Architects' People

The Case of Frank Lloyd Wright

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Summary

This article is a preliminary attempt to investigate architects' images of human body, personality and society. In recent years architects and architectural education have sought to bring knowledge of human behavior closer to the center of the design process. To do this, they have relied heavily on the assumptions and research of social scientists. But the images of human beings derived from the social sciences are themselves open to question. Oddly, no one has thought to examine the images of people and social life implicit in the appreciable body of written and graphic work of our most influential architects. Adapting Alfred Schutz's critique of the model person or *homunculus* implied in social theory, Frank Lloyd Wright's articles for *Architectural Record* between 1908 and 1952 are closely examined to discover the hidden actors implied.

Résumé

Cet article se propose d'étudier les représentations que les architectes se donnent du corps humain, de la personnalité psychologique et de la société dans son ensemble. Ces dernières années, les architectes et les études d'architecture se sont efforcés de placer l'homme et son comportement au cœur même du processus créatif. Pour ce faire, ils se sont appuyés sur les recherches et les acquisitions des chercheurs en sciences sociales. Mais il faut également mettre en cause la représentation que celles-ci se font de l'être humain. Aussi étrange que cela puisse paraître, personne n'a encore eu l'idée d'étudier les représentations de l'usager et de la vie sociale sous-jacentes tant dans les écrits que dans les plans de la plupart des grands architectes. En adaptant la critique qu'Alfred Schutz fait de l'être humain-marionnette ou de l'*homunculus* sur lesquels s'appuient les sciences sociales, ce travail examine les articles que Frank Lloyd Wright a écrits de 1908 à 1952 pour la revue *Architectural Record* afin d'en découvrir les acteurs cachés.

1. The Issue

If it is true that each of us carries around an implicit theory of human personality or behavior based on continuing experiences, and which we use to gauge and evaluate people we first meet, it is probably no less true that architects, designers, and planners have built into this theory something about people in relation to places and spaces.

Harold Proshansky

A few years ago, following a lecture I had provocatively entitled "The Ecto-plasm of Buildings", I managed to catch the interest of an architect in the audience who felt he understood what I was getting at. Over the course of a long conversation he volunteered the following:

> O yes, I've dreamed I was a building, and I changed myself in the dream. I've also dreamed I was an element in the landscape.
> When I'm "looking around" in [the design for] a two-storey space, my consciousness is everywhere. When it's a one-storey space, I'm looking from about eye level.
> When I'm doing urban type work, I tend to draw Gordon Cullen people. I hate Jacoby people!

Imagine! Through the bubbling activity of dream life actually becoming buildings, parts of sites, etc., and changing oneself! Prospective buildings were ani-mated through him and their structures experienced by becoming them. One might wonder on behalf of *whom* his self was used in this experiencing and in response to *what* the self/building was changed? More talk with him provided answers. The dreaming was a design activity in an architectonic sense. Anthropomorphizing the building through himself was a way of establishing a dialogue between the emergent structure and his own evolving ideas as a designer.

It became clearer how some architects can seriously say, following Louis Kahn, things like "the building *wants* to be that tall". If you *are* the building, *it* can have volition. If your consciousness permeates a two-storey space and, as designed, it doesn't "make sense", it can "want" to be a different shape or volume and push itself out or contract until "it" is comfortable. The clue to the working of the architect's waking eye in this dreaming eye is that the eye floats, disembodied and assembles information for the designer and the designed. In the case of this architect, when he does "people" his designs, he prefers a particular style of archi-tecturally rendered people who will inhabit the designed results.

1.1. The Hidden Actor in Architecture

Working with architectural designers and students, I have noticed a seeing-linked ability I've called "imaginative self-projection" (Ellis, June, 1974) which seems to get architects visually in touch with what the human experience of a pro-posed design might be. An observation of Robert Maxwell's has been especially suggestive:

> We look at plans and we imagine doors swinging, drawers being pulled, corridors full of racing feet, people falling down unexpected steps or jamming on landings. We compare the drawing with similar drawings or with actual buildings in our memory store and we say, with considerable confidence, it wouldn't work, the circulations would cross, the corridor is too narrow, the room is claustrophobic, and wc's are too far away, the waiting space is intimi-dating, and so on.
> In other words, we attribute to the drawings or models operational qualities based on our own experience, and assess the performance which we would expect, imagining the building built and us in it. (Perin, 1970, 116)

