A History of Community Design/Build in the United States in Four Moments

The origins of community design/build education in the United States are multiple and storied. Though many architects and educators today associate the practice's inception with Steve Badanes' Jersey Devil or Samuel "Sambo" Mockbee's Rural Studio, American design educators have experimented with combinations of social and technical learning since the 1930s. This paper tells one history of community design/build through four significant cases. Moving chronologically it describes four projects built by students and volunteers under the direction of design educators. Each represents a significant example that exhibits pedagogical, professional and ethical principles often associated with community design/build today. Although the pairing of design/build pedagogy with social aims may seem natural, this history reveals a more complicated story that sheds light on the motivations and methods of its practice today.

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Existing accounts of the history of design/build education take an eclectic approach, including many instances in which students have built for pedagogical purposes. In general, one can see two trends in this literature. One group sees that architecture and building have long been separated and that this unnatural division stems from architects' historic attempts to assert class superiority.[1] A second strain sees building as a long-standing tradition in architectural education and that this tradition is revived periodically in response to political and institutional opportunities.[2] Those who follow the first logic, locate design-build's origins with the Bauhaus, because that institution "reunited design and craft." Those who follow the second see the most significant break coming instead in the radical 1960s when the master/pupil hierarchy and focus on a singular creative vision came into question.

While many authors observe that the practice has become more popular since the early 1990s, the reasons behind the trend are unclear. William Carpenter argues that the reemergence of the practice is "a developing philosophy to respond to the separation between the architect and construction."[4] Vincent Canizaro explains the contemporary resurgence as "likely in response to theory-laden 'paper architecture' and stylistic historicism of the 1980s."[5] Anthony W. Schuman observes a "generational shift towards design/build" amongst those interested in community-based architectural practice, but does not pinpoint the

forces behind it.[6] Knowing why the practice becomes popular at particular historic moments is key to understanding its utility for the profession and for the communities it claims to serve. A lack of historic grounding results from the brevity of most historic accounts, which usually make up only a few pages of introductory text in books arguing for renewed investment in the practice.[3] In addition, existing accounts limit their search for explanations to the history of the design professions. For this reason, they cannot fully capture the larger historical patterns that produce this practice.

My work takes an approach that is not concerned with arguing for or against community-based design/build. Instead, it asks why architects reach for particular models and deploy them in specific times and locations. Following the anthropologist Paul Rabinow, it considers how a particular type of "rationality" came to characterize the way architects see and act on the world's problems.[7] It looks at the American context in order to identify the historical patterns that shape architects' efforts. These include trends in social welfare policy, notions of service and volunteerism and educational philosophies. Informed by the work of social historians, the paper highlights how models generated in specific historic moments resurface when conditions again become amenable.[8]

How educators mentally connect the physical labor of building to social goals is key to understanding the rationale behind the practice. In this paper, each case demonstrates how educators conceived one aspect of the design/build model in a given historical context and the complex forces that determined its shape and impact. The first case, Black Mountain College (1939–1941), looks at the way **citizenship** is understood at the intersection of physical labor, teamwork and ideas of holistic education. The second case, the Neighborhood Renewal Corp of the University of Pennsylvania (1959–61), considers how **community** came to be defined as both a group of people and scale of action. Third, the case of the San Francisco Chinatown Community Design Center (later Asian Neighborhood Design, 1971–73) investigates **advocacy** for the voiceless and the supposed erosion of expert authority. Finally, the case of the Auburn University Rural Studio (1993–present) examines how **empathy** becomes an ethical imperative connecting life and art, and in the studio's second phase, how technical solutions replaced it as the driving justification for the work.

These four logics – citizenship, community, advocacy and empathy – are the glue that links the physical labor and technical contribution of student architects to a social purpose. The logic of these ideas usually goes as follows: community defines the appropriate scale and subjects of intervention; advocacy describes how architects can represent or "speak for" others; empathy helps them listen so they will know what to say and do. The result is architectural citizenship, a state of seeing, knowing and acting ethically. Educators often take these ideas for granted when answering the question of what design/build programs offer communities and students. A historical look exposes their basis in old ideas about work, poverty, service and expertise. They are not neutral assertions, but are at the very heart of professional self-definition. These little-understood frameworks determine what architects feel they can and should do about inequality.

