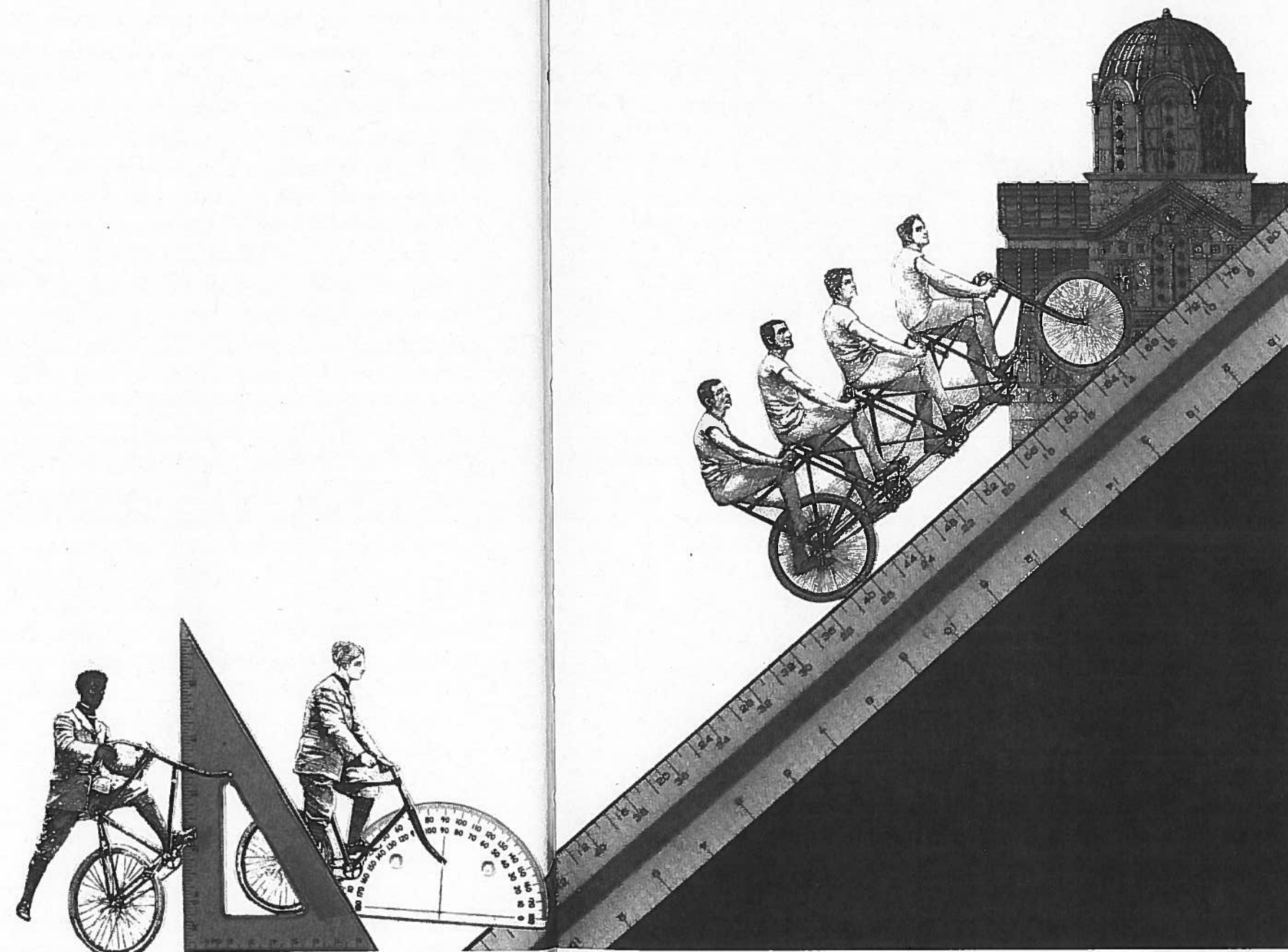


Designing for Diversity



## Introduction

### WHAT IF... ?

**WHAT IF FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT** had been a woman? Would Frances Lloyd Wright have become the most famous architect in American history? Would she become a model for generations of architects? Would her works be listed in the National Register of Historic Places? Would they become popular international tourist attractions? Would her fans be buying Wright-inspired ties, tee shirts, note cards, and calendars?

What if Frank Lloyd Wright had been African American? Would he have been allowed even to study architecture? Would Louis Sullivan have hired him? Would Wright have had the chance to develop a wealthy clientele or been in a position to run off with his client's wife? Would he have had the means to develop his own school and studio? Would he have had the opportunity to leave such an impressive imprint on the American landscape? Would he have been granted commissions to design the Guggenheim Museum or the Marin County Civic Center?

Even today, over a century after Wright was born, women and persons of color still struggle to succeed in the architectural profession. Their voices must be heard. Among the shocking findings from my surveys and interviews of over four hundred architects nationwide:

- Most of the architects who have encountered a glass ceiling in their jobs are women.
- Significant gender and racial differences exist in the perceptions of glass-ceiling barriers in the architectural profession.
- Sharp salary differences for full-time architectural employees occur along gender lines. Women architects employed full-time earn *significantly less* than their male counterparts, regardless of their years of experience on the job.
- Over two-thirds (68%) of the respondents have seen or heard about gender discrimination in an architectural office, and four out of ten (44%) have personally experienced it.

- Four out of ten (42%) have seen or heard about racial discrimination in an architectural office.
- A quarter (27%) have quit their architectural jobs because of unfair treatment.
- Many had horrendous experiences in architectural offices. For instance, many well-qualified women architects watched their male subordinates become their superiors almost overnight.

But there is good news: scores of architects from groups that are underrepresented in the profession—that is, women and nonwhite males—have overcome formidable obstacles and enjoyed tremendous success in their professional lives. Photographs of their work appear in the pages of this book. Years ago, who could have foreseen that major structures such as the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo, the building that houses the San Francisco Ballet, or the Air Traffic Control Tower and Administration Building at Los Angeles International Airport (fig. 1) would all be designed by women? And who would have imagined that one of the most high-profile architectural commissions in America—the replacement for the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, destroyed by a terrorist



The Air Traffic Control Tower and Administration Building at the Los Angeles International Airport was designed by Katherine Diamond, FAIA, of Siegel Diamond Architecture as consultants to Holmes & Narver, Inc., Architect/Engineer of Record. It was completed in 1995 and publicized in *US News and World Report* and elsewhere as one of the major architectural commissions to be designed by a female architect. Photograph courtesy Siegel Diamond Architecture.

bomb in 1995—would be won by a woman-owned firm?<sup>1</sup> The works of such prolific contemporary architects as Carol Ross Barney, Ann Beha, Denise Scott Brown, Sheila Cahnman, Katherine Diamond, Diane Legge Kemp, and Beverly Willis shatter stereotypes about what women can and cannot do. Similarly, the awe-inspiring designs of Walter Blackburn, David Fukui, Ronald Garner, Mui Ho, Sylvia Kwan, Johnpaul Jones, David Lee, Patricia Saldana Natke, Norma Sklarek, and Donald Stull provide compelling evidence that persons of color have much to offer the architectural profession.

#### ABOUT THIS BOOK

Most coverage of underrepresented architects in professional journals has featured profiles of successful designers and their work, with their names and photographs prominently displayed. In such a public forum, most architects highlight only their positive experiences; they do not mention the firms that may have mistreated them early in their careers, the pain that may have caused them, or how they rebounded. While such “showcase” publicity is valuable to the profession, its focus is on individual mobility rather than on structural forces. Its scope is limited, and it presents an overly rosy picture of the profession. A structural approach requires a broader perspective, allowing one to examine the context in which individual advances within the field can occur. As the sociologist Natalie Sokoloff argues in her book comparing black women and white women in various professions, “The United States may be a more open society than some, but the myth that hard work will be rewarded regardless of a person’s racial/ethnic, gender, or class background is just that—a myth. Only a structural approach allows us to see why people from various groups are more or less likely to succeed in entering and rising in a given profession.”<sup>2</sup>

The focus on individual achievement has meant that some potentially powerful information has been overlooked. What about those who have not yet achieved success? Or those who are still struggling in unpleasant, unfair working conditions? Or those who have hit the infamous glass ceiling? This book addresses that gap.

*Designing for Diversity* focuses on the experiences of underrepresented architects, especially women and persons of color, and how they compare to those of their white male counterparts. To a lesser extent, it also examines the experiences of architects who are gay or lesbian. This book gives voice to those who have long remained silent about the abuses of architectural practice and allows readers to step into the shoes of those who have been marginalized. Based on a



substantial body of empirical research, *Designing for Diversity* suggests strategies to reform and further diversify the architectural profession. My goal is to inspire architects to create a more humane work environment that will benefit the profession and ultimately society at large.

