

# Planning History News

New Series, 1

Society for American City and Regional Planning History

Spring 2000

## Eighth Biennial Conference on Planning History

The Society for American City and Regional Planning History's eighth biennial conference, cosponsored by the Urban History Association and the International Planning History Society, was held at the Washington Marriott, Washington, D.C., November 18-21, 1999. More than 235 participants contributed to the success of an intellectually stimulating and wonderfully collegial meeting. Highlights included Carl Abbott's opening address, "Where's Washington? Regional Identity in a National City," held at the D. C. Public Library, luncheon addresses by Stephen Ward, president of the International Planning History Society, and SACRPH president David Schuyler, and plenary sessions devoted to the planning of Washington and its environs.

Fifty-three paper sessions addressed a breathtaking range of topics. Sessions extended chronologically from colonialism to planning for the 21st century and geographically spanned the globe. One of the great delights of the Washington meeting was the opportunity to exchange ideas with and extend friendships to the large contingent of international scholars who participated in our deliberations.

Another highlight of the conference was the Thursday afternoon workshop devoted to race, class and gender in planning history held in memory of former SACRPH trustee Marsha Ritzdorf. Organized by Mary Corbin Sies and June Manning Thomas, the workshop consisted of a series of conversations moderated by Andrew Wiese, June Thomas, Gail Dubrow, and Leonie Sandercock. Fourteen papers presented works in progress that probed these crucial themes and suggested an agenda for continuing research.

This was a remarkably rich and provocative workshop and a fitting testament to Marsha's life.

For many participants the presence of SACRPH Vice-President K. C. Parsons was truly inspiring. Although gravely ill, K.C. and Jan traveled to Washington for the conference. K. C. was too weak to read his paper, but he warmly greeted longtime friends, colleagues, and former students.

Conference tours on Thursday and Sunday gave

participants the opportunity to visit important places in the history of planning in the Washington region, including the Mall, the 7th Street corridor, parkways in and around the federal city, and 19th and 20th century suburbs.

All participants are indebted to the many individuals who contributed to the success of the conference, but especially to members of the Program Committee--Rob Freestone, David Gordon, Alison Isenberg, Alan Lessoff, Gail Radford, and Christopher Silver (chair)--and the Local Arrangements Committee--Matthew Bell, Ralph Bennett, Sally Berk, Sidney Brower, Tim Davis, W. C. Dutton, John Fondersmith, Howard Gillette, Stephen Kidd, Richard Longstreth, Amy Menzer, Kelly Quinn, Siddhartha Sen, Israel Stollman, and Joseph Wood.

Several individuals deserve special recognition: Valerie Brown and American Studies graduate students from the University of Maryland, who staffed the registration table and kept the sessions running smoothly; Stephen Kidd, who managed the book exhibit; Susan Klaus, co-director of local arrangements; Edwin Martini, the conference manager; and Mary Corbin Sies, local arrangements co-director. Those who have had the privilege of working with Mary understand how inadequate words are to describe the talent and commitment she brings to SACRPH.

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## ***From the President...***

This newsletter offers a good reflection both of the vitality of our organization so manifest at the Washington meeting and the jarring nature of change that inevitably follows the loss of one of our most valued members. Most everyone attending the November sessions were quickly struck with the number of new faces, the high quality of the presentations, and the staying power of the membership. Sessions were well attended, even into the after-dinner hour Saturday night. It was there that we both commended prizewinners and had the pleasure of K.C. Parsons's valiant appearance, despite the grave illness that took his life only a few weeks later. Slated to serve as president for the 1999-2001 term, K.C. had to relinquish that opportunity, but he wasn't going to give up the chance to be with colleagues and friends at this special occasion.

Also special to the Washington conference was the workshop held in memory of another valued late colleague, Marsha Ritzdorf. Gail Dubrow's thoughtful comments reprinted here were only part of a frank and lively evaluation of the still unrealized potential for a fully inclusive history of the planning field. That so many young scholars joined veterans to project the trajectory of their forthcoming studies was tremendously exciting.

We hope to capture more of this energy and dedication by extending our conference program in 2001 to include a full afternoon session on the first day assessing planners's efforts to get at the most intractable of modern urban problems: disinvestment and the terrible strain it places on communities. Set in one of the nation's most beleaguered cities, Camden, these sessions will look at efforts in Camden and the greater Philadelphia region to reverse the slide of our historic cities that has extended a full generation.

So impressed were we with the energy and intelligence brought to the last meeting, we are currently exploring a new venue for publishing planning history. Such efforts are risky as well as costly, so we will not take on new responsibilities without seeking advice widely. Chris Silver has assumed responsibility to make a recommendation to the board of directors in the near future. In the meantime, you can expect this newsletter to substitute for the moment for our earlier journal. We are grateful to Marilyn Faughner of Academic Technologies at Franklin & Marshall, who helped in preparing the template for this publication.

SACRPH has undergone still other transitions. Our long-term and dedicated executive secretary, Rob Hodder, has resigned as he has made a transition to a new position. My colleague Felipe Gorostiza, who serves as executive director of Rutgers's new Walter Rand Institute for Public Policy, has helped assume some of Rob's earlier responsibilities by taking the new post of membership secretary. His efforts to engage a broad public in the central issues of urban and regional development in south Jersey provide one foundation for

our next conference. Also part of the transition, Robert Fishman, who serves, with Eugenie Birch at the University of Pennsylvania, as co-chair of local arrangements for the next conference, will continue his duties from afar as he moves from Rutgers-Camden to take a new job in the University of Michigan's A. Alfred Taubman College of Architecture & Urban Planning in the fall.

Change is the historian's primary subject. That we should change as an organization is only natural. I believe, however, that we have established at the core, not the least with the help of our immediate past president David Schuyler's tireless effort on behalf of the organization, a solid foundation to build on. I can only urge your active participation in shaping our future. Our activities will be only as vital as our members make them. Please consider volunteering for one of committees to award the prizes listed on pages 7 and 8, for the 2001 program committee, or for our membership committee. You can contact me directly at [hfg@camden.rutgers.edu](mailto:hfg@camden.rutgers.edu) or 856-225-6064. We also welcome news of your activities for publication in the fall newsletter. Please send information directly to David Schuyler at the address posted on the last page.