BLACK MOUNTAIN COLLEGE: WORK PROGRAM & STUDIES BUILDING, 1939-41
While the figure of the "citizen architect" has come into vogue in recent years, physical work in needy communities has been a strategy for the production of young citizens since the early Twentieth Century.[9] As the Great Depression

receded in the late 1930s and a World War loomed, many educators searched for a pedagogy that could produce individuals capable of dealing with domestic and international crises.[10] Against this backdrop, Black Mountain College's founders revolted against elitist and hierarchical structures in typical higher education. Founded by John Andrew Rice, Theodore Dreier and other faculty from Rollins College, Black Mountain began its existence on the former YMCA Blue Ridge campus outside of Asheville, North Carolina. Its founders organized the college on an ethic of community life where students and faculty shared responsibility for the day-to-day maintenance of the college and the direction of education.[11]

Inspired by the writings of John Dewey, the college followed the pragmatist philosophy of learning-by-doing.[12] Within Black Mountain's curriculum, the fine arts, mathematics, literature and other branches of education held equal weight. The school developed a reputation for experimentation and avant-garde thinking, which allowed it to attract many well-known figures to the campus. Josef and Anni Albers, exiles from Germany's Bauhaus, ran the arts program and visitors including Buckminster Fuller (who built his first dome on the campus) and Walter Gropius contributed intellectual guidance to students and faculty.[13]

When the owners of the original campus evicted the college in 1939, Black Mountain acquired a piece of property across the valley. Though the school first hired Walter Gropius and Marcel Breuer's office to design a building for classes, individual student studies and lectures, the building proved too expensive for a school that relied almost entirely on donations.[14] Instead, they entrusted A. Lawrence Kocher, one of their newest faculty members, with the job of designing a simple building that students and faculty could build themselves.[15] Kocher had been the editor for the *Architectural Review* from 1928-1938 and a prominent architect in New York before leaving his practice to teach basic design at Black Mountain.[16]

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Figure 1:"Black Mountain College Work Camp Publication," 1941. Black Mountain College Museum + Arts Center Collection, D.H. Ramsey Library, UNC Asheville.

Within six months, Kocher had drawn up plans, and the entire college community was digging drainage ditches, pouring a foundation and beginning construction on the building's base-piers. The design reflected a local adaptation of CIAM modernism, elevated off the ground on piers made of marble scraps quarried a few miles from the campus.[17] Later, students and faculty noted that the completion of the substantial building was a high point in the college's creative life and a time of community spirit and good will.[18] Discussed in national publications,

the success of this effort lent the school credibility as an avant-garde institution. Soon, designing and physically building structures for the campus' needs became an official part of Black Mountain's architectural curriculum.[19]

Publicity material that documented students during the construction process, argued for the connection between physical labor and citizenship.

> "The very grass roots of democracy are the young people who have prepared themselves for their future citizenship; who have the training, physique, and convictions vital to a democracy . . . young men and women must have the opportunity to confront for themselves some of the main tasks that exist for the individual in our day: improvement in practical skills, responsiveness to community obligations, expansion of ideas, and building of physical, intellectual, and spiritual stamina."
>
> ––Black Mountain College Work Camp Publication[20]

This document reflects the political tensions of the 1940s, a time when the communitarian aspects of the school brought suspicion of communist leanings. Faculty leaders felt compelled to issue firm statements on the school's commitment to democratic principles, especially if they were to maintain the private donations necessary to keep the school running.[21] Beyond this propagandistic purpose, faculty and students genuinely felt physical work and learning-by-doing was central to an education in cooperation, self-sufficiency and creative problem solving. At the intersection of physical labor, teamwork and progressive ideas of holistic education, Black Mountain's leadership argued that design/build could create individuals who embodied and could act out American values.

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA'S NEIGHBORHOOD RENEWAL CORP: MELON COMMUNITY COMMONS, 1959-61

Today, the "community" portion of community design/build is often taken for granted. Community as a positively framed group of people and preferable scale of local intervention is an idea that was not well defined until the 1960s. One of the first design education initiatives to make use of this concept was the University of Pennsylvania's Neighborhood Renewal Corps, an initiative of landscape architect Karl Linn with the support of young architects from Louis Kahn's office and future Pennsylvania Governor Milton Shapp. The program emerged in response an urban condition characterized by joblessness, white-flight, racial tensions and degraded housing and infrastructure.[22] These conditions prompted Philadelphia's city council to begin plans for urban renewal starting with its struggling downtown. Partisan bickering and mismanagement of funds limited the effort's success.[23] In the wake of this disappointment with little prospect of future revenue, top down urban renewal seemed impossible for the city's most degraded neighborhoods. Mayor Richardson Dilworth and his planning team made a strategic decision to concentrate investment in the most "conservable" areas, while arresting further loss in "blighted" neighborhoods through code enforcements and selective demolitions.[24] As part of this strategy, the Philadelphia City Council enacted a policy in 1959 to allow the Department of Licenses and Inspections to acquire tax-delinquent properties through sheriff's sales and then turn those properties over to community groups for recreational or other uses.[25]