This work is an outgrowth of my first book, *Design Juries on Trial*.<sup>5</sup> In fact, the philosophical stances as well as the methodological approaches are similar in both books. The earlier work was among the first to challenge one of the field's "sacred cows," the design jury system, which is the primary mode of critiquing architectural work. My goal was to persuade architectural educators and students to create a more humane academic environment that would ultimately benefit the profession. My research, which drew upon interviews with and surveys of over nine hundred faculty, students, and award-winning designers, documented disturbing gender differences about how students perceived design juries, design studios, and architectural education. It led me to wonder whether the patterns found in school might be present in architectural practice.

*Designing for Diversity* chronicles the turmoil and triumph that underrepresented architects have experienced in their profession. Many of their frustrations parallel those encountered by mainstream architects. To a certain extent, all architects struggle to survive in a profession where the educational preparation is long, the registration process is rigorous, the hours are grueling, and the pay is incredibly low. Yet many underrepresented architects face additional hardships, such as isolation, marginalization, stereotyping, and discrimination. Still, for many architects—whether they be in the majority or minority—the intense satisfaction of seeing one's project develop from the ground up far outweighs the agony. Admirably, they display an incredible passion for this field. Several respondents to my survey expressed their continued attraction to the practice of architecture, even though they have confronted professional hardships. (In the following comments, respondents are identified by numbers, to preserve their anonymity; see full explanation of numbers below.)

Architecture is not a career or a profession. It is a way of living. I love it and I always have. I love the ever-changing nature of it. I love the intellectual exchanges. I love the beautiful work it creates. I love the complicated process of conception, design and construction; I love how it keeps me aware of my environment and the impact I can have on it. I have been an architect ever since I can remember. I will never be anything else. (#152, African-American female, age 38)

I've been in it too long to quit . . . I still get a rush when I sketch a house plan. (#190, African-American male, age 43)

You can look and see the fruits of your labor. . . . Maybe it will be here long after you're not here and maybe [it] will inspire somebody else. (I-#13, African-American male, age 60)

I can't imagine being out of it unless I was so disabled that I couldn't draw or speak or see. (I-#8, Latina female, age 40)

This book is aimed at those who will lead the architectural profession into a new era. It targets several audiences: practicing architects, educators, scholars and students in architecture and related disciplines, along with those in gender, racial, and ethnic studies. It can serve as a text for professional practice, management, and diversity courses in schools of architecture. It is directed toward those individuals who are victims of discrimination—as well as toward their victimizers. In all fairness, it must be said that the majority of architects fall into neither camp, yet these architects will also benefit from my research. They can play an especially critical role in rectifying some of the wrongs. By opening their eyes to what their colleagues face every day, and by viewing their field through a new lens, white male architects in the mainstream of the profession can become powerful voices for change.

While working on this research, I have often been asked the question, Do men and women, African Americans, Latinos and Latinas, or Asian Americans design differently? When interviewing underrepresented architects, many journalists insist on asking just that. My preference here, however, is to avoid gender or racial stereotypes and to let individual voices be heard. I hope to paint a dramatic portrait of all the actors on the architectural stage. While the press has occasionally spotlighted the stars, my light will shine on those waiting in the wings.

Throughout this book are examples of racism and sexism in the architectural workplace, compelling evidence that many architects remain largely unaware of or insensitive to diversity issues. Some instances are obvious, while others are subtle. Most speak for themselves. To a certain extent, the phenomenon of ageism is revealed as well. While some individuals have routinely referred to architecture as a "gentleman's profession," an "old boy's profession," others view it as an "older person's profession." In fact, several architects have told me that excelling in this field before age fifty was next to impossible, and that they were not taken seriously until they had some gray hair to show for their efforts.

Less visible are examples of heterosexism and homophobia in the architec-

tural workplace. This reflects the questions asked in my surveys and interviews; sexual orientation was not my primary focus. Nevertheless, where relevant I have included the perspectives of gays and lesbians. Issues concerning architects with physical disabilities are beyond the scope of this book. A vast literature on universal design focusing on consumers with disabilities already exists. Much more information must be gathered about designers with disabilities, and this topic merits a book of its own.

*Designing for Diversity* does not simply address what's wrong in the profession. On the positive side, it points to the unique contributions that underrepresented groups have made to the architectural profession, as well as ways they can further reach their potential in the field.

### THE GLASS CEILING IN ARCHITECTURE RESEARCH

Funds from the Campus Research Board of the University of Illinois and from the Graham Foundation enabled me to conduct one of the first nationwide studies of gender and racial issues in architectural practice. The goal of this research was to identify and examine those aspects of architectural practice that hinder or support the full participation of women and persons of color—and ultimately to produce information that can be used to improve the professional climate for underrepresented architects. Its objectives were: (1) to compare the situation in architecture with that in other fields, including those in the business world; (2) to compare the professional experiences of white women, women of color, white men, and men of color in architecture; (3) to identify and analyze obstacles and opportunities for professional advancement in architecture, with a special focus on those for underrepresented architects; (4) to analyze some ways in which underrepresented architects have succeeded in shattering the glass ceiling; and (5) to analyze successful strategies for diversifying the architectural profession.

The "glass ceiling" is a major issue explored through my research. The phrase has been used frequently in the last few decades to refer to obstacles that prevent certain people from obtaining high levels of responsibility, prestige, and power in their careers. These barriers are at first invisible but no less real. Once women and people of color have entered the architectural profession, how well do they fare? What *obstacles* do they face? What kinds of professional opportunities are they offered—or denied? How difficult is it for them to be hired, promoted, or named a principal in an architectural firm? Which kinds of clients are they able—or unable—to attract? How do their experiences compare with

those of their white male counterparts? How widespread are sexual discrimination and racial harassment?

My research on designing for diversity has spanned a decade and it continues. It has included an extensive review of literature in architecture and other disciplines. This examination was essential in providing a historical, political, and social context for my analysis. Throughout this period, I have received anecdotal information from scores of underrepresented architects who recounted their experiences in letters, e-mail, and phone calls.

My research in this area has paralleled my teaching. Since 1991 I have taught a course on gender and race in architecture at the University of Illinois. My course has included an annual field trip to Chicago where my students and I interviewed underrepresented architects and toured their offices. Hearing their stories provided an impetus to pursue this research in book form.

An overview of my methodological approach is shown in table 1; for a more detailed description consult appendix A. I used multiple methods to compare the experiences of underrepresented architects with those of their white male

TABLE 1. Designing for Diversity Research Methods

Phase	Sample	Survey	Interviews	Archives
1	Underrepresented architects ( <i>n</i> = 58) women architects architects of color		x	x
2	Professional organizations architects ( <i>n</i> = 23) non-architects ( <i>n</i> = 17)			x
3	Underrepresented architects ( <i>n</i> = 30) women of color ( <i>n</i> = 13) white men ( <i>n</i> = 11) men of color ( <i>n</i> = 6) (possible duplicates for phases 4–6)		x	
4	Sample 1 <sup>a</sup> ( <i>n</i> = 94) volunteers solicited via newsletters and AIA events ( <i>n</i> = 128)	x		
5	Sample 2 <sup>a</sup> ( <i>n</i> = 257) randomly selected AIA members ( <i>n</i> = 800) white men ( <i>n</i> = 200) white women ( <i>n</i> = 200) men of color ( <i>n</i> = 200) women of color ( <i>n</i> = 200) (usable surveys = 783)	x		
6	Sample 3 <sup>a</sup> ( <i>n</i> = 58) volunteers solicited via 1994 AIA National Diversity Conference ( <i>n</i> = 220; possible duplicates from samples 1 and 2; response rate is inconclusive)		x	

a. Total of samples 1–3 = 409

counterparts. I relied primarily upon archives, surveys, and interviews. Surveys produced largely quantitative data, while interviews and archives yielded qualitative information.

For phase 1, *interviews* with 58 women architects and architects of color were conducted by students in my course on gender and race in contemporary architecture. The students conducted the interviews as part of an assignment to produce exhibit boards featuring profiles of underrepresented architects. Students also collected *archival data*, including resumes, published completed projects, drawings from their architects, and brochures from firms. This material was collected over a ten-year period, beginning in 1991. In phase 2, *archival data*, such as brochures, reports, and surveys, were collected from organizations of underrepresented architects around the country and from professional organizations of underrepresented employees in other fields. The information obtained was used to identify key issues, research studies, and survey questions that could be incorporated into my own research. Phase 3 involved in-depth *interviews* conducted with 30 women architects and architects of color. For phases 4-6, individuals in three research samples were sent a written *survey* containing approximately 400 questions, a combination of "open" and "closed" items, that is, questions that were open-ended and those that were multiple choice. A total of 409 practicing architects from across the United States responded. These included white men, white women, men of color, and women of color. Appendix A describes each sample in detail.

Respondents represent a broad cross section of ages, races, ethnic groups, geographic areas, and levels of professional experience. Several are well-known, highly accomplished figures in the field. For a detailed demographic description of the sample, consult appendixes A and B.

