

ECHOES OF UTOPIA:
THE PRIMARY PRESERVATION DILEMMA OF BRUTALIST-PLANNED CAMPUSES

by
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THESIS ABSTRACT

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This thesis analyzes the Brutalist Campus and its context within the collegiate environment of the 1950s-1970s. It first defines the significance of the nation-wide phenomenon by examining its social and physical characteristics. A primary case study, SUNY Old Westbury, is then analyzed under a historic preservation perspective to determine the primary preservation dilemma of the campuses: incorporation or modification of elements within the dense, concrete-heavy environment that does not break the fluidity or movement of the holistic, interconnected nature of Brutalist design. The primary preservation dilemma is broken down into its related issues and uses both the primary and supportive case studies as evidence. From the analysis, a set of processes is proposed for management of the Brutalist campus.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

““If people are smart enough to build this...this concrete erection, you know, I mean they got to be smart enough to finally learn how to live in it”
– *Getting Straight* (1970)

Upheaval and social justice defined the mid-1950s to 1970s era of the United States when a host of social and political traditions were challenged. The desire to build a better society drove utopian images in the minds of designers and architects, who responded to the failures of glass-box Modernism and other architectural movements. Although the achievability of utopia was either questioned or considered an impossibility by that time, as seen in Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932) and George Orwell's *1984* (1949), the vision of a creating a better world through architecture persisted. Architects and planners sought ways to express both social ideals and aesthetics by imparting their dreams into the built environment, where they could be realized and used by others. Stemming from Alison and Peter Smithson, Team X, and Le Corbusier, a new vision for the collegiate environment was imagined. It served as the perfect way to establish a complete

work of design, where living, educational, and administrative systems worked together in landscapes and buildings to form a multifaceted organism.

The resulting complex concrete manifestations of holistic design lie across the United States, their significance forgotten or dismissed. They are Brutalist planned-campuses, which thrived under the vast growth, idealistic educational regimes, and desire to give educational opportunities to the underprivileged. A major theme of the Brutalist campus was the community college, but the nature of the community college's status among higher education, however, has limited the knowledge of their architectural visions. In addition, they have fallen from popularity as the campuses hit the fifty-year mark, what the National Register defines as historic. The rough, concrete surfaces beg to be heard again and not forgotten as new elements and buildings transform the campus. Their history must not be eclipsed, for they are the character-defining features of the community colleges that make them a vital chapter in the history of the United States.

Problem Statement

Colleges planned with Brutalist principles, aesthetic, and layout were socially idealistic visions of architects and planners during the 1950s to 1970s, but today they often receive the label "dystopic." There has been no comprehensive study on the potential preservation issues in managing the plan as these campuses evolve over time. Many, such as SUNY Old Westbury's campus, have been overlooked and will soon be significantly altered or demolished. This thesis highlights the potential issues that Brutalist campuses are facing and presents solutions to help preserve

their historic integrity.

Brutalism and the college campus became intrinsically linked during the 1950s to 1970s due to the growth of the collegiate environment, and in particular the community college. The community college was an emerging concept due to two main factors. One, the four-year college could not sustain the increase in student population, so the two-year community college began as an institution of study until spots became available during the third or fourth years of the four-year college. Two, they offered higher education options for lower-income individuals. Both these factors, in addition to the experimental education ideas of the era, defined a movement against the “Ivory Tower,” a sense of elite academicism, and towards the “Outlook Tower,” a communal academicism. Planned as brand new colleges, Brutalism was a natural fit with its social implications, concepts, and the relative cheapness of concrete.

The Brutalist campus typically encompasses an interconnected system of concrete plazas, walkways, and bridges between similarly concrete, or brick, buildings with articulated forms. Often utopian in vision, the architects generally strived for creating areas of congregation and interaction among dramatic visuals. Following the change in architectural theory towards Postmodernism, Brutalist architecture became subject to a change in attitude supported by failures like the housing complex Robin Hood Gardens in London.¹ It quickly became labeled as “dystopic,” and its association with dystopic movies, such as *A Clockwork Orange*, *Fahrenheit 451*, and *Logan’s Run*, furthered this label. Prevailing attitudes started the

¹Sofia Balters, “AD Classics: Robin Hood Gardens/Alison and Peter Smithson,” *archdaily* (August 18, 2011), <http://www.archdaily.com/150629/ad-classics-robin-hood-gardens-alison-and-peter-smithson/>.

bias against Brutalist architecture and its resulting lack of preservation.

