vast field of which I have only a limited knowledge, yet it is apparent that it is of critical importance to us in our search for an understanding of man's relationship to his environment. If we consider only the instances where the findings of the psychologists are in conflict with some of our most cherished architectural concepts, it should serve to illustrate its importance.

One of the findings that should be of interest is that human beings tend to seek an information rich environment, an environment in which all of their senses are receiving lots of signals about what is going on around them. The ordered environment, the environment their senses can scan and understand instantly may be reassuring, but it is, also, boring. Compare this view of the world with our own commitment to elegant simplicity, to the ordering of environment at the hands of the master designer, to the elimination of the non-essential as an achievement of high order. To eliminate the non-essential is to eliminate redundancy, and redundancy, strangely enough, is a vital necessity if human beings are to relate quickly and accurately to their surroundings.

In at least one other basic way our views seem to be at odds with behavioral research. To the psychologist, it is clear that one of the greatest needs a human has is to recognize himself as an individual and to have others recognize him as an individual. This is not an attribute of the mentally ill, it applies to all of us. Contrast this with our concept of total design as a desirable goal, a concept that implies we must control all the variables in a designed environment. If we were to really accomplish total design, what opportunity remains to the individual for self-expression; what opportunity does he have to exercise individual choice.

In these two instances above we find a basic conflict between well known architectural precepts and the impressive data compiled by psychological research. Does the plan really have a logic of its own? Is it true that "Less is more?" Psychology insists that the real needs of human beings require us to change our ways of thinking about architecture.

In discussing man's cultural dimensions we return once more to familiar ground. It is where the art of architecture lies. While it is familiar ground, it should not be assumed that we completely understand it for we are not talking about culture in the limited area of the arts but in the much broader terms of the cultural anthropologist.

All of us are influenced in ways we little understand by the tides of the culture of which we are a part. It runs in shallow surface currents, quickly changing, that bring us new forms of entertainment, new hair styles, and new

(Continued on Page 14)

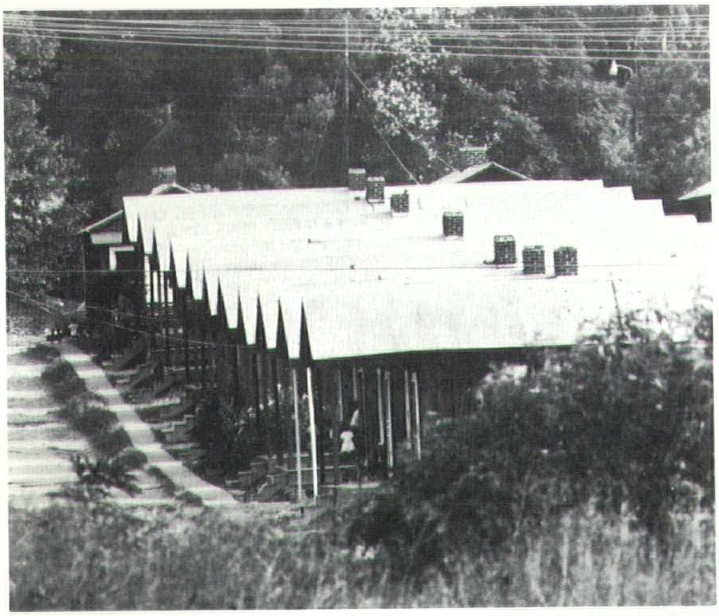


PHOTO - DAVE GLEASON

IS ZONING REALL

C. H. JORDAN, AIA

Professor of Architecture

Louisiana State University

Over the past fifty-three months, as a member of a Zoning Commission, I have asked myself this question many times. Month after month of stark drama — of little old ladies pleading for their very existence — of land speculators describing themselves as the harbinger of progress — of smooth lawyers defining the real meaning of zoning with cliches and bromides — of merchants explaining that off-street parking is completely unnecessary in *his* business — of hearing about the beauty and utility of junkyards and trailer camps — of latter day Patrick Henrys proclaiming liberty or death — of tears — or hysteria and wailing and gnashing of teeth — the question is just bound to come to mind — *IS ZONING REALLY NECESSARY?* The first answer is always an emphatic *NO* — there just must be a better way to ensure the orderly development of a community, but upon reflection, I always return to the conclusion, expressed by the old saw about religion — "if it didn't exist we would have to invent it." Imperfectly as it is written, understood, and administered zoning is not a necessary evil but a necessary good. My personal frustrations aside, there seems to be a nation wide malaise concerning zoning and its efficacy in dealing with contemporary urban problems.