Howard Gillette

### **Society for American City and Regional Planning History**

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# Gender and Planning History

*Remarks by Gail Lee Dubrow at the SACRPH Workshop on Race, Class, and Gender in Planning History, held in honor of Marsha Ritzdorf, Washington, D.C., Nov. 18, 1999.*

I've been asked to make some remarks on the future of gender as a category of analysis in planning history. Looking back on two decades of scholarship dedicated to writing women into planning history, some patterns seem clear to me.

The first wave of work recovered the lost history of women as professional planners; more a short story than a novel, one might say. Here I'm thinking of the early work of Eugenie Birch, which by implication suggested that if women had any past presence there was hope we might have a future in the planning profession. The long history of exclusion made the few individuals we recovered that much more precious. Still the search for foremothers in a predominantly white male profession left few subjects for investigation. (I remember a time in graduate school in the mid-1980s when we were literally tripping over one another writing term papers on Catherine Bauer.)

In a related vein, Dolores Hayden and more recently Daphne Spain have sought to recover a lost history of women's contributions to improving the quality of the civic realm, at the margins or wholly outside of the professional arena, whether as intellectuals, club women, or other social reformers. This work has stretched the boundaries of planning history to include efforts intended to improve the material conditions of women's lives. This project of recovery has been inspiring; yet we've come to realize that if the scholarship isn't done carefully it can have some of the same limitations as the mainstream planning histories they implicitly criticize, in the sense that their celebratory impulse may have obscured more complicated dynamics of race, class, and nationalism bound up in women's civic improvement projects.

These efforts to rewrite women into planning history, as professionals and as citizen planners, have been joined by a third strategy or approach that has turned the lens away from the female minority to make the male majority the object of critical analysis. Here I'm thinking of Susie Wirka's efforts to understand the process by which knowledge and expertise became allocated in a gendered way between social settlement workers and early city planners. Similarly, the wave of work on gender (as opposed to women) that has swept into our field in recent years has opened the entire history of planning to critical reexamination. One of the immediate consequences has been new work, reflected in Andy Shanken's comments today and Laura Baker's paper tomorrow, on the construction and representation of masculinities in planning.

The most recent and I think encouraging development has been a movement across lines of class, race, and gender to expand the subject of planning history to study the differential impacts of planning on a wide range of publics, combined with renewed attention to the historical agency of these groups in relation to planning. Gail Sansbury's paper reflects this growing direction in planning history, as do papers in my session tomorrow that deal with planning's impact on prostitutes, beggars, and other groups swept up and out in the process of cleaning up city streets. Clearly this approach has the power to pry open planning history in ways that make its impacts rather than its intentions the primary subject of discussion. Some of the most fruitful work will come out of this approach in the coming years, and I welcome its obvious connection to practice.

Not all who come to this conference teach history in the context of professional degree programs in planning, but for those of us who do the question of what planners need to know about the past is a subject of profound significance. How we answer that question creates more or less space for considerations of race, class, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, and national identity in the curriculum. All of the scholarly developments to which I have made reference have created more room for women/gender in planning history.

In the past few years, as my dear friend and colleague John Hancock retired from our faculty in Urban Design and Planning at the University of Washington. He has passed the torch of teaching history to me, I have had to face the question of what I believe planning students need to know about the past--and to be blunt, I have found myself uncomfortable with the basic assumption held by my colleagues who are not historians that the proper subject necessarily is "planning" history. As participation in a university-wide curriculum transformation project provided time for critical reflection and welcome support from like-minded colleagues, I found the courage to resist a former department chair's plan for me to teach a new lecture course on planning history and replaced it with an intensive seminar on American Urban History, in which the history of planning is conceptualized as only one of many forces shaping city and region. I have found that this approach, which decenters professional planners, more accurately mirrors the reality of their influence and creates a more commodious space for the concerns that animate this symposium. The contributions of Cronon, Goings and Mohl, Hayden, Ryan, and Chauncey, to name a few, stand side by side with classics and emerging work in planning history. Best of all, studying the wider range of approaches to urban history that are better models of inclusiveness builds students' capacity to read planning

history itself from a more informed and critical perspective. No longer presented as collections of "facts," as in a past generation of textbooks, the interpretive biases of planning histories come into sharper relief when they are read in this context.

Some of my colleagues still think our curriculum is missing a course on planning history and that a detailed knowledge of the history of the profession should be given priority, if they value history at all. Perhaps. This is a debate worth having in the curriculum review process our department and most others go through periodically.

No discussion of the conditions necessary for scholarship on race, class and gender to flourish--particularly one dedicated to the memory of Marsha Ritzdorf--would be complete without considering the material conditions under which this work is being produced. Recognition of Marsha's scholarly achievements is only the most public part of the story. She also worked tirelessly, usually behind the scenes, to support outspoken advocates of equity in the academy, where we have too often found ourselves and our messages greeted rather coolly in some places of power, with the exception of our deeply appreciated allies. It is a poorly kept secret that women and people of color who work on topics judged to be in the mainstream of planning often are received more warmly than those who have chosen to address issues of gender, race and sexuality. Let's face it: we make some folks uncomfortable because we ask difficult questions, not only in our scholarship but also in our daily lives--on search committees, in the process of tenure, merit and promotion decisions, about the division of labor and the allocation of resources, about modes of teaching and styles of learning, and about core values.

I have no doubt that the university is a more hospitable place as a result of those who came before me, and Marsha figures prominently among them. But ten years into a permanent academic position in planning, I'd be less than honest if I didn't report that resistance to scholarship rooted in a feminist and anti-racist impulse still remains with us. Even extraordinarily accomplished women in planning--Marsha among them--have found their careers constrained by others intolerant of their politics. My graduate students are still plagued with doubts about whether their choice of research topics, from identifying Korean American landmarks to studying the impact of planning on prostitutes, will marginalize them (read, make them unemployable), despite their remarkable qualifications in architecture, urban design, preservation, and planning. I fear this will lead bright and creative people, potential innovators, to make "safe" choices that won't push the field where it needs to go. The wide range of feminist conferences and strong network that sustained my early decision to work on the issues I really cared about have nearly atrophied in planning, and I worry about the consequences for those who follow.

