ARCHITECTURAL EDUCATION AT CORNELL: 1928-1950

BETWEEN MODERNISM AND BEAUX-ARTS

A Thesis

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by

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ABSTRACT

Cornell University's School of Architecture, the second oldest in the United States, enjoyed for many years a reputation as a quintessential "French" school, based on the teaching methods of the École de Beaux Arts in Paris. Its students and alumni did very well in design competitions, and went on to successful careers all over the country.

When the author attended architecture school in Caracas, the majority of the faculty were Cornell alumni from the 50s. Their focus was on modernism, and when they reminisced about Cornell they talked mostly about what they learned studying Le Corbusier, Mies van der Rohe and Gropius, among others.

For this thesis the author reviewed documents in the university's archives and corresponded with alumni of the era, in order to look at the transitional period between those two phases in the life of the Cornell school.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Christian Nielsen-Palacios was born in Caracas, Venezuela, of a Danish father (Nielsen) and a Venezuelan mother (Palacios).

He attended a Jesuit high school, graduating near the top of his class. He then came to the United States to prepare for college by repeating the final year of high school in Lawrenceville, New Jersey. Being homesick, he returned to Venezuela and enrolled in what was one of the best and more progressive universities in the country, the “experimental” Universidad Simón Bolívar, founded in the late 60s. He is a member of the 5th class of architects to graduate from the University, in 1981. The faculty of that young school was composed, in great part, of Venezuelan architects who had studied at Cornell in the 50s and early 60s. Therefore, Christian’s education was indirectly affected by the teaching methods and ideas prevalent in Ithaca at the time.

After graduation, Christian started his own practice with five other architects, four of them members of the first class to graduate from USB. Most had pursued graduate studies abroad, at Harvard, Yale and MIT, and were also teaching at our Alma Mater. Three years later, Christian decided to follow their example, and chose to attend Cornell, to pursue an M.Arch. with a minor in architectural history. After one semester, Christian realized he was enjoying his minor so much that he decided to formally transfer to the MA program in history of architecture, with a special interest in the history of the profession itself.

Christian stayed in Ithaca, became licensed in New York State in 1991, and continues to practice architecture to this day.

I dedicate this thesis to my parents, C. Steen Nielsen and Beatriz Palacios de Nielsen, who always supported me and my studies, and would have been thrilled to know I actually finished.

To my wife, Edie Reagan, for encouraging me to submit it again 27 years after defending it, and to my sons, Austin and Joseph, as proof that when you start something worthwhile, you should finish it no matter when.

And to my uncle and godfather Gonzalo Palacios, scholar, role model and almost an architect himself.

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I would like to thank many people for helping shape the architect, historian and person I have become:

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My friends and former business partners: Nuri Bofill, Lourdes Bracho, Guillermo Frontado, David Gouverneur and Enrique Larrañaga, who, by their example as architects and scholars, instilled in me the desire for continued learning. If only they had also been Cornellians!

RM, who would not like to be named here, but who introduced me to the wonderful world of the Cornell archives and the pleasure of using primary sources.

The faculty during my days at Cornell: Christian Otto, Martin Kubelik, Mark Jarzombek, and especially Mary Woods and Val Warke, who were my thesis advisors. They and my classmates during 1984-1987 helped make those years among the most fun and interesting in my life.

The alumni who responded to my letters and phone calls asking for recollections of their time at Cornell. Their letters, in Appendix D, are probably the best part of this work.

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PART I

INTRODUCTION: THREE POINTS OF DEPARTURE

1 Cornell before the Beaux-Arts

The architecture program at Cornell University was established in 1871, thanks to the efforts of its first president, Andrew Dickson White. The period discussed in this thesis started sixty years later. Earlier phases of the college's history have been the subject of other works. The following paragraphs are based on three of them, written by Ethel Goodstein,[1] Roberta Moudry,[2] and Arthur Weatherhead.[3]

Among A. D. White's many interests, architecture was always recognized as having a starring role. "This love for architecture was furthered by his reading of Ruskin."[4] During his frequent trips to Europe, White purchased thousands of architectural books and photographs, as well as casts of architectural sculpture. His collection, at the time the best in the United States, was donated to the university to form the base of the architecture program.[5]

In addition, White was responsible for the selection of the university's first professor of architecture. At the conclusion of a faculty search described by Moudry, White settled on Rev. Charles Babcock.[6] Babcock had trained as an

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1 Ethel Goodstein, "Charles Babcock: Architect, Educator and Churchman," MA thesis, Cornell University, 1979.
2 Roberta Moudry, "From Babcock to Beaux-Arts: Architectural Education at Cornell," graduate seminar paper, Cornell University, December 1985.
3 Arthur Weatherhead, The History of Collegiate Education in Architecture in the United States, Los Angeles, 1941.
4 Moudry, op. cit., p. 3.
5 Weatherhead, op. cit., p. 33.
6 Moudry, op. cit., pp. 4-6.

apprentice in the Gothic Revivalist office of Richard Upjohn (his father-in-law), which may have been one of the reasons White picked him. Babcock's practical training, and his commitment to the Gothic,[7] would define the first phase of the architectural program at Cornell. The "Babcock Era"[8] would see its growth from a small department within the College of Engineering (with the Reverend as its director and sole faculty member), to an independent college of the university.

For almost a decade, Babcock and a few student assistants taught every subject in the four-year course, leading to a Bachelor of Science degree. Instruction was pragmatic in character, similar to what Babcock had received as an apprentice in Upjohn's office. Design, taught only at the end of the course, was what would later be called working drawings.[9] "At no point in Babcock's curriculum was an attempt made to teach ... the actual act of artistic composition."[10]

In 1890, an assistant professor joined Babcock: Charles Francis Osborne, "who took over the teaching of design,"[11] and "taught much of the applied construction and construction details."[12] The two architects, products of the apprenticeship system, were very compatible and continued the pattern established by White and Babcock. They were joined in 1894 by a third pragmatist, their former student Clarence Augustine Martin, "who took charge of

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7 Among the buildings he designed for the Cornell campus are Sage Hall, Sage Chapel, Lincoln Hall, and Tjaden (formerly Franklin) Hall.

8 W. G. Purcell, "1902 and the Gilded Age; Teaching Architecture in Universities: A Story of Cornell," Northwest Architect, v.16, n.2, March-April 1952.

9 Weatherhead, op. cit., p. 34.

10 Moudry, op. cit., p. 8.

11 Moudry, op. cit., p. 10.

12 Weatherhead, op. cit., p. 34.

the applied construction courses, and raised the standards in this department until it became the strongest in the United States."[13] These men, it should be noted, did consider architecture one of the fine arts, but thought that the four years at Cornell should be used in preparing students for employment. Those with a gift for creative design could hone their skill as they worked on real projects.

All of a sudden, external factors disrupted the established model. Moudry describes how, in late 1895, "the Board of Trustees created a committee to analyze future facilities needed by the departments of architecture, chemistry and physics."[14] For reasons that do not concern us here, the committee also "discussed drastic changes in faculty, curriculum, and most importantly, a shift in the underlying theory of architectural education" in the department.[15] In what can be described as a coup d'état, the committee forced a radical reorganization of the department in March 1896. It would become an independent college, following the approach of the French *École des Beaux-Arts*. Young Olaf M. Brauner, who had been teaching in Cornell's Sibley College of Mechanical Engineering, was appointed Instructor in Drawing in the new College of Architecture, the first in a long series of fine arts faculty members.[16]

Babcock and Osborne left. Osborne took a leave of absence, and went on to teach at the University of Pennsylvania, where Cornellian Warren P. Laird was Dean of the School of Fine Arts. Babcock promised to resign the following

[13] Weatherhead, op. cit., p. 34.
[14] Moudry, op. cit., p. 14.
[15] Moudry, op. cit., p. 15.
[16] (Obituary in 1947 Faculty Minutes)

year. He served as the college's first dean, and retired as Professor Emeritus in 1897.

The new head of the architecture program was Alexander Buell Trowbridge, who had spent three years at the *École* after graduating from Cornell.[17] Trowbridge was responsible for the hiring of John Vredenburg Van Pelt to teach design. Van Pelt had attended the *École* nine years, and was the first American to receive the French government's diploma (*Architecte Diplômé par le Gouvernment*).[18] He would be appointed dean in 1902, when Trowbridge resigned in order to practice in New York City. Van Pelt also left for New York shortly thereafter, and Clarence A. Martin, who had remained in charge of construction courses during this transitional period, became the new dean. He headed the college from 1904 to 1918.

Although they would not serve as deans of the college, a long dynasty of *École* trained men (many of them ADG) would follow Trowbridge and Van Pelt as instructors of design.[19] In 1919, when Martin resigned the deanship, Francke Huntington Bosworth was hired to replace him. Bosworth was again an *École* man, although not ADG.

These architects transformed Cornell's reputation from one of excellence in technical training, to one of leadership among Beaux-Arts inspired schools. Ethel Goodstein makes a comparison between Richard M. Hunt's atelier and

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[17] Moudry, op. cit., p. 20.
[18] Moudry, op. cit., p. 21.
[19] Maurice Prevot, Jean Hébrard, Georges Mauxion, Shepherd Stevens, Ely J. Kahn, Everett Meeks. Weatherhead, op. cit., pp. 92-93.

Richard Upjohn's office that may also serve to contrast the two approaches at Cornell:

> The Hunt atelier and the Upjohn office represent, perhaps, the purest interpretation of their respective traditions in America. The French tradition implied that architectural design could be taught -- one simply developed the proper thought process and the fluidity of the pencil to give the ideas graphic expression. In contrast, the English tradition put less emphasis on creative design, suggesting that design cannot be taught; the talent to excel in design had to reflect an individual's personal experience, observations and instincts. Hunt provided his pupils with a liberal education in the fine arts and architecture. Upjohn, on the other hand, schooled his pupils in the methodology of building.[20]

In this thesis, we will discuss how both traditions continued at Cornell even after the heyday of its Beaux-Arts phase, and how elements of each combined to make possible the beginning of a new stage in the College of Architecture history.

[20] Ethel Goodstein, op. cit., p. 43.

2 The methods of the École des Beaux-Arts

The system that Babcock's successors inaugurated at Cornell had already had a long development. A predecessor, the Royal Academy of Architecture in Paris, had been founded more than three centuries earlier. The *École* itself was created in 1797 and, in 1864, "Napoleon III placed it under direct state supervision."[21] Its importance as a state-supported institution, and the lack of tuition charges, initiated its success. Since only a few could be taught, rigorous entrance examinations were established. There were no other restrictions for admission, except an age limit of thirty. We will now look at some of the system's main features, to set the background for the next few chapters.

Once admitted into the school, students had to accumulate a certain amount of points, or values, by taking and passing a specified number of design problems. There were also lecture courses in history, theory, descriptive geometry, construction, and other subjects. Attendance to these lectures, however, was optional, and students needed only to pass an examination to receive credit. There was no predetermined time limit. Students could take as long as needed to pass the exams and take the design problems (until their thirtieth birthday).

The admission exam was a compact version of what the rest of the *École* experience would be like. It consisted of three parts.[22] First, the candidate had to

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[21] Turpin Bannister, ed., The Architect at Mid-Century: Evolution and Achievement, v.1 of the Report of the Commission for the Survey of Education and Registration of the AIA. New York: Reinhold Publishing Corp., 1954, p. 87.

[22] J. P. Carlhian, "The Ecole des Beaux-Arts: Modes and Manners," Journal of Architectural Education, v.33, n.2, November 1979, p. 8. Much of what follows is based on this article. It is especially illustrative of the peculiarities of the design process (even today), and their practical origins.

pass the *esquisse d'admission*, a twelve-hour problem in which he or she would draw, in plan, section, and elevation, a simple architectural design "requiring the use of classical motifs":

> Such an exercise, therefore, required from its author ... an understanding of classical proportions, a familiarity with the orders, a knowledge of simple geometry in order to establish the proper correspondence between different projected views of the building, and to represent accurately the meeting of complex forms such as vaults as well as the correct way of casting shadows created by an imaginary sun.[23]

Quite a tall order just for admission. The second step tested the candidate's skills in fine arts. A decorative detail had to be represented in two ways: a freehand drawing, and a soft clay reproduction. Finally, scientific knowledge was examined, with descriptive geometry problems such as "an accurate graphic representation of an intersection of vaults with the development of a selected component through appropriate projections."[24]

Only after successfully passing these three stages were students admitted to begin their training as *elèves* of the *École des Beaux-Arts*. The knowledge and skills required to just take the exam had to be obtained beforehand, elsewhere. Therefore, candidates started the process by becoming members of an *atelier*, where a master architect would provide the necessary training, at least theoretically. In reality, because meetings with the *patron* were seldom and brief, it was the older students (*anciens*) who passed on knowledge from generation to generation of new students (*nouveaux*).

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[23] Carlhian, op. cit., p. 8.

[24] Carlhian, op. cit., p. 8. Even to someone who once taught descriptive geometry, this is a nightmarish problem.

Once admitted to the *École*'s second class, students started collecting points by registering for, and passing, a pre-established number of design problems. Some of these were *analytiques*, similar to the *esquisse d'admission*. Others were more complex, requiring two phases: the *esquisse*, and the *projet rendu*. The *esquisse* was produced individually, at the *École*. Students were isolated in small rooms or booths (*en loge*), where they had twelve hours to come up with an original schematic solution. They would then be allowed to return to their *ateliers*, where they would have a few weeks, and the help of *nègres* (colleagues not taking that particular problem, and therefore with some free time), to produce the *rendu*, a complex, laborious drawing. The basic concept (*parti*) expressed in the *esquisse* had to be strictly adhered to, under penalty of being declared *Hors de Concours* (H.C.), out of the competition. Also, a few *esquisses-esquisses* (no *rendu* required), and exams in lecture courses, had to be passed before being promoted to the first class.

The last few hours of frantic work before the deadline to submit the solutions to these problems were called the *charrette*, for the carts in which the boards were transported from the *ateliers* to the *École*. There, they would all be displayed for inspection by a jury composed of many of the *patrons*. After eliminating any submission that they judged deserving of an *H.C.*, the jury would assign *mentions* and *médailles* to the best solutions.

First class work was similar, but with more emphasis on design projects. Six *projets*, (*esquisse* and *rendu*), six *esquisses-esquisses*, and six *concours* (competitions), had to be executed. A student could then compete for the *Grand*

Prix de Rome, or do a thesis and obtain a *Diplôme*. Completing these requirements could take several years.

Basically, this was the system that *École*-trained Americans brought to the United States. It became so deeply ingrained in the profession that all of the French terminology became part of the English language, at least as spoken by architects.[25] (Therefore, for the remainder of this thesis, they will not be italicized.)

There were, however, several École features that required modification. Some, because of their deep roots, would take years to change. Other aspects had to change immediately after being introduced into the American collegiate system. Two will be particularly important for our discussion. First, in this country higher education was seldom free, and an architecture student had to complete degree requirements in four (later five) years. Second, the evaluation system, with its mentions and medals, was not compatible with any other discipline taught at the universities. Numerical equivalents had to be provided in order to calculate the student's overall average. Nevertheless, the Beaux-Arts system was enthusiastically accepted by almost every school, and many of their best students would attempt to culminate their architectural training by spending some time at the École.

Some of their predecessors in Paris had met in 1890, and decided that, upon their return to the States, they would import the system. In 1893 they kept their word, and established the Society of Beaux-Arts Architects (SBAA) in New

[25] Nègres became "niggers" and "niggering," and charrette somehow lost an **R**.

York City, with a membership of seventy-two former École students.[26] They immediately started an educational section, and created the Paris Prize, to furnish "to the winner two hundred and fifty dollars quarterly during a period of two years for the purpose of travel and of study at the École."[27] In 1904 the Society made an agreement with the French government, by which winners of their prize would be admitted directly into the École's first class.

The educational section of the SBAA prepared architectural design problems similar to the ones that would have been formulated by the École's theory professor. "The prestigious position of 'Professeur de Théorie' conferred to the holder of its chair a role of primary if not crucial importance in the development of architectural design education at the École, in that he was responsible for the writing of every design program from that of the entrance competition to that of the most prestigious concours."[28] The architectural design programs issued by the SBAA (assuming the role of Professeur de Théorie), and its Paris Prize, became so popular that the educational branch grew into a separate entity. The Beaux-Arts Institute of Design (BAID) was created in 1916. "The Society of Beaux-Arts Architects voluntarily surrendered to the Institute the educational privileges of its charter ... The Beaux-Arts Institute of Design was incorporated from its inception as a school to teach design in architecture, and sculpture and painting in relation to architecture."[29] It is necessary to emphasize

[26] Weatherhead, op. cit., p. 76. According to Bannister (op. cit.), the Society was incorporated as such in January 1894.
[27] Weatherhead, op. cit., p. 78.
[28] Carlhian, op. cit., p. 15.
[29] Weatherhead, op. cit., p. 79.

that, more important than the instruction offered in its own ateliers, the influence of the BAID was due to the problems it issued, available to anyone.

Among the most ardent defenders of the Beaux-Arts system were McKim, Mead and White, and the professionals that collaborated with them on the 1893 Columbian Exposition. Six months after the establishment of the SBAA, they met in New York City and created a parallel institution: the American School of Architecture in Rome. "In 1895 the 'Roman Scholarship' of $1,500 was founded. It was open to graduates of recognized schools of architecture in the United States or to Americans who had completed a minimum of two years at the École."[30] Selected Americans could thus study in Rome, just as the winners of the École's Grand Prix. In 1897, the school was incorporated as the American Academy in Rome (AAR), also with departments of painting and sculpture. Landscape architecture would be added later.

[30] Weatherhead, op. cit., p. 83.

3 "Beaux-Arts" and "Modern"

When two terms are as familiar to the reader as these, it is difficult to write about what they mean and meant. Everybody "knows" what they stand for, but it is often hard to provide a concise definition. Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary defines beaux arts as simply "fine arts." Modern and its derivatives take half a page. The first definition is "of, relating to, or characteristic of a period extending from a relevant remote past to the present time." The Dictionary goes on to address some of the problems we face in this thesis:

> MODERN may date anything that is not ancient or medieval ... or anything that bears the marks of a period nearer in time than another ... or, less clearly, may apply to whatever is felt as new, fresh, or up-to-date.[31]

The Penguin Dictionary of Architecture is even less helpful. Beaux Arts is "a very rich classical style favoured by the École des Beaux-Arts in late C19 France."[32] There are similar definitions for Gothic, Renaissance, and Baroque, for example, but none for Modern or Modernism. The reasons for avoiding the task of defining these terms are clear: it is difficult, and whatever definition is achieved may be obsolete in no time.

In our case, the problem is complicated by the large number of references to primary sources. We cannot only consider the current meaning of these words, but also what they meant in the thirties or in the fifties. Rosemarie Bletter faced this problem when she wrote "The Art Deco Style":

> ... while earlier historians had neglected Art Deco in favor of the International Style, several authors of contemporary Art Deco books

[31] Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, 1973, s.v. "modern"
[32] Penguin Dictionary of Architecture, 3rd. ed., s.v. "Beaux Arts Style."

> go now to another extreme and suggest that everything produced in the twenties and thirties is Art Deco, including International Style architecture. The reader is never told exactly how someone like Corbusier, Gropius, or Mies is supposed to fit into the Art Deco style. We will have a more workable model of the styles of the twenties and thirties if we assume that there was an esoteric style, that is, the International Style, alongside of which developed a more popular style which has been named variously Art Deco, Modernistic, Jazz Modern, Zigzag Modern, Style 1925, the Twenties Style, the Thirties Style, Streamlined Modern, etc... . In its own day this style was referred to in America, after some initial vacillations between "modernist" and "modernistic," as Modernistic from about 1928 onward.[33]

At Cornell, in the thirties and forties, Moderne and Modernistic were used to mean Art Deco. Internationalism and MODERN are used by alumni to refer to the International Style.[34] Similarly, Beaux-Arts sometimes means the "rich classical style," but more often it refers to the educational system/process/method of the École, or is short for Beaux-Arts-Institute-of-Design.

The confusion would be very difficult to avoid. In this thesis, more than actual building styles, we are examining attitudes toward the teaching and learning of architecture. "Beaux-Arts" is associated with the orthodox, at times dictatorial, approach of the last representatives of the College of Architecture's École tradition. "Modern" will be used (consistently, I hope) to refer to the more democratic, catholic interest in a variety of approaches that started at the same time, but especially after World War II. The two intertwine, and it is therefore improper to call them phases or periods, but I probably will.

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[33] C. Robinson and R. H. Bletter, Skyscraper Style: Art Deco New York (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 41.

[34] See alumni letters to CNP, Appendix E.

The choice of the terms Beaux-Arts and Modernism for the subtitle of this thesis could perhaps have been avoided. "From Dictatorship to Democracy" did not convey the interlocking of the two parts, and "From Orthodoxy to Catholicism" did not seem appropriate either. To avoid giving an idea of sequential development, of one approach ending before the other began, I chose to use "between" instead of "from," and to invert the expected order of Modernism and Beaux-Arts.

PART II

THE THIRTIES AND THE SURVIVAL OF THE BEAUX-ARTS TRADITION

4 Rejection of the Beaux Arts Institute of Design

In his 1941 dissertation on the history of architectural education in the United States, Arthur Weatherhead said that "when most American schools were turning increasingly to Beaux-Arts methods [at the beginning of the century] as far as these could be applied, Cornell was one of the leaders in the movement."[35] This leadership was made possible by a series of École-trained men who were often in charge not only of design instruction, but also of the administration of the school. One of these was Francke Huntington Bosworth. Sincerely interested in pedagogical issues, he introduced changes in architectural education at Cornell that would later become the norm elsewhere. The "analytique," the five-year curriculum, and the thesis requirement are listed as examples in his obituary.[36] These credentials were surely the reason he was asked by the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture (ACSA) to conduct a survey of architectural schools in the United States and Canada during the fall and winter of 1930-31. In it, he and coauthor Roy Childs Jones of the University of Minnesota listed their two schools as examples of those "which

[35] Arthur Weatherhead, The History of Collegiate Education in Architecture in the United States (Los Angeles, 1941), p.92.
[36] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 10 January 1950.

prefer to control their own educational policies in design," as opposed to relying on the problems issued by the Beaux Arts Institute of Design (BAID).[37]

This break of Cornell and the Beaux-Arts was not absolute. Two aspects should be considered, the BAID as a managerial entity, and the Beaux-Arts as a teaching philosophy. The BAID was an administrative organization, concerned with issuing design problems to universities and ateliers, and membership was optional. The traditional teaching methods of the École, on the other hand, could not be rejected so easily. The French system had become so ingrained in the profession and the schools that its influence would last much longer than that of the BAID.

Despite Bosworth's denial, Cornell did in fact use the BAID problems occasionally, as we will see. He did not appear to be totally against them himself. Just before starting the survey, he wrote in their support:

> I think you are right that the taking of the Beaux Arts and having them judged in the general judgment is about as good a way as any of checking up on one's progress.[38]

There were many other opinions among Cornell's architecture faculty. The next dean, George Young, Jr., was a member of Cornell's Class of 1900, and therefore experienced the school's Beaux-Arts phase from its beginning. After a few years of professional practice he returned to the university in 1909 as an assistant professor, to teach courses previously taught at the College of En-

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[37] F. H. Bosworth, Jr. and R. C. Jones, A Study of Architectural Schools (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932).

[38] Records, box 8, Bosworth to Francis W. Kervick (Department of Architecture, University of Notre Dame), 8 March 1930.

gineering. A few months after Bosworth's letter cited above, Young wrote to F. W. Revels censoring the BAID programs:

> As I think I told you I do not see the Beaux Arts Society as a valuable educational aid to the work of Colleges of Architecture and it seems to me that they would be better advised to confine the whole thing to Ateliers under their own control.[39]

This discrepancy of points of view is typical of the period, and must have been responsible for intense discussion and revisions of the teaching ideologies of the faculty, both as a group and as individuals. As a group, the college surely wanted to project a cohesive image to the outside, and emphasized its independence from any established educational system, as Bosworth did in the ACSA survey. Individually, faculty members had to struggle with their own uncertainties at a time when everything that they had been taught in their student days was being challenged from many fronts. This vacillation can be seen in another letter written by Young, which appears to contradict what he wrote to Revels just a few months earlier:

> In general these ateliers give the best type of instruction outside of a University that can be had, though it applies only to Design. Progress in an Atelier would be very much worth your while in entering Cornell, or any other University.[40]

A middle point or compromise, and probably more indicative of the real situation at Cornell at the time was recorded in a letter of Professor Alexander Duncan Seymour to Dean Young. In it, he expressed his ideas on how to approach the design courses: analytiques would be taught to freshmen and

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[39] Records, box 8, Young to F. W. Revels (Syracuse University), 3 October 1930.
[40] Records, box 8, Young to Frederick Wise (prospective applicant from Philadelphia), 5 February 1931.

sophomores, and they could "then cease the Beaux Arts work and continue our old system of local projects through the Thesis... . This scheme seems as though it would create interest in the work and give us good material in the upper classes to develop in our own manner."[41] Because Young obviously knew what he meant, Seymour unfortunately did not describe "our old system" nor "our own manner," but it is clear that he, and probably others as well, thought that the Beaux-Arts (and the BAID problems) was a good way to inculcate architectural principles in the younger students, allowing them greater freedom in their more mature and questioning years. Once students were in command of these principles, their training would be completed with an assault of varied ideas and points of view. The 1933 Committee on Curriculum put it as follows:

> The general objective of this college is focused in the fifth year work. At that time the student should be assured of the greatest possible number of faculty contacts for the sake of unification of the students [sic] ideas.[42]

In 1933, Young felt it necessary to inform the alumni of the college that Cornell had "ceased using the Beaux Arts programs and consequently is not represented in the judgments"[43]. A few months earlier he had written:

> In the first place it should be recognized that some of the schools send all of their work to the Beaux-Arts, some send varying proportions, and others send none. We happen to be in the third class. None of our work has been sent down for a number of years... . The B.A.I.D. is, frankly, an institute of Design. It does not and cannot … teach Architecture or anything else for that matter … Certainly it

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41 Records, box 8, Seymour to Young, 2 May 1931. By "local" he probably meant non-BAID problems. We will also see later how Cornell introduced the use of real, "local," sites for design problems, which could also be what he meant.

42 Faculty Meetings, minutes, 9 January 1933.

43 Alumni Letter, October 1933 (this copy found in Records, box 11.

> can do no more than to test the work in Design which, after all, is but one phase of the work of a school of Architecture.[44]

As mentioned above, despite these denials Cornell did sometimes use BAID programs. Professor Leroy Pearl Burnham (alumnus of Harvard, the École, and the American Academy in Rome) kept sending the work of his students to be judged at the Institute, at least up to 1931.[45] It is reasonable to suppose that he may have continued using the problems longer than that, since he taught until 1947.

[44] Records, box 10, Young to J.E. Smay (Director, School of Architecture, University of Oklahoma), 12 April 1933.

[45] Esquisses for a "Monestary [sic] in the Mountains," Class A Project I in November 1930, and "A Private Banking House," Class A Project IV in February 1931; in Records, box 8.

5 Acceptance of the Beaux-Arts teaching system

The second point, the survival of the Beaux-Arts philosophy, is more complex. While Cornell declared itself independent of foreign influence in its educational policies, it followed the traditional methods rather closely, especially in the teaching of design. References to the French system appear constantly throughout the thirties and forties, especially in matters of organization, production, evaluation, jargon and traditions.

Standard École methods and rules guided the teaching of architecture at Cornell. In 1928, when Young was Acting Dean because of Bosworth's illness, he wrote asking him to clarify some questions on the proper way to run the design studios. Bosworth answered describing the typical ancien-nouveau relationship:

> [Regarding] "The degree to which an upperclassman may help an underclassman on work in design."
> I question very much whether this can be defined by any exact ruling. I see no reason, in fact I think it desirable for an upperclassman to help an underclassman from time to time in a verbal criticism; or help him render or help him to finish, as a draftsman, some of the final drawings. He should not do original work on the major drawings. He might fill in a section if it were one at a smaller scale and of no great importance in the problem... .
>
> [Regarding] "Whether the ruling on the use of books, documents, and help from other students while taking a sketch problem has reference to minor problems, preliminary sketches, etc."
> Minor problems and esquisses for problems, unless the program states to the contrary, should be done without consulting documents of any sort. I see no reason why students taking the same problem should not discuss it together -- in fact I see value in it. They should not receive criticism or aid of any sort from upperclassmen, that is, students not taking or eligible to take that problem.[46]

[46] Attachment to Honor Committee Meetings, minutes, 16 March 1928.

Bosworth had assumed the role of Professeur de Théorie, and was the final authority on Beaux-Arts related questions. According to Professor Hartell, "Bosworth wrote all the programs for all the courses and they were issued to the critics."[47] A couple of years later, Professor Martin expressed concern about some violation of École rules. At a 1931 meeting of the faculty he asked whether or not students should be allowed to continue working on their thesis drawings between the rendu and the actual hanging of the drawings. The faculty was not unanimous, and no decision was made at that meeting.

It was not always the old-fashioned faculty forcing Beaux-Arts procedures onto the students, but often the students also turned to conventional norms. At a meeting of the Student-Faculty Committee in 1929 (at that time called the Honor Committee), the students brought up "a question relative to the advisability of using the Beaux Arts system of covering the names of the designers during the judgment of problems." Again, no action could be taken at that time, and the issue came up again seven and eight years later.[48] In the same competitive spirit (another legacy of the Beaux-Arts), the students, not the faculty, insisted on having problems submitted late declared "H.C.," and not credited toward advancement.[49]

The Beaux-Arts practice of making students advance in the design sequence by earning "points" and "values" also remained in use for many years, although subject to periodic studies and attempted revisions by faculty

[47] John Hartell to CNP, 15 March 1988. See Appendix E.
[48] Honor Committee Meetings, minutes, 16 February 1929; Student-Faculty Committee, meeting minutes, 05 November 1935 and 14 April 1936.
[49] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 15 April 1935 and 14 January 1936; Student-Faculty Committee, meeting minutes 21 February 1939.

committees appointed for that specific purpose.[50] These revisions tried to compensate for the system's incompatibility with collegiate education. While the École allowed its students to take as much time as needed to complete the design sequence (as long as they were younger than 30), in the United States four or five years was the expected time for obtaining an architecture degree. The design series had to be completed at the same time as lecture courses, and attendance in these was not optional as in France. In addition, because the College of Architecture was only a part of a larger whole, it had to adapt to broader university standards. A way had to be found to translate "Mentions" and "2nd Medals" into a numerical equivalent, which in turn would later become a letter grade, as required by the registrar of the university. In a letter to Dean Biggin at Alabama Polytechnic Institute, Young described Cornell's position in 1931:

> Our system of marking Design problems may or may not be more satisfactory than the customary one of values. That perhaps depends on whether you think there is an [sic] value in any system of marking. I suppose we would all agree that any system whatever is a nuisance and only tolerated because of its necessity.

He explained how the jury first assigned "1st Mention," "Mention," and other grades, and these were then translated into percentages according to the length of the problem. The student passed "to the next term's work, regardless of the calendar" once he had "collected" 300 points. That the students were supposed to graduate in five years, and that none of the other courses in the college or

[50] New systems, or plans for their study, are reported in the faculty meeting minutes of 11-09-31, 11-17-31, 01-05-32, 06-14-32, 06-13-33, 06-13-44, 08-08-44 and 10-10-44.

elsewhere at Cornell could disregard the calendar as was done at the École, were not addressed by Young in this letter. His awareness of these problems, however, is evident as he concluded:

> Mentions and values and that sort of thing can just as well be expressed as either percentages or in points. To my mind, the insistence of talk about mentions, medals, and values, is nothing but a hang-over from the Beaux-Arts system, which never did apply to American universities and my notion is that the sooner we get rid of it, the better.[51]

Another piece of Young's correspondence should be quoted, in which he clarifies the difference between the Beaux-Arts system and the Beaux-Arts Institute of Design problems:

> About the Beaux Arts system -- here again one could write a book. We do not use the Beaux Arts problems. My own opinion is that there are no advantages in the system FOR THE USE OF THE COLLEGES [his caps]. As to the disadvantages of the system:
>
> (a) The over-emphasis of the importance of Design as differentiated from Architecture.
>
> (b) The system, as a system, is too rigid to fit with the needs of a school in which somebody may have a desire to put his own personality into teaching.
>
> (c) In the past it has too often been true that the programs have been carelessly written and not assembled with any idea of sequence.
>
> (d) The whole system stresses the competitive element too much. It is doubtless true there is some virtue in the competitive notion but my own feeling is that whatever virtue may be inherent in it has been terrifically over-done not only in the Beaux Arts system but throughout our colleges of Architecture.

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[51] Records, box 8, Young to Frederick C. Biggin (Dean of Architecture, Alabama Polytechnic Institute), 29 May 1931. It is interesting to compare the numerical equivalencies of 1925 (left) and 1934 (right):

F	= No credit	Pass	= 75
E	= 50 to 59	Commendation	= 80
Mention	= 60 to 79	2nd Medal	= 90
1st Mention	= 80 to 89	1st Medal	= 95
1st 1st Mention	= 90 to 94		
2nd Medal	= 95 to 98		
1st Medal	= 99 to 100		

The later group seems to be getting away from the French system in that it is less demanding, and there are fewer categories. However, each of the four acquires greater importance, since there are no intermediate grades, and the equation works from left to right: a 2nd Medal becomes a 90. Paradoxically, the earlier (supposedly more "Beaux-Arts") table must have worked from right to left, a 95, 96, 97 or 98 becoming a 2nd Medal.

(e) Whatever the intention may have been, it has actually been true that far too much importance has been placed on a drawing and too little on what the student gets into his head. Here again, the criticism applies not solely to those subscribing to the Beaux Arts system but to many of our schools of Architecture.[52]

In spite of the opinion above, on the overemphasis on drawing, the Beaux-Arts' insistence on composition and layout, which made the drawing itself as important as what was drawn, made intermittent appearances. Harry J. Williams '35, in a 1950 letter to Dean Clarke, reminisced:

> When I attended Cornell, 1930 to 1935, … we were trained to make beautiful designs of buildings with no thought given as to how they might possibly be built. ... Although I was able to design and render fairly well, I still was practically useless to my employer . . .[53]

The importance given to drawing can also be seen in the reasons stated for giving honorable mentions to certain thesis projects in 1930: George N. Hall received one for his "excellent composition and charm of rendering," as did George T. Lacey for the "thorough mastery of technical phases of the problem and exceptional presentation."[54]

This situation apparently changed rather quickly, and there was less interest in drawing as an end. The disinterest was apparently not enduring, since in 1938, after having participated as a visiting critic in the summer program, Roy C. Jones commented:

> I've always thought of Cornell as having a specially realistic approach to Architecture. This time I noted a more marked tendency to academic and decorative values in programs, and a greater concern

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[52] Records, box __, 06 July 1932, Young's letter to Ralph Fletcher, Department of Architecture, Ohio State University.
[53] Records, box 20, 23 February 1950, Harry J. Williams '35 to Clarke.
[54] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 12 June 1930.

> with rendering on the part of the students than I've sensed in the past.[55]

The beginning of the decline of the Beaux-Arts influence, and a simultaneous interest in its resurrection, become evident in the 13 April 1931 faculty meeting, when a discussion took place on the establishment of the Edward Palmer York Memorial Prize. York's widow (Muriel) intended it to stimulate "that phase of student work which is weakest." The faculty decided that that was the "one-day sketch problem in design" (esquisse), which they considered "our sickliest product." They thought that the $50 prize would give the esquisses "more importance in the eyes of the underclassmen, and should create a spirit of rivalry" (despite Young deploring the over-doing of the competitive element). Further in the York Prize discussion, they said:

> Another proposal was made because we seem to have no tradition for painstaking or decorative archaeological work so called. At any rate our projets [sic] cannot compare with the ambitious works done in some schools of equal rank or even in many of the younger institutions. The proposal was that the York Prize (or Prizes) be awarded for the best work in upper class archaeology and ... [that the competition] should produce monumental drawings worthy to be permanently displayed when the need comes for decorating larger quarters.[56]

Years later, in 1945, the issue of 12-hour sketches came up again, when the Committee on Post-war Policy recommended in its April report that two or three be required each term. No mention was made at this time of their Beaux-Arts origin, but of their usefulness in training for the New York State examination

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[55] ___, 31 March 1938, Roy C. Jones' letter to Tilton.
[56] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 13 April 1931.

for architects. Chairman Mackesey recommended their inclusion in design courses even though at this time he probably thought of the esquisses as a necessary evil. His opinion was more clearly expressed four years later, in a letter sent to the deans of other New York architectural schools:

> The present examination in Architectural Design consists of a twelve-hour design problem involving a building of some complexity.
> A twelve-hour sketch {of the type given in recent years may not be a} fair test of a man's ability as a designer. In no school where ten or twelve hour sketches are a part of the training in design is the design ability of the student rated solely on his performance in sketch problems. ~~Those of us who have worked with students for years know that there are men who usually do well with sketch problems and others who have difficulty in getting an adequate solution drawn up in the allotted time~~. We recognize too {submit} that the student with the flair for the quick solution is not necessarily the best designer nor potentially the best architect.
> {We believe that it is desirable to require the candidate to demonstrate ability to organize the spacial [sic] requirements of a building but we feel that} it is unreasonable to expect the solution in twelve hours of problems in architectural design as complex in organization as some required in recent years."[57]

Conventional Beaux-Arts modes remained at the College of Architecture, even if some were "sickly." Nevertheless, the thirties show a questioning of these rules and methods that would have been impossible a decade earlier. The intertwining of traditional and new ways was characteristic of this period, and was evidenced also in the work of the students.

[57] Records, box 21, 28 July 1949, "PRELIMINARY DRAFT ONLY" enclosed [?] with Mackesey's letter to other NY Deans, on Architectural Registration Examination. Transcribed here as originally typed. Text in {brackets} indicates handwritten corrections or additions; text that was crossed out with pencil is so indicated; corrected version was dated October 18.

6 Contrasting student projects of the thirties

Early manifestations of the transition between the classicism typical of the Beaux-Arts era and modernism can be seen in the variety of approaches used by students in their work. The list of projects receiving a "Commendation" at a Medal Judgment recorded in the minutes of the 27 September 1934 faculty meeting include "A Subway Station" by George W. Atkinson and a "Château in the Style of Louis XV" by Catherine I. Williams. The station, which one suspects could have been a modern project, concerned with issues of function and technical requirements, was thought to be as deserving as the château, a historicist, surely formalistic design. A similar list, in the minutes of 11 June 1936, pairs "A Country Estate" by M. M. Winters with "A Phenol and Aniline Plant," by A. W. Day. Both of these thesis projects received a Second Charles Goodwin Sands Medal. The actual architectural style of these projects can only be imagined, since no pictures were found to confirm this assumed contrast.

The question is more clearly illustrated when looking at the photographs in the Announcement of the College of Architecture, official publication of the University. The issue for 1935-36 shows, on adjacent pages, "An Exposition for Decorative Arts" by senior Charlotte A. Dowrie and "An Office and Showroom Building for a Factory Group" by sophomore A. Geller (fig. 1). The first shows a large scale, classically designed plan only, while the second includes a rather modern looking elevation with plan, sections and perspectives relegated to a secondary role, all on the same board. Both projects merited a Mention (90 points), even though Geller's appears to be marked "HC" in the lower right

corner. Page 26 of that same issue (fig. 2) has, above, "A Design for a Community Center Building" by freshman Nicol Bissell,[58] showing two Colonial Revival elevations and a small schematic perspective and, below, "A Private Hangar" by T. T. Lloyd, a junior. The presentation of the hangar is dominated by a large perspective, while an apparently schematic plan and section provide functional information. The first follows Beaux-Arts tradition by emphasizing orthogonal representations over the perspective, and the second reverses the order of importance.

[58]See Appendix E for Bissell's letter to CNP, which mentions this project.

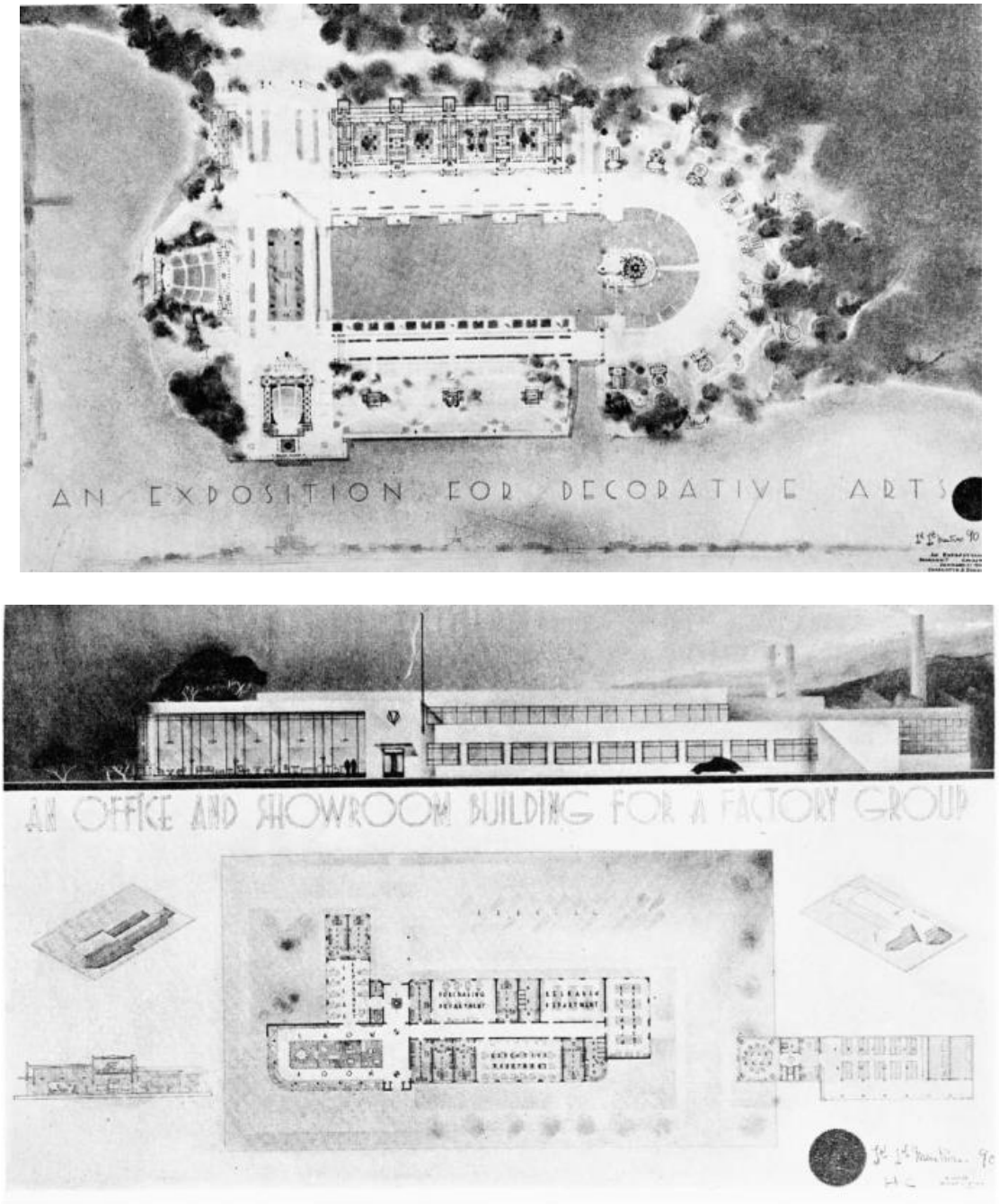
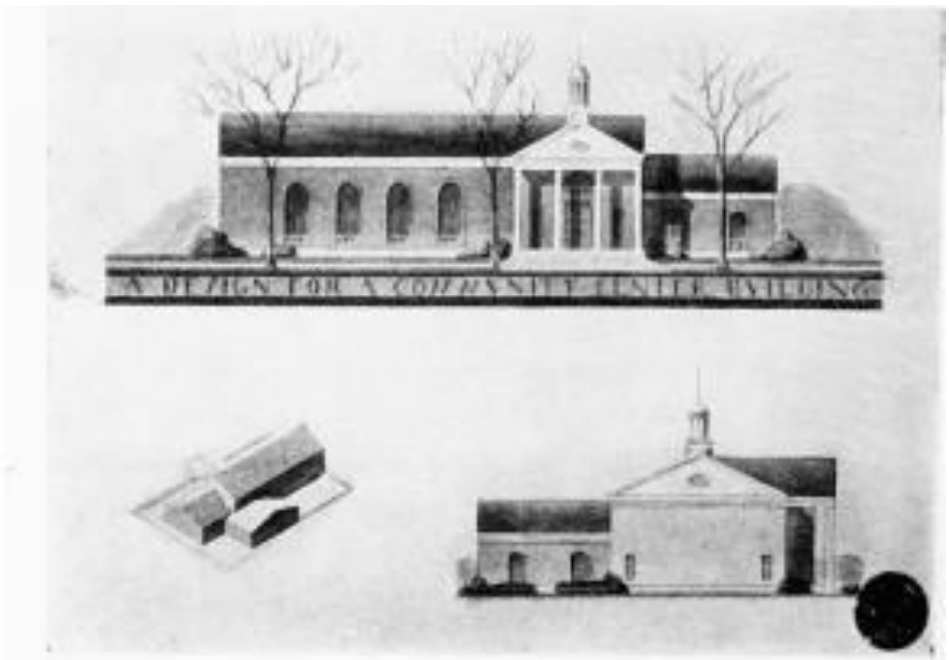
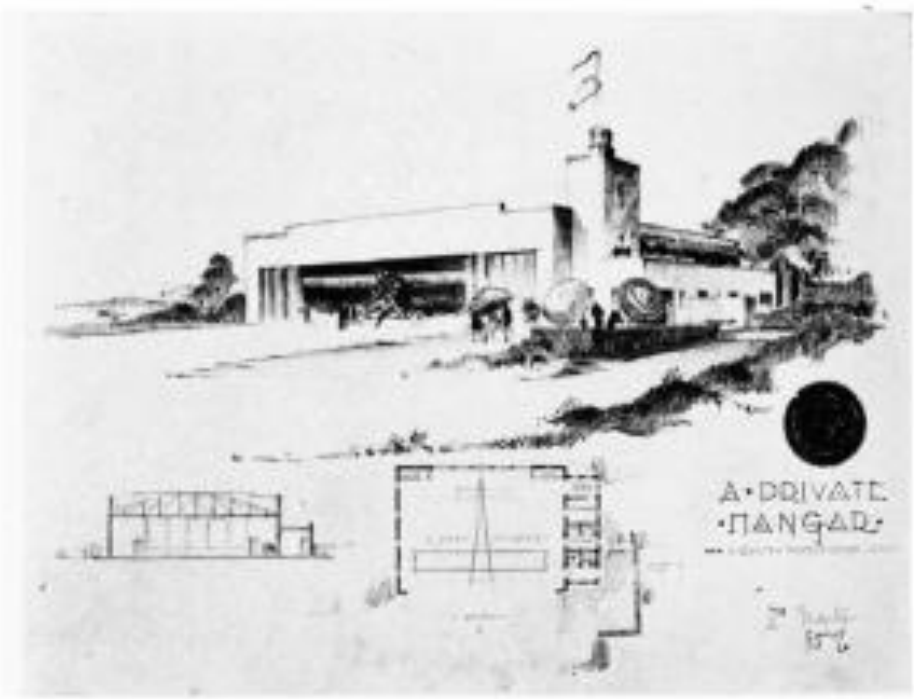


Figure 1: Pages 22 and 23 of the 1935-36 Announcement of the College of Architecture



FRESHMAN DESIGN — NICOL BISSELL



JUNIOR SKETCH PROBLEM — T. T. LLOYD

Figure 2: Page 26 of the 1935-36 Announcement of the College of Architecture

This juxtaposition of modern and traditional projects cannot be accidental, and indicates that, to the faculty (who assigned grades and mentions and determined what would be published in the Announcement), both approaches were possible. At first, however, the modern vocabulary was confined to subway stations, aniline plants, factory showrooms and airplane hangars. More traditional programs were expected to remain classical in appearance.

There is no relationship, at least in these four projects, between the stylistic expression and the student's level in the program: a senior and a freshman are traditionalists, and a junior and a sophomore are more modern.

Soon afterward, in the 1937-38 Announcement, "A Weekend Cottage on the Shore" (fig. 3) replaces the hangar. The very modern cottage, by Robert Kitchen, is presented by means of a large perspective that fills the sheet, in a manner diametrically opposed to the norms of the Beaux-Arts. The floor plan at the upper right corner is not only asymmetrical, but because of its size and position on the board acquires the characteristics of a footnote.

Figure 3: Page 26 of the 1937-38 Announcement of the College of Architecture

Not only was it possible for these projects to coexist in the school and its official publication, but classicism and modernism were neighbors also in the minds and hands of the students: if, after admiring Kitchen's prowess with the modern vocabulary in the design of the cottage, we turn the page on that same booklet, we find his submission for the Rome Prize. Shrewdly, Kitchen rendered a beautiful, orthodox site plan that got him the Prize for 1936-38 (fig. 4).

