Contents

3  Jim Henry
    Writing Architecture

7  Nicole Pertuisset
    The Floating Eye

14 David Dunster
    Collaboration in Education Diploma Project at the Bartlett 1988-89

22 Mark Frederickson
    Design Juries: A Study in Lines of Communication

28 Frances Anderton
    Response to Frederickson

29 Stephen Kendall
    A Pedagogy of the Base Building

42 M. Gordon Brown
    Form as the Object of Experience: Georg Simmel’s Influence on Mies van der Rohe

47 Yehuda Kalay, Lucian Swerdlow, Bruce Kajkowski, Carl Neumrberger
    Process and Knowledge in Design Computation

54 Book Reviews
    Frank Lloyd Wright Index
    Reviewed by Curtis Besinger
    Poetics of Light
    Reviewed by Charles Moore

59 Conference Reviews
    Kathryn Anthony; Arnold Aho

62 Op Arch
    Nicholas Davis

64 Response
    Diane Ghirardo

The Journal of Architectural Education has been published since 1947 for the purpose of enhancing architectural design education, theory and practice.

The JAE is published quarterly in Fall, Winter, Spring and Summer, by the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture, Inc. 1735 New York Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20006. ACSA is a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation governed by an elected Board of Directors.

©Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture, Inc. All rights reserved. Printed in the USA, 1990 ISSN 1046-4883.

Volume 43, Number 2
Winter 1990
Conference Reviews

Reflections on EDRA 20: The 20th Annual Conference of the Environmental Design Research Association

The 20th annual conference of the Environmental Design Research Association (EDRA 20) both commemorated the 20th anniversary of the organization and marked a significant turning point for the field of environment and behavior. Participants from all over the United States, Canada, and elsewhere exchanged views on the past, present, and future of environment-behavior research and design, prompting lively exchanges and renewed interest in the field.

Nestled away in a retreat in Black Mountain, North Carolina, the conference was organized by Graeme Hardie and his colleagues at North Carolina State University, site of EDRA 1 back in 1969. The conference format differed from previous ones. Each person arrived at the conference with a vision statement addressing the future of environmental design research.

In the opening session, John Archea, one of the few participants to have attended all 20 EDRA Conferences, provided a personal overview of the evolution of EDRA and the environment and behavior field, highlighting landmark events in the years before EDRA (“BE”) and after EDRA (“AE”). Following this, a number of leading figures in the organization were asked to comment on three questions: “Had the organization achieved its original vision articulated back in 1969? “Do the paradigms that we use inhabit or facilitate how we operate?” “What can we say after 20 years that we know and that we do not know?”

Henry Saroff, Chair of EDRA 1, opened by addressing the first of these questions. Saroff argued that indeed the field had been effective in bringing people from the fringes of parent professional organizations. In education, for instance, in psychology, virtually all introductory textbooks now include a section on environmental psychology. In architectural education, the changes are not quite so obvious, however, signs of change do exist. The architectural accreditation review process has been revised to incorporate environment and behavior as an essential part of the curriculum. The degree to which environment and behavior studies have truly penetrated design curricula remains questionable, however.

Gary Moore added yet a different perspective. In his view, the field has not yet achieved its vision of success, if one of the chief criteria is its impact on the design professions. In fact, Moore cited the retrenchment found in almost every American school of architecture where environment and behavior is at best a small part of the curriculum, if it exists at all. In fact, Moore acknowledged that environment and behavior has been largely overshadowed by powerful architectural movements and trends that have surfaced during the past several years, i.e., Post-Modernism and Deconstructivism. However, Moore acknowledged that the field has been extremely effective in generating new knowledge. One shining example is the new Handbook of Environmental Psychology, edited by Daniel Stokols and Irwin Altman. By far the most comprehensive work about the state of the art of environment and behavior, this two-volume set legitimizes the discipline as a extremely rich source of information for many audiences.

Next at the podium was Michael Brill. Had EDRA kept its promise? Perhaps EDRA promised too much and it’s simply not yet finished. According to Brill, EDRA began as a child of the 60’s. Surprisingly, EDRA has survived and flourished while politically conservative forces grew. Brill contended that he had been personally influenced by EDRA, that it had profoundly changed the way he engaged in architectural practice. What promises have been kept? Brill pointed to the discovery of a rich body of information about special populations, about ways to gather information, how people use environments, and about how to make that information available. A number of members have used environment-behavior research as a marketing technique, and it has been highly successful for 20 years. One major shortcoming pointed out is that environment and behavior has never developed a large, stable base of public funding, thus severely hampering the effectiveness of the field. Brill acknowledged that one of the pluses of EDRA was the ability to attract new participants to the conference every year. He called for all EDRA members to remain fiercely active.

Following Brill was Wolfgang Preiser, who presented a more somewhat cautious view and called for some new directions. Among them was the need to connect more closely with other professional organizations such as the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture (ACSA), the American Institute of Architects (AIA), and others. He also asked for greater political involvement on issues such as accessibility for the disabled, housing for the homeless, and others. He urged EDRA members to address concerns not only in North America but also in developing countries where their expertise is sorely needed. He also recommended continuing education courses in environment and behavior to expand the organization’s outreach.

Gary Winkel arrived next at the podium. He cited advancements largely in the area of interdisciplinary work, with more and more people from various disciplines working together over the years. However, he also called for greater links with other fields such as geography, child development, and sociology.