Until this time the curriculum of the School of Fine Arts at the University of Pennsylvania, which housed the architecture and landscape architecture

programs, was isolated from the city and its problems.[26] As in much of the United States, the fifties and early sixties saw a growing realization amongst students and citizens that racial tensions and inequality must be addressed.[27] An area called West Poplar experienced these problems acutely. Like much of North Philadelphia, West Poplar held a population of mostly low-income African American families. It also contained one of the highest level of degraded buildings and abandoned property in the city.[28] As tensions between African American youths and the police became more frequent, the Department of Licenses and Inspections chose the neighborhood as the test site for its new land aquisition program.[29]

The Melon Neighborhood Commons, also called the Melon Block Project and the Melon Play Park, became the pilot project. It combined code compliance, vocational training and recreation. As such, it seemed an ideal first step to address the neighborhood's most pressing issues. For years, social workers at the Friends Neighborhood Guild, a Quaker charity organization, had been eyeing a site across from an elementary school and just south of a large housing project for a community playground. The Guild joined forces with the West Poplar Civic League, a newly formed community organization dedicated to bettering the neighborhood through self-help efforts.[30] They also accepted the help of Linn and his students to design the grounds and play equipment.[31]

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Figure 2: Students of the University of Pennsylvania Landscape Architecture Department erect a merry-go-round at the Melon Park site as local children look on, 1961. Center of Environmental Design Archive, U.C. Berkeley, Karl Linn Collection.

Linn and his students designed a park that included rolling topography, an amphitheater, sand pit and inventively designed play structures. All the materials for the project were salvaged from abandoned houses in the surrounding area (Figure 2). The bulk of heavy work, clearing and leveling the site and the initial construction, was done in a ten-week period in the summer of 1961 by high school and college-age workers from the Friends Work Camp and later finished by Penn students. Neighborhood boys and some older residents helped, working with skilled laborers hired to complete difficult tasks.[32]

Linn understood the group's work as one of place making in a neighborhood in which place and community were systematically being destroyed through decay and urban renewal. He wrote,

> "Our aim was to create a park that has a sense of a place to which people like to come, an inherent magnetism. Our efforts were directed to the establishment of basic space rhythms and not play equipment."[33]

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He saw the salvaging of materials as a way for a neighborhood to embrace its past. The design could thus heal psychological wounds by building the residents' ability to imagine their surroundings in different and positive ways.

Neighborhood social workers hoped that the park would provide a platform for the development of local leadership, institutional procedures and positive relations with city agencies. He called it "that tangible and concrete something" that could replace residents' despair and self-preservation with a collective commitment to neighborhood improvement.[34] In this way, the material construction would lead to self-help efforts in the future. Linn carried these ideas with him when he moved to Washington D.C. to participate in the President's Committee on Juvenile Deliniquency, and later, as a consultant for the Model Cities program. Through figures like Linn, self-help at the neighborhood scale and the use of "community" to describe a group of the deserving poor became accepted ideas replicated in Federal anti-poverty programs.[35]

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY WITH ASIAN NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN: DESIGN DEMONSTRATION PROJECT, 1971-73

In 1965, tensions between grass roots and top down planning characterized the University of California, Berkeley and the surrounding Bay Area. Students on campus supported the Free Speech movement and followed Civil Rights struggles in the American South. As the chair of the Architecture Department at the time, Claude Stoller noted, "Students were wondering, what's does this [their architectural education] have to do with that [the political struggles throughout the country]."[36] To respond to students' social interests, Stoller recalled his own education at Black Mountain College and suggested that the school set up an off-campus studio to assist poor and minority residents in their battles against top down planning processes. While the architecture department's administrators refused support for the project, the University Extension gave Stoller funding to set up a studio in an empty building in San Francisco's Haight-Ashbury neighborhood.[37] He titled the course the Wurster West Workshop (after Wurster Hall, the architecture school's home on campus). Students, guided by Stoller and other professional architects, began offering design services to communities in need. This began the direct involvement of Berkeley's architecture students with the personal and political struggles of communities in the surrounding area.