This uneasyness (or antipathy) probably stems from one or more of these three root causes:

1. Traditional resentment of any control that limits free choice of actions.
2. Little or no understanding of zoning principles or purposes by the commissions that administer the ordinances, much less the general public.
3. Out-of-date zoning ordinances that stifle creative approaches and tend to be unnecessarily complicated and confusing.

Let us briefly analyze these three points and see if there is a ray of sunshine on this dark horizon.

1. Laissez Faire Traditions

Our traditions of property prerogatives stems in part from the English thesis that "a man's home is his castle." This feeling was deep rooted in the English colonist and formalized in our Constitution's Bill of Rights. But possibly even more garmane is that we are so close to our pioneer forefathers that defense of one's property tends to be a personal rather than a community endeavor. Traditions, like habits, die slowly, if at all, but social and political changes are now taking place so rapidly, that perhaps our individualistic attitudes will change at the same pace.

Historically, mankind has always had, in some way, to temper private prerogatives with public responsibility (even to the point of being a sacrificial victim for a bountiful harvest) so we are accustomed but not reconciled to controls. The decisive point, it seems to me, is that practically no private development can take place without

ECESSARY?

public assistance in roads, drainage, utilities, etc. Consequently, it is only fair for the community to exercise some control for its own protection. This is a rational point of view and may not strike a responsive chord in the general public, but it should in the various professional groups associated with land and its development and use.

Possibly, the plethora of new governmental controls on every facet of life and death, will so enure us to so many rocks in our shoes that the "zoning rock" will fade into insignificance. Mankind seems to respond in positive ways when problems become acute and general, and no one could possibly predict that our urban problems will get less general or less acute, so our degeneration might prove to be our salvation over the long haul.

ON UNDERSTANDING ZONING

Though most of the controls embodied in zoning ordinances have been exercised in one place or another over the world for hundreds of years, the American proto-type is of relatively recent origin. New York City enacted the first American ordinance in 1916 as a response to the adverse effect that the new skyscrapers had on adjacent property in terms of light, air, and usefulness. Tested in the crucible of litigation over a period of half a century, most ordinances are strikingly similar and have as their stated general objectives the promotion of *health, safety, morals,* and the *general welfare of the community* — but (and this is the most important and most ignored aspect of zoning) the realization of these objectives *must* be based on a *comprehensive plan* for the development of the community. Without exception a comprehensive plan *is* made, but all too often it is shelved with other historic documents and referred to only by implication. In a dynamic community, a plan is out-of-date as soon as the last line is drawn — new generative forces are created hourly, consequently, planning must be a continuous process, directed at broad community goals, but ever changing in response to new problems, new information, new techniques, and new technology. All too many cities are planning by zoning instead of implementing the plan with zoning. This type of planning is comparable to opening a can with an ax.

Who will do the planning? The nation is woefully short of trained, competent planners. The A.I.P., the nearest thing to registration in the planning profession, has less than four thousand members — not enough to fill even the administrative posts that are available. The increase in universities offering planning degrees is dramatic but it will be years (if ever) that supply will come close to demand. In the meantime our urban problems multiply in geometric proportions.

What can we do until the doctor comes?

I would urge that more architects broaden the scope of their knowledge and services to include practice in urban design and planning. In the absence of adequate staff on municipal payrolls, the informed architect could provide valuable planning direction to his community as a consultant. Many architects, with a high sense of professional competence and no formal urban planning education, are reluctant to involve themselves in planning. I disagree with this attitude. An architect is faced daily with the same kind of organizational discipline that is so vital to planning. If he is lacking in some specialized area — extensive reading and attendance at seminars and short courses should prove remedial. Planning encompasses such a wide range of factors that no one man could possibly be expert in all, hence a team approach is necessary. The architect will be least apt in the research, analysis, and programming phases, but should be pre-eminent in the synthesis of all factors into a viable physical form. Willing or not, I believe the architect will be faced more and more with building complexes rather than individual structures, so the step to the larger scale should not prove unusually difficult.