Over and over again in design sessions or studio "crits" designs are referred to as if they were occupied. The traditional architectural program encourages this tendency through articulation of the prospective design's occupants and their activities: a family of five; "low cost housing"; a day care center; a factory for the production of electronic equipment; etc. For some experienced architects such a

program will prod their visual imagination beyond the mere square footages or equipment specified. In greatest measure, however, the "occupants" which architects project into their designs and plans are empty forms, and design education itself has only recently begun to address in any immediate detail the *content* of human activity. (Juhasz & Zeisel, 1981)

One can easily understand the necessary abstractness of actors and action in the frequent instances where the users of proposed buildings are in large measure anonymous, e.g., a public bureaucracy. What has come to interest me, however, are the *features of the implicit actor who lurks in the designer's imagination.* What is this model actor like who falls down steps, who jams drawers, who experiences claustrophobia, etc. Alfred Schutz's critical formulation — applied to social science theory — is remarkably applicable to these questions.

1.2. The Architect's Homunculus

Schutz (1962) contended that it is the peculiar failing of the scientist of society of providing no "here" — no living locus — around which the meaningful social life he or she attempts to understand can be spread. Even the participant observer in the field setting, he contended, only temporarily drops the "scientific attitude" in order to make close experiential contact with the group being studied. Presumably, this temporary adoption of a position in the field would give the participant some advantages in understanding the subjective meaning to actors of their observed social behavior. But, ultimately, the scientific attitude requires not only understanding, but the actual "construction of some model of the social world and the actors in it". To make sense of observed behavior, the scientist invents an actor with features related to the phenomenon under investigation (e.g., status occupancy, family life, power, etc.). He supplies the invented actor with a "fictitious consciousness". Schutz imagines this invented actor as a kind of puppet or "homunculus" and, in a critique of the social sciences, contends,

... these models of actors are not human beings living within their biographical situation in the social world of everyday life. Strictly speaking, they do not have any biography or any history, and the situation into which they are placed is not a situation defined by them but by their creator, the social scientist. He has created these puppets or homunculi to manipulate them for his purpose. A merely specious conscious is imputed to them... which is constructed in such a way that its presupposed stock of knowledge at hand... would make actions originating from its subjectively understandable, provided that these actions were performed by real actors within the social world. But the puppet and his artificial consciousness is not subjected to the ontological conditions of human beings. The homunculus was not born, he does not grow up, and he will not die; he has no hopes and no fears; he does not know anxiety as the chief motive of all his deeds. He is not free in the sense that his acting could transgress the limits of his creator, the social scientist, has predetermined. He cannot, therefore, have other conflicts of interests and motives than those the social scientist has imputed to him. He cannot err, if to err is not his typical destiny. He cannot choose, except among the alternatives the social scientist has put before him... (Schutz, 1962, 41).

What is interesting about Schutz's observations is his examination of a way of thinking by which students of society "model" real phenomena in order to understand them. Architects, I propose, because they focus on buildings, have a distinctive set of tendencies in their modeling of users. These differ distinctively from *Schutz's characterization of the social scientist.*

It has been my informal observation over the years that architects characteris-

tically assume meaning and potential action to reside in things. They do not usually make a clear connection between human interchange and the resultant deposit of meaning in "mere" things. The architect's *homunculus* is usually featureless and emerges first as disembodied actions interlarded with a design's details. Actions float free. As in Maxwell's comment, there are "doors swinging, drawers being pulled, corridors full of racing feet". There are "circulations" which cross. Unlike the social scientist's invented actor, consciousness does not appear to be a common feature of architects' *homunculi*. Indeed, in moving through designs with some architects one gets the impression that an indistinctly motivated lump of somatic stuff — born in and taking shape in bubble diagrams — is being conducted, via arrows, along paths and loci of "circulation", "living", "eating", etc. This little puppet, though animated by the designer, tends to be passive and unobtrusive of the design's flow.

It is not extreme to say that, for many designers, architecture *creates* the *homunculus*. The emergent plan generates the action of the somatic lump, and, as the design takes on added features so does the puppet. But the plan is the puppeteer.

This same inclination can be found in the writings of architects, when they discuss the relationship between architecture and people.

In human dwelling places, complex *inner* stimuli derive from the design of rooms and articles in them with which we surround ourselves...

It is clearly the design of a room and its furniture which call for certain habitual movements and placements of the body. The taking and holding of a posture, the going into any muscular action, in turn establish... kinesthetic pattern.