Six years later, the school had Community Design Centers in several neighborhoods in San Francisco and the East Bay. A group of Asian American students advocated for a separate CDC for San Francisco's Chinatown. The students were concerned about the poor living condition of many immigrant families and with the forced closing of International Hotels and boarding houses where many Asian workers lived.[38] In addition to proposing alternative development plans to the city's urban renewal schemes, the students concentrated on the interiors of apartments in Chinatown. They designed custom furniture with built-in sleeping areas and storage to make the most of the tight spaces that families could afford.[39] (Figure 3) As the 70s wore on and the funding and enthusiasm for CDCs at Berkeley waned, the Chinatown CDC separated from the University and established itself as a nonprofit under the name Asian Neighborhood Design.[40] Today, instead of direct political battles or student design/build projects, AND provides specialized architectural services aimed at needy clients and vocational training for at-risk youth.[41] These changes helped the practice survive as the activist fervor of the 1960s and 70s dwindled.

ENDNOTES

1. William J. Carpenter, *Design Build Studio* (Decatur, Georgia: Lightroom Studio, 2010); Steve Badanes, makes similar claims, see Susan Piedmont-Palladino, *Devil's Workshop: 25 Years of Jersey Devil Architecture*, 1st ed (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1997). Jason Pearson also argues for a consistent and longstanding commitment in the profession to "an

Figure 3: Design Demonstration Project Executed by Asian Neighborhood Design in relation to course work at University of California, Berkeley. Source: *Inside Chinatown: A booklet on the Design Demonstration Project* by Mary C. Comerio, 1982.
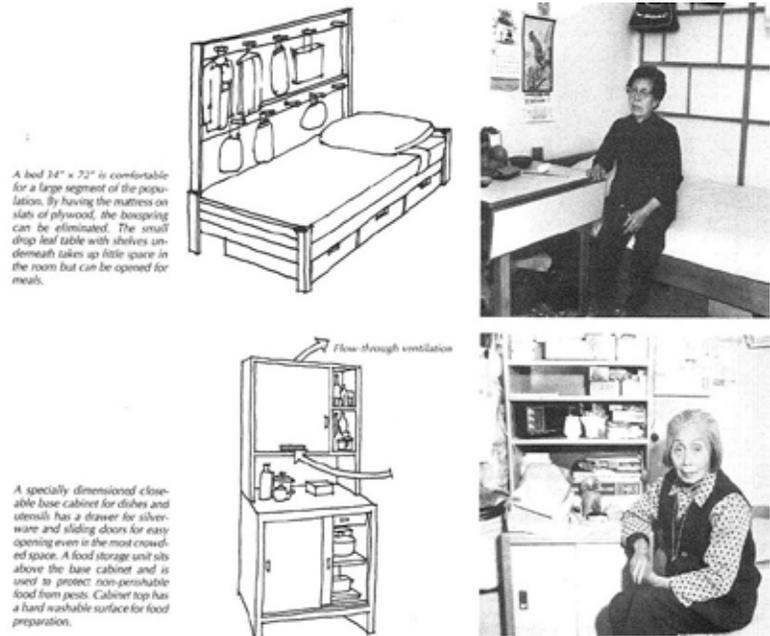
ethical responsibility to uphold the public good" that educators can choose to reinvest in. Jason Pearson, *University-Community Design Partnerships: Innovations in Practice*, 1st ed (Washington, DC: National Endowment for the Arts with the support of the Richard H. Driehaus Foundation, 2002).

2. Richard W Hayes, "Design/Build: Learning by Constructing," in *Architecture School: Three Centuries of Educating Architects in North America*, ed. Joan Ockman and Rebecca Williamson (Cambridge, Mass. : Washington, D.C: MIT Press ; Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture, 2012), 286–290; Thomas Angotti, Cheryl S. Doble, and Paula Horrigan, eds., *Service-Learning in Design and Planning: Educating at the Boundaries* (Oakland, CA: New Village Press, 2011).

3. No historical account of the practice is longer than 5 published pages with the exception of Richard W. Hayes' book on the Yale Building Project.

4. Carpenter, *Design Build Studio*, 20.

5. Vincent B. Canizaro, "Design-Build in Architectural Education: Motivations, Practices, Challenges, Successes and Failures," *International Journal of Architectural Research* 6, no. 3 (2012): 21.

6. Schuman does not necessarily see this shift as positive and critiques programs for their lack of ambition and prioritization of student learning over community needs. Anthony W. Schuman, "Community Engagement: Architecture's Evolving Social Vocation," in *Architecture School: Three Centuries of Educating Architects in North America*, ed. Joan Ockman and Rebecca Williamson (Cambridge, Mass. : Washington, D.C: MIT Press ; Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture, 2012), 257.

7. Paul Rabinow, *French Modern: Norms and Forms of the Social Environment* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1989).