Other than planning practice, every architect should make his specialized training and knowledge available to his community in every way possible — to serve on planning, zoning, beautification, park, or any other commission dealing with the physical and visual aspects of the city and most especially — to stand up and be counted on civic issues where his knowledge is pre-eminent. The most heartening thing to come out of the New Orleans highway controversy, is the number of architects that have been willing to speak out and fight for a community principle. It should happen in more Louisiana cities, more often.

OUT-OF-DATE ZONING ORDINANCES

Zoning ordinances, like most laws, grow by accretion — new regulations are added on top of old until it becomes a complicated mess of split hairs — difficult for the expert to remember and the citizen to understand. Baton Rouge has far from the worst of these ordinances, yet it has sixteen zoning districts and scores of special conditions. New concepts and simplification would be of inestimable help in guiding the dynamic growth of our cities.

The conceptual path that offers the most promise, I feel, is an ordinance built on *performance standards* rather than our traditionally arbitrary linear and vertical property restrictions. Man is still subject to, and seeks relief from, the problems he faced forty years ago — noise, smell, lack of light and air, visual chaos, congestion, and health and safety hazards; but there have been dramatic changes in society (and the goals it seeks), in technology (and its many mechanical solutions), and in the design professions (with increased ability to deal with urban problems). We should now be able to specify the tolerable limit of any nuisance and free the individual to select a traditional or a contemporary answer. Most codes have vestiges of performance standards in terms of decibels, smoke density, etc. but they are poorly understood and policed, therefore, it would be absolutely necessary for any new ordinance to keep in mind the practicality of enforcement.

Aesthetic control strikes a responsive chord in most architects. The promotion of beauty or the annihilation of ugliness must be ranked with God, motherhood, etc. as unassailable ideals, but when we try to define beauty or ugliness, all unanimity disappears — whose aesthetics will be fostered whose will be gored. Laws governing aesthetics are more possible now than ever before (Segrams Building, Billboard Act, etc.) but I would prefer a cautious approach, for two principle reasons. (1) These laws are all too likely to be framed by politicians or other unlikely and untrained groups, and (2) I am convinced that the real mature beauty of a city stems from the variety and diversity of aesthetic ideals as well as the necessary diversity of function. Architects, or people acting as architects, are the real creators of urban space. If we are conscious of, and conscientious in, living up to our responsibilities, we should need no laws.

I am not sure that I have convinced you that zoning is necessary, for I find it hard at times to convince myself, but I hope sincerely that each architect will take a more active interest in his community, provide leadership, and obviate the importance of zoning.

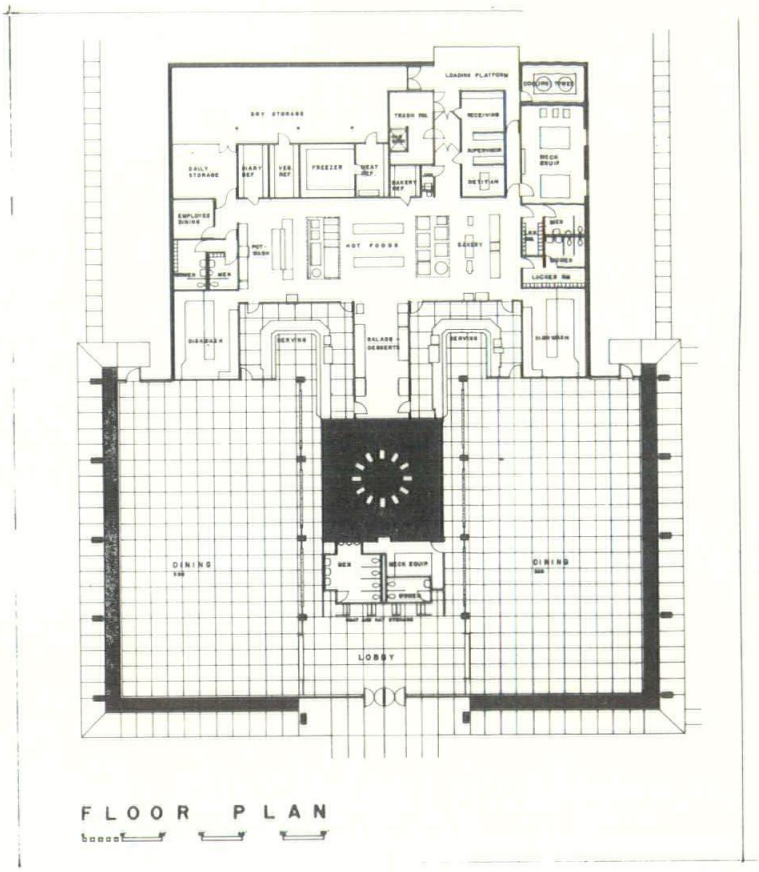
HONOR AWARD —AIA 15TH GULF STATES REGIONAL CONFERENCE