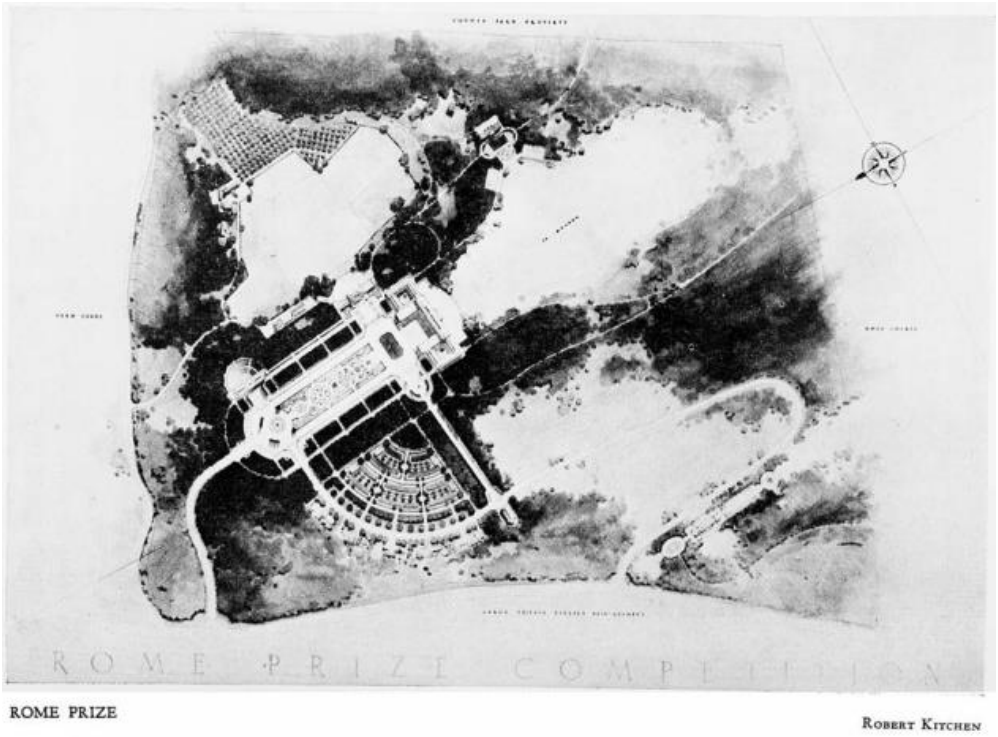


Figure 4: Page 28 of the 1937-38 Announcement of the College of Architecture

The analysis of different issues of the Announcement deserves one further comment. The 1924-25 issue, and preceding ones, show only Beaux-Arts style projects. Then, illustrations are discontinued from the publication until the 1935-36 edition discussed above. No justification for this decision was found in the materials researched. Although the period encompasses that of the Depression, it starts a little before and ends a little after its effects were really felt at Cornell. Therefore, it does not seem that economic factors were the only reason for omitting photographs of student work from the booklets. It could be that the faculty hesitated, not wanting to present a public image that could be seen as either too traditional or too revolutionary, until the mid-thirties, when they were more confident of their own catholic views.

7 Babcock's legacy of technical competence

As we have mentioned above, in its early days Cornell's College of Architecture emphasized technical knowledge as a requirement for success as a professional architect. Babcock's background and interests led him to develop a program concerned with producing competent technicians rather than creative artists. Although he would be forced out of his position at the college in 1896, and an openly Beaux-Arts inspired curriculum would replace his, we will see how the effects of the more practical ideals he instituted would still be felt many years later.

Clarence Augustine Martin provided a direct link between the period of our study and the origins of the school. A former student at Cornell (although he never graduated), he joined Babcock in 1894 as an instructor in the then Department of Architecture. He had had some practical experience as an apprentice wagon builder, and must have shown an ability in dealing with technical matters that Babcock remembered when he needed someone to assist him with the construction courses. Martin also taught graphics (descriptive geometry, perspective, shades and shadows), and later working drawings and mechanical equipment courses. He published Details of Building Construction in 1899, which helped increase his reputation as an expert in the field. He stayed on after Babcock's resignation, and eventually became director and dean of the college. His teaching was propagated by his pupils, several of whom became teachers themselves, and continued his work long after his retirement.

George Young '00 was one of them, and, although a product of the first few years of Cornell's Beaux-Arts phase, also inherited some of the Babcock era principles. He came in 1909 to assist Martin in the teaching of the subjects listed above. He also followed Martin's steps in becoming dean of the college upon Bosworth's resignation to the position. As we have seen, Young's main complaint about the Beaux-Arts was its disregard of non-design subjects, but this went beyond self-preservation and territorial defense, since he had a genuine interest in team work and the overall architectural education picture:

> As to the advantages of having a fundamental knowledge of Construction as a prerequisite to Design, I am not sure that this could be accomplished within the limits of a five year course. If it could be shown to be possible, I doubt whether it would be desirable, provided of course Design is properly taught. This bears on a particular hobby of my own, namely, that I do not believe that such subjects as Design, Construction, History, etc., should be viewed or taught as if they existed in water tight compartments. In other words, Design teaching that does not emphasize Construction and Construction teaching that does not emphasize Design, are equally hopeless.[59]

Hubert E. Baxter also graduated from Cornell, in 1910, and joined the faculty almost immediately. He taught structural design, and was Young's co-author for Descriptive Geometry (1921) and Mechanics of Materials (1927). He may have had similar didactic views, but because he did not become a figure in the administration of the college, few documents in the Records of the College of Architecture residing at the Cornell University Archives bear his name[60].

Finally, John Neal Tilton '13, another Martin disciple, was chosen (upon Martin's suggestion) to replace him when Martin retired to Sarasota in 1932.

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[59] Records (of the College of Architecture – Cornell University Archives), box 10, Young to C. Ralph Fletcher (Department of Architecture, Ohio State University), 6 July 1932.

[60] Cited as "Records" in this thesis and the Bibliography.

Tilton would ultimately also play an important role in the administration of the college and the establishment of its educational policies.

We have already seen how Harry J. Williams '35, in spite of having been taught by Young, Baxter and Tilton in "the strongest [construction department] in the United States", found his technical training lacking. Similar letters can be found elsewhere in the Records.[61] This was not due to lack of competence on the part of Martin, Young, Baxter and Tilton, but happened because they thought that instruction in these subjects should only be started in school, and concluded in the office. Like Babcock, they saw office experience as the culmination of the educational process. To this end, they assisted students in finding employment after graduation, and in 1929 established a professional fellowship in collaboration with Shreve, Lamb and Harmon of New York City. The winner would be offered a one or two-year position at this firm, designers of the Empire State Building.[62]

It seems plausible to think that when the opportunity to downplay decorative design and drawing was offered by the first stirrings of the International Style, these professors welcomed it. Even though, as we will see, they had trouble accepting the new style wholeheartedly, they opened the door to a more comprehensive curriculum and new ideas on functionalism, modern

[61] Compensating for these, many of the alumni who wrote to CNP seem to agree on the high quality of the courses, and on their contribution to successful professional practices.

[62] Richard Harold Shreve was a friend and former classmate of Young's, Cornell '02, who kept close ties with the University. He had taught design at the college from 1902 to 1906, and later became a member of the College of Architecture Council. Young was listed as Shreve, Lamb and Harmon's "Ithaca representative" in their 1932 letterhead.

equipment, and drawing techniques. The fact that three of them would at some point lead the administration of the college must have made for a wider opening.

8 Integration of architecture and fine arts

If on the technical side the college followed Babcock's doctrine, on the artistic they stuck to Beaux-Arts tradition. Just as the École des Beaux-Arts, the Beaux Arts Institute of Design, and the American Academy in Rome had painting and sculpture departments to complement the training imparted by their architecture divisions, so Cornell emphasized a collaborative attitude between all artistic sections of the College of Architecture. The fields of architecture and fine arts overlapped in a way that they do not today, when they are separate administrative units.

Also emulating the École, where students in architecture, sculpture and painting would team up to work on a problem, Cornell had a long tradition of success in "collaborative" problems. For example, Cornell's team tied with Yale's on a collaborative competition of the AAR, for a memorial room dedicated to President Wilson in 1929 or 1930.[63] Another team won a prize in the 1939 competition.[64]

This unity was also revealed in that all entering students "were required to take straight architecture their first year."[65] Only afterwards did they branch into architecture, landscape architecture, or fine arts. That separation, however, was relatively tenuous. Many architecture students continued taking fine arts courses, since joint projects encouraged team work between students of all fields. When the BAID approach was supposedly eschewed, collaborative problems were

[63] Records, box 8, Young to Louis C. Boochever, not dated. The team members were Shigeo Hirata (architect), Takayoshi Yoda (painter), and Takanabu Ajiki (sculptor).

[64] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 14 March 1939. Olaf Dahlstrand, architect; G. William Atkinson, landscape architect; Ruth F. Rogers, painter; Elfrieda M. Abbe, sculptor.

[65] Elizabeth Barrus Sievers '34 to CNP, 20 September 1988.

produced in house. In 1941, for example, a Second Sands Medal was awarded to a team for their project for a public library. The team consisted of four members: J. Warren Platner as architect, B. Nikrodhananda as landscape architect, Barbara Karlin as sculptor, and Henri V. Jova as painter.[66] Jova was actually an architecture major, which shows how the spirit of unity between all fields in the college lasted well into the forties.[67]

This comradeship was not without friction, however. In 1933, when Cornell was disassociating itself from the problems issued by the BAID, the faculty met to decide what to use instead:

> That opinion was varied. It was suggested that the matter be referred to a committee representing the departments involved. Objection was raised on the grounds that the province of the Design Department was being invaded. It was pointed out that collaborative problems were a matter of college concern, and not solely departmental interest. Professors Camden, Seymour and Young were accordingly appointed a committee for action with regard to the collaborative problems.[68]

To maintain the "competitive aspects that were at once the good and the evil of the Beaux Arts problems,"[69] Cornell encouraged instead participation in intercollegiate problems with other schools (MIT, University of Minnesota, Pennsylvania State College and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in 1938.)

This was not the end of the BAID collaborative problems, although in 1942 Dean Clarke expressed "the feeling of this faculty that these [BAID] group

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66 Faculty Meetings, minutes, 7 October 1941.
67 Jova, officially class of '40, received his B.Arch. degree in 1949, after a break caused by World War II.
68 Faculty Meetings, minutes, 14 November 1933.
69 Alumni Letter, 1 January 1938.

competitions are not worth entering, since the programs are poorly drawn or the jury is incompetent, or both."[70]

No decent substitute had been found, and again, as part of the intermittent thirst for Beaux-Arts methods, the students requested "more collaborative problems" at a meeting of the Student-Faculty Committee, 12 June 1945. They were told that this would be difficult, because "there were no professional painters or sculptors in residence [at the BAID?]."

If at certain times during the period of this study there were demands for greater independence between the departments of architecture and fine arts, in general the attitude was one of collaboration. In March of 1930, faculty meetings dealt with a proposal submitted to the Board of Trustees to change the name of the College of Architecture to a more encompassing "College of Fine Arts." Among the reasons cited in support of this request were:

> That the individual members of the Faculty, representing interests in varied fields of the fine arts, have been stimulated by contact in fields other than their own and have been inspired by intimate association with men in allied fields. That it is this actual experience which makes them feel so strongly that each art gains in breadth and depth by the closest possible association with the other arts and loses by separation.[71]

This "closest possible association" would later be exemplified by Professor John Hartell, who taught both architectural design and painting. One of the principal proponents of this change, however, was not a member of the fine arts group, but Professor Albert C. Phelps, who taught history of architecture.

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[70] Records, box 13, Clarke's letter to Dean Everett V. Meeks (Yale University).
[71] Faculty Meeting, minutes, 11 March 1930.

The insistence on an architecture-painting-sculpture whole was part of the École tradition and its call for decorative features in architecture. Following the established teaching doctrine, Phelps required weekly postcard size sketches as part of his history lectures (fig. 5), and taught courses in Historic Ornament, which thus combined intellectual and artistic issues. Dean Young, in a letter to Cornell music Professor Paul J. Weaver, paraphrased Vitruvius when he said that:

> ... any Art course that neglects the intellectual element descends to the Trade School level and should have no place in a University curriculum. ... Furthermore, and perhaps quite as important, is the idea that any course that attempts to develop understanding of the meaning of the Graphic and Plastic Arts and which confines itself to Philosophy and History, to talk, reading, and speculation, is sunk before it starts.[72]

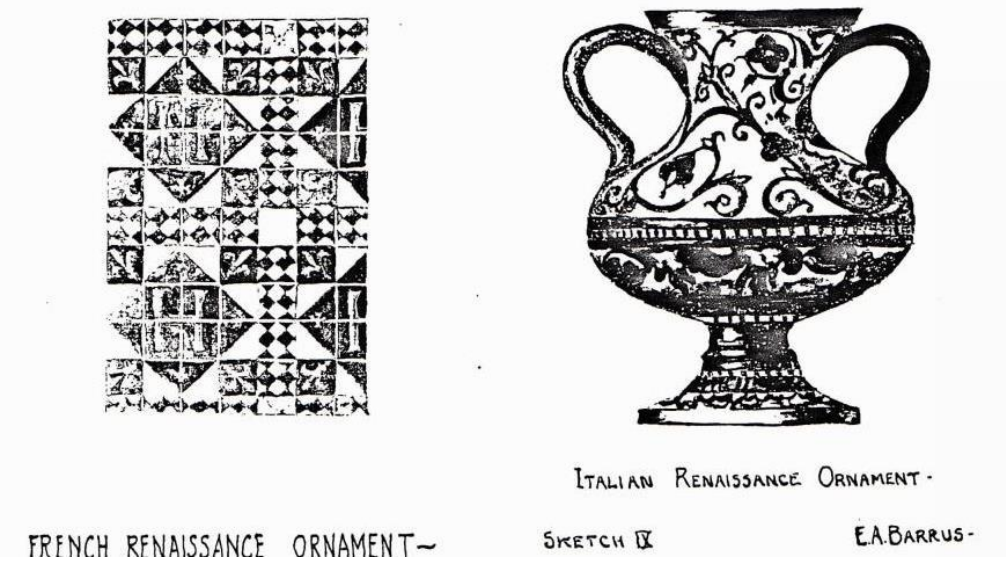

Figure 5: Postcard-sized sketch by Elizabeth A. Barrus '34

[72] Records, box 11, 12 November 1934. Vitruvius' passage (Chapter I, 2) is: "architects who have aimed at acquiring manual skill without scholarship have never been able to reach a position of authority to correspond to their pains, while those who relied only upon theories and scholarship were obviously hunting the shadow, not the substance." The Ten Books on Architecture, trans. Morris Hicky Morgan (New York: Dover Publications, 1960), p. 5.

The integration of these three visual arts, a custom based on École precedent, would be fervently defended in the thirties and forties. The desire for an even closer relationship would find expression in occasional plans for a new college building. At least twice, Dean Clarke discussed with President Day the need for better quarters.[73] The second time, Day made a suggestion which was rejected by the faculty because it implied separating architecture and fine arts. At the same time, when so many traditional views were being questioned, the faculty dared to propose clearer administrative separations between the two fields. In 1946 the college established a four-year fine arts program, breaking from the five-year parallel with architecture. At the same meeting where this change was announced, the fine arts faculty asked

> "that a new medal be instituted for work in Painting and Sculpture, leaving the Charles Goodwin Sands Memorial medal for work in the various fields of Architecture and Landscape Architecture; and that, until the above recommendation can be put into effect, medals be awarded for work in Painting and Sculpture by a jury of the Faculty in those fields and not by the whole Faculty."[74]

The "whole faculty" did not approve.

A final example indicating this desire for a separate identity is provided by the new course numbering system adopted a few months later. The fine arts courses were now designated with the letters "ART" and three digits. They had previously shared the "ARCH" prefix.

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[73] Records, box 20, Clarke's "Memo for the Files of the College of Architecture," 23 November 1943, and Clarke to Day, 8 November 1945.

[74] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 14 May 1946.

9 Interdependence with landscape architecture

At Cornell, the landscape architecture program had started in the College of Agriculture, about two decades before the period of this investigation. It was transferred to the College of Architecture in 1922. From the beginning, students in the program were extremely successful in winning prizes in competitions, especially the Rome Prize of the American Academy in Rome, to the point that other schools complained and hinted at possible improprieties in the awarding of the fellowships.[75] (Out of the first fifteen winners, ten were Cornellians.)[76] The College, and the alumni, followed the AAR competitions intensely, with a zeal similar to today's fascination with sports and star athletes:

> This year again the winner of the Rome Prize in Landscape Architecture is from Cornell (Morris E. Trotter '32). Another of the finalists (J.M. Lister, A.B. Harvard, B.L.A., Cornell '33) will hold the University Fellowship next year. He will bear watching in next year's competition [he won].[77]

Harvard seems to have been particularly upset about the Cornell monopoly. In a series of letters, Dean Clarke explained what he thought were the reasons for the different rates of success:

> The Harvard group are upset concerning the showing their students have made in the competitions during the last few years. Of course, they indirectly attack the method which has been developed teaching Landscape Architecture here at Cornell. While we are not perfect by any means, after careful consideration I still feel that we are doing a much better job than Harvard ... If, at Harvard, they could have the cooperation among the two branches of the Faculty that we have here at Cornell, neither Pond or [sic] Hubbard would quarrel about the

[75] Records, box 10, series of letters around June 1933.
[76] Alumni Letter, January 1938. The first winner in the history of the Prize (1915) was Cornell student Edward Lawson, who would later become a member of the faculty.
[77] Alumni Letter, October 1933.

> manner in which the competition in Landscape Architecture is conducted.[78]

The lack of cooperation Clarke mentioned probably referred to the new organization at Harvard, where the architecture program was directed by Gropius while the landscape architecture course remained unchanged, in the hands of traditionalists. While these orthodox teachers should have been successful in winning the Rome Prize, Clarke thought that collaboration with the architects was essential. The controversy continued, and Clarke wrote a few months later:

> I suppose you know that Henry [Hubbard] has stated that the winners of the competition in the last few years have been trained more along the lines of architecture than landscape architecture and he is interested in having a problem that tests particularly a man's training in the shaping of land and the use of plant materials upon it.
> He is not interested in architecture, never has been, and never will be and that is the reason why Harvard will never get anywhere so long as Henry and Bremer Pond think that architects are demons who should not be spoken to or recognized in human society.[79]

In contrast, at Cornell the two fields were very closely tied. Perhaps because of the École's insistence on large scale, monumental projects, architecture and landscape architecture projects were often indistinguishable from each other. As we mentioned above, all freshmen in the college took the same courses, before branching into their preferred fields as sophomores. Architects and landscape designers had longer parallel paths. Landscape architects took technical courses in botany, surveying, and earthwork that were not required of architects, but this would only have been apparent in detail

[78] Records, box 10, Clarke to Ralph E. Griswold, 22 November 1938.
[79] Records, box 10, Clarke to Ralph E. Griswold, 14 March 1939.

drawings that were not submitted to competitions. The relationship between the two fields had also been described by Young in the 1933 Alumni Letter:

> As time goes on it becomes increasingly clear that the transfer of this work from Agriculture to Architecture was a wise and timely move. Unsuspected opportunities for co-operation have been developed and a mutually helpful spirit is evident in the faculty as well as among the students.
> Often the students in both departments do the same problem; sometimes they work collaboratively; at all times a student in Architecture can get criticism from a Professor in Landscape Architecture, and *vice versa*.[80]

In the 1935 Alumni Letter, Dean Young continued:

> We here have for years carried on instruction in Architecture and Landscape Architecture in a more integrated fashion than is done elsewhere. The Faculty has developed into one solidified faculty rather than two separate ones.[81]

The "solidified faculty" taught a semi-solidified student body. Besides taking many of the same courses, they shared the same drafting room in White Hall, as well as time and criticism from the faculty of the two departments. In addition, the emphasis on college-wide collaborative work, especially for the prizes of the AAR, produced a symbiotic learning environment.

This interdependence was emphasized with summer courses in the mid-thirties. The first one, "stressing the inter-relation of Architecture and Landscape Architecture", was held in the summer of 1935, led by professors Bosworth and Montillon. Attendance was limited to advanced students, "all of whom have had at least three years training in Design, selected to some extent to maintain a

[80] Alumni Letter, 1933.
[81] Alumni Letter, 1935.

balance between the two primary fields of interest."[82] A report in October of that year concluded that the six week program had been too ambitious, and that not all problems had been submitted, nor all theory discussions carried out. Nevertheless, the summer course continued, and with much more success:

> In the summers of 1937 and 1938 [Professor Lawson] was co-critic in an immensely popular six-week architectural design course together with Roger Bailey, B.Arch. 1921... . As I recall, the summer course was limited to students who had completed at least three years of design, and there were about ten students in the class. It was extremely intense, amounting to ten and twelve hour days, six days a week. Normal four-week design problems were done in one week, and one-week problems were done in one day.[83]

A continued successful life seemed guaranteed for the landscape architecture program, but as the world changed because of the Depression in the thirties and the war in the forties, so did the profession. Societal and economic changes caused by these catastrophes forced an analysis of the goals of an education in landscape architecture and of its relevance. Missing the aristocracy that had sponsored their traditional endeavors, the profession started to adapt to a new world, where the public was the client, and private gardens and estates were the exception.

As early as 1928, Professor William H. Schuchardt had offered a course in city planning, and by the early thirties Dean Young started organizing a full-fledged program in that field. In 1933 he reported to the alumni that several courses and lectures had been offered in cooperation with the College of Engineering, sponsored by the Schiff Foundation. He "hoped that out of them will

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[82] Alumni Letter, 1 January 1935.
[83] Olof H. Dahlstrand letter to CNP, 3 October 1988.

grow some developments of permanent significance."[84] By 1935, now thanks to the Carnegie Corporation, he announced a joint program between the two Colleges (with the support of Agriculture, Arts and Sciences, and President Farrand), and was looking for "a man of proven capacity ready to carry the ball."[85] This would be Gilmore D. Clarke '13, who had a very successful landscape architecture and city planning practice in New York City, and had been an occasional lecturer at Cornell. Perhaps because of his dual professional interest, Clarke was able to foresee a merging of the two disciplines, or the absorption of the first by the latter. In chapter 20 we will see how the decline of landscape architecture coincided with the rise of city planning at Cornell.

[84] Alumni Letter, 1933.
[85] Alumni Letter, 1935.

10 Traditional teaching of history and theory

It was to be expected that an architecture school founded under the patronage of Andrew D. White would include the study of architectural history from the beginning. Babcock felt that a study of the past was necessary to determine the best possible solution to problems of the present. "Where his successors would rely heavily upon historical study for the borrowing of motives and styles, Babcock stressed the structural details and building technologies of the previous eras of architectural history."[86] Soon after the Beaux-Arts reorganization of the College, Professor Albert C. Phelps joined the faculty, and taught for 38 years, until his death in 1937. He was the first full-time professor of history of architecture in the college, and was alone responsible for that area for almost three decades, until William McLeish Dunbar '21 joined him. College of Arts and Sciences Professors Finlayson, Underwood, and Waage also offered courses in history of art to architecture students.

Following Beaux-Arts standards, the study of history was closely tied with instruction in design. Architecture students were not only encouraged, but required, to copy and adapt historical formal elements taken directly from "documents" borrowed from the library, but the rules for their use were vague. The students tried to clarify the matter and their Honor Committee "recommended that the design faculty be notified to announce that documents may be used for rendering of Sophomore Esquisse-esquisses."[87] The

[86] Moudry, op. cit., p. 9.
[87] Honor Committee Meetings, minutes, 24 October 1930.

relationship between the two fields found expression in the history lectures in the requirement of weekly sketches we mentioned before.

In his 1929-30 annual report to President Farrand, Dean Young explained how the art courses were meant to give physical expression to the knowledge gained in history courses:

> [New courses in Drawing, Painting, and Modelling] offer an effective laboratory experience for students in the historical courses.

This "laboratory" was always considered an important part of the educational experience. The historical courses provided the necessary basis for the experiments to be conducted in the laboratory-studio. Therefore, they were indispensable for the proper teaching of design. Professor Martin, serving as Acting Dean during Young's 1932 leave of absence, considered them a prerequisite for design when he wrote:

> ... our Design courses require either that a student have Freehand Drawing, Descriptive Geometry, and History of Architecture before beginning the Design or that he carry these three studies along with the course in Design.[88]

Freehand drawing would give the students the skill, descriptive geometry the technical accuracy, and history the subject matter for their design projects.

Although history courses were fundamental, they still were a minor portion of the curriculum. It was only in 1929, for example, at the request of Professor Phelps, "supported by [painting] Professor Brauner," that a course as

[88] Records, box 9, 11 January 1932.

important as Historic Ornament was brought to the level of most others and assigned three credit hours.[89] (It had been worth only one credit in 1911-12.)

It would be many years before a separate history of architecture program was established. In 1934, however, the College of Architecture decided to diversify the B.Arch. degree. Up to then, a student could choose to concentrate in either architecture or structures. These concentrations were called "options." That year, Professor Tilton proposed increasing the number of options from two to five, adding landscape architecture, fine arts, and history.[90]

We have already seen how in 1931 one of the proposals for the establishment of the Edward Palmer York Memorial Prize encouraged "painstaking or decorative archaeological work." This was not approved, but in 1936 a new opportunity presented itself. Professor Phelps announced that Charles D. Robinson, Jr., of the Class of 1930, intended "to establish an annual prize for student work in the History of Architecture".[91] The Robinson Prize was officially announced at the 11 March 1936 meeting, as available to both graduate and undergraduate students,

> "... for superior advanced work in the history of architecture. Such work may take the form of a written report or essay; an archaeological restoration of an approved building or buildings; a series of measured drawings of a meritorious building or group of buildings; or a piece of creative archaeology, such as the solution of an archaeology problem issued in the course in advanced architectural design. "

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89 Faculty Meetings, minutes, 16 April 1929.

90 Faculty Meetings, minutes, 13 February 1934. No mention was made of eliminating the BLA degree, so that the landscape option may have been a sort of minor for B.Arch. candidates. In 1936 the options were listed as construction, landscape, history, painting, and decorative composition (minutes, 12 May 1936).

91 Faculty Meetings, minutes, 11 February 1936.

Instead of turning away from the traditional approaches, the college bent toward École methods, archaeological in spirit and content. Phelps, trained as an architect, favored conventional teaching routines (the postcard sketches), but his considering a written report as worthy of a prize as the archaeological measured drawings, and the creation of the history minor, point at a less traditional attitude. He had awarded Robinson an honorable mention for "sound scholarship" on his 1930 thesis. Phelps, having studied at the Bavarian Technical School in Munich between his Bachelor and Master degrees from the University of Illinois, also insisted on requiring a reading knowledge of French or German from candidates in the history option.[92] In an obituary presented to the faculty, Professor Finlayson wrote:

> "[Phelps] had the capacity and the infinite patience of the scholar to whom no research is too laborious. ... The aims of professional education and broad scholarship were in his mind identical. "[93]

Phelps' death at the end of the decade had important repercussions in the college of architecture. Not only was he interested in the integration of history, design, and fine arts, but he also appears to have led the development of the library. His willingness to tackle laborious jobs meant that, on his passing, the college would be noticeably shorthanded. The history courses were left in the hands of Dunbar, Hartell, and Detweiler, as we will see in chapter 21. Their interests and attitudes were different from Phelps', and would give a different character to the teaching of history in the forties.

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[92] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 13 March 1935.
[93] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 12 October 1937.

The development of instruction in theory of architecture appears to parallel that in history, but presents an important difficulty for us. While there are different ways to approach the study of history, there was at least a consensus on what it entailed. "Theory" was understood in several ways. The word seems to have been taken to include many topics taught in lectures, as opposed to what was learned in studios. Although grouped separately in the course listings, Theory of Construction included mechanics of materials and structural design. Theory of architecture also involved instruction in professional practice and technical subjects. As late as 1949, a letter from Dean Leopold Arnaud, of Columbia University, described architectural theory as

> "…theoretical questions of orientation, lighting, ventilation, circulation, etc. (the more "practical" considerations in planning). Also discussion and criticism, and bloc solutions, of some relatively simple planning problem (or problems) demanding freehand, thumbnail sketches only."[94]

This definition might have applied to Columbia and not to Cornell, but we will see later that both universities had similar approaches at this time.

Early course listings (1914-15, for example) do not include anything under the theory label, although a one credit "seminary" [sic] taught by Martin, Phelps and (or?) Young dealt with "subjects of professional interest not covered by other courses."[95] The situation seems to have changed with the arrival of Dean Bosworth. The 1920-21 Announcement lists four courses under the theory of architecture heading, two by that same title, and two more (elective) labeled "Philosophy of Architecture." All four were taught by Bosworth, who had a

[94] Records, box 21, Arnaud to Mackesey, 18 April 1949. The underlining is Arnaud's.
[95] Announcement of the College of Architecture, 1914-15.

monopoly as the theory professor would have had at the École, but were still worth only one credit each. No description of the subject matter accompanies the listing, but the courses consisted of lectures, with sketches and essays or "assigned work."[96] Apart from having little curricular weight, many of the theory courses were elective or interchangeable. In 1931 a student petitioned the faculty "to be allowed to substitute Theory 011 for Perspective 512, it being more applicable to his work."[97] The fact that the petition was granted may have something to do with the fact that the student majored in sculpture, but also points to the lack of definition of what theory courses should include.

By 1932, Bosworth no longer had absolute control on theory courses. Professors Hurd and Seymour were also teaching such courses, and Montillon and Ewald offered courses in theory of landscape architecture. Bosworth taught the only two-credit course, to non-architects. (It was "open to non-technical upperclass students" and was held in Goldwin Smith Hall, instead of in White Hall.) This course, Appreciation of Architecture, provides the first descriptive blurb and a hint of what the ones for architects must have been like:

> "No ability in drawing required. An analytical and historical study of specific examples taken from the Classic and the Renaissance period. Lectures with assigned readings, essays and examinations."

Bosworth provided the initial opportunity for the discussion of new architectural concepts, but the faculty was still too immersed in the Beaux-Arts environment to fully take advantage of it. We will also see in chapter 21 how, when the study of modern architecture became a real possibility in the history

[96] Announcement of the College of Architecture, 1920-21.
[97] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 12 October 1931.

courses of the forties, and new faculty members and numerous lecturers came to Cornell after World War II, the theory courses were redefined.

11 Composition of the faculty in the thirties

When George Young took over the reins of the College of Architecture in 1928, most of the faculty had already been at Cornell several years. The staff was increased that same year with the arrival of Professors Seymour (design), Finlayson and Washburn (both fine arts), but otherwise consisted of men who had been at Cornell for at least five years. A few had started a few years on either side of the turn of the century, and two of them (Martin and Brauner) had been hired during Babcock's administration.[98] They had been responsible for Cornell's excellent Beaux-Arts reputation.

Let us now look at the different faculty groups that were active in the thirties:[99]

The technical subjects so emphasized by Babcock (construction and graphics) were taught by three men of long experience and with a common Cornellian background. Although he never received a Cornell degree, Professor Clarence A. Martin, a special student from 1886 to 1888, was hired by Babcock in 1894 to help him with the construction courses. Martin would eventually lead the college as its director and dean, and was very interested in educational and professional issues, being a member of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) and one of the founders of ACSA. Hubert E. Baxter '10 was asked to teach structural design and descriptive geometry soon after graduation, and co-authored books on those subjects with George Young, himself a member of the class of 1900. A fourth instructor in these subjects was Edward Abbuehl. He

[98] A listing of the College's faculty is shown in graphic form in Appendix A.
[99] Appendix A may help visualize the interactions between the different groups and individuals.

started teaching graphics (descriptive geometry, perspective, shades and shadows) while a student in 1925-26 (he received an M.Arch. in 1928). His teaching career at Cornell was cut short by the Depression after a comparatively brief eight years.[100]

In landscape architecture there was a similar situation. Professor Ralph C. Curtis '01 had been teaching ornamental horticulture in the College of Agriculture since the beginning of the century. Eugene Montillon '12 joined him in 1922, and Edward Lawson '13 in 1923. Lawson also earned a Cornell MLA degree in 1914, and studied in Italy after winning the first Rome Prize of the American Academy in Rome in 1915.

The rest of the faculty had a more heterogeneous educational background, although a few were also Cornell alumni. In fine arts, there was the other link to the early days of the college. Professor Olaf M. Brauner, as we saw in chapter 1, started teaching at Cornell in 1895, and at the College of Architecture in 1896, just as Babcock was leaving. He had been born in Norway, but moved to Massachusetts as a teenager, studying at the Normal Art School of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts.[101] Christian Midjo, a contemporary of Brauner's, was trained in Denmark and Norway, and taught freehand drawing, modeling and advanced painting. Walter K. Stone, in the fine arts faculty since 1920, had studied in Rochester and at the Pratt Institute, and had his illustration work published in numerous magazines and books. He also collaborated with

[100] Abbuehl, and two others, could not be reappointed when their contracts expired in 1933. Alumni Letter, October 1933.
[101] Obituary in Faculty Meetings, minutes, 18 March 1947.

the landscape architecture program by teaching "in connection with the courses in planting design."[102] Almost twenty years younger, Donald L. Finlayson was an alumnus of Dartmouth, and had done graduate work at Brown and Princeton Universities. He had a long Cornell career, teaching courses in art history until 1960. The only Cornell alumnus in the fine arts group, Kenneth L. Washburn '26 taught freehand drawing, elementary drawing and composition. His stay would also extend until the fifties.

History of architecture, as we have mentioned, was in the hands of Professors Phelps and Dunbar. Albert C. Phelps had studied at the University of Illinois and in Germany. He was the college's first instructor in architectural history, having been hired in 1898, and taught at Cornell until his death in 1937. William McLeish Dunbar '21 started teaching in 1926, and was listed in the Announcement until 1941. In 1931 he took a three-year leave of absence to set up a history of art program at Pomona College. The 1935 Alumni Letter places him "still at Claremont College in California,"[103] but announces his return "next Fall to work with Professor Phelps on some important plans they have in mind." By 1940, Dunbar was Dean of the College of Fine Arts at the University of New Mexico.[104] After Phelps' death, he required the assistance of Hartell and Underwood, and was eventually succeeded by Detweiler. This will be studied in a later section.

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[102] Obituary in Faculty Meetings, minutes, 14 March 1950.
[103] A 1937 document refers to it as Scripps College: Records, box 11, list of faculty and their salaries and teaching loads, dated 25 October 1937. Scripps, Pomona and Claremont Colleges are all in Claremont, California, and form the Claremont Association of Colleges.
[104] Clarke's letter to prospective student Robert L. Anderson, 20 March 1940.

In the late twenties, three men were in charge of instruction in design, courses that included a large amount of architectural drawing and rendering. Although with different non-Cornell backgrounds, all three had spent some time studying in Paris. Leroy P. Burnham, at Cornell since 1914, was a member of Harvard's class of 1902. He also received an M.S. degree from that school, and was awarded "the Harvard and Roche [Rotch] Travelling Fellowships,"[105] which took him to the École in Paris and the American Academy in Rome. Between Europe and Cornell, he spent several years in professional practice.

Francke Huntington Bosworth, Yale '97, spent four years at the École des Beaux-Arts. After some professional practice and war service he was hired by Cornell in 1919, to teach design and to replace Martin as Dean of the College of Architecture.[106] As his predecessor, Dean Bosworth was involved in academic and professional societies such as ACSA, AIA, and BAID. In addition to his years in France, he was at one point intensely committed to the Beaux-Arts system in the Unites States, having been the head of the architecture department of the BAID for some time.[107] According to his obituary:

> "The years following the first World War were important in the history of American architectural education. The pattern of professional training then in force in our schools was being re-appraised in the effort to make it a more effectual foundation for the practice of the profession in the 20th century. During the period in which Dean Bosworth was administrative head of the College, this Faculty led in

[105] Obituary in Faculty Meetings, minutes, 14 October 1952; another document mentions Burnham as "the first holder of the Nelson Robinson Jr. Travelling Fellowship in Architecture, as well as the Julia Amory Appleton Travelling Fellowship in Architecture": Records, Tilton's letter to prospective student L.L. Reeve, 28 January 1939.

[106] Of all the directors, deans and acting deans of the college between Babcock and McMinn, Bosworth was the only one selected from outside of the ranks of the faculty: Babcock, Trowbridge, Van Pelt, Martin, Bosworth, Young, Tilton, Clarke, Mackesey, Kelly, Parsons, Seley, Stewart and McMinn.

[107] Records, box 8. A letter of Philip A. Cusachs (Director, Architecture Department, BAID), 30 June 1930, mentions that Bosworth used to have that position.

> the introduction of changes which long since have been proved sound and have been adopted in one form or another by leading architectural schools in the country. Perhaps the most significant were "Analytique", the establishment of a five-year curriculum leading to the professional degree and the inclusion of a substantial thesis as a requirement of the curriculum. "[108]

Bosworth's administrative tenure ended because of illness in 1927, but he continued to teach until 1939.

Finally, Alexander Duncan Seymour was hired just as Young became dean. He had a background similar to the other two. A graduate of Columbia University (1905), he also spent several years at the École in Paris, and had fifteen years of professional experience before coming to Cornell.

The similarities and differences in the background of Cornell's faculty deserve some analysis. Even before its association with the College of Architecture, the landscape architecture program had had such a successful record that it probably would not have made sense to look for faculty members coming from schools other than Cornell's. That the whole landscape architecture faculty had a Cornell training was therefore justified.

The situation is not as clear with the technical subjects group, which had the same Cornellian homogeneity. Information on Martin and Young, especially in their obituaries, suggests that they enjoyed the respect and admiration of their colleagues throughout the country. They, and Baxter, wrote textbooks that were apparently the "standard reference" in their fields, and were honored by the AIA and ACSA upon their retirements. However, without an equivalent to the landscape architecture prize of the American Academy in Rome, it is difficult to

[108] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 10 January 1950.

gauge how graduates of others schools compared to them. In chapter 25 we will see how the preference for Cornellians to teach construction, structures and graphics courses continued for many years.

In fine arts, the faculty's backgrounds were more varied. Apart from Brauner's and Midjo's familial Scandinavian connections, there appears to be no pattern as to the criteria used to select faculty members. History of architecture, having only two faculty members, does not allow us to arrive at any valid conclusions in this regard: fifty percent studied in Illinois and Germany, and fifty percent at Cornell.

Design, however, again provides a homogeneous case. In contrast with the construction and landscape architecture faculty, not one design professor had been a student at Cornell. They had all, instead, attended the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, at least for a few years, so that the French emphasis inaugurated by Trowbridge in 1896 lingered even if in a slightly diluted fashion. (Unlike many of their predecessors, Burnham, Bosworth, and Seymour did not become "Diplômé par le Gouvernment"). Seymour had even conducted his own atelier in New York before coming to Cornell. In addition, they all had somewhat extensive office experiences: Burnham had worked several years with McKim, Mead & White, and Bosworth with Frank Holden and with Carrère & Hastings. Seymour worked with several New York offices, and was the winner of many competitions.[109]

[109] Records, Tilton's letter to L.L. Reeve, 28 January 1939.

The unstated standard for the selection of design faculty in the thirties was, then, that they should have the combination of a Beaux-Arts training (as required at Cornell since 1896) with a realistic point of view engendered from exposure to professional practice (as Babcock would have demanded). This guaranteed that Cornell's reputation for excellence in design and technology would continue.

Four other professors arrived at Cornell in the early and mid-thirties: Hartell, Tilton, Brown and Clarke. They will also be discussed in chapter 25, because their influence and attitude relate better to the events of the forties.

12 Composition of the student body in the thirties

The students, less encumbered by the conservative ideas of their elders, played an important role in bringing change to the study of architecture. Dean Young, in an article written for American Architect explained that architectural education should teach students "how" to think, and not "what" to think ("assuming that you know it yourself").[110] He expressed this very concisely in a letter to Henry S. Churchill '15, who was going to deliver a lecture on planning issues and had warned Young about his "pretty radical" ideas:

> I am sure that your warning about your radical views does not find me unprepared nor does it dismay me. The attitude of the College and of the University is in general to get the students to the point where they are not afraid to think about anything and where they cannot possibly have the idea that because a book or a lecturer or a professor takes this or that attitude, he she or it, is necessarily right.[111]

This idea was, at least outwardly, shared by the rest of the faculty. While students were encouraged to think independently, they were less unfettered when it came to expressing their ideas architecturally. Lee Schoen '30 seems to have been a habitual critic of architectural education methods at the time. A few months after graduating, he wrote to a newspaper editor:

> "Sir: I have read with interest your recent editorial comment "Light on Yale's Art," in which criticism, slightly sarcastic of the Yale's senior's frankness is balanced by the very last sentence: "He has informed the world that at Yale there are a few free spirits who really have an interest in art."
> Perhaps it would be of interest to know that such interest is limited, unfortunately, to a very small few in every school, and that these few are combatted -- perhaps for their future good -- by almost every member of every architectural faculty in every architectural school in

[110] George Young, Jr., "what Are The Schools Doing About Modern Architecture?", American Architect, March 1932, pp. 24-25,70.
[111] Records, box 11, Young to Churchill, 20 October 1934.

> the country. To call these men architectural teachers is ridiculous. They are frankly professors of archaeology, whose sole idea of creation is the adaptation of a Gothic church into a campus dormitory. These "creators" strongly influence perhaps ninety-nine of every hundred to whom they "teach" architecture.
> The art of building does (and the A.I.A. has seen to it that it will) depend on our college-trained architects. Now, how on earth, with existing conditions as they are, can we hope for other than what we now have in architectural design? In our most imaginative period of life we are guided toward the archaeological. The fault does not lie with the practicing builders of today (though so few of them do seem willing to continue their learning), but rather with those so-called molders of our destiny -- our befossiled college professors.
>
> L.S.

Forest Hills Gardens, November 17. "[112]

A couple of years later, Schoen wrote directly to Young to congratulate him on the American Architect article mentioned above, but criticized the article for not being supportive of progressive ideas:

> "I read your article in the American Architect and was very much impressed by its content. It did symbolize your teaching viewpoints very ably. And it very soundly had no reference to personal views or viewpoints on one's preference to style. It was the only impartial article on the subject that I have read in a long time. But there is a criticism ----my usual one, and I still have to be hit over the head to make me keep quiet about it. Granted that the prime duty of a school is to make a student think for himself regardless of what subject, there is coupled with that duty another one. The impression must be cast in the students [sic] mind that all his thoughts must center towards progress and not away from it. I'll not elaborate; you know the usual follow-up on that."[113]

Young described Schoen as "a nice boy but he is one of these militant modernists who will know a lot more than he knows now by the time he has lived

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[112] Records, box 8, Sun newspaper clipping filed with Young's 3 December 1930 letter to Benjamin Betts, editor, American Architect.

[113] Records, box 9, Schoen to Young, probably March or April 1932. Despite these opinions, Schoen must have recognized the quality of his Cornell training. Twenty years later, he wrote for admission information for his daughter Sandra, even though she still had four years of high school to finish (Records, box 15, 19 May 1952).

a few years longer. I can't help admiring crusaders but I guess they lead a Hell of a life."[114]

We have already seen how student demands were not restricted to Schoen's quest for modernism, but also included an apparent return to traditional ways when they felt a need for them.

In the same way that the composition of the faculty was determined by stated and tacit standards, students in the late twenties were admitted according to published entrance requirements as well as a customary determination of presumed caliber. In the midst of a decline in applications in 1935, the faculty decided "that it is not necessary to fill the College; that in the deliberations of the Admissions Committee quality should be considered of more importance than quantity."[115] The issue of quantity did, nevertheless, have an immense importance in the history of the College, especially when it was deeply affected by the Depression and World War II. It will be discussed later in those contexts.

What were the attributes that the faculty looked for in order to determine student quality? At the École, candidates for admission underwent the arduous examinations in descriptive geometry, freehand drawing, sculpture, and design that we mentioned in the introduction. The high failure rate assured that only those with the best chance of success would become élèves. The College of Architecture at Cornell, although outspokenly Beaux-Arts since 1896, does not appear to have had entrance requirements until much later. It certainly had no requirements in the subjects mentioned above. On the contrary, the faculty felt

[114] Records, box 8, Young to Betts, 3 December 1930.
[115] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 16 April 1935.

that those subjects were best learned from scratch, once admitted into the college:

> "The fact that you have had no previous training in painting or other work of that sort will not handicap you. Very often we would prefer that students enter our courses without previous training."[116]

The 1935 Alumni Letter indicated that it was in 1925 that "selective admission" started. In a 1933 letter, Dean Young (who had been at Cornell since 1909) recalled that prior to 1922 there had been no selection process, and that:

> "[students were accepted] without reference to sex, color, or previous condition of servitude."[117]

Nevertheless, references to gender, race and religion do appear occasionally in letters dealing with students and prospective faculty or lecturers. These were other qualitative aspects that were considered vital in the Cornell of the thirties and forties. A few examples will illustrate this point. A letter to someone interested in hiring a black instructor in architecture mentions that, as of 1931 (sixty years after the founding of the school), there had only been two black graduates of the college, both then teaching at Howard University in Washington, D.C.[118]

In the case of women, the older faculty were not comfortable with the idea of female professionals. Two letters written by Professor Martin, in 1930 and 1932, can be contrasted, since both deal with a visitor's lecture on the same subject (air conditioning):

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[116] Records, box 13, Tilton to Jane P. Doan, 31 August 1942.
[117] Records, box 10, Young to Mary O. Soroka, 5 May 1933.
[118] Records, box 8, Young to Roy C. Reynolds, 6 June 1931.

> I must confess to some degree of apprehension lest a lecture given by a woman may tend to a less abstract and a less definite scientific approach to the subject than I should like. On the other hand, I know something of what women have accomplished in the world and know that there may be an element of unfairness in my feeling about it. I justify the reference only to make it clear that if Miss Ingels comes to us, I would like to have the subject matter handled in a definitely technical rather than a popular manner.[119]

On the other hand, when Mr. H. C. Babcock, of the Carrier-Lyle Corporation, was to come a year and a half later to deliver a similar lecture, Martin assured him: "I do not care how informally you present the subject."[120]

Although the example above refers to lecturers and not students, similar attitudes can be surmised from other events. The number of women students had been limited, if not by regulations, by tradition.[121] Because there were usually very few women applicants, they never seemed to pose a threat. Around 1934 the effects of the Depression were felt in such a way that the faculty considered the possibility of admitting more women to keep registration at an acceptable level:

> "Dean Young reported verbally that the number of applicants for admission was lower than usual, that the proportion of women applicants was higher than usual, and asked the opinion of the faculty regarding the situation.
> The question of the limitation of the number of women students in the College was discussed at length. The view expressed by the members of the Fine Arts Department was that women might well be admitted much more freely than heretofore in that department. The view expressed by the members of the Department of Landscape Architecture was that women might well be admitted somewhat more freely in that department.

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[119] Records, box 8, Martin to Brewster S. Beach, 7 October 1930.
[120] Records, box 9, Martin to H. C. Babcock, 9 March 1932.
[121] Joseph Esherick mentions that it was an official policy at the University of Pennsylvania to limit enrollment of women to ten percent ("Architectural Education in the Thirties and Seventies : A Personal View", in The Architect, Spiro Kostof, ed., Oxford University Press, New York, 1977, p.239.)

> A motion (Bosworth), that it was the sense of the meeting that the general policy that women applicants be subjected to a stricter consideration than the men, and that the number be limited to approximately 10% of the group, was by vote defeated, receiving but one affirmative vote.[122]

We will see later, in discussing effects of factors external to Cornell, how these fears seem exaggerated. The proportion of women to men was so small, anyway, that it should not have generated such a lengthy discussion[123].

This attitude of the older faculty is not easy to justify, but can be explained as a consequence of their cultural background. John W. Smith '10 wrote to Clarke in 1945, concerned about his daughter, who was interested in studying architecture at Cornell:

> "... when I was at Cornell, co-eds were looked upon as a very low form of life -- something like cockroaches or silver fish. Somehow or other they had got into the school and noone [sic] was able to get rid of them, though everybody tried.
> When I was there we had two, and we called them Miss Love and Miss Griswold. These were their names. I never knew whether they had other names. None of us did. This seems very queer to me now, but at the time it seemed quite reasonable. How are conditions now anyway?"[124]

To its credit, Cornell was a pioneer in admitting women from the very beginning of the school. Louise Blanchard Bethune, the first woman to be admitted to the AIA, attended Cornell until 1876, before deciding on the more traditional approach of apprenticeship.[125] Margaret Hicks (A.B. 1878, B.Arch.

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[122] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 14 June 1934.

[123] Even though the number of women at Cornell was small it must be measured against the fact that most private schools of architecture (Columbia, Harvard) admitted no women at all then.

[124] Records, box 16, Smith to Clarke, 13 November 1945.

[125] Grossman and Reitzes ("Caught in the Crossfire: Women and Architectural Education, 1880-1910", in Architecture: A Place for Women, Ellen P. Berkeley, ed., Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, 1989, p.37) indicate that "as of 1901, the following schools admitted women: Cornell University (1871); Syracuse University (1871); University of Illinois (1873); and MIT (1883)." Louise Blanchard Bethune attended Cornell until 1876 (Adriana Barbasch, "Louise Blanchard Bethune: The AIA Accepts Its First

1880) became the first woman to graduate from an architecture course at an American university[126]. Similarly, Vertner Woodson Tandy '07, the first black graduate of the college, was also the first black architect registered to practice in New York State.[127] Nevertheless, blacks and women were definitely rare in the College of Architecture.

One more example will be included here regarding attitudes toward religious backgrounds. In a letter to his former high school teacher, who was in 1932 running a boarding house in New York, Young asked for lodging for two women students intending to take a summer course at Columbia University:

> "They are rather more mature than the average student and I can recommend them as girls of intelligence and breeding.
> It is perhaps wise to say that one of them is Jewish but I can assure you that she is the kind of person I would be willing and delighted to have in my own home."[128]

The preceding examples have been included for more than their anecdotal flavor. They convey the conservatism of the time in issues not only architectural, but societal. Jean Paul Carlhian writes that "in terms of age, nationality or race, there were no restrictions" at the École, and mentions Julia Morgan as the first woman admitted to it, in 1898.[129] Still, its ultimate goal was to produce architects to serve the government and the upper levels of society, and it would not have made much sense to train someone who, aside from his or her design ability, would not fit into that society. Although at Cornell the situation was altered by the American cultural environment, the attitude was inherited. They

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Woman Member", in the same book, p.16.)
[126] https://aap.cornell.edu/about/history
[127] Michael Adams, "A Legacy of Shadows", Progressive Architecture, February 1991, p.86.
[128] Records, box 9, Young to Cora Hill, 24 May 1932.
[129] Carlhian, op. cit., p. 9.

may have felt it a waste of time to teach someone who in their opinion would end up being a full time mother and housewife, or not being hired because of their ethnic and religious background. White protestant males had an infinitely greater chance of professional success. It would take some time, and the prodding of external factors, for some of this to change.

13 Effects of the Depression on the college

Although it took a while for its effects to be felt in Ithaca, the depression started by the stock market crash of 1929 eventually did affect the functioning of the College of Architecture at Cornell. Lecturers and visiting critics could not be invited, some faculty members could not be reappointed, and students withdrew for lack of financial means to continue their studies. The effect of these circumstances was summed up by Dean Young in his 1935 Alumni Letter:

> "But despite the depression (or maybe because of it) things seem to keep on happening. Some of them may be of interest."[130]

In 1930, Young corresponded with other architecture schools, concerned about an abrupt fall in applications to Cornell and the other schools.[131] By November of that year, Young blamed "The present economic situation" for causing four student withdrawals a week.[132] The situation continued to worsen, and by 1933 total registration in the college fell to a level unseen since the first World War (fig. 6).[133]

In an effort to curb this decline, the College had to return to its pre-1922 admissions policy. In August, Young wrote: "It looks as though we will just fill our Freshman class comfortably but we are not turning anybody away this year."[134] In his annual report to the alumni, the dean told them about the lack of applicants:

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[130] Alumni Letter, January 1935.
[131] Records, box 8, Young's letter to E.V. Meeks (Yale University), 10 July 1930, and F.W. Revels' (Syracuse University) letter to Young, 25 September 1930.
[132] Records, box 8, Young's letter to Bosworth, 5 November 1930.
[133] The graph was published in the 1935 Alumni Letter. The large increase in 1922 was due to the incorporation of the Landscape Architecture program.
[134] Records, box 11, Young's letter to Martin, 29 August 1933.