We often talk about symposia such as this one in somewhat pejorative terms as "preaching to the choir." In our dedication to integrating our concerns about race, class, and gender into the mainstream of the profession, I fear we've neglected our need for creating spaces of support, exchange and renewal that proceed from a basis of at least some shared political values, which sustain our ability to do work that isn't always valued by our immediate colleagues.

In a strange way, this conference is a flashback for me to a time in the mid to late 1980s when I was a graduate student at UCLA, where members of the organizations Feminist Planners and Designers and Minority Association of Planners and Architects ran annual conferences that addressed these sorts of issues. What I see clearly today is that we still need them! Having chosen a strategy of infiltration, we've yet to develop a scholarly journal in the field that is dedicated to the critical examination of these kinds of questions, yet this approach successfully has been adopted in many other fields to legitimize work on provocative subjects. Perhaps our overly professionalized concept of mentoring needs to give way to a broader and more generous strategy of mutual support. These formal initiatives may be required of us in a world without Marsha.

### **Urban Archaeology Web Sites** Compiled by Julie Schablitsky

*The Society for Historical Archaeology Web site:*  
[www.sha.org/](http://www.sha.org/)

Information on urban archaeology is usually found under the umbrella of historic archaeology. The Society for Historical Archaeology's web site provides information on the society, its meetings, publications, and announcements. The web site is a frequently updated guide for students and professionals who wish to follow current research, attend educational workshops and meetings, and learn about a future in historical archaeology.

*The Five Points Site:* [r2.gsa.gov/Fivept/fphome.htm](http://r2.gsa.gov/Fivept/fphome.htm)  
A historical and pictorial tour of a site in a 19th century New York neighborhood. Photographs transport visitors to an archaeological site or an informational page on the history of Five Points. The site also provides interpretations of artifacts and how archaeology can alter or change our views of the past. The site is a useful resource and provides a list of recommended readings, related links, and photos of artifacts recovered at the urban site.

*Lower East Side Tenement Museum:*  
[www.wnet.org/archive/tenement/](http://www.wnet.org/archive/tenement/)

This site presents the history of 97 Orchard St. in Manhattan and includes information on the excavation of the site, the objects found during the dig, the history of the building and its uses over time, and the lives of residents.

## *Kermit Carlyle Parsons 1927-1999*

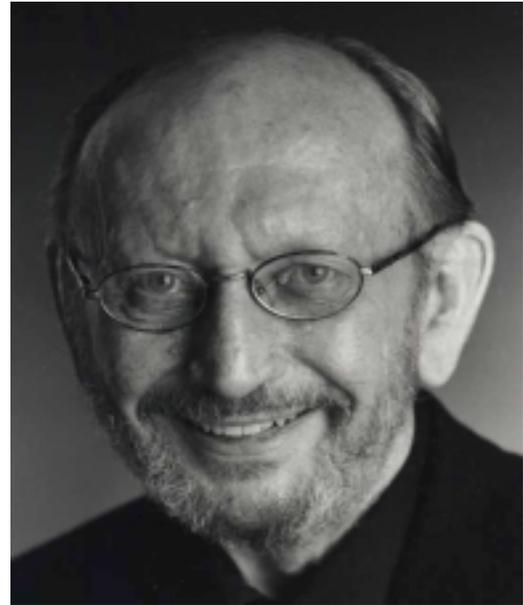
Kermit Carlyle Parsons, 72, died peacefully in his sleep at home on December 9, a few days after becoming Professor Emeritus of City and Regional Planning at Cornell University where he taught for more than forty years. After receiving his Bachelor of Architecture from Miami University of Ohio in 1951 he studied at Cornell for his master of Regional Planning degree that was conferred in 1953. For the next four years he carried out increasingly responsible assignments as a staff member of the Cleveland City Planning Commission, ending as Head of the Community Planning Section.

Kermit (K.C.) returned to Cornell in 1957 as Assistant Professor, becoming Associate Professor three years later. In 1965 he was appointed Chairman of the Department of City and Regional Planning and promoted to Professor. In 1971 he became Dean of the College of Architecture, Art, and Planning, a position he held until 1980. During this period he also served as Visiting Professor in the graduate program in planning at the University of Puerto Rico and lectured at Western Reserve University, the University of Washington, and Harvard University.

Following his deanship, K.C. resumed teaching until being appointed director of Cornell in Washington, the university's public policy program in the national capital, serving from 1985 to 1988. Returning to his department, he taught until his retirement in 1999. His achievements were recognized and aided by grants from the Ford Foundation, National Science Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, the Woodrow Wilson International Center, Skidmore, Owings and Merrill Foundation, the Graham Foundation, and the Aline MacMahon Stein Fund.

K.C. published more than 50 journal articles, consulting and research reports, monographs, and books on university campus planning, urban renewal, downtown planning, national urban policy, and the history of urban planning. He was a long-time member of the Society of Architectural Historians, American Planning Association, American Institute of Certified Planners, and the American Institute of Architects, among others, and was president-elect of the Society for American City and Regional Planning History.

His book, *The Cornell Campus: A History of its Planning and Development* (1968), became a model for those preparing similar studies of other colleges and universities. He was instrumental in founding the Society for College and University Planning and was its president from 1966 to 1968. A more recent book was *The Writings of Clarence S. Stein: Architect of the Planned Community* (1998) a volume of selected and profusely annotated letters and other writings.



More than a dozen of K.C.'s articles and conference papers were on aspects of Stein's work and were to be chapters in a book on this influential architect-planner, a work that his colleagues hope to see through to publication. Another book will consist of edited papers presented in September, 1998 at the international conference K.C. organized at Cornell to mark the centennial of the publication of Ebenezer Howard's garden city concept.

An important part of his K.C.'s career was professional practice. He was planning consultant in this country for the City of Cleveland and several architectural firms there, Wayne State University, the New York State University Construction Fund, the Mid-Hudson Patterns for Progress, the Chemung Valley Study of Higher Education and served as an expert witness in cases involving planning issues.