Brutalist campuses are currently reaching the point where they are increasingly becoming the target of alteration, demolition, or expansion due to their age, the desire for new construction to meet demands, and previously mentioned biases. Amplifying the possibilities that can result in destruction of integrity are multiple preservation issues with this specific type of campus plan. The holistic nature of the Brutalist plan, which is perhaps one of the most important elements, incorporates the ideals of Brutalism, which include human movement and interaction, creating scenic experiences through that movement, and organizing or articulating functions. Removal or alteration of elements that connect the buildings can reduce or render the significance null. Potential changes lead to the issue of incorporating new elements within the plan, which is a problem that many universities face, no matter the style, but the extensive use of concrete within a dense environment make Brutalist design especially difficult. Brutalism's struggle with flexibility, unlike the previous movement of Modernism with its wide-open spaces, is yet another impact upon planning and reuse decisions. This study examines and proposes steps to address these issues, in addition to explaining the significance of the design and plan of Brutalist campuses.

Application of the Word “Brutalism” and “Brutalist Campus”

The genre of Brutalism has grown to encompass a wide range of resources in America from its initial application of the movement in Britain, due to similarity in design and ideology. Resources that can be labeled as Brutalist range from

vernacular, simplistic designs, where heavy and unfinished concrete forms might be the only Brutalist factor, to the awe-inspiring designs of Paul Rudolph. The word Brutalism now defines a trend of architectural design and themes, rather than the then limited number of British architects who termed themselves Brutalist, starting in the 1950s. Figure 1 shows examples of the varying levels of Brutalist design. Since the Brutalist campus is a larger, more complete vision that aligns with both the ethics and aesthetics of the original movement, it ranks highly in the spectrum of Brutalist design. It falls short of the top of the spectrum because the majority of architects and planners would not have labeled themselves as “Brutalists” like the British founders would have done. An example is this thesis’s case study architect John M. Johansen, whose son noted, “Brutalism is not a word I ever heard my father use to describe his work.”² Despite this, he does classify his father’s work as Brutalist.

This thesis, therefore, uses the broader conceptual term rather than the narrow Anglo-centric definition. American architects of the time might not have considered themselves “Brutalists,” but much like Modernism, there was a wide spectrum of architects with varying ideas that are along the general philosophy of the movement. The correlation justifies the use of Brutalism, and the majority of architectural historians use it when defining the style of the subject buildings. Other descriptors for the Brutalist movement in America include “American Monumentalism,” or the generality “Late Modernism.” The debate on whether or not vernacular Brutalist buildings and structures should be labeled as Brutalist,

² Christen Johansen, “John M. Johansen’s Architecture of the 1960s – Brutalism and Beyond,” in *Clog: Brutalism*, ed. Kyle May et al. (Canada: Clog, June 2013), 67.

