

## MID-CAREER SEMINAR

Plans are underway for a weekend workshop/retreat to provide a mid-career celebration and develop career goals for the future.

Tentative Dates: Fri– Sun, May 20–22, 1988 at Bodega Bay.

Focus will be OWA members with 15–20 years of experience.

Purpose:

– To celebrate by showing slides, sharing awards, projects, accomplishments, reminiscing. Start gathering material. This is a good time to assemble/review your portfolio and resume.

– Solve current concerns like keeping the small practice going, managing growth, personal image, company image, client skills, children and career juggling, the “glass ceiling” to senior management, etc.

– To plan the future such as job security, age discrimination, housing, retirement, specializing, writing, teaching, relaxing.

... seminar casual enough to bring anything you want critiqued: your firm brochure, slide show brief, your dream house, your latest project. Some workshop ideas so far:

Journaling workshop – pre-assignment to prepare for the seminar

Estate planning with timeline

Resume improvement

Modifying your career track

New sources of inspiration

Developing corporate vision

Call Marda at 437-3916 or

Linda at 540-6506

## MODERN AMERICAN ACADEMIA

By Eleni Bastea

Form your letters slowly and well:  
making things well is more important  
than making them.

—Antonio Machado  
(trans. by Robert Bly)

We have a saying in Greek that “it takes a long time for the good thing to be made.” In this country that would only sound like a poor excuse for being slow. It was thus a welcomed revelation to me to come across the above poem today. It helped me regain my perspective and the necessary distance from the academic race that I am just entering.

Perhaps this time next year I will be teaching architectural history at some university. The openings are not many (between 15–20 advertised) and those are further limited by the particular areas of specialization: ancient, Renaissance, modern, American, Eastern architecture, etc. The majority of the positions require a Ph.D. (which I expect to complete by this summer), and give preference to those who have teaching experience and publications.

Almost all the Ph.D. students from Berkeley have been teaching assistants for several terms. That is better than nothing, but, of course, not as impressive as being a lecturer, or even an assistant professor, as some of the people who will be competing for the same positions are. Somehow, one has to break the circle and enter the dance.

Most academics at the entry level have published some articles, and might be working on a book. The material for both usually comes from their dissertation. The *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* is probably the most logical place for one’s first publication. It is a quarterly, and each issue publishes 5 articles, as well as several book reviews. That means that only 20 people can appear in a year. Of course, some of them are established authorities, who might not need the exposure as much as younger scholars. Once an article is accepted, it takes about two years until it appears in print. One could also submit work in a journal of a related field, but the competition and the time factor would be comparable.

Most schools realize that it takes time to get your work published, and they are willing to take the candidate’s potential into account as well. This is probably the most subjective of criteria, and it has to be based on the applicant’s recommendation letters and the impression she or he will convey to the interviewer and the respective department.

I cannot talk about the actual interviewing process from personal experience yet. I will try

to analyze here the discrepancy between what I expect from myself and what the academic world expects from me. Of course, “the academic world” is a general term that might not correspond to any one university faculty. But that is the only way to summarize the experience I have had so far in this profession.

First my own expectations: Unlike most people, I do not see a seam between academic writing and creative writing. Through my works in architectural and urban history I try to express my insights about life, history, and society that could also be expressed through poetry or prose. Doing research is almost an excuse to satisfy a curiosity for how people live and think. Writing the “results” of a research is, for me, as delicate as writing a story. One has to decide what to reveal first, where to focus, how to introduce the actors, how to conclude. In a way, all those decisions are arbitrary, and they all have to be made by the author. For me, writing is the most exciting part of this field.

Even a meticulous writing process, however, does not produce “perfect” academic books. Very early on, we learn that no book has the last word on anything, and even very good books, or articles, might be criticized right away, or in ten or in twenty years. That gives a reason, if one had to be, for younger scholars to enter the field. At least in the humanities, there will always be room for different interpretations and new findings. Nevertheless, it takes a while to complete a work and during that process one is constantly bombarded by the seemingly ceaseless production of the rest of the academic world. More than ever before, young scholars in this country are expected to publish a first book quickly, within a couple of years after they finish their dissertation. One gets the impression that no one actually reads or criticizes these books. Having done the job seems to be the only objective. Who ever talks about doing things well any more?