The... kinesthetic pattern established, inside to body, is... in intimate correspondence with the layout and design pattern outside. Architecture, in fact, is just such a pattern, laid down about us to guide continuously the movement and straining of our eyes, necks, arms, and legs. (Neutra, 1954, 151)

In this extreme conception, even human kinesthetic makeup derives from physical arrangements. Presumably, the joints and structure of the model being permit the way it can move, but architectural plan, fixturing and layout determine its internalized tendencies and the fact of its movement.

Finally, this architecturalization of human beings has been deepened and extended in the recently popular notion of "defensible space". Here, human consciousness and intersubjectivity are tangential or subject to the strategic arrangement of spaces which can prevent criminal acts, catalyze sentiments of community, etc. (Newman, 1972)

2. F. L. Wright's Writings

These observations set me on a course of reading to discover what literate architects, with descernible influence on American practitioners, have had to say about human body, personality, group life and society in their writings (this in full cognizance of the fact that most reading by architects has probably been generation-bound and largely secondary interpretations of the original). With these guidelines, the writings of Frank Lloyd Wright proved the most immediately fascinating to peruse. Wright wrote over a long period and, more specifically, attempted *to articulate a coherent statement of his philosophy*. This took the form of seventeen articles commissioned by *Architectural Record* which appeared in that journal between 1908

and 1952. These were re-published in a single volume (Wright, 1974). I have chosen them as a basis for the content analysis which follows.

2.1. Wright's World

Entering Frank Lloyd Wright's written world is to encounter a mystic, poetic and political humanscape. In a Whitmanesque celebration of modern American Democracy, human nature, flowers, trees, social order, materials and machines gather, under the imaginative guidance of the "creative artist", into a surging "organic" architecture which, according to Wright, not only reflects modern life but will save it.

> All Man has above the brute, worth having, is his because of Imagination. Imagination made the Gods – all of them he knows – it is the Divine in him and differentiates him from a mere reasoning animal into a God himself. A creative being is a God. There will never be too many Gods.
> Reason and Will have been exalted by Philosophy and Science. Let us now do homage to Imagination...
> Imagination is so intimately related to sentient perception – we cannot separate the two. Nor need do so.
> Let us call Creative-Imagination the Man-light in Mankind to distinguish it from intellectual brilliance. It is strongest in the creative-artist. A sentient quality. To a degree all developed individuals have this quality, and to the extent that it takes concrete form in the human life, it makes the fabrication live as a reflection of that Life any true Man loves as such – Spirit materialized. (Wright, 145)

Wright's people take shape, only by indirection, against the backdrop of wood, stone, steel and glass wrought by force of the new democracy into a "foil for life". What is this "life"? What is the human nature best expressed and animated by it?

2.1.1. Human Nature and Purpose

Like Marx, Wright viewed human nature as historically mutable. Conditions set by the new democratic society allow the emergence in life and built form of long-buried human potential.

> Materials everywhere are most valuable for what they are – in themselves – no one wants to change their nature or try to make them like something else.
> Men likewise – for the same reason: a reason everywhere working in everything. So this new world is no longer a matter of seeming but of *being*[1].
> Where then are we?... [In] the first Democracy of *being* not seeming.
> The highest form of Aristocracy be it said the world has ever seen is this Democracy, for it is based upon the qualities that make the man a man. (Wright, 149)

"Men likewise..." Wright's people seldom appear to us except as mediated through a material or vegetal equation. The emergence of man, material, nature and civilization are always portrayed as an organic whole; as aspects of each other. Occasionally, humans possess autonomous features. Certain persistent qualities in human nature are freed in "this new world... of *being*".

> Human feeling loves the vigor of spontaneity, freshness, and the charm of the unexpected. In other words, it loves life and dreads death. (Wright, 135)

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1. This emphasis and all subsequent emphases in original.

Also, through the arts and creative artists (especially architects) we are now in a position to realize our love of life in our poetic nature.

> Any of these Arts called "Fine" are Poetic by nature. And to be poetic, truly, does not mean to escape from life but *does* mean *life raised to intense significance and higher power.*
> Poetry, therefore, is the great potential need of human kind.
> We hunger for Poetry naturally as we do for sunlight, fresh air and fruits, if we are normal human beings. (Wright, 225)

The purpose of our nature — our imagination, our love of life, our natural hunger for the poetic, etc. — is, God-like, to realize life through manifestation of "the spirit": a goal common to all nature.