8. For a parallel analysis focused on social welfare in America, see: M. B Katz, *In the Shadow of the Poorhouse: A Social History of Welfare in America* (New York: Basic Books, 1986).

9. For example, John Ruskin led Oxford students in a road building exercise to help the people of a poor area near the college in the Spring of 1874. New York Times, "Ruskin: The Experience of Canon Rawsley and Two 'Atlantic' Contributors," *New York Times* (March 31, 1900); Hardwicke Rawnsley, "Contributors' Club," *The Atlantic Monthly* 0085, no. 510 (April 1900): 568–576.

10. Michael B. Katz, *Education in American History: Readings on the Social Issues* (New York: Praeger, 1973).

11. Vincent Katz and Martin Brody, *Black Mountain College: Experiment in Art* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003).

12. John Dewey was an extremely influential figure during the progressive era and his numerous books on the relationship between ethics, education and creativity inspired the curriculum of Black Mountain, see: John Dewey, *Art as Experience* (New York: Minton, Balch, 1934). Dewey also sat on the college's advisory board.

13. Mary Emma Harris, *Arts at Black Mountain College* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002).

14. A. Lawrence Kocher, "Letter from A. Lawrence Kocher to Theodore Dreier," July 9, 1937, Kocher/Dreier Correspondence, Private Collection Theodore and Barbara Dreier; Subseries 6: Theodore Dreier Black Mountain College Correspondence, 1933-49, and Undated, Western Regional Archives.

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In the context of the San Francisco Bay area in the late 1960s and early 70s, community design meant a commitment to pluralism and grass roots advocacy. Unlike the other design/build programs examined in this paper, Berkeley's CDCs did not operate in an unregulated, abandoned or peripheral area. Instead, they worked in the thick of battles over control of urban space and identity politics aimed at maintaining access to the city.[42] The politics of minority students motivated a strategy that bent itself to the demands of community groups, keeping design aesthetics as a low priority. As such, students and faculty connected design skills to ethics through the idea of the architect as advocate and as translator who can make the visions and needs of an underrepresented community concrete and legitimate.

AUBURN UNIVERSITY'S RURAL STUDIO: HOUSES AT MASON'S BEND, 1993-2001/20K HOUSES, 2003-PRESENT

In the Spring semester of 1992 D.K. Ruth and Samuel "Sambo" Mockbee found themselves in a rented house near Auburn's campus discussing the possibility of a venue for Mockbee's interest in crossing professional and cultural boundaries.[43] At the end of a decade of post-modern experimentation and a rough period for Mockbee's private architectural practice, he accepted a position at Auburn to make ends meet. While there, conflicts with faculty and distance from home made the idea of having a studio in a rural location appealing. A decade earlier, Mockbee began playing with the idea of building for the poor in a proposed project for a Catholic charity organization near his home in Canton, Mississippi. While the project never found funding, it planted the seed of an idea.[44]

The site chosen for the Rural Studio was made ready by almost a century of decline and neglect. Once a prime cotton growing region, the Alabama Black Belt boasted some of the wealthiest families in the state. Hale County contained rich soil and a railroad reaching from Birmingham to New Orleans. This economy rested on a system of economic and racial inequality that divided blacks and whites. Over the Twentieth Century as cotton, logging, brick making and many other local industries disappeared, the area lost population and became one of the poorest in the nation.[45]

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15. A. Lawrence Kocher, "Letter from A. Lawrence Kocher to Theodore Dreier," July 9, 1940, Kocher/Dreier Correspondence, Private Collection Theodore and Barbara Dreier; Subseries 6: Theodore Dreier Black Mountain College Correspondence, 1933-49, and Undated, Western Regional Archives.

16. Lawrence Wodehouse, "Kocher at Black Mountain," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 41, no. 4 (December 1, 1982): 329, 10.2307/989804.

17. Kocher had already been engaged in design/build work while a visiting professor at Carnegie Institute of Technology. There, he taught a class on designing "a house for a typical family." A. Lawrence Kocher, "Letter from A. Lawrence Kocher to Josef Albers," May 18, 1940, Kocher/Dreier Correspondence, Private Collection Theodore and Barbara Dreier; Subseries 6: Theodore Dreier Black Mountain College Correspondence, 1933-49, and Undated, Western Regional Archives.

18. Theodore Dreier, "Letter from Theodore Dreier to A. Lawrence Kocher," January 26, 1946, Kocher/Dreier Correspondence, Private Collection Theodore and Barbara Dreier; Subseries 6: Theodore Dreier Black Mountain College Correspondence, 1933-49, and Undated, Western Regional Archives. A. Lawrence Kocher, "Letter From Giselle (former BMC Student) to Ted Dreier," June 7, 1942, Dreier Admin. and Subject Files Folder 103, Work Program 1935, 1940-1946, Western Regional Archives.