With the exception of those architects interviewed in phase 1, all participants in the surveys and interviews remain anonymous. My intention was to allow individuals to speak freely about their professional experiences, without their photographs or names attached. Discovering what architects have to say under the cloak of anonymity is an essential feature of my study. Note that throughout this book, where responses to the open-ended questions are quoted, each respondent is identified by a number. These are included so that readers can compare responses for the same individuals across different questions when available. In addition, individuals who participated in this research can try to locate themselves if they wish. A survey respondent is identified by number ("#") only, while an interview respondent is identified by "I-#."

Whenever possible, each respondent is also identified by age. Age is an especially important demographic trait, as it indicates how recently the reported events occurred. For example, one might expect that a sixty-five-year-old woman would report an unpleasant incident during her interview for her first architectural job. However, when a thirty-five-year-old woman recounts the same problem, this reveals that the dilemmas of forty years ago persist today.

Although I collected additional identifying information about each participant, such as the geographic region where they worked and their specific involvement in architectural practice, I included none of this data here, in order to protect confidentiality. The community of underrepresented architects is small, especially for women of color. Providing any more detailed information would jeopardize respondents' anonymity.

Preliminary results from my research were presented at two American Institute of Architects (AIA) National Diversity Conferences and published in the proceedings.<sup>4</sup> Several conference participants volunteered to be interviewed or surveyed. In response to their requests, I expanded my survey sample. Early findings were also published in *Progressive Architecture* and mentioned in *Architectural Record*.<sup>5</sup> To date, this coverage represents the greatest exposure my research has received.

Later, my research assistants and I collaborated on an exhibit entitled "Shattering the Glass Ceiling: The Role of Gender and Race in the Architectural Profession," a series of black-and-white collages that illustrated major findings and compelling quotes from the surveys and interviews. Jami Becker, Tracey Jo Hoekstra, Melissa Worden, and I collaborated on the design of the collages, and Melissa Worden and I coproduced the exhibit. In 1996 it was displayed at the Urbana-Champaign campus of the University of Illinois, Harvard University's Graduate School of Design, the AIA National Diversity Conference, and the AIA National Conference in Minneapolis.

A few words of caution: my research is limited by the nature of my research sample. As practicing architects, the respondents were willing participants in the profession. I did not include people who wanted to study architecture but were discouraged from enrolling, those who enrolled but never graduated, and those who received their architectural degrees but never practiced. Only through second-hand reports was I able to gain some understanding of those who did practice but later dropped out of the field. While such individuals would have much to say, tracking them down is a challenge that I will leave to others.



## OVERVIEW

This introduction and chapter 1 make the case for designing for diversity. Chapters 2 and 3 analyze how gender, sexual orientation, race, and ethnicity have interacted with the built environment. They examine how the collective forces of sexism, racism, and the star system in architecture have long silenced the voices of diverse designers, and how these voices eventually began to be heard. These chapters explore several key questions: What roles have diverse designers played as clients, consumers, creators, and critics of the built environment? What spaces and places have they created? How have architectural partnerships between husbands and wives affected women architects? Where can one find buildings that celebrate diversity?

Chapter 4 examines the political and social context by describing how groups of diverse designers banded together in organizations that had a collective impact on the architectural profession. Affinity groups sponsored a myriad of conferences, lectures, publications, and exhibits that served as powerful forces of change.

Although they are sprinkled throughout the book, key themes raised by my empirical research are the primary focus of chapters 5–7. These chapters take on question such as: How are women architects and architects of color faring compared to their white male counterparts? How do their experiences with the internship process, professional registration, and promotions compare? What are their levels of job satisfaction? How do they perceive architectural practice? How do their salaries compare with those of mainstream architects? How do they balance personal and professional lives or deal with layoffs?

Finally, chapter 8 charts a multifaceted plan to restructure and diversify the architectural profession, presenting new strategies for architectural education, individual architects, architectural firms, the American Institute of Architects, and public outreach.

The twentieth century opened the doors of the architectural profession to those who were previously shut out. Architects of the twenty-first century must now transform their profession into one that truly provides equal opportunities for all.

## Chapter 1

### DIVERSITY IN DESIGN

Thirty years after the dawn of the civil rights era, architecture remains among the less successful professions in diversifying its ranks—trailing, for example, such formerly male-dominated fields as business, computer science, accounting, law, pharmacology and medicine.

—Ernest Boyer and Lee Mitgang

**ERNEST BOYER AND LEE MITGANG**, in their seminal work, *Building Community*, raised a deep concern about the practice and study of architecture: “We worry about . . . the paucity of women and minorities in both the professional and academic ranks.” They based their findings on extensive research with architectural practitioners, students, faculty, and administrators.<sup>1</sup> In a follow-up piece in *Architectural Record*, Mitgang called for an end to “apartheid in architecture schools” and argued that “the race record of architecture education is a continuing disgrace, and if anything, things seem to be worsening.”<sup>2</sup>

While over half the users of the built environment are female and large numbers are people of color, population figures in early 2000 revealed that only 16% of architects in the United States were women, 4% of architects were of Hispanic origin, and 2% were African American.<sup>3</sup> But these figures simply reflect individuals’ self-reports. Some individuals may call themselves architects but may not really be licensed in the profession. Others may not yet have passed the licensing exam, making them ineligible to assume legal responsibility for the design of a building.

How have the numbers of women in architecture compared with those in

other fields? The U.S. Census data includes all persons who list themselves as architects, regardless of whether or not they are professionally licensed to practice. According to the census, women comprised 4% of architects in 1970, 8% in 1980, and 15% in 1990. While these figures show some increase, the representation of women in architecture is by far the lowest among many arts professions, including photography, music performance, and music composition. In fact, the rate of women's entry into the architecture profession closely parallels that of women in medicine.<sup>4</sup>

What about the representation of women and persons of color among architects who are licensed? Here the most reliable source is data from the American Institute of Architects (AIA), the major professional organization in the field. Table 2 illustrates the *dramatic underrepresentation* of women and persons of color in architecture across the board: especially in practice, as AIA members, and as full-time and tenured faculty.<sup>5</sup> As of 1999, 13% of AIA members were women and only 8% were persons of color; of those licensed to practice (i.e., solely regular AIA members, excluding associate and emeritus members), only 10% were women and 8% were persons of color.<sup>6</sup> No woman or person of color has yet received the highly coveted Pritzker Prize, the profession's equivalent of the Nobel Prize.<sup>7</sup>

Astonishingly few African-American architects are licensed to practice in some states. For example, in 1996, twenty-six U.S. states each had a total of five or fewer licensed African-American architects. Delaware, Mississippi, New Mexico, North Dakota, and Rhode Island each had only one. Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Montana, New Hampshire, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wyoming had none.<sup>8</sup>

**TABLE 2.** Women and People of Color in Architectural Education and Practice

	Total	Women	All People of Color	African American	Asian	Latino	Native American
Architects	194,000	15.7%	—	2.3%	—	4.4%	—
AIA members	64,831	13.0	8.2%	1.3	4.1%	2.6	0.2%
Full-time architecture faculty	2,456	15.8	10.3	3.3	3.1	3.8	0.1
Tenured architecture faculty	1,256	13.9	8.4	2.8	2.7	2.9	—
Architecture undergraduate students	13,701	38.0	29.2	9.1	10.4	8.6	1.1
Architecture graduate students	5,064	43.6	23.7	2.3	12.0	8.4	1.0
Graduates of B.Arch. programs	2,617	28.8	22.1	5.0	9.1	7.5	0.5
Graduates of M.Arch. programs	2,002	37.2	17.4	2.0	9.8	5.2	0.4

No wonder some critics have gone so far as to call African-American architects an "endangered species."<sup>9</sup>

Only 16% of full-time architectural faculty in American colleges and universities are women; just 10% are persons of color. For all tenured architectural faculty—those to whom their institutions have made virtually a permanent, lifetime commitment—the figures are even lower; only 14% are women and 8% are persons of color. About half the women (58%), Latinos or Latinas (50%), and Asian/Pacific Islanders (48%) and one-third the African Americans (34%) among architectural faculty are marginalized in part-time teaching positions, with little or no job security.<sup>10</sup> In the early 1990s, similar statistics prompted an article entitled "Why Aren't More Women Teaching Architecture?" in *Architecture*.<sup>11</sup> In 1992, of the 108 architectural schools in the United States and Canada that grant tenure, 40 schools had no tenured women at all, and 27 had only one.<sup>12</sup> As of the 1997–98 academic year, the 117 accredited architectural schools in the United States and Canada produced only 17 women administrators: 7 deans, 5 chairs, 3 heads, and 2 directors.<sup>13</sup>

Of all undergraduates enrolled in accredited architecture programs in the United States at the close of the 1990s, 38% were women and 29% were people of color. Although these figures represent a substantial increase over earlier ones, the number of students far exceeds the number of those individuals who actually make it into the profession. In accredited graduate architecture programs, women comprise 44% and students of color make up 24%.<sup>14</sup>

The number of African-American architecture students appears to be decreasing slightly, although until 1990 we had no way even to track this information. Prior to that date, the National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB) amassed data for "minority" students, but it did not subdivide it by racial or ethnic groups such as African Americans, Latinos/Latinas, Asian Americans, and Native Americans. As of the mid-1990s, African-American architecture students comprised only about 6% of the architectural student body. In 1995 only 32 African-American students across the United States received a master's degree in architecture; by 1999 only 40 had done so. Furthermore, recent figures show a disturbing pattern of *racial segregation* in architectural education. Of the 1,313 African-American students enrolled in architecture schools in North America, 45% were students at the seven historically black schools with accredited architecture programs—Florida A&M, Hampton, Howard, Morgan State, Prairie View A&M, Southern, and Tuskegee—while the remainder were enrolled at the other 96 schools of architecture.<sup>15</sup>

Such disturbing figures raise serious questions about the lack of diversity in



the architectural profession today. Statistics like these perpetuate the image of the profession as a private white men's club. To the outside world—and to many within the field—the profession seems incredibly insular and, compared to many other fields, archaic.