> The quality of *life* in man-made "things" is as it is in trees and plants and animals, and the secret of character in them which is again "style" is the same. It is a materialization of spirit. (Wright, 133)

From this historically conditioned and exalted nature, the goal of life and living emerges.

> Earth-dwellers that we are, we are become now sentient to the truth that living on Earth is a materialization of Spirit instead of trying to make our dwelling here a spiritualization of matter. (Wright, 151)

The key to Wright's people is understanding that the artist is the clearest distillation of the best human qualities. Creative imagination is the most developed in him. He is the true conduit through which spirit is materialized. Achievement of the core purpose of our dwelling on earth is his calling. This is important to keep in mind when we try to envision Wright's homunculus occupying built things.

2.1.2. Social Order

Wright is a polemical theorist of social order. He is a celebrant of democracy in the United States ("Usonian Democracy"), and a severe critic of slavish invocations of antiquity, in architecture and society. They are enemies of creative imagination and the new life.

American Democracy is liberation of the spirit. Its unique structure opens dramatic new possibilities for individuality, expression and architecture. It is the true historic setting for the emergence of human potential. The old is death.

> I do not believe we will ever again have the uniformity of type which has characterized the so-called great "styles". Conditions have changed; our ideal is Democracy, the highest possible expression of the individual as a unit not inconsistent with a harmonious whole. The average of human intelligence rises steadily, and as the unit grows more and more to be trusted we will have an architecture with richer variety in unity than has ever arisen before; but the forms must be born out of our changed conditions, they must be *true* forms, otherwise the best that tradition has to offer is only an inglorious masquerade, devoid of vital significance or true spiritual value... (Wright, 56)

But Wright takes an odd turn. Individuality in a harmonious whole is a delicate point. Indeed, it is the crucial issue in any socio-political vindication of democracy in a mass society. But the element — the working dynamic in this democracy — is, for Wright, the very fact of standardization and its symbol, the machine.

> Standardization as a principle is at work in all things with greater activity than ever before.

It is the most basic element in civilization. To a degree it is civilization iself.
Standardization should have the same place in the fabric we are weaving which we call civilization — as it has in that more simple fabrication of the carpet. (Wright, 135)
The machine is the normal tool of our civilization, give it work that it can do well — nothing is of greater importance. (Wright, 55)

Given the romantic centrality of poetry, imagination, the hunger for spontaneity and freshness which vivify creative human nature, one would assume the levelling and cheapening tendencies of standardization to be a peril. Indeed, Wright warns vigorously of this prospect, but creative-imagination freed by the new democracy renders standardization a positive, and *organic* element in the work of the architect!

Standardization can be murderer or beneficient factor as the life in the thing standardized is kept by imagination or destroyed by the lack of it...
The *"life"* in the thing is that quality of it or in it which makes it perfectly *natural* — of course that means organic. And that simply means true to what made it, as it was made, and for what it was made. That would be the *body* of the "thing". (Wright, 136)

2.1.3. Social Order in Architecture

Wright is effusive and certain about the implications of this social world for the array, structure and function of the new architecture. Despite his broad social analysis, however, we know only by the *fiat* of poetic juxtaposition that their connections exist. The how and why remain unexplicated. Usonian Democracy stretches and shapes plans and forms into mutually consonant shapes; into organic architecture. But the profoundly influential *patterning* of life is so distantly implied as to be indistinguishable from the architecture itself. Certainly, democracy, standardization and the machine are, in his rolling logic, something like causal, but buildings appear, in his vision, to be the active agents.

Shimmering, irridescent cages of steel and copper and glass in which the principle of standardization becomes exquisite in all variety.
Homes? Growing from their site in native materials, no more "deciduous" than the native rock ledges of the hills, or the fir trees rooted in the ground, all taking on the character of the individual in perpetual bewildering variety.
The City? Gone to the surrounding country. (Wright, 149)

The American Middle West, "Cradle of Democracy", gave birth to Wright's organic architecture. But, the historic origins of this architecture do not hint at the specific social processes served, although its entire purpose is to serve them.

Gradually, over a fifty-year period, ... it planted and established fertile forms and new appropriate methods for the natural (machine) use of steel, glass, plastics (like concrete) and provided more ample freedom in shelter for the free new life of these United States than any "style" had ever provided or even promised. Organic-architecture thus came of America — a new freedom for a mixed people living a new freedom under a democratic form of life... Organic-architecture was definitely a new sense of shelter for *humane* life. (Wright, 233)

This broad conception linking an emergent society and architecture shrouds any formative dynamic we might seek. "Fertile forms" and "appropriate methods" are "planted" creating "a new freedom for a mixed people". A new architecture results: "Shelter for humane life". One need not be critical of the historical adequacy of a confident architect. The point here, in relation to our quest, is that we do not find our collective *homunculi* in Wright's history.