—CIMINI AND MERIC AND ASSOCIATES - Architects

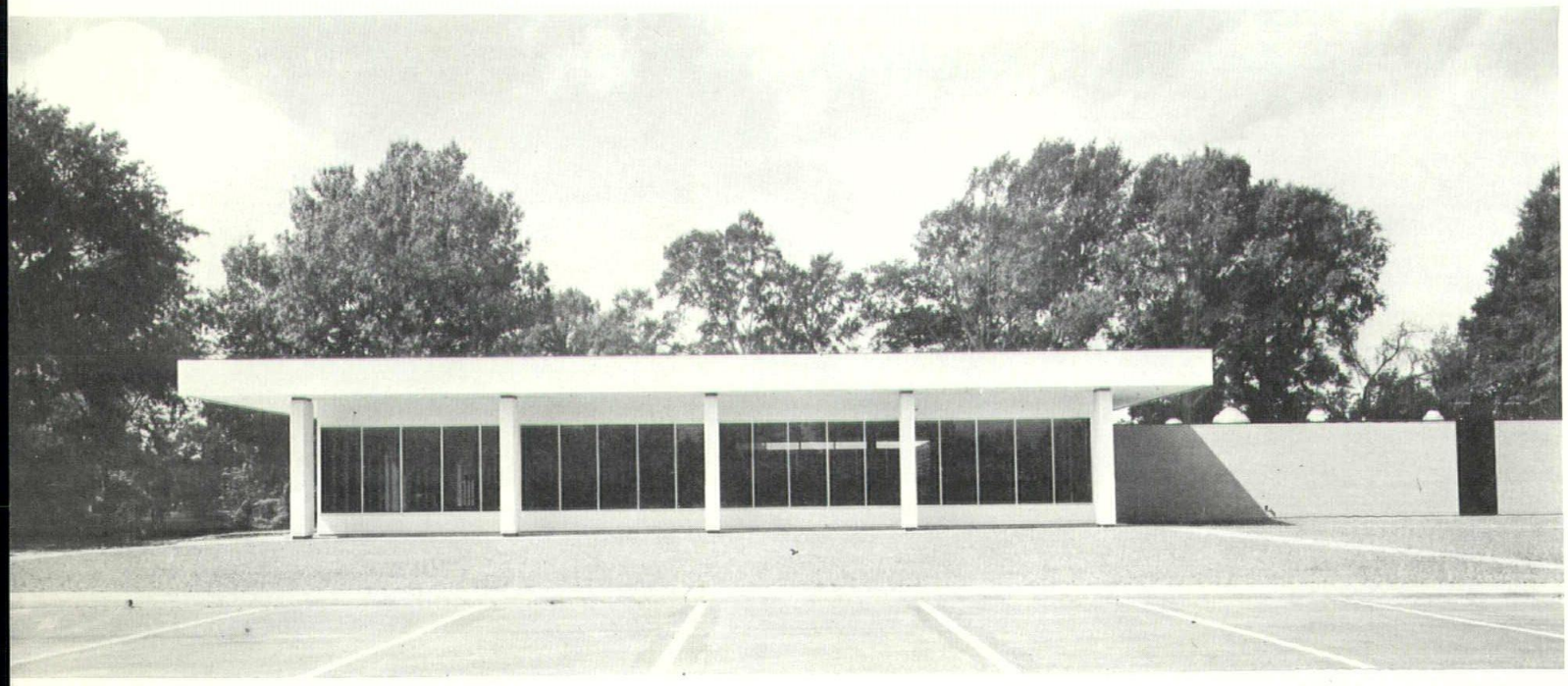
JURY COMMENTS:

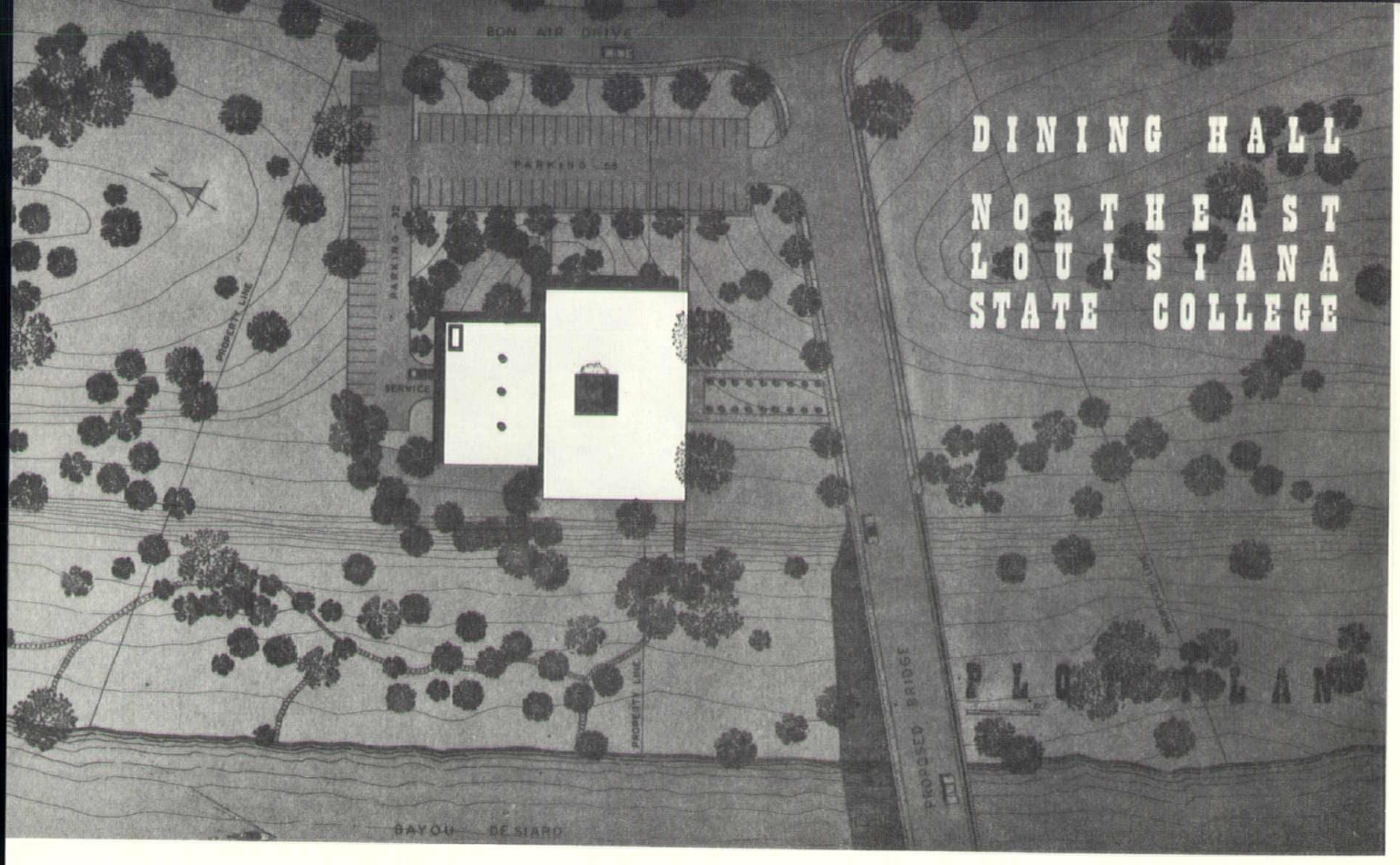
This is a forthright selection with fine relationship of the several elements. The circulation is splendid and the architectural statement of the facades is particularly noteworthy. The Jury was impressed with the restraint of the architectural character.