Abroad, K.C. was consultant to the Ministry of Education in the Philippines for a campus plan of the Miagao campus of the University of the Philippines and on the Rio Peidras campus planning program for the University of Puerto Rico. For the Department of State he traveled to Nigeria to advise on the projected University of Ife, and for the World Bank he provided advice on the design of agricultural markets in Mexico and in Seoul, Korea.

K.C. touched the lives of his Cornell colleagues, associates elsewhere, professional clients, and hundreds of students as teacher, advisor, and friend. He will be missed by all.

*John W. Reps*

## *K. C. as mentor*

I first met K.C. Parsons in the early 1980s when I was employed as a research assistant in the Department of Manuscripts and University Archives at Cornell University. K.C. was a chronic researcher and would frequently arrive at 4:30, just a half hour before the archives closed for the day--the late arrival caused by an unexpected conversation with one or more students. Saturdays provided longer stretches of uninterrupted time to pore over the Stein papers, the collection he most often used. K.C. was well known around the archives, which had provided the material for *The Cornell Campus*, an elegantly written history of campus architecture and planning that he crafted decades before a cultural approach to architecture became fashionable.

From these first meetings I was impressed by how well K.C. juggled the two parts of his intellectual/professional life: his devotion to students and teaching and his love of research, particularly in an archives, elbow-deep in folders of letters and sketches. That he blended these two commitments, in fact that he orchestrated their mutual enrichment, is a testament to his stature as a scholar and as a good and decent person, who respected students and rejoiced when they too felt the pull of the archives and the necessity of collegial intellectual sharing.

Years later, as a student of architectural history, I had difficulty convincing some faculty members that my proposed dissertation topic, a study of the architectural activities of a life insurance company, was sufficiently "architectural." I turned to K.C. for support, knowing of his interest in housing and planning history. With the patience and faith of those who dig in archives for yet unknown and unpublished material, he told me to jump in, and he would help when he could. Thus, K.C. became the chair of my committee, permitting me to forge ahead. With the broad vision of architecture he developed from his formal education in architectural design and regional planning, and from his intimate knowledge of Clarence Stein's work, he supported a process that changed in a fundamental way my understanding of architectural history. Because of this I can say that the process of creating a dissertation was the very best part of my graduate education, for it challenged me in every way. Without K.C.'s support and public endorsement, that would not have been possible.

As I worked my way through the dissertation, K.C. was most helpful in the area of housing and community planning history, urging me to place Met

Life's housing and mortgage investment efforts into a broader context. But he read every page of every chapter meticulously, and we had more than one conversation debating issues such as the meaning and implication of the word "profession," and the relationship of aesthetics to corporate identity. In the housing arena, he led me to a number of new sources and suggested new perspectives; elsewhere, he insisted that I think clearly and defend my language as well as my conclusions.

K.C. loved all aspects of his work: he was committed both to teaching and scholarship, and that enthusiasm was infectious. He was always immersed in various projects, none more deeply than his editing of *The Writings of Clarence S. Stein*. Any conversation about planning history would inevitably turn to this work, both the process and the anticipated product. He was tremendously proud of the published volume, and we celebrated this accomplishment with him.

K.C.'s enthusiasm for research, his commitment to students, and his sustained interest in the history of the built environment inspired the creation of the Clarence Stein Institute at Cornell. Endowed by Aline MacMahon Stein, the Institute supports student research in the areas of community planning and history, events such as the international conference on Garden Cities and their legacy, planned by K.C. and held at Cornell in the fall of 1998, and broad educational out-reach in community planning and its history. Its very shape is testament to the interests that defined K.C.'s career.

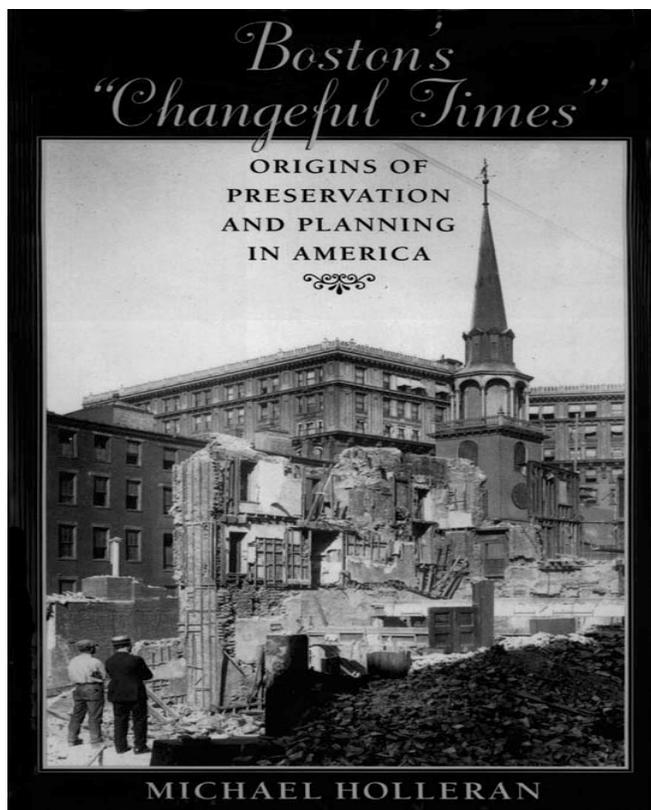
As scholar and teacher, K.C. made a lasting contribution to the practice and history of city and community planning. His enthusiasm for planning history and for archival research was tangible and infectious. Most treasured, however, was the respect that he showed his students, the way in which he extended to those youngest of his colleagues the gift of academic freedom, all the while reminding us of the responsibilities that accompany that freedom. I am thankful for these gifts, which will express themselves in his students' future endeavors. And I will remember him especially in those archival moments, when the tedium of reading is interrupted by the excitement of revelation.

*Roberta M. Moudry*

## SACRPH Awards

The Society for American City and Regional Planning History announced the following awards for scholarship at its Eighth Biennial Meeting on Nov. 20, 1999.

The Lewis Mumford Prize for the best book in American city and regional planning history was awarded to **Michael Holleran** of the University of Colorado for *Boston's "Changeful Times": Origins of Preservation and Planning in America* (Johns Hopkins, 1998).