Brutalist Spectrum of Style

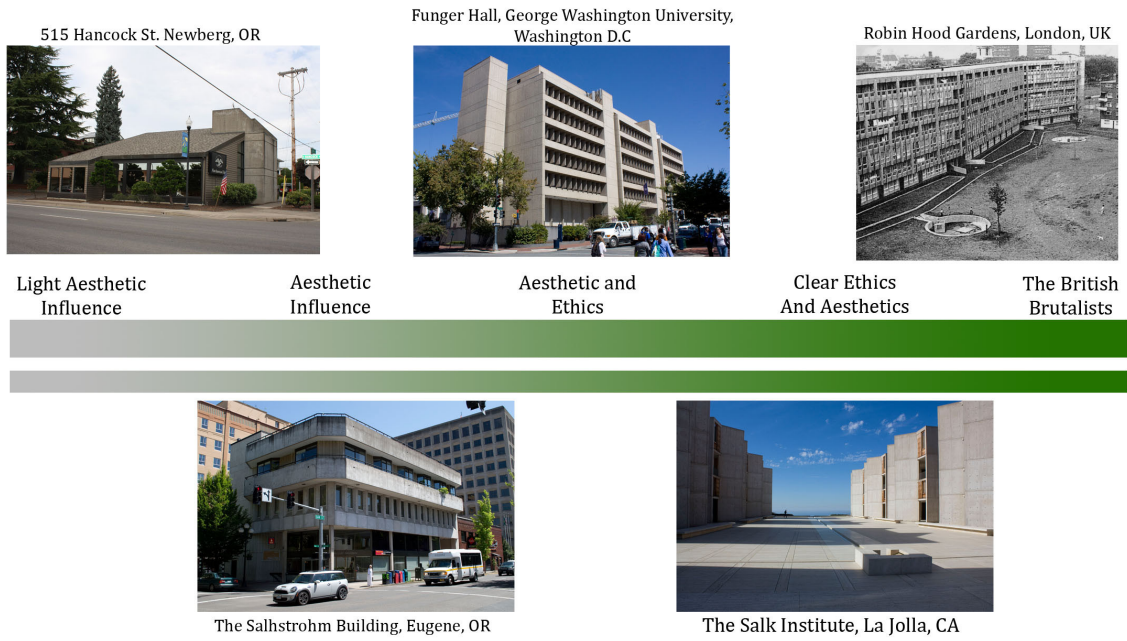


Figure 1 - The Brutalist spectrum of style

however, is not addressed in this thesis. This thesis only covers campuses that demonstrate both ethics and aesthetics of Brutalism as initially presented by architectural critic Reyner Banham.³

The term “Brutalist campus” is used throughout the thesis to describe campuses initially planned with Brutalist philosophy when they were conceived and built. The use of the term does not mean that the campuses currently have only Brutalist features and buildings, since most have developed new features and plans since their inception. Brutalist campus rather is based on the origins of the campus to simply the descriptor of the pertinent campuses. As a movement, the vast majority of Brutalist campuses are community and public colleges, but the term was not limited to exclude other higher education types, or holistic portions of universities, that follow the same characteristics and can benefit from the issues and processes addressed by this thesis.

The Definition of Brutalism and the Brutalist Campus

Reyner Banham, author of the *New Brutalism: Ethic or Aesthetic*, has been a major figure in defining and studying Brutalism as a Movement. He clarified the tangible stylistic elements of Brutalist architecture, and noted three main elements, “1. The building as a unified visual image, clear and memorable; 2. Clear exhibition of its structure; and 3. A high valuation of raw, untreated materials.”⁴ Using this simplified breakdown of Brutalism with a number of other sources by Banham and

³ Reyner Banham, *The New Brutalism: Ethic or Aesthetic* (New York: Reinhold Publishing Corporation, 1966), 127.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 127.

others, the movement can be used to clarify what is and what is not Brutalist design.

Brutalism is defined in Cyril M. Harris's *Dictionary of Architecture and Construction* as, "A style of modern architecture, primarily in the 1960s, emphasizing heavy, monumental forms and raw surfaces; it may show patterns of the rough wood framework used in casting the concrete (béton brut). Buildings in this style are often suggestive of massive sculptures."⁵ The style also exhibits ethics, as addressed by Banham, including truth in materials, a focus on expression of interior spaces and movement of people within both architecture and plan, and exposed mechanical systems furthering architectural truth [See Figure 3]. The architects referred to architectural truth as not hiding the materials' and mechanical systems' true form with false fronts. Its main period of influence began with the *Parallel of Art and Life* exhibit in 1953 until 1975, when Post-Modernism took over as the primary architectural influence.