STRUCTURAL SYSTEM—cast-in-place concrete columns with exposed white polar quartz aggregate around dining areas. Sq. steel tube columns in kitchen area. Steel beams, bar joist, corruform and insulating concrete form roof construction. EXTERIOR SURFACES—Brick cavity walls around kitchen area. Solar grey glass with cement plaster panels above and below around dining area. Fascia of high roof is precast concrete, with exposed polar quartz aggregate. Soffits are cem. plast. INTERIOR PARTITIONS—Exposed conc. block in storage areas. Glazed structural facing tile in kitchen and toilet rooms. Glass in metal frames around office areas and helps dining FLOORS—Terrazzo in dining areas, ceramic tile in toilet rooms. Terrazzite in kitchen areas, concrete in storage rms. CEILINGS—2 x 2 vaulted lay-in acoustical tile with exposed suspension system in dining rooms. 12 x 12 aluminum faced, acoustical tile and concealed suspension system in kit. areas AIR-CONDITIONING—Blower units with chill and hot water coils circulate air through stripline diffuses in din. rms. and lobby. Offices and helps dining are also air conditioned.

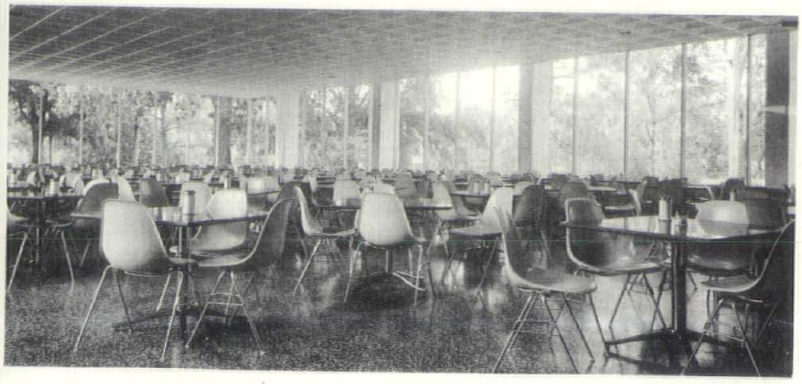


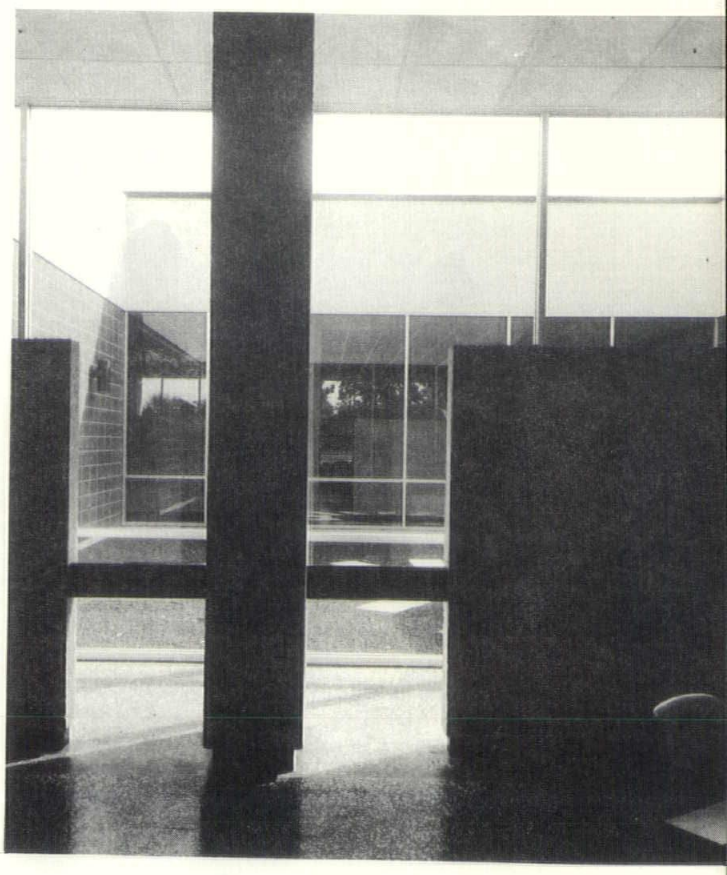
FLOOR PLAN





The dining hall is located on a wooded site on Bayou Desiard across from the main college campus. A proposed bridge over the Bayou will connect the dining hall, several existing dormitories and other proposed projects with the main campus. The dining hall contains 19,000 sq. feet and was primarily designed for men students. The two dining areas have a seating capacity of 300 students each and the two serving lines are designed to serve a total of 1,200 meals during any meal period. Two completely independent and separate dining rooms were provided in order that one dining room and serving line could be entirely closed off when not required and also in order that student and/or faculty banquets, luncheons, etc. could be accommodated without interfering with the operation of the adjacent dining room. The courtyard separating the dining rooms not only provides light and visual interest for the students in line but also an area in which to display student art work. The solargrey glass around the dining areas reduces the glare, affords a view of the Bayou and forms a black reflective background for the white concrete columns.





fashions in art. It also runs in deep, remarkably stable, currents that give us our sustaining concepts of family structure, our laws and whole range of values around which we organize our lives.

These same currents supply the architect with a host of familiar concepts. "Familiar" may not be the right term for they are so well known to us that we may not recognize their existence. When we pick up a pencil we do not need to remind ourselves of certain facts about scale, proportion, and form; we do not need to run through a catechism of materials that are appropriate or inappropriate. We have absorbed this information through every pore since the moment of our birth. It is part of our cultural adaptation, our cultural baggage, and it is very hard to dispose of it.