Interestingly, organic architecture does somehow reshape buildings to fit a mixed democratic people. We are left to guess at the daily imperatives of their lives to imagine the necessary re-design of their shelter.

> Even the walls played a new role or disappeared. Basements and attics disappeared altogether. A new sense of space in appropriate human scale pervaded not only the structure but the life itself lived in it was broadened, made more free because of sympathetic freedom of plan and structure. The interior space to be lived in became *the reality of the whole per-formance.* (Wright, 234)

The image here is enticing but not suggestive: a broad and free life facilitated by plan and structure "sympathetic" to that life. In our search for the social life housed in this new society, we must accumulate features of the "house" itself.

> Buildings perform their highest function in relation to human life within and the natural efflorescence without; and to develop and maintain the harmony of a true chord between them making of the building in this sense a sure foil for life, broad simple surfaces and highly conventionalized forms are inevitable. (Wright, 61)

Something in the new life makes broad simple surfaces and highly conventionalized forms inevitable. What this is, is not clear. As far as we can tell from the text, it is the inexorable march of standardization in some complex interplay with the social dynamics of democracy.

2.1.4. Buildings and People

Only when we ask about the dwelling do we find instructions; vague with respect to the interactive nature of occupants, but definite in its directives to architects. One overarching principle is consistent with Wright's conception of American democracy:

> There should be as many kinds (styles) of houses as there are kinds (styles) of people and as many differentiations as there are different individuals. A man who has individuality (and what man lacks it?) has a right to its expression in his own environment. (Wright, 55)

However, a more specific programmatic directive, not discernibly related to any other point in the text, tells us:

> The most truly satisfactory apartments are those in which most or all of the furniture is built in as a part of the original scheme considering the whole as an integral unit. (Wright, 55)

The sole remaining *dictum* — and, perhaps, Wright's most influential — articulates the dwelling plan with great concreteness.

> A building should contain as few rooms as will meet the conditions which give it rise and under which we live, and which the architect should strive continually to simplify; then the ensemble or rooms should be carefully considered that comfort and utility go hand in hand with beauty. Beside the entry and necessary work rooms there need be but three rooms on the ground floor of any house, living room, dining room and kitchen, with the possible addition of a "social office"; really there need be but one room, the living room with requirements otherwise sequestered from it or screened within it by means of architectural contrivances. (Wright, 54)

A house for Usonian people. Let us now try to give them the features, needs and impulses implied in what Wright has led us to understand. What are architects to do with this understanding? How should they blend it into their work?

3. Wright's Homunculus

Attempting to discover Wright's people in these writings, we can retrace our steps, examine the terms he uses to describe them and relate the distilled image to what we can make of organic architecture. Listed below, in the order they were encountered, are these descriptive terms.

gods	spiritual	lovable
poetic	individual	true
joyous	pure	like trees
genuine	gracious	like flowers
natural	dignified	
free	sincere	
integral		

Repeatedly, these are the words Wright uses to describe people *and* "the best" architecture. Buildings and people at their best are constantly equated: "A building has a presence as has a person...", "Buildings like people must first be sincere, must be true and then withal as gracious and lovable as may be.". People and buildings are also equated with trees, flowers, and, on occasion, elements in a graced landscape. Human character and the character of their dwellings are organic and spiritual facts whose natural *raison d'être* is the materialization of "spirit". All is participation in God's work here on earth. Indeed, we are gods.

The core bearer of all these qualities, summarized in "Creative-Imagination", is the artist (architect). They are "strongest in the creative-artist". Our material fabrications achieve their spirituality through this medium, but "[to] a degree all developed individuals have this quality". Our development of these qualities grows from the social soil of democracy. With few exceptions[2], Wright's individuals are classless, "average American", freed, in the new democracy, of the need for radically differentiated dwellings. More open to each other, to direct, unmediated contact. But, we can't discover why.

Embedded in a democracy of trustworthy individualism, and having shed the classical "Grandomania" of the aristocratic, monarchic and oligarchic past, this new being is in need of human-sized buildings.