The Brutalist campus can be further defined from this stylistic definition. In addition to the above emphases, it will often feature concrete plazas, raised walkways or skybridges, a ring road or a similar major circulation pattern, and separation of traffic from the pedestrian. These campuses were often designed with expansion in mind, and they have been heavily tied to community colleges, as well as experimental colleges or universities.

Conceptual Framework

This thesis utilized a working hypothesis to assess the plans of Brutalist

⁵ Cyril M. Harris, *Dictionary of Architecture and Construction* (McGraw-Hill Professional, 2005), 130.

campuses in light of competing architectural visions that may alter the historical significance. The working hypothesis was there is one primary preservation dilemma with the Brutalist campus, and the dilemma is made up of multiple components. Those components are individual points of the dilemma, but interrelated preservation concerns. By focusing on one primary dilemma and the issues involved, this thesis is able to examine the topic in depth. The primary preservation dilemma then allowed for direct evidence collection through the lens of one primary case study and multiple comparative case studies. Considering the lack of an intensive body of work on Brutalism and the Brutalist campus, however, exploratory research was conducted prior to viewing the lens of case studies to determine the significance of these cultural landscapes. For this thesis, significance is defined through the perspective of the National Register, the national standard for historical significance. It serves as a vessel to identify the importance of the Brutalist campus within the continuum of Brutalism and 20th Century America.

The primary case study focuses on architects John MacLean Johansen, Victor Christ-Janer, and Alexander Kouzmanoff's "Hilltown" college campus at SUNY Old Westbury [See Figure 2]. Slated for major alterations through demolition and reuse, the case study illustrates a Brutalist campus that is a relevant and ongoing case study to base this thesis around. Comparative case studies are employed not only to broaden the scope, but also to better understand the primary preservation dilemma, draw conclusions, and highlight poor to exemplary examples of Brutalist campus management. The comparative case studies include a range of campuses, such as Lane Community College, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, and Evergreen