19. John Evarts, "Democracy in Action," *California Arts and Architecture* LVIII (July 1941).

20. This publication advertised a summer session. Black Mountain College students as well as students from outside would attend, and the curriculum for the work camp paralleled that of the "work program," which all students participated in during the regular school year. The photos are from these regular sessions and feature BMC students. "Black Mountain College Work Camp Publication," 1941, Black Mountain College Museum + Arts Center Collection, D.H. Ramsey Library, UNC Asheville.

21. Martin B. Duberman, *Black Mountain; an Exploration in Community,* 1st ed. (New York: Dutton, 1972).

22. Michael B. Katz and Thomas J. Sugrue, eds., *W.E.B. DuBois, Race, and the City: The Philadelphia Negro and Its Legacy* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998); Matthew Countryman, *Up South: Civil Rights and Black Power in Philadelphia,* Politics and Culture in Modern America (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006); Guian A. McKee, *The Problem of Jobs: Liberalism, Race, and Deindustrialization in Philadelphia,* Historical Studies of Urban America (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008); Lisa Levenstein, *A Movement without Marches: African American Women and the Politics of Poverty in Postwar Philadelphia,* The John Hope Franklin Series in African American History and Culture (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009).

23. Gregory L. Heller, *Ed Bacon: Planning, Politics, and the Building of modern Philadelphia,* 1st ed, The City in the Twenty-First Century (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 89–116.

24. Nancy Kleniewski, *Neighborhood Decline and Downtown Renewal: The Politics of Redevelopment in Philadelphia, 1952-1962* ([Philadelphia: s.n.], 1981), 76-80; McKee, *The Problem of Jobs,* 35.

25. Karl Linn, "'White Solutions' Won't Work in Black Neighborhoods," *Landscape Architecture* (October 1968): 23-25.

26. Ian L. McHarg, *A Quest for Life: An Autobiography* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1996).

Into this context, Mockbee envisioned architecture students learning to construct buildings while experiencing the reality of rural poverty. While difficult to recruit students in the first years, the studio soon gained momentum through Mockbee's charisma and the impact of the experience on students.[46] The first ten years of the Rural Studio under Mockbee concentrated on the issue of degraded rural housing, approaching it through the construction of one-of-a-kind custom homes for poor individuals or families.[47] Clients were identified with the help of a local social services agency after Mockbee requested he be taken to the location of "real" poverty. In this way, he selected Mason's Bend, Alabama (called "the Bend" by locals) and the three families living within it as the beneficiaries of Auburn students' design and labor.[48] (Figure 4)

These expressive projects demonstrated an aesthetic that combined salvaged materials, innovative construction techniques and regional elements like overhanging roofs. Both the designs and act of living in a different cultural and economic landscape was meant to take students outside themselves.[49] Mockbee's view of architectural education used an affective technique to attempt to cross cultural boundaries through the evocation of a common human experience. For this reason, he forced his students to interact with the individuals for whom they built in a personal and sustained way. This technique occupied Mockbee in all areas of his life and work. He wrote,

> "But what is necessary is a willingness to seek solutions to poverty in its own context, not outside it. What is required is the replacement of abstract opinions with knowledge based on real human contact and personal realization applied to the work and place."[50]

After Mockbee's passing in late 2001, Andrew Freear took over as director of the studio. He began focusing more on large community projects requiring several year commitments from thesis students.[51] By organizing technically sophisticated buildings in a more traditionally modernist vocabulary, the studio is now able to take on ambitious structures and complex community-oriented programs. In addition, the program now focuses on sustained projects that can span years and different students' involvement. These include an iterative $20,000 house project aimed to take advantage of a rural loan program (Figure 5) and the FARM initiative, which considers local economic and environmental sustainability.[52]

While Mockbee's art and teaching tried to disrupt students' professional and personal identities, Freear's studio holds more firmly to professional boundaries, concentrating on growing students' expertise and solidifying their position

Figure 5: Outreach Students at the Rural Studio hurry to finish a 20K House before their deadline. Author's Photo, May 2010.

27. See *American Babylon* for an excellent analysis of the University's complicated relationship to race and social justice during this period. Robert O. Self, *American Babylon: Race and the Struggle for Postwar Oakland*, Politics and Society in Twentieth-Century America (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 2003).