#### WHY DIVERSITY IN ARCHITECTURE?

Why do we need greater diversity among designers? And why is designing for diversity such a paramount concern? *The built environment reflects our culture, and vice-versa*. If our buildings, spaces, and places continue to be designed by a relatively homogeneous group of people, what message does that send about our culture?

Compared to most other countries, our American culture is a rich mosaic of racial and ethnic groups. With the latest waves of immigration, American cities are becoming increasingly racially and ethnically diverse, prompting a 1991 *USA Today* headline, "Minorities a Majority in Fifty-one Cities." The accompanying article noted that during the 1980s, people of color tipped the population scales in seven cities with populations over 500,000, including New York, Houston, Dallas, San Jose, San Francisco, Memphis, and Cleveland.<sup>16</sup> By 1990, Chicago's Hispanics, primarily immigrants from Mexico, Puerto Rico, and Cuba, represented about 18% of the city's population. African Americans were 37%. The Vietnamese have the fastest rate of increase of any ethnic group in Chicago, and Filipinos and Indians are close behind. Historically, the Windy City has had high populations of Italians, Greeks, Germans, Poles, and Irish.<sup>17</sup>

These ethnic groups will eventually assume leadership roles. Several cities have already had African-American mayors and city council representatives: Atlanta, Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, New York, and Philadelphia.<sup>18</sup> Yet the architectural profession in these and other cities is predominantly white.

#### ARCHITECTURE AS A CREATOR AND REFLECTION OF CULTURE

The lack of diversity in the architectural profession impedes progress not only in that field but also in American society at large. Throughout the world, architects create the places in which we live and work, from those where we are born to those where we die. The built environment is one of culture's most lasting and influential legacies, a fact underscored by Sir Winston Churchill's observation, "We shape our buildings, and afterwards our buildings shape us." Dis-

crimination in the architectural profession can lead to discrimination in how we all use the built environment. In fact, it has done so for years.

Leslie Kanés Weisman's book *Discrimination by Design* provides a thorough analysis of how the built environment has historically reflected and promoted the treatment of women as second-class citizens. Her work examines these issues in American housing, the office tower, the department store, the shopping mall, the maternity hospital, and elsewhere. As Weisman argues:

Public buildings that spatially segregate or exclude certain groups, or relegate them to spaces in which they are either invisible or visibly subordinate, are the direct result of a comprehensive system of social oppression, not the consequences of failed architecture or prejudiced architects. However, our collective failure to notice and acknowledge how buildings are designed and used to support the social purposes they are meant to serve—including the maintenance of social inequality—guarantees that we will never do anything to change discriminatory design. When such an awareness does exist, discrimination can be redressed.<sup>19</sup>

Women, persons of color, certain ethnic groups, gays and lesbians, and persons with physical disabilities have historically been treated as second-class citizens in the built environment. In effect, their civil rights have been denied. For example, the Jim Crow laws that shaped the landscape of the American South from the late 1880s until the mid-1960s, forcing the construction of separate churches, schools, building entrances, restrooms, cemeteries, and water fountains for African Americans, reflected an oppressive, two-caste spatial system. So did the construction of Nazi concentration camps in Germany and Eastern Europe during the Holocaust, when over twelve million people—including six million Jews, Slavs, gypsies, gays, persons with physical disabilities, and other pariahs—met their deaths. In the United States, approximately 110,000 people of Japanese ancestry living along the West Coast, two-thirds of them American citizens, were forced out of their homes and into "relocation camps" during World War II. No doubt that these are the ultimate modern examples of discrimination by design.<sup>20</sup>

Discrimination by design can be overt or covert. For example, in public places like theaters, stadiums, and airports, we see long lines of frustrated women waiting to use the rest rooms, while men are in and out in a flash. Architects and their clients, as well as building-code officials and others, never noticed that women take longer to use restrooms, and hence women's restrooms need more

toilet stalls than do men's rooms. Had women been the architects, clients, and code officials, the built environment would likely be much more user-friendly to women.

Journalists have argued in the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, *Working Woman*, and publications across the country on behalf of gender equity in rest rooms.<sup>21</sup> One of the more vivid accounts appeared in the *New York Times Magazine*:

I've seen a few frightening dramas on Broadway, but nothing on-stage is ever as scary as the scene outside the ladies' room at intermission: that long line of women with clenched jaws and crossed arms, muttering ominously to one another as they glare across the lobby at the cavalier figures sauntering in and out of the men's room. The ladies' line looks like an audition for the extras in "Les Miserables"—these are the vengeful faces that nobles saw on their way to the guillotine—except that the danger is all too real. When I hear the low rumble of obscenities and phrases like "Nazi male architects" I know not to linger.<sup>22</sup>

In the early 1990s, to accommodate the growing number of women senators, Senate majority leader George Mitchell announced that he was having a women's room installed just outside the Senate chamber in the U.S. Capitol. At that time, only a men's restroom was located there, marked by a sign "Senators Only," an implicit assumption that all senators were men. Senators Nancy Kassebaum and Barbara Mikulski, who did not qualify for admission, had to trek downstairs and stand in line with the tourists. From the U.S. Capitol to fifty state capitols across the country, "potty parity" has often been a pressing issue for women legislators. One New York State assemblywoman reminisced: "We had to tell the doorman whenever we were leaving the floor to visit the rest room—it took so long to get there and back, we were afraid of missing a vote. . . . It was like getting a permission slip from your teacher."<sup>23</sup>

Some state legislators have required architects to design a greater or at least equal number of toilet stalls in women's restrooms, compared to men's, in newly constructed or remodeled public buildings. In 1987, California led the way. State Senator Art Torres introduced such legislation after his wife and daughter endured a long wait for the ladies' room while attending a Tchaikovsky concert at the Hollywood Bowl. The bill became law that same year.<sup>24</sup>

To a certain extent, residential kitchens are also sites of discrimination by design. Instead of standing up, wouldn't it be more comfortable to sit down while washing a sink full of tomato sauce-stained pots and pans? Ironically, we have

to be in a wheelchair in order to get architects to design a kitchen that we can use while seated. Many kitchens are designed with cabinets so high that women need step-stools to reach the shelves, placing them in danger of falling onto a hot stove or a hard floor. While American kitchens may feature the latest appliances and the most fashionable interior design, they often pose special problems for Asian-American women, Latinas, and members of other ethnic groups who tend to be shorter than the average white American male.

Even the projects of stellar designers highlight the need for greater sensitivity to the needs of women and other "diverse" users. Many of Frank Lloyd Wright's housing designs featured spacious living areas, yet the kitchens were so dark and tiny that most women—whether the clients or their household help—would have found it unpleasant to cook in them. (We can assume that in Wright's day, men were not doing much of the cooking.) The traditional woman's domain was not Wright's top priority.