"The number of applications for admission to the College has been declining for the past three years. For the coming year the indications are that we will just about fill the entering class (45) but there will be no rejections of qualified applicants. In the upper classes there have been withdrawals due to financial stress that have cut the total attendance about 10 per cent. Other comparable schools seem, in this respect, to have suffered more than Cornell; so, for the present, our condition can be viewed as quite satisfactory."[135]

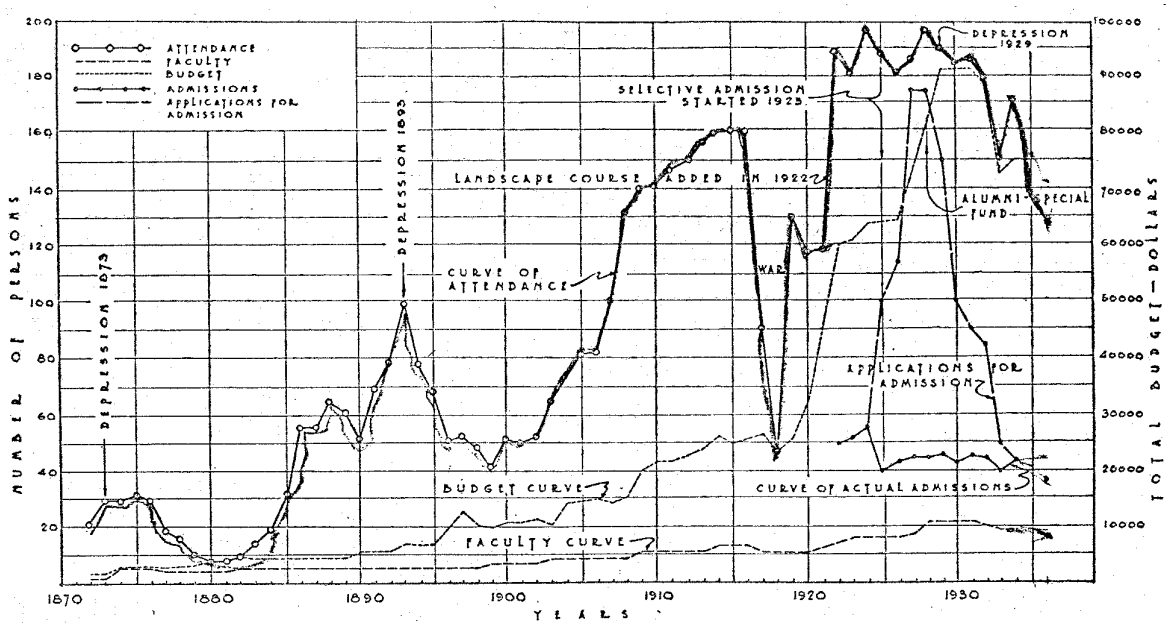

Figure 6: 1870-1940 admissions and enrollment data, published in 1935 Alumni Letter

Despite Young's competitive spirit's relief, the drop in registration prompted the lengthy discussion mentioned above about the possibility of admitting more women than usual. The brief respite shown in the graph for 1934 cannot, however, be credited to a rise in women architecture students. In the 1935 Alumni Letter Young felt it "necessary to add that the increase in attendance shown for the current year occurs in the departments in Landscape Architecture [5 men and 3 women admitted] and Fine Arts [1 man, 10 women admitted].

[135] Alumni Letter, October 1933.

Architecture, by itself, shows a slight decrease [25 men, no women admitted]."[136] The population (and tuition income?) needs of the college were met by increasing admissions in fields where women were acceptable, and also by admitting more graduate students:

> "The year just past brought a notable increase in the number of graduate students. This was due in part to the lack of opportunity in business…"[137]

In 1936 the end appeared in sight. The Committee on Admissions analyzed total registration and was able to conclude:

> "These figures show a further decline in total attendance but an encouraging increase in new students.
> It seems likely that we have passed the low point with regard to entering classes and perhaps for total attendance."[138]

Although their prediction was correct, and the Depression was then almost over at Cornell, its effects would remain in evidence for many years. Pre-1929 registration levels would not be reached again until after World War II.

The university administration asked all colleges to curtail expenses as far as possible,[139] which to the architects meant a dramatic reduction in outside lecturers, critics and exhibitions. We will look at that in the next chapter.

We have mentioned how a few new teachers had been hired in the early part of Young's deanship (Camden, Finlayson, Hartell, Seymour and Washburn.) The economic slump would soon cause an almost total standstill in the arrival of

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[136] Alumni Letter, 1935. Bracketed information from Faculty Meetings, minutes, 9 October 1934.
[137] Alumni Letter, October 1933.
[138] Faculty Meetings, minutes, __September 1936.
[139] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 12 October 1931, 16 May 1932, 14 November 1932. Numerous letters of around 1932 refer to the Depression as the reason for these cuts. For example, what appears to have been a customary exchange of slides with other institutions had to be stopped for lack of postage funds. In 1933 studio time had to be reduced in order to close White Hall earlier (at 11 pm) to lower the heating bill (minutes, 13 March 1933).

new faculty. In 1932 Young wrote to Martin, very worried that, as the administrative head of the College, he might soon have to fire someone: "We are commencing to feel the depression here in a definite fashion."[140] His fears were not unfounded and Goeller, Hurd and Abbuehl were let go. Young then lamented: "... it will mean that three more people are out searching for jobs that do not exist."[141] A fourth faculty member, Walter Ewald, who had been standing in for Lawson during his leave of absence in Europe, could not be reappointed either, and left Cornell in 1933. Dunbar's three-year leave of absence must certainly have helped in balancing the College's budget.

Only three other faculty members who started their work at Cornell between 1931 and 1936 survived the Depression. Gilmore D. Clarke, who had given occasional lectures the previous few years, was asked to join the faculty in 1934 and develop the program in city and regional planning. His salary, however, was paid by the Carnegie Corporation and therefore did not affect the college coffers. John Tilton came to Cornell in 1932 to take over Martin's courses, since he was retiring to Florida. Tilton's wages, then, came from funds already available for those courses. Ludlow Brown stayed as an instructor after receiving a Master's degree in 1932, but his salary was so embarrassingly low that it did not harm the budget significantly.[142]

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[140] Records, box 10, Young's letter to Martin, 15 December 1932.
[141] Records, box 10, Young's letter to R.H. Shreve, 4 March 1933.
[142] A 1937 list of faculty members, salaries and teaching loads shows him having the lowest salary in the College, of $1200, up from $775 sometime before. Most of the others earned between $3000 and $5400. He was considered "too valuable a man to continue at this salary." Records, box 11, list dated 25 October 1937.

From the point of view of progression toward modern architecture at Cornell, the economic situation may have aided at the same time that it hindered it. While the lack of new faculty may have delayed the arrival of new ideas, Dean Young credited the Depression crop of graduate and advanced students with initiating an intellectual broadening of the old faculty:

> "We are constantly drawing more students who have had previous college experience. This naturally raises the average age level and the average work level. It also has affected our point of view to some extent [my underlining.]
> The tendency is to adapt the course of study to the student and his needs in so far as that can be done without compromising the standard of our degrees…"[143]

[143] Alumni Letter, October 1933.

14 Influence of exhibitions and visiting faculty

Another way in which the college's point of view was affected was through the images and ideas brought to the campus by exhibitions and visitors. Cornell, because of its geographical isolation from urban centers, had to rely on shows being brought to campus, rather than attending lectures and exhibits in larger cities. Rooms in Goldwin Smith Hall, and later Morse and White Halls, had been used since early days to display the work of professional artists, students and faculty. In the early thirties, a few exhibitions may have offered the first glimpse of modern architecture to the students at Cornell. One held in the Morse Hall Art Galleries, perhaps not solely architectural, provided the opportunity to purchase books on German and Russian theater, including Hoftheatre in Weimar and Die Buhne im Bauhaus, among many others.[144] Although there is not much more information than that, we at least know that the words Bauhaus and Weimar had made an appearance in Cornell's Arts Quad. Another exhibition at about the same time dealt with contemporary Swedish architecture. Previously shown at Princeton and Harvard, it featured the work of Asplund and about forty-five other architects.[145]

In September of 1932, the College of Architecture had a very real opportunity to explore not just "modern" architecture, but the International Style proper. Philip Johnson's Museum of Modern Art exhibition had been showing in nearby Buffalo for several days. Near the end of the month, the Albright Art

[144] Information found in folder "Exhibitions 1931-32" in Records, box 9, does not mention the title or exact date of this exhibition.
[145] Same folder.

gallery wrote to Young to offer him this exhibit for display at Cornell, with models and photographs of the work of Le Corbusier, Gropius, Oud, Howe and Lescaze, and "Miss Van der Rcho" [sic]. Young turned the offer down, citing lack of funds.[146]

The extreme budgetary reduction provided a slackening in the tension created by the coexistence of traditional methods and new currents. The existing Records are confusing. At the end of 1932 Professor Finlayson (in charge of exhibitions) notified the Museum of Modern Art that the Cornell gallery had been closed for the academic year.[147] The 1933 Alumni Letter confirmed this fact, explaining that only two local exhibitions had been possible, and that resumption of shows would require better times. Just a year later, Young mentioned an abundance of shows, instead of his budget, as a deterrent in scheduling an exhibition. When Henry S. Churchill '15 offered to bring drawings of a housing project he had designed, Young told him that:

> "Our exhibition room is now used so much of the time that we have to watch our dates pretty closely but I am pretty sure we can work [your drawings] in."[148]

Although Young's letters usually had a sincere ring to them, in this case the inconsistency suggests that he may have been buying time.[149] Although the effects of the Depression were in fact being felt in Ithaca, perhaps Young thought that the college was not ready for exposure to the ideas of such progressive

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[146] Records, box 10, Gordon B. Washburn to Young, 23 September 1932. Young's response dated 30 September 1932.
[147] Records, box 10, Finlayson to the Museum of Modern Art, 8 October 1932.
[148] Records, box 11, Young to Churchill, 2 August 1934.
[149] Later, Young asked Morris Bishop, in charge of University Lectures, to fund a lecture by Churchill, while the college agreed to pay for the exhibit expenses. Records, box 11, 14 August 1934.

designers. The description of the show included with the Albright Gallery's letter stated that "expositions and exhibitions have perhaps changed the character of American architecture of the last forty years more than any other factor."[150] This sentence, probably intended as an inducement to the public, may have had the opposite effect on the Cornell faculty who, sheltered by the dire economic situation, were able to avoid the exhibition.

In any case, the wait for improved economic conditions would be long, and only in the forties would the college resume its efforts to obtain exhibitions to show the students. Interestingly, others (with better budgets or broader interests) were able to show modern architecture a little earlier: the College of Home Economics (now Human Ecology) exhibited "Modern Houses in America" in the Martha van Rensselaer Gallery in March 1939. The show had been prepared by Mrs. Rudolf Mock of the Museum of Modern Art's Department of Architecture, and included works by Frank Lloyd Wright, Richard Neutra, William Lescaze, Edward Durrell Stone and A. Lawrence Kocher, among others.

Unfortunately, although exhibition announcements were carefully filed, no one seems to have recorded students' or faculty's reaction to them.

Another means for Cornell students and faculty to learn about architectural developments outside Ithaca were visiting critics and lecturers. Since at least the beginning of the century, the College of Architecture had been interested in bringing to campus a series of outside artists and professionals, to expose students to different points of view. The 1915-16 Announcement of the

[150] Entire text of the description included in Appendix B.

college mentions, for example, Ely Jacques Kahn and Victor Horta. Still, these different points of view were not necessarily of the avant garde.

A lecture on the "Architecture of Tomorrow", which "promises to be most interesting" was to be delivered 14 May 1931 by Egerton Swartwout, and suggests at least a curiosity toward new architectural trends.[151] Swartwout was, despite the enticing title of his lecture, very conservative. He had trained at McKim, Mead, and White, and did his most important projects from 1913 to 1929. Young described him as a member of "the older school." Swartwout had previously written an article titled "Mistakes in Modern Architecture are Results of Commercialization in Designing," excerpts of which may give us an idea of the content of his lecture at Cornell:

> "Somebody, I forgot who, once said ... "architecture is frozen music" ... Not being a musician myself I am in no position to comment, but I would not recommend that the practice of architecture be thereupon hastily assumed by those young men whose only qualification is their ability to produce obscene noises from a saxophone, unless perhaps they intend to devote their attention exclusively to modernistic work. I have no doubt that many of the architects of New York's high buildings are saxophone players.
> ... [in] a good architectural school ... [a student] will learn the rudiments of the art, the history of architecture, what has been done before him, and if possible why it was done the way it was done and not some other way. He will learn to draw, a little, and to render a good deal, and he will be inoculated with the virus of modernism. If it takes, his work will be very sick for some time, but if he has a sound constitution he will recover and ever after be immune ... . Do the modern in the school if you must, and it seems you must to get mentions in the Beaux Arts competitions, but don't neglect the serious groundwork in historical styles. The jolly old pendulum has a way of swinging back, and in a few years modernism will go the way of prohibition and bobbed hair, and the poor wretch who only knows piers without caps in place of columns ... will be caught flatfooted."[152]

[151] Records, box 8, Young's memorandum to the faculty, 6 May 1931.
[152] Records, box 9, contains a carbon copy of the typewritten original, dated 29 October 1930. Swartwout,

The following year C. Grant LaFarge, another member of the old guard,[153] delivered a lecture on "Conservatism vs. Modernism," probably of a similar character to Swartwout's.[154]

Was this a perverse plot by the Cornell faculty to steer students away from the modernist track? Did the "befossiled professors" invite befossiled lecturers as part of a carefully thought plan? Probably not. Swartwout's comment on how it was necessary to "do the modern" in order to win Beaux-Arts competitions, and Young's labeling him as of "the older school" combine to indicate how Cornell's faculty (even its oldest members) were less traditional than many of their contemporaries. If Swartwout thought of modernity as what would make Robert Kitchen's project (fig. 4, above) win the Rome Prize a few years later, and it made him react so fervently against it, we can imagine what he would have thought of Cornell's faculty allowing (and honoring) projects such as Kitchen's beach cottage (fig. 3).

Why, then, did the College of Architecture not invite the younger, pioneering designers to lecture at Cornell? The lack of money has already been mentioned and must be kept in mind. Another explanation may be found in Cornell's mixed feelings of regret and pride on its Ithaca location, "centrally isolated" from anywhere. Anyone planning to visit the campus at that time had to set aside a few days to do it, and getting busy professionals to come to Ithaca

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Yale '91, apparently wrote the article for the Yale News.

[153] The Macmillan Encyclopedia of Architects lists La Farge as designer of St. John the Divine (New York City, 1888-1911) and a few other buildings, mostly churches, up to 1915.

[154] Records, box 9, Bosworth to Cornell University Secretary Woodford Patterson, announcing LaFarge's lecture for 11 May 1932, at 8:15 pm in Baker Lab.

was probably quite a challenge. The two examples above, La Farge and Swartwout, had built their major works years before, and were probably semi-retired by the time they lectured here.

In 1934, Henry Churchill (the man with "radical ideas" mentioned above, also included among Art Deco practitioners by R. Bletter) sent an "Astoria-Queens Exhibit", on a large housing project he had done with others, and was to lecture on it at Cornell. While making arrangements for his visit, Dean Young wrote him: "Strictly between ourselves, I should prefer if you cannot come to have Aronovici. Lescaze and Mayer are unknown to us but we have had [Henry] Wright here a number of times."[155] Churchill did manage to come to his Alma Mater and deliver a lecture for a reduced fee of $75 (the usual being $100). This example also shows how Cornell's geographical isolation may have delayed discussion of current architectural developments, since Lescaze's PSFS building in Philadelphia had been completed two years before, and been the subject of numerous articles in Architectural Record, Architectural Forum, Architectural Review, and the T-Square Club Journal.[156] Even earlier works by Howe and Lescaze had also been reviewed in the architectural press (and displayed in Martha Van Rensselaer Hall).

That same year, during Cornell's bleakest budgetary period, A. Lawrence Kocher, editor of the Architectural Record, wrote to George Young. In his letter, Kocher offered the services of Walter Gropius, "for a series of lectures or for a

[155] Records, box 11, Young to Churchill, 2 August 1934.
[156] A year earlier, Young had written to Conway Todd that "we" did not subscribe to Architectural Record, but only to American Architect and Architectural Forum. The letter was written from his home, and it is not clear whether "we" is the College of Architecture, or he and Mrs. Young.

semester of teaching ... for the spring of 1935 or for the fall term of 1935-1936."[157] Four days later, Young promised to "try to write [Gropius] though that will have to depend on having any funds available. I am hoping that something may turn up but, frankly, I fear the contrary."[158] Kocher's letter has the ring of a form letter, probably sent to several universities. He was at the time trying to bring Gropius to the United States in order to establish a new school of architecture somewhere in Long Island. Since Young addressed him as "Dear Sir," it is clear they did not know each other, and there appears to be no reason why Cornell would have been singled out for such an offer. Assuming that Young was sincere (and not just polite) in his answer, the incident provides another instance of the Depression delaying the arrival of modernism at Cornell. (It also allows us to speculate on how the history of modern architectural education might have developed if Gropius had made it to Cornell and perhaps never to Harvard.)

In 1935 F. S. Onderdonk offered to lecture on "Adolf Loos - Pioneer of Modern Architecture." Although his offer was also rejected, Young cited scheduling conflicts rather than lack of funds as the reason.[159]

Sir Raymond Unwin, who had been approached at least as early as February 1935, came in January 1937. The students, perhaps excited after a long dry spell, were so impressed that they "suggested that the college have more speakers like Sir Raymond." Young explained the budgetary difficulties, but

[157] Records, Kocher to Young, 4 December 1934.
[158] Records, Young to Kocher, 8 December 1934.
[159] Records, Onderdonk to Young, 22 March 1935; Young's response dated 26 March 1935.

joined Hartell in "working out a plan" to bring more visitors.[160] By the February meeting of the Student-Faculty Committee, Young and Hartell had a proposal which may have satisfied the students while keeping costs down by relying on friends and local practitioners:

> The men considered [to lecture in the future] were as follows: Mr. R. H. Shreve, of the firm of Shreve, Lamb and Harmon, ... Mr. Dall, of Ithaca; Prof. Dillenbach [sic], of Syracuse; Mr. Cummings, of Binghamton; and Mr. McKeig [?], of Buffalo.[161]

The students' interest was serious, and in April Dean Young conveyed it to the College Council at their meeting in New York City:

> Another topic discussed at the meeting was the previous policy of the college in presenting outside lecturers. Mr. Gherardi [trustee member of Council] proposed ways and means for reinstituting this practise [sic].
> Professor Bosworth commented on the meeting saying that the trustee members of the council were getting "the spirit of the place." [My underlining.][162]

After a long wait, the students managed, through the Student-Faculty Committee, "to invite two practicing architects to the college during the year, Mr. Aymar Embury, II in the first term, and Mr. William Lescaze in the second."[163]

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[160] Student-Faculty Committee Meetings, minutes, 12 January 1937. Although not recorded, it is possible that Unwin's honorarium could have been a part of the Carnegie Corporation's contribution to the establishment of the city and regional planning program.
[161] Student-Faculty Committee Meetings, minutes, 23 February 1937.
[162] Faculty Meetings, minutes, Young's report to the faculty, 13 April 1937.
[163] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 8 November 1938.

15 Foreign travel as climax of Cornell education

While exhibitions and visitors brought outside ideas and images to Cornell, they were no substitute for first-hand experiences. At the École, travel (preferably to Rome) had always been considered the crowning event of an architectural education, and therefore winning the Prix de Rome was the ultimate goal.

A similar interest in travel was encouraged by the members of Cornell's architectural faculty. In the thirties, in the absence of the Eidlitz Traveling Fellowships, which would only be created at the end of that decade, students had to rely on private funds, or hope to win the prizes of the BAID (to Paris) or the AAR (to Rome).

In the article cited above, Carlhian mentions how attendance at École lectures was optional, and how professors, "rightly or wrongly, ... were reconciled to the fact that absenteeism was usually caused by the lure of travel," among a few other reasons. In addition, travel to selected destinations could be a substitute for academic requirements. Going to Rome could be accepted as an equivalent to thesis work:

> The most talented, seeking the Grand Prix Award, striving to win this prestigious award, would in fact keep postponing the obligation of fulfilling the Diplôme [Thesis] formalities in the hope that they might avoid its requirements -- which, in their rapidly developing pride and conceit, had grown to seem demeaning if not outright offensive.[164]

Although attendance to lectures at Cornell was compulsory, the attitude towards the thesis was similar to the École's. Geoffry Lawford, a senior in 1929,

[164] J. P. Carlhian, op. cit., p. 9.

wrote the Petitions Committee "requesting the privilege of satisfying the Thesis requirements of the College by travel and specified architectural study in Italy and the presentation of the results of such study to the Faculty." The petition was granted, progress to be supervised by Dean Young.[165] A similar case was presented to the faculty in 1932 by William Simrell, whose Thesis objective was "the Study and Analysis of Residence Architecture and Landscape Architecture of England, France and Italy . . ."[166]

Obviously, the Depression was a great deterrent to travel. Weatherhead mentions that in 1930, "according to a list compiled by the Committee on Education of the American Institute of Architects, there were thirty-eight scholarships regularly providing for travel and study in Europe."[167] He does not mention how many were available during the Depression years, but in any case, most were for graduates of certain universities. Harvard students, for example, could apply for the Robinson, Appleton, Sheldon, and University traveling fellowships. MIT, Yale, and Columbia had three possibilities each. Cornell only had a nameless traveling scholarship, "a special gift made occasionally, and not a regular scholarship," according to Weatherhead. The main sources of funding for Cornell graduates were the prizes of the American Academy in Rome and the Society of Beaux-Arts Architects, for which they had to compete against everybody.

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[165] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 15 January 1929.
[166] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 9 May 1932.
[167] Weatherhead, op. cit., p. 142.

Travel opportunities were catapulted in 1938 with the establishment of the Robert James Eidlitz Fellowship Fund. Although its stated purpose was not specifically travel, the income from the Fund was meant "to provide, for those students who could not otherwise afford it, an opportunity to supplement the professional training they have received at the College of Architecture at Cornell University in such ways and at such places as may be best suited to their individual needs" [my underlining].[168] Unfortunately, World War II would intervene, and the Eidlitz program was put on standby soon after it was created. Its importance, therefore, is best discussed with other events of the forties.

Cornell, in addition to its devotion to Rome and Paris, showed a noteworthy interest in Scandinavia, and the work of Eliel Saarinen. (Word of his polemical entry in the 1922 Tribune Tower competition must have reached even faraway Ithaca.) This interest in Scandinavia may have been induced through some connection to Brauner or Midjo, but I found no evidence of this. Hartell received a travelling fellowship from the Scandinavian-American Foundation soon after graduating in 1925, and may have encouraged others' interest in Scandinavia once he started teaching.[169] Another contact was recorded in 1930, after Danish architect L. Marnus visited the campus as part of his tour of American architectural schools.[170]

An early reference to Saarinen's ideas appears in 1931. Young wrote to the executive secretary of the AIA to thank him for "the copies of Mr. Saarinen's

[168] Records, box 17, copy of Mrs. Sadie Boulton Eidlitz's letter to President Day, 26 January 1938.
[169] The example loses some of its significance because Hartell's father was Swedish, but it still shows an early connection between Cornell and Scandinavia.
[170] Records, box 8, Marnus to Bosworth, 6 January 1930.

address [which] were distributed to the members of the Senior class and we had just enough to go around," and to ask for an additional 200 copies "for returning students."[171] I found no opinions on any Saarinen designed building, but Cornell's faculty and students seemed particularly impressed by his educational work at Cranbrook. We have mentioned Clarke's opinion of Harvard elsewhere, and will see later that the faculty found most schools wanting when compared to the College of Architecture at Cornell. This was not the case with Cranbrook.

Richard Raseman, a Cornellian architect, was the Secretary there by 1932, and may have been for several years before that. By then, graduate fellowships at Cranbrook were popular among Cornell graduates. When Dean Young made his way to Cranbrook, perhaps at Raseman's invitation, he was tremendously impressed. On his return, he wrote to Benjamin Betts, editor of American Architect:

> "I have had two out-of-town trips lately ... the second a visit to Eliel Saarinen's school at Bloomfield Hills. Both of these [trips] were important and inspiring. If there were any way that a magazine like yours could reproduce the spirit of the Cranbrook School it would be a great thing but it just cannot be done."[172]
>
> Similarly, he wrote to Conway Todd:
>
> I have just returned from Detroit and I want to have a long talk with you about Sarrinen's [sic] layout. It is an impressive thing.[173]

A third letter, to Edwin C. Rust (apparently a former sculpture student), stated:

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[171] Records, box 9, Young to Edward C. Kemper, 19 June 1931. Saarinen's address was one given at the 64th AIA Convention in San Antonio that year. Considering that the decline in student attendance had started a few years before, and that the total registration for 1931 (architecture, landscape architecture and fine arts) was 176, the request for 200 copies is rather impressive.

[172] Records, box 11, Young to Betts, 7 February 1935.

[173] Records, box 11, Young to Todd, 11 February 1935.

> "I was at Cranbrook not long ago ... [and] while I do not agree with all of the stuff of Milles that I saw, there is some of it that is superlatively good ... I did not meet Milles, as he was away at the time, but I was very much impressed with Saarinen…"[174]

The enthusiasm for Cranbrook and Saarinen would last many years. In the 1938 Alumni Letter, Dean Young reported that:

> "Each year for three years now [since his visit, then], one of our students has been honored by the award of a scholarship to help him continue his work at The Cranbrook Academy under Eliel Saarinen. The holders of these scholarships, so far, are Edmund Norwood Bacon, George Alfred Hutchinson and Raymond Arthur Young."[175]

It is not clear whether the scholarships were offered by Cranbrook or by Cornell, but students applied for them with well thought out proposals. Henry Hebbeln '37 was one of them. His application must have been successful, since, when he came back as a visiting critic in 1952, he was mentioned as having had a fellowship in regional planning at Cranbrook, and as having worked with Alvar Aalto in Helsinki.[176] His interest in Scandinavia also revealed a departure from the traditional idea of travel for research in classical motifs:

> "I am writing to learn if the college would consider recommending me for a scholarship. I should like to go to Cranbrook to study under Eliel Saarinen... . I feel our architecture should be an honest expression of our materials, gaining its interest & harmony from composition of textures (not exactly a new idea, I know). The whole-sale borrowing of "periods" from the past is decadent art."[177]

Perhaps the Scandinavian approach provided a more palatable outlet away from the "evils" of the Beaux-Arts, allowing the ever important Cornellian

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[174] Records, Young to Edwin Rust, 4 April 1935.
[175] Alumni Letter, 1 January 1938.
[176] Records, box 20, 10 December 1952.
[177] Records, box 11, Hebbeln to Tilton, 13 March 1938.

consideration of materials, construction issues, and the integration of the arts, as opposed to the ornamental barrenness of the International Style.

PART III

THE FORTIES AND THE RISE OF MODERNISM

16 Three perceptions of modernism at Cornell

We have seen how Cornell's College of Architecture alternated between praise and censure regarding the Beaux-Arts in the early thirties. Although they acknowledged the system's obsolescence, they were still very dependent on it. Several indications of the Beaux-Arts decline were discussed, and the point was made that this was not a linear descent, but that Beaux-Arts ideals kept reappearing, at least in modified form. Some of the features of the French system still exist today to some degree: the competitive practice, the ancien-nouveau relationship, and the phasing of design presentations in stages reminiscent of the esquisse-rendu sequence. Although it would be many years before the system would actually be abandoned, the need for change, and the beginnings of that change were obvious since an early date.

During the fall and winter of 1930-31, former dean Bosworth took a leave of absence to carry out a survey of all architectural schools in the United States and Canada and study their teaching methods. The study, sponsored by ACSA and financed by the Carnegie Corporation, would probably not have been necessary just a few years earlier. It would, in fact, have been superfluous, because at that time the similarities between schools were much more pronounced, since most based their teaching on the problems issued by the BAID. Upon his return, Bosworth was often consulted as the foremost expert in

the different architectural education systems. One such request came in a letter from Clarence Zatzinger, chairman of the AIA Committee on Education. He was too impatient to wait for the publication of the survey, and wrote to Bosworth directly:

> "I do not wish to trespass -- butt in -- but I should like to know your conclusions. I have already some hearsay suspicions that much, or all, is not well in the management of many schools. Our Committee is in the position to recommend the endorsement by our profession of the highest ideals and standards. I believe the moment is propitious for some action by the profession.
> We are in peril of change. Evolution is to be desired, but revolution is to be avoided."[178]

These last two lines may be a good way to describe the situation at Cornell. Because of the faculty's backgrounds, a teaching revolution was not possible without an administrative reformation similar to the one suffered by Babcock in 1896, or those at Harvard, IIT, and other schools that imported former Bauhaus teachers.[179] The slow arrival of new, modern professors, starting with Hartell in 1930 and continuing with Warner (1940), Wells (1945), and Canfield (1946), among others, would initiate the "desired" evolution. While a revolution may have a clear, definite goal when it starts, evolution is full of

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[178] Records, box 8, Zatzinger to Bosworth, 23 July 1931.

[179] "Increasing interest [in the International Style] soon penetrated American architectural schools. In 1936, the climax came when Harvard University replaced its French chief critic with Gropius himself, who became chairman of the department. He soon called Marcel Breuer to the faculty. Curricula and courses were reoriented. . . .
A second American center of Bauhaus influence was created in 1938 when the Illinois Institute of Technology appointed Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Gropius' successor at Dessau, to direct its School of Architecture. Mies soon reorganized its curriculum and teaching in a more drastic manner than Harvard had deemed necessary. . . .
Bauhaus teaching and methods were also transplanted by other members of its faculty, in 1937 by Moholy-Nagy at the Institute of Design in Chicago, and in 1940 by Josef Albers at Black Mountain College in North Carolina."
Turpin C. Bannister, ed., The Architect At Mid-Century (New York: Reinhold Publishing Corporation, 1954), pp. 106-7.

uncertainties and surprises, and its end identified only, if at all, after it has happened.

It was perhaps clear that architecture, and architectural education, were evolving towards something called modernism. It was not so clear then what that term implied, as we have seen. There were also many interpretations of what each of these terms meant. At Cornell, there were surely at least as many definitions as faculty members. The thoughts of the deans were fortunately recorded in writing, and can be analyzed. Let us look at modernism in the minds of Bosworth, Young, and Clarke.

In one early Cornell example, a clear connection is made between "modern" architecture and what was being done at the Bauhaus. Again consulted as an expert, Bosworth received a letter from Dr. Frederick vanBeuren, Jr. in 1931:

> "Mr. Keppel tells me that you have recently inspected the various schools of the United States and have the latest information available. My son, Michael, to whom I refer, believes he is interested in "modern" architecture and is fired with an ambition to go to the Bauhaus in Munich [sic] where there is said to be an excellent school of the "modern" type. I would, however, regret to see him going to this school without having at least some conception of the regular type of architectural design and instruction, such as he might secure from one of our schools in the United States, ...
> ... I am sure, however, that he would do better at a school where some consideration at least was given to the so-called "modern" architecture, which, as I understand it, stresses particularly the matter of construction through the use of materials best suited for the purpose in mind with little regard for the element of beauty of design. I should like very much to know which schools in the United States do give some attention to this phase of architectural work. I am sure that such a school would secure his interest and best effort far more readily than a school of a purely classical type and I am strongly of the opinion that it would be a mistake for him not to secure some

> general instruction in architecture before going into a specialized school such as I understand the Bauhaus to be. Such a course would seem to me like studying ophthalmology or oto-laryngology without having gone through a general course leading towards a medical degree."[180]

This misunderstanding of the intellectual and creative ideas of the Bauhaus, and of what we call today modern architecture, is understandable in a physician like Dr. vanBeuren. It is a little more surprising to find it repeated in Bosworth, who despite his Beaux-Arts background, appears to have been a scholar interested in the more abstract architectural ideas:[181]

> "You are absolutely right, one doesn't start with specialization if one expects to get anywhere later, but that is a fact which, if I know anything about the present generation, it is far wiser to keep entirely in the background...
> As to the schools in this country, the good ones are not "classical" in any sense. In fact some are more progressive if anything than the foreign ones. That again is a fact for your information rather than an argument to be used with the boy. I think I know him; completely carried away by the Bauhaus repertoire. The good schools here are not interested in "modern" or "classic"; they are interested in teaching essentials. If the student wants to be modern then one and all say "Bless you! Go to it". They take a broader point of view I think than that which insists upon modernism, which after all is only an external phase in most cases."[182]

Bosworth's theoretical interests, and his apparent liberalism in putting modernism and classicism on an equal footing contrast with his shortsightedness in defining modernism as an "external phase" or "specialization." He was definitely aware of more important issues regarding modernism, and mentioned a few in his book. Describing creative methods to

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[180] Records, Dr. vanBeuren to Bosworth, 25 June 1931.
[181] Olof H. Dahlstrand (B.Arch. 1939) says that "to fully appreciate [Bosworth's] value as a critic, required a high degree of design sophistication. Discussions with him were at an unusually erudite level, and he posed challenges that were often beyond the understanding and grasp of all but the brightest students." Dahlstrand's letter to CNP, 31 August 1988.
[182] Records, Bosworth to vanBeuren, 26 June 1931.

teach drawing at certain schools, he and Jones provide a definition of Modernism:

> "The objective again is not the copying of nature nor the development of a technical skill but rather the development of a power of observation that goes below the surface -- that gets at what is to the student the essence of the thing seen. Modernism, if you choose; but a remarkable and divergent and varied series of drawings results, which gives every evidence of interest and enthusiasm on the student's part and an unconscious acquisition by him of a skill that is equal at least to that acquired by the older and what once were the universal methods."[183]

In another part of their book there is what seems a reference to Le Corbusier's "machine for living" which also indicates that Bosworth was aware of other relevant aspects of modernism.[184] His scholarly mind seems to have been at odds with his Beaux-Arts spirit, and he chose to emphasize one or the other depending on his audience.

Young appears more constant. He was willing to accept modernism, but saw it as only one of several possible approaches. We have already quoted Lee Schoen's fervent letter in defense of a renewal of architectural education against "befossiled college professors." In 1931 Young interviewed several New York City architects, apparently to replace Hartell, who was not sure about staying at Cornell. One of them was Eugene Schoen, Lee's father:

> "He frankly wants the job. He has a brilliant personality and is not nearly so Modernistic as you might suppose. I should call him Modern -- as against Modernistic."[185]

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[183] Bosworth and Jones, op. cit., pp. 19-20.

[184] "There is an idea beginning to struggle for expression in some schools that if a modern building is in large measure a machine, . . . " Bosworth and Jones, op. cit., p.28.

[185] Records, box 9, Young to Martin, October 1931 (not dated.) Eugene Schoen is also among Art Deco architects mentioned by R. Bletter in Skyscraper Style.

Although Lee was apparently a brilliant student (his name appears in College Records as recipient of medals and mentions), he could probably also be described as a trouble-maker.[186] The fact that his father, also "modern", would be considered for a teaching job at Cornell is worth noting. In another letter that month, Young described Hartell as follows:

> "As to Hartell ... he is a very enthusiastic young fellow, just a little bit modern but after all that isn't a detriment if it is properly balanced by other points of view in the other men."[187]

In both Hartell's and Schoen's cases, Young sees modernism, if not quite as a virtue, at least as an acceptable point of view, and desirable if "properly balanced."[188] This interest in "balance" will recur over and over during this period. Here, it appears as an honest interest: a modern teacher was leaving (Hartell), and a modern one was sought to replace him (Schoen), thus maintaining the status quo.

In a letter to someone who had asked for suggestions in order to prepare a talk on "Ten Famous Modern Buildings" Young expressed his opinion on the difficulty of establishing even the exact meaning of the term "modern":

> "I am sorry to say that I find it impossible to furnish you the material you need. The most experienced Architect today would find it difficult to handle the subject you propound. Modern Architecture is scarcely well enough developed to admit of selecting ten building from the others and there is no literature I know of that is any safe guide.

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[186] We have seen Young's description of him as a "crusader", and he is also mentioned in Frederick Short's letter to CNP.

[187] Records, box 8, Young to Norris I. Crandall, Director, Division of Fine Arts, George Washington University, Washington, D.C., 16 January 1931.

[188] What may not have been as acceptable was Schoen's ethnic background. Young, in his October 1931 letter cited above, wrote:
"He . . . seems thoroughly competent but unfortunately there is about 1/10 of 1% too much Jew in the family -- not to suit my taste for I like them all but thinking of introducing that element into the Ithaca picture is a bit difficult. "

To show just what I mean, any adequate discussion of what is meant merely by the phrase 'Famous Modern Buildings' would require at least an hour of discussion and an immense amount of preparation. My own guess is that the subject is quite beyond my reach.[189]

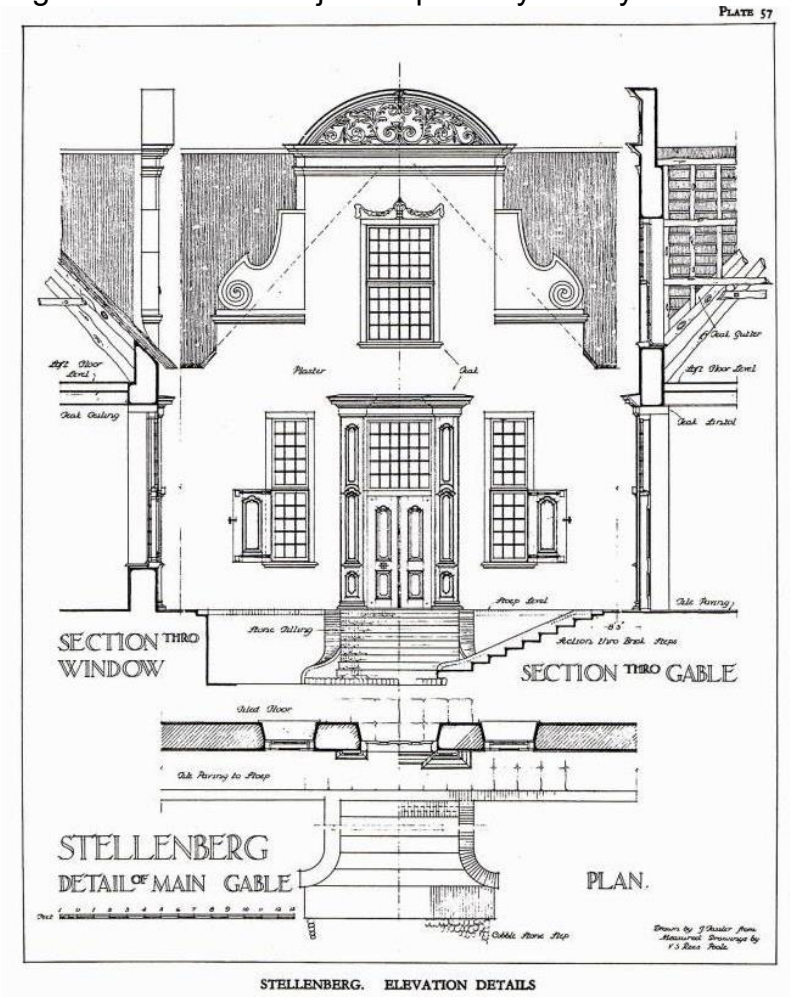

Figure 7: Dutch style residence

An example of how broad that definition was is shown in fig. 7. This Dutch style residence is illustrated in a book on 18th-century South African architecture that was given to the College's library.[190] Writing to the author to thank him for the gift, Young said:

[189] Records, box 11, Young to Mrs. John C. Norman, 11 February 1935.
[190] G.E. Pearse, Eighteenth Century Architecture in South Africa, 1933.

> "I was showing it yesterday to one of our students, who is more than ordinarily competent, and his remark was, 'gee, this is good modern stuff'. This may not appeal to you as being the highest type of commendation, but I assure you that from his point of view that is what it means."[191]

Dean Gilmore D. Clarke, although also a promoter of "balance" (as we will see), was less accepting of modernism. A graduate of Cornell (B.S. 1913), he was a very successful planner and landscape architect in New York City. (He founded Clarke & Rapuano, active until 1993.) He had lectured at the college at least since 1930,[192] and was appointed Professor of Regional Planning when the Carnegie Corporation provided funds for that purpose in 1935.[193] He would soon head the administration of the college as Dean Young's successor. Before looking at Clarke's stance on modernism, we must make a pause and describe the events that led to his becoming dean of the college.

In September 1937, the College of Architecture Council, meeting in the New York City offices of Shreve, Lamb & Harmon, discussed steps to be taken due to Dean Young's "sudden illness," Phelps' recent death, and the fact that many professors were near retirement age:

> "It was recognized that the College Faculty is now at a stage where in the near future new appointments will be necessary. As a part of this reorganization the Head of the College should be selected. It does not appear that this man is now on the Faculty unless Professor Clarke can be persuaded to take the place. In the event that someone outside the present group should be chosen, it is thought that he should come from the aesthetic or "design" side of the profession."[194]

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[191] Records, box 10, Young to Pearse, 31 January 1934.
[192] "… a series of lectures during the coming term by Mr. Gilmore D. Clarke and others on 'Regional Planning and Public Properties.'" Faculty Meetings, minutes, 14 January 1930.
[193] Alumni Letter, January 1935.
[194] Records, box 11, 11 September 1937, and Faculty Meetings, minutes, 12 October 1937.

In the meantime, John Tilton was appointed Acting Dean. When a formal appointment became necessary, the faculty met with President Edmund Ezra Day. The minutes of that meeting are unusually detailed, but will be cited at length because they will help understand subsequent events:

> "President Day spoke to the faculty about the deanship. He began by saying that university statutes require the president to canvass faculty opinion before making an appointment of a dean to the Board of Trustees, and to obtain a statement from the faculty concerned... .
> President Day continued, saying that six weeks ago he and Dean Young had talked about the latter's health and had agreed that the time had come to make a new permanent appointment to the deanship. The President said that he told Dean Young that, a new appointment being necessary, he felt one obvious move was to be made, -- to interest Professor Clarke. [Professors Clarke and Tilton were absent from this meeting.] With this Dean Young heartily agreed. President Day then approached Professor Clarke and was delighted to learn that he would be favorably disposed to the appointment. Doubtless it is unnecessary to record the following; but Dr. Day pointed out that his decision had not been hastily reached, and that it was made because Professor Clarke would bring the type of leadership desired.
> The faculty was then asked to discuss the proposal and to report immediately, so that a recommendation could go to the Board of trustees at their meeting in late January. The recommendation would provide for certain special arrangements; -- Professor Clarke to serve only part-time in Ithaca for a year or two, slightly more time than at present; and to be relieved of routine work in the Dean's office. Consequently another recommendation would go to the Trustees providing for the appointment of Professor Tilton as Assistant Dean, this to continue until Professor Clarke could give more nearly full time. Professor Tilton's present appointment as Acting Dean would continue through this academic year and Professor Clarke would take office July 1, 1938. [President Day then left the meeting, and Bosworth presided it.]
> ... Professor Clarke's interests outside Cornell, which require considerable travelling, were considered desirable... .
> General discussion of Professor Clarke's career brought out that there was no sentiment against his appointment on the grounds that he is not an architect. It was mentioned, among many other things, that he is a licensed engineer and an honorary member of the American Institute of Architects. [Clarke's and Tilton's appointments

were then voted and approved, and Tilton joined the rest of the meeting.]"[195]

Dean Clarke tackled the reorganization of the college immediately and with great zeal. Fifteen months after taking office, he had appointed nine new faculty members.[196] He also addressed other issues, which allow us to return to the discussion about his perspective on modernism.

As the first academic year of his administration was starting, Dean Clarke

> "... urged close cooperation between the departments of Design and Fine Arts, citing, as an example of the need for this, a recent competition for the War Department Building in Washington, in which box-like designs, naked of embellishment, were proposed. The suggestion was that suitable relief ornament, architectural sculpture, and mural painting should be studied in connection with design projets [sic], under the criticism of members of the Fine Arts Department, as has been done to some extent in the past, especially as in the case of the collaborative projets [sic] of the Alumni of the American Academy in Rome Competitions."[197]

These feelings were expressed at the very first faculty meeting of his deanship. His viewpoint seems so utterly conservative that one might suspect him of trying to compensate, in the eyes of the faculty, for not having come from the "aesthetic side of the profession." This attitude, however, lasted long after creating a good impression was necessary. Four months later he supplemented the previous exhortation when he "suggested that the members of the Fine Arts Department give their attention to design projets [sic] in preparation, in an attempt to combat the trend toward barrenness in present day American architecture."[198]

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[195] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 11 January 1938.
[196] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 18 October 1938 (Gibbs, Mackesey, Reed, Waage); 14 February 1939 (Underwood); 8 May 1939 (Mahoney); 10 October 1939 (Detweiler, Gugler, Udall).
[197] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 18 October 1938.
[198] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 8 February 1939.

Clarke's "combat" of new trends, and defense of traditional aesthetic values, were not just for internal attention. On 2 May 1940, he addressed the Architectural League of New York (of which he had once been Vice President). "As in several other public addresses, the Dean put the brakes on the tendency to sudden change in our architecture."[199] Two transcriptions of his speech are filed in the Records of the College of Architecture in Olin Library.[200] The preliminary draft, "Modern Trends in Architecture," is included in Appendix C. The revised version, retitled "Educational Plan: College of Architecture, Cornell University," was a much shorter paper, where many references to history and architectural tradition were removed (perhaps due to time constraints). This leaner rendition suffered some additional trimming, this time probably to avoid appearing excessively old fashioned. It is worth looking at what was deleted. Quoting "a prominent architect who has served the educational field for many years," Clarke edited:

> "... The tendency to yield to such pressure as is expressed by certain extremists ~~like Neutra, Gropius, and others~~ is undermining the value of architectural education so as to result in sending out students that are equipped only for an emasculated type of showmanship, acquainted only with stunts and propaganda of their profession."[201]

On the next page, now in his own words, Clarke continued:

> "The past few years have demonstrated, more clearly than ever before, the need for a closer collaboration in the arts of architecture, landscape architecture, painting, and sculpture. A single art can ill afford to be represented alone. Painting and sculpture are becoming increasingly more important in relation to architecture. As our

[199] Review in The Architectural Forum, June 1940, v. 72, no. 6, p. 436. My thanks to Jim Warren for bringing this to my attention.
[200] Records, box 12, 2 May 1940.
[201] Records, box 12, 2 May 1940. Clarke does not identify this prominent architect. He quoted Paul Cret elsewhere in his speech.

> architecture becomes further simplified, as it departs further from stylized forms, ~~with the resultant elimination of, for example, the entablature, the pediment, the egg and dart, and the bead and reel,~~ there appears a greater need for embellishment with sculpture and painting."[202]

Despite his being more conservative than Young and even Bosworth, Clarke's deanship was responsible for reforms that would anchor modernism in the College of Architecture at Cornell. Some of these changes can be attributed to the effects of World War II, as we will discuss later. Some others may be credited to Clarke's part-time commitment. The day to day operation of the college was in the hands of Professors Tilton, first, and Mackesey, later. Professors Seymour, Detweiler, and Lang also lent a hand as acting dean, secretary of the college, or professor-in-charge, when required by leaves of absence of the other two (Appendix A). If not particularly radical, these professors, by being several, fostered a catholic environment that would characterize the college after the war.

[202] Records, box 12, 2 May 1940.

17 Ancien and Nouveau methods in drawing and design

Instruction in design and drawing in the thirties, and the evaluation of student work, generally followed the traditional methods established by the École des Beaux-Arts. The overlap of attempts to try new methods with efforts to maintain tradition were evident. We will now describe these endeavors and see how some of the customary practices may have paradoxically contributed to the dissemination of new ideas.

In the thirties, students defended their right to design in the modern language (Schoen's letter), and simultaneously demanded clarification of rules regarding use of documents for esquisses, and the use of certain Beaux-Arts procedures for grading projects anonymously. The grading system was cumbersome and incompatible with the one used in the rest of the university, but the students did not know any alternative. We have seen how the faculty was aware of the obsolescence of a grading system based on points, values, and mentions, and how as early as 1931 Young thought that it would be convenient to eliminate that system. Eight years later, however, the system was still in use; a Graduation Requirement Committee was established in the College to determine whether the higher numerical grade required to pass design (67%) should be revised to agree with policies elsewhere in the university:

> "This requirement is a college matter and any change should not be influenced by procedure in other Colleges of the University or elsewhere... . Since Design is based on the value system, -- that is no numerical grade is reported until the course is completed, -- the effect of Design [on a student's average] is difficult to appraise until the Records are complete. Even then Design grades do not correspond

to other course grades since unlimited time is permitted for completion of these courses."[203]

It would only be in the mid-forties, at about the same time that instruction in design was changing, that parallel changes would occur in the grading system. In June 1944, "Professor Baxter stated that some question had arisen regarding the passing grade in Design. It was the sense of the Faculty that the Design Staff should report to the Faculty at its next meeting on a system for grading Design problems and should furthermore report on procedures for Medal Judgments."[204] In August, "Professor Hartell reported progress on the system for grading Design problems",[205] and in October he submitted a report on it. This new system was first rejected and returned to Hartell for further study, then reconsidered, amended and accepted, all during the same meeting.[206] The revised proposal was attached to the minutes (the original version was not), and suggested allotting weekly numerical grades on which the final grade would be "based." No reference was made to mentions, values, or medal awards, perhaps proposing their demise. The old system, however, lingered at least until the early fifties. An alumnus who graduated in 1951 mentioned that his thesis and subthesis received a 1st 1st Mention at that time.[207]

Although these mentions would eventually be translated into a numerical equivalent, it is perhaps worthwhile to speculate that a definite end to the Beaux-Arts grading system could have come simultaneously with modern technology:

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[203] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 14 November 1939.
[204] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 13 June 1944.
[205] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 8 August 1944.
[206] Faculty meetings, minutes, 10 October 1944.
[207] Robert F. Gatje (B.Arch. 1951) to CNP, 16 August 1988.