Holleran argues that in response to the unprecedented rate of change experienced in urban America during the nineteenth century, many individuals and groups began to seek a measure of permanence and stability in the humanly created environment. Turn-of-the-century Bostonians found remedies through deed restrictions and easements, through the preservation of old monuments such as Old South Meeting House, through the emergence of landmarks as visual keys to the cityscape, and through the protection of Boston's skyline, particularly in the vicinity of Beacon Hill and the Back Bay. Holleran then assesses the shift from preservation to control through governmental instruments, most notably zoning.

Holleran traces the evolution of these tools through analysis of legislative and judicial records, newspapers and the architectural press, and a series of case studies that includes (among other examples) the addition to Bulfinch's State House, the preservation of Old South and the Old State House, and an absolutely

fascinating battle over the future of Copley Square, in which a height of building law resulted in the lowering of Westminster Chambers, an apartment house then under construction, by several stories, and the intransigence of its owners, who at the lower height refused to place a cornice on the building, leaving it with an unfinished appearance. He pays attention as well to the emergence of institutional and individual players in the search for a controlled urban environment, including developers, real estate brokers, preservationists of every stripe, and civic leaders. Beautifully written and illustrated, Holleran's study raises many new avenues for exploring the origins of modern planning practice,

The Mumford prize committee also cited **Joel Rast** for *Remaking Chicago: The Political Origins of Urban Industrial Change* (Northern Illinois University Press, 1999) for honorable mention. Breaking new ground in the study of urban political economy, Rast examines the active agency of actors who refused to allow the economic vitality of neighborhood-based production to be buried either by national trends or indifference downtown.

The Catherine Bauer Wurster prize for the best scholarly article was awarded to two articles. The committee praised **Kingston Heath** and **Raphael Fischler** for articles that will not only improve our understanding of the past but enhance planning possibilities for the future. Heath's essay "The Howland Mill Village: A Missing Chapter in Model Workers' Housing," published in *Old Time New England*, volume 75, 1997, revealed the intersection of idealism, reality, and human nature before planning became a profession. Every historian should read this article to find the dire consequences that befell a paternalistic vision that proved unprofitable. Fischler's essay "The Metropolitan Dimension of Early Zoning: Revisiting the 1916 New York City Ordinance," published in *Journal of the American Planning Association*, volume 64, 1998, revisited and revised our understanding of one of the planning professions' first landmarks, the 1916 New York City Ordinance. The classic view interprets New York zoning as the "brainchild of property and financial interests working to regularize real estate markets to foster the development of the corporate city" (171). Fischler found, however, that the 1916 ordinance was not the product of an elite but the work of a diversity of groups that produced a planning vision of "mainstream character." The consensus-building that marked New York's early planning provides a rich historical legacy that is also central, Fischler reminds us, to our own planning experience.

The John W. Reps dissertation prize was shared by **Owen D. Gutfreund** and **Thomas Campanella**. Gutfreund's "Twentieth Century Sprawl: Accommodating the Automobile and the Decentralization of the United States" (directed by Kenneth T. Jackson, Columbia University, 1998) explores how governmental

policies over the course of nine decades have promoted automobile-dependent growth outside established city centers. Gutfreund offers case studies of three very different places--the big nineteenth-century boomtown of Denver, Colorado, the tiny old New England village of Middlebury, Vermont, and the bustling new automobile-manufacturing exurb of Smyrna, Tennessee--to show that sprawl occurred in largely the same way in every location regardless of size, population growth, or regional characteristics. Of particular interest is the "follow the money approach" in which Gutfreund goes beyond our customary focus on overt federal policy to bring alive the backstage world of bond financing and other actions at the state and local level.

Thomas Campanella's "Republic of Shade: The Emergence of the American Elm as a Cultural and Urban Design Element in Nineteenth Century New England" (directed by Lawrence Vail, MIT, 1999) celebrates the humble street tree. In a beautifully executed study, he mines hundreds of local history sources across New England to explore how this region adopted the American Elm during the fifty years following the American Revolution. Efforts began informally, as communities venerated individual giant trees that survived from the primeval forest--as on the Commons at Springfield and Boston--or where significant events had occurred--such as the Washington Elm in Cambridge. Altruistic landowners began setting out elms along the streetline to ornament their property and provide public shade. And by the 1820s village improvement societies organized to plant and maintain trees, a function soon taken over by municipal governments. Campanella succeeds in conveying his own love for the majestically-shaped elm, and in the process helps us understand how deep the passion for civic improvement runs in the American soul.

Both of these dissertations expand our understanding of the planning process: Campanella by showing its deep roots in community activism, Gutfreund by demonstrating the powerful effects wrought by decades of government action.

The Reps Prize for the best master's thesis was awarded to **Monica A. Abeita** for "Historical Community Development in North Central New Mexico" (Univ. of New Mexico, Albuquerque, 1999). This outstanding work adds much to our understanding of a seriously under researched topic: the impact of Pueblo and Hispano peoples on the planning and community development of the southwestern United States. Ancient habits of cooperation and interdependence, emphasis on extended families, respect for natural resources, and an additive approach to building both individual houses and communities--all are still at work shaping the landscape. Ms. Abeita's dual perspective as a municipal planner and someone raised in these older traditions makes her writing rich with insights. This thesis deserves publication, so that both historians and practicing planners may absorb its messages.

The Francoise-August de Montequin Prize for the best paper on colonial planning history was awarded to **Martha J. McNamara**, Department of History, University of Maine, for her paper "Courts and Commerce: Public Space in Eighteenth-Century Massachusetts." The committee recognized McNamara's paper as "a brilliant exposition of the changes in the legal profession in Colonial New England that resulted in separation of the court house and its functions from city hall and its related commercial functions, setting the stage for the future central role of the court house in the planning of communities on the western frontier that were influenced by New England models."

The committee awarded a citation for honorable mention to **Michael T. Lucas**, University of Maryland, for "A Rare and Occasional Settlement: An Historical and Archaeological Interpretation of Colonial Town Planning at Mount Calvert, Maryland."