Ever since it was built in 1950, the famous glass house that Ludwig Mies van der Rohe designed for his client Edith Farnsworth in Plano, Illinois, has been considered one of modernism's greatest masterpieces. Yet when Farnsworth moved into her showcase house, the roof leaked so badly and the heating system produced such an unsightly film on the windows that a local plumber suggested the house be called "My Mies-conception." When Farnsworth refused to accept delivery of the furniture that Mies had designed for her, she also refused to pay any more bills and soon began legal proceedings, which resulted in a lengthy legal battle fought out in the courts and in the press. In a 1953 interview for *House Beautiful*, she explained:

The truth is that in this house with its four walls of glass I feel like a prowling animal, always on the alert. I am always restless. Even in the evening. I feel like a sentinel on guard day and night. I can rarely stretch out and relax. . . . What else? I don't keep a garbage can under my sink. Do you know why? Because you can see the whole "kitchen" from the road on the way in here and the can would spoil the appearance of the whole house. So I hide it in the closet farther down from the sink. Mies talks about "free space": but his space is very fixed. I can't even put a clothes hanger in my house without considering how it affects everything from the outside. Any arrangement of furniture becomes a major problem, because the house is transparent, like an X-ray.<sup>25</sup>

A more recent case in point is Ohio State University's Wexner Center for the Arts, the winning entry in a design competition. This building was designed by

the world-renowned architect Peter Eisenman and opened in 1989. It attracted enormous national publicity and was hailed as a groundbreaking work in deconstructivist architecture. Purely as a work of art, it is surely that.<sup>26</sup> Paul Goldberger wrote in the *New York Times*, "How well does the building work? Surprisingly well, considering how little its architect professes to care about such things."<sup>27</sup>

There are telling discrepancies between the accolades of the architecture critics and the experiences of everyday users. Jack Nasar, a professor at Ohio State University, has spent years conducting post-occupancy evaluations of this award-winning building.<sup>28</sup> A persistent finding in his research is that the Wexner Center poses special challenges for women users. One serious problem is the threat of crime. A number of women who work in the building, as well as those who must pass by it after dark, find it dangerous because its design offers too many hiding spots for potential criminals. Another problem is the design and location of floor-to-chest-high windows in the building's top-floor offices, a feature that *Time's* architectural critic referred to as one of several "architectural jokes."<sup>29</sup> To women workers, the windows are no laughing matter. They allow passersby to take a peek up their skirts, hardly a view most women care to expose.

Nasar describes countless examples where elderly people with physical disabilities are not only inconvenienced but endangered by this building. For example, in order to access the Fine Arts Library, visitors must move along a long outdoor aisle that is unsheltered. Marble strips along the walkway become extremely slick whenever it rains. The aisle is a wind trap, making it difficult to walk. When the entrance floor gets wet, it turns slippery. Glare from windows irritates elderly users especially. In order to enter the library, visitors descend a steep stairway into a dark basement, and many have tripped. The building was designed from the perspective of an able-bodied male, without much sensitivity to the different kinds of people who actually use the building. And the public suffers the consequences.<sup>30</sup>

Awarding prizes to buildings like the Wexner Center before the first woman or man has ever set foot in it is ludicrous. And selecting the winners of design competitions primarily on the grounds of aesthetics is an irresponsible use of precious public funds. But Eisenman is not to blame. *Rather it is the architectural profession itself. Its value system, which all too often rewards aesthetics while ignoring the experiences of users—especially diverse users—is simply out of touch with reality.* These scenarios—and countless others—underscore the need for diversity in design.

Controversies about discrimination in architectural education occasionally have made headlines. For instance, when a 1992 report from an ad hoc committee of University of California professors and professional architects critical of Berkeley's Department of Architecture was leaked to Bay Area media, the issue exploded. Three women graduate students at Berkeley's architecture school went public with their complaints of sexual harassment and discrimination.<sup>31</sup> One student had initially complained in 1991 that her professor told her classmates that she had no right to be in architectural school because she was a mother. Yet one of her colleagues contended, "If anything she was remarkable. . . . She had a baby on Thursday and she was back in class on Monday."<sup>32</sup> That same year, several architecture graduate students signed a letter to the dean of the graduate division complaining that architecture professors showed favoritism to males, discriminated against minorities, and treated graduate students in their thirties and forties like juveniles. The ad hoc committee that reviewed the incidents chastised the department.

Two other Berkeley students complained in 1992 that their research supervisor, a graduate student, made sexist and racist remarks, such as "Asian women are inferior to men," and he eventually fired them. One student claimed that the same supervisor had taken a hair tie out of her hand and forcibly pulled it up her leg, saying, "You need a garter belt." The university has since settled the matter, saying that "the appropriate action was taken."<sup>33</sup>

The Berkeley campus was rocked once again a few years later by the lawsuit of Marcy Wong, an assistant professor of architecture, who alleged that she was denied tenure because her white male colleagues were uncomfortable working with an Asian woman.<sup>34</sup> Her saga began in 1985, when members of an ad hoc committee of the architecture department unanimously recommended her for tenure. But the next year, her tenure was denied. Wong and her lawyers claimed that she had been blackballed by an "old boys' club," who felt she did not fit in. Wong filed several unsuccessful grievances with the university before deciding to sue, charging both sexual and racial discrimination. Her case was settled in 1996. Wong and her attorneys were awarded \$1 million, of which Wong netted about half. The university contended that it settled the suit because a trial would have been too costly and because the denial of Wong's tenure was justified. As the case dragged on, Wong had three children and started her own architectural office. Yet the lawsuit took its toll on her. She claimed that she fell apart physically, losing weight and suffering severe pneumonia and bronchitis over several winters in a row. She chose not to return to academia. While Wong's legal case is an anomaly in architectural education, her tenure review is not.



Many women have had less successful outcomes, and, like Wong, they chose to flee academia altogether.<sup>35</sup>

In fact, far too many women professors of architecture have been treated unfairly during the promotion process both for tenure and for full professor. Several have needlessly suffered emotional trauma. More often than not, rather than going public and facing retaliation, women architecture faculty suffer in silence.

Another problem underrepresented academicians face is burnout. They are often overworked, required to serve on countless committees, and saddled with administrative tasks. Out of self-preservation they feel they must work as liaisons to the National Organization of Minority Architecture Students (NOMAS), women-in-architecture groups, and other affinity groups. Such commitments are important, but they also cut into precious time needed for research and scholarship, the criteria upon which their evaluations are based.

Two architecture faculty members, Linda Groat and Sherry Ahrentzen, have conducted thorough investigations of gender and racial issues in architectural education. Their 1990 report for the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture (ACSA) surveyed 210 women architecture faculty across the United States and analyzed demographics within schools. It documented that women were grossly underrepresented among the ranks of tenured faculty. Even worse, many reported experiencing discrimination on the job, and two-thirds believed that sexism is endemic in architectural education. Over a third of the women faculty surveyed perceived significant inequities in salary, appointments to institutionally important committees, and standards for promotion. Ahrentzen and Groat followed up with extensive interviews of over forty women architectural faculty. Based upon these results, as well as the new agenda called for by the landmark Boyer and Mitgang study, they concluded that women can play special roles in transforming both the mission and practice of architectural education through the ideals of a liberal education, interdisciplinary connections, the integration of different modes of thought, connections to other disciplines through beginning studios, the reformation of pedagogical practices, collaboration, and caring for and counseling students.<sup>36</sup>

In their 1996 study of 650 students at six architecture schools, Groat and Ahrentzen extended their research to examine gender and racial issues for architectural students. Their findings identified the largest and most consistent gender difference as women students' perception that they have to outperform males so that the faculty would take them seriously. They also found that a substantial number of students (43%) in the five Caucasian-dominated schools

“believe that students of color must outperform Caucasian students to be taken seriously. . . . These results not only seem indicative of the larger landscape of racial inequities in this country, but they underscore the basis for the extremely low representation of African Americans in the profession generally.”<sup>37</sup> The researchers documented women students' perceptions that faculty either ignored or dismissed their work. As the researchers put it, “Such a pattern of dismissal and devaluing leads many women to conclude that there is a tacit double standard whereby male students are perceived by some faculty as inherently more architect-like.”<sup>38</sup> Groat and Ahrentzen found that compared to male students, female students were less satisfied with architecture as a career, and among international and Asian-American students, women were much less satisfied with architecture both as a major and as a career. As the researchers suggest, “This generally lower level of satisfaction among women appears to be consistent with anecdotal evidence that there is a high level of attrition of women as they move into their careers.”<sup>39</sup> Furthermore, underrepresented students were more inclined to consider switching to alternative careers. Women were more likely than men to consider working for an advocacy or nonprofit firm; an interior design firm; a government agency; in business; and in historic preservation, programming/evaluation, or elsewhere. Over half the Latino students and almost half the Asian-American students considered switching to nonarchitectural careers.<sup>40</sup>

Mark Frederickson has reported on gender and racial bias in design juries, the primary mode of critiquing student design work in architectural education. His extensive research, based on videotaped protocol studies of 112 juries at three American design schools, examined issues such as interruption, opinion polarization, idea building, advisement, questioning, jury kinesics and proxemics, sexual and racial bias, verbal participation rates, among others.<sup>41</sup> Frederickson identified several consistently biased design-jury practices that disadvantage underrepresented students and faculty.

Nevertheless, several years after the publication of my book *Design Juries on Trial*, and after Frederickson conducted his research, design juries remain firmly in place in most architectural schools today. Yet, Boyer and Mitgang found that 58% of administrators and two-thirds of the students agreed that their school should offer alternative ways to evaluate design projects.<sup>42</sup> Resistance to changing design juries is strong, however. In a 1996 article in *AIA Architect*, the architect John Rossi reported that “the traditional jury system in architectural education is effective, its role is valid, and it is not about to be replaced any time soon, agreed a panel of 40 architects, educators, and architecture students that

convened at the 1996 AIA New England Conference."<sup>43</sup> Nonetheless, in that same piece, Rossi raised major concerns about counterproductive juries that demoralize students.