Professors Lang, in 1947, and Detweiler, in 1953, had to instruct the rest of the architecture faculty on "the procedure to be followed in recording final term grades on IBM cards."[208] A computer might have detected a "1st 1st" as a typographical error.

In 1944, at the time that Professor Hartell was turning away from tradition and devising the new grading system, "the students requested that a course in rendering be offered."[209] We should remember that already in 1938, Roy C. Jones had thought students' concern with rendering a thing of the past.

The interest in traditional drawing issues was not restricted to the students. In 1945, the Committee on Post-war Policy, chaired by Mackesey, listed among its recommendations courses in "Drawing, Painting and Sculpture for Architects", in which "There should be drill in representational drawing both in line and in tone with special emphasis upon the precise rendering of volumes in shades and shadow. Pencil, water color and opaque water color should be given special attention."[210] In 1946, Professor F. M. Wells went to Harvard, MIT, Yale and Columbia, and reported on his visit to the faculty. He compared, among other things, their "approach to design," "sketch problems," and "presentation & rendering." In this last category, he wrote that in Harvard there was "no attempt to present as we do. Looked like semi-working drawings"; at Yale, "All work is on tracing paper"; and at Columbia, "Presentation about like ours." His comments on MIT drawings are even more telling of how things must have been at Cornell:

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[208] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 16 December 1947 and 10 March 1953.
[209] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 8 August 1944.
[210] Committee on Post-war Policy, 8 November 1945 report.

> "... all work on tracing paper. No standardization of sheet sizes (Must be hard to judge). They point in ridicule at the new students from another school who hands [sic] in first problem with a large carefully lettered title…"

Not only was Wells displeased by the use of tracing paper for final presentations at Yale and MIT, and sympathetic of the taunted student, but his finding the lack of uniformity of drawing sizes a handicap in judging hints at the survival, at Cornell, of École ideals regarding composition.

Even though, stylistically, a few projects departed from the traditional image of the French school, the process used to arrive at those unorthodox solutions, and their presentation, were very much the standard of the time. Henri V. Jova '49 mentioned that in his days at Cornell any project could be modern, but the presentation style would probably still be Beaux-Arts. As one who interrupted his studies to serve in the Armed Forces, he indicated that before World War II, the typical display would consist of one or two boards, where the arrangement of several drawings would also be judged, as had been done in Paris. After the war, having individual drawings in five or six boards, to avoid some of the drawbacks of the traditional approach, was common.[211]

More important than the persistence of the emphasis on layout and drawing techniques was the perpetuation of the ancien-nouveau relationship. This was encouraged by the fact that all students shared the White Hall drafting room.

We have seen how Bosworth recommended that upperclassmen help underclassmen with their renderings and by giving them verbal critiques of their

[211] Interview, Henri V. Jova '49 and CNP, 30 April 1988.

work. Paradoxically, this ancestral system may have provided an early exposure to modern ideas. Since the older faculty did not seem particularly interested in the new architectural language, students turned to each other for instruction in it. Freshmen, because of their own lack of confidence and knowledge of design, often stayed within traditional design parameters. Frederick Short, a landscape architecture student in the late twenties, put it this way: "Since I was an architectural neophyte, I clung to tradition along with all the others, for it was all we got."[212] This caution also assured permanence in the College, or so it was perceived by the students. Indicating that the interest in the new ideas was present, but that there was some risk involved in trying them in your own work, Ralph Parks, Short's classmate, writes:

> "As for the "revolt" sv. [sic] the accepted and expected "norm" of the period my classmates + those upper classmen a few yrs. ahead of us did little of a radical nature - not enough to be "kicked out" - but in every way possible let the faculty know of their preference to do modern and when I did my thesis (spring 1931) the faculty had been won over to the point of acceptance."[213]

Going beyond this "point of acceptance" took some time. A decade later there were still similarities with the cases described above:

> "Occasionally students, especially in the lower classes, would do fairly traditional Beaux-Arts influenced work, but generally a more uninhibited exploratory approach was tried. This was particularly true of the older more talented students."[214]

[212] Frederick W. Short (B.L.A. 1931) to CNP, 14 August 1988.
[213] Ralph H. Parks (B.Arch. 1931) to CNP, 14 September 1988.
[214] Olof H. Dahlstrand (B.Arch. 1939) to CNP, 3 October 1988.

We have mentioned other examples in which it was the students, and not the faculty, who appeared to cling to tradition. In another one, provided by an alumnus, the censoring of the International Style came from his classmates:

> "In our drafting room, solutions to design problems executed in what is nowadays called Art Deco became common. Some few, disdaining the Deco as "Modernistic", went all out for Internationalism, (off and on I was one of these), but such efforts drew some very unwelcome attention from fellow students, at least in 1935 and 1936, and I was discouraged by the poor results."[215]

Students would anyway wish to explore unconventional avenues, and after perhaps learning to "play the odds" in order to ensure a passing grade, would become more adventurous and imitate the work done by older students.

Although not documented, the path for modern ideas may have been a two-way street. These ideas did not only flow from seniors to freshmen, but perhaps also the other way. When the faculty started to expand, its younger members were assigned to the younger students, while the older, tradition-biased professors dealt with seniors and fifth year students. This apparently official policy guaranteed a certain balance of ideas that was part of the college's central philosophy of teaching, as we will see later on.[216] The advanced students had to struggle trying to convince Bosworth, Seymour or Burnham of the merits of the International Style, while freshmen were given the opportunity to emphasize more abstract ideas under Hartell, Warner, Canfield or Wells. The older students probably envied the opportunity given the freshmen, and may

[215] Daniel B. Warner (B.Arch. 1939) to CNP, 22 August 1988.
[216] "Younger professors were assigned in Freshman and Sophomore years and older professors in the later years. The whole design faculty was available as critics in the final thesis term." John A. Boyce (B.Arch. 1932) to CNP, 3 October 1988.

have absorbed some modernism knowledge from the few who did not rely on proven stylistic approaches, displayed as paradigms of good design on the corridor walls of White Hall.

18 Arrival of new faculty and models of instruction

The significance of the younger professors in bringing modernism to the College of Architecture has been suggested above several times. Hartell, the first one to arrive at Cornell, appears to have been a key figure in this regard and, because of his much longer tenure, especially important. He is mentioned as the "forerunner of good modern design" by an alumnus of the early thirties.[217] Charles Warner arrived in 1940, and played an important role in introducing new methods to teach younger students. His ideas will be discussed below, with the interest in Industrial Design that coincided with his stay at Cornell. Canfield, Wells, and others, guaranteed the permanence of modernism at the College, and stayed until well after the period studied here.

These changes had started at Cornell some years before, when, even though rendering in the traditional way was still the standard for studio projects, instruction in architectural drawing was de-emphasized. In 1930, an alumnus wrote to Bosworth informing him of his having been hired at MIT to teach freshman design, and said that the first term of that course had been "merely Descriptive, Shades and Shadows, and Perspective."[218] No mention was made of any creative design activities, nor was any surprise or puzzlement expressed about the subject matter. It is clear that these topics were considered standard "design" fare. A little later (1934), Dean Young wrote to someone who had asked for information on architectural drawing books, and indicated that at Cornell drawing techniques were also learned as a consequence of instruction in design:

[217] John R. Butler (B.Arch. 1933) to CNP, 19 August 1988.
[218] Records, box 8, Robert Lent to Bosworth, 15 January 1930.

> "Architectural Drawing is not a thing to be learned as such... . When it comes to make presentation drawings I know of no book that is of very great value as I think this is the kind of thing that must be learned by experience and under direction.
> I can easily understand that these ideas will seem curious to you and perhaps over-strained but you can get the best picture of it I think if I say that in the College of Architecture here we have not given any course in Architectural Drawing for the past fifteen years. Of course our students do learn to draw and they learn that surprisingly quickly and easily but their knowledge and skill is obtained not through instruction in Drawing but as an incident to instruction in Design, in Descriptive Geometry and in their other courses. Our program is to furnish them with the materials, with a problem to be done and then to trust to their absorbing a knowledge of drawing in the same way that a person gets wet if he jumps in the water."[219]

Although drawing and rendering were learned in conjunction with, or as a byproduct of, design, the concern for the graphic presentation of student work was still very intense. A notable percentage of the alumni who responded to my 1988 letter devoted some time to describing the process of making "stretches" for final presentation drawings[220]. Some also wrote about the trouble of grinding ink and preparing ink and watercolor washes.[221] Even after alternate rendering techniques had been introduced and accepted (opaque tempera, white ink on dark background, "smooching" pastels, etc.), the required drawings were most often the usual Beaux-Arts plans, sections and elevations:

> "The programs restricted the number and kind of drawings to be presented, the scale of each, the size of the sheet and the number of sheets. Variations therefrom were at your peril. Usually it was plan, section, elevation(s). I don't remember ever being required to present a perspective drawing, even though Perspective was a required course under Mr. Baxter."[222]

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[219] Records, box 11, Young to Mr. Gerard F. Jones, 4 January 1934.
[220] Stretching watercolor paper to prevent it from buckling when wet.
[221] Some of those letters are included in Appendix E.
[222] Daniel B. Warner (B.Arch. 1939) to CNP, 22 August 1988.

Very simple volumetric perspectives started to be included in the corners of presentation drawings (fig. 2), almost as a prelude to similarly schematic cardboard models that would soon become very popular.[223] In 1941, a notice was posted advising students of Design 111 that "no student shall present more than two models without special permission of his critic."[224] Two models would have been redundant to express only the volumetric characteristics of the building. Other aspects of design were therefore being analyzed with models -- siting considerations, certainly, and interior spatial relationships, perhaps. This was, I believe, unheard of at the École des Beaux-Arts.

The students who arrived at Cornell soon after World War II had a very different perception of the College's "style". One of them mentions that the reason he chose to attend Cornell was that he "was thoroughly committed philosophically to contemporary architecture, and Cornell was the only school which had broken away from the Beaux Arts tradition."[225] Another confirms this opinion:

> "When I entered school there was no battle for modernism to be won - modernism existed and in fact, short of our History of Architecture classes, there was no emphasis or concern with traditional architecture."[226]

The change occurred, as we have seen, slowly and with vacillation. The most accurate pinpointing that can be attempted is to place the break sometime during the war years. Professor Ralph Crump (B.Arch. 1949) noticed great

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[223] This schematic simplicity seems to give weight to Bosworth's assertion that modernism was an "external phase in most cases."
[224] Records, box 13, notice dated 23 October 1941.
[225] Robert P. Darlington (B.Arch. 1950) to CNP, 27 August 1988.
[226] Robert Gitlin (B.Arch. 1950) to CNP, 5 October 1988.

differences between the teaching methods before and after the war.[227] He came to a school that had a different attitude from the one he had left.

New teaching methods are mentioned by other alumni of the early forties. In 1942, Professor Warner asked the freshmen to design abstract paper structures.[228] The exercise must have been the same that Hartell was using in 1946:

> "If we had any lingering ideas about traditional architecture, they were quickly chased by our first two projects, an abstract study in free-form paper sculpture, and an abstract study in right-angled planes paper sculpture. These were designed to wipe out any preconceived notions about how things "should" look. It worked. By the time we had cut, twisted and pasted our models, and then drawn them in plan, elevation and perspective -- our first efforts at architectural rendering -- any thoughts we had about designing New England Colonial or Greek or Roman or Renaissance anything were long gone."[229]

Not only did this type of exercise take away any preconceptions about architecture itself, but also went against accepted Beaux-Arts methods of instruction. Donald Drew Egbert has written about how perspectives, required by Hartell and Warner, were submitted only three times in the entire history of the Grand Prix de Rome (over two hundred years), and were in fact forbidden in 1786 and 1787. Even more revolutionary is the method of starting to design by making a three-dimensional model, and deriving the two-dimensional representations from it.

When Professor F. M. Wells visited other architectural schools in 1946, he addressed their use of models in his report on each of the four programs:

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[227] Personal interview. Professor Crump entered Cornell in 1939 (Class of 1943), interrupted his studies to serve in World War II, and returned to graduate in 1949.
[228] Malcolm S. Weiskopf (B.Arch. 1949) to CNP, 1 September 1988.
[229] Robert P. Darlington (B.Arch. 1950) to CNP, 27 August 1988.

Harvard ("Beautiful models, they do many more than we do"), MIT ("some working models but not many final models"), Yale ("A few study models but not many final models") and Columbia ("Some models, especially large site plans, done by groups of 7 or 8").[230]

Although these changes, and the emergence of perspectives and models on an equal level with the traditional orthogonal representations suggest a definite break with Beaux-Arts ideals, it must be remembered that even when new techniques were used, a traditional attitude could be observed in the drawings and their arrangement.

The realization that these drawings were only representations of a more complex entity, three-dimensional in conception and reflecting some abstract ideas, was in the air. A copy of the Journal of the American Institute of Architects that apparently belonged to Mackesey has a handwritten note, very non-Beaux-Arts in character: "draftmanship as a tool -- yes [;] as an end -- no."

When the fifties arrived, circumstances had reversed, and the end of Beaux-Arts design methods was apparent:

> "We built models of everything and did as little drawing as possible ... but somehow we learned to draw anyway."[231]

[230] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 17 December 1946.
[231] Alfred E. Edelman (B.Arch. 1956) to CNP, 12 August 1988.

19 Introduction of industrial design courses

Warner's new methods were tied to his interest in industrial design, which added to the differences between the Cornell College of Architecture of the thirties and of the forties. This new interest was tied to European ideas of functionalism and beauty in objects of everyday use. It probably originated in the United States during the Depression years, when industrial design provided an alternate source of employment to architects, and increased during World War II. Writing in the Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin, C. Louise Avery indicated a direct connection between hard times and this new interest in functionalism. Although her example was Germany, it also applied to the Unites States:

> "... poverty has strengthened the natural tendency to be intensely practical and to stress simplicity and utility. Consequently here we find a great demand for things of good design, extremely simple in form and decoration, which can be produced in factories in large quantities and sold at small cost."[232]

As with architectural design, the Scandinavian products may have been more appealing than those designed by Germans and other more revolutionary artists. (The political dislike of Germany may also have played a role.)[233] R. Craig Miller writes:

> "One of France's rivals as a leader in the applied arts during the period before World War II was Sweden. In 1927 the [Metropolitan] Museum [of Art] hosted a large exhibition of contemporary Swedish decorative arts, the first in a series of Scandinavian shows held at the Metropolitan. Nordic design appealed to Museum officials and the American public because it was thought to be less aristocratic and more democratic. [Joseph] Breck noted that 'contemporary Swedish

[232] C. Louise Avery, "The International Exhibition of Contemporary Glass and Rugs," Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin, no. 24, October 1929, pp. 289-90, quoted in R. Craig Miller, Modern Design in the Metropolitan Museum of Art: 1890-1990, Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers, New York, 1990, pp. 17-18.

[233] R. Bletter, op. cit., pp. 44-47.

> decorative art is far from expensive or luxurious in character. It reflects, on the contrary, the tastes and needs of the comfortable middle class for which it is made.' "[234]

This interest of the financially strapped public soon extended to schools of architecture, and of engineering. Early in 1940, Professor Seymour attended a meeting [ACSA?] in Ann Arbor, Michigan. In his report to the faculty he said that "the general discussion centered about industrial design and its place in the curriculum of an architectural school."[235] Soon after this report Charles Warner was appointed to the faculty, to assist Burnham, and to teach freshman design. (Bosworth was retiring.)[236] Although perhaps just a coincidence, Warner arrived at a time when industrial design was a frequent topic of discussion at Cornell. Plans for a first course in industrial design were made the following year, because of popular demand:

> "The Dean has received an increasing number of inquiries concerning instruction in industrial design. He suggested that a three-hour course in industrial design be established. The College of Engineering is interested in collaboration in such a course."[237]

A month later, two courses in industrial design (one per semester) were approved, under Warner, "with the possibility of making industrial design a select field of study." This last designation put the subject at the same level of other "select fields of study" (another term for the options or concentrations), such as history and construction.

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[234] R. Craig Miller, op. cit., pp. 17-18.
[235] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 6 February 1940.
[236] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 8 October 1940.
[237] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 9 December 1941.

We have already mentioned how Warner introduced new design problems for the teaching of freshmen (the paper structure exercise). Although his stay at Cornell was brief, his influence on teaching methods at the College of Architecture was important. One of his students credits him with creating an interest in modern design in both students and faculty:

> "In 1941 [sic], a reform-oriented architect was appointed to the faculty. This was Charles Warner, a young man whose talent and enthusiasm for architecture soon captivated the student body as well as the Old Guard. In my opinion, Warner's brief years at Cornell gave significant support to the modernization process."[238]

Not much more is known about his work in the college, but it was undoubtedly considered important even then. When he announced his plans to resign in 1944, the faculty tried to retain some of his ideas by asking him to leave a written legacy to the school:

> "Professor Hartell pointed out the importance of Industrial Design as a field for the architect and stated that inasmuch as Professor Warner, who has been concerned with the instruction given in Industrial Design, is leaving the University at the end of the term, that it might be well if Professor Warner would discuss for the Faculty the relation of Industrial Design to Architectural education.
> IT WAS VOTED that Professor Warner be appointed a committee of one to report at the next meeting of the Faculty on Industrial Design and its relation to Architectural education, particularly at Cornell."[239]

Warner's comprehensive report was submitted on June 13, 1944. In it he gave a brief history of the pseudo-profession of industrial design, as he called it. He described how, in the Unites States, the field had been usurped by "gentlemen [with] boastful letter heads and lush offices ... financed either by borrowed money or convenient marriages, ... [by] package designers and layout

[238] José D. Firpi (B.Arch. 1945) to CNP, 15 August 1988.
[239] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 9 May 1944.

artists, ... [and by] disillusioned modern painters." The original industrial designers, in his opinion, were "young naive architects" who had been forced by the Depression to give their talents to fields other than architecture. He thought instruction in that field should take place in universities, preferably in schools of architecture rather than engineering:

> "As I see it the engineer is primarily concerned with function [...] When the engineer trys [sic] consciously for aesthetics he usually fails utterly, simply because he sets it up in his mind as something quite apart from functional aspects. There is nothing accidental about good design. Aesthetics and function are one and both are planned consciously together at the same time. I feel that an intelligent architect is best able to hit upon the best compromise."[240]

He concluded his report with specific plans for an industrial design degree program at Cornell. Unfortunately, after his departure interest in it dwindled. Although Hartell continued using Warner's problems for freshman design, industrial design remained as two elective courses which were even suspended during the low-registration World War II period.[241] In 1946, Dean Clarke explained that specific instruction in industrial design was not necessary if good architectural training was provided:

> "In the College of Architecture at Cornell we offer general courses of study in Industrial Designing. These are elective and are included more for the purpose of giving the student a general idea of the scope of the profession of Industrial Designing rather than to offer a technical training in that area. We do not feel that it is necessary to offer a full course in Industrial Designing since training in the field of

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[240] Records, box 18, 13 June 1944; "INDUSTRIAL DESIGN - PROGRESS REPORT. Covering the Pseudo-Profession of Industrial Design in General and its Relationship to Architecture in Particular - Presented to the Faculty of the College of Architecture, June 13, 1944, by Charles H. Warner, Jr. - Assistant Professor of Architecture."

[241] Two new courses were offered in 1947, but outside of the architecture department. The courses (in Applied Design: costume design, textiles, crafts, interiors and advertising) were required by the New York State Department of Education of those BFA candidates interested in teaching positions. Faculty Meetings, minutes, 13 May 1947.

> architecture seems to fulfill the need of those who wish to enter the Industrial Designing field."[242]

An alumnus' letter the following year supported Clarke's opinion, and agreed with Warner's description of the origins of the profession. Horace G. Barnard '37, who mentioned that he had been second in his class (so that it was not the mediocre students who went into industrial design), wrote:

> "... I have done a considerable amount of designing, both architectural and in several allied fields, such as furniture, interiors, and even jewelry and other such distantly related subjects. I've always felt that the principles of design we learned at college were as applicable to other fields of design as to those purely architectural."[243]

Correspondence in 1950 and 1951 indicates that there was still interest in the field, but apparently not enough support from the university administration.[244] In 1952 Hartell and Mackesey worked out a plan to offer a four-year program in the fine arts department, leading to a BFA in Industrial Design, and presented it to President Malott.[245] The university decided it was not a good time for expansion, and the plans were cancelled.

The introduction of industrial design courses, and related design exercises by Warner, contributed to the perception of design as encompassing more than monumental buildings and site plans. The importance of tridimensional design of small objects paralleled the new interest in models and perspectives discussed above, and helped affirm the presence of modernism at Cornell.

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[242] Records, box 18, Clarke to Mr. Jacques Martial, 26 November 1946.
[243] Records, box 20, Horace G. Barnard, 4 September 1947. Answered by Mackesey.
[244] Records, box 20 Mackesey to H.A. Nieboer, 14 April 1950; and box 18, Hartell to Don Wallace, 5 November 1951.
[245] Records, box 18, Mackesey to Malott, 31 January 1952; and Faculty Meetings, minutes, 12 February 1952.

20 Between landscape architecture and city planning

After the outstanding success and reputation of Cornell's Landscape Architecture program in the early part of the century, a clear decline can be observed during the late thirties and forties. The reasons had much to do with new national conditions, not only academic, but also economic, social and political.

Dean Clarke, both a landscape architect and a city planner, alluded to some of these new factors in a 1942 letter to the AIA Committee on Education:

> "Whereas before 1930 the development of the private estate was the chief source of income for the landscape architect, since that date emphasis has been placed upon the development of public and quasi-public properties, including parks, parkways, and housing. Since the war, airports, cantonments, and industrial planning has [sic] been added. This newer work requires an entirely different type of preparation for professional practice."[246]

Addressing issues of industrial planning, housing, and the development of public property would require not only a new type of preparation, but a kind of faculty and students different from those that had brought so much glory to Cornell's traditional program. The dramatic drop in enrollment that started to affect the college during the Depression was even more pronounced among landscape architecture students. It coincided, as we said, with an increase in the number of graduate students, some of them working in city and regional planning. While the rest of the College started to recuperate around 1936, and enrollment to increase until the war caused a second drop, landscape architecture never went back to its former healthy status. From 25 students in

[246] Records, box 13, Clarke's letter to W. Pope Barney, AIA Committee on Education, 10 March 1942. Clarke was quoting himself, from his (1942?) annual letter to the alumni.

1936, registration went down to 12 in 1939, two in 1942, and then none until 1945. A letter from Mrs. O'Brien, secretary at the college, to an interested student, blamed World War II for the cancellation of the landscape architecture course.[247] The reasons must have been more complex, however, as the decline had started several years before the war really had an effect on Cornell.

Little new blood was supplied to the landscape architecture faculty, and although the program was not officially terminated, not much effort seems to have been made to revive it, especially at the undergraduate level. Professor Seymour, in charge of the college during Clarke's partial leave of absence, wrote to another prospective student that

> "... at the present time we have no students registered in the landscape architecture field due to our limited faculty and lack of students registered [sic], but it is possible that we could handle under our present set-up a student in the advanced field of landscape architecture."[248]

The report of the Committee on Post-war Policy that has been cited above included a recommendation for the resurrection of the program:

> "There are no changes in the curriculum in Landscape Architecture contemplated at this time, except insofar as the curriculum coincides with that in Architecture for the first 4 terms. The Committee advises the consideration of means of building up sufficient enrollment so that a course in landscape architecture may be reestablished."[249]

Despite this apparent interest in the revival of a program that had brought so much distinction to Cornell, the faculty were probably not very optimistic.

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[247] Records, box 17, Mrs. O'Brien to Miss Alice Miller, 13 September 1943.
[248] Records, box 18, Seymour to Mr. Jack Nazar, 13 November 1944.
[249] Report of the Committee on Post-war Policy, 8 November 1945.

Dean Clarke, answering the letter of a concerned parent, must have had mixed feelings when he said:

> "I would not advise your son to take graduate work in landscape architecture [but to practice two or three years], ... and then, if he still wishes to take graduate work, he will be in a better position to know what to do and where to study... . I speak with some little authority in these matters for, in addition to serving as Dean of this College, I am a practicing Landscape Architect and Engineer in New York City where I spend almost one-half of my time... . If your son insists upon further study I would suggest that you look into the possibility of having him enter the Graduate School of Design at Harvard. Professor Bremer Pond is in charge of instruction in Landscape Architecture."[250]

In view of Clarke's opinion on both Harvard and Pond, quoted in chapter 9, this advice has the tone of an obituary for Landscape Architecture at Cornell. The program, if not actually dead, was on some kind of artificial life support. A new formula had to be found to provide the "entirely different type of preparation" mentioned by Clarke and required by the times.

In 1948, Thomas Mackesey proposed the creation of a new degree program in the College of Architecture. Because there were only four candidates for the BLA degree, and only one had graduated in the previous seven years, a shorter, four-year course was suggested, so as to compete with other schools.[251] An extra year would provide a graduate degree in either landscape architecture or city planning. This new undergraduate degree would be solomonically called a "Bachelor of Science in Land Planning", recognizing "the changing scope of the

[250] Records, box 18, Clarke to Mr. W. C. Applegate, 12 December 1945.
[251] A table in the same folder as Mackesey's proposal, in Montillon's handwriting, shows comparative enrollment for 1948-49: Cornell (4), University of California (70), Harvard (28), University of Illinois (94), Rhode Island School of Design (12), Iowa State (81), Michigan State (130), etc.

field of professional opportunity in landscape architecture by including considerable work in city planning and engineering."[252]

The new BSLP degree plan was submitted to Cornell's Board of Trustees, and approved by them in February the following year.[253] It was not so well received by some of the alumni, who could not accept the demise of the old program. One of them, Stuart Mertz, wrote stating that four years would be enough for either landscape architecture or city planning, but not for a combined course, since

> "the student will have a smattering of both and not enough of either to be really worth much at either... . And why do you call it 'Land Planning'? That to me is the greatest insult possible to our profession, and Dean Clarke now President of the ASLA too! "[254]

In a series of letters, Clarke tried to explain to Mertz that the MLA degree would still be available, and discussed the downfall of the profession and the rise of city planning. He was not able to convince him, and finally quit trying, asking Mackesey to relieve him, and "take a whirl at this one."[255]

Mackesey, the original proponent of the new program, agreed with Clarke on the importance of the graduate degree, and did not seem to mind Mertz's criticism. Although I found no correspondence between Mackesey and Mertz, Mackesey wrote a few months later to the Architecture Department at the Georgia Institute of Technology about their proposed planning curriculum. After commenting on individual courses (rather rigorous, in his opinion), he wrote:

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[252] Records, box 18, Mackesey to the faculty, 2 December 1948.
[253] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 15 February 1949.
[254] Records, box 18, Stuart M. Mertz to Edmondson, with copy to Clarke, 28 July 1949.
[255] Records, box 18, Clarke to Mackesey, 28 July 1949.

> "These remarks are on the assumption that you have in mind a graduate program. That is what I hope [,] for I am afraid that all that can be acquired from an undergraduate program in planning is a smattering of ignorance."[256]

The emphasis on graduate work would continue during Mackesey's deanship. The two courses would be slowly transformed, and the decline of landscape architecture as a profession would coincide with the rise of city planning, paralleling the relationship between Beaux-Arts and Modernism. Eventually, the undergraduate course in landscape architecture would return to the College of Agriculture, and the MLA program would afford the only link with the College of Architecture.

[256]Records, box 20, Mackesey to Professor I.E. Saporta, 30 January 1950.

21 A modern approach to history and theory

In the 1930s, Phelps had taught a rather traditional course in history of architecture, similar to what he had been teaching since 1899. The study of the formal aspects of buildings and details took precedence over the analysis of other factors determining the conception of architecture. The interest in these other ideas started to develop within a parallel group of courses, started by Dean Bosworth to study anything not covered elsewhere. These courses, labeled "theory of architecture," therefore included a potpourri of issues that makes their description difficult. While at first the theory courses included mostly professional and technical subjects, they soon started to incorporate the analytical study of architecture, as evidenced by the description for Bosworth's "Appreciation of Architecture" course cited in chapter 10. Soon, other faculty members were teaching "theory" courses in their areas of interest, which meant there were probably as many definitions of the term as there were professors.

In 1935, Hartell was granted permission to add a course titled "Advanced Theory Seminar 014" as an elective for upperclassmen and graduate students, which was probably an early opportunity to discuss issues concerning modern architecture.[257] Many other changes would soon follow regarding the teaching of history and theory.

An immediate cause for some of these changes was Professor Phelps' death in July of 1937. Professor Dunbar suddenly found himself as sole historian in the faculty, and probably attempted to tackle the additional work unaided.

[257] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 16 April 1935.

Years before, during the Depression, he had expressed a curiosity about contemporary issues, and a willingness to assume additional duties during difficult circumstances. While on his California leave of absence in 1932, he wrote to Dean Young about his forthcoming return to Cornell:

> "I think you know that increased duties at Cornell would have no effect on my decision [to return] even though you feel it your duty to warn me. In fact to take entire charge of Working Drawings or sole charge of a distinct group of students in a Design course, in addition to my previous work would be an inducement. My predilection for historical work has grown, especially with the growing questionings of architectural styles (I wonder what you think of it all) and my notion of the value of historical study for undergraduates has been immensely strengthened."[258]

Despite his good intentions, Phelps' absence created too heavy a burden, and Dunbar required assistance to teach history. A year and a half later, Dean Clarke announced "the possibility of a new course in Architectural History for students in the College of Arts and Sciences, to be given by Professor Underwood."[259] At the same time, in order to reduce teaching loads, history requirements for fine arts majors were cut down from nine to six credits, in courses to be taught by Underwood as well.[260] The importance of his assistance thus established, Professor Underwood was formally invited to join the College of Architecture faculty a couple of months later, and his courses were listed in the college's Announcement.[261]

In addition to Underwood's help, Professor Hartell assisted Dunbar in teaching American and Contemporary Architecture 413, "The architecture of the

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[258] Records, box 9, Dunbar to Young, 1 March 1932.
[259] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 8 November 1938.
[260] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 13 December 1938.
[261] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 14 February 1939.

United States in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth centuries and of Europe and the United States from 1800 to the present."[262] Dunbar taught the first part of the course, and Hartell took over for the second half of the semester.[263] By this time, Hartell appears to have been in charge of every course that had anything to do with modern architecture. The same winter that Professor Underwood joined the faculty, Hartell was asked to teach Introductory Theory 011, and his advanced theory course (014) was "increased in credit from one to two hours." This course was "to treat of modern architecture."[264] Thus, Hartell, who had been teaching design to freshmen, and probably introducing them to modernism, now influenced intermediate and advanced students through history and theory courses.

When Henry A. Detweiler joined the faculty in 1939 as Dunbar's replacement, he inherited Hartell's history notes, and used them to teach the course in contemporary architecture.[265] Detweiler may have been grateful for these notes, because his main interest was archaeological. Before his arrival at Cornell he had already "spent a number of years on archaeological expeditions in Syria, Palestine, Iraq, Transjordan and Persia,"[266] and his work in this field would long be recognized in and out of Cornell.[267] He probably taught

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[262] Announcement of the College of Architecture 1939-40, p.41.

[263] "For a few years at the end of Phelps' career, before Detweiler arrived I finished off the sequence of required courses in the History of Architecture with 1/2 a semester about modern and MODERN architecture using Russell Hitchcock etc etc"; John Hartell to CNP, 11 March 1988.

[264] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 8 November 1938.

[265] John Hartell to CNP, 11 March 1988.

[266] Records, box 12, typed draft for 1940 Alumni Letter.

[267] In 1949 he was invited by the University of Alexandria to supervise "the architectural recording of some Hellenistic buildings that have recently been discovered in the Nile Delta"[Records, box 20, Mackesey to Acting Cornell President deKiewiet, 29 December 1949]; in 1951 he was Visiting Professor of Roman Archaeology at the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem [Faculty Meetings, minutes,

contemporary architecture out of a sense of duty more than because of genuine devotion. In a 1945 letter to someone interested in graduate study in American architectural history (at a time when it was not available at Cornell), he unwittingly exposed his attitude:

> "We consider the American Architectural History very important. Twenty-five per cent of the time spent in the study of Architectural History in our department is dedicated to this period."[268]

His lapse in labeling Dunbar's and Hartell's three and a half centuries of American architecture as a "period" is perhaps forgivable in someone used to thinking in millennia, but nevertheless indicates a certain apathy toward the non-archaeological.

Although some of his students counted him among their favorite professors, Detweiler seems not to have been the most engrossing of lecturers. This, in addition to his predilection for ancient architecture, made students turn to other professors and to classmates for knowledge of modernism.

The onset of the war diminished even more the effect of history courses on the introduction of modernism to Cornell. The study program was compressed to fit in eight terms, which could be accomplished in two and a half years, with a corresponding reduction in course quantity and quality.

The accelerated war program is discussed elsewhere in this thesis, but one of its effects that should be mentioned here was a lull in the teaching of history and theory of architecture. Detweiler and the rest of the faculty had to

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9 January 1951]; he was also architectural advisor to the American Academy in Rome on the excavation at the Etruscan city of Cosa [Faculty Meetings, minutes, 8 December 1953]; and in 1955 he was elected President of the American Schools of Oriental Research at Jerusalem and Baghdad [Faculty Meetings, minutes, 11 January 1955].

[268] Records, box 18, Detweiler to Mr. Abbott Lowell Cummings, 9 May 1945.

collaborate with the war effort by teaching war-related courses in other Cornell colleges, and even outside of the university.[269] The faculty meeting minutes between 1939 and 1945 do not include important references of discussions dealing with these two subjects. Suddenly, in April of 1945, both resurface, as part of a fresh burst of activity and renewal at the college. At a faculty meeting, newly arrived Professor Wells reported that the students had "asked for the revival of seminars on the theory of architecture."[270] This need was also recorded in a preliminary report of the Committee on Post-war Policy:

> "There has been an obvious lack of something to take the place of the old theory courses. The supposition has been that what used to be called theory is absorbed in the design courses. To a certain extent that is true. It does seem important, however, that new students be started with a series of lectures covering the basic principles of design, the organization of the profession, and some simple facts about materials of construction."[271]

While the definition of "theory" had not yet broken away from its ties with professional and technical subjects, architectural history was definitely seen with different eyes at this time:

> "The History of Architecture was once taught primarily to give the students motives and historical examples useful in design. Since this approach is no longer important [my underlining], the history of architecture is best studied for an understanding of the social, economic and political factors which produce architecture."[272]

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[269] "The Dean announced that the following members of this Faculty are giving instruction outside of this College: In the College of Engineering teaching Engineering Drawing - Professors Mackesey [planning], Underwood [art history], Washburn [life drawing], and Mr. Daly [painting]; in the College of Arts and Sciences teaching Geography - Professor Finlayson [art history]; in the Army Specialized Training program - Professor Detweiler." Faculty Meetings, minutes, 20 July 1943.

[270] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 10 April 1945.

[271] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 10 April 1945. Preliminary report of the Committee on Post-war Policy.

[272] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 10 April 1945. Preliminary report of the Committee on Post-war Policy. Interestingly, the final report (dated 8 November 1945) had only a briefer, sanitized version of this statement: "The History of Architecture is best studied for an understanding of architecture as an expression of the social, economic and political factors which produced it." (They still did not dare say that design based on adaptation of historical motives was not important.)

Although Detweiler was more interested in archaeological research than in contemporary architecture, he did emphasize the study of these factors, encouraging architects to stop considering history as just a source of formal and decorative elements. One of his students remembers him for always "grounding in" the relationship between economics and architecture, and for his having prepared a special lecture on the same day the United States learned of the European invasion in 1944.[273]

At the same time that this new way to study history appeared, the definition of theory as an intellectual analysis of architecture became clearer. The need for this analytical study of buildings and architectural writings became more obvious with the new developments in architecture. The early inclusion of these topics in courses labeled "theory" has been mentioned above, as well as the difficulty in clearly determining what the term meant because those courses also incorporated many other subjects. In 1950, Mackesey suggested a less comprehensive grouping of topics, and perhaps a new label, free of traditional connotations:

> "The Assistant Dean discussed at length the need of a new course in Design Analysis. The approach would be akin to what is ordinarily called Theory of Design. There is such a course listed in the new five-year curriculum in the fifth year under modern architecture, but he was of the opinion that something of the kind was needed for the second year. He therefore suggested that all second year students be required to meet for one hour per week without credit, for the present, to discuss theory and the background of the profession. Assistant Dean Mackesey did not propose to call it theory in the beginning, wanting it to be a forum for free discussion. General debate followed in the meeting. Professor Hartell emphasized the importance of

[273] Robert L. Myers (B.Arch. 1950) to CNP, 17 August 1988.

> background reading on the literature of the profession and Assistant Dean Mackesey offered to bring in ideas at a future meeting."[274]

While Phelps' death cannot be labeled as the cause for a new attitude toward the study of history and theory of architecture at Cornell, it created an emergency that facilitated changes. Hartell's collaboration with Dunbar, the recess of history and theory during the war years, and the arrival of Detweiler as a scholar interested in more than the aesthetics of historical examples, expedited the rise of a preoccupation in the theoretical analysis of architecture, and the demise of the Beaux-Arts attitude toward the study of history.

[274] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 14 February 1950.

22 War, Students and Faculty

Just as the Depression was the key event of the thirties, the forties can be associated with World War II. The effect of the Depression on the size and type of faculty and student body was discussed in chapter 13. A parallel situation occurred in the early forties when faculty, students and pedagogical views were modified because of restrictions presented by the new political and economic circumstances.

After the Depression, enrollment started to pick up, and the faculty expressed satisfaction about also having a more heterogeneous geographical distribution. While during the previous years a majority of students had been state residents, by fall of 1936 the proportion of New Yorkers had dropped from 60 to 29 percent, as students from other states were able to afford a distant school such as Cornell.[275]

This interest in geographical diversity was also reflected in an increased number of foreign students. Although there had been some in the past (several Japanese students were very successful in the early thirties,) it was in 1936 that the Committee on Admissions started to tally them in their annual reports. One student was admitted from China that year, and two other foreign students enrolled in each of the following three years. In 1940 the number of new foreign students jumped to six, and kept that level thereafter.

The number of national students also kept increasing, and in 1939 "Dean Clarke announced the entering class to be the largest in the history of the

[275] Faculty Meetings, minutes, September 1936.

school."[276] (49 accepted, from 72 applications.) The days of almost unrestricted admissions forced by the Depression were over, and the college imagined a calm, bright future. The political situation in Europe would soon change that perception.

Although the United States was not yet officially at war, young men started joining the armed forces in great numbers. In October of 1940, Professors Lawson and Montillon were appointed "to take charge of registration in the college for Military Service."[277] In June 1941, Dean Clarke expressed concern about the low number of applications for the following term (just twelve) and, in a gesture reminiscent of the thirties, suggested that it might "be necessary to accept a larger proportion of women in order to keep the enrollment up."[278] Six months later, after the attack on Pearl Harbor, the United States were at war with Japan, Germany and Italy. The College of Architecture at Cornell was deeply affected, both during and after the conflict.

If the drop in registration during the Depression affected the college as we indicated in chapter 13, it is easy to imagine even more complex changes caused by this new crisis. While at the lowest point in 1936 there were 130 undergraduates in the college, there were only 57 in March of 1944 (Fig. 8).[279] Not only was there a drop in applications, but many of the students who were already in had to interrupt their studies half-way or even near the end:

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[276] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 10 October 1939.
[277] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 8 October 1940.
[278] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 11 June 1941.
[279] Data for these graphs was taken from the Faculty Meetings reports of the Committee on Admissions. They do not agree with Table 56 of The Architect at Mid-Century.

"The fact that we are a five-year school very naturally increases in mortality rate [students leaving before graduating], since the fifth-year men are all of the draft age and eligible for service in the armed forces."[280]

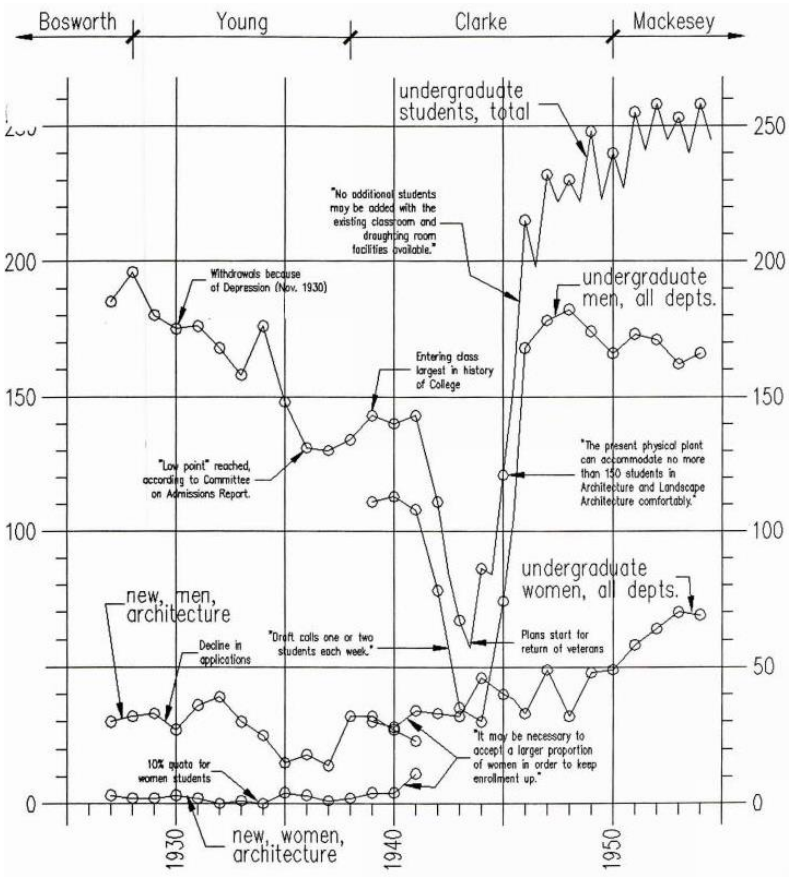

Figure 8: Enrollment 1925-1955

The situation continued to worsen, and a year after the United States' involvement started, Clarke wrote to an alumnus that "the work here goes on about as usual with smaller numbers. The draft calls one or two students each week."[281] Although this may appear an exaggeration, attendance was indeed dropping dramatically.[282] The customary breakdowns of the admission

[280] Records, box 16, Clarke to George B. Cummings (President of Alumni Association), 11 February 1942.
[281] Records, box 16, Clarke to Elmer Manson '37, 9 December 1942.
[282] The graph shows a steeper drop than during the Depression, when there were supposedly four withdrawals per week. Records, Young to Bosworth, 5 November 1930.

committee were modified to list students according to their military or civilian status: Army, Marines, ROTC and Navy (V-1, V-5, V-7, etc.) on the one hand, and foreign students, women and underage men on the other. Dean Clarke, again, would later summarize the situation as follows:

> "For more than three years we have, as you know, been unable to train many men in the field of architecture, for neither the Army nor the Navy recognized that field as necessary, so we perforce limited our efforts to the training of a few 4F's, South Americans, other non-citizens, and women students."[283]

Figure 8 also shows how, in 1944, the unprecedented happened, and there were more women students (46) than men (30) in the College. This did not last, because, whether intentionally or just thanks to the approaching end of hostilities, a vertiginous increase in male students coincided with a drop in women admitted the next two years.

The faculty was similarly affected by the war. Some had to take leaves of absence, or resign to their positions, in order to also serve in the armed forces. Those who, because of age, physical condition or other factors, were not able to contribute as soldiers, were assigned to special war related duties. In addition to the assignments listed above (Mackesey, Underwood, Washburn, Daly, Finlayson, and Detweiler), Professor Mahoney was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the Camouflage Division of the Army Air Corps[284], Seymour worked full time for the Navy[285], and Robert Lang (librarian, but professor of

[283] Records, box 16, Clarke to C. Colman, 9 July 1945.
[284] Records, box 13, Clarke to President Day, 9 June 1942.
[285] Records, box 13, Hartell to L.C. Dillenback (Syracuse University), 11 January 1943.

graphics after the war) was called to serve in the Army.[286] The lack of activity in the college justified even more Clarke's absence from the campus, and he took a long, unpaid leave during most of 1944 and 1945.[287]

The older faculty [and Hartell, apparently] remained in Ithaca, and devoted a large part of their time to administrative work, caused by the constantly changing student body. Tilton, for example, in addition to being Acting Dean for most of this period, was appointed advisor to all "V-1" students.[288] Dean Young's 1935 statement that "despite the depression (or maybe because of it) things seem to keep on happening,"[289] could probably be paraphrased here.

This very reduced enrollment during the war probably created a calmer environment, where polemic discussions were less frequent, and the confrontations of Beaux-Arts versus Modernism less pronounced. Students and faculty were surely more interested in the developments in Europe and the Pacific, the fate of friends and relatives in the front, and the possibility of being drafted themselves. Very little was recorded in the college files or in the faculty meeting minutes that compares, in terms of architectural issues, to the periods on both sides of the war years.[290] Although whatever "kept on happening" was not recorded, its importance will be obvious if we compare the teaching of

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[286] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 13 April 1943.
[287] Records, box 20, Clarke to President Day, 16 January 1945.
[288] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 18 April 1942.
[289] Alumni Letter, January 1935.
[290] The reduction in enrollment, and this apparent apathy, may also be reflected in the fact that, of the 41 alumni who responded to my 1988 request for information (with letters or interviews), only one attended Cornell during the war years. José Firpi '45 is the only representative of the classes between '41 and '49. I had hoped for a larger response to compensate for the lack of information in other primary sources.

architecture before and after the war. It has already been stated that, to those students who had started their studies at Cornell before the war, and returned to the college afterwards, the contrast was evident.

23 War and Curriculum

The clearest change was in the curriculum. There had been frequent evaluations of the courses in the past, but the most comprehensive ones coincided with these periods of national hardship and low student registration. In 1933, Dean Young reported that "all courses of study have been revised."[291] "The important changes" were limited to the courses in materials, construction, working drawings and freehand drawing. Most of the modifications were due to Tilton taking over Martin's work, and had as his goal a better integration with courses in design and structures. Other slight changes occurred in 1934, and in 1938 a committee was appointed "to study curriculum."[292] The recommendations of this committee seem to have been limited to changes to entrance requirements (high school courses), and perhaps other minor revisions.[293] It was World War II, however, that demanded an important overall rearrangement of the curriculum. If not for academic reasons, to deal with organizational issues.

Very early in the conflict (February 1942), the AIA realized that the war would force many reforms in both the training and the practice of the profession. Its Committee on Education polled different schools of architecture to determine which would be considered the most important changes. In his response, Clarke said:

> "Training in the field of architecture can never be permitted to remain static if the colleges are to fulfill their obligation to the profession as a whole. At Cornell it has been found necessary, looking back as far as

[291] Alumni Letter, October 1933.
[292] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 8 February 1938.
[293] I did not find a copy of the Committee's report. A reference is made to these changes in the report of the Committee on Post-War Policy, 8 November 1945.

> I am able to look back, to make changes in the curriculum and in methods of instruction to keep pace with changing social and economic conditions which we have to face as a people.[294]

The most obvious changing conditions at the time were those caused by the war. The armed forces, besides the direct effect on faculty and students discussed above, triggered revisions in the academic programs. Cornell, having originated the idea of five-year curricula for the teaching of architecture, was forced to return to a four-year plan:

> "The Dean drew attention to the fact that the Army Enlisted Reserve Corps is organized on the basis of four years, eight consecutive terms, as the length of a college course. The availability of a degree in that time is implied. The instruction in this College being now based on five-year curricula, he recommended that the Faculty reconsider programs of study, -- seeking, for the duration of the war, satisfactory four-year curricula leading to the degrees."[295]

The faculty probably considered "satisfactory four-year curricula" an oxymoron, but a few weeks later submitted a "sample war curriculum for architecture" (Fig.9).[296] The words design, art, history and theory do not appear once in this program, organized in four military-sounding "stages" of 32 weeks each. The kind of professional such a program would produce might perhaps have been very successful if the war lasted many years. We have seen, however, that there was a certain unrealistic optimism about an early end to the conflict. The usefulness of such professionals would therefore not be lasting. More importantly, such a curriculum was not just a change, but a total departure from every pedagogical idea shared by Cornell's architecture faculty, even before

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[294] Records, box 13, Clarke to W. Pope Barney (AIA Committee on Education), 10 February 1942.
[295] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 13 October 1942.
[296] Records, box 13, Clarke to Cornelius Betten (Dean of Faculty,) 18 November 1942.

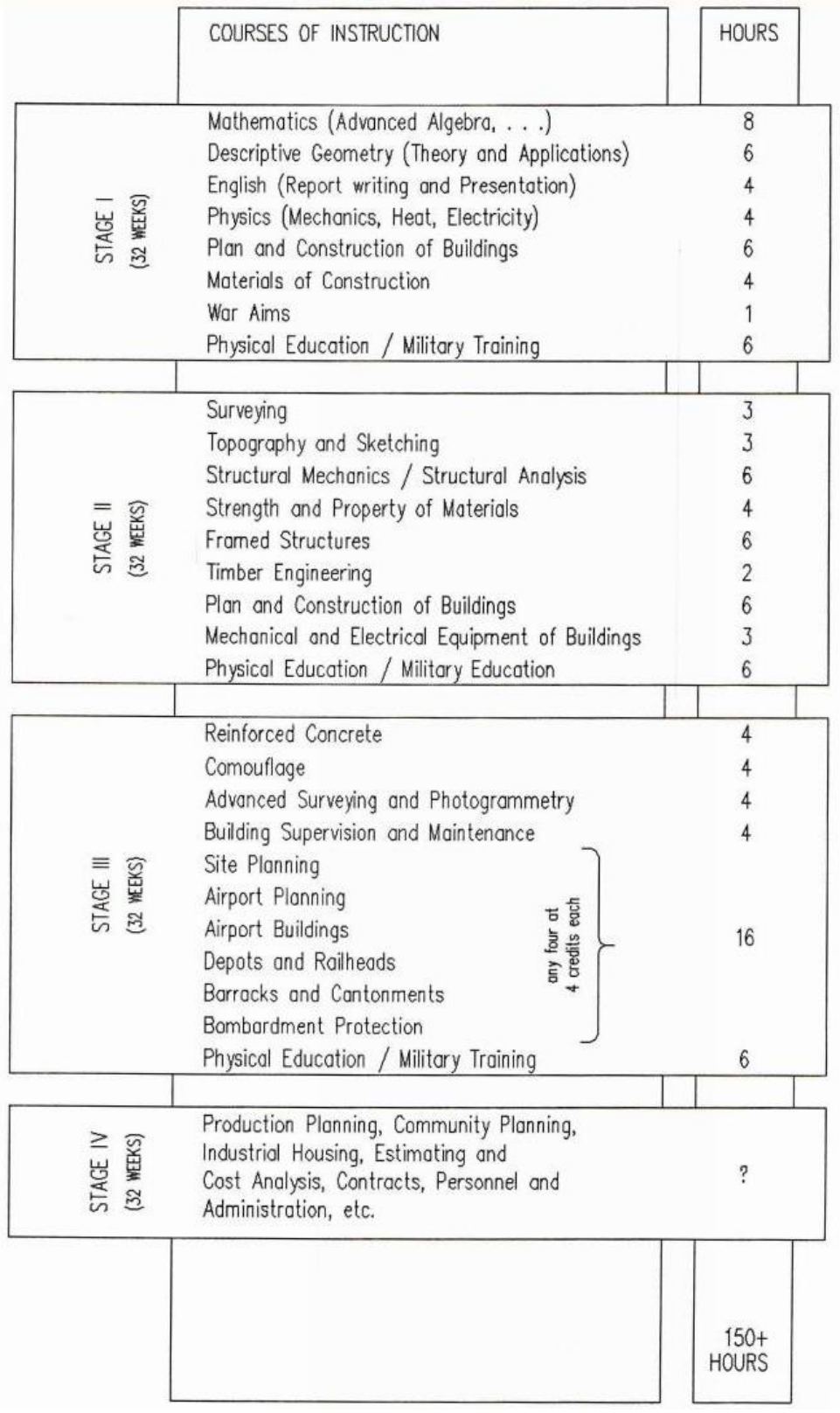


Figure 9: “A Sample War Curriculum” - Courses of instruction, 1942

1896. The program would have made it almost impossible to teach the principles of architectural design, training students instead on the specifics of a few building types and technical problems. It is almost as if, in order to meet a deadline, the faculty rushed a curriculum extracted from some extraneous source. The program was fortunately not put to use and, in May the following year, the faculty met again to discuss the curriculum and its relationship to the war effort:

> "There seemed to be general agreement in principal [sic]; that, whereas professional practice may be presented with unique problems during the post-war period, professional education then as always will have the same task, that of inculcating an understanding of those basic fundamentals which are unchanging truths.
> The emphasis should be on education, as such, mind training... .
> The aim of all professional education should increasingly be that it itself be truly professional as differentiated from vocational."[297]

This, clearly a reaction to the previously submitted program, produced a different, "Cornell" war curriculum. The new accelerated program, to be accomplished in eight terms, was developed during the following few weeks, and started in July of that year (Figure 10).[298] Despite having fewer credits than the 1942 war program, this one did include courses in history, fine arts and design proper, as well as a few electives. Instruction in design and history would surely incorporate those "unchanging truths," and the electives and other non-architectural courses would provide the broad education that tradition demanded of Cornell. Clarke, satisfied with this curriculum, wrote for the Alumni News, summarizing its purpose:

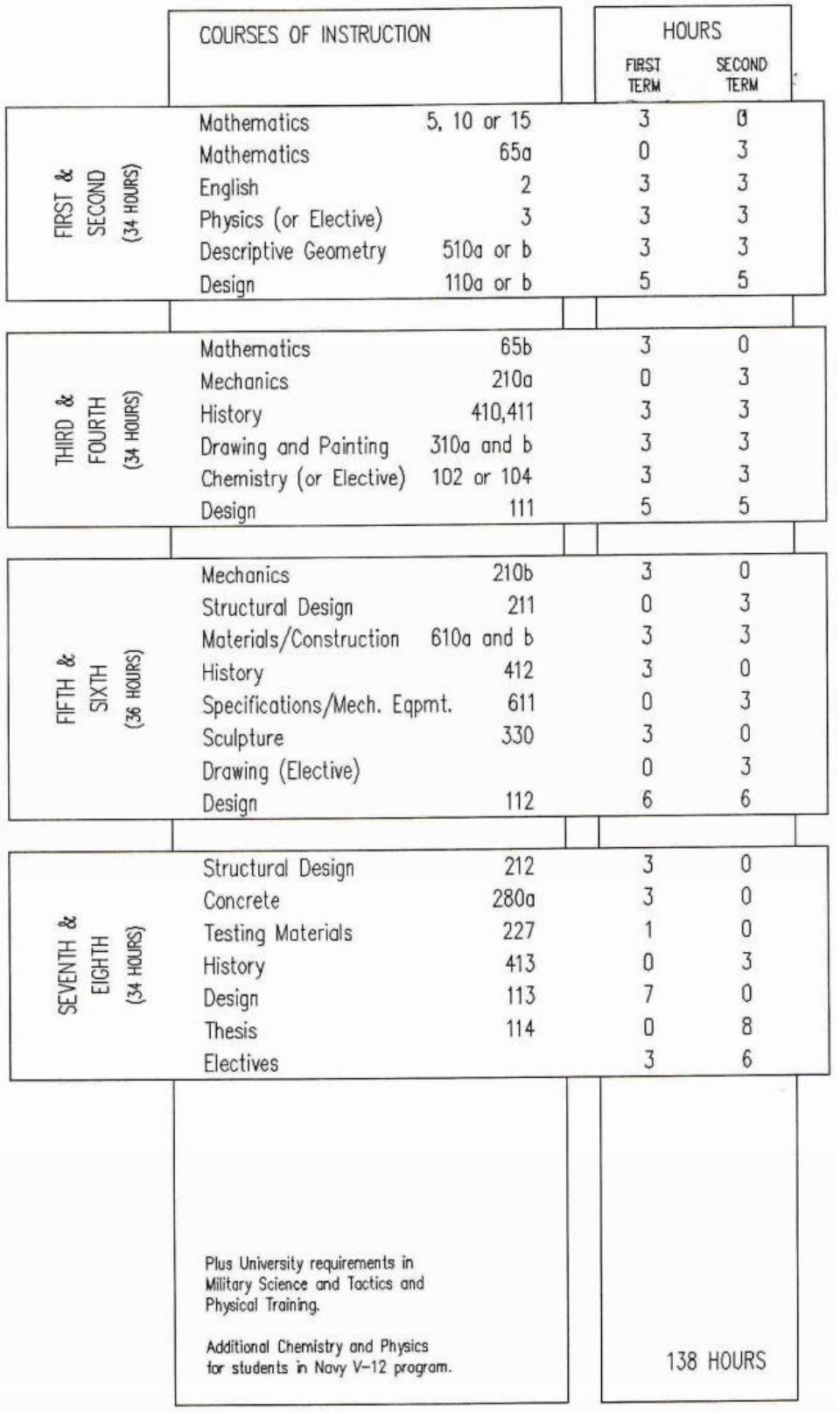
> "Experience indicates that the successful architect must encompass a broader field than the mastery of those skills which make him

[297] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 21 May 1943.
[298] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 3 August 1943.

> technically competent; he must have at his command a broad cultural training, at once a mark of distinction. Whether or not the graduates of architecture at Cornell are familiar with the latest developments in plastics, the last work in extruded metals, or the last method of designing prefabricated houses, matters little. The background gained through a sound training in the fundamentals afforded by a broad education is most likely to produce, later on in life, the impetus for sustained creative work in architecture."[299]

The College, although having come up with an adequate emergency program, still believed five years was the minimum time necessary for a proper education. Although, by taking advantage of full summer terms, the students could complete degree requirements in less than three years, the situation was considered transitory. In fact, the five-year curriculum did not disappear completely. Just before the official faculty approval of the accelerated program, the question came up "whether the three women candidates for the Fine Arts degree should be put on an eight term basis. It was the consensus of the Faculty that they should not be."[300] The faculty tried to keep the number of students eligible for the eight term program to a minimum. Later, they would decide that, although returning veterans would be allowed to conclude their studies under this program,[301] those veterans who had "never attended a school of architecture should be required to take the five-year curriculum."[302] Although not clearly stated anywhere, it appears as if women and foreign students were still under the five year plan. This is not only confusing today, but was also at the

[299] Records, box 16, "The College of Architecture Post-War," typed draft of Clarke's article for Alumni News, copy to ACSA dated 9 November 1943.
[300] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 20 July 1943.
[301] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 14 December 1943.
[302] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 12 June 1945.



	COURSES OF INSTRUCTION		HOURS FIRST TERM	HOURS SECOND TERM
FIRST & SECOND (34 HOURS)	Mathematics	5, 10 or 15	3	0
	Mathematics	65a	0	3
	English	2	3	3
	Physics (or Elective)	3	3	3
	Descriptive Geometry	510a or b	3	3
	Design	110a or b	5	5
THIRD & FOURTH (34 HOURS)	Mathematics	65b	3	0
	Mechanics	210a	0	3
	History	410,411	3	3
	Drawing and Painting	310a and b	3	3
	Chemistry (or Elective)	102 or 104	3	3
	Design	111	5	5
FIFTH & SIXTH (36 HOURS)	Mechanics	210b	3	0
	Structural Design	211	0	3
	Materials/Construction	610a and b	3	3
	History	412	3	0
	Specifications/Mech. Eqpmt.	611	0	3
	Sculpture	330	3	0
	Drawing (Elective)		0	3
	Design	112	6	6
SEVENTH & EIGHTH (34 HOURS)	Structural Design	212	3	0
	Concrete	280a	3	0
	Testing Materials	227	1	0
	History	413	0	3
	Design	113	7	0
	Thesis	114	0	8
	Electives		3	6

Plus University requirements in Military Science and Tactics and Physical Training.

Additional Chemistry and Physics for students in Navy V-12 program.

138 HOURS

Figure 10: Courses of instruction, 1943

time. A year and a half after the start of the accelerated program, the faculty discussed "the problem of eligibility for the eight-term curriculum":

> "There seemed to be some misunderstanding about whether or not we were offering eight terms and ten terms simultaneously, or whether we would offer these two curricula in the future. "[303]

The accelerated program was only tolerated as a regrettable solution for those serving in the war. Years later, perhaps concerned with Korean war implications, Mackesey recorded the faculty's opinion when he wrote:

> "We are not contemplating shortening the curriculum in architecture. During the last war we were forced into an eight-term curriculum and we hope that we can avoid that again. There was an unquestionable sacrifice in the quality of instruction while the eight-term curriculum was in effect."[304]

Letters and meeting minutes that will not be quoted here make it clear that the faculty was anxious not only for the end of the war itself, but also for the return to the five year program. When the end of hostilities could be more realistically predicted, a Committee on Post-War Policy was established. Progress reports in February and April of 1945 were followed by the final product in November of that year. The work of the committee, chaired by Mackesey, has been mentioned repeatedly before. It gave an excuse for an overall reassessment of the educational policies in all departments of the College, and produced improved curricula. For architecture, the report stated that

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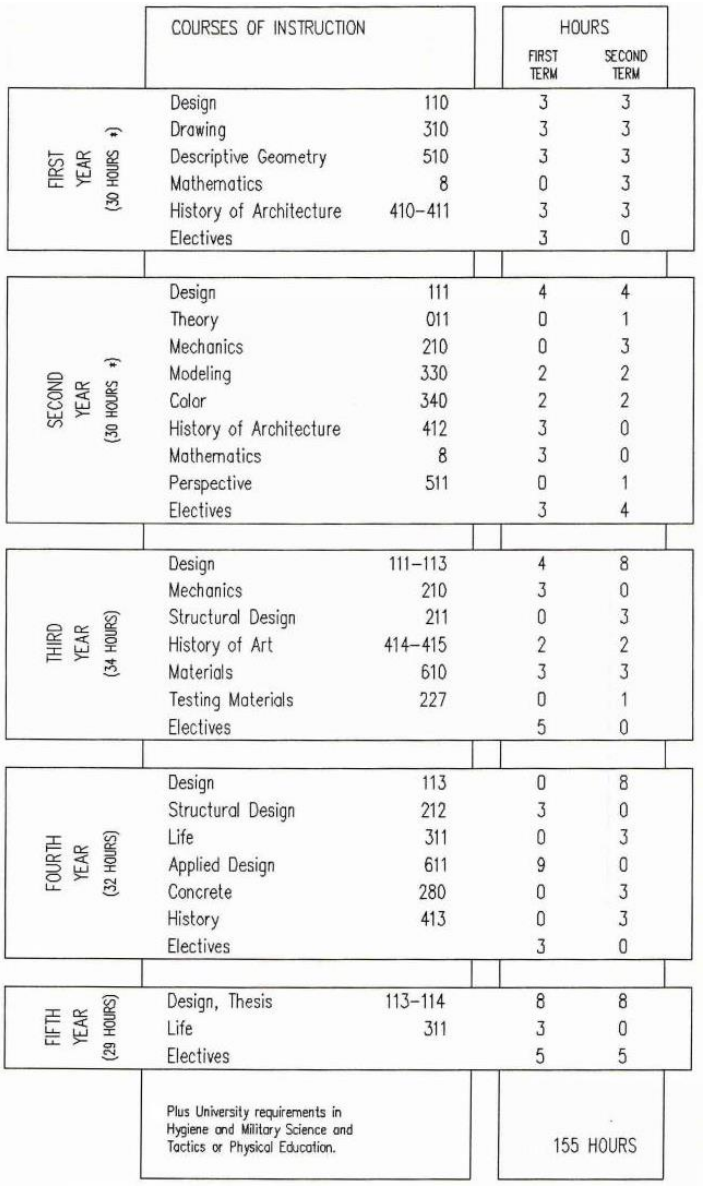
[303] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 12 December 1944.
[304] Records, box 16, Mackesey to B. Kenneth Johnstone (Dean, Carnegie Institute of Technology), 26 February 1951.

"The 10-term curriculum in effect before the war [Figure 11] was basically sound. The curriculum here recommended does not differ from it widely."[305]



	COURSES OF INSTRUCTION		HOURS FIRST TERM	HOURS SECOND TERM
FIRST YEAR (30 HOURS +)	Design	110	3	3
	Drawing	310	3	3
	Descriptive Geometry	510	3	3
	Mathematics	8	0	3
	History of Architecture	410–411	3	3
	Electives		3	0
SECOND YEAR (30 HOURS +)	Design	111	4	4
	Theory	011	0	1
	Mechanics	210	0	3
	Modeling	330	2	2
	Color	340	2	2
	History of Architecture	412	3	0
	Mathematics	8	3	0
	Perspective	511	0	1
	Electives		3	4
THIRD YEAR (34 HOURS)	Design	111–113	4	8
	Mechanics	210	3	0
	Structural Design	211	0	3
	History of Art	414–415	2	2
	Materials	610	3	3
	Testing Materials	227	0	1
	Electives		5	0
FOURTH YEAR (32 HOURS)	Design	113	0	8
	Structural Design	212	3	0
	Life	311	0	3
	Applied Design	611	9	0
	Concrete	280	0	3
	History	413	0	3
	Electives		3	0
FIFTH YEAR (29 HOURS)	Design, Thesis	113–114	8	8
	Life	311	3	0
	Electives		5	5
	Plus University requirements in Hygiene and Military Science and Tactics or Physical Education.			155 HOURS

Figure 11: Courses of instruction, 1945.

[305] Committee on Post-War Policy, progress report, 10 April 1945.

24 Peace, students and faculty

If the war affected the faculty and students as we indicated above, its conclusion had an even deeper effect on their quantity and quality. We have seen, in figure 8, how the number of students increased dramatically at the end of the war. The fact that so many men nationwide had had to postpone their studies created a bottleneck that generated many logistical problems to universities. At Cornell, over 8,000 students were expected to enroll during the first few semesters after the war, their education being financed by the GI Bill. The College of Architecture was aware of the problems that its share could cause:

> "It is probable that at the end of the war the applicants for admission to the College will far outnumber those that can be housed in the present plant. At present 91 old students are on leave of absence on military service or on activities connected with the war. The majority of these can be expected to return and they must be assured a place in the College...".
> ... Even though the student body is now small, any substantial increase in enrollment could mean a tight situation when our old students return... .
> The present physical plant can accommodate no more than 150 students in Architecture and Landscape Architecture comfortably.[306]

The university administration asked the college to expand its customary enrollment anyway, and register 200 students.[307] In the fall term of 1946, 201 undergraduates and 14 graduate students were listed in the report of the admissions committee.[308] This unwanted increase in enrollment affected facilities, faculty, and students, in ways both quantitative and qualitative.

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[306] Committee on Post-War Policy
[307] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 9 April 1946.
[308] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 10 October 1946.

The 1938 curriculum committee mentioned above had recommended only minor modifications in the entrance requirements Therefore, the potential caliber of post-war students can be assumed to have been equivalent to that of previous Cornellians. However, the type of persons admitted changed noticeably.

First, and not surprisingly, the number of women students was immediately restricted:

> "New applications then should be carefully studied and standards of preparation maintained. This is particularly true in the case of women... .
> Not more than 15 per cent of the students in Architecture and Landscape Architecture should be women."[309]

Second, the number of foreign students also dropped, diametrically changing what had been the normal composition of the student body just a few months earlier:

> "Normally we would like to have a graduate student from India, who has the background which Mr. Suthar evidently has, but due to the restricted enrollment and to the relatively large number of foreign students already registered in the College it would seem unwise to add another one at this time."[310]

Finally, the sense of a moral duty to reward veterans for their sacrifices during the war meant that the number of students coming directly from high school would also diminish:

> "The applications from ex-service men are being received in such large numbers that there will be no opportunity for civilian students to enter the College for some time to come."[311]

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[309] Committee on Post-War Policy
[310] Records, box 18, Clarke to Graduate School Dean Cunningham, 21 January 1946.
[311] Records, box 15, Clarke to Brooks E. Wigginton (Department of Landscape Architecture, University of Georgia), 18 December 1945.

These three facts, especially the last one, created a different environment in the College of Architecture. The majority of students were now rather mature, because of age and experiences. This, joined with an urgency to finish their studies (perhaps in order to provide for their families, since many were married), encouraged intense, responsible work. They might also have been more demanding of the faculty and carried more serious discussions. It should also be mentioned that at least a few must have visited some of the European landmarks of modern architecture, and brought that first-hand knowledge with them to Ithaca. The new environment at the college had an intensity similar to the one during the Depression, when the increased number of older graduate students helped affect the faculty's "point of view," according to Dean Young.[312]

The demands on the college and its faculty caused by the sudden increase in enrollment put a strain on the efficiency of facilities and professors. The "tight situation" that Clarke had alluded to had a literal expression in the crowding of classrooms and studios in White Hall. Clarke and Mackesey would attempt to provide larger quarters for the college, but would only succeed years later with the move to Sibley Hall.

More important, however, was the inadequate faculty-to-student ratio imposed by the avalanche of returning veterans. While on the one hand those professors serving in the war returned to campus, on the other many professors retired or resigned during this period.[313] To deal with this shortage, Clarke again

[312] Alumni Letter, October 1933.
[313] Burnham, Young, Curtis, Midjo, Stone and Warner (and Bosworth, Brauner, and Lawson just a few years earlier.) See Appendix A.

had to hire more faculty, in all fields. Design professor Frederick Morris Wells arrived first, in January 1945. He was joined the next two years by Santiago Agurto-Calvo, Thomas Canfield and Stuart Barnette. In construction, Ludlow Brown, who had been an instructor before the war, was invited back to replace Young, who retired in the summer of 1946. The faculty in city planning, and in fine arts, was similarly increased at that time.[314] In the following chapter we will look briefly at each of these groups.

[314] Professors Chisholm, Hanson, Myers and Sternberg. See Appendix A.

25 A new generation of teachers

The new design faculty did not have the homogeneous background that we described for their predecessors, consisting of some years in Paris followed by extensive professional experience. Hartell, as mentioned above, was a Cornell alumnus who, instead of attending the École in Paris or the American Academy in Rome, had received a fellowship from the Scandinavian-American Foundation. His professional practice experience was acquired after starting his teaching career.

Charles Warner spent a relatively short period at Cornell, and there is little information about him in the university archives. However, his interest in industrial design, and the abstract "paper structure" exercise that he used in his freshman design courses, make it safe to assume a non-École educational background.

"Morrie" Wells was also a Cornell graduate, product of the 1927 class that also included Nathaniel Owings and Lawrence Perkins. After a short European tour, he spent a dozen years in professional practice in New York City, and in 1942 joined the U.S. Navy as a senior architectural engineer.

Santiago Agurto-Calvo had been a graduate student in the college, and was asked to join the faculty after graduating in 1946. He is remembered as "of the Corbu-Niemier [sic] persuasion" by one of his students.[315] He was awarded an Eidlitz Fellowship to travel and study in the United States the summer of 1947, and returned to his native Peru afterwards.

[315] Robert L. Myers (B.Arch. 1950) to CNP, 17 August 1988.

Thomas Canfield is also remembered as a modernist, and as "the reigning designer on the faculty."[316] He received a B.Arch. degree from Ohio State University in 1939. He served in the Pacific front from 1942 to 1946, and had therefore little or no office experience before coming to Cornell.

The last of the new design professors, Stuart Barnette, arrived in 1947 to replace Burnham. Perhaps in order to compensate for the varied and non-traditional backgrounds of his colleagues, he did have a Parisian École des Beaux-Arts education.

If the new design professors broke with the patterns previously established for them in the College of Architecture, those in the construction subjects stuck to tradition. As we saw before, John Tilton '13 was hired to replace his old professor, Clarence A. Martin, when he retired to Florida. Tilton was not only Martin's pupil but also "the first son of an alumnus to be educated in the College."[317] The Cornell pedigree shared by Martin, Young, Baxter and Tilton would be considered a requisite when a successor was sought for Young in preparation for his California retirement in 1946:

> "Professor George Young, Jr. retires in June, 1946. It seems to Professors Seymour and Baxter, and to me, that his successor should be appointed at least two terms in advance of June, 1946, in order thus to benefit from a period of experience with Professor Young, more particularly in the area of Mechanics for students of Architecture. The course of study in Mechanics given by Professor Young since his appointment to the Faculty is generally known as the most comprehensive course of its kind offered to students in the field of Architecture in this country. We believe it important, therefore, to continue the same high standards which now obtain in this area... .

[316] Robert F. Gatje (B.Arch. 1951) to CNP, 16 August 1988.
[317] Alumni Letter, October 1933.

> ... We believe that we have been fortunate in the choice of Gordon F. Stofer, the candidate whom we recommend to succeed Professor Young. Mr. Stofer graduated from Cornell in 1937 with the degree of Bachelor of Architecture. He was an outstanding student and is recommended unqualifiedly by Professors Seymour, Baxter, and Young, all of whom knew this young man in his student days... .
> ... It is important for the College that this candidate be an architect by both training and experience, and that he possess those personal characteristics indicative of a good teacher. Stofer is a leader; he played football when a student at Cornell, and in spite of this, had the distinction of graduating at the top of his class."[318]

Stofer was not able to accept the offer, and Clarke then recommended Ludlow D. Brown very highly for the position.[319] Brown, who had already taught as an instructor at Cornell before the war, had also studied at the College of Architecture, but apparently did his thesis in Civil Engineering.[320] He was hired, this second time, when the war was over and important changes were clearly in the horizon.

Landscape architecture, the other field where a Cornell training had been a common denominator for the faculty, had practically disappeared at this time, although the MLA degree was still offered. No replacement was sought when Lawson resigned in 1942, nor when Curtis retired in 1946. Frederick Edmondson '38 returned from the AAR to join the faculty in 1948. Montillon took a leave of absence the spring semester of 1950, and then taught only part time until his retirement in 1952.

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[318] Records, box 21, Clarke to Cornell vice-president George E. Sabine, 15 January 1945.
[319] Records, box 21, Clarke to Sabine, 1 November 1945.
[320] Ralph H. Parks (B.Arch. 1931) to CNP, 20 August 1988.

In fine arts, a new group of faculty was also arriving, because of the retirement of those who had established that department. Brauner had retired in 1939, Stone in 1943, and Midjo in 1945. (See Appendix A.)

In history of architecture, we have already explained how Phelps' death in 1937, and Dunbar's appointment in New Mexico left that area in the hands of A. Henry Detweiler.

City and regional planning increased its prominence in White Hall. Academically, it replaced landscape architecture as the second most important field in the college. Administratively, it became the new source for College of Architecture managers. The almost continuous succession of construction deans (Martin, Young, Tilton) was followed by a regime of planners (Clarke, Mackesey, Kelly, Parsons).

While the construction field remained more or less unchanged, and provided a continuous link with the early days of the college, the design areas in the forties contrast with what happened in the twenties and thirties. The changes in backgrounds and interests of the design faculty, the new attitude toward the study of history, the decline of landscape architecture, and the simultaneous rise of city and regional planning, joined to define a new kind of College of Architecture at Cornell.

26 Arrival of unorthodox visitors

Once the economic restrictions of the Depression were over, the college slowly resumed its efforts to bring architectural exhibitions for the benefit of its students. This time their endeavors would be interrupted by the war. A Pratt Traveling Exhibit, for example, was displayed in February of 1941. The show, whose title was not recorded, was seen at many schools of architecture. Cornell was to receive it from MIT, and to pass it on to Mies van der Rohe at IIT.[321]

I found only one reference regarding an exhibit during World War II, one on "Modern Dutch Architecture," shown in 1944.[322] During the war, with extremely reduced staff and student body, there were almost no exhibitions at Cornell. When the conflict was over, the immediate increase in population and activities at the college might have justified a similar rise in the number of offers and requests of display materials. If this happened, it was not recorded as carefully as it had been during the thirties. The summer of 1945 "the larger portion of the collection of photographs, called 'America Builds', from the Museum of Modern Art" was shown in the college's exhibition room.[323] In 1946 a show dealt with "Building in the USSR",[324] and in 1949 alumnus Nathaniel Owings '27 sent an exhibit of the work of Skidmore, Owings and Merrill.[325] In addition, just as in 1939 the women of the College of Home Economics had provided an opportunity to see an exhibition on modern design, a decade later Wells College offered an alternative to College of Architecture exhibits:

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[321] Records, James R. Patterson (Pratt Institute) to Tilton, 11 December 1940.
[322] Records, box 17, no date.
[323] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 8 May 1945.
[324] Records, box 17, no date.
[325] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 8 March 1949.

> "An exhibition of the work of the architect Mies van der Rohe, prepared and circulated by the Museum of Modern Art, New York, will open at Wells College tomorrow (Thursday) and will continue until Nov. 28 [1949]. The public is invited."[326]

The main sources for exposure to outside images and ideas after the war were visiting critics and lecturers. Early opportunities were offered, but not taken advantage of, by the large group of modernists who emigrated from Europe to the United States in the late thirties because of the political situation in Europe. Perhaps due to the lack of architectural work during the war, many offered to teach or lecture at Cornell. A few examples will illustrate this.

Arthur L. Harmon (Shreve's partner), at the time president of the New York Chapter of the AIA, wrote to Dean Clarke late in 1938 asking for suggestions on actions the chapter could take to help architect refugees from Germany and Austria.[327] Clarke answered that, although he had interviewed several, he found himself unable to help them.[328]

Jan Reiner, a Czech architect, wrote in April of 1941 applying for a teaching position. He enclosed reproductions of newspaper clippings reporting on his visits to several United States cities, from Florida to Oregon. Some of the headlines read: "Homes of the Future to Be of Glass, Predicts Architect on Visit," "Furniture to Be Made of Plastics After War, Designer Believes," and "PREFABRICATED HOUSES OFFER GREAT FUTURE, SAYS ARCHITECT."[329]

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[326] Records, box 20, News from WELLS COLLEGE, 9 November 1949.
[327] Records, box 11, Harmon to Clarke, 28 November 1938.
[328] Records, box 11, Clarke to Harmon, 7 December 1938.
[329] Records, box 12, Reiner to Clarke, 30 April 1941.

Reiner, a 32 year old who "calls himself a modernist",[330] wrote about his qualifications:

> "... my training began in 1927 at the University of Prague, continued with Le Corbusier in Paris and with Ove Bang in Oslo, Norway, and finally with Gropius at Harvard. In '38 I received my Master's degree there. For two years I was a faculty member of Moholy-Nagy's School of Design in Chicago."[331]

Clarke answered that there were no openings on the staff, but that he would file Reiner's application "for consideration if a vacancy should occur."[332] Reiner was apparently not contacted when new faculty were required after the war, and was again turned down when he reapplied a decade later.[333]

In August of the same year, Richard Neutra's secretary wrote Clarke to announce that "Mr. Neutra is expecting to spend several weeks in the East this fall," and would have been willing to lecture at Cornell if invited.[334] I found no answer to that letter, but it does not appear that Neutra ever made it to Ithaca.

Another unsuccessful attempt to teach at Cornell was made by Hans Alexander Mueller the same month. He had been a full professor at the State Academy of Graphic Arts in Leipzig, from where he had been dismissed in 1937 for having a Jewish wife. A note in Clarke's handwriting instructed his secretary, Miss Fuller, to send Mueller the "usual letter."[335]

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[330] Reiner's clipping of the Los Angeles Times, 2 March 1940.
[331] Records, box 12, Reiner to Clarke, 30 April 1941.
[332] Records, box 12, Clarke to Reiner, 6 May 1941.
[333] Records, box 20, Reiner to Monica Fuller (College of Architecture secretary,) 20 July 1951.
[334] Records, Miss S. Silver to Clarke, 11 August 1941.
[335] Records, box 13, Mueller to Clarke, 12 January 1942.

In October, Erich Mendelsohn also offered to lecture at Cornell, and was politely turned down, a lack of funds being cited by Clarke as the reason.[336] However, after a meeting with the Student-Faculty Committee, Clarke reconsidered. He wrote to Mendelsohn, telling him that new funds had just become available for lectures, and that "your name was among those they [the students] would like to have me invite."[337] Clarke apparently felt forced to invite Mendelsohn, and posted a notice on bulletin boards reminding the students that

> "Mr. Mendelsohn was invited on the suggestion of members of the student body, and it is requested that every member of this College be present."[338]

Mendelsohn delivered a lecture on December 11, titled "Architecture Today -- Reconstruction or Creation," met with the students in Detweiler's seminar in history of architecture, and had lunch with members of Gargoyle. He was paid $100, Cornell outdoing Harvard, Princeton and Columbia, who had offered $75 for similar services.[339] Privately, the faculty admitted disappointment in Mendelsohn's lecture. While acknowledging his "extraordinary career," they felt "he did not do justice to his background."[340] Although Mendelsohn repeatedly offered to return (starting as soon as January 1942), he was always courteously rejected by Clarke.

Another visitor that was requested by the students, perhaps at the same meeting mentioned above, was Edward D. Stone. Clarke wrote to him five days after inviting Mendelsohn:

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[336] Records, box 13, Mendelsohn to Clarke, 1 October 1941; answered 6 October 1941.
[337] Records, box 13, Clarke to Mendelsohn, 12 November 1941.
[338] Records, box 13, notice dated 18 November 1941.
[339] Records, box 13, Mendelsohn to Clarke, 14 November 1941.
[340] Records, box 13, Detweiler to Edgar Fischer (Institute of International Education), 9 February 1942.

> "The governing committee of the student organization of this College suggested a list of three or four architects whom they would like to have [as a visiting critic]; your name was on that list."[341]

Stone's visit was, in contrast to Mendelsohn's, very successful. In what sounds like a sincere letter, Clarke wrote to Stone expressing his regret at not having been in Ithaca during his visit and therefore missing it. (He probably also missed Mendelsohn's.) He added:

> "When I returned to Ithaca a week ago to-day, a different atmosphere pervaded White hall. The depressed feeling caused by the war seemed to have lifted and the students were recalling the principal event of the previous week, the visit of "Ed" Stone. You made a great hit personally and professionally…"[342]

Although the college had started to open its doors to atypical architects like Mendelsohn and Stone, some of the old customs still took precedence. In his letter inviting Stone to Ithaca, Clarke explained that the visit would have to be scheduled so as not to conflict with certain traditional activities:

> "At first I thought we might be able to arrange the program so you might visit us between Thanksgiving and Christmas, but find that a five week collaborative problem, issued by the Alumni of the American Academy in Rome, will take up this period."[343]

Mendelsohn and Stone, although not equally liked, marked a promising beginning to a possible series of visits by important, contemporary architectural figures. Unfortunately, the war would intervene and interrupt the sequence at its start. A year after these visits, Clarke had to write to cancel or postpone other lectures:

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[341] Records, box 13, Clarke to Edward O. [sic] Stone, 17 November 1941.
[342] Records, box 13, Clarke to Stone, 23 February 1942.
[343] Records, box 13, Clarke to Stone, 17 November 1941.

> "... I wonder if it might not be wise to delay [your lecture] until after the war, principally because our student body at the moment is about one-half the size of normal."[344]

Carol Aronovici, who, as we have seen, was known and apparently liked as a lecturer by Cornell's faculty, was also asked to postpone his visit:

> "Personally I should like very much to have you lecture here at Cornell some time in the Spring. However, it would be very difficult to guarantee an audience by reason of the fact that practically all of the work here at Cornell is given over to the Army or the Navy. They are on a rigid schedule and have little or no time for extra-curricular matters. A university situated in a small community like Cornell is unable to draw upon an area outside for its audience like Columbia is, for example. Therefore, I think it would be wise to postpone your trip to Ithaca until sometime after the war and we are back to a period of more normal activity."[345]

Cornell's geographic isolation once more played an important role. Since it was so difficult to attract visiting lecturers and critics, the college probably felt that the least it could do was assure them of an appropriate reception. We have already indicated how Clarke though it necessary to nag the students to make them attend Mendelsohn's lecture, which they had requested themselves. With the severely reduced student body of the war years, a decent audience could not be offered. When Dean Hollister, of the College of Civil Engineering, gave a lecture for architecture students, attendance was so embarrassingly poor that Mackesey felt the need to apologize:

> "We are all very grateful to you for taking the time and trouble to speak to our students last Monday. We regret that your audience was not large, but I know that those who were there got a lot from it."[346]

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[344] Records, box 13, Clarke to Mr. B.A. Colonna (Marble and Stone Institute of New York,) 15 February 1942.
[345] Records, box 18, Clarke to Aronovici, 14 December 1943.
[346] Records, box 18, Mackesey to Hollister, 4 September 1944.

As soon as the war was over, the enthusiasm generated by victory spread everywhere. New programs could be attempted, and old ones revived. The American Society of Planners and Architects, in 1946 presided over by Harvard's Dean Joseph Hudnut, invited Le Corbusier to speak at the New School for Social Research in New York City. Dean Clarke was asked to invite Cornell students and faculty to attend the lecture.[347] Clarke's handwritten note on that letter ("This will be something!"), forceful and with exclamation point, suggests an excitement that had been absent during the academically slow war period.

At Cornell, efforts to bring visitors were immediately resumed with renewed vigor. At the start of the 1946-47 school year a Lectures and Exhibits Committee was created, composed of some of the more broad-minded faculty members: Detweiler, Wells and Hartell. Very shortly after its inception, the committee's chairman, Detweiler, "announced the successful visit of Professor Walter Gropius to the College on January 9, 1947."[348]

In March, the committee "reported that efforts were being made to bring Alvar Aalto to the campus to deliver a public lecture," and that "Amédeé Ozenfant had lectured February 26, 1947, in Olin Hall before a large audience."[349] In November, they declared "that they were unable to persuade

[347] Records, box 20, Hudnut to Clarke, 14 January 1946.
[348] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 21 January 1947. Gropius' lecture was on "Architectural Design," according to the 1947 Alumni Letter. He returned to the area two years later, to deliver a public lecture at Wells College, at the same time that Mies' work was being exhibited there (Records, box 20, "News form WELLS COLLEGE," 9 November 1949.)
[349] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 18 March 1947. Ozenfant's lecture was titled "Modern Painting and Modern Architecture," again according to the 1947 Alumni Letter.

Professor Saarinen to come. They hoped that it would be possible to bring Mies van der Rohe to the University."[350]

Although many of their efforts were unsuccessful, the creation of the committee, and their choice of possible guests indicate that a new attitude was prevailing at the college. In contrast with the quantity and quality of lecturers of the thirties (Swartwout and LaFarge, for example,) Cornell invited many contemporary professionals in all of the college's areas of interest. Among the visitors for the 1948-49 academic year were: Michael Harris '30, one of the architects for the United Nations headquarters; Charles H. Warner, who had taught architectural and industrial design at the college a few years earlier; Stanley Abbott '30, a landscape architect; Swedish architects Sven Markelius (Chairman of Stockholm's City Planning Commission) and Bertel Hulten; and Nathaniel Owings '27, as mentioned before.[351]

The spring semester of 1950 three architects were invited to take turns teaching Professor Seymour's design studio while he took a leave of absence: Sanford Wells '31, Joseph Boaz and Philip Johnson. Boaz had written to Clarke offering his services as a critic,[352] and the others may have been suggested by the students or faculty members. Their combination, however, was not without analysis. Clarke appeared concerned that perhaps the students were being exposed to too much modernism, and tried to control the situation. Writing to Mackesey about the visiting critics, he said:

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[350] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 18 November 1947.
[351] Records, box 16, 1949 Alumni Letter, and Faculty Meetings, minutes, 10 May 1949.
[352] Records, box 17, Boaz to Clarke, 15 November 1949.

> "Now we come to the question of the third assignment [for visiting critic]. As you know, Mr. Joseph N. Boaz indicated that he is available for a five-week period. In view of the fact that we are engaging Johnson, who is pretty far over on the left side as far as design penchant is concerned, I am wondering if we should not have at least one fairly conservative critic... . Having Boaz follow Johnson gives us two men who cannot be said to be conservative thinkers and I am wondering if we should not have a little better balance."[353]

Clarke's interest in "balance" echoes, almost twenty years later, Young's 1931 opinion of Hartell being acceptable if balanced by other faculty members. Perhaps similar criteria were used every time to select visiting lecturers and critics. The difference was that after the war there was much more that needed "balancing."

Among those who visited Cornell in the early fifties were Caleb Hornbostel, Oscar Stonorov, Igor Polevitsky, Pietro Belluschi, William Hennessey, Kenneth Day, Robert Bishop, Buckminster Fuller, Abraham Geller '37, Allen Kramer '42, Henry Hebbeln '37, Frank Lloyd Wright,[354] Daniel U. Kiley, Paul Rudolph, Larry Perkins '27, and Edmund Bacon '32.

A detailed description of these visitors will not concern us here, but the case of Buckminster Fuller deserves some comment, because it illustrates the contrast between the beginning and the end of our study period. In December of 1951, "Dean Mackesey announced that Buckminster Fuller is coming to the University for two days under the joint sponsorship of the Housing Research

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[353] Records, box 17, Clarke to Mackesey, 20 December 1949. The conservative critic Clarke had in mind was Walter Cain, of McKim, Mead and White. It is not clear whether Wells had already been decided upon, or if he provided the equilibrium to Boaz and Johnson. The faculty minutes for 10 January 1950 mention Wells and Johnson, and an "undecided" third critic.

[354] Records, box 21, 20 November 1952. Wright gave a public lecture in Bailey Hall on 6 November 1952, and another for students of the college the next day. He was brought to Cornell through the efforts of Herbert F. Johnson of Racine, Wisconsin, who also provided the $1,000 for Wright's honorarium. Mr. Johnson was apparently promoting Wright for the design of a new President's House, "a small house connected to the old [A.D. White] mansion."

Center and the College of Architecture."[355] His invitation would later be expanded so that Fuller would serve as a five-week visiting critic,[356] and he was invited again two years later to supervise the construction of a geodesic dome on the third floor of Rand Hall.[357] In 1930, instead, Dean Young had found him hilarious:

> "I wonder if you have ever happened to talk with a wild-eyed enthusiast named Buxminster [sic] Fuller of Chicago? If not, you have missed as diverting a time as anything I know about. His ideas are clear up in the air (literally)… "[358]

Whether all of these visitors can be considered true modernists or not is beside the point. The fact is that, in the decade immediately following World War II, Cornell architecture students were exposed to more critics, lecturers and new ideas than in most of the college's history. The desire for "balance" indicated not a setback, but was a symptom of the advance toward the true expression of the college's stated goal of teaching students "how," not "what," to think.

[355] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 11 December 1951.
[356] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 12 February 1952. Fuller was here from 21 April to 24 May, 1952.
[357] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 11 May 1954.
[358] Records, box 8, Young to Grosvenor Atterbury, 18 July 1930.

27 Pilgrimage to Scandinavia

Just as the college was widening its intellectual horizons in the forties, but especially after the war, it was also considering wider geographical frontiers. During the Beaux-Arts period, as we have seen, the highest mark of success for an architectural student was winning a fellowship of the American Academy in Rome, or attending the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris for a while. The Depression first, and World War II later, created economic and political circumstances that made it difficult for this to continue.

Even before the United States' involvement in the European conflict, the dangerous conditions there forced a former student to reconsider his travel plans. As soon as Mrs. Eidlitz instituted the now famous travel fellowships in her husband's memory, students and recent graduates applied for them. The first one, for $1,200, was awarded in 1939 to John D. Anderson, part of whose proposal read:

> "It is my proposed plan for use of the money available from the Eidlitz Fund to continue the study of the Architecture of Western Europe by residence and travel in Europe. I propose to make my headquarters at the American Academy in Rome during the school year 1939-40, where there would be guidance from mature persons, professional companionship, and an excellent library at my disposal. Rome would be a base for travel and a center for the study of the arts of a succession of civilizations."[359]

The political turmoil in Europe made this plan hazardous, and a few months later the minutes of a faculty meeting recorded the following:

> "John Anderson, Eidlitz Fellow, has altered his plans to study in Rome due to the international situation and intends to travel and study in

[359] Records, Anderson to Young, 17 February 1939. A second award ($300) was given to another student "for assistance in continuing study in this college." (Faculty Meetings, minutes, 14 March 1939.)

Mexico and Central America. There was no objection on the part of the faculty."[360]

I found no record of Eidlitz awards for the next three years, but in 1942 they were mentioned as suspended "due to war conditions" (as were the Shreve, Lamb and Harmon Fellowships).[361]

Although Rome was sidestepped against Anderson's (and the faculty's) original wishes, the fact that the first Eidlitz Fellowship was used for travel in an unconventional region was almost prophetic of future trends. After the end of the war, Rome and Paris would not be important in Eidlitz Fellowship applications. In confirmation of the interest we have described before, the new architectural Mecca was in Scandinavia.

In January of 1947, the fellowship Committee "reported that funds were available for the award of several Robert James Eidlitz Fellowships, none of which were granted during the war."[362] A total of six applications were received that year, and three prizes awarded. Santiago Agurto-Calvo, as mentioned before, received $500 for travel and study in the United States before his return to Perú. The other two awards, $1,500 each, were "for travel and study of modern architecture and city planning in the Scandinavian Countries," and "for graduate study in architecture at the Royal Institute in Stockholm and travel in Scandinavia and the Continent." Of the three proposals that did not receive awards, two were for graduate study in the United States, and one for "European

[360] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 10 October 1939.
[361] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 12 May 1942.
[362] Faculty meetings, minutes, 21 January 1947.

travel."[363] This interest in supporting Scandinavian study (85% of the funds available) coincided with the faculty's endeavors to invite Aalto and Saarinen that semester.

The following year, although the distribution of funds was not as lopsided, Italy again lost the starring role it would certainly have had a decade or so earlier. Seven Eidlitz applications were submitted, and three $1,000 prizes awarded.[364] One went to Eric Quell (future faculty member) to attend the Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule in Zürich.[365] Another was given to John J. Wallace, who had never been outside the United States, to go to the Royal Academy of Arts in Stockholm.[366] Wallace later asked for a postponement of his award, because he had just started to work with a Scandinavian architect in Massachusetts:

> "Despite our colonial environment [in Falmouth] we are very contemporary, or I should say Mr. [Gunnar] Peterson has done a great job selling contemporary architecture to the people here."[367]

Even students who had not been awarded generous Eidlitz Fellowships made efforts to go to Scandinavia. We have already mentioned how Henry Hebbeln '37 was awarded a fellowship in city planning at Cranbrook and somehow managed to work with Alvar Aalto in Helsinki. Similarly, another alumnus wrote to Mackesey in 1948:

> "In reply to your request for information for the University Placement Service, may I say that I am employed in Stockholm at the firm of Backstrom and Reinius. The salary that I receive is not what one would call handsome but in view of the total ignorance of the

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[363] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 13 May 1947.
[364] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 13 April 1948.
[365] Records, box 17, Quell to Mackesey, 29 February 1948.
[366] Records, box 17, Wallace to Mackesey, 11 February 1948.
[367] Records, box 17, Wallace to Mackesey, 22 April 1948. Wallace's departure for Europe on the Queen Mary was reported at the faculty meeting of 11 January 1949.

> language and methods, it is reasonable. At the present rate of exchange it amounts to about $125 per month. This is approximately what every new graduate of architectural schools receives here.[368]

The third Eidlitz award in 1948 did in fact have Italy as its objective. However, the student's proposal was certainly different from what would have been expected in the thirties, if the fellowships had been available then. Vincent Moscarella wanted to attend the University of Rome (not the American Academy), and to study post-war reconstruction projects:

> "Because of the present economic conditions of the country, my interest would be particularly directed to new solutions being offered in answer to the urgent problem of low-cost housing, with a view to evaluating results obtained with respect to functionality of design, methods of construction, use of materials and aesthetic quality. In addition I should, of course, take advantage of my stay in Italy to look at some of the outstanding examples of her architecture."[369]

Now, the main purpose of Italian travel was the study of functionalism and technology. The survey of historical masterpieces would be done "in addition" to that.

To be honest, it must be acknowledged that the AAR was not inactive, and still sponsored travel to Italy. Cornell landscape architects were still being favored with their fellowships. Frederick W. Edmondson '38, who had received one in 1939, had to join Anderson in Mexico, but eventually made it to Rome, and then back to Ithaca in 1948 to join the faculty.[370] Vincent Cerasi '36, after a brief teaching stint in the college, received another American Academy in Rome

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[368] Records, box 21, Oliver J. Foster, Jr. to Mackesey, 8 July 1948.
[369] Records, box 17, Moscarella to Clarke, 8 March 1948.
[370] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 13 May 1948, and 1940 Alumni Letter.

Fellowship in Landscape Architecture in 1948.[371] Henri V. Jova '49 is also mentioned as a winner of a Rome fellowship in 1949,[372] and extended his stay another year thanks to a 1950 Fullbright award.[373]

While the American Academy in Rome awards provided the opportunity to study classical architecture, and ties with architecture's past, the Eidlitz Fellowships gave Cornell students an alternative, and the chance to prepare for a modern future that allowed other than the traditional possibilities.

[371] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 13 May 1948.
[372] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 10 May 1949.
[373] Faculty Meetings, minutes, 11 April 1950.

PART IV

CONCLUSION

28 From Bosworth to Mackesey

It has been mentioned how Bosworth took the first tentative steps to wean the school from the programs of the Beaux-Arts Institute of Design, starting what would later become standard practice in architectural schools.

Dean Young often wrote on architectural education, in correspondence and for publication. In all these writings he emphasized the need to teach students "how" to think that was mentioned above. For example, in 1930 he wrote:

> If the result of an educational process is that it has produced a high grade of mentality and the right point of view, the process has justified itself and the student will be in a position to find out any gaps in the subject matter which may have been left open.[374]

Before worrying about what he considered "the right point of view" it must be remembered that he appeared unconcerned about "radical views" and that he thought Cornell students could not "possibly have the idea that because a book or a lecturer or a professor takes this or that attitude, he she or it, is necessarily right.[375] In a letter to C. Ralph Fletcher, of Ohio State University's Department of architecture he wrote:

> In conclusion may I say that a long experience in teaching Architecture indicates to me that there is no system and there can be no system which has any very great inherent advantages; that educational activities all finally come back to the personalities through whom contact with the student is made. Given one set of personalities, certain results may be achieved with a given system;

[374] Records, box 8, Young to Kenneth K. Stowell (The Architectural Forum), 19 February 1930.
[375] Records, box 11, Young to H. Churchill, 20 October 1934.

> with a different set of personalities the same system may become totally hopeless.[376]

In 1932 he wrote an article for American Architect in which he repeated these ideas when he said that "the best traditions of teaching are rooted in the freedom of each teacher to present his subject in his own fashion and according to his own convictions.[377] Similar words reappear in letters and speech drafts throughout the thirties.

John Tilton agreed with Young's position. Days after the 1932 article appeared (and before his teaching appointment), he congratulated Young, saying that "it is certainly true, as you say, that the business of the school is to give the students the best opportunity possible for self development."[378] Later, when he was serving as Assistant Dean, Tilton wrote about "Cornell's grand tradition of freedom and responsibility in education, where the student is allowed much more freedom in his work and thereby learns the real meaning of the responsibility which immediately rests on him for the production of the appropriate answer.[379]

Young's successor, Clarke, was less liberal, as has been explained above. However, although he would probably have liked to teach students both how and what to think, he recognized the need for constant change in architectural education:

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376 Records, box __, Young to C. Ralph Fletcher, Department of Architecture, Ohio State University, 6 July 1932.

377 George Young, Jr., "What Are The Schools Doing About Modern Architecture?" American Architect, March 1932, p.24.

378 Records, box 9, Tilton's letter to Young, quoted in Young's to B. Betts (editor, American Architect), 15 March 1932.

379 Records, box 13, Tilton to Roland E. Coate, 7 November 1942.

> At Cornell it has been found necessary [my emphasis], looking back as far as I am able to look back, to make changes in the curriculum and in methods of instruction to keep pace with changing social and economic conditions which we have to face as a people.
> I think the activities of those whom we call "leftists" with respect to design has [sic] had a very stimulating effect in keeping the other members of the profession alive to the importance that the changes in our social and economic order require changes in every other phase of human activity."[380]

In 1943, the faculty, on Dean Clarke's request, started preparing for the end of World War II. They thought that, in architecture, "the emphasis should be on education, as such, mind training."[381] And in 1947, Clarke wrote to the alumni including part of F. M. Wells' report on architectural education. Wells wrote that one of the "basic principles [that] form a sound and rational approach to the study of design" was

> To introduce the freshman to architectural design in a straightforward manner that clears away all the preconceived ideas and cobwebs he may have accumulated. From the beginning of the course, we seek to give the student an opportunity to be creative with all the freedom implicit in contemporary design and, at the same time, help him to realize that architecture is not merely a development of the last twenty years: that its cardinal principles remain the same and that the "constants" of all good design are still in effect.[382]

The Cornell non-system was successful in providing a fertile environment for change. The varied interests of faculty and students could be accommodated, and their work remained among the best in the country. The acceptance of different ideas worked then, and allowed evolution and progress.

> We do not have on our faculty in architecture a big name, such as that of Gropius at Harvard or Mies Van der Rohe at Illinois Institute of Technology. We have deliberately rejected the possibility of

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380 Records, box 13, Clarke to W. Pope Barney (AIA Committee on Education), 10 February 1942.
381 Faculty Meetings, minutes ____ 1943.
382 Records, box 15, Alumni Letter, may 1947.

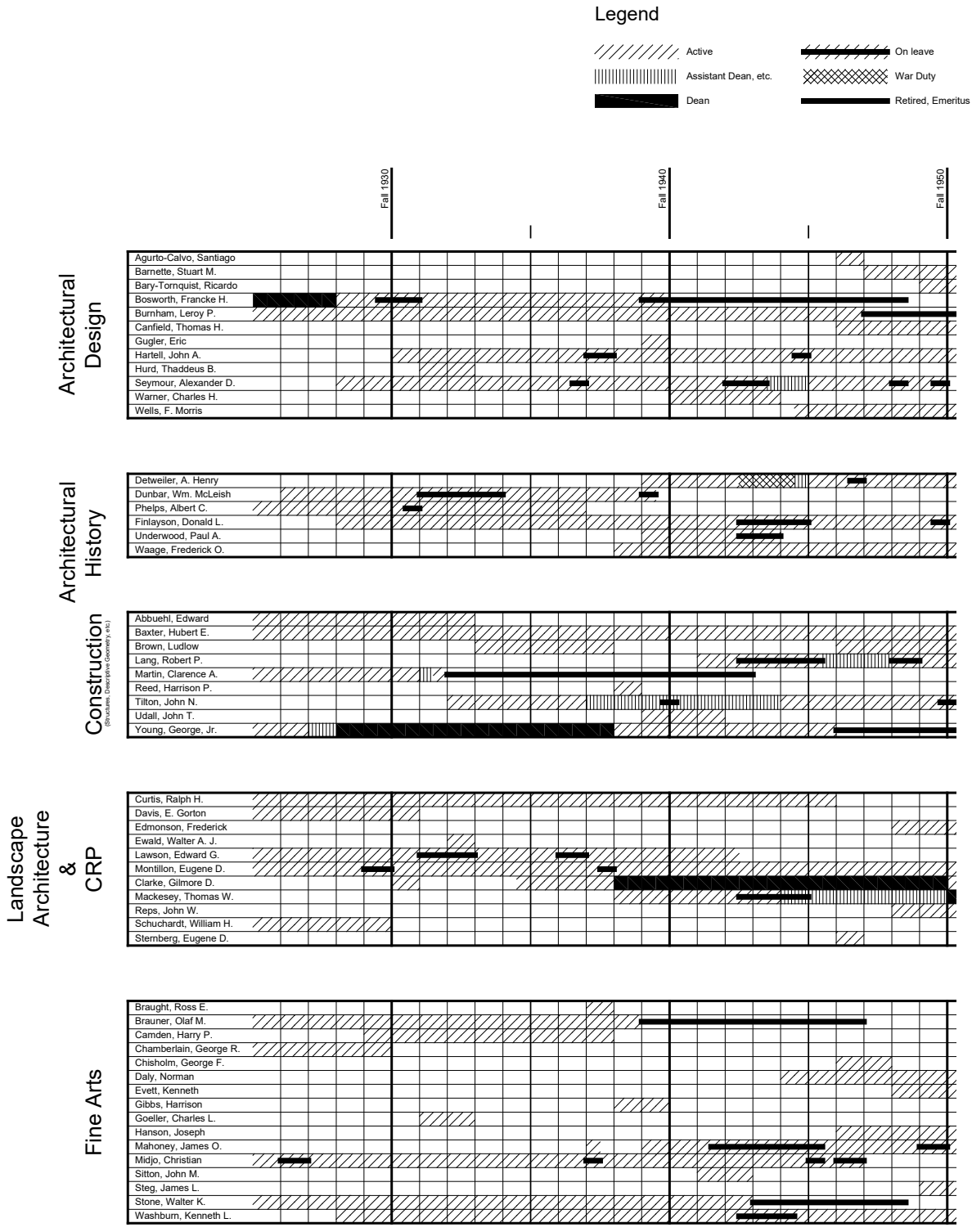
> establishing here the master and disciple system of teaching. Our staff is young, vigorous, and competent. We do not follow a party line, but each teacher is carefully selected because of his professional competence and teaching ability, and each teaches according to his own lights and from his own point of view. We feel that this system exposes the student to a number of current philosophies in architecture and gives every student an opportunity to form his own philosophy and to pilot his own course.[383]

With these words, Dean Mackesey expressed the basic pedagogical positions at Cornell's College of Architecture. In spite of the varied, often contrasting, attitudes and backgrounds of Cornell's faculty and students that have been described in this thesis, there was throughout a common element. From Bosworth to Mackesey, there was an awareness that architecture, and the teaching of it, and that the only successful "system" was the lack of one.

[383] Records, box 15, Mackesey to Herbert Williams (Cornell University Admissions Office), 28 January 1952.

APPENDIX A

COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE FACULTY TIMELINES



APPENDIX B

FIRST INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF MODERN ARCHITECTURE

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15TH [1932], AT ALBRIGHT ART GALLERY

The latest developments in America and throughout the world in the field of modern architecture will be shown at the Albright Art Gallery in an international exhibition of modern architecture which opens to the public Thursday, September 15th. The exhibition will remain at the Gallery through October 16th and will continue on a three years tour of the United States. The itinerary includes cities from coast to coast and also University art museums throughout the country.

"Expositions and exhibitions have perhaps changed the character of American architecture of the last forty years more than any other factor," says Alfred H. Barr, Jr., director of the Museum of Modern Art, in his foreword to the catalogue of the exhibition. "As a result of forty years of successive and simultaneous architectural magazines and annual exhibitions are monuments to the capriciousness and uncertainty of our architecture.

"The present exhibition is an assertion that the confusion of the past forty years, or rather of the past century, may shortly come to an end. Ten years ago, the Chicago Tribune competition brought forth almost as many different styles as there were projects. Since then the ideas of a number of progressive architects have converged to form a genuinely new style which is rapidly spreading throughout the world. Both in appearance and structure this style is peculiar to the twentieth century and is as fundamentally original as the Greek or Byzantine or Gothic, because of its simultaneous development in several different countries and because of its world-distribution it has been called the International Style.

"The aesthetic principles of the International Style are based primarily upon the nature of modern materials and structure and upon modern requirements in planning. These technical and utilitarian factors in the hands of designers who understand inherent aesthetic possibilities have resulted in an architecture comparable in integrity and even in beauty to the styles of the past."

Special models designed by leading American and European architects, and a group of enlarged photographs, will demonstrate that modern architecture can achieve practical expression in every type of building -- private house, school, apartment house, church, factory, department store, club and college dormitory.

Each of the American architects who have designed models for the exhibition has dealt with a different problem in modern architecture, Raymond Hood, well-known New York architect, presents his ideas of sky-scraper apartment tower in the country. Howe and Lescaze, New York and Philadelphia architects, offer a solution for low-priced housing in the Chrystie-Forsyth district in New York's Lower East Side.

Frank Lloyd Wright of Spring Green, Wisc., will show a model of a large private house on the Mesa, Denver, Colorado; Bowman Brothers of Chicago, a striking apartment house project for Chicago; and Richard Neutra of Los Angeles, a modern school building.

The four "founders" of the International Style in architecture are represented in the exhibition by models. Walter Gropius of Berlin, with his model for the Bauhaus Institute in Dessau, Germany: Le Corbusier of Paris, with a model for a luxurious house: J. J. P. Oud of Holland, with a model of a private home in Pinehurst, N. C.; and Miss Van der Rcho [sic], who has designed an elegant house in Brno, Czechoslovakia. Otto Haesler, the fifth European architect who has designed a model for the exhibition, presents his project for a housing development at Kassel, Germany.

The exhibition has been in preparation since December, 1930, under the direction of Philip Johnson, a member of the advisory committee of the Museum of Modern Art. The Albright Art Gallery is one of the six original subscribers to underwrite the expense of assembling the exhibition.

Courtesy of Museum of Modern Art.[384]

[384] Records, box 10, 23 September 1932. Incorrect punctuation, and misspelling of Mies van der Rohe, as in the original.

APPENDIX C

"MODERN TRENDS IN ARCHITECTURE"

[Preliminary draft for Dean Gilmore D. Clarke's address before the Architectural League of New York, 2 May 1940. Text ~~crossed out~~ was not in final draft.]

~~Present social and economic trends are continuing to exert a most profound influence upon all of the arts. The arts of the past frequently form the only key we have to the great periods of history; we measure the greatness of peoples by the relative importance and by the quality of the works of art which remain as evidence, often the only evidence, of past civilizations. The pyramids of Egypt, the temples and the sculpture of Greece, the churches, monuments, sculpture, and paintings of the Renaissance, all these stand in mute testimony of the great periods in history which they represent; these precious treasures form a measure of the social and economic as well as the artistic values which obtained in these past ages.~~

~~As we look upon the works of art of the past, we are conscious that long periods of time were consumed in their creation. Outstanding examples of the art of ancient China are known to have taken hundreds of years to complete. The great gothic cathedrals of Europe were finished only after the passage of a hundred years or more; they stand witness to the labors of at least two and sometimes four or five generations of workers, artisans who were banded together into Guilds, the primary purpose of which was the maintenance of the highest possible ideals and standards of workmanship; excellence of the product was the dominating factor which took precedence over every other.~~

~~Contrast these old customs and ideals, concerning the production of the great works of art of past ages, whit those which obtain today. Our art is generally governed by speed of production; as a consequence quality is sacrificed; the arts unquestionably reflect this rapid tempo of the time. Economy has frequently dictated the necessity for utilizing materials often devoid of lasting qualities; well may we ponder whether or not in this age in which we live will much evidence be left to future generations as witness of our inventive genius, of our inherent desire to create swiftly, and to build cheaply.~~

~~Even our great national monuments are built "against time", the dominating idea being to secure as much for the money available as possible without that careful emphasis upon quality so necessary to insure beauty and long life. Demon speed and the element of "bigger and better" are dominating factors in our art. Therefore, it is safe to say that the absence of the attributes which obtained in the production of the art of~~

~~**past ages results in sacrifices of quality and lack of permanence of much of the artistic production of our own age.**~~

Our architecture has already shown a movement away from traditional forms. That is a good sign. We are beginning to strive to express in our buildings a closer harmony with the recent changes in our social and economic systems. But frequently these changes in our architecture are not based upon sound principles. While we are thoroughly justified in changing, the changes should be made only after a careful and thorough examination of the past. A gradual transition would seem to result in more sound policies; on the other hand, a rapid departure from past precedent is likely, in the long run, to result in a loss of ground gained. Dr. Cret has said:

> "The abandonment of classical disciplines is neither new nor without its price. Regardless of the use made later on of the forms they proposed as examples, these disciplines had an unquestionable educational value. What is to be substituted for their proved efficacy in training the eye to proportion, to rhythm, to composition, is not as yet divulged, and those who condemn them as stifling to originality forget that an originality so easily stifled must not be very robust. Of the men doing original work in this country at the present time, by far the greater number have been classically trained by our schools."

~~**The practice of Art must be based upon sound scholarship. If our Arts are to survive and develop as a virile expression of our time, then they must be expressed through the minds, the hearts, and the inspirations of individuals trained not alone in the manual technique, but as well in the humanities, the sciences, and the liberal arts. Vitruvius, writing in the reign of Augustus said:**~~

> "Architects who have aimed at acquiring manual skill without scholarship have never been able to reach a position of authority to correspond to their pains, while those who relied only upon theories and scholarship were obviously hunting the shadow, not the substance. He who professes himself an architect should be well versed in both directions. He ought, therefore, to be both naturally gifted and amenable to instruction. Neither natural ability without instruction nor instruction without natural ability can make a perfect artist. Let him be educated, skillful with the pencil, instructed in geometry, understand music, have some knowledge of medicine, know the opinions of jurists, and be acquainted with astronomy and the theory of the heavens."

Since all of the Arts, including architecture, are in transition, we are witnessing many trial balloons expressing queer forms and absurd expressions created by men and women who hope to make an impression and cultivate a following.

Their work expresses their culture, truly a narrow one. Nevertheless, they possess an uncommon ability to appeal to the public and they succeed in gaining a large following among those enamored of things completely lacking in depth of thought and in profound inspiration developed out of a sound scholarship. Men and women of outstanding scholastic attainments combined with inspired creative thought will produce works that will live down through the ages. The trite stuff of this transition period will soon pass notice and be easily forgotten.

A prominent architect who has served the educational field for many years states:

> "I am convinced that the time has come when there should be no more compromise with the prevalent laxity with regard to sound principles of architectural design in the schools. The tendency to yield to such pressure as is expressed by certain extremists ~~**like Neutra, Gropius, and others**~~ is undermining the value of architectural education so as to result in sending out students that are equipped only for an emasculated type of showmanship, acquainted only with stunts and propaganda of their profession."

We cannot break away from tradition too quickly lest we sever contact with the past and suffer the loss of all the valuable traditions which form the basic groundwork for a fresh but still sound approach to the solution of new problems in architecture and to the expression of new ideas, advanced ideals, fresh impressions, and creative inspirations in the field of the graphic and the plastic arts.

The complex ways of life brought about through the inventive genius of man, have resulted in a marked tendency toward narrow specialization in all walks of life. This limiting and narrowing of the various fields of endeavor is not restricted to industry; it is a factor which affects the Arts with equal force. This brings about the necessity for collaboration, a term descriptive of the cooperative effort so desirable for creating effective results in the solution of more or less complex problems, or in the production of intricate works where the talents of two or more persons must be developed in mutual sympathy in order to achieve a result of distinction.

The past few years have demonstrated, more clearly than ever before, the need for a closer collaboration in the arts of architecture, landscape architecture, painting, and sculpture. A single art can ill afford to be represented alone. Painting and sculpture are becoming increasingly more important in relation to architecture. As our architecture becomes further simplified, as it departs further from stylized forms ~~**with the resultant elimination of, for example, the entablature, the pediment, the egg and dart, and the bead and reel**~~, there appears a greater need for embellishment with sculpture and painting. In the new architecture the Art of the painter and of the sculptor must be studied in close conjunction with the development of the architectural study from the

beginning, in order that the painting and the sculpture may become integral and harmonious parts of the larger composition.

Collaboration must also extend beyond the building and the building line; it must encompass the area of land upon which a given building is built, and in this connection we should expand our collaborative effort to include the broad province ruled over by the landscape architect.

If you have ever been up in an airplane and soared over some of our cities you may be thoroughly conscious of the frightful mess ~~**the architect and**~~ the engineer ha[s] made of the areas comprising our municipalities. We have used less imagination in the layout of our cities and the development of our countryside than in any other single enterprise of man in this country. In that broad field of endeavor, we shall require the collaborative effort of many professional groups, in addition to the architects and the landscape architects. Let us not limit our horizons; this whole country patiently awaits the guiding hands of those imaginative yet wholly practical individuals who, by reason of their superior talents in the arts of design, may lead us out of the disorder and slovenliness which obtains in the environs of our homes, our business areas and our factories. "Beauty", says Judge Pound, "may not be a queen, but she is not an outcast beyond the pale of protection or respect. She may at least shelter herself under the wing of safety, morality, or decency."

APPENDIX D

SELECTED ALUMNI RESPONSES TO AUTHOR'S LETTER

John Hartell '25
(22 February 1988)

This is to make sure you understood me when we spoke on the telephone about your project. I am ready to discuss with you what you have dug out of the archives any time you wish.

For now I have the suggestion that to write about the introduction of the Modern idea you should be acquainted with the influence of the Paris Ecole des Beaux Arts and of the educational function performed by the (New York) Society of Beaux Arts Architects.

It occurs to me too that there are architects still in practice who were students at Cornell during the period you are studying. Abraham Geller who has had a distinguished career is one. Thomas J. Baird, a retired professor of Engineering is another, they might be willing to help you and I am sure there are others.

John Hartell '25
(11 March 1988)

I read the material from the Archives right away all at one sitting without taking any notes. Now two days later I will set down for you in this informal fashion and in a hurry, my responses to what I read.

(1) What happened in the front office and what the front office wrote to a person not connected with the College can be misleading.

I and the other teachers were busy with the students.

(2) Until some time in the 1960s there was the College of Architecture. The Art and Planning became independent departments that late.

(3) Baxter and Young's Descriptive Geometry was an excellent text and the course as administered was excellent education.

When I wanted to consult a copy about 1963 or 65 it was no longer in the Library ----- lost.

(4) If the minutes of Faculty meetings are available to you, you need them, those of early date anyway.

(5) Edmund Bacon would tell you about a classmate of his who presented as a program for his B.Arch. thesis a neighborhood unit, based more or less on the pattern of Radburn (is that the name)

There was great argument in the Faculty, the program was accepted and the thesis presented but some Faculty thought it "sociology" rather than "architecture."

(6) Faculty members thru the years did do work outside. Wells & Canfield did a number of residences, in conjunction with others I did some, and Gilmore Clarke whose firm designed the Naval Training Station on Seneca Lake gave work to Mackesey and etc.

Tilton too worked at one time with a local architect. Lawson the landscape architect practiced.

(7) If your subject is the resistance of the Faculty to the introduction of MODERN, not all of the Faculty resisted.

Also the profession and the public had troubles with it.

And since "skyscrapers" are I suppose modern, maybe you have to define MODERN.

(8) The story of the founding of the Museum of Modern Art in NYC and Philip Johnson's part in it is pertinent to your subject ----- or it may be.

(9) Please remember I am very vague about dates.

(10) ~~Consider how World War I killed the bungalow!~~
Good Luck John Hartell more

(11) If it is available to you the material in Archives about Gilmore D. Clarke would be useful to you.
Also there may be about F. Huntington Bosworth.

(12) For a few years at the end of Phelps' career, before Detweiler arrived I finished off the sequence of required courses in the History of Architecture with 1/2 a semester about modern and MODERN architecture using Russell Hitchcock etc etc
When Detweiler arrived he took it over using my notes.

(13) Again the official obituaries published by the University Faculty would help you ----- especially about G.D. Clarke.

I have no copy of this.
JH

John Hartell '25
(13 March 1988)

As far as I know the Faculty never got to-gether and decided "we will teach MODERNISM", or not teach it.

The Beaux Arts attitude faded away as the older men retired. The additions to the staff brought other attitudes.

Canfield was (is) a very good architect and a fine teacher. Then came Henry Elder from England and Colin Rowe came and went and came back. Hejduk was very important.

The discussions that took place during the jury reviews of design problems in the 1930s and early 40s were the only general discussions of objectives.

A kind of non-eclectic rationalism had developed, I think, before Henry Elder arrived and he fitted into it.

II

There is reference in you material to meetings during which a course called ARCHITECTURE was proposed.

This was to teach design structures aesthetics materials of construction etc etc etc all in one course.

The difficulties of scheduling and administration proved too much & too many.

III

When Burnham Kelly took over as Dean he instituted a research project on how architecture should be taught. A printed document was produced. I do not have one.

A high percentage of the staff was new to Cornell and it was immediately evident they wanted MODERNISM of one kind or another. Or so it seemed to me.

IV

There is reference in your extracts to a scheme proposed by Hudnut in which an entering class would be divided into ateliers. Maybe three masters would be at the top and the beginning courses for each master would be worked out by him and taught by his assistants.

That is very unlike the system I knew at Cornell.

V

Well, I say again Good Luck

VI

Another source of information would be the work of people who graduated during the period you are interested.

But that would be an heroic job.

Some of them did become very important in the profession.

John Hartell '25
(15 March 1988)

* Martine [sic] Dominguez a Spanish architect who left Spain to get away from Franco and later left Cuba to get away from Castro joined the faculty while Mackesey was still Dean. An excellent practicing architect whose name should have been among those I have already listed, a friend of his named Romanyc (?) also very important also from Cuba stayed only a few years.

* There was in the 1930s anyway a book of photographs of student work printed annually.

* Also it was normal practice for many years to collect and file the programs issued in each Design course when it became the practice of having the critics write their own.

* During my first few years anyway Bosworth wrote all the programs for all the courses and they were issued to the critics. This followed I think the procedure of the Paris Ecole des Beaux Arts, Gaudet [sic] wasn't that his name? {I may be all wrong here}

* My memory is that until Colin Rowe appeared, there was nobody on the faculty interested in abstract theory, really. The attitude was that of the practitioner.

Ralph H. Parks (B.Arch. 1931)
(20 August 1988)

As a member of the Class of 1930, B.Arch.'31 your letter brings back many fond memories of those impressionable years at Cornell and in the College of Architecture, as I recall it was simply called in those days. Although I am approaching age 82 this Nov., I still attempt to "keep my hand in" architectural practice on a very limited scale: Preservation, additions etc., some consulting but no big or involved projects that I cannot handle alone.

Your listing of faculty members during the 30's includes about 25 that I recall. A few of course stand out and probably contributed much to my education there.

Martin: known to us as Prof. Martin, formerly dean of the school and in my freshman and junior (?) year the teacher of a Carpentry, Plumbing, Masonry, Heating etc. lecture course to acquaint us with the practical side of building; tho' we thought it dull, it was really quite a good idea - then when we had learned to draw a bit, it was Working Drwgs. - Complete 1/4" scale plans, elevations & some details of a house. He was thought to be quite elderly by us but a "good skate" and we treated him with respect.

Clarke: Only in passing, since he was connected with city planning.

Eugene Baxter: Descriptive geometry - very reserved, but well liked and dedicated. Also authored a book on Mechanics with George Young, later Dean Young to us, and a father confessor sort of person that one could go to and get complete understanding and guidance - as we matured we came to appreciate him as simply the greatest and as upperclassmen we were able to know him quite intimately and realize some of the problems he had to deal with.

Dunbar and Lawson were buddies, and we came to know them well in the Architects' House - the old Ezra Cornell House, used as a dormitory for a self-chosen group of 5th year students.

Midjo - the artist in art classes - W.C. still life + carcoal [sic] life drawing. A kind teacher.

Stone (Walter King) likewise + very popular as a Savage Club entertainer with all the students.

Ed. Abbuehl; also Descrip. Geom. Shades & Shadows etc. At that time a young teacher who was very dedicated and who also assisted as a sort of proctor @ the Archt's House. A westerner who gave us some interesting broader outlooks - very conservative, but understanding.

Washburn. Only slightly - an artist I believe.

Ludlow Brown: Classmate and a very dedicated teacher whom I re-visited in the 60's to update myself on how things were being done @ the school - spent most of a Sat. with "Lud." Ludow [sic] was one of those students in the college who excelled in almost all his studies except design; he finished by taking a thesis in the school of civil engineering, worked a while in the "field" with Sibley and returned to devote his life to teaching potential architects how to better understand structure.

Detweiler: Only slightly acquainted - sort of after my time, I guess.

Wells: ditto above, but very impressed with my casual acquaintance at revisitations.

Bosworth: Dean when I first arrived @ Cornell + later a prof. of design; influential and well liked by all.

Mackesey; Dean, after my time, but became acquainted thru AIA chapter meetings and thru a mutual friend and distinguished Urban Planner + later professor @ Illinois: Louis Wetmore. Mackesey must have been a splendid dean from the comments of grads whom I came to know as employees and from my cusory [sic] observations on occasion.

Burnham: One of my most influential design profs - a former design man @ McKim, Mead & White, and a very colorfull [sic] character; very much the creative artist esp. in W.C. - loved to experiment on the students' work - "And when he leaves -you use the sponge" - became a lyrical ditty expressing many students' reaction - although I personally felt he was constructive.

Seymour: Came to the school in his early retirement; won fame as co-designer of Perry Memorial on Lake Erie; a very experienced, affable, likeable and mature person who helped bring a bit of the real world into the cloistered life very inobtrusively; socially very personable and as a student once observed @ a formal affair: "The only one of our professors present who looked comfortable in a tuxedo". Went on the "bout" with the boys of Logive [sic] et al and a great champion of any student in difficulty with the authorities.

Davis: Landscape prof. who was very much admired by his students and who would invite them to his house on a Sat. afternoon for "Beer + Brahms." Tho' I knew him only slightly, always felt he "had his feet on the ground."

Tilton: Only slightly in my 5th yr. - another practicing arch't. who came in retirement.

Brauner: Art prof. whom I seldom saw.

Montillon: Landscape prof. who was also highly regarded by his students, some of whom were my classmates + one of whom - George Bebb [?], (deceased,) felt to be very helpful in design. "Monty" also attended Central N.Y. AIA chapter meetings + altho' very retiring lent a quiet + persuasive presence to the gatherings.

Hartell (Johnnie") A young arch'l design prof. who spoke up @ jury meetings - I am told - and helped in the transition from Beaux Arts to Modern. Essentially an artist - attempted to get a license but finally gave up as just not "his dish", I hear.

Finlayson, Prof. of History of Art whom I came to like very much - ran the slides for him. A very modest man and a good teacher.

Phelps: Prof. of the History of Architecture and one of my most influential prof's in his teaching + seminars. Personally always liked history and after the usual or typical bout with modern as was the trend in the post WWII days, I came to realize the importance and significance of the traditional styles - as they were called in the electic [sic] period - and on which I apprenticed in the mid-thirty's [sic].

Hurd: "Thad" (Thaddeus Baker) - an instructor during my senior year - but a fraternity brother, and my "frat" big brother - whom I got to know very well and whom I respected for his good judgement and wise advice. We still correspond - once a year - he has retired in his home town of Clyde, Ohio where he is the local active historian and prime mover in affairs antequarian [sic].

As for photos of student work: the College library had - at one time - photos of premiated work such as theses + my Wm. [sic] Sands Medal award for a Cornell Club in N.Y.C. was one of them; otherwise I have only a collection of the drwgs + renderings here, but no photos. Should I have a chance to visit Cornell again soon I could bring them with me.

As for the History of the College of Architecture, I have of course a few vivid recollections re Student Activities that I might relate in another letter - for what they are worth.

As to your itemized list Curriculum thru Relationship of A,A,P + LA - I also will try to find time to make a few comments about those of which I feel I have some pertinent knowledge. The Depression + WWII had a big impact on my class and I could also comment on this as well as my impressions over 50 yrs. of practice as to the product of some other schools who have worked with + for me.

Ralph H. Parks (B.Arch. 1931)
(20 August 1988)

This chapter will try to recall my impressions Re Student Days with relation to the following:

Curriculum: In general I feel the subjects taught and the studio courses given were equal to or above average for the period as far as preparation for entering the practice of architecture. In retrospect I wish we had had more time and emphasis put on the importance of public speaking ability, more science + chemistry; less time "running washes" and developing renderings - all of which occasionally stood me in good stead during the highly competitive Depression days, but did not necessarily prove germain [sic] to competence as an architect. The depression + "school of hard knocks" quickly convinced me of this essential. However, school is certainly the place to study theory and experiment with it - no time for that in the "real world" for the average person.

For a time Syracuse and some of the other schools put little emphasis on the History of Architecture and I could not but notice the omission in working with some of their graduates. The courses given by Young, Baxter, Abbuehl and Reinf. Concrete in the Civil Engineering school plus I-380 (Industrial Organization) an easy ellective [sic] were of tremendous help in attaining the know-how to pass the State License Exam - George Young was so proud when I passed the first time thru, as I learned several years later during WWII from one of my classmates, with whom I was working on a munitions plant in Baldwinsville, N.Y. Courses were taught via lectures, "Laboratories" and Studio techniques of the time; I was always grateful that I had gone to Cornell @ Ithaca rather than in some large city school; probably they need to have the four + two, or academic plus grad school type of curriculum to enable a student acquire a well-rounded education before concentrating on the technical. Cornell with its "rural" setting, fraternities, extra-curricular activities and exposure to courses and work in other colleges gave an opportunity to do a pretty good job in 5 yrs. As I say, fewer washes and more of certain electives would of [sic] been an improvement.

The requirement of doing a "landscape problem" occasionally and the emphasis on basic art courses were rewarding. Fred Short, L.A., is one classmate with whom I have occasionally corresponded. He has retired after many years with the State of N.Y. at Letchworth State Park. I hope you hear from Fred. He now lives in the Orlando Florida area: Winter Park. Also hope you hear from Larry Perkins '30 who in his retirement is still giving a lecture course + leading some tours in France, I believe. Francis Marston '30 is another who could give you some helpful memories - Frank is quite a W.C. artist, retired in Claremont, VT. and practiced as a delineator of note + teacher @ Syracuse school of architecture back in the 50's or 60's I believe.

"Thad" Hurd should also be helpful. He is retired in Clyde, Ohio and impressed me greatly with his all-around ability: e.g. at one time he did all the design + working plans + specif. incl. the mech'l, electrical + struct'l for a school bldg. in his home town single-handedly!! Now thats [sic] my idea of a truly capable architect. Granted, he had to have time and a supportive client, but given the opportunity how many (in my estimation - very - very few) could do this? A recent article in the Cornell Architecture, Art & Planning Newsletter refered [sic] to the school of my time as a "Beaux Arts school". I would qualify that by saying that during my first year or so they did use Beaux-Arts programs for the design problems, but soon got away from that and often wrote their own - and as far as I can remember the grading was done by the Cornell faculty.

At the time - perhaps due to Lawson's influence - the Landscape School often won the Prix de Rome award. "Mike" Rappuano [sic] was one whom we knew. Believe he also played center on the football team as an undergrad. "Bob" Alexander was also a foot-ball player (left end I believe) + a very good student - and a very successful practitioner in California.

We had very few visiting lecturers or critics in those days - if any. Design was too much a "world apart" from other courses, I fear, altho' "Lud" Brown + others worked to correct that later on. Before Clarke + Mackesey Planning was thought to be a part of architecture - apparantly [sic] no one dreamed of urban or community planning as such; apparantly [sic] this was born of the depression + urban renewal et al; of course there were examples of isolated planned communities like Radburn in N.Y. and those in England etc; But no real science of fact-gathering and demography.

Altho' I graduated into the Depression it had not struck the school fully as yet. I did get excused from attending my own graduation ceremonies because of lack of the wherewithall [sic] to rent a cap + gown etc. During the first ten years of married life 1935-45, we had moved twelve times so that I could continue in architecture - often only a few months here + there. In 1938 I hung out my shingle - earned about $100/wk doing FHA home plans for a Lumber Co. plus the beginnings of a practice - residences, filling stations, small commercial et al. Many of my classmates went into other fields - twenty-five eventually practiced. While working in NYC for a short time @ the office of John Russell Pope, I learned from a former classmate who had finished @ Yale that he and another fellow working for an architect who did work for _____ developed a slogan: "A drawing a day keeps the draftsman away". So production was at a peak.

I do not know if Ludlow Brown is still living in Ithaca, but he told me what industrious students the vet's of WWII were; the profs sure loved them and have never seen the like since I guess.

Should you want another Epistle like these: I might be able to recall some memories of undergraduate life during the prohibition days, the beaux arts balls of architecture, the "tanking" ritual etc.

Ralph H. Parks (B.Arch. 1931)
(14 September 1988)

Delighted to receive your good letter and learn of the response you have had. I am enclosing a copy of [ ]'s letter to me and doubt you will be hearing more from him - altho' I urged that he write you. I guess that I am lucky to be well enough and sentimental enough to make the effort. I would love to invite you here or meet part way for a visit, but when I mentioned it, my wife who is 5 yrs. older than I had a "fit" - has so much on the agenda for me to do here that I'll have to content myself with writing a bit and will mail some of my drwgs + photos for your perusal, copying if you wish + return.

I remember well the "Green Dragon" of my undergrad days - esp. as an underclassman and our participation in the parade thru downtown Ithaca + up College Ave. to the campus. Yes Spring Day I believe. Hope I can find a picture for you. Also I do not mind at all if you quote me.

My wife is now reading ___ "The Fountainhead" by Ayn Rand and it reminds me of the attitude of my classmates re. Modern Architecture vs. the Classical and Traditional of the Eclectic Period into which we were graduated. Harry Wade, a senior then was noted for his wit and antics. He later became vice-pres or something in a large Insurance Co. One day or nite while we were all on "charette" he blurted out: "When Harry K. Thaw saw the new Roxy Theater (just then opened in NYC - a Baroque extravaganza) he said 'My God I shot the wrong architect'".

As for the "revolt" sv. [sic] the accepted and expected "norm" of the period my classmates + those upper classmen a few yrs. ahead of us did little of a radical nature - not enough to be "kicked out" - but in every way possible let the faculty know of their preference to do modern and when I did my thesis (spring 1931) the faculty had been won over to the point of acceptance.

As undergraduates we were very much influenced by our estemed [sic] upperclassmen who were very instrumental in exercising a conditioning 'regimen' - much like a fraternity would - to keep us in line and perpetuate the "mores" of the college body. They did a very good job of it and as a mild punishment or discipline for infraction of rules, or simply obstreporous [sic] behaviour they exercised the Tanking Ritual. There was a shallow metal square tank about 6 to 8' in size and about 8-10" deep in which we soaked our Watman's paper to make "stretches" for the large water color washes etc. we were taught to make in presenting our design problem solutions (Incidentally, this had become such a "fetish" that eventually it was largely abandoned as a waste of time - esp. the india ink routine where hours were spent grinding the ink etc. and some "modern technique" radicals actually did tracing paper floats for their W.C. renderings or went to pastels, or Conte crayon on a light yellow paper.)

Now back to the Tank: A kids slide was set up next to the tank and the "culperts" were required to don swim trunks + shirts and amid the beating of drums + such antics told to slide down into the water. Such later luminaries as "Larry" Perkins of Perkins + Will as well as yours truly were among the victims.

This brings us to the Beaux Arts Balls: Before my time - about 2 yrs. I was told by the late Conway Todd, who was an instructor there during my first two years - that the daughter of a prominent Rochester Arch't [name omitted] - one [name omitted] came on a white horse - with long hair - completely nude as Lady Godiva. Reluctantly I guess the faculty had to send her home. Then in my day we had a circus as the theme - in the large "attic" top floor of White Hall - complete with bleachers for the faculty + guests - trapeese [sic] bars etc. I had gone up + down the hall of the "Architects House" sampling various drinks prior to my arrival at the college. Larry Perkins was helping a proctor screen those entering and when he observed my identity + surmised my condition he gave me a big shove into the crowd and said: "he's ok". All this was during prohibition and you can imagine what a wild time some had. Another episode happened in front of Willard Straight: There had been a growing practice for the Soph's to "shanghie" [sic] the freshman class officers prior to their annual class banquet and hide them in some fraternity house - this particular year in order to protect the frosh and prevent molestation at their banquet the Univ. had lined up a large group of varsity lettermen to guard the entrance; our soph. leader was a chemist and led us in a "gas" attack - chloform [sic] I think - in the clash which resulted. I came to lying on my back on the steps with people stepping on me. We retreated under cover of a fire hose and vanished into the twilight behind the chapel across the street; only after accidentially [sic] spraying the Univ. Proctor in his touring car as he passed by.

Then there was the Smoking Room in the college basement. In the center of the room was a large earthen vase called the "Gaboon" - into which butts were thrown. The walls were adorned with the silouettes [sic] of "revered" upper classmen and other such "memorials".

P.S. Also recall the GO TO HELL stickers on windshields which announced the archt's mock up of a Hell under the stadium complete with Dragon's mouth as an entry - cubicles with a guy acting out _____ et al. Then another Spring Day the Roman Circus @ the track around football field: VIA FORUM signs - the OTHERWAY etc. A chariot race with real horses + chariots.

Frederick W. Short (BLA 1931)
(14 August 1988)

I quite agree with your choice of the History of Architecture at Cornell as a fitting subject for a thesis, so I will do a bit for you with a few recollections that go back to '26 when I first set foot in old White Hall. Presumably your sources will be kept nameless which will suit me very well; please do [permitted to use his name 17 September 1988].

To begin with, I was a city-bred "summer vacation farm boy" with practically no background in the Arts. After high school, I studied a year at Antioch College taking an arts-business course and followed the proscribed [sic] work-study program part time in an NCR factory. I hated it so [I] transferred to Spring and Summer terms at Cornell Agricultural college toward an ornamental horticulture degree. By sheer luck there I met some Landscape Architecture students, liked their program and so matriculated in the college of Architecture in the Fall of '26, graduating in June 1931 with a B.L.A. degree. ....What a contrast that was! It was like entering a new world where the hum-drum of academia suddenly changed to a world charged with excitement and imagination. I never got over it -- quite truly a born-again young man. Here was a school with a huge drafting room where camaraderie was everywhere and it was all so real!

THE WAY COURSES WERE TAUGHT -- There each class had its own color smock. Ours were maroon, so the profs would have no trouble finding us for our 15 minute criticisms, one on one. As you know, the first year and a half all students, architects, landscape architects and fine arts took essentially the same courses. Architects and landscape architects paralleled their subjects a little longer diverging more in 3rd, 4th and 5th years and in design often shared or asked for time from the same critics, especially when working on Collaborative design projects. Dean Bosworth was much in demand, perhaps partly due to his early training in the Beaux-Arts academies in France. Dunbar and Lawson both had European experience, Ed Lawson as a Prix de Rome scholar. André Smith was an earlier product of some Beaux-Arts schooling and of course you have Records of many of that era. Thad Hurd, an architect design instructor (with tongue in cheek) described our design training a great exercise in "vacuous eclecticism". He was partly right, but we worked hard at it and were very serious with our grounding in the traditional elements of design and the historic architectural masterpieces. Dean Bosworth, one of the giants of his time, a master of detail as well as the Grand Plan, spread enthusiasm wherever he went. When he saw a good piece of design, he would exclaim, "That's bully!"

Since I was an architectural neophyte, I clung to tradition along with all the others, for it was all we got. To me, the history of architecture was vital and each week we duly presented for grading our postcard sized ink sketches from Fletcher's History of Architecture, Prof. Phelps, rarely giving an A. Like the rest of

us, I pored over McKim, Mead and White monographs, Sheperd & Jellicoe, Italian villas, F.L. Olmsteds [sic] parks and the like. But MODERNISM was coming in though barely tolerated, and a classmate, Lee Schoen, threatened or actually did pull out in a huff because of faculty prejudice against it. On the other hand, a few of us spent time exploring fine local examples of Greek Revival architecture. Hurd and Abbuehl took a few of us around in Ed's car Sunday afternoons photographing old Cobblestones, churches and farmhouses of that period on our own. Another favorite reference book of mine was John F. Harbeson's Architectural Design in which could be found all the fanciful Beaux-Arts designs by the best Paris Prize winners that anyone could wish for. Fanciful, yes, but they kindled a great interest in master plan design which I never forgot.

CURRICULUM -- The first floor classrooms in White were devoted to Math and Calculus. In the basement rooms were Descriptive Geometry, Mechanics of Materials and Structural Design classes taught by Baxter, Abbuehl and Dean Young and where [*]Ed Lawson taught Plant-Design [sic]. But here Lawson became one of my most exacting profs and for that I am most thankful. There is more to that endeavor than at first one might think. All these basement level subjects bore direct relationships to design. Earthwork Computations and Surveying taught scale an the control of land surface and form. Rigid frame bridges were just beginning to be used as a new engineering design concept, especially in parkways. On a more esthetic note, Life and Watercolor classes by Stone, Brauner and Washburn taught composition, color and the grecian loveliness of natural forms.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR -- As we were architects, we were invariably expected to decorate for the big dances at the Drill (Barton) Hall. I was chairman of decorations for the Navy Day Ball in '30. I was also art editor (following Dick Belcher) of the literary monthly, The Columns, where I did five or six cover designs plus a few odd bits for the inside pages; also designed the front page for the Track publication, "The Wastebasket". Gurney, Marsten, Belcher, Samie Abbott and others did stunning cartoons for the "Widow". Of course we always made our big Green Dragons for the Spring Day parades, some even starting down town and ending up witha [sic] circus at Schoelkopf. Was the World Square or Round? The debate between architects and engineers across the Quad was furious, the architects always winning, of course.

FELLOW STUDENTS -- It was just as much a part of our education to watch fellow students at work, a sort of demonstration in 'how it is done'; a delight to watch Hirata wield a brush with such ease, to watch Nat Owings in deep concentration over his drawing board, to watch Johnstone run a big wash on his thesis, to see someone else poché a building plan, or have Professor

[*] -- Professor Ralph Curtis always had the discriminating landscape designer in mind when he taught identification and the essential characteristics of trees, shrubs and vines. His field trips were memorable [This footnote in original letter.]

Seymour come by to suggest a rich shade of "Boint Sienna" or have Don Hershey show how to rusticate a wall. Of course we all returned small favors (niggering) by helping prepare a "stretch" or lettering a plan or bringing up a coke. One day sketch problems or Esquisse-esquisses put everyone at fever pitch - each student pouring out his concept and a hurry-up rendering to the last few minutes of explosive activity, the Charette, before time was called.[385] Then there was the suspense next morning during the judging by the faculty behind the locked doors of the Exhibition Room. Much value should be attached to the few Collaborative projects in which architects and landscape architects did a design project together.

A few 4th and 5th year students enjoyed the high privilege of rooming at the "Architects' House" (formerly the F.C.Cornell mansion) with some of our classmates, Will, Alexander, Hirata, Owings, Harris, with Abbuehl, Hurd and Lawson as proctors. I earned my room there by tending the furnace. Will there be another Architects' House? Cornell certainly deserves it.

VISITING LECTURERS AND CRITICS -- If I remember correctly, there were very few visiting lecturers during my time. Possibly the Depression had something to do with this. Harold Shreve came up from NYC a couple of times, but his new Empire State Building did not interest me particularly. As for landscape architects, Gilmore Clarke gave at least one lecture on Parkways. I believe I just missed one by Bryant Fleming.

The College also owes a bow to "Daisy" Farrand, wife of President Livingston Farrand. Since she studied for her degree in Fine Arts, she had a warm spot in her heart for the students in White Hall and occasionally entertained students and faculty out on the broad terrace on the east side of the President's residence, then on East Ave.

[...]

P.S. It was almost traditional for Cornell landscape architects to win the annual Prix de Rome competitions. I was a finalist in '31, placing second to Neil H. Park, who won. I was allowed to use my competition design with its accompanying report for a "Country Park" as my thesis. I was lucky in making good grades in design and picked up a half dozen or so 'Gold Seals' and also won the coveted Sands Medal "for excellence in design".

[385] [Handwritten on reverse]: Rolls after rolls of tracing paper were used as one design was refined after another and a sea of discarded sketches littered the floor to be swept up by our patient janitor, sometimes with quiet amazement on his face!

Frederick W. Short (BLA 1931)
(30 August 1988)

Supplementing my critique of 8/14, I have a few more points to bring out. It was a not uncommon practice to work summers in the offices of prominent Cornell alumni. For instance, I worked for Ralph E. Griswold in the offices of Nicolet and Griswold in Pittsburgh during the summers of '28 and '29 where I assisted on current projects and the making of a large scale model of the Allegany [sic] County Memorial Cemetery.

There was nothing narrow in the curriculum for LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS.. We were all taught a good number os disciplines by an outstanding coterie of professors and instructors in three separate colleges arranged and under the deanship of George Young, Jr. Since I had transferred credits from a year at Antioch College and spring and summer terms at the College of Agriculture, the following were my subjects so far as I can recall:

[List of courses and faculty omitted]

NOTE - Both design subjects [architectural and landscape] embraced PROBLEM ANALYSIS, followed by application of logical and innovative solutions, as well as learning and the use of basic historical and classic motifs; i.e. these design problems taught planned progression toward final solutions involving deliberative, introspective philosophic, humanitarian and artistic principles and skills. In the course of this design process, roll after roll of tracing paper were consumed, sheets of drawing paper, supplies of drafting equipment, all involving frequent trips to the Coo-p [sic] for supplies. Reference books in the college library were actively used and reference to prior Gold Seal designs served as models for finished renderings. About 5 design probs/term.

[Continuing list of courses omitted]

Three and sometimes four weeks were allowed for the development and completion of each design problem for which a carefully worded program describing its special conditions was mimeographed for each student.

One day only (the first), was given to the preparation by each student, on his own, to work out a preliminary idea for his intended solution, a scheme from which he was not allowed to depart. If he did depart from his unique scheme too radically in his final presentation, he was marked with an "HC" - (hors de concours - literally "out of the contest") which was essentially a failing grade, a most fearsome threat, believe me!

Thus "deadlines" - the urgency to make quick analyses was excellent training for the professional of the future.

Frederick W. Short (BLA 1931)
(26 September 1988)

More excavations archeological.....If there is any truth to the theory that the college makes the man, old White Hall, the BUILDING, was a superb example.

With its top floor composed of three drafting rooms opening to each other, i.e., freshman, upperclassmen and sophomore, there was a progression and freedom of movement and a logic between them that served to meld the student body into an impromptu but cohesive "guild".

By day the rooms were bright with sunlight streaming from the east through the campus elms and through colorful, sometimes blossoming maples across the Ithaca valley and Baker dorms to the west. By night, we were a huge illumined workshop, a lighthouse-on-campus right up to curfew and often beyond.

One flight down was the Smoking Room where Howie Matteson (or someone else) would repair with his canes and braces (he had had polio) and bat out a few measures on an old beat-up piano. Adjacent to this was the college library administered for a time by Mrs. E. Gorton Davis. Next to it, the lecture room, the main stairway, then the college offices, then the large Exhibition Room surrounded by faculty offices. The floor below was all Mathematics and the Basement was devoted to Descrip drafting, Mechanics and Structural Design offices and lecture rooms pertaining thereto. Altogether it was a neat and efficient package.

Fine Arts were in Franklin (now Tjaden Hall) and old bombed-out Morse, neither of which had the stalwart character of White which, while not exactly a "Christopher Wren" was not unlike an aerie, a nest for eagles, nevertheless.

Balancing Morrill with McGraw between, to our minds we were the ones who dominated the campus with our antics, our parades, our parties, our penny pitching against the front steps between classes. When we did things, we generally did them together.

With the move to Sibley, we have what seems to me a series of compartments forced by expansion, so a lack of unity. But then of course I haven't LIVED there as we did at White!

Edmund N. Bacon (B.Arch. 1932)
(11 October 1988)

I regret that I have been so long in responding to your very interesting letter of 7-28. I am totally fascinated by the subject of your thesis. The period I was at Cornell, 1927-1932, did mark the beginning of the transition. During that time Hartell introduced the entirely new notion of rendering, not in chinese ink graded washes, but with tempera colors in ruling pens. This instantly smashed the awareness of the subtleties of light and space which had been the essence of the previous architectural drawings. Also, instantly it denigrated the craftsmanship of the Whatman stretches and graded washes, and substituted an easy and relatively spectacular way to get attention.

If you are interested in some of my drawings, photographs of them are readily available in the library. I do have some others here, but the best ones have been photographed. My thesis, which is a plan for the center of Philadelphia, may have a special interest because, as Director of the Philadelphia City Planning Commission, I became responsible for the development of the plan for that exact area, which was built.

The whole subject is so vast and so compelling that it is difficult to write casually about it. I would be glad to discuss it with you by phone if there is still time.

One thing I remember very strongly was the collaborative projects with painters and sculptors. These were truly exciting, and I regret that they are not used today.

There is an absolutely fundamental point, and that is that we were taught and believed that architecture had theories which underlay it. Professor Burnham's theory classes were profound and very moving. They will live with me always. (I am not sure they were generally held in high regard by the students.) I think that both teaching and practice now suffers grievously from lack of an underbase of principles and theory.

Dean Young was a marvelously gutsy person. He had a profound influence on me. He told me I could do anything I wanted to do. No one else ever said that to me, and I believed him.

I was close friends with Midjo, but I resisted his insistence that I should become a painter.

I am profoundly of the view that my experience of moving directly from High School to the architectural program at age 17 was much the best thing for me. Then I graduated in 1932 with a Bachelor of Architecture, and never

darkened the halls of academia again, freed of learning from then on. My own view ia [sic] that it is a serious mistake to delay the architectural experience, and to hang around universities so long.

My one experience with city planning was a course with Gilmore Clarke which was principally concerned with transition zones, around the periphery of the business district. The principle [sic] impression that his course left in my mind was that city planning was impossible, and, surely, something I never wanted to have anything to do with.

Now I remember a deeply significant thing about our class. Levine, (I forget his first name), whose father ran a dress trimming sweatshop in the Lower East Side, decided to do a community for his thesis. The faculty met in formal session and concluded that the design of a community was not architecture, and the subject was formally disallowed. Levine did it anyway and got a medal.

I suppose you have received much material on the tubbings that were held periodically. The great basin for wetting the Whatman stretches was filled with water. A drafting board slide was rigged up to it, and some offending freshman was slid down it. I was not, unhappily, ever chosen, so I cannot give an authoritative inside account, nor can I remember clearly what the causes of the tubbing actually were.

These random recollections are of very limited value. There is a great story to be told of the transition years and what they meant. I hope you, and your anonymous friend tell it.

[...]

PS I think the Esquisse system was very good. I believe it is not used today. We had a week in which to make a sketch of the overall plan for the project which forced us to think of the design as a whole. We were then supposed to follow the general outlines of the esquisse in the development of the project.

I think this was incredibly valuable. I learned to do an overall concept very quickly, which I do today. It made it impossible to keep messing around with details.

John A. Boyce (B.Arch. 1932)
(3 October 1988)

In trying to look back sixty years to recall material that might be useful to you in your research, I find that all I can offer are random observations and personal reactions without any documentation. I will try to respond to each of the areas of concern listed in your letter.

My student days extended from September 1927 to June 1932 at which time I completed the regular five year course in Architecture, graduating with a B.Arch. degree and officially listed as a member of the Class of '31. Although the college was still affiliated with the B.A.I.D. in New York, the design faculty wrote their own programs and juried all student projects. However, many Beaux Arts traditions were still continued including (1) requiring a student to submit his parti solution during the first twelve hours of a problem, (2) spending the next four to six weeks developing that scheme and (3) winding up with a "charette" in which the rendering of the project was rushed to completion.

Architectural Design was the central course each of the five years. Increasing emphasis was reflected in the number of credit hours given, ranging from three hours per term in freshman year to nine hours per term in the last year. This in relation to an average course load of fifteen hours. Each year included a one term [hour?] lecture course in Theory of Architecture. History of Architecture was taught first and second years. Freshman year we had two terms of Descriptive Geometry and two terms of Freehand Drawing. Sophomore year we had more Fine Arts courses consisting of two terms of Life Drawing and a term each of Color media and Clay Modelling. During those two years, we rounded out our schedule with any required English, Math or Science courses we had failed to take in high school.

Junior year we started engineering courses with two terms of Structural Mechanics, a term of Construction Materials, a term of Heating and Plumbing and a term of Perspective Construction. Senior year rounded out our engineering education with Structural Design, Concrete Construction and testing Materials, as well as an architectural course in Working Drawings. Fifth year was largely devoted to working on our Thesis. Both fourth and fifth years we were expected to fill out our schedules with elective courses, preferably outside the College and not directly related to Architecture, in order to broaden our general education in the humanities. To insure this, we were required to obtain faculty approval for our selection of courses that would earn the necessary elective credits.

There were only about two hundred in the College with a faculty of about twenty. Each professor was a distinct personality with his own way of teaching. George Young, Jr. was Dean of Architecture at that time. He insisted on teaching

Structural Mechanics to each Sophomore class. He told each beginning class that the subject matter of the course could be learned in less than six weeks, but that he would take two terms to teach it so that he would have time to train each of us how to think! - and he did!

Bosworth taught architectural theory. He was a former Dean, and semi-retired, but he was highly respected and his lectures demonstrated the thinking processes that led to design solutions. Professor Phelps gave slide lectures on the History of Architecture. Students were required to submit post card sized drawings of examples related to periods currently under study. Each week he would post outstanding submittals on the bulletin board outside his office. There was great competition to have your card posted. Subjects varied over a wide range and were drawn on a 3 x 5 card using pencil, ink or full color.

Working Drawings was taught by "Pa" Martin, also a former Dean of the College. His lectures prepared us for our main project, doing construction drawings for a two story house with basement, the general plan and design of which was given us. Drawings consisted of 1/4" scale plans and elevations plus a 3/4" scale cross section of the house, showing details of foundations, framing of floors, walls and roof, as well as elevations of interior room walls, doors and trim.

In Design, students were assigned a design professor to act as his critic for each term. Younger professors were assigned in Freshman and Sophomore years and older professors in the later years. The whole design faculty was available as critics in the final thesis term. My favorite was Prof. Seymour. He had a thorough Beaux Arts background, but had recently retired from active practice. His approach was both imaginative and pragmatic. He was quite open to "modern" design, but sometimes complained that it took itself too seriously, being what he called "triste" and missing the delight that should characterize good design. He was also courtly but somewhat patronizing to women students. He asked one co-ed what technique she planned to use in the rendering of her design project. Informed that she planned to do a wash drawing, using tobacco juice instead of Chinese Ink, he pretended to be horrified and suggested that she use tea instead. She did and got the highest grade of her student career.

Effort was made to familiarize us with the related field of landscape design and urban planning. Occasionally we had joint problems in which landscape students and architectural students participated and for which the student had a design critic from both departments. Visiting lecturers filled us in on current developments such as town planning at Greenbelt, Md. and urban design at Radio City in New York. We were introduced to the concept of regional planning in a series of lectures by Gilmore Clarke, who later returned to become Dean of the College and founded the department of urban planning and design.

As for the history of the Green Dragon, I was involved in the first and perhaps the only motorized dragon. It was in the spring of 1931, or possibly 1932, when the Depression had not fully penetrated the campus. I had seen the Auto Show in New York that year where the English had introduced the first minicar, the Austin, a truly miniature vehicle. By MArch, when our committee was making plans for that year's dragon, an Ithaca dealer took an ad in the SUN to announce that he has Austins in stock. We decided to rent three and build our dragon around them. Thinking it would be good publicity, the dealer agreed to deliver the cars to the back of White Hall at 11:00 on the morning of March 17. There we hastily rigged the articulated wood frame and attached the green cloth cover, before heading out on the quadrangle, just as the library clock struck noon.

As we crossed in front of Sibley, which at that time was the home of the engineers, they poured out from their classes. Spotting us, they armed themselves with snowballs from the early morning snow and charged the dragon, hoping to roll it over. Fortunately, the line of architectural students along both sides of the dragon was able to fend off the engineers, while the dragon beat a hasty retreat to the other end of the quadrangle. Our committee was greatly relieved when three undamaged Austins arrived back behind White Hall.

William W. Freeman (B.Arch. 1932)
(7 October 1988)

Enclosed is my rough draft of a response to your questions of 7-28-88. Have been in hospital past 2 months. Rather than finishing & sending typed material - will send as is. Will be interested in your thesis. Good luck.

I graduated in 1932 with a B.Arch degree. In 1932-33 I returned for a years [sic] work for a Masters Degree which I did not complete. Reason for returning - no job - reason for not completing my Masters work - out of funds.

The Curriculum was centered on Design which was taught by individual appointment with the Instructor or Professor to whom you were assigned. This averaged approximately an hour a week. In the interim it was trial and error in the drafting room with some assistance from the upper classmen. This system I recall was most strange to me and I found it very difficult to adjust. My background was completely foreign to the subject, the method and the techniques. However it apparently worked. With no regular classes - no assignments and many outside interesting (to me) activities to attract ones [sic] attention I found it took much discipline with myself to apply my time as became obvious was so necessary. The balance of the curriculum was via the normal class routine and gave one gradually the backup necessary for design. In the 3, 4 or 5th years electives were allowed which I found most interesting. I managed to reach out to courses in the various colleges that greatly broaden my horizon. Eng Law - Ind design - Greek Archeology [sic] - Hotel Management & Planning - Music Appreciation for example I found very beneficial and have given me enjoyment in varied ways all my professional life.

The faculty was headed by Dean George Young - he Baxter and Ed Abbuehl managed to hold my interest in the structural complexities of Architecture. Prof. Phelps in Architectural History was great - most enjoyable but difficult at times to stay awake in the dark lecture room, min. ventilation and a somewhat level quality to his voice even tho the slide collection was superb. Design included Bosworth who made one think and Seymour who made one work. Seymour to me was the man who had it all. Marvelous critiques - wonderful fast loose sketches and many quips that I have often thought back on. Stone Midjo and Washburn taught me to draw and the discipline of color.

Stones [sic] classes in Pastel drawing was [sic] an afternoon of entertainment and most instructive.

Fellow students - the White Hall drafting room-rooms made us after the first term as a freshman into one group. Everyone worked for everybody. Much was learned. My memories of outstanding people include Don Setter, Phil Will, Larry Perkins, Ed Bacon, George Bottcher, Art O'Dell, John Boyce, John Townsend,

plus others whose names I cannot recall. The sessions downstairs in the exhibition room when relaxation was required were always enlightening with much architectural discussion. Occassionally [sic] a faculty member joined in - smoke really became thick.

The judging of the design problems resulted in awards - Mention, 1st Mention, 1st 1st Mention, Medal with a numerical grade in addition. The numerical grade was used as points of which one had to achieve a given number each year.

Louise Stevens Proctor (BFA 1932)
(6 September 1988)

I graduated with the Class of '32 - altho I should have in '31 - since we had a five year course - so it happened. I was most fortunate to be awarded the Charles Goodwin Sands Metal [sic] at the time of graduation. "M. Louise Stevens" 1932.

One of the most rewarding + delightful 'Problem' [sic] I had was the combine of Arch, Art + Landscape. The Arch was Shigio [sic] Hirato, I the artist - the landscape arch escapes my mind. As I recall we did very well and received a high mark.

I think Midjo first + then Brauner were the two who really spurred me on. I admired + really loved them both. Young was the big boss then. I do remember very kindly Washburn, Camden and Finlayson.

In '30-'31 our class enter [sic] competition in N.Y. Society of Beaux-Arts Architecture for which I received "1st Metal [sic] Mural Painting M.L. Stevens"

I think the best thing that happened with my Art Courses at Cornell - was the number of other course [sic] , besides painting drawing etc - perspective, history, design (architectural) so many that have stood me in good steed.

I do have several snaps of a couple pieces of my work, which I will send + hope they help with your Thesis-! These were all done in classes. The one of the laborer - should be there - I left that by request as a sample - if you find it - I'd love a better picture.

John S. Townsend (B.Arch. 1932)
(22 August 1988)

Thank you for your letter and request of July 28, 1988. It brought back a lot of very happy memories, and names I had forgotten. I have enjoyed the following and hope that it helps you on your thesis.

I'll start by taking your list in order:

1. Curriculum. Design stands out, then structural under Dean Young. History under Phelps, Art under Ken Washburn & Midjo, Mechanics under Pa Martin was poor. I enjoyed my electives. Philosophy, Economics, Public Speaking, and Psychology are those I remember.

2. The classes were small so you did have a rapport with the professor. Design was one-to-one, of course, as was art. I don't remember any dull or uninteresting courses except under Martin.

3. I apparently had fair-to-good grades, made Tau Beta Pi, so I don't remember this as a problem.

4. I'll list the faculty in the order of their excellence, in Design they were all good, Bosworth, Seymour, Dunbar, Hartell. Young was an outstanding teacher. We all had a very good rapport with Abbuehl and Hurd. Dunbar and Phelps were very good in History, a joy for years. Ken Washburn and Midjo in Art - I feel their influence almost daily.

5. My fellow students became my best friends and I am still in touch with these: John Boyce, Ed Bacon, the Pruyn Brothers, Bill Freeman, all in Class of 1931. We admired the good students, particularly [in] design, like Phil Will, John Billings, etc. Shigeo Hirata was outstanding, could, and did help us all. A few touches by him on a rendering improved it 100%. Larry Perkins was and is a good friend.

6. The visiting lectures [sic] are all that I remember - from New York City. Don't believe we had [visiting] critics.

7. Design was Number 1.

8. We did relate to those in Landscape Design, absorbed some of their work. No planning that I can remember but my 5th year I did a study of Neighborhood Design and Development and made a speech to all architecture and engineering students and won first prize - the first architect to win first prize - $100.00 (a lot then). And, as I was rooming with Ed Bacon, he absorbed a lot of this study and it probably helped influence him to go on into City Planning.

9. I was fortunate that the depression did not affect me at Cornell, but I did work for nothing during Summers of 1930 and 1931 and after I graduated in 1932. There were no jobs in Chicago in 1932 so I worked for the first prefab house company in America, General Houses, for $0 until I left for China in November 1933. I got the following men jobs with General Houses: Phil Will, Larry Perkins and John Pruyn.

The favorite architects in my days at Cornell and after:

Sarinen [sic], Alvar Alto [sic], Gropius, Mies Vanderow [sic], F.L. Wright, Neutra, Holibird [sic], and Root (a Cornell graduate); (I worked for them the Summer of 1930 for $0.); William Wurster of San Francisco (Don Emmons 1932 became a partner.); Gardner Daily and Roy Kelly of Los Angeles.

I am fortunate to be retired to Auburn. They have a fine architectural school and I've met many of the faculty and students these last nine years. I enjoy my contacts there very much. One of my best friends, Nick Davis, is a good friend of your Dean.

Here is a brief Resume:

High School, Harvey, Illinois, graduated 1927. Cornell - graduated 1932. Gargoyle, Tau Beta Pi, Art Editor Cornell Annual 1931, Architecture College President 1931-1932. 150 lb. Crew 1931-1932. R.O.T.C. Scabbard & Blade. L'Ogive Social, Phi Kappa Sigma Fraternity.

There is lots more I could cover after Cornell: China in 1933-34, Polio in Shanghai, Cranbrook & Saarinens [sic] Prefab houses. Engineering during the war - Perkins & Will. How John Boyce came to chicago [sic]. My own practice, 1937-1977, and so on! My work was Modern or Contemporary - with a few eclectic houses in later years.

One amusing anecdote: Daisey [sic] Farrand, the Cornell President's wife, took some courses with our class in Architecture. We became friends. At our baccalaureate, she sent me a note, "Would the Architectural Class of 1931 please come to Tea, in her garden." I still have the note, signed, "Daisey."

[...]

John S. Townsend (B.Arch. 1932)
(25 August 1988)

[...]

The letter enclosed is one I received from Dean Young after he had retired to Novato, Calif. He didn't date it but the postmark is June 1951. As you will read, he came to see me in Chicago in late 1934 or 35 when I was paralyzed from the waist down from Polio.

In 1932 Dean Young came to Chicago to the meeting which introduced Mies Van Der O (?) as the new dean at IIT. Frank L. Wright was the 1st speaker, then walked out - he was really arrogant! and I remember that dean Young was Mad. There were a group of Cornell Architects at this meeting seated at a table with Young.

The [enclosed] cards are an example of what we did in History under Phelps. He was a good teacher.

[Dean Young's letter to Townsend follows:]

Dear John.

I wonder if you can realize what such a letter as yours means to one whose really active life is past?

I suppose that every one who retires and has no day to day responsibilities comes to wonder about all those years when from day to day he was facing pressing responsibility.

And insortably the thought comes of how much more he should have put into those years and how much better his job could have been done. How much better (given a measure of the fore-time strength and energy) he could do it today.

Then a letter like yours comes along. It is so sincere - so obviously unrehearsed that it carries some conviction. Maybe those years were not so unproductive as they seem in retrospect. I had a similar letter from Phil Will - and Dicky Drake - and next Saturday there will be a party of about 15 of the boys here to reune. Of course San Francisco is not the best place in the world to find Cornell Architects but we have raked up about 15. The ones you might remember are Ken Washburn - Bob Tobin (Fred Langhorst will not be here as he is abroad) Sewall Smith Don Emmons Bob Kitchen - possibly Ed Bissantz. The others are enough older or younger so that your paths would not have crossed.

I have thought many times about the call I made on you at your home in Chicago when you were so helpless that one could only hope and

pray that a normal life would be possible for you. Your letter is the best possible reassurance in that respect. I am glad.

as ever yours

George Young Jr.

John S. Townsend (B.Arch. 1932)
(12 September 1988)

I'll try to reply to your letter of the 3rd the best I can.

#1 I had no idea Dean Young was unhappy the last few years. Am sorry to hear that.

I did not go to Cranbrook but visited Ed Bacon. He did go there in 34-35 & 35-36. I met the Saarinens thru Ed. Also Carl Millies [sic] the sculptor (Great one!)

I don't know of any one teaching, etc. about Scandinavian architects. I think I just admired their work, and still do. Perhaps it is because my grandfather was a Scandinavian (I hardly knew him) I don't believe Midjo or Brauner had any influence in that matter. Or, any of the rest of the faculty.

I went to China to Work. I was earning $5.00 a week in Chicago. Had worked for 6 months or so for 0 [zero]. Read about the deppresion [sic] of 29-34. It was tough. Shanghai was not to feel the depression until '35 or so. I made $125 a week (or was it a month?) which was great. Ed Bacon and I had an apartment, a Cook Boy, etc. etc. We did contempory [sic] style work for Mr. Murphy - a Yale graduate from New Haven Conn. We liked Chinese architecture and admired much about China, and still do. Our work was for the European Colony in Shanghai.

Some movie maker is making a film of Ed Bacon's days in Shanghai. My letters home were the inspiration for this. Are you familiar with Bacon's videos on City Planning-?

John R. Butler (B.Arch. 1933)
(19 August 1988)

In reference to your July 28th letter, I doubt that I am a very good source of information for you as I was one of the "Depression" students. Transferred to Cornell from the University of Kansas as a Junior in the fall of 1930, I graduated in the spring of 1933 at the ripe old age of 20. I am sure I would not have been accepted, due to my below average grades, if they had not been desperate for students at the time. The classes were small and the curriculum limited, consequently both faculty and students got to know each other very well. There were very few truly gifted students attending, which was limited to those financially able to do so. Several had to drop out for this reason while I was there; however, we all had a memorable and wonderful experience.

In respect to the faculty, I had classes under about a third of those you list. The ones that meant the most to me were Dean Young, Professors Martin, Hartell, Burnham and Seymour. They were all very good teachers. Hartell was the forerunner of good modern design, which was just evolving at the time. Martin was great at the practical application of what we were learning. Burnham and Seymour taught us the classic basis of good design, and Young was always there to give us a frank lecture of [if?] we weren't doing a good job -- which often applied to me. My main interest was residential architecture, but nearly all of our assigned projects were public buildings. I did not save any of my drawings, tho two or three were exhibited by the College at the 1977 Reunion. Maybe they still have them.

I was most fortunate to be able to live in the Architects' House my last two years. Anyone who ever lived there will tell you it was one of the best institutions Cornell ever had. Besides the fellowship, our spaghetti dinners were the talk of the campus. It is most regrettable that it is now gone.

We were all very conscious of the Depression. 1933 was not a good year to graduate. As a result, very few of the students stayed with architecture. After spending several weeks in New York and Chicago trying to get a job, I returned to my home in Wichita, Kansas, and worked two years for free in the state's largest architectural firm, which had shrunk to two of the original three partners. I got a lot of practical experience, including how to write specifications. Since I knew how to type, it was my job while there as the firm couldn't afford a secretary. I opened my own office in the fall of 1935, concentrating on residential work. Did fairly well, but the jobs were few and far between. I was lucky and got a few published in national magazines. I got married in 1938 and quickly discovered that two could not live as cheaply as one. I tossed in the sponge in early 1939 and went with the HOLC (your granddad can explain what that was) in Topeka, Kansas, as State Reconditioning Supervisor. Having had a taste of the mortgage business, when that agency started to fold I moved to Houston in January, 1941. I found a job with a mortgage banking firm here and remained with them until my retirement in 1977. So much for the Depression.

Mary Brown Channel (B.Arch. 1933)
(3 September 1988)

Sorry that I have put off writing but I have been trying to remember what I could about our professors. Since I was a girl and did not come into contact with the faculty socially or in conversation I am afraid I can't tell you very much, but have written just a few bits about the ones I remember.

Martin

We called him "Pop" Martin I expect because he was older than the other faculty.

He was very dapper looking with his white hair and white goatee, and although older he was very straight.

I found out he had been in World War I designing a concrete ship which was never finished because the war was over. I don't know whether it would have floated or not.

He walked up to me one day and told me he had been very flattered because I said "Sir" and "No Sir" to him (my good southern training) until he heard me say "Sir" to the young professors.

Midjo

Mr. Midjo was one of my favorites. He taught drawing from life. I knew that he did excellent painting of people but really did not see too much of his work until I went back to a reunion and they had many of his portraits on exhibit.

He was a wirey [sic] little man and gesticulated with his hands a great deal. He could really make one draw just by waving his hand in the right direction, you quickly caught the idea.

Girls did not use much make up in those days, maybe just a little lip stick. I used very little. One day before class a couple of the girls got hold of me and fixed me up with rouge and lip stick. Mr. Midjo came in the room gave me one look slaped [sic] his hands against his legs and said "Now I have to get twenty feet away from you instead of two".

He did a portrait of my roommate with her pretty blond hair. He really caught her personality, laughing with the world yet not showing a big grin on her face.

Abbuehl

Abbuehl was a young assistant instructor not long out of college himself always properly dressed and quite good looking.

He later came to Virginia and settled in Salem (near Roanoke). I think he was in business with Abbot who graduated in '30 or '31. Abbot's son is an architect in Williamsburg and could probably tell you more about Abbuehl.

Hurd

Hurd also was young and shortly out of college.

Stone

Stony as we called him was also a painter of merit but I did not come in contact with him much.

I do remember Baxter, Dunbar, Burnham, Seymour, Lawson, but cannot tell you much about them. Also Tilton.

Washburn

Washburn was a painter of scenes around the country side. His autumn scenes were outstanding.

Brauner

Another painter. I never had him as an instructor but I was quite taken with his work when I saw an exhibit of it. His son was in school at the same time I was; maybe he is still living.

Bosworth

Bosworth was professor of design for the seniors. I thought he was the greatest. He would come around once a week and give us a critism [sic] on our work.

Young

Young was Dean of the College when I was there. His wife sometimes invited some of the students to their house. She was an artist. He must have talked to each student at least once as I was called into his office once. I just don't know why but probably to get to know the student better.

Phelps

Phelps was instructor in the History of Architecture. He had many many slides which I expect are still in the College. I never cared for history until I had his class, but the slides and architecture gave me something to tie general history to. Now I find I want to know more and more about my own area.

He was a small man and usually read from his notes but he really put the continuity of history together.

Sorry I can't help too much.

Benjamin J. Rabe (B.Arch. 1935)
(25 August 1988)

Enclosed are four "projects". Most of us had projects copied and you may get quite a few of them. These are some of mine.

My class was Arch. 1935 plus a granted fellowship year for a Masters in 1936.

Memories of college days are enjoyable. After graduation in 1936 I was employed by Dwight James Baum in New York. In 1938 I moved to Eggers and Higgins, the surviving firm of John Russell Pope. The firm was then involved in the Jefferson Memorial and the National Gallery, at that time called the Mellon Gallery, for Mr. Mellon financed the building.

In 1941 I joined the Army and was a Major in charge of Airfield construction in District 3 of China, which was the Southeastern section. 20 to 30 fields were built entirely by hand by coolies. This included grading, rock breaking and gravel making for the runways which were solidified with a slurry of clay and water. 10 to 20 thousand coolies in one day could grade down or up as much as graders today, and much more interesting to watch! There were no landing mats or cement or grader available. In 1946 I returned to my home town of Redlands and had a pleasant, modest architectural practice.

Design, History of Architecture and its construction were the most interesting subjects for me.

Chewing tobacco was done in the drafting room as brass spittoons were still around, however, smoking predominated. During prohibition bootleggers and speakeasys [sic] were readily available. When prohibition ended, liquor was legal, but it cost more. L Ogive [sic] and Kappa Beta Phi were the drinking clubs. HouseParties [sic] were splendid.

In 1931 I requested of Dean Young, a three day absence to attend my sisters [sic] wedding. He refused; explaining that it was not possible, as the Dean to freely eliminate three days of the schooling that Cornell had agreed to provide. He added, howver [sic], that it was my choice alone and my loss to skip class, but he certainly could not and would not approve it. I did take the days off. He was quite correct in what he didand [sic] it made me realize clearly, at age 19, that almost every action is one's own choice.

All of us were very fortunate during the depression to even be in school. I believe those in my class all got good jobs promptly after graduation.

Cornell was a most pleasant time.

Elmer J. Manson (B.Arch. 1937, M.Arch. 1940)
(mailed 12 October 1988)

I am not as feeble as my handwriting might indicate. This is written on the Canadian Pacific R.R. on the way to Banff.

Your thesis is most interesting. If possible I would like a copy.

I retired from my former firm, Manson-Jackson-Kane, staff of 30-35, ten years ago. Since then I have had a "sunset office", one man, me. A recent project was the alteration of a Methodist church in Lansing built in 1889 from a design by Elijah Myers, architect of the Michigan State Capitol. The committee wanted me to respect the Richardson Romanesque Architecture which brought back memories of the analytiques (sp?) at Cornell. That training helped me develop a design harmonious with the original.

I'll admit that I am perplexed about current design. Many of the traditional styled projects are excellent. Many of the "post-modern" are also excellent. I hope I am tolerant enough to enjoy both. Unfortunately there is so much poor (lousy) work.

Why the architect is losing out as the master builder is not part of your thesis.

a) In retrospect the curriculum was excellent. We received a broad education whether we wanted it or not. We students groused (sp). But I think that we knew we had selected a good school, so we might just as well get the most from it. Also Ed Abbuehl would ask about the sermon at Sage Chapel and Tad Hurd expected knowldgeable (sp) comments about the symphony concert. And I should add the faculty helped in the instructions of staging a good cocktail party. We received as Ezra C wished instruction in <u>many</u> subjects.

The exposure to engineering was appropriate. Memory: We agreed that twelve students should not all do identical graphs for an engineering project. We established a division of labor and each architect did one graph which we all traced. It expedited the exercise. Unfortunately one graph was 1/8" and the rest at 1/10 scale. We were summoned to Dean Youngs [sic] office for the proper reprimand. Then with a big smile he said "You should know that wouldn't work in a [sic] Engineering College". He knew that we were developing originality in problem solving.

b) Possibly the technique of instruction could have been improved; BUT I believe effectiveness is better than efficiency. The models Baxter had for descript [sic] were marvelous. The slides Phelps had for history with a "Cornell student in

the background" were in my mind when I was able to see the actual object. The library was a tremendos [sic] resource.

However the courses were taught we absorbed a lot about architecture. Memory: Tilton had a materials class at 8:00 AM Sat. Several of us did not have time to change from our tux, so we pulled on rain coats over the formal attire and attended class. Being in a condition of semi-stupor by previous arrangement we agreed to filibuster. Whatever Tilton said, someone would question. We successfully prevented any meaningful discussion. Much to our amazement, at the end of the hour, Tilton said "all those attending class this morning are excused from the final exam."

Which leads to

c) The grading system was flexible, except of course for presentation. If a project was not in the drawer on time, it was H.C. In later years a deadline was a deadline. Owners want performance, not excuses. Work should be done on time.

Somehow grades were given on what we students had learned and not necessarily on what we wrote back in a prelim book.

Memory: For one project [name omitted] did an excellent reproduction of a plate published in the Beaux Arts Bulletin. A student delegation objected to this plagiarism to the critic, Seymour. Uncle Dunk responded "He had the intelligence to select a good design and the skill to copy it. He deserved a 75."

Prizes were accepted as part of the procedure. Somehow my masters thesis was awarded a Sands medal, much to my surprise. Some twenty years later my wife found it while house cleaning and had it framed for my office.

The gold stars awarded for outstanding design were good recognition, but I believe most students were self-motivated. We wanted the skill to get & keep a job when we graduated.

Faculty. We accepted the faculty with the same attitude we accepted the curriculum. They were gentlemen of the old school and we respected them. Each added to the enrichment we received from the Cornell connection. It impressed me that Lawson always served LAWSON scotch. Its the elan which makes good things just a bit better.

Memory: At lunch one noon Dean Young said Black Jack taught one to add quickly.

Visiting Critics: I accepted them as part of the show. They offered valuable side lights to the hazards of professional practice. Bob Shreve recounted one

evening on the stock he received for design of the Empire State Building which turned out to be worthless. In later years I could say to developers, give us an equal share of the profits and we'll share in the equity.

Depression. We were all equally poor so it made no difference. After I graduated I believe that I had ten jobs in nine months. No one asked me what my personal objectives were. I wanted a chance to earn a paycheck. At one time I refused a pay cut from $30 to $25 a week so I looked for employment elsewhere. It could have been that I was only worth $25 a week.

Relationship to Art, etc. This was one of the finer things. By assimilation we absorbed an appreciation of painting and landscape. In practice I always wanted a landscaper, same as an engineer and tried to establish the proper atmosphere with the owners.

The European magazines were available in the library. We were intrigued by the "modern" things. I remember studying a library by Dudok to analyze (sp) how he manipulated the plan to get the masses of brickwork in the proper places -- and my regret for not having saved the landmark issue of the Forum on Frank Lloyd Wright.

I believe my Master's Thesis is still on file. It has some of my sketches. I have nothing now.

If you can't read this, send it back. I'll send a translation.

Nicol Bissell (B.Arch. 1938)
(13 August 1988)

I received your letter of 7-28-88 concerning research on the history of the Cornell architectural program. The following is an attempt (in the heat of my terrace) to answer some of your many questions; hopefully this will help in a small way.

I entered the school in 1933 and graduated in 1938 - having won (at graduation) the Sands Memorial Medal for my Thesis (A Womans [sic] Hospital) and the Shreve Lamb & Harmon (architects of Empire State Bldg) fellowship for a year's guaranteed work in their architectural, N.Y.C., office. This was during the depression and even a promise of a job was critical.

After 3½ years in the Navy (WWII) (luckily obtained my R.A. just prior to entering) I joined the firm of Rogers & Bulter, became an associate and recently retired, after 40 busy years of architectural practice.

Beaux-Arts

When I entered, George Young was Dean. He was a structural engineer. Prof. Bosworth had recently been Dean, and fortunately for all of us remained on the faculty (retired) as a design critic. He was, in my opinion, the most inspiring teacher.

This was the first year 1933 that Cornell really broke away from the "Beaux Art" system. This system, as I understood it, meant that several schools issued the same design problems to the upper classes - I am not certain how they were judged.

Paragraph 2 of your letter mentions your investigation being divided into three parts. The first two, administration and faculty, are actually one & the same. Our reaction as students? We were brand new and just accepted the system as taught. I don't understand your angle on this point of inquiry.

Modernism

Enclosure (A) is a photo of a design project, freshman year, that appeared in a school catalogue. It is obviously in the traditional style of a New England building. Soon after there was a new and growing enthusiasm towards a modern approach as opposed to the Beaux Arts with its symmetry, eclectic details, and traditional ornamentation.

Profs. Bosworth, Dunbar & Washburn were inspiring as were seminars on the Bauhaus, Wright, L. Sullivan etc. The student pioneer in "modernism" was Abe Geller '36 whose later N.Y.C. practice confirms this.

An Illustration

The turning point ("B.A." vers modern) or period, is perhaps illustrated by two enclosed photos of projects of mine 1937 or 36? i.e. enclosures (B) and (C)

Enclosure (B) is a Railroad Terminal which program obviously screamed for a symmetrical, axial, "B.A." approach (or solution). The other, Enclosure (C) is a Milk Plant. here, corny as it may sound, "form followed function". Note for instance the irregular spacing of windows on 1st floor which reflected the use of the inside space.

This letter seems to go on and on. It is difficult to touch base on all points of your letter. However, in relation to your questions on teaching, critics, students etc., here are some recollections:

Courses

"The way courses were taught" -- that's difficult. I can only compare this phase with the teaching experience I had for 10 years (1949-59) at Columbia Univ. Architecture Dept. (in the evening school); I taught courses in working drawings, professional practice and design -- Columbia was tougher!

At Cornell ('33-'38), design problems were judged and graded by the faculty "in private". At Columbia (and perhaps other schools) judgements and grading were "open" with students able to explain or defend their problems to the jury (faculty)

Fellow Students

We all worked hard and on occasion well into the night or all night. In the '30s there were academic and social groups; I was a member of:

(a)"Gargolye" [sic] - honorary society see enclosure Enclosure (D) - invtiation [sic] dinner, G. Clark [sic], Dean was speaker, 1937, Dutch Kitchen, Ithaca.

(b)"Logive" [sic] - social group (c) Tau Beta Pi engineering scholastic society, which accepted architects.

This is enough in this heat - You mentioned the Green Giant [sic] - it was after my time. But you did not mention the semi-annual Beaux Art [sic] (coustume [sic]) Ball. That was a most important Architectural School event, and should be recorded (the event may still exist?)

Nicol Bissell (B.Arch. 1938)
(15 September 1988)

Thanks for your letter of Sept 5.

Yes, you may use my name in a quote if it would help -- and if, by its omission, a comment may sound like "hearsay"

Back to your question of students opinion on matters of education and methods of teaching. In the five years I and fellow students were exposed to only one method ie: "The Cornell way". We had nothing to compare teaching and different courses with. Had I or some one else transferred mid way from say Columbia, Pratt or Syracuse, then we might have been able to compare techniques.

As I mentioned, the "Green Dragon" did not exist 1933-38 and the Beaux Arts Ball was then (and had been) every other year.

Raymond K. Graff (B.Arch. 1938)
(18 August 1988)

In answer to your letter of July 28 I have enclosed a few snapshots and outlined various recollections from my 5 years of Cornell Architecture, which follow: (1932-1937)

Architectural design was the major course, I think 9 credit hours.

The drafting rooms were all located on the top floor of White Hall. Freshmen were in the south wing with boards back to back facing east and west. Sophomores were in the north wing with boards similarly arranged. Juniors, seniors and 5th year men were in the main central area with boards back to back facing north and south: juniors at the north end, seniors in the middle and grads at the south end.

In the SW corner of the main drafting room was the janitor's office of JOHN (DEAN) CARMAN and on a shelf outside the office was a (modern) radio. A large soapstone sink for soaking drawing paper for "stretches" was located on the floor in the NW corner. The sink was also occasionally used for "TUBBING" smart aleck underclassmen by sliding him [sic] down a chute of drawing boards into it.

As project rendue [sic] dates approached, upperclassmen frequently had underclassmen "NIGGER" for them, doing pochaying [sic], lettering and menial time consuming drafting chores. I recall "niggering" on a Rome Collaborative Competition Project for a design team consisting of an architect, BOB KITCHEN, a landscape architect HUNTER HOWARD, and a fine arts major BOB WILSON.

Design critics: Freshman year - Thaddeus (Tad) Hurd. Sophomore - Prof. Seymour. Junior Senior & Grad. - Frank[e] Huntington Bosworth, Prof. Burnham and John Hartell, a newcomer, I think in my sophomore year.

As I recall there were about 3 major design problems each semester requiring an initial "esquisse" which was reviewed for approval by the design critic before proceeding with the project. Between each major project, two or three "esquisse esquisse" were assigned. These were smaller projects with one week time limit, requiring finish drawing and wash rendering etc.

All design projects were criticized by the design faculty and marked: GOLD SEAL, 85, 75, 65 or **X** BUST.

Math courses were taught in the basement of White Hall north wing. Adjacent was a small drafting room equipped with tables for small drawing boards. Ed Abbuehl was our instructor for Descriptive Geometry -- a friendly and

very able man. Homework assignments "plates" were executed in the small drafting room on 15" x 22" sheets of K and E DUPLEX paper purchased at the Co-op.

Sophomore math included Analytical Geometry and Differential Calculus taught by Assoc. Prof. Hubert Eugene Baxter.

Junior and Senior math embraced Structural Design: the design of built up steel girders, trusses, arches[,] retaining walls and structural steel building frames. All computations were performed on slide rules. Professor George Young Jr., Dean of the College taught these courses assisted by Baxter.

George Young Jr. was a most likable man, a friend to all who knew him. He enjoyed writing poetic verse and privately printed two 75-page booklets of very entertaining and amusing poems entitled ILLITERATURE PARTS 1 and 2 dated 1937 and 1943 respectively. I am the privileged owner of a set of these booklets. He was a good friend to me indeed. In my graduate year he loaned me $75.00, payable after graduation, so I could make my final tuition payment.

Senior's class in reinforced concrete design was held in the C.E. college at Sibley Hall.

History of Architecture, by Prof. Phelps, with Hamlin's History of Architecture as required text consisted of three illustrated lectures per week (at 8:00 AM), where we frantically took notes in a darkened room illuminated only by the lantern slide projector. The projector was a large machine operated manually from the rear of the room by an upperclassman who received 35¢ per lecture for the service. Each slide consisted of two thin pieces of glass sandwiching a transparency edge bound with a black paper passepartout tape. The machine held but two slides which were [moved] back and forth by hand as each slide was used and replaced. Many times a slide became too hot to touch and presented a brief painful problem.

I operated the machine for several semesters. At 8 o'clock AM on cold winter mornings, after late nights during a design "charette" it was often difficult to stay awake and respond to the tap on the floor of Prof. Phelps' pointer, his signal for "next slide".

In addition to frequent written quizzes, Prof. Phelps required the submittal of one postcard size home drawn history sketch per week relating to the current subject matter. Sketches were graded and mounted on the bulletin board where all could see and compare. Bannister Fletcher's history book was much used for subject material.

History of European Painting was an illustrated lecture course conducted by Prof. Donald Lord Finlayson. Toward the end of the semester, students were required to prepare and deliver an illustrated lecture on an assigned artist; select his own slides and prepare his own lecture and answer questions from the class. Prof. Finlayson was another good friend. Occasionally baby sat his infant daughter and tended his house furnace.

In John Tilton's (Father John) Materials of Construction course we researched materials for building construction and wrote specifications.

Students were encouraged to take elective courses outside the College of Architecture. I took one course in Geology, given in McGraw Hall. I also studied music appreciation under the Music Dep't Head, Paul Weaver. Prof. Weaver also conducted the Sage Chapel Choir where I sang tenor every Sunday for four years.

Two years of ROTC was required of every male student; one entire afternoon per week. I elected the horse drawn artillery rather than the infantry because horseback riding was the main activity during the second year. We had to saddle our own animal, perform various group manouvers [sic] within a large corral and occasionally ride cross country. At the end of each drill period we had to unsaddle and clean the animal including picking the muck from the hooves with a special tool. Frequently I carried a stable fragrance to dinner with me on my clothing.

When I entered Cornell in Sept. 1932 there were TWO women students in Architecture. Ruth Reynolds was in her 5th year and Natalie Firestone was a Senior. The following year Merle Eliot entered as a freshman. I was mildly surprised to see women studying Architecture because having worked for Shreve Lamb and Harmon Archts in New York City for five years before entering Cornell I had naively assumed that Architecture was a man's world.

Every spring the Architects organized and paraded on St Patrick's day. The parade always featured a home made dragon which was constructed in the Fine Arts Bldg. and included much high-jinks. The C.E. students would heckle the parade and bombard it with snowballs if snow were on the ground.

I have many drawings, renderings and sketches from my design courses, including a few GOLD SEALS, and several descriptive geometry plates which you are welcome to dispose for me. My wife and I are planning a visit to the campus within the next few weeks and will be happy to deliver them to you. Please advise where we can meet.

Olof H. Dahlstrand (B.Arch. 1939)
(31 August 1988)

[...]

The general subject you pose is a most interesting one. Looking back on my student days, especially after knowing the backgrounds of many of my friends and colleagues from the "Big Band" schools of the time, I realize that the intellectual turmoil posed by the transition from Beaux-Arts to Modernism ar Cornell was probably the best of all worlds.

Olof H. Dahlstrand (B.Arch. 1939)
(3 October 1988)

[...]

My student days at Cornell began in September 1934 and continued for the next five years until my graduation in June 1939. Cornell at the time (although I did not realize it until later) was unique among architectural schools in the country. The process of transition from the Beaux-Arts system of design training to what became known as Modernism had been in effect for some years and continued at least beyond my time there. The discussions, arguments (sometimes heated) and attitudes regarding the changes taking place in architecture covered a broad range. At times they had an almost chaotic quality, especially since there was no single strong voice or philosophical direction present. Later in my career, after meeting and working with colleagues who had been educated at the various institutions of the time that were strongly dominated by single individuals (Gropius, Van Der Rohe, Saarinen, Frank Lloyd Wright, etc.), it became clear that the philosophical turmoil at Cornell had, in fact, been superbly enlightening.

The story of the character of the College at that time should begin with some recollections of the physical plant. The core of the College of Architecture was centered in the two top floors of White Hall. The top floor was all drafting room for students of architecture and landscape architecture. The large center space was occupied by fifth year students, seniors and some juniors. Sophomore classmen and some juniors were in the smaller north room while the freshmen were in the smaller south room. Six or eight large exquisitely rendered plates of student designs from the Beaux-Arts era were hung in various locations in the three rooms, reminders of the recent past and awe-inspiring in their technical perfection. Graffiti, wild displays of muralistic efforts on some walls were the principal other decoration. The center room also contained a shallow sink, about four feet by six feet for soaking Whatman paper as the start of the process of "stretching" it onto drawing boards for the final presentation drawing of the design problem. A broad stairway in the center room led down by way of a landing to the third floor main reception hall of the College.

The third floor had various faculty offices at the north end. Next, to the south, was a large exhibition room used for display of design problems for judging and faculty critique thereafter. Occasional outside exhibits were hung here, and the room was the only place where smoking (a common habit) was permitted. The reception hall and main entry to the College at the center of the building on this floor was bordered by the administrative office, the dreaded dean's office and several faculty offices. The south portion of the floor contained some seminar rooms and a delightful "woody" library.

The north third of the basement of White Hall contained a lecture room, drafting room and faculty offices of Professor Baxter and his department,

devoted primarily to descriptive geometry and related structural engineering subjects. A lecture room for architectural history plus a small classroom for engineering courses taught by Dean George Young, Jr. were on the third floor and were, as I recall, used jointly with other departments.

The fine Arts department of the College of Architecture was primarily in the upper floors of Franklin Hall, now called Olive Tjaden. (The College of Architecture at that time included landscape architecture, planning and fine arts as departments, and the name of the College was not as extensive as today). This building was shared with the College of Electrical Engineering on the lower floors. The fine arts spaces consisted of a number of large studios for painting and life drawing, faculty offices, a small blue-atmosphered smoking room, and a large room for the storage and display of plaster casts of important examples of sculpture.

The rest of the Fine Arts Department occupied Morse Hall, formerly on the site of the Johnson Art Museum. The building was the remnant of a Romanesque style structure that had lost its roof and possibly an upper floor to a fire; some charring and a smoky smell remained. Faculty studios, teaching studios and a large meeting room were the principal functional spaces therein.

The curriculum, I feel, is best described in conjunction with my recollections of individual faculty members. This will serve to bring out some of the intellectual diversity I have referred to earlier. The core of the curriculum was five years of design, totalling about one third of the credit hours required for graduation. Mathematics and engineering courses were about another one quarter of the total, while history, fine arts and elective courses filled the balance. Since I had been blessed with more than average drawing ability, I devoted a large portion of my elective hours to fine arts courses, and, thus, had a more extensive view of that department than many of my classmates.

The dean of the College of Architecture at the time I entered was George Young, Jr., an amiable, lovable man who concealed these traits from the students with a facade of autocratic tyranny that struck terror in the soul of even the most cynical. Only after graduation were students apt to discover his true nature. (In the late forties he lived quietly in retirement in Marin County north of San Francisco. His annual summer picnic for his "boys" was a very enjoyable special occasion for us eight or ten Cornell architects in the Bay Area). Dean Young taught Mechanics of Materials in addition to his administrative duties. His stern demeanor and no-nonsense style provoked a seriousness in the students rarely seen in other courses. He expected everyone to be fully familiar with the day's assignment. On the second day of class he asked, "Any questions?". An uncomfortable silence of a half a minute was followed by his saying, "O.K., class dismissed". Everyone felt somewhat cheated, so thereafter questions were always asked. If they were foolish, they brought on an unmercifully stern

reaction, so we quickly learned to learn. I don't recall anyone ever getting a failing grade.

George Young retired because of ill health around late 1937, as I recall, and Gilmore Clark[e] was named to replace him. Clark[e] was still an active partner in the planning and landscape architectural firm of Clark[e] and Rapuano (both Cornell) in New York City, and he commuted by train between New York and Ithaca, spending about three days a week at the College. He immediately instituted several courses in city planning which were eagerly received by the architectural students. Most fourth and fifth year students took the courses, largely out of curiosity. I believe it was in the fall of 1938 that he brought Thomas Mackesey to the faculty to assist in the ever expanding planning curriculum.

Architectural and landscape design were basically taught through the process of a series of design problems, as I suspect is done today. Each student was assigned a faculty critic, who would meet with the student every few days (depending upon the rate of development of the design) to discuss, probe, cajol [sic] and prod the student into thinking about what he was doing and why. Problems were generally four weeks in duration, and they were due at exactly 6:00 PM on a Saturday. One minute late, and you lost your grade. About twice a semester a one week problem of lesser complexity was scheduled, and about every three or four weeks a one-day problem was given (on Tuesdays). This latter problem was due at 10:00 PM, and there was a struggle to finish it, with time being so limited, especially if the day was filled with other commitments. It was not required that all design problems be done; only a specified minimum. As I recall, course grades were based on the best grades of problems beyond that minimum.

Final presentation of the design problem was a rendering of the required plan, section and elevation views and at specified scales. This was done on heavy Whatman paper which had been "stretched" on a drawing board. (Paper was soaked, then glued to the board around the perimeter and kept wet until the glue dried, after which paper was allowed to dry and shrink tight as a drum. Removal of the paper required scoring on the inside of the glue edge and careful cutting in the scored groove. Sometimes a disastrous rip across a corner or part of the sheet resulted for the unwary). Models were not used for presentations and rarely for study purposes. The rendering was done in a medium chosen by the student. Most common was water-based paint: transparent or opaque watercolor; sumi ink or similar monochrome. Another popular medium, called "smooch", was monochrome pastel chalks in graded values applied in powder form with a cotton wad, using paper for masking. This was enhanced with dilute ink or watercolor.

Given the messy aspect of most of the rendering materials, it was usual for students to wear smocks over their clothing. Dress was formal by today's standards: shirt and tie, with a suit or jacket and slacks.

All of this was something of a carry-over from the Beaux-Arts days, but the character of the designs was radically different from that earlier time. Occasionally students, especially in the lower classes, would do fairly traditional Beaux-Arts influenced work, but generally a more uninhibited exploratory approach was tried. This was particularly true of the older more talented students.

Lower classmen were often asked (or offered) to help older students complete their presentation drawing (an activity called "niggering") by doing such dross work as lettering, titles, rendering decorative borders, etc. This, also a Beaux-Arts carry over, served to initiate the younger students into the finer technical points of rendering.

The program for the four week design problem was available on Monday morning following the Saturday completion of the previous design problem. It was required that a rough sketch (esquisse-esquisse) outlining the basic scheme of the proposed solution to the new problem be submitted before 6:00 PM on Tuesday. Major deviation from this in the final design resulted in a reduction of the grade; thus very careful, intense thought was required to be directed at the basic idea for that brief period of time. No help was forthcoming from the design faculty on this. Human nature being what it is, serious effort on a four week design problem the usually languished until a couple of weeks before it was due. Late hours in the drafting room were commonplace, but the doors were closed at midnight, except in very special instances. All-night sessions were a rarity, and they required special permission from the dean's office.

The first-year design critic during the mid-1930's was Professor John Hartell, himself only about ten years out of school. He also served as critic for more advanced students. A more perfect choice for this task of guiding new students into the design process is hard to imagine. His quiet temperment [sic] softened the harsh reality of being told your idea was lousy, and his provocative questioning brought about the first realization of the importance of imagination and inventiveness, as opposed to slavishly copying and imitating what others had done. Students also stood in awe of his additional talents as an artist.

Professor Burnham was the most unrelenting traditionalist faculty member from the Beaux-Arts era. His students were mainly in their junior and senior years. While he, too, encouraged original thinking, his primary concern was with the proportions of building elements and spaces. Basic and important as this was, the design treatment that he favored was classic Beaux-Arts. Attempts at modernism were invariably resisted in quiet subtle ways.

The other architectural critics were Professors Bosworth and Seymour. The former was almost exclusively assigned to fourth and fifth year students, and, to fully appreciate his value as a critic, required a high degree of design sophistication. Discussions with him were at an unusually erudite level, and he posed challenges that were often beyond the understanding and grasp of all but the brightest students. Professor Seymour had a more nuts-and-bolts reality to his approach, and he, more than anyone, would require consideration of such often neglected matters as structure. Both he and Bosworth dated from the Beaux-Arts days, but I believe both had been involved in actual practice and were cognizant of the changing world in design.

The two critics in landscape design were Professors Lawson and Montillon. Landscape design was limited, as I recall, to third year students and older. Lawson in his student days had won the Prix de Rome, and, while I was there, a Cornell student seemed to win the Rome Prize in landscape architecture almost yearly. Two architectural students, Robert Kitchen and John Kirkpatrick, in successive years came back for a landscape degree after their B.Arch. Consecutively, they each won the two year fellowship at the American Academy in landscape architecture.

Professor Lawson also figured in a brief but interesting curriculum addition. In the summers of 1937 and 1938 he was co-critic in an immensely popular six-week architectural design course together with Roger Bailey, B.Arch, 1921. At the time Bailey was Professor of Architecture at the University of Michigan on leave for two years as a visiting critic at Yale. As I recall, the summer course was limited to students who had completed at least three years of design, and there were about ten students in the class. It was extremely intense, amounting to ten and twelve hour days, six days a week. Normal four-week design problems were done in one week, and one-week problems were done in one day.

After the first week and a half, Bailey came in after lunch and announced, "O.K. everybody; get your watercolors. We're going out to paint. I've got the watercolor paper". What an experience! He was a consummate watercolorist; he could dash off a magnificent painting in twenty or thirty minutes. It opened everybody's eyes and touched off in some of us a lifelong interest in the medium. The whole group went out weekly on painting junkets, and some of us have kept right on going.

We also socialized frequently during the time of the course, mostly Sunday picnics, culminating in a grand spaghetti party put on by Ed Lawson at the end of the course. Everybody received the recipe, which was gleaned from Lawson's days in Rome. My wife and I still refer to it as "Lawson Supreme". (Professor Bailey, who had won the 1923 Paris Prize, and whose students at the University of Michigan included E.C. Bassett, chief designer at S.O.M., San Francisco, and Charles Moore, went on to found the College of Architecture at the University of

Utah in 1948. I saw him frequently after his retirement to the Monterey Peninsula in the mid-1970s until he passed away a few years ago).

Professor Hugh Baxter and his assitant [sic], Ludlow Brown, as stated earlier, taught descriptive geometry and a structural engineering course, which was a follow-up on George Young's Mechanics of Materials. Other structural courses (concrete, testing lab., etc.) were given in the Civil Engineering College.

Architectural history was the province of Professor William Dunbar, a debonair young bachelor. The slide lectures in a stuffy, hot, darkened room required extreme measures to fight off sleep. The black and white slides used in the course suddenly lost what little appeal they had, when Dunbar and Lawson returned from a summer trip to Europe in 1936 with COLOR TRANSPARENCIES! Many students at that point wished they could take the course over again.

Professor Donald Finlayson taught fine arts history,and, not having taken his courses, I knew him only slightly. Professor John Tilton was assistant dean of the College and taught courses in materials, specifications, office practice, etc. He remained a partner in a Chicago architectural firm, which he visited several times a year. He had an extremely dry sense of humor, bordering at times on the pixie, and was a delightful opposite number to the stern Dean Young.

The Fine Arts Department was somewhat unrelated to the architectural curriculum, even though a number of courses in drawing, color and sculpture were required to be taken by the architects. Some students, such as myself, had some drawing talent and elected to take a number of additional courses there, primarily life drawing. Professor Kenneth Washburn was the instructor in most of my courses, although I took one of Professor Midjo's classes. Washburn was an extremely talented man with an incredible range of ability. He was a consummate draftsman, oil painter, sculptor and wood carver, and he went out of his way to encourage and help any student who showed any degree of interest or ability. Professors Brauner and Stone primarily taught oil painting and had almost no architectural students. Stone, with a wonderfully rich sense of humor and a gift of drama, used to entertain everyone who was in the smoking room during a break in the action with hilarious anecdotes. He was a genuine character!

Grading systems in most courses, except design, were the usual percentage type grade. Design problems were given an "X" for failure, or a 65, 75 or 85. The latter grade merited a "gold seal" by which the College laid claim to the drawing for its archives. Virtually never was a grade higher than 85 given.

The principal prizes for the architectural students were medals for excellence in design. The Charles Goodwin Sands medal was awarded to

students in any of the classes after about the second year, several being awarded each year. The Clifton Beckwith Brown medal was awarded once per year and usually went only to a fourth or fifth year student. Some years no award was made. I was fortunate to win one of each.

Only two design competitions, involving students from other schools, were given. The Rome Prize, mentioned earlier, had some very tough competition in architecture, but Cornell frequently won the landscape fellowship. The alumni of the American Academy in Rome sponsored an annual collaborative competition in which about fifteen architectural schools competed. Only seniors were eligible to enter. It required a four person team for each entry: an architect, a landscape architect, a sculptor and a painter. The purpose was to integrate all four disciplines in a coherent whole. The 1939 prize was won by Cornell with William Atkinson, landscape architect; Elfriede Abbe, sculptress; Ruth Rogers, painter; and myself, architect. (Bill Atkinson went on to become a well known designer of women's apparel as "Glen of Michigan"; Elfriede Abbe was commissioned that year to do a piece for the 1939 New York World Fair).

Women students in architecture and landscape architecture were a rarity, there being only two or three at any one time out of a total of about one hundred thirty students. The fine arts department had many women students, however, and they usually outnumbered the men.

Many students took part in campus activities and sports. A few exceptional athletes were also architects. The Cornell Widow art staff was mostly populated by architects year after year, as was the post of art editor, a path which I followed. One student, Robert Krider, headed an excellent dance band of Cornellians; they were in great demand not only at Cornell functions but also in the surrounding towns.

The Green Dragon did not exist in my time, although a spring-time parade and costumed, circus-like event designed to tease the engineers was held annually. Other sporadic spur-of-the-moment needlings of the engineers were apt to occur throughout the year, often consisting of insulting signs placed on the cornice of White Hall facing their bastion, Sibley Hall. I heard of fire hose battles between the buildings before my arrival at Cornell, but none occurred while I was there.

An amusing tradition was the annual picture of the College's freshman class. The students were posed on a pleasant fall afternoon against the east face of White Hall, a group of approximately thirty smiling, innocent souls. The photographer required at least two shots, and the last one, by prearranged signal, caught the arrival of fifty or more gallons of water dumped by upperclassmen from the building cornice above. One year the developed photo revealed an opened umbrella among the freshmen.

My first year was the last year that Livingston Farrand was president of the University. His wife, Daisy, who had been in the theater, had made the College of Architecture and its students her pet. She visited the College often, and targets for her showy, dramatic displays of affection would be whoever was at hand, be it faculty member or student. Her unbridled effusiveness clearly caused the stern Dean Young many an uncomfortable moment.

She often arrived, unannounced, up the stairs to the top floor drafting room. This put into play the early warning system designed to spare sensitive female ears from the rigors of the sometimes raunchy rhetoric of the place (women students didn't count and had to get used to the situation). The warning consisted of the hoisting of a wildly colored old smock up to the ceiling, accompanied by a whistle, this being the responsibility of whoever had been assigned the drawing board at the head of the stair.

The premier social event at the College was the biennial Beaux-Arts Ball. It was far too elaborate a production to be staged as often as yearly, and, since it took place in the drafting rooms on the top floor of White Hall, the administration was barely able to tolerate this disruption even every two years.

It was a costume party, of course, and a very elaborate one at that. Invitations to attend were eagerly sought by students outside the College and prized when obtained. Each event was based on a specific theme, architectural in nature; the one in my sophomore year, for example, was a Roman Forum. The drafting rooms were cleared of all furniture and drawing tables, and an extensive, well crafted and colorful stage set was erected. The not inconsiderable talents of much of the student body were recruited under the direction of the upper class organizing committee, and the results were truly spectacular. The costumes of the celebrants were, for the most part, up to the design standards of the setting. This, combined with the fact of prohibition having been repealed only a few years earlier, led to a "bash" of considerable proportions and notoriety. Tales of the event, sometimes exaggerated, continued to impress incoming freshmen for years after.

Visiting lecturers and critics were a rarity. I am not sure why this was; more than likely the idea had not yet caught on. Such visitors as we had usually consisted of practicing architects from New York, and the event would have a purpose somewhat similar to today's Mackesey Seminars. Now and then an interesting travelling exhibit would appear in the College exhibit room. I recall being especially impressed with a show of drawings, details and construction material assemblies of Frank Lloyd Wright's first Herbert Jacobs house in Madison, Wisconsin. Another time a marvelous exhibit of watercolors by Ted Kautsky arrived, surprising everyone who knew only his exquisite pencil drawings.

Travel to and from Ithaca was pretty much limited to the train. Commercial air service to Ithaca did not exist, and it was in its infancy elsewhere. Very few students had cars. Bus travel from Ithaca was only sporadic and not convenient. In fact, travel generally in the United States was very limited, largely due to the expense and time involved.

The depression of the 1930's did not have much noticeable direct impact on the College or most of the students, except that undoubtedly many potential students found education to be beyond their means. Some students would take a year off now and then due to strained finances, and many had jobs to help defray costs. Although quite a few students were clearly on limited budgets, nobody made much of their own financial situation.

The economic reality of that period hit home as graduation neared, and the scarcity of jobs in architecture became more obvious. Awareness of this had filtered back from some recent graduates. Casting out feelers for a job in the spring before graduation, only to be disappointed time after time, became the first taste of the real world for many, and a great proportion of my class never ended up in the profession. I was perhaps a bit more aware of the situation than a number of the others, since I had worked in architects' offices a couple of summers and knew first hand the difficulties of getting a job.

Discussions and "bull-sessions" on the general state of affairs in the country and the world tended to occur outside of the College -- rarely in it. The ominous geopolitical developments in Europe and Asia elicited little more than a general feeling of uneasiness. World War II had not yet begun, and Japan's depredations in Manchuria and China seemed very remote at the time. The true nature of the world situation became obvious with the shocking news of war in Europe a few short months after graduation in 1939.

Awareness and knowledge of architectural activity in other countries was somewhat limited in the mid and late thirties to what appeared in the architectural press. Although there were a number (three or four, I believe) of monthly magazines devoted to architecture, little international news appeared, and then it was more or less limited to the "newsworthy" projects of Corbusier, the Bauhaus, Aalto, and the like. Architecture in Italy, Spain (with a raging civil war), Great Britain and South America, not to mention the Orient, the Balkan countries and, to some extent, the Soviet Union, did not appear to exist. The heavy handed character of "official" architecture in the Soviet Union and Germany and Italy elicited little more than disdain.

The work of U.S. architects was widely reported in the press, but it was, for the most part, regarded as unimportant, imitative and faddish, or timidly traditional. Occasionally an exciting design event, such as a major competition, a special issue (such as was devoted to Frank Lloyd Wright: Architectural Record,

January 1938) or an important government project (TVA, etc.) would generate discussion and interest. Another reason for limited news was that building activity in the U.S. in that period had declined drastically, so that the pool of newsworthy projects had pretty much dried up. Television, of course, did not exist, and the printed press rarely showed any interest in architecture, unless it was controversial, politically significant, or associated with scandal or scandalous behavior.

The effect of this paucity of news, coupled with the limited communication and travel opportunities of the day, created a somewhat provincial atmosphere regarding what was being done in the country. Few individuals, students or faculty, were aware of what was happening on the west coast, for example, until reports of the 1939 San Francisco World Fair began to be published. Building activity on the east coast, particularly New York, was well known, and there was even some awareness of Chicago as a center of some importance, but the rest of the country remained somewhat of an architectural blank. Major attention and interest was thus focused primarily on the works of the prominent modernists of the day.

Despite all the potentially disruptive influences and distracting ideas of the time, the College of Architecture retained a remarkably steady, beady-eyed focus on its main purpose during those late 1930's. I suspect most of my classmates of that time would concur that the experience was unparalleled in terms of preparing students to deal with the monumental changes that have occurred in both the profession and the world in the years since.

Daniel B. Warner (B.Arch. 1939)
(22 August 1988)

Look back fifty years! You are asking a lot!
However -----

I transferred to the College of Architecture of Cornell in September, 1935, from the School of Architecture at Tulane University, New Orleans.

If Cornell's curriculum was then based in the (so-called) "Beaux-Arts System", it certainly never occurred to me to think about it. After all, it was the same curriculum as Tulane's, only with more depth, with more scope, a better faculty to teach it, and offering a degree with more prestige. I was very glad to be admitted!

At that time, courses in all required subjects except Design were taught in a standard classroom setting -- recitation, homework, examination, numerical grading system, and only a few were outside the College. The Design portion of the curriculum was structured to fill all our free-time, and then some, and was offered in a studio setting with no fixed class hours (a system, of course, which resulted in a great many frantic, grueling charettes). The ____ of this endeavour was the top floor of White Hall, where Architects and Landscape Architects worked together -- Intermediates at the North end, Advanced Design and Thesis people in the big Center Room, Freshmen in the South end.

Faculty critics advised us, circulating through the Drafting Room to the worktables of those students assigned to them on a regular schedule (?) (I'm hazy on this point) -- something like a doctor making the rounds of his patients.

We worked in problems of varying complexity, presented to us as printed programs -- a certain date and time handed out, a certain date and time for handing in the solution. Some problems required weeks of work to "solve", some were as brief as a week. (Do I remember any one day sketches? I'm not sure) In any case, "time's swift chariot" was always at your heels. I think many of these problems were written at the Beaux-Arts Institute in New York and issued to member schools. Usually they were so formal, so monumental -- "Memorial to a Fallen Hero in the Principal Avenue of a Capital City" -- and so on. I used to chafe at the utter impracticality of this sort of thing, and hope that the next problem, Heaven willing, would be about a 'real' building.

I think we were supposed to respond with solutions which explored some recognized eclectic style -- a church equals Gothic, a court house equals Roman Classic, etc.

The programs restricted the number and kind of drawings to be presented, the scale of each, the size of the sheet and the number of sheets. Variations therefrom were at your peril. Usually it was plan, section, elevation(s). I don't remember ever being required to present a perspective drawing, even though Perspective was a required course under Mr. Baxter.

Models and alternate means of presentation had never been heard of (not in my early years, at any rate). All presentation work was drawn on smooth water color paper. The sheets were wet in a tank and then stretched and edge-glued to a wood drafting board. If you had done it properly, you had a perfectly smooth, drumhead tight surface when the paper dried. Stretch-making and graded transparent water color washes were two of the most fundamental skills we acquired. But forget not that tense moment when you cut the paper loose, praying that your finished rendering did not split in half when the tension was released! Besides watercolor, we worked a great deal in pen-and-ink with ruling pens. In my time, some mastered the use of the air brush, but generally the former method prevailed. Great care was lavished on title-lettering -- all hand-done, of course.

The results of this system was [sic] a very formal and structured discipline, of course; But I must say, nonetheless engrossing, and at times full of the excitement of creativity.

I'm sure the faculty of the time were all gentlemen and scholars of substance, but I don't remember having much curiosity about their backgrounds. Some must have been career teachers, and some undoubtedly were ex-practising architects taking shelter in Academia from the storm of the Depression. There were no Big Names. I knew best Messers [sic] Hartell (our Young Man, then), Bosworth, Tilton and Dean George Young. Of the others, Gilmore Clarke (a late-comer in the scene, my scene) had the glamour of his New York practise [sic]; Baxter was stern, and frightening simply because of the difficult subjects he taught; Dunbar was gentlemanly and rather decorative; Lawson and Montillon were landscapers; Seymour related only to jocks amongst the students -- and I was no jock; and Midjo, an almost impenetrable personality, failed miserably to teach me any skill whatsoever in Life Drawing. The rest have faded into history, I fear . . . But we should not fail to pay tribute to Mrs. Livingston Farrand, wife of Cornell's President during most of my time, whose interest in those students who got to know her was an inspiration. I think most of my training in learning to "cope with the world" can be traced to tea at the President's house on Sunday afternoons, where the talk was literate, graceful and wide ranging, and you felt much a part of the society of the time -- "real grown up", so to speak. I do remember Daisy fondly, and with great respect.

My recollections of fellow students have been dimmed by fifty years. It was an overwhelmingly male student body, with a handful of women, almost all of

whom were landscape architects. A small number were from foreign countries. There were no minorities. I suppose one of the most noticeable things about us as a group, as compared with today's students, was our dress code: coats and ties, business suits not outlandish; "casual dress" was odd [?] slacks and a tweed jacket. We could have walked from the drafting room directly to a job interview without changing clothes!

I think we were a rather isolated group within the University -- which was itself geographically isolated -- working long and late and irregular hours up there in our attic. I wasn't a fraternity member, and I didn't feel I had many social contacts outside the College. I don't remember many visiting lecturers or critics. Indeed, I don't think it was much the fashion in the Thirties as an Administration policy.

Landscape Architecture and Architecture were closely related in a most productive way. We occupied the same drafting room, had several courses in common and each academic year included a collaborative design problem requiring the formation of teams -- landscape architect, architect and an art major, working together and presenting a joint solution. And there was a great deal of informal mutual criticism of each other's work which supplemented the visits of the faculty critics.

Of competitions, there was the annual competition for the Rome Prize in Landscape Architecture, almost always won at Cornell. The same competition for Architecture hardly ever was, however. Other than these, I don't remember any important prizes, unless one counts a tuition scholarship, which I was awarded in 1938-39 (but I've forgotten the name of the donor!)

As long as we remained in school, the Depression could be held at bay -- all of us had parents affluent enough to support us. But all of us also knew that at graduation there was going to be a difficult job hunt. As the Thirties wore out -- after 1938, there was also a growing realization that the deterioration of the political situation in Europe would eventually affect our lives, but none knew how, and the idea of war and going to war was something we could not grasp.

As for the influences of the Depression on the curriculum, I don't think it had any influence at all. It continued to be exactly the same in the Thirties as it was in the Twenties and before. The only thing I remember being added in my time was a requirement that every student had to present a collection of sketches he had made during the summer vacation upon returning in the Fall.

I think my years at Cornell saw the beginning of the "transition from Beaux-Arts to modernism" (your words). If so, it was a trend resisted by most of the faculty and -strangely- by many of the students.

We had the magazines and we were aware of the appearance of the International Style in Europe. I remember how excited I was by the published examples of Modern work, eagerly anticipating the latest 'Architectural Review', and reacting with puzzlement and disappointment when the German magazines, by 1935 under the thumb of Nazi esthetics, showed pallid throwbacks to the 18th century ("Treason!"). And there were influential books like F.R.S. Yorbe's "The Modern House" and Antoine Raymond's two books on his work in Japan.

In our drafting room , solutions to design problems executed in what is nowadays called Art Deco became common. Some few, disdaining the Deco as "Modernistic", went all out for Internationalism, (off and on I was one of these), but such efforts drew some very unwelcome attention from fellow students, at least in 1935 and 1936, and I was discouraged by the poor results. I think the positive separation between Design and Structural Design that existed at the time discouraged any meanful [sic] exploration of Internationalism until the very late Thirties.

I don't feel I was at all successful with Modernism until I came to my 1939 Thesis, which I chose to execute in pure International (and wrote the program, not incidentally, tailored to fit a Modern solution!). It received a bare passing grade when judged -- really a slap in the face, for I had worked very hard in that thesis. I was shocked and dissappointed [sic], and when I cornered Dean George Young and asked for an explanation, he told me that, though it <u>was</u> good work, the jury "just didn't <u>like</u> it".

Still, all unwittingly, perhaps I was a link in the transition to Modernism? Very comforting!

José D. Firpi (B.Arch. 1945)
(15 August 1988)

I received your circular of 28 July 1988 requesting information about the history of the College of Architecture, Cornell University.

As a student of the College (Fall of 1941 to Winter of 1945), I enclose a copy of my opinions and recollections, often critical and demistifying, but stated with respect and admiration for Cornell, the College, and the Old Guard.

....

(1) The way courses were taught: During my freshman year at Cornell, the Beaux-Arts tradition was vanishing. The College, however, remained as an old-fashioned and shallow school, directed by an Old Guard ---administrators and professors--- almost totally addicted to eclectic academicism. In 1941, a reform-oriented architect was appointed to the faculty. This was Charles Warner, a young man whose talent and enthusiasm for architecture soon captivated the student body as well as the Old Guard. In my opinion, Warner's brief years at Cornell gave significant support to the modernization process. This development initially moved slowly, among other things because Gilmore Clarke, Dean of the College, worked only on a part-time basis, giving more attention to his New York private practice than to his academic commitment. Furthermore, the geographical and intellectual isolation of Cornell at that time did not provide a most favorable environment for the much needed transformation.

(2) Grading system and prizes: In architectural design, these were based not on a pass-or-fail system but on the competitive race-to-fame approach borrowed from the Parisian Beaux-Arts movement. The Sands Memorial Medal, for instance, came in silver and in bronze, like in the Olympic games, and the jury system was often authoritarian and incompetent.

(3) Members of the faculty: During my student years, Charles Warner, John Hartell, Hubert Baxter and Thomas Mackesey were among the most competent and dedicated professors. Not much attention was given to the erudite lectures on history given by A. Henry Detweiler. As in many other schools of architecture, Cornell had implemented the break-up between architectural design and history of architecture, ambivalently advocated by the Modern Movement.

(4) Fellow students: Their quality generally responded to the wartime situation and to the transitional development phase of the College. Cornell students of that epoch were detached from the avant-garde movements promoted by other universities, such as Harvard, MIT and Illinois Tech. Nevertheless, from 1942 to 1943, some high-standing students either came to Cornell from other schools, or emerged within the College itself. These exceptional cases played an important

role, similar to Warner's, setting standards of performance and design excellence. Concerning the physical plant of the College, it must be said that facilities at White Hall were rather tight. For instance, the library was too small and subequipped, there was no student's lounge, and the drafting room was overcrowded and noisy. The latter, a Mansard-roofed elongated space atop White Hall, was well known on campus, because of the endless charettes of design students who incessantly played Records of favorite swinging jazz artists (Benny Goodman, Count Basie, Peggy Lee, Lena Horne, among others).

Malcolm S. Weiskopf (B.Arch. 1949)
(1 September 1988)

Your letter requesting assistance in your research elicited some memories of my days at Cornell.

I started in the fall of 1942 and left for the Army in January of 1943. I returned from the service in the fall of 1946 and graduated after summer school in the fall of 1949. Because I had a leave of absence when I went into the service, I came back under the four year program. (I believe I was the last student to graduate under the prewar four year program.) I had exactly one elective in all of those years. I took a course in residential landscaping in the Agricultural school.

The Freshman class in '42 was relatively small, probably around 30 students. I believe only Murray Gibson and Jack Spransy returned with me in '46.

Our first design project in '42 was to design a paper structure (Critic-Warner), followed by a monumental stair, a one room cabin, a pedestrian bridge and then, I believe, a single family residence. I had only one other residential design project while in school. I believe also that we had the option of skipping one three week design program (a luxury abandoned after the war). All our projects were presented with either pencil or ink on illustration board. After the war, zip-a-tone and Tempra [sic] would predominate. In 1942 I had Professor Baxter for Descriptive Geometry et. al. and, after the war, Professor Brown. These courses led to the structural courses which I always considered worthwhile.

The Design courses both before and after the war were presented in a totally pragmatic context. It was understood that we were learning Modern Architecture but it was taught in an intellectual and cultural vacuum. I learned from the other students [sic] work and by observing final projects on display in the exhibition space. There one could observe presentation techniques and try to fathom the characteristics of good design. To my knowledge no Critic ever referred to a design approach at other schools, or any other country or was there any discussion at all of ideas of Wright, Corbusier, Gropius or any one else. We learned more or less by osmosis. I felt I was suffering from ideological neglect and I depended upon the library for some clarification. I regularly read the architectural magazines. After reading Gideons [sic] "Space, Time and Architecture" and some books by Le Corbusier, I felt more equipped to cope with any current design problems.

Architectural history could have provided an opportunity to give the whole architectural design program an historical context. Since the program was taught

chronologically starting with pre-history, by the time we covered modern architecture we had almost completed our studies.

At that time the new campus of the Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago was being built. I had two friends who were studying architecture there and they introduced me to the work of Mies van der Rohe.

Friends from Cornell would occasionally stop in Chicago and we would tour the Wright buildings in and around Oak Park, plus the Robie House.

My thesis in the summer of '49 was the design of an architectural school much in the style of Mies van der Rohe. As far as I could tell, no one at Cornell had ever heard of him.

The manner of teaching at Cornell at that time contrasted markedly with the method used at IIT. The architectural students there were steeped only in the work of Mies. Unless they sought out other influences all their designs were totally and predictably Mies.

The presentation and rendering techniques I learned at Cornell were unknown to students at IIT. These courses together with the structural design courses have proved useful through the years.

After graduation, I worked in architectural offices in Chicago and Los Angeles. In 1960, with a friend from IIT whom I had met in the Army, we started an architectural practice in Chicago and we are still actively in business.

Robert P. Darlington (B.Arch. 1950)
(27 Aug. 88)

I entered the College of Architecture in February of 1946, at the age of 22, three months after being discharged from the Army's 10th Mountain Division as a sergeant. There were 20 in our class, 15 or 16 of us veterans. This gave a distinct flavor to our group, far different than the happy-go-lucky attitude of the freshman class at Swarthmore College when I entered there in 1941.

We learned later that the Architecture faculty had been concerned about what to expect from a bunch of war-weary, battle-hardened veterans. They figured we would be cynical, lazy and averse to any kind of discipline.

It wasn't long before they realized we were there for a purpose: to get an education and to get on with our lives. Sure, we had fun and raised a little hell, but basically we were a pretty serious, dedicated group. We studied hard, we put in a lot of hours, we disciplined ourselves, and generally had above-average grades.

Some of us -- including myself -- were married, and this gave added meaning to our schooling. My wife, Jeanne, was a recent graduate in Chemistry from Knox College, Galesburg, Illinois. Her salary for four years as a laboratory assistant in the Federal Nutrition Lab out Tower Road, plus my GI Bill money, got us through comfortably, if not lavishly.

Although I had 2½ years as an English major at Swarthmore from 1941 to 1943 before I was drafted, and another semester at Knox College with the Air Corps -- where I met Jeanne -- I was starting all over again at Cornell as a freshman because there was no way to speed up the required five years of design. The College accommodated those of us who wanted to move fast by providing summer courses for full credit. As a result, I went seven straight semesters -- spring, summer, fall of '46, spring, summer, fall of '47, and spring of '48 -- before taking a break in the summer of '48. I was almost burned out, so I worked in construction that summer, working in Trumansburg and Ithaca on a milk house project and a private residence.

I came back for four more semesters, -- fall '48, spring, summer and fall of '49 -- for 11 in all. (I took one extra to pick up some additional courses.) I graduated in February of 1950.

Many of my Swarthmore courses satisfied Cornell prerequisites, so I had a ball taking electives during my four years. I took a lot of additional courses in the College -- city and regional planning, art, painting, and sculpture -- as well as courses throughout the University -- English, history, sociology, and geology. As a result, when I received my B.Arch. in 1950, I actually had nine years of college

behind me. The unusually broad spectrum of studies worked to my advantage over the years since, was a hell of a lot of fun, and has added immeasurably to my enjoyment of life.

Gilmore Clarke was Dean during my years from 1946-1950, but was seldom around, spending most of his time in his New York City office. The guiding force for all of us was Thomas Mackesey, the Assistant Dean. Tom moved up right after I graduated and was Dean for many years. We had a good rapport, and he was a great help in securing my first teaching position several years later at Washington State College -- later University -- in Pullman, Washington, in 1953.

As soon as we arrived in 1946, it became clear that our major time commitment by far was to Design. This was fine with me for several reasons. One, I had switched gradually from English to Architecture over the past several years as I read more and more about Wright, Sullivan, Eliel Saarinen and the other great contemporary pioneers, and had seen some of the masterpieces in Italy during the war. Two, I was thoroughly committed philosophically to contemporary architecture, and Cornell was the only school which had broken away from the Beaux Arts tradition. And three, the studios, or design labs as we called them then, allowed me the freedom to discipline myself, as opposed to the more regimented classroom courses.

If we had any lingering ideas about traditional architecture, they were quickly chased by our first two projects, an abstract study in free-form paper sculpture, and an abstract study in right-angled planes paper sculpture. These were designed to wipe out any preconceived notions about how things "should" look. It worked. By the time we had cut, twisted and pasted our models, and then drawn them in plan, elevation and perspective -- our first efforts at architectural rendering -- any thoughts we had about designing New England Colonial or Greek or Roman or Renaissance anything were long gone.

From now on it was start with the problem and find a solution that related to the environment, the culture, and the pocketbook. Some magnificent work has resulted from this approach over the past several decades. Unfortunately, it seems to have gotten boring to some practitioners who have tried to liven things up with Post Modern ("Miss Piggy's Palace" in Framingham, Mass.) and now the explosion in the chopsticks factory. When you apply the three never-outdated criteria of "firmness, commodity and delight" -- i.e., structurally sound, solves the program, and looks good -- today's fads fall woefully short. I'm 64 now, and Philip Johnson was an early hero. . . .

Back to history. Our first design instructor was John Hartell, a painter of considerable talent. He was an excellent choice to get us loose through abstraction, the rest of that first semester by gradually applying abstract

concepts to simple programs, e.g., horizontal and vertical planes became an outdoor farmer's market. By the time the programs became more sophisticated and complex, we had developed the technique of looking at solution and form simultaneously.

Subsequent early semesters were led by Professors Tom Canfield and Maury Wells, who also had a small practice in town. We appreciated this because we were being taught by people who were practicing what they were preaching. All of the design instructors shuttled through most of the five design years, so we were exposed to a wide variety of approaches and experiences. Some of the older instructors were not as comfortable with the new philosophy, but none attempted to force traditional concepts on us.

I do recall that an occasional design problem had a cash award, but undue emphasis was not placed on this. Of perhaps more importance were the stick-on seals affixed to the best solutions for any project. I also recall that numerical grades were given. I think 65 was failing. Grades in the high 80s and in the 90s usually got the seals and were photographed for the College archives. These photos were mounted in books and kept in the Library, where a whole year's work in one book could be reviewed.

To put all this in perspective, remember that it all took place in White Hall. The whole top (fourth) floor was Design, and all five classes were free to mingle all afternoon five days a week, plus nights (and mornings), and week-ends. This was a big help to the beginning students, who could see drawing and presentation techniques in action, and talk over design ideas and philosophies with the advanced students.

The lower floors had administration, lecture rooms, and display rooms (used for penny pitching, coke drinking, smoking, etc., when not used for judging and display.) Most of our classroom work was on these floors: history, art lectures, office practice, materials and methods of construction, and, very importantly, Baxter and Brown's courses in wood and steel structures and graphics. These latter courses gave me a solid foundation for the "firmness" criterion mentioned earlier. Both B. & B. were very conscientious in keeping the technical aspects of structures out of the abstract and closely related to actual construction.

Then, as now, there was more to be taught than there was time in a five-year curriculum to teach it. Calculus was considered a necessary evil, and served no good purpose. Under Mackesey, after I graduated, calculus was dropped, proving, as Tom said in a letter to me when I was teaching, that "what is difficult or unpleasant or painful is not, ipso facto, necessarily good for your soul."

There was much about the practice of architecture which I had to learn in the heat of battle after graduation. The important thing, though, is that I had a firm foundation on which to build. In my first offices I never felt inferior in any respect to graduates from other schools. More often, I felt that I had a definite edge because of the open-minded, problem-solving approach I had learned at Cornell. The best buildings I have done, the competitions I have placed well in, the ten years of teaching: all have been the result of this approach. In particular, my many years in architectural research owed much to this open-minded, creative imagination approach.

In retrospect, I have no regrets for the years spent at Cornell from 1946-1950. The contemporary approach, not even in effect at most schools, had already been taught at Cornell for several years, and found eager and ready subjects in the class of returning veterans after WWII.

I could say much more in depth about curricula, faculty members, fellow students, extra curricular activities, and the prevailing culture and mores of the time and place (Do they still skinny dip in the daytime below the suspension bridge?) But enough. You'll have to ask.

Richard B. Frazier (B.Arch. 1950)
(15 August 1988)

I was a student in Architecture, 1946 to 1950, you probably know that from the College Records but it will set the limits to my experience.

The freshman class of 1946 was composed of veterans of WWII except for two men and three women. We - the veterans - were in a hurry and not bothered by normal student disciplinary measures. After three or four years of military service we paid little attention to traditions intended to teach freshman [sic] their lowly place. There was great interest in anything which flouted authority in some way such as disrupting the annual ROTC parade which [sic] on the quadrangle.

CURRICULUM - The curriculum was aimed at what we assumed the faculty thought was essential to an Architectural education. There did seem to be very little coordination from one subject to another. For instance I can not remember anyone from the structural department in the basement ever appearing in the drafting room to criticize a design problem. Perhaps we would have been diverted from consideration of design problems which were difficult enough by wondering where to put the plumbing.

The design critic was king of the heap. Some were poor and a couple were superb - Canfield and Hartell. Hartell taught freshman design in 1946. If that continued I cannot say. I think it was Finlayson who wove short segments of Art History into the History of Architecture offered up by Detweiler. Many of us enjoyed that since he could always illustrate his points with slides of nudes from any period. This was delightful after the dull stuff Detweiler gave us as the first class after lunch three times a week.

Mackesey's lecture course on City and Regional Planning was good because he was good. He was also a great Assistant Dean of the College. Clarke, to the best of my knowledge, was never there.

The College had a visiting critic program which was offered to the clas [sic] behind us. We were excited when Philip Johnson was on hand for three or four weeks and we were given a glimpse of Architecture as he practised [sic] it and as I have never seen it since.

Baxter and Brown lived in the basement of White Hall and did a grand job. They were both kind to me and seemed glad when someone would descend from the top floor drafting room to talk to them. Both men deserved better from the students of my day than they received. Perhaps they were respected by the faculty more than I know. Baxter told me once that the faculty had an annual pool on which members of the freshman class would graduate. He claimed to be particularly successful in his predictions which he based on an aptitude for

Descriptive Geometry. He brought a luster and excitement to that perennial freshman subject which I can only believe lay in near genius.

GENERAL THOUGHT - The four years - the college allowed many of us to get through the five year program in four - were exciting and enjoyable. I'm glad I had them particularly in retrospect after seeing some of the other Colleges around the country and the dull and boring curriculum and faculty that they offer.

Robert Gitlin (B.Arch. 1950)
(5 October 1988)

I am sorry not to have responded sooner to your request for background information on my studies at Cornell. A vacation and other matters intervened; also I am not certain exactly how to best respond. So I will just put down my thoughts as they occur and hope they will be of use to you.

First, a little background on me. I started at Cornell in Nov 1945 shortly after my army discharge. The program was then four years; in my mid (first) semester it became a five year program and I graduated in June 1950. I worked in the private architectural sector until 1970. Then, having acquired a great deal of technical competence but no outstanding position, I joined the then new NY Urban Development Corporation where I am presently the Director of Architecture and Engineering. During my time at Cornell, I have been involved in several projects in the Ithaca area, some with Cornell. U.D.C. has two current projects at Cornell, one in which we have an active role.

Now to your third question - "the reaction and projects of the students."

When I entered school there was no battle for modernism to be won - modernism existed and in fact, short of our History of Architecture classes, there was no emphasis or concern with traditional architecture. During my entire stay at Cornell I only remember one traditional design ever being submitted by a student - a colonial church design. I [it?] was judged by the faculty with a great deal of lip service as to the legitimacy of using the colonial idiom but no great amount of enthusiasm. One of the professors, Burnham I believe, was an old timer and a skilled classical architect who had designed the Ithaca Post Office. He was generally downrated as a critic because he had no feel for modern design and was not capable of critiquing [sic] the student work in a useful manner. The students had no patience with this (then) old timer and expressed themselves in blunt, rather cruel ways such as hanging a model effigy on one occassion [sic].

Cornell's architectural faculty was generally very competent and effective but was not considered outstanding in the outside world. You mentioned the relationship to Art, Planning and Landscape Architecture. As to the first, art was a part of the School of Architecture and we had several courses involving drawing and painting techniques. Planning and Landscape Architecture simply did not exist. There was one landscape professor, shortly to retire (Montillon I believe) and I heard no talk of replacing him. We took one course with him - lectures, not design work.

Generally, everything of a technical nature was taught in the school of architecture. The major exception was concrete design which was taught in the

C.E. School. I remember clearly that the courses, given jointly to architecture and engineering students, demonstrated that architects were better able to figure out the solution but the engineers were faster and more correct. This was because the preliminary structural courses given in the Architecture school by Prof. Baxter (and Brown or Hanson?) taught the student to analyze problems; the C.E. school taught how to apply formulas. Keep in mind that so soon after the war, the C.E. school had not yet recaptured the excellent faculty which had (and still) gives Cornell its excellent reputation in Engineering.

In one respect, the courses were sadly inferior. The electrical/mechanical/material studies were all in the hands of one old time professor who retired about 1949-50; fortunately I do not remember his name. The course [sic] were given by rote and the excellence of your notebook was the basis for grading. The technological wonders that were being developed had no part in these courses which were almost a total waste. There were many complaints to the administration but this professor, at the end of a long and (we were told) distinguished career at Cornell was not to be downgraded so shortly before retiring. There should have been a better way to have honorably kept him on until retirement without the students having to suffer a major gap in their education.

Otherwise, the staff was good to excellent. I must comment on Professor Mackesey who was one of the finest persons I ever met and the heart and soul of the school. Every institution deserves such men but few have them - our school of architecture did. I also want to mention Professor Canfield who came shortly after I entered school. He was almost like a student in his dealings with the students but his real skills and incredible enthusiasm made him outstanding in inspiring the students (I never had him for a course). Another notable Professor was Detweiler who taught History of Architecture and archeology [sic] courses. His actual experience and personal qualities made him a favorite of mine and, I believe of many others - also we were all intrigued with the size of his family (five children I believe). Washburn was an art professor of great skill and much gentleness who made an impression on me in both respects. As is common in many persons who are truly individualistic, I got the impression that he was not a "team" member and somewhat apart from the others - I could be wrong on this. The other faculty members made only ordinary impressions on me and I can't comment further.

In general, mornings were devoted to "other courses", all afternoons and many evenings to design problems. We (the students) designed, the professors would circulate periodically and critique. They never said do this or that though they did make suggestions or in other ways give the sense of another direction. As a rule, as the last day of a problem approached, night work was increased. The last night was a madhouse and when campus patrol closed the building at 11-12 midnight, almost everyone packed up and took the project home to

complete. Judging was usually about 9:00 AM the next morning so projects put into the exhibition room before that time were on time. Judgements were made by a panel of professors - usually two or three and usually including the professors whose students were presenting work. There were many student complaints that this system was unfair so on one occassion [sic], the class being judged was asked to select their own jury which reviewed the work independently of the staff. The two judgings were then compared and, surprise, they were virtually identical. The students were more prone to not giving grades either as high or as low as that [sic] of the professors but about 85%-90% of the judgements were identical.

About the second year there were also student grumbles about the pressures on our class. The administration was finally forced to acknowledge these complaints and a meeting was held. The students were told "yes, we are setting a rigorous pace but there are 100 students waiting to be admitted for each position so we feel we can expect the best from everyone". The administration never did back down. Aside from design and the drawing courses, teaching was fairly conventional with professors lecturing and periodic tests to determine if anything had been absorbed. The only item of note is that, following the honor system, tests were not monitored until extensive cheating was observed. With regard to the honor system, we always felt the requirement not to copy work of others in the past to be inconsistant [sic] with the architect's objective to build on the work of great, past architects. But in fact, the modern age was upon us and we relied almost not at all on past work. In retrospect, this was a mistake and I suspect that some of the more intelligent and skillful of the students studied for themselves past work which had been done. Some structured guidance though would have helped.

There were almost no outside critics. In my fourth year, a visiting critic program was started with Philip Johnson leading off. I didn't have a presence in Johnson's class but I participated in the rash of glass building designs that followed. This isolation was regrettable because it was reflected in other ways. In retrospect, I believe the education had many deficiencies. The design and art course process of learning by doing was very good, the structural courses given in the college were excellent but the remaining courses average to mediocre. I don't recall the discussion of current or international work by noted architects as an ongoing subject of discussion. Exhibitions outside the school that we participated in were few and far between and we existed in a vacuum created by our own isolation. Possibly the fault is my own but certainly the outside influence were [sic] not emphasized by the school in any substantial way to encourage student participation outside our own sphere.

I cannot comment on the influence of the Depression and of W.W.2 since I came after these were finished. However, I can point out that my freshman class, the first great influx after the war ended, numbered about 100 students. <u>All</u> the

remaining classes in Art & Architecture numbered also about 100. This tells you something of how the ending of the war affected the school.

I must close now because I've covered your questions as well as I can for now and I can see my handwriting is getting very sloppy - my apologies. I know I've said nothing of the other students. I'll be happy to answer specific questions if you have any. I'll close with my recollections of the Green Dragon.

I believe it was in 1947 that our class was assembled and the president (Bob Bien I believe) announced that we were going to promote and old tradition in Cornell - chasing the snake out of Cornell on St. Patrick's day. I never discovered if we were reviving an old tradition or creating an old tradition but there it was - a 100 foot long green cheese cloth snake with a paper [sic] maché head that has, I believe, turned into a chinese dragon. Those not providing snake legs became MacNamara's band and we frightened the snake though [sic] all the major campus buildings until we all gave up from exhaustion and retired to drinking beer. Unfortunately, some lame brain dragged a horse into Goldwin Smith with the snake and a coed, emerging from class and startled by the horse in the hall, screamed, frightened the horse which thereupon kicked the coed. Dumb students, sensible horse. We were naturally chided by the University administrators who banned any further chasing of snakes but relented the following year. Mackesey, as was customary kept a straight face as he told us what a horrible and stupid prank we had pulled. We agreed upon the stupidity part and, as was customary with the students, let the scolding roll off our backs.

Before I really end let me point you to several incidents that I am certain others will describe:

(1) The annual welcoming "wet" picture for the new freshman class.
(2) The last problem prepared by the Class of 50 just before a picnic that was rained out and the too do [sic] with campus patrol that was trying to throw out the (by then) drunken picnicers [sic] who had no place to go and had settled down to a picnic in the exhibition room.
(3) The parade (about 1949) by ROTC in the quadrangle which was disrupted by Architecture students who were largely ex-military persons and certainly anti-war and anti-military.

Robert L. Myers (B.Arch. 1950)
(17 August 1988)

Interesting that you're interested:

* I am Robert Myers
B.Arch. Cornell '50, M.Arch. Harvard (under Gropius) '51
Prix de Rome 1953-54 ----- Now retired.

*"Remembrance of things past":

*World War II was on and I was accepted to enter Feb. '44 with alacrity into a class of 3 (2 girls). I was there 1 term before being drafted.

*Having taken art lessons since about age 10, my ability to draw was appreciated by a faculty in a college where art was appreciated. Warner in commending my drawing said "that's half the battle" (later, at Harvard, I was amazed that perspectives were called sketches and, fudged or not, they were acceptable as "breezy" complements to concept and careful model.) Mr. Baxter would have been unnerved by some of the Harvard infidelity to the laws of perspective. Later, I was to learn that clients are sensitive to such infidelity -- and complain. (Perspectives sell !!)

*Brown: I returned to Cornell after Rome as a design critic while I unabashedly crammed for the N.Y. State exam. This good man couldn't have been more helpful in refreshing me in struct'l design at odd times. He admitted liking his job + his Thoreau-like life.

*Detweiler: I'll never forget that in the history of architecture building is always a reflection of the economics of the time. He ground this in - and it's true. Early on the morning of June 6, 1944, I learned the European invasion! had commenced. When I got to his 8 o'clock class I was pleased and impressed he'd organized a slide show for the class showing Normandy - Caen - Brittainy [sic] + related architecture.

*Wells - Jovial + enthusiastic. He expressed concern (once to me) that Ithaca's relative isolation was a problem in being "with it" architecturally. "Au contraire" for me as a student: that very isolation made me a voluntary grind. Look up my record + notice top in class, etc. Gropius was invited up for an evening lecture. That was the inspiration for my applying to his graduate class at Harvard + a more metropolitan experience.

*Mackesey: Another indelible quote: "Any problem re the city can find its supreme illustration or example in New York City."

*Hanson: His surviving colleagues (Daly, Evett) still maintain that he never got just recognition in the "art world" during his life. As an art collector I'm glad to have acquired 2 of his works from the Johnson Museum.

*Tilton: He was called by students "Father John" (not to his face.) When I won the Rome Prize he was kind enough to write me a congratulatory note. I had a tough time on exam (NY) on mech. eqpmt. Had Tilton's course been more organized + specific I'd have had less self-educat'n in this.

*Montillon: Actually a landscape archt. His black + white saddle shoes come to mind. Naturally I have a fond association with the Prof. who announced to me, a WWar II vet, that after one design project under him I was to be advanced to the next design course ("skipping a grade"). He was Mr. Nice Guy, a perennial collegiate with a personable way with students.

*Hartell: Sophisticated, articulate, this first year prof. exuded simplicity in architecture vs. tricky, banal taste. Mies' Barcelona Pavillon [sic] was his undisclosed ideal. His approach was to get the student to think. As his asst. in teaching freshmen, he said to me: "Don't take it away from them all at once!" (I had jeered at projects showing pointed cedars flanking entrances.)

When I returned to my hometown: Winston-Salem, N.C. I, with friends, founded a gallery of fine arts which, since, with Hanes money, etc. has become The Southeast Center of Contemporary Art with grant from Equitable Life, etc. (SECCA). At least 3 times he served as juror for art (for sale) from a 5-state region. (I own about 8 Hartells.) The SECCA facility (conversion and addition to Jas. G. Hanes (hosiery) mansion was dome by Michael Newman -- a Cornell freshman under Hartell + Myers. Bottom line: ripple effects!

*Mahoney: Kind, brilliant, sense of humor -- never really "bought modern architecture". Broadly, Cornell in my day was Post Beaux Arts -- into Bauhaus, Corbu, etc. Living thru Post-Modernism, he could have said "I told you so." Somehow, from my view, Cornell's being close to art was a leveling effect in the "this year's hemline" faddishness of architecture.

*Canfield: No. 1 in my time. Enthusiasm balanced by strictness (failure to appear for a crit meant an automatic zero.) He sold circulation, character and elegance in architecture. I lament that he took early retirement -- sort of harrassed [sic] by the "nouveau regime" -- faculty and assts.

*Agurto-Calvo: To a North Carolina WASP, this man was an interesting shot of "exoticism" ---- sort of the Corbu-Niemier [sic] persuasion -- form , shape, emotion, etc. I liked "Sago" very much as a person + critic.

*Daly: Sophisticated artist -- often critical of architects + the way they thought. He came into "his own" with his invented civilization (Lhuros). I am the happy owner

of 4 of his works. Remember, I'm not your average architect. Art is most important to me.

*Barnette: Brilliantly educated: MIT - the Paris École. Having been brought up to respect authority, rather than jest about this man, as did many of my contemporaries, I was first made aware by him of axial relationships. With a background like Louvre - L'Étoile axis, he taught: "Have some element of a bldg. as a satisfying terminus for a view --- not the accidental corner of a bldg. -- or the like." During an intense charette he brought Records of "La Bohème" to the drafting room atop White Hall -- thus, introducing me to an opera which later rippled on to many operas.

Conclusion: I've enjoyed what I hope helps you.

Robert L. Myers (B.Arch. 1950)
(12 September 1988)

1) Immense difference in teaching before + after WWII: Yes, due to: new blood (teachers) released from service with mature attitudes and new blood (student veterans). Another factor: for example, Henry Jova (now an Atlanta archt) reentered. Brilliant and clever, he was a design "star". His influence not only rubbed off on fellow students -- but faculty as well. He was asked to be a part-time critic while working twd B.Arch. degree. Another great difference: faculty/ student ratio change challenged faculty to be more "organized" than during WWII.

2) Differences between Cornell + Harvard.

a. Harvard's requirement of a degree -- pre architecture made for generally more mature + broadened students. (Fortunately, during my Rome Prize days, I was able not only to travel widely but to read classic, great novels of the world which had a profound effect on my personal life -- for the better).

b. Harvard <----> MIT

Great cross-fertilization thru visiting lecturers (world-wide) at both schools.

c. Advantages of metropolitan location (discussed in my original letter to you.) Example: master class visit to New Canaan Glass! house.

d. Gropius' master class consisted of a diverse, international group (only 15 in number). Most U.S. candidates came from U. of Minn. and I recall their "awe" at the "glorious east" -- that I had always more or less accepted as normal. It was fun for me at that time to read "Main Street" by S. Lewis + feel almost smug about my totally eastern seaboard life up to that point. Now the U.S. of course is more homogeneous.

e. A more wordy [sic], intellectualizing environment -- social conscience in planning and afore-mentioned lack of emphasis on art -- see my original letter to you.

[...]

P.S. La Vie de Bohème at both schools identical! Beaux Arts Balls to match.

Alfred E. Edelman (B.Arch. 1956)
(mailed 12 Aug. 88)

I graduated in 1956, my wife Carol, in 1957. You might actually be more interested in my brother, Harold, who finished in 1943-44 and represented a rather curious collection of Cornell architects who were there at the beginning of the Second World War. My brother now practices in a fairly conventional small practice in N.Y.C.

However your letter did start me thinking about those days in school. These are not considered to be the happiest of times but Cornell did a very interesting thing for me which I only began to appreciate many years later. I started, after 2 years as an engineering student, with a group of 13 transfer students in a totally separate class from the typical classes. Zevi Blum, who is now on your faculty was in this bunch and can speak about that time. The group was completely independent until its last year, very cohesive, very small. As far as I know each of the 13 has skirted the profession in one way or another. I tried my hand at the traditional office both as a partner and then in my own firm for many years and frankly found it wanting. I now own and manage a series of small businesses only casually related to building, design and construction. I practice architecture in a very personal way, smaller projects of interest to me and opf [sic] importance to the client. I will not take on any project in which I do not have control of the construction and imput [sic] to the financing.

My wife also a Cornell graduate and a registered architect is senior partner of a mid-sized interior architecture firm of high quality. She may or may not agree with any of the things I might say here.

As I see the Cornell curriculum in hind-sight I see that it made room for an attitude which included the idea that one did not absolutely have to be a traditional architect in order to succeed in life -- a very healthy attitude for the time. The faculty that I remember as being important to me invariably had a message that extended beyond the narrow professional arena:

Tom Mackesey was Dean and together with John Reps exposed us to the bigger experiences of regional and planning issues. This may have been early contextual stuff. Also they had a very different view of history than the typical architectural history taught in segments and consisting of only the monuments. The city planning history had an awful lot concerning the real people of the time and the attempts at solution for real problems.

Hubert Baxter proved to us that the "kids upstairs" didn't really deserve our undifferentiated respect without a certain cynicism. However he did show us in many ways that he had a healthy awareness of the design process and was very encouraging of our generally pathetic performance.

The single biggest influence was Aldo Giurgola who immediately demonstrated to us the degree of flexibility and humanity needed to be a creative designer. The Giurgola stories are still wonderfully rich in the re telling [sic].

The Beaux Arts tradition was still apparent as a method of teaching even in the "styles" had changed. We were militant "modernists" without a great understanding of what that meant and were still in the romantic vision of an earlier time. An important aspect of that quality was a genuine respect for the other fine arts.

I was there at the time that many of the older 1930-1940's faculty were leaving, retiring and we could sense that a period was ending.

The visiting critic system was superb and well liked by all of us. After meeting several Wesr [sic] Coast architects this way it was apparent that I would wish to travel West. The grading system was awful. The only redeaming [sic] fact was that many of us learned how to play the odds -- doing acceptable work in the early part of the semester in order to experiment later on (at least we thought so).

We built models of everything and did as little drawing as possible (this was a direct reaction to the Beaux Arts) but somehow we learned to draw anyway. Oddly, I later taught drawing and watercolor.

There was a lot of favorite student stuff. Some of my fellow students who have become the darlings of the profession were generally ignored, even ridiculed. (Richard meier [sic], Pete Eisenman)

A strong and positive influence came from the many South and Central American students who were there in great numbers at the time. These were superbly trained in drawing and general 3D thinking by the time they came to college. At this time there were also many Korean War veterans in our midst who were exceptionally good students and tough competition.

The School was generous with small scholarships and jobs which helped me in many ways. I was the recipient of the Eidlitz after graduation which sent me to Holland and Italy and where I got my first real taste of history and a contemporary architecture which could co-exist with other buildings.

It is a total embarassment [sic] to send slides of student work, but you asked and you may have to look at these horrors. The subject was an electronics research/teaching center on the campus of U. of Michigan. I was working part-time at the GE electronics lab at the Ithaca airport at the time and thought that I knew something the faculty didn't. little [sic] did I know!

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Letters from alumni to the author (CNP – Christian Nielsen-Palacios). Typed versions of the letters are included in Appendix D. Cornell College of Architecture alumni who wrote to Christian Nielsen-Palacios for this Thesis are listed below, by year of degree:

HARTELL, John	(B.Arch.	1925)
PARKS, Ralph H.	(B.Arch.	1931)
SHORT, Frederick W.	(B.L.A.	1931)
BACON, Edmund N.	(B.Arch.	1932)
BOYCE, John A.	(B.Arch.	1932)
FREEMAN, William W.	(B.Arch.	1932)
PROCTOR, Louise Stevens	(B.F.A.	1932)
TOWNSEND, John S. Jr.	(B.Arch.	1932)
BUTLER, John R.	(B.Arch.	1933)
CHANNEL, Mary Brown	(B.Arch.	1933)
BERRY, Elisabeth Jones	(B.F.A.	1934)
SIEVERS, Elizabeth Barrus	(B.F.A.	1934)
RABE, Benjamin J.	(B.Arch.	1935)
SULLIVAN, John Jr.	(B.Arch	1936)
MANSON, Elmer J.	(B.Arch.	1937)
PERRON, Louis J.	(B.L.A.	1937)
BISSELL, Nicol	(B.Arch.	1938)
GRAFF, Raymond K.	(B.Arch.	1938)
DAHLSTRAND, Olof H.	(B.Arch.	1939)
WARNER, Daniel B.	(B.Arch.	1939)
COLE, Dorthea Thurston	(B.Arch.	1940)
FIRPI, José D.	(B.Arch.	1945)
WEISKOPF, Malcolm S.	(B.Arch.	1949)
DARLINGTON, Robert P.	(B.Arch.	1950)
FRAZIER, Richard B.	(B.Arch.	1950)
GITLIN, Robert	(B.Arch.	1950)
MYERS, Robert L.	(B.Arch.	1950)
GATJE, Robert F.	(B.Arch.	1951)
MULLEN, Jo-Ann Mayer	(B.F.A.	1951)
SKOLER, Louis	(B.Arch.	1951)
SPRAGUE, Joan Forrester	(B.Arch.	1953)
POLSON, Margaret R.	(B.F.A.	1954)
SELIGMANN, Werner	(B.Arch.	1955)

EDELMAN, Alfred E.	(B.Arch.	1956)

Interviews only with:

UDALL, John T.	(?)	
UDALL, Frances Cranmer	(B.L.A.	1931)
BLASS, Noland Jr.	(B.Arch.	1941)
CRUMP, Ralph W.	(B.Arch.	1949)
JOVA, Henri V.	(B.Arch.	1949)
HARTRAY, John F.	(B.Arch.	1954)

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