The reaction to fine wood and thick carpet is quite predictable in our culture. They are luxury symbols. The fireplace has outlived its usefulness as a heating device but it persists in response to some deeply ingrained cultural dimension. Most of us have strong convictions about the therapeutic value of communing with unspoiled nature though we might be reluctant to walk across the street. All these responses are cultural adaptations.

We find them, too, in more subtle manifestations such as our concept of personal space. We are a "non-contact" culture and typically like privacy. Other cultures, "contact" cultures, are accustomed to conversing on virtually a nose to nose basis. To quote Daniel Carson again, "To an Arab, the question of where he goes to be alone is meaningless: who would want to be alone?"

There is a whole order of cultural responses that we accept without ever really understanding them. For the architect, understanding them may be particularly important. It seems likely that the essence of the creative act lies in understanding these dimensions, isolating them, and selectively altering or recombining them to accomplish new results. This is the source of the excitement and surprise we feel when we observe a new answer to an old problem. We may feel cheated that we didn't think of something so obvious ourselves. Perhaps we would have if we had a clearer understanding of our cultural dimensions.

The value of such insights is not to surprise, but to contribute new and useful solutions for the problems of society. The most useful role our profession can play is to suggest such changes. In order to do this we may have to recognize that we ourselves carry a certain amount of cultural baggage of dubious value. I think it would be fair to say that most of us have an image of the city as a place of broad plazas, distinguished buildings, order and beauty. Is this a valid image for the kind of life we live in the cities we live in? We also share a tendency to identify the creation of new forms as the substance of architectural greatness. As an architect I concede that they have a fatal fascination for me, but I cannot escape the conclusion that unless they are related to the human dimension, unless they in some way contribute to a more viable human environment, they have no more importance than sand pile play.

There is one last bit of cultural baggage we should examine with great care. This is the concept that great architecture is solely a matter of inspiration and that searching out the prosaic facts of human behavior is beneath it. Whatever this kind of architecture may be, it is hardly an architecture for humans.

In discussing the sets of human dimensions that we must understand, if we are serious about creating an improved environment for man, I hope that I have not created the impression that it will be either easy or impossibly difficult. The hardest part of the work has been done by researchers in many disciplines. Our work is to take this knowledge and use it in creating a better, more relevant architecture and better systems of urban life.

This may well be beyond the capacity of any individual architect or any firm of architects. It is clearly not beyond the capacity of the profession as a whole. It is my hope that we can, through joint action, conduct the investigations that will define the human parameters we must learn to deal with. As a profession, we should be prime movers in the development of a unified science of environment.