## DEFINING DIVERSITY

Diversity is a set of human traits that have an impact on individuals' values, opportunities, and perceptions of self and others at work. At a minimum, it includes six core dimensions: age, ethnicity, gender, mental or physical abilities, race, and sexual orientation. But it also includes secondary dimensions such as education, family status, religion, first language, geographic location, military experience, income, communication style, organizational level, work experience, and work style. Although less visible than the core dimensions, the secondary dimensions can exert strong influences on individuals' lives. The core dimensions of diversity can cause some individuals to have more opportunities, greater credibility, and unearned privileges compared to others. As Marilyn Loden, a change management consultant for Fortune 500 companies, argued in her book *Implementing Diversity*, "the recognition of this hierarchy can be the first step towards valuing diversity. For it is only after we appreciate the subtle ways in which one's core identity can help open doors to opportunity—while others with different core identities remain locked out—that we can resolve to value all core identities equally and create a truly level playing field on which to compete and succeed."<sup>44</sup>

A brief discussion of terminology is in order. In fact, the terms "gender," "race," and "ethnicity" are oversimplifications. For conceptual clarity, I often refer to either "women" or "men," or "whites" or "persons of color," but each individual's experience is complex. For instance, social and economic class differences can cause inequities. An African-American woman raised in the South Side of Chicago will likely have a different worldview than her North Shore suburban counterpart, even if only twenty miles separate them. Similarly, an East Los Angeles Latino and his Beverly Hills cousin may feel light-years apart. For another, long-term relationships, marriage, and parenthood color individuals' perspectives. A single mother with three children may well have different priorities than a woman who is married without children.

The terms "race" and "ethnicity" are often interchanged. While "race" refers primarily to one's skin color and physical distinctions, "ethnicity" highlights both physical and cultural differences and is more often used in the sociological and anthropological literature.<sup>45</sup> Note that in describing my survey research results,

I have broken down much of the quantitative data by race (in aggregate form, whites vs. persons of color), while the qualitative data presents a sampling of experiences by ethnicity (for example, African Americans, Latinos/Latinas, Asian Americans). That is because the numbers of respondents in each ethnic category were not high enough to draw statistical comparisons.

Although the term "minority" is frequently used in the architectural profession to define any nonwhite racial or ethnic group, it is offensive to many because it implies a lesser status than that of the white mainstream majority. Nowadays "people of color" is preferable to "minority." No socially acceptable expression accurately links women and persons of color as a group. However, when writers refer to these individuals as managers in organizations, they have often used the term "nontraditional" or "underrepresented." In this book I have adopted the latter as it applies to the architectural profession.

From a theoretical viewpoint, diversity in design can be viewed across a broad spectrum as it relates to: *consumers*—people who use the spaces and places we live in, work in, and pass by every day; *critics*—those who write about design, be they journalists, writers, or researchers; and *creators*—those who design and produce these spaces, be they practitioners, educators, or students—of the environment. Clients inhabit more than one segment of this spectrum, playing dual roles as creators and consumers, for without their financial backing, designers would have no work. *Throughout this book, I will argue that by widening our theoretical viewpoint, and by examining the multiple roles that not only designers, but also consumers, critics, and creators of the environment have played, the contributions of underrepresented persons to architecture come to light.*

Diversity encompasses the concerns of women, persons of color, lesbians and gays, and persons with physical or mental disabilities—almost anyone other than the able-bodied white male. How these individuals relate to the built environment is important. Historically, many have been shut out of the environmental mainstream, and their voices remained silent. The architectural profession has only recently begun to notice them at all.

This cultural lag stems from the fact that for far too long, the voice of the architectural profession has been homogeneous. While consumers of the built environment have always been diverse, its creators and critics have been able-bodied white males. In economic terms, we have witnessed a mismatch between consumers and producers of the built environment. In fact, what the public perceives as architecture's objectivity is merely the construction of white male subjectivity.

Diversity has become an issue of national importance. In 1998, Federal Re-

serve chair Alan Greenspan—one of the most powerful persons in the United States—proclaimed that diversity “is good for business. It is good for our society. And—it is the right thing to do.” He stressed, “Discrimination is patently immoral, but it has now increasingly been seen as unprofitable.”<sup>48</sup> That same year, the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) held several diversity roundtables in an effort to find ways to boost the role of women and persons of color in corporate America. Arthur Levitt Jr., chair of the SEC, proclaimed, “Fostering diversity is, and will remain, a priority for the SEC.”<sup>47</sup>

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITY LAWS AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PROGRAMS

Equal opportunity laws prohibit workplace discrimination based on race, religion, sex, national origin, age, or disability. By contrast, affirmative action is aimed specifically at race and gender. It is “a set of public policies, laws, and executive orders, as well as voluntary and court-ordered practices designed to promote fairness and diversity.” Affirmative action programs spell out guidelines for correcting historic patterns of exclusion and discrimination within organizations. They involve proactive steps to set targets and timetables to improve the gender and racial profiles in specific job categories within an organization. They operate at the federal, state, and private levels.<sup>48</sup>

Set-asides, a component of affirmative action programs, require that on federally sponsored projects, a certain percentage of work be contracted out to persons of color and women. The assumption is that individuals who have had weights placed on their backs cannot run the same distance as easily as someone who is not so burdened. Set-asides and affirmative action programs are attempts to level the educational and economic playing fields.

The political evolution of diversity issues sheds light on the current state of affairs in the architectural profession. Equal opportunity laws and affirmative action programs have played integral roles in this history. They began in the 1960s as an outgrowth of the civil rights movement.

In 1961, President John F. Kennedy issued Executive Order 10925 urging federal contractors to hire more persons of color. While it did not specify enforcement procedures, it did include the phrase “affirmative action.” In 1963, the Equal Pay Act was passed. It amended the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, which had established nationwide standards for minimum wage, overtime pay, and the employment of children. The new law addressed the need for equal pay for men and women doing work that requires equal skill, effort, and responsibility.

In 1964 President Lyndon Johnson signed into law Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. It barred discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin in hiring, firing, promoting, compensating, and other terms, privileges, and conditions of employment. Only if a finding of discrimination was made did the act require court-imposed affirmative action. That same year, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) was established.<sup>49</sup>

In 1965, Executive Order 11246, also signed by President Johnson, required federal contractors to adopt goals and timetables to achieve proportional representation. The order pertained exclusively to race and made affirmative action the purview of the U.S. Department of Labor. At that time, the Office of Federal Contract Compliance was established. Two years later President Johnson issued Executive Order 11375, adding the category of sex to the areas protected by affirmative-action orders. In 1972 the Equal Employment Opportunity Act empowered the EEOC to take legal actions in federal courts to enforce Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. At that time, the Equal Pay Act was amended to cover administrative, executive, and professional employees, and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act was broadened to include higher education faculty. In 1978 the Pregnancy Discrimination Act extended existing short-term disability or sick leave to pregnant women and made it illegal to discriminate on the basis of pregnancy.

President George Bush signed the 1991 Civil Rights Act, making it possible for victims of intentional discrimination based on sex, religion, or disability to recover compensatory and punitive damages. Prior to this time, such remedies pertained only to race-based discrimination cases. That same year, Title II of the Civil Rights Act, the Glass Ceiling Act, established a bipartisan twenty-one-member Glass Ceiling Commission charged with preparing recommendations on “eliminating artificial barriers to the advancement of women and minorities (to) management and decision-making positions in business.”

In 1993, President Bill Clinton signed into law the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), offering men and women job-protected, unpaid time off to recover from a serious illness or to care for a new child or sick relative. Under the FMLA, a person who works for a company that employs fifty or more workers is entitled to up to twelve weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to care for a newborn, a newly adopted child, or a seriously ill child, spouse, or parent.<sup>50</sup>

Soon after affirmative action programs were established, they unleashed a strong public backlash. Charges of reverse discrimination surfaced nationwide, as white males argued in the courts that affirmative action programs had denied them equal opportunity on the job. Many cases were successful.



By the mid-1990s, serious efforts to dismantle affirmative action programs were underway. In 1995 Governor Pete Wilson of California issued an Executive Order to End Preferential Treatment and to Promote Individual Opportunity Based on Merit. This ended all state affirmative action programs not required by law or by a court decree. That same year, the University of California Board of Regents voted to end affirmative action in admission, hiring, and contracting at all of its campuses beginning in 1997. In 1996 the anti-affirmative action California Civil Rights Initiative passed in a statewide election. It was later challenged by the courts, and the decision was upheld. California served as a bellwether for other states to place anti-affirmative action initiatives on their ballots. Although in certain states, affirmative action programs have been scaled back significantly, and recent Supreme Court decisions have limited their scope, they remain intact in most of the nation.

At the time of this writing, the debate over the proposed Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) remains unresolved. This measure would provide federal legislation to prohibit discrimination against gays and lesbians in the workplace. However, even if ENDA were signed into law, lesbians and gays would still not have as much legal protection as that currently offered to women and persons of color.