If research is, for me, an excuse to find out what people in the past did, being at school is an excuse to see what people around me are thinking and doing. It can be an extremely fertile environment for unexpected exchanges, discussions, meetings, or pointless talks. All these bring people closer. I always enjoyed that aspect of academia, because it kept me in contact with others, and fueled my own work. At least up to this point. Suddenly, as all of my colleagues are hunting for jobs at the same time, that loosely structured camaraderie seems to have crumbled irreparably: We cannot exchange notes, because we are competing. The academic world fosters this competition. That goes against my own nature, and my expectations of myself

## Introducing the New Steering Committee Members

**VIRGINIA M. YANG** first joined OWA in 1979 when she moved to the Bay Area from New York City. OWA was helpful to her as a newcomer to the area by helping her to locate a new job with The Ratcliff Architects and giving her the opportunity to meet other people in the design professions here.

Her career as an architect the past 15 years, began formally at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn where she studied Architecture. While there, she concentrated most of her energy on community planning and design, working with neighborhood advocacy groups to develop housing for elderly people and recreation centers for younger people.

Her years in New York were spent learning the practice of architecture in small firms. She was also active in the movement to make buildings more accessible for the disabled, teaching courses at Pratt which explored the issues of accessibility and participating in design workshops with disabled people.

In California for the past 8 years, she has combined her professional life with mothering two children, Jeffrey and Jessica, now 7 and 4 years old. She has gained more experience in general practice and also developed special expertise in architectural programming and the planning and design of justice facilities, such as jails, prisons, and courts.

In recent years she has moved through succeeding larger firms, and is currently working at DMJM on a housing development in the Fillmore district of San Francisco.

Other work important to her has been experience teaching disabled and disturbed children and designing/producing fabrics before she became an architect.

## Modern American Academia

*Continued from previous page*

as a social being.

It would be an incomplete profile, if I left my own family, my husband and our little son, outside of it. Curiously, when I sit down to write I do not think of myself as a mother or a wife. I see myself as I have always seen myself, a bundle of contradictions, memories, desires, hopes, fears, and potential . . . And my work effects what has changed in me with time, and what remains the same. To the academic world, however, I now have to give proofs that I am as serious about history of architecture as I was two-and-a-half years ago, before I became a mother.

**CAMERON WHITE** joined OWA in 1976 when she was working for Forell/Elsesser Engineers in San Francisco. Shortly after graduating from Cal, she joined the Steering Committee and found it to be "a wonderful experience learning from other women architects whose experiences were invaluable in helping me proceed with my architectural career."

Since those years she has worked for The Ratcliff Architects, Kurtzman and Kodama and a small firm in Hayward; she and her husband Paul Deirup have two children. She is presently licensed and is working at the Project Manager level on a wide variety of projects from multi-family housing to commercial to space planning. She has recently started work for Hood Miller Associates. While on the Steering Committee she is interested in exploring these questions:

- What kind of particular problems do we encounter as women architects in 1988?
- How do our experiences relate to problems and obstacles women face in other fields?
- How can we learn to analyze and overcome on-the-job problems when they occur?

**ARIANE ZAND** was educated in England at the Architectural Association School of Architecture. She qualified in 1972 with the RIBA finals and in 1973 with the A.A. Dip (M. Arch.). She also has a postgraduate degree in Health Facility Planning. She has worked internationally in Europe, the Middle East and now in the United States. Her experiences cover a variety of projects, such as housing, schools, commercial buildings, restaurants, etc., though her major work has been in health facility buildings, from small clinics to thousand-bed hospitals. In San Francisco, she has worked for the firms of Stone Maraccini and Patterson, and the NBRJ as medical planner and designer. She has been an active member of the women's organization in Europe and the Middle East.

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## In Memory of Dolores Malloy

Dolores Malloy passed away January 6th after 2 years of illness. She has been a member since the founding of OWA. We will all miss her.

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## CLASSIFIED ADS

The City and County of San Francisco is actively recruiting Black, Hispanic and women applicants for the 6318 Construction Inspector classification. These targeted groups are presently underrepresented in the City's workforce as Construction Inspectors.

**6318 Construction Inspector**  
\$39,276 - \$47,628

**Anticipated Duties:**  
under supervision, performs beginning level construction engineering inspection in conjunction with public works construction projects to assure compliance with contract plans and specifications, and performs related duties as required

**Anticipated Minimum Requirements:** Four (4) years of experience in engineering construction inspection work insuring that plans and specifications are complied with, and the workmanship and materials used to meet specifications.

**Notes:**

1. Experience as an architect or surveyor may be substituted on a year-to-year basis up to two (2) years of the required experience; OR
2. A Bachelor's degree in Engineering; OR Architecture may be substituted for the required experience;
3. Journey level construction and drafting experience will not be qualifying.

For information, call Lia Shigemura at 554-4743 EE/AA Employer

Marda Stothers is the point of contact for employment information until the new steering committee members are installed. The AIA bulletin boards remain the source for openings. Call Marda for encouragement, strategy session, resume review.