The Student Research Award was presented to **Michael Dudley** for "The Widening Gyre: Defensive Dispersal and the City Planning Profession in the Early Atomic Era, 1945-1960" (Department of City Planning, University of Manitoba). In this paper Dudley poses the hypothesis that the apocalyptic vision spawned by the existence of nuclear weapons precipitated a policy discourse regarding social and physical change, especially decentralized urban form. Moreover, Dudley argues that planners such as Tracy Augur contributed to shaping a deliberate policy of metropolitan dispersal. Augur called for breaking up cities into clusters spread over 886 square miles. By 1951, according to Dudley, President Truman was ordering the National Security Research Board to pursue a policy of industrial dispersal and the American Institute of Planners was issuing a report on "Reduction of Urban Vulnerability," that advocated urban dispersal. Finally, Dudley sees the Housing Act of 1954 as a major step toward urban dispersal. This paper was thoroughly researched, possessed a strong theoretical base, and presented a solid argument.

The society congratulates all prize recipients and is grateful for the work of the prize committees: Eugenie L. Birch, Greg Hise, and Howard Gillette (chair) for the Mumford Prize; Robin Bachin, James Spencer, and Bruce Stephenson (chair) for the Wurster; Tom Hanchett (chair), Reps committee; Lawrence C. Gerckens (chair) for the deMontequin; and Cliff Ellis, Roberta Moudry, and John F. Bauman (chair) for the Student Research Award.

For Sale: Fabulous SACRPH Canvas Bags from 1999 conference. Sturdy bags, spacious enough for two slide carousel boxes, red and white with conference logo. \$7.50 Postpaid. Send checks to Mary C. Sies, SACRPH Treasurer, 24 Lakeside Dr., Greenbelt, MD 20770

## What We're Reading

Carl Abbott, *Political Terrain: Washington, D.C. from Tidewater Town to Global Metropolis* (North Carolina, 1999). An analysis of Washington's changing regional roles and characteristics from its origins to the present, this book explores Washington's historically layered identities as tidewater town, southern city, national center, and global metropolis.

Peter Baldwin, *Domesticating the Street: The Reform of Public Space in Hartford, 1850-1930* (Ohio State, 2000). Arguing that late 19th-century streets were chaotic, dirty, and noisy, this book locates an important effort to make public space conform to the ideals of the middle-class home. Reformers fought to eliminate prostitution, litter, peddling, and other nuisance uses. Their cause was eventually taken up by business elites who zoned the city and relegated vice and crime to marginal areas far away from homes, public spaces, and the downtown.

John F. Bauman, Roger Biles, and Kristin M. Szylvian, eds., *From Tenements to the Taylor Homes: In Search of an Urban Housing Policy in Twentieth-Century America* (Penn State, 2000). Twelve essays by well-known scholars that explore such topics as the war against the slums, planned suburbs for workers, the rise of government-aided and built housing during the Great Depression, post-World War II urban renewal policies, and the retreat from public housing.

Andres Duany, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk and Jeff Speck, *Suburban Nation: The Rise of Sprawl and the Decline of the American Dream* (North Point Press, 2000). The most complete assessment of the costs of suburban sprawl and the advantages of New Urbanist planning principles from the perspective of the founders of the Congress of New Urbanism.

Robert Fishman, ed., *The American Planning Tradition: Culture and Policy* (Johns Hopkins, 1999). An invaluable collection of essays that examines the achievements of planners in constructing public spaces and public institutions in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Margaret Heilbrun, ed., *Inventing the Skyline: The Architecture of Cass Gilbert* (Columbia University, 2000). Gilbert, one of the most talented Beaux Arts-trained architects in the United States, is best remembered for the Woolworth Building, whose Gothic tower soared above Lower Manhattan. His prolific career is the subject of a major exhibition at the New-York Historical Society as well as this handsomely illustrated collection of essays.

Greg Hise and William Deverell, eds., *Eden By Design: The 1930s Olmsted-Bartholomew Plan for Los Angeles* (California, 2000). A facsimile of the rare Olmsted-Bartholomew report, *Parks, Playgrounds, and Beaches for the Los Angeles Region*, with a thoughtful introduction by the editors that examines the plan's origins and its fate and a discussion with Laurie Olin that situates the report in the history of American planning.

Jane Jacobs, *The Nature of Economies* (Modern Library, 2000). A platonic dialogue, set in contemporary New York, comparing human economies to organic systems and imbedding them within ecologies. The discussions of emergent and consolidating city economies will be of particular interest.

Max Page, *The Creative Destruction of Manhattan, 1900-1940* (University of Chicago, 2000). This astute, well-written analysis of the tension between developmental pressures and a sense of place interprets the emergence of zoning and historic preservation as tools to regulate market forces and thereby control the shape of the modern metropolis.

Martin V. Melosi, *The Sanitary City: Urban Infrastructure in America from Colonial Times to the Present* (Johns Hopkins, 2000). This encyclopedic history of the development of water supplies and sewer systems incorporates technological innovation, the evolution of environmental and public health concerns, and the political context so essential to the construction of such major public works projects.

Stephanie Sabine Pincetl, *Transforming California: A Political History of Land Use and Development* (Johns Hopkins, 1999). Using land use--especially battles over forest and wildlife management, urban development, agriculture, and water uses--Pincetl argues that California's environmental degradation, economic inequality, and political gridlock result from an archaic system of government that extends from village halls to the statehouse.

Gregory C. Randall, *America's Original GI Town: Park Forest, Illinois* (Johns Hopkins, 2000). A thoughtful history of the development of the post-World War II community W. H. Whyte made famous in *The Organization Man* (1956), written by a planner who grew up there.

Bob Thall, *The New American Village* (Johns Hopkins, 1999). A noted photographer's take on the landscape of the Edge City around O'Hare and Schaumburg, Illinois -- the corporate headquarters and parks, commercial developments, subdivisions and homes, and the "natural" landscape incorporated into the frame of the new city.

## Send Us Your Comments on . . .

Gray Brechin, *Imperial San Francisco: Urban Power, Earthly Ruin* (University of California Press, 1999).

Patrick D. Reagan, *Designing a New America: The Origins of New Deal Planning, 1890-1943* (University of Massachusetts, 2000).