How have equal opportunity laws and affirmative action programs affected architects in the United States? The results are mixed. Without a doubt, the greatest achievement has been in the educational arena, where the legislation and programs have opened the doors of colleges and universities that had historically excluded women and persons of color, either explicitly or implicitly, from studying architecture. As a result, they allowed a more diverse constituency to trickle into the field. In the professional arena, affirmative action programs offered women- and minority-owned businesses countless opportunities that would otherwise have been impossible to gain.

On the downside, some beneficiaries of affirmative action programs find themselves viewed as tokens, pigeonholed into particular types of work. This is true not only in architecture but in other professions.<sup>51</sup> Such programs are double-edged swords. Some architects are quick to point to firms that abuse the intent of set-aside programs, that is, firms that claim to be woman- or minority-owned but where those individuals serve as a cover for a white male who essentially runs the company.

In the academic world, university-wide affirmative action programs have long pressured architecture departments to hire women and persons of color as faculty. Colleagues often resent having to hire so-called "affirmative action candi-

dates," and throughout their university careers, many underrepresented faculty receive little or no departmental support and may feel as if their credentials are viewed as suspect.

How has the Family and Medical Leave Act affected architects? Since few architectural offices hire more than 50 employees, its effect has been minimal. As of 1996, only 9% of architectural firms employed 20 or more employees; 10% had 10-19 employees; 26% had only 2-4 employees, and another 34% were offices of solo practitioners.<sup>52</sup> Apart from such statistical evidence, anecdotal accounts have revealed blatant subversion of the intent of FMLA. Some women architects have returned to their jobs after maternity leave only to be laid off after a week.<sup>53</sup>

Rule of Conduct 1.401 of the AIA's Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct clearly states, "Members shall not discriminate in their professional activities on the basis of race, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability, or sexual orientation."<sup>54</sup> Violation of any rule of conduct is grounds for disciplinary action by the institute. Ethical Standard 5.1 in the AIA's code of ethics also has implications for underrepresented architects; but as a standard rather than a rule, it is not considered mandatory. Instead, it is one of many goals toward which members should strive in professional performance and behavior. This standard states, "Professional Environment: Members should provide their associates and employees with a suitable working environment, compensate them fairly, and facilitate their professional development."<sup>55</sup> *Yet as my survey results reveal, women architects are not compensated fairly—and the profession provides little recourse.*

In connection with Rule of Conduct 1.401, the AIA issued an advisory opinion entitled "Discrimination against Employees Based on Gender."<sup>56</sup> Rules must apply to all professional activities of AIA members, including dealings with clients, colleagues, employees, and others. This advisory opinion describes a troublesome case, which I summarize here.

A woman was repeatedly harassed by a male coworker in their architectural office. He sent her malicious notes; consistently rearranged items on her workstation; removed equipment from her workstation and replaced it with inferior substitutes; and demeaned her education, competency, and professionalism, making disparaging comments in front of her and her coworkers. Although she had been at the firm six months longer than he and was two years further along in her preparation for the Architect Registration Examination (ARE), he was paid \$3,500 a year more than she. He was also offered training in Computer Aided Design (CAD), which she was denied even though she had expressed a desire to learn it.

Her attempts to discuss this harassment with the offending coworker were to no avail, as were her repeated discussions with her supervising architect. Her boss made matters worse by meeting with the offender as well as all other male employees in the studio. This resulted in tension between her and other male coworkers, with whom she had never experienced problems. Furthermore, her supervisor explained that he had done all he intended to do, and that she should learn to expect this behavior if she continued to work in a "man's profession."

After contacting her local AIA component and asking the staff to intercede in what she perceived to be a violation of the institute's Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct, she was referred to a local council on human rights. Council personnel, while sympathetic, warned her of being blackballed in the local architecture community if she filed a complaint. During her annual evaluation at her firm, wherein she received a favorable review, she advised her supervising architect that the harassment had not stopped. He indicated that he could do no more to help her. She subsequently passed the registration exam. But the harassment soon escalated and recurred regularly over three weeks. She once again attempted to discuss her case with her supervisor, asking him to stop further harassment.

A few days later, she was suddenly informed that her services would no longer be required, effective 5:00 P.M. that same day, due to a work slowdown. She was fired. Yet just days after that, the same firm offered a job to a male architect whose education, job experience, and licensing status were almost identical to hers. He was told that he was needed immediately because so much work had to be done.

This case clearly outlines a pattern of harassment that never ceased, one that the supervising architect implicitly condoned by failing to recognize and deal with it, even after the woman's repeated complaints. Because he told her that she had better get used to this kind of behavior if she intended to continue working in a "man's profession," he overtly condoned and aided in the harassment. Furthermore, by paying her substantially less than a male colleague with considerably less experience and less seniority in the firm, and by offering her fewer training opportunities, the supervising architect overtly discriminated against her. Considering all of this, and the fact that her annual reviews had been positive, the legal analysts concluded that "it is difficult to ascribe her employment termination to anything other than overt discrimination based on her gender." The hiring of a male with similar training and experience, within days of the woman's termination due to a supposed work slowdown, made the case of gender discrimination even stronger. This case is a preview of some of the shocking stories that women architects recounted to me in the course of my research.

## MANAGING DIVERSITY

By the mid-1990s, many organizations discovered that the equal opportunity laws and affirmative action programs of the 1960s were of limited effectiveness. They came to believe that valuing differences and managing diversity, two outgrowths of the earlier developments, are more successful ways to address inequities in the workplace. These new approaches seek to maximize the potential of every individual by helping organizations create a level playing field and a supportive environment for all employees.

Valuing differences and managing diversity do not merely satisfy legal requirements. They represent a paradigm shift that fundamentally changes the corporate culture. Profile improvement may still fall under their canopy, but it is not an end in itself. Managing diversity is a new strategy that holds organizations responsible for creating an environment in which diversity not only survives, but thrives. This management model is a giant leap beyond affirmative action. As Marilyn Loden writes, "The basic aim of valuing diversity is to create a more flexible, diversity-friendly environment where the talents of all employees can flourish and be leveraged for individual, work team, and organizational success."<sup>57</sup>

In his book *Beyond Race and Gender* and numerous other publications, R. Roosevelt Thomas Jr. underscores the need for organizations to manage diversity.<sup>58</sup> Formerly a professor at Harvard University, Thomas now heads the American Institute for Managing Diversity (AIMD). He cites countless examples where organizations with good intentions have been ineffective at achieving diversity. The result has often been no more than politically correct rhetoric or occasional small-term gains. According to Thomas, managing diversity must be a long-term goal, and organizations take years to achieve it. People in many levels of management must engage in a consistent, consolidated effort. Organizations must conduct a culture audit in order to assess the current state of affairs at their workplaces, to identify critical issues, and to begin to address them in a holistic way. *The Guide to Culture Audits*, published by AIMD, elaborates on how these work.<sup>59</sup>

With this political context in mind, what would it mean to value differences and manage diversity within the architectural profession? No longer can we tell underrepresented designers to either sink or swim and offer them no life raft. Managing diversity calls for a systematic, holistic approach to revamp what many underrepresented architects would call a "chilly climate" or an "inhospitable corporate culture."

## LOSING FROM INTOLERANCE AND GAINING FROM DIVERSITY

There is no doubt that diversity is good for society. But humanitarian reasons are not enough. What are the costs of intolerance? And what are the benefits of incorporating diversity programs into the architectural profession?

Whether aware of it or not, every organization pays a hefty price when it fails to provide a supportive work environment for underrepresented employees. Teamwork can not flourish. Sales may be lost. Innovation may be limited. Productivity is reduced. Absenteeism can rise. And turnover can skyrocket. Among the other costs are: (1) worker alienation resulting from misunderstandings of values and behaviors; (2) unnecessary termination stemming from communication breakdown and misinterpreting employee behavior; (3) managers' reluctance to hire and work with diverse workers; (4) racism and discrimination resulting from misinterpreting the behaviors of others; (5) costly discrimination suits arising from poor communication and worker alienation.<sup>60</sup>

Virtually all employers fear lawsuits, especially those resulting from an intolerance of workplace diversity. Multimillion-dollar racial discrimination suits like those against Denny's restaurants and Texaco tarnish the reputations of organizations in the eyes of clients, customers, investors, potential employees, and the public. Such cases often lead to boycotts, lost revenues, huge settlements, and just plain bad publicity.

Still other practices result in social and psychological costs—and ultimately economic costs as well. *Ethnocentrism* involves assuming that the behaviors of others, no matter what their origins, can be interpreted according to the rules and values of one's own culture. *Stereotyping* entails using inflexible statements about a category of people, applying them to all members of a group without regard to individual differences. As my research demonstrates, both of these can be found in the architectural profession.

*Culture shock* is a state of mind that occurs when people are immersed in a strange culture. It happens generally in three ways: an individual's behaviors are not getting the response to which he or she is accustomed; an individual realizes that he or she no longer knows the cultural rules of the game and does not understand how to behave; or, finally, an individual no longer receives appropriate credit for achievements, skills, or ideas. When underrepresented architects enter the traditional architectural office, two worlds collide. Like immigrants, the underrepresented workers are trying to build a permanent home in a new land.