The fable persists, somehow, that knowledge is the enemy of art. Whatever its source, it is abundantly clear that it does not apply to architecture. Ours has always been a relevant art, relevant to the needs of humanity. To understand those needs better, to accommodate them more precisely, will not stifle creativity but give it base for greater accomplishments.

INTRODUCTION—Meet our new LAA Gal Friday—Miss Phyllis Muncrief

The skills and charm of our "Hot Springs Honey," Phyllis Muncrief have effectively softened the blow of losing, to the Hills of Tennessee, Pat Beeson.

While she's new to the Cajun Country, Miss Muncrief is not new to the public relations and legislative work this job calls for. She has worked for the Muncrief Printing Company in her home town of Hot Springs, at the Arkansas Bank and Trust, Hot Springs, the National Crushed Stone Association in Washington, D. C., and for two years with J. Walter Thompson Co., the world's largest advertising agency.

Miss Muncrief holds a BA Degree in Speech and Drama from Southern State College in Magnolia, Arkansas, and has attended Henderson State Teachers College, Arkadelphia, Ark., and Interamerican University, Saltillo, Mexico.

The following excerpts from four letters of reference should convince you that we've got the right gal for the LAA. "Phyllis is a very sound and steady individual, with a good personality. She handled her responsibilities with enthusiasm and a high measure of intelligence" . . . . "Miss Phyllis Muncrief is the most reliable, dependable and interested secretary I have ever had. What more is there to say?" . . . . "She's a self-starter without being self-assertive. Competent, but not cocky. Friendly but not intrusive. More than willing but anything but a drudge. I hope I don't make it seem that this girl can't be genuine, because you're not likely ever to meet a more genuine person." . . . . "carries out assignments promptly and without prodding; she is highly conscientious, gladly works overtime when work pressure demands it" . . . .

In the few weeks Miss Muncrief has been with the LAA I've found these statements to be completely accurate.

When you call your LAA office you'll be pleased with her prompt and courteous assistance.

—THE EDITOR

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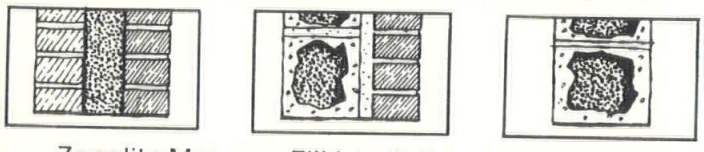

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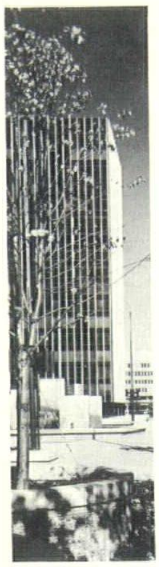

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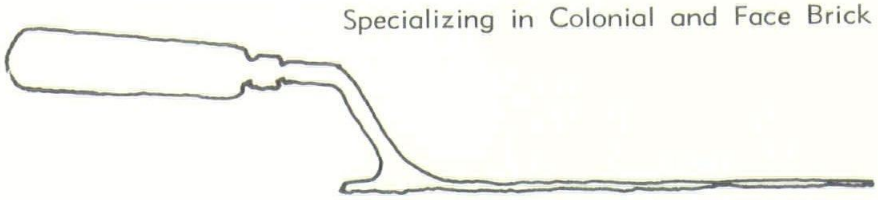

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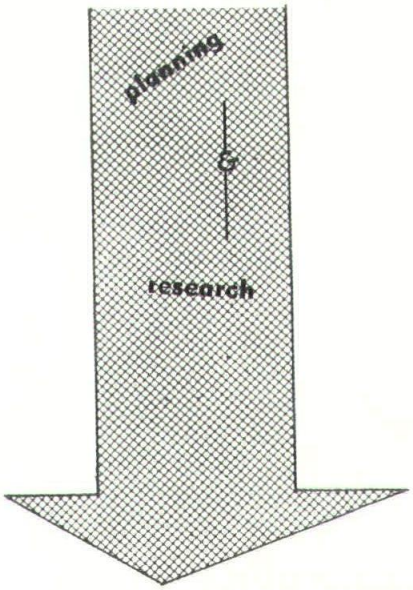

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