Lloyd Rodwin and Bishwapryia Sanyal, eds., *The Profession of City Planning: Changes, Images, and Challenges, 1950-2000* (Rutgers Center for Policy Research, 2000).

Bobby M. Wilson, *America's Johannesburg: Industrialization and Racial Transformation in Birmingham* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2000).

Bobby M. Wilson, *Race and Place in Birmingham: The Civil Rights and Neighborhood Movements* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2000).

. . . and any other books, journal issues, or web sites you think worthy of notice in **Planning History News**

# *NEW YORK, A.D., 1997*

## *A PROPHECY*

**George E. Waring, Jr.**

If the population centering in New York increases during the next hundred years as rapidly as it has during the past fifty years, it will comprise, probably, twenty million souls. It would be futile, of course, to attempt to predict, with even a probability of accuracy, what the character and conditions of life of that community would be.

Judging from the building progress of the past twenty years, Manhattan Island will be covered, aside from its great public buildings and their ornamental and roomy surroundings, and the parks, which are forever dedicated to the use of the people, with architectural monstrosities which the sky scrapers of the present day portend. It is not unlikely that the whole island will be largely abandoned as a place of residence. Staten Island will be given over to shipping, longshoremen and unsavory industries. The shoal western side of the harbor below Jersey City will be filled with docks, warehouses and railroad terminals. The beautiful ridge on the west side of the Hudson and all the northeastern portion of New Jersey, as well as the upper portion of Westchester County and the whole of Long Island, will become one vast residence region, save for the frequent manufacturing centres which will be established in favorable localities.

### *How will the people live?*

How the people will live it is impossible even to guess, but it is not likely that they will live in the closely huddled habitations of the present day. The indications are these: The tenement house will be unknown, and no man, rich or poor, will live in a house of which every room does not open freely to the outer air. The present tendency to aggregation and conglomeration will yield to Heaven knows what method of free, easy and cheap transportation. He would be a bold man who, recalling the short interval of time between the days of the ubiquitous omnibus and the rapid and pleasant trolley of to-day, would venture to predict what will be our means of urban travel. A quarter of a century ago no one would have believed that old and young, rich and poor, would be flying about our streets and over our country roads on rubber tired bicycles. It would have been as absurd to predict then what we are now so familiar with as to predict now that there will be some safe and universal method of aerial or subterranean mode of conveyance.

### *Engineering problems--water supply, sewage.*

The problems of municipal engineering are no less difficult to adjust, in view of the great possible changes of method and arrangement. For example, to supply a population of twenty millions with water, according to our present system and at our present rate, would be practically impossible. It would involve the forcing of rivers of water from Lake Ontario, and the waste

water of the great community would foul both shores of Long Island and the entire Hudson. The lower bay would be a cesspool.

As a mere matter of fancy, I have for some time considered the ultimate result of an experiment which I made on the wharf over the main outlet sewer at Newport in the Summer of 1894. Sewage was pumped up into filter tanks, which were supplied with abundant air (oxygen) to stimulate and facilitate the development of the bacteria by which the oxidation and nitrification of foul organic matter is effected. That system has now been applied in practice to filters which are purifying 100,000 gallons per day. Within the short space of four hours fouled sewage is purified to the drinking water standard. I do not venture to predict, but I do say that it is possible that the development of this process will suffice for the purification of all the liquid wastes of all this vast population. At Newport the sewage was purified to the drinking water standard -- bright, sparkling, odorless and palatable. Not only did I drink it myself, but it was drunk without question by half a dozen of the officials of Providence, who came to visit the works.

It is entirely beyond the realm of possibility to suppose that the public authorities, at the end of the next century, will furnish to the people, not water, but compressed air? that the sewage flowing from every house will be purified in filters of the character indicated -- aerated by air under pressure, and by the same pressure forced to reservoirs in the tops of the houses, from which it will flow to be used again? This is practically nature's way of purifying foul water. It is sent back to us through the medium of rain, earth filtration and river feeding springs.

So far as we can see, much, if not all of the work of lighting, heating and transportation will be performed by electricity under the great development it is to receive at the hands of men of genius like Nikola Tesla. One thing seems very sure -- coal and wood will cease to be used for fuel, and the atmosphere of the city will be as free of smoke as the houses and streets will be of ashes and dust.

### *No horses or other domestic animals.*

Domestic animals will cease to be domesticated within the limits of towns. Indeed, I believe that twenty years will not elapse before the horse will be unknown in New York, and that automobile carriages and trucks will entirely supplant the vehicles of to-day. Heavens! What a relief this will be to the Department of Street Cleaning. In fact, there seems to be no end to what one may imagine as to the material changes that are to take place in our modes of life.

### *The greatest changes will be in the people and government.*

But all these changes, great though they will be, will be as nothing compared with the changes that are to come over the people themselves and over their government. As to the people who will make up the vast community of New York a centuryhence, I think we may be most hopeful. There has never been, within the memory of any living person -- if we except, perhaps, the devastations of the war -- any period of five years that was not better than the five years preceding it.

From *Life of Col. George E. Waring, Jr., The Greatest Apostle of Cleanliness, as told by Dr. Albert Shaw* (New York: The Patriotic League, 1899), pages 36-42.

*Pessimists.*

Calamity howlers and pessimists have said, from time immemorial, that the world was going to the demnition bow-wows, but the world has never failed to postpone to an indefinite time the realization of their fears and to march steadily on toward better things. In my judgment, our salvation from the impending disaster depends on two great facts: One is the constantly improving condition of public education, and the other is the constantly increasing interest of the people themselves in whatever may affect their public and private welfare.

*Public Education.*

The public schools of New York are marvelous -- not so much for the mere book instruction that they are giving to the children of all classes of the people as for the influence that school life is exerting on the children's character. It has been my good fortune to see a great deal of the public schools of this city, and I have never ceased to marvel at the good order, the good training, the cleanly appearance and the individual ambition of children, even of the lowest class, brought in from the streets and subjected to the influence of competition in all matters appealing to their ambition. The value of the reflex action on the character of parents and their pride in sending their children to school in tidy condition cannot be overestimated.