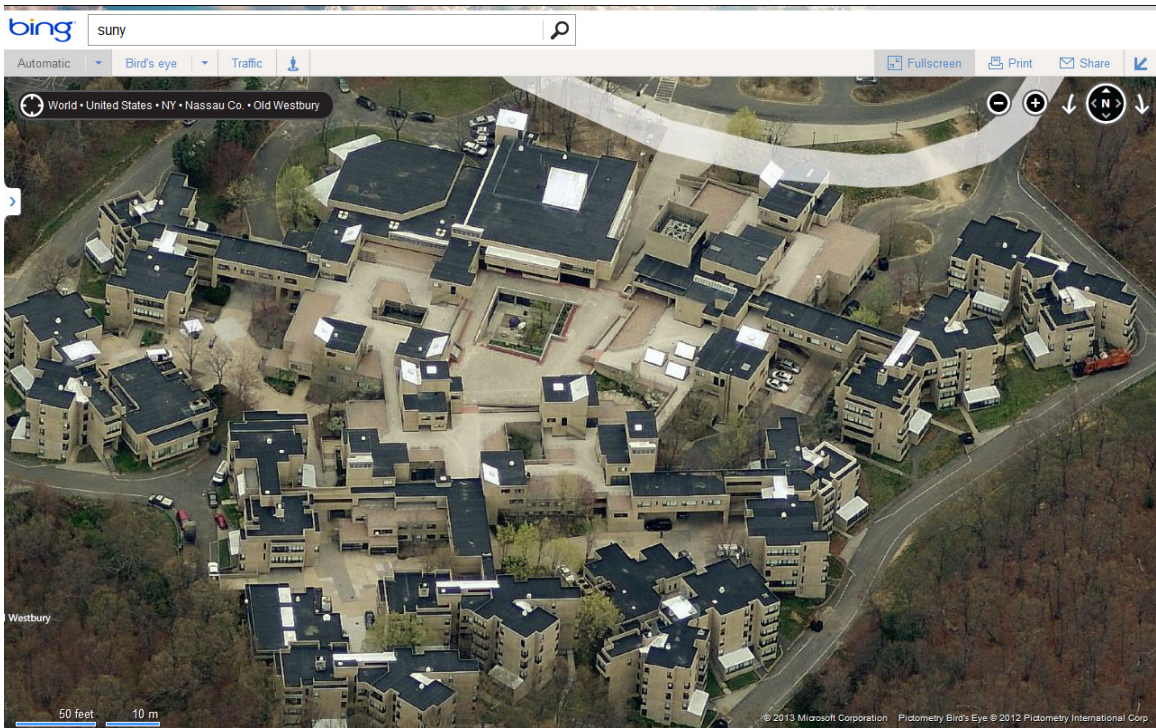


Figure 2 - SUNY Old Westbury aerial

State College. The primary case study, supported by the comparative studies, led to conclusions that assist in the proposal of processes for management. The processes can then be employed to help mitigate the effect of the campus's evolution over time with the campus plan and historic cultural landscape. With the knowledge of the campus as a continually functioning entity, the concepts of usability and adaptability are considered in the argument for preservation.

Research Design and Methodology

This thesis has three overall components. The first component illustrates the significance of the Brutalist campus. It is derived from researching primary and secondary resources to understand the nature of the Brutalist campus within the gamut of architectural history. The second component defines the primary preservation dilemma that emerges from the host of preservation issues. It then utilizes case studies as a lens to understand real-life applications of the primary preservation dilemma. Qualitative information is then derived from the case studies to support the assumption of the primary preservation dilemma. Utilizing the case studies, conclusions emerge on how to minimize the impact of change upon the historic Brutalist components and plan of the campus. The conclusions lead to the final component, a proposed set of processes to help with preservation of these resources. The following is a breakdown of the methodology by the three components of the thesis:

Component I

Research the significance of the Brutalist campus utilizing primary and secondary resources. Primary resources are a main contributing factor in understanding the significance, due to the abundance of written information available by period journals. Archival drawings by the architects assisted in visual portrayal of their ideas versus what was constructed, in essence providing a comparison and contrast of the ideal versus reality. Secondary resources, most of them recent due to increased interest in Brutalist architecture, provide a larger historical context. They are primarily books on architectural and American history, as well as articles from magazines, journals, et cetera. Combination of the information from all these resources resulted in a conclusion of what makes the Brutalist campus significant.

Component II

Component II utilizes previous research and case studies to understand the primary preservation dilemma of the Brutalist campus. Newspaper and online articles on endangered campuses and Brutalist architecture, as well as construction on campuses, highlight and confirm the proposed primary preservation dilemma this study explores. Films, such as *Fahrenheit 451*, were studied for their portrayals of Brutalist architecture in their dystopic, science-fiction settings because of their important role on the perception of Brutalist architecture. Viewpoints presented in media and written documents on the architecture were also examined for the perception of Brutalist architecture.

One primary case study and multiple comparative studies are employed to understand and delve into the primary preservation dilemma of the Brutalist campus. SUNY Old Westbury is the primary case study and the comparative studies include, but are not limited to, Lane Community College, Evergreen State College, and University of Massachusetts Dartmouth. The ways that the campuses are dealing with their Brutalist architecture and plan serves as tangible evidence of the primary preservation dilemma, which is present in both the primary case study and the comparative studies.

Prior to examining the primary preservation dilemma with John M. Johansen's SUNY Old Westbury, primary and secondary research was conducted to get an in depth understanding of its significance within the spectrum of Brutalist architecture and the Brutalist campus. This was conducted by examining the John M. Johansen Archives at Columbia University, reading books and articles written by Johansen, analyzing articles on his architecture, and reviewing sources that inspired his designs.

Following research on significance, research on existing conditions and preservation issues was conducted. On-site analysis via photographs, notes, and sketches were employed for SUNY Old Westbury to document the existing conditions and note character-defining features, landscape components, and plan components. Documents, such as the campus master plan, were inspected for details on conditions, upcoming projects, and proposed projects. Then, the primary preservation dilemma was analyzed with regard to the case study, from which conclusions were drawn.

Component III

To propose processes for management, working examples of