28. Zollie Stringer, "Memo to: Francis Bosworth and Elfriede Friese Regarding Community Work Activities: June 8, 1959 to May 13, 1960," May 16, 1960, Friends Neighborhood Guild Records, URB 32, Temple Urban Archive; Special Collections Research Center, Temple University Libraries.

29. Clara Lightfoot, "Letter to Barnet Lieberman, Commissioner, Department of Licenses and Inspection Regarding Melon Block Pilot Project on Neighborhood Use of Existing Vacant Lots," October 19, 1960, Friends Neighborhood Guild Records, URB 32, Temple Urban Archive; Special Collections Research Center, Temple University Libraries.

30. Stringer, "Memo to: Francis Bosworth and Elfriede Friese Regarding Community Work Activities: June 8, 1959 to May 13, 1960."

31. Zollie Stringer, "Friends Neighborhood Guild - Community Work Meeting of the West Poplar Civic League - Hancock School 7:45 Pm," January 11, 1961, Friends Neighborhood Guild Records, URB 32, Temple Urban Archive; Special Collections Research Center, Temple University Libraries.

32. The Work Camp is an idea that gained momentum in the 1940s. The original camps were run by Quaker pacifists who proposed a character building civic vocation for young Quakers who wanted to avoid prosecution for their refusal to participate in the draft. *Work Camps for America* – a non-profit organization that supported the practice – was championed by important national figures like Eleanor Roosevelt.

33. Karl Linn, "'The Melon Neighborhood Park: A Self Help Pilot Project Planned by a Design Corp of the Students of the Department of Landscape Architecture, School of Fine Arts of the University of Pennsylvania under the Guidance of Professor Karl Linn and Sponsored by The West Poplar Civic League' [Speech given at the Opening of the Melon Community Common]," August 15, 1961, Friends Neighborhood Guild Records, URB 32, Temple Urban Archive; Special Collections Research Center, Temple University Libraries.

34. Zollie Stringer, "Memo to: Francis Bosworth Regarding: Agency Learnings in Operation Poplar, June 8, 1959-May 31, 1961," July 20, 1961, Friends Neighborhood Guild Records, URB 32, Temple Urban Archive; Special Collections Research Center, Temple University Libraries In this document Stringer wrote of the Melon Block Project's "Two-fold Objectives": to contribute materially to the neighborhood and to build local leadership who could take responsibility for future self-help efforts.

35. Alyosha Goldstein provides an excellent analysis of the use and limitations of these ideas. Alyosha Goldstein, *Poverty in Common: The Politics of Community Action during the American Century* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012).

36. Claude Stoller, Interview on Black Mountain College and Founding of University of California Community Design Centers, interview by Anna Goodman, Digital Recording, February 11, 2013.

37. Ibid.

38. Asian Neighborhood Design, *Asian Neighborhood Design: The First 25 Years: New Directions for Social Changes* (San Francisco, Calif.: Asian Neighborhood Design, 1998).

39. Mary C. Comerio, "Inside Chinatown's Tiny Apartments [San Francisco]," *AIA Journal* 72, no. o.4 (1983): 68–71.

as designers of good buildings. According to Freear, this development responds both to experience in Hale County and the necessity of an economic and pedagogical environment in which student learning must be balanced with real economic contributions to the region.[53] As the studio shifts away from the empathetic approach of Mockbee towards a more straightforward modernist commitment to a technical solution to the problem of mass housing for the poor, it encapsulates a tension present in many community design/build efforts. Can the architect's drive to contribute materially to an area eclipse the mandate for advocacy and inclusion?

LEGACIES AND LESSONS

The legacy of the programs described here depends heavily on the long and productive careers of those who participated in them. Decades after their design/build experiences at Black Mountain, Claude Stoller and Robert Bliss founded community design programs at the University of California, Berkeley and University of Utah (respectively). Karl Linn went on to serve on War on Poverty sub-committees in Washington D.C. and as a consultant for the Model Cities program, helping cities across the nation set up community design centers in needy neighborhoods.[54] Members of Asian Neighborhood Design still fight for minority communities and fair housing in California, and the impact of the Rural Studio's first students is just now beginning to be felt.[55]

Beyond the legacies individuals carry over generations, the ideas and values produced in specific design/build programs are woven into the fabric of architecture culture. These help determine how architects understand their professional and ethical potential. While any given program may practice several of the theories mentioned in the introduction – for example, working under the assumption that the education simultaneously produces citizen architects and advocates for an underrepresented community – the naturalness of these ideas and their appropriateness for both educational and social goals must be continuously reexamined. With historical perspective, we can begin to understand how architects can have very little impact locally but a great deal of impact on conversations around the built environment and the poor; Or conversely, how architects can make significant material contributions at the local level, but have little effect on social and economic structures that ensure the continuation of unequal conditions.