In the matter of scale, the human being is the logical norm because buildings are to be humanly inhabited and should be related to human proportions not only comfortably but agreeably. Human beings should look as well in the buildings or of it as flowers do.
People should belong to the building just as it should belong to them. (Wright, 154)

Otherwise, this being is ageless, sex-less, race-less, group-less and has no personality save the poetic grandeur, dignity, etc., potentially shared by all in the new society, or features discovered by the architect in the great variety of individuals this society permits.

2. Wright makes very few social distinctions throughout the text. The most significant are identified in the following:

"The average American man or woman who wants to build a house wants something different — 'something different' is what they say they want, and most of them want it in a hurry... The average man of business in America has truer intuition, and so a more nearly just estimate of artistic values, when he has a chance to judge between good and bad, than a man of similar class in any other country. But he is prone to take that 'something different' anyhow; if not good, then bad. He is rapidly outgrowing the provincialism that needs a foreign-made label upon." (125)

Indeed Wright's *homunculus* is, in part, the society; is, in part, the *living* building; is, in part, an incomplete approximation of the architect. All is woven into our fabrications. The *homunculus* never truly walks or sits in them, but stands majestically with them mutually fused in individual dignity, spiritual and organic beauty. It is a heroic pose.

As though a wave of creative-impulse had seized stone and, mutable as the sea, it had heaved and swelled and broken into lines of surge, peaks of foam — human-symbols, images of organic life caught and held in its cosmic urge — a splendid song! (Wright, 175)

4. Conclusion

What I am attempting in analyses such as this is not to make social scientists of architects but to find the implicit social "science" in their work; beginning with their writings. The reader would do well to compare, for example, Neutra's entirely psycho-physiological conception of humans and society with Wright's broadly historical and poetic vision. What is more, imagine a large number of our most significant practitioners' work subject to a similar analysis[3].

For nearly two decades architects have worried about the weak connection between buildings they have wrought and the uses to which the buildings are put. The concern was significant enough to justify the addition of various social scientists to the curricular mix of many schools of architecture. Disaffection was immediate — especially when social studies threatened the artistic aspects of practice[4] — and has grown in recent years. But, surely, before and after the flirtation with things social, *some* conception of people and social life has inhabited the imaginations of designers. We ought to know what these conceptions were and are.

Architects set the stage for human doings. Assuming they design a small proportion of our physical world, they certainly set the popular templates copied by others. Uncovering the features of their implicit actors tells us something about the purposes — in effect — of their settings, beyond the bland "program". The form of their hidden social images must somehow contribute to the form their stages take. Surely, there is *some* life vision buried in the recent return to form and "Post-Modernism".

3. See Russell Ellis and Dana Cuff, Eds., *Architects' People*, forthcoming.

4. Howard Boughey discerned a serious conflict, among a national sample of architects, between a self-professed commitment to the use of social science knowledge in their work and a protectiveness toward the prerogatives of their "art".

Since it is in those areas of decision making and choice where there is the least codified or empirical knowledge in which the architect has the greatest degree of freedom to dominate and set general goals for the client, we might speculate that the lack of such knowledge has its advantages for the architect. This might help explain the past failure of the profession to develop such a knowledge base, which might threaten the "mysterious omnipotence" on which he can base his dominance over clients. It might also auger for future resistance against acceptance of scientific findings relevant to his main task.

Such speculation is reinforced by the emergence of the "art defense" in a number of the interviews. When faced with the prospect of scientific testing of the behavioral results of their designs, a fourth of the architects interviewed retreated from their former positions as self-acknowledged manipulators of stage-settings for social occasions and defined themselves instead as primarily artists, whose works could not essentially be judged by their practical results. As artists, these architects claimed the freedom and autonomy to follow essentially non-rational and personally esoteric rules in the creation of human environments. (1969, 168)

Even if the adaptability of human beings renders elitest and pretend socio-logies among architects[5] threatless, we need to know how or if what we are slowly learning about people in relation to the built environment is competitive with these visions, impulses, habits of thought, dreams and wishes which architects hold about people.

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5. The influential Philip Johnson steadfastly refuses to acknowledge the importance of human or social images to his work:

"But you see, you use 'human' as if that was a value of any kind. I don't mind inhuman... 'Human' to me is not a word that we can use in architecture, simply because everything is human. I don't want to talk about humanity and monumentalism as a dichotomy, because I think it's entirely meaningless to what I'm trying to do." (Cook and Klotz, 51)

When Johnson does allow himself such images, they tend to be snide characters. See for example, the description of his Welfare Island project. (Cook and Klotz, 42)