*Popular will supplant monarchical school government.*

The interest shown by the school children of all classes in the organization of the juvenile street cleaning leagues and in the civic organizations established by Mr. Wilson L. Gill, president of the Patriotic League, especially his "School City"; the avidity with which they acquire information as to the minor details of government; the idea that is beginning to prevail among them that government means something more than the policeman to be run away from -- as when building bonfires in the street -- and the interest that they show in everything affecting public welfare -- these alone are enough to give one the most confident hope for the future.

There are two other influences which are working most effectively throughout the whole community. One is the series of public free lectures given in the public schools, under the direction of Dr. Leipziger, where crowds of intelligent, earnest men and women drink in eagerly the information laid before them to their and our lasting good. The other is the formation of fellowship clubs and associations, largely under the direction of the University and College Settlements and kindred organizations. These are gatherings mainly of young men eager to improve their condition, and to secure for themselves and their neighbors the improvement that their united action can effect.

The tendency toward the formation of these associations is extending rapidly, and the indications are that within a very few years every little community -- certainly every Assembly district -- will have an organization properly guided, but left free for such action as it may desire, looking to the bettering of local conditions and to the exertion of useful influences on those who have the direction of municipal forces.

*People will do their own thinking.*

Through these agencies we cannot fail soon to reach a condition where the people of all classes and in all parts of the

city will begin to do their own thinking and to act together for the advancement of the best interests of all. It is hardly too much to hope that these organization, rather than the boss-guided primary, will become the source of nominations for municipal offices. When the desire for such a result is generally realized, it will be backed by such a political power as must suffice to exterminate "politics" as we know it, from the control of the business of the city.

Relief, especially in this respect, is not to be secured in a moment, but we may certainly say that the condition is most hopeful.

*Not afraid of Tammany.*

The town is now filled with apprehension as to what may happen if Tammany Hall returns to power, and the fear is far too general that this would mean a return to the worst conditions of the past. I have no such apprehension. I have had occasion, during the past two or three years, to make a familiar acquaintance with many of the most active leaders of the Tammany organization, and I have made the important discovery that they are human beings; that, as a rule, they are actuated by the same aspirations that are felt by others. They seek success in life, and the acme of such success is to secure the approbation and the esteem of the people.

WE SHALL ALWAYS HAVE AS GOOD A GOVERNMENT AS THE PEOPLE AT LARGE APPRECIATE. These Tammany gentlemen are not hankering after public obloquy and disgrace. The voice of the people is the controlling power with them. Some of them make mistakes and some of them do wrong, but the worst man among them will hold his hand before he will knowingly shock public opinion. They still have a greedy hankering after "patronage," and they will make mischief in satisfying it for some years yet, but this tendency will lessen as time goes on.

*Public opinion.*

Public opinion is constantly growing more intelligent and more exacting, and it cannot fail to react to our rulers, of whatever party, in leading them to conform to such standards as the people may establish. In the present case the conditions seem very clear. The people have learned what good government is, and they will not give it up for long under any administration.

Long before the great city of the future shall have approached the lines laid down above, ITS PEOPLE WILL BE A DIFFERENT PEOPLE FROM WHAT THEY NOW ARE, AND ITS RULERS WILL BE DIFFERENT RULE.

*George E. Waring (1833-1898) was a sanitary engineer and author of the "Waring system" for drainage that he introduced in Memphis, Tennessee. He was also a consultant to a number of cities on the design or improvement of sanitary or water systems, both in the United States and in Cuba. During a long and productive professional career, Waring was an agriculturist, an engineer who installed the thorough drainage system in New York's Central Park, the compiler of the Social Statistics of Cities component of the U. S. Census of 1880, and Street Commissioner of New York in 1895-96. In this latter position Waring achieved remarkable success. According to Dr. Albert Shaw, his biographer, Waring's efforts had a "transforming effect upon the appearance, comfort, and health of the city."*

### Books for Sale -- Half-Price

• *A Critic Writes: Essays by Reyner Banham*. Selected by Mary Banham, Paul Barker, Sutherland Lyall, and Cedric Price, with a foreword by Peter Hall. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996 (pb, \$12.00).

• *Adolph Reed Jr., Stirrings in the Jug: Black Politics in the Post-Segregation Era*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999 (pb, \$10.00).

• Mary C. Comerio, *Disaster Hits Home: New Policy for Urban Housing Recovery*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998 (hardcover, \$20.00).

• Alan DiGaetano and John S. Klemanski, *Power and City Government: Comparative Perspectives on Urban Development*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1999 (pb, \$11.00).

• Peter Ward, *A History of Domestic Space: Privacy and the Canadian Home*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 1999 (hardcover, \$20.00).

• Patrick M. Condon, ed. *Sustainable Urban Landscapes: The Surrey Design Charrette*. British Columbia: University of British Columbia, 1996 (pb, \$9.00).

Terms: send check or money order made out to SACRPH to Mary C. Sies, SACRPH Treasurer, 24 Lakeside Drive, Greenbelt, MD 20770. SACRPH pays shipping.

### Mark Your Calendar

Aug. 20-23, 2000 -- IPHS 9th International Conference of Planning History, Helsinki - Espoo Finland. Organized around the theme "Centre-Periphery: Globalisation, Past & Present." For additional information contact conference convenor Sr. Laura Kolbe (laura.kolbe@helsinki.fi) or visit the conference web site:  
<http://www.hut.fi/Yksikot/YTK/koulutus/iphs.html>

Nov. 1-4, 2001 -- SACRPH Ninth Biennial Conference on Planning History, Philadelphia, PA and Camden, NJ. Program chair is John F. Bauman (jbauman@gwi.net), while local arrangements co-chairs are Eugenie L. Birch (elbirch@pobox.upenn.edu) and Robert Fishman (fishman@crab.rutgers.edu).

### Visit SACRPH's Web Site:

Thanks to the efforts of our trustee and former president, Chris Silver, and University of Illinois graduate student Jeramiah Yeksavich, SACRPH has a web site:

[www.urban.uiuc.edu/sacrph/index.html](http://www.urban.uiuc.edu/sacrph/index.html)

Please send Chris or Jeramiah your comments and ideas for the site.

### *Planning History News*

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