The next set of speakers addressed the question: “What can we say after 20 years that we know and that we do not know?” Amos Rapoport, the first in this next series of speakers, called for a greater historical perspective in the field, suggesting more studies using a longitudinal approach and within a broader conceptual framework. The wheel must not be re-invented every time around. Both researchers and designers must take advantage of lessons from previous works.

Next came Sue Ann Lee, one of the founders of the International Association for the Study of People and their Physical Surroundings (IAPS), the European and Middle Eastern counterpart to EDRA. She believes that the enterprise is more complex than originally anticipated. She pointed out the need for broader approaches towards the field. She acknowledged that cooperation is extremely difficult to achieve across disciplines, citing her own role as a psychologist in an architecture school as a case in point. She highlighted the experience of IAPS as an example of the difficulty of multi-disciplinary, multi-cultural work.

Sue Weidemann followed, presenting a three-dimensional matrix of issues (such as satisfaction, safety, sense of place, productivity), settings (such as housing, office, and recreational environments), and users (such as elderly, children, single-parent families). She
acknowledged that while several of the matrix's cells have been filled with interesting and valuable pieces of research, many pieces are still missing. She urged EDRA members to be patient. Indeed, no other discipline has developed full force within a short time span of only 20 years.

Next came the discussion of the final question: "Do the paradigms which we use inhibit or not?" Lynda Schneekloth stressed that those of us in environment and behavior feel a pressing need constantly to explain and justify what we do. Nina Gottlieb was next, emphasizing that the relationship from work to home is changing in a profound way, and as a result, so are the implications for planners and designers. She cautioned that categorizing environment research into broad labels such as elderly, women, and other special user groups tended to promote stereotypes and ignore the differences within these particular groups. For example, research examining women in the environment must take into account differences in age, social status, and race.

Irvin Altman emphasized that the problems of today provide an agenda for the future; perhaps we have focused too much on outcomes rather than on processes. He urged members to recognize that EDRA is still alive and well, and that its work remains unfinished. He encouraged participants to take a long-term view of the field, concentrate on its successes, and chart out challenges for the future. Altman pointed out that the eclectic approach to research and design that typified environment and behavior over the years is in fact one of its greatest strengths.

Clare Cooper Marcus cited the strong reliance on the scientific method, which focuses on what can be measured directly, as a major shortcoming of the field. The scientific method, according to Cooper Marcus, ignores what cannot be measured, but what may in fact be even more valuable, i.e., spiritual values towards the environment. She called for a more intuitive way of understanding how people relate to the environment, interpreting and understanding the world via images and experiences, rather than simply via scientific research. She encouraged the audience to acknowledge the cultural connections between people and places, to learn from traditional cultures, and to understand more about special places and what makes them so. She urged environment-behavior researchers to continue to work not only with their heads, but also with their hearts.

In addition to the traditional paper sessions, workshops, and other events, participants were asked to divide up into working groups that met during four separate occasions. The purpose of these groups was to discuss the future of the field and EDRA, itself. What was so enlightening about these sessions in large part was the opportunity for strangers to meet each other and share ideas.

A number of themes emerged from the working groups, all of which were presented at the conference's final wrap-up session. The need for greater publicity and promotion of EDRA members was one of the strongest themes to surface. Many EDRA members have been doing work of extremely great value to architects, planners, landscape architects, and other client groups, yet to most designers and members of public at large, EDRA remains an unknown. Another point raised was the need for a more multi-disciplinary and eclectic approach to the field. Members argued that the discussion of the gap between research and design, and between researchers and architects, an issue which can be found in almost all prior EDRA conference proceedings, has been rendered obsolete. Instead, a "Multi-ecistic" model linking research, advocacy, policy, practice, and education was proposed. A broader audience of designers, investors/developers, user groups, and policy makers was suggested. Several participants expressed a strong interest in becoming more involved politically with the homeless, AIDS patients, and other social causes. Many believed that EDRA members have the research, knowledge, and skills to be of great assistance to various groups in need. However, at present, no formal mechanism for such involvement exists. Others recommended that EDRA focus its efforts on powerful instruments such as codes and legislation. In fact, as a result of EDRA 20, a new political action network has been formed. Several other ideas arose, and the consensus is that the organization is not only alive and well, but also is entering a new phase of renewed excitement and energy.

In all, the other events at the conference were extremely stimulating. Participants helped set a new agenda for the future. Many of these themes will no doubt re-emerge at EDRA 21, April 69, 1990, on the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign campus. Nonetheless, one can rest assured that even though many issues will remain unresolved. However, the fervor and excitement sparked at EDRA 20 should help propel EDRA into a new era.

The EDRA 20 conference proceedings, or any previous proceedings, can be obtained directly from the EDRA national office: P.O. Box 24083, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73124.

Kathryn H. Anthony
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Architecture and ACSA Technology Conference
February 24, 1989
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Mardi Gras literally translated means "Fat Tuesday". While technically referring to Shrove Tuesday, the last day before the Lenten season, Mardi Gras in Louisiana has come to be an extended period of festivities where diverse social groups come together for parades, merrymaking, eating, and drinking— all to a reasonable degree of excess.

On the eve of these Mardi Gras celebrations, unique to that part of the country, a joint conference was held in Baton Rouge, hosted by Louisiana State University and ACSA. While both meetings had been conceived and planned separately — The Symposium on Architecture and Building Construction Issues" by LSU and the "Seventh Annual ACSA Technology Conference" by ACSA (originally slated to be held in San Francisco) — fortunately, they were combined in time to result in a rich and memorable event. Like the color and diversity of the Mardi Gras parades themselves, the offerings of papers at the conference ran through a full range of techno-