The inefficiency of students' involvement in physical construction demands institutional support that often wanes when political and economic conditions

change. Programs that endure tend to be those flexible in terms of both the site and scale of action. Other programs with long legacies begin within universities but become non-profits to avoid the restrictions of institutional requirements and academic schedules. These often let go of the physical construction component of their work in favor of advocacy and development roles. Despite its status as a usually temporary part of curricula, design/build holds a significant ideological place in American architects' vision of themselves and their social responsibilities. It provides a tool of action during times of political and economic crisis. It allows architects to work in divested landscapes while demonstrating their relevancy in terms of civic obligations. We must continue to question the premises of community design/build education. Citizenship, community, advocacy and empathy are ideas that can hide larger social dynamics while glorifying individuals' choice to "do good." Exception from reality and individualism are the opposite of these programs' intended outcomes, and for this reason, programs must be continually reexamined in light of local, national and historic contexts.

40. Mary Comerio, Interview about Elmherst Community Design Center, interview by Anna Goodman and Skylar Bisom-Rapp, June 19, 2012

41. Asian Neighborhood Design, "AND - Home," *Asian Neighborhood Design Website*, accessed December 28, 2013, http://www.andnet.org/.

42. Manuel Castells, *The City and the Grassroots: A Cross-Cultural Theory of Urban Social Movements* (University of California Press, 1985); Paul Erling Groth, *Living Downtown: The History of Residential Hotels in the United States* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994); Paul Erling Groth, *Nonpeople: A Case Study of Public Architects and Impaired Social Vision*, CEDR-WP 01-86 ([Berkeley, Calif: University of California, Berkeley, Center for Environmental Design Research, 1986).

43. William "B.B." Archer, Interview on the Youth and Development of Samuel Mockbee, interview by Anna Goodman, Digital Recording, September 3, 2013.

44. Ibid.

45. Nancy Anderson and Foster Dickson, *Treasuring Alabama's Black Belt : Multidisciplinary Approaches to Teaching Place* (Montgomery, AL: Auburn University and Alabama Humanities Foundation, 2008), 23.

46. Jackie Mockbee, Interview on the Life, Art and Work of Samuel Mockbee (subject's husband), interview by Anna Goodman, Digital Recording, September 1, 2013.

47. Andrea Oppenheimer Dean and Auburn University, *Rural Studio: Samuel Mockbee and an Architecture of Decency* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2002).

48. Fletcher Cox, Interview on the Life, Art and Work of Samuel Mockbee, interview by Anna Goodman, Digital Recording, September 1, 2013.

49. Southern California Institute of Architecture, *Recording of Lecture: "Samuel Mockbee Scavenger Architect.,"* 2 vols., 1996, <http://sma.sciarc. edu/video/samuel-mockbee-scavenger-architect/>.

50. Samuel Mockbee, "The Role of the Citizen Architect," in *Good Deeds, Good Design: Community Service Through Architecture*, ed. Bryan Bell (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2004), 151–156.

51. Rusty Smith, Interview with Rusty Smith, Auburn University Professor and Associate Director of the Rural Studio, on the Organization, Funding and Objectives of the Auburn Rural Studio, interview by Anna Goodman, Digital Recording, September 23, 2013.

52. John Marusich, Interview on the Curriculum of the Auburn Rural Studio and the construction and Maintenance of the Akron Boys and Girls Club II, interview by Anna Goodman, Digital Recording, September 9, 2013.

53. Andrew Freear, Interview on the Organization, Funding and Objectives of the Auburn Rural Studio, interview by Anna Goodman, Digital Recording, September 22, 2013.

54. Fredrick Gutheim, "Neighborhood Commons, Inc." (The Washington Center for Metropolitan Studies, November 20, 1962), Karl Linn Collection,Box 14; Folder D-3-1 Washington D.C. Operation, Environmental Design Archive, University of California, Berkeley.

55. For example, former Rural Studio student Jay Sanders now runs Design-build Adventure, a "camp" program in the Austin, Texas area (http://www. designbuildadventure.com/camps/); outreach students Marie and Keith Zawistowski have used their experience to teach Professional Practice, Building Analysis, Building Assemblies, and a Third Year Architecture Studio Virginia Tech <http://archdesign.vt.edu/faculty/zawistowski-keith>, and Rural Studio alumni Jack Forinash, Maria Sykes, and Rand Pinson founded the Epicenter, a non-profit that provides housing and business resources and promotes the arts in rural Utah, <http://ruralandproud.org/>.