Marga Rose Hancock, executive director of AIA Seattle, makes a strong case that architectural firms ought to be proactive in promoting diversity. She argues that those firms who engage in racist or sexist practices are asking for trouble, as employees once treated unfairly become corporate executives or public officials elsewhere who steer valuable contracts away from them.<sup>61</sup>

If principals of architectural firms allow a high incidence of internal harassment to occur and do little or nothing about it, if they treat coworkers in a disrespectful manner, or if they are uncomfortable dealing with gay or lesbian coworkers, how can they feel confident that these are not problems with clients, consultants, subcontractors, and others outside the firm? What kinds of business opportunities may be lost from groups against whom they have particular biases?

Among the demonstrated benefits of successful corporate diversity programs are an increase in the number of women and persons of color contributing to patents; reduced absenteeism; and improved promotion and retention numbers for underrepresented employees.<sup>62</sup> Managing diversity also provides a competitive advantage, setting some architectural firms above others—attracting a new breed of clients and users in a more globally diverse marketplace. Ethnic marketing efforts can be made. Architects respond more effectively to various subcultures, whose spending power is rapidly increasing. Consequently, customer service will be greatly improved, and the public's image of the architectural profession will be enhanced. A nonarchitectural example serves as a case in point: when Aetna, a major insurance company, wanted to expand into a Hispanic market, they tapped into their network of Hispanic employees, who advised them about where to advertise in newspapers and radio programs.<sup>63</sup>

## MODEL WORKPLACES FOR DIVERSITY

Several model workplaces foster and thrive on diversity. *Diversity: Business Rationale and Strategies*, a report published in the mid-1990s and based on information from thirty-four companies and fifty-three organizations, provides examples of successful diversity programs.<sup>64</sup> It reveals that the most critical elements for a successful diversity strategy are, in order of importance: (1) management commitment, leadership, and support; (2) integration of diversity initiatives into business and organizational objectives; (3) communication and continuing dialogue among all employees; (4) education and training; and (5) accountability with consequences, especially for senior and middle management; and (6) employee involvement.



Successful corporate practices include: (1) incorporation of diversity into mission statements; (2) diversity action plans; (3) accountability in business objectives; (4) employee involvement from all levels and functions; (5) career development and planning; (6) community involvement and outreach; and (7) long-term initiatives directed at overall culture change.

What do diversity programs such as these accomplish? Their aims are varied. They teach managers to ensure that their companies comply with affirmative action programs and equal opportunity laws dictated by the federal government and by the state. They teach people from different backgrounds to value their individual differences and work together. They recruit employees from underrepresented communities. They offer employees flexible work schedules to enable them to meet obligations at work as well as at home.

Roosevelt Thomas describes a number of pioneering organizations that have taken significant steps toward managing diversity. Avon is one of the most successful. Its current progress in promoting minorities and women goes back to the mid-1980s. The company hired a consultant to undertake a multicultural planning research project. A five-year implementation plan produced several new multicultural initiatives. Critical to its success is a partnership between human resources and line management. At its core is a management philosophy of employee empowerment.<sup>65</sup>

Marilyn Loden believes that members of an organization occupy any one of five segments on what she calls a Diversity Adoption Curve. At one end of the curve are innovators and change agents, with pragmatists and skeptics in the middle and traditionalists at the other end. Those at the innovation end of the scale perceive greater opportunities and fewer risks in adopting diversity practices in the workplace, while those at the traditionalist end of the scale see decreased opportunities and increased risks.<sup>66</sup> She outlines an elaborate strategy for creating a workplace environment in which different types of people are approached about diversity in different ways. Beginning diversity programs with those who are likely to be most receptive—the innovators—helps foster an atmosphere in which others, such as the pragmatists, are likely to participate later on. But Loden cautions that forcing everyone to participate unwillingly is a prescription for disaster.

She also warns that diversity programs can spark a harsh backlash, a predictable reaction to any new idea. Some individuals may react toward diversity programs with denial, dread, hostility, cynicism, and contempt. Among the most commonly mentioned reasons for resisting diversity programs are suspicion of “otherness,” hiring quotas, reverse discrimination, a shrinking economic pie,

divisiveness, lowering of quality and performance standards—all of which share a common motivation: fear.

According to Loden, ignoring the mainstream can lead to calamitous consequences. If diversity benefits only underrepresented employees, then others are much less likely to buy into it. Viewing such programs as no more than affirmative action, they are likely to feel alienated and marginalized. Hence white males must be included in the planning, decision-making, and implementation processes in order for diversity programs to be effective. Similarly, those who promote diversity in the workplace must avoid sounding self-righteous and morally superior. Spreading blame and guilt simply won't work. Advocates of diversity must be open to those who oppose it. Silencing the opposition will simply worsen what may already be an adversarial environment. Open discussion and dialogue are essential.

Who should conduct diversity awareness training programs? Simply having employees undertake this role can leave them floundering to answer questions and control the discussion, placing them in an awkward and dangerous position. Gender, racial, and multicultural issues can become volatile and explosive. Calling in an outside expert can result in a program that sounds like “one size fits all,” too canned to be credible. A model of internal and external trainer pairs is a good alternative. The external trainer has the group facilitation skills, and the internal trainer has the corporate knowledge and experience. Together, the two balance each other.

As a result of continuing education requirements instituted at the AIA, architects now are required to complete thirty-six learning units of continuing education per year in order to maintain their professional licenses. Since diversity issues are not part of the required curricula for architectural school, enrolling in diversity continuing-education classes is one way to help educate a profession that has lagged behind other fields. Principals, partners, personnel managers, human resource specialists, and others in leadership positions are ideal candidates for such courses.

Ever since 1987, Catalyst, a nonprofit research organization that works with businesses to advance women, has issued an annual award showcasing exemplary initiatives.<sup>67</sup> Throughout the year, a committee conducts a thorough evaluation, including interviews and focus groups with a wide range of employees, along with two-day audits of finalist companies. Among the criteria evaluated are senior management commitment, measurable results, accountability, replicability, and originality. *The Catalyst Guide to Best Practices* discusses winning programs in detail, covering such issues as mentoring, recruitment, com-

pensation, performance evaluation, sexual harassment programs, workplace flexibility, work/life balance, diversity, women's networks, and career development.<sup>68</sup> Recent award winners included Procter and Gamble, the Sara Lee Corporation, the Allstate Corporation, and Avon Mexico. Catalyst offers advisory teams that are hired by companies and firms to create more supportive environments for women employees. Its information center serves as a national clearinghouse for women and work, offering a myriad of valuable resources. Catalyst's awards winners and their diversity initiatives can be adapted as models for design practice.

In order to meet the changing needs of employees and their families, a few architectural offices have already paid special attention to diversity issues. Chicago's Ross Barney + Jankowski Architects has long been one of the most female-friendly firms in the country. Carol Ross Barney has routinely assigned women as project architects and encouraged them to advance professionally on the job. Her office has been the launch pad for many women's successful architectural careers. At Boston's Stull and Lee, one of the oldest African-American architecture firms in the United States, over half its employees are women and persons of color. The office has a strong affirmative action policy along with an informal mentoring system. It accommodates flexible work hours and encourages its employees to travel and take continuing education courses.<sup>69</sup>

At Steffian Bradley and Associates of Boston, over 65% of its sixty staff are women or persons of color. Of ten principals, two are women, and of six associates, four are women. The firm offers flexible hours, excused absences when employees or their children are sick, and both maternity and paternity leave.<sup>70</sup> Another family-friendly firm is Leers, Weinzapfel Associates, Inc., of Boston, where over half of thirty members are women. Its employee review process asks its staff to evaluate their future career development and that of the firm.<sup>71</sup>

Ann Beha Associates of Boston has made the development of its professional staff a top priority by hiring an outside business consultant. Their joint efforts helped Beha value the contributions of staff at all levels, encouraged her to cultivate leadership, and reinforced her efforts to make team collaboration a hallmark of the firm's work. The coach trained three principals who passed on their knowledge to the rest of the office. Beha's office has distinguished itself with an unusually diverse client constituency, from small community groups with limited resources and many age groups to larger institutions. She has specialized in starting new cultural initiatives such as community performing arts centers and design work for Native American cultures.

A British firm, Waldman and Jim, offers alternative part-time or flex-time

contracts to women employees who need them. Gail Waldman, a partner in the firm, has no difficulty informing clients if their project architect is not in. She explains, "After all, even full-timers are not accessible all day."<sup>72</sup>

In sum, managing diversity clearly produces dividends in the workplace, and the architectural profession is no exception. Chapter 8 highlights in greater detail how architectural firms can effectively manage diversity. When women, persons of color, gays and lesbians, and persons with disabilities work side by side with white male architects, they are better able to respond to the complex environmental needs of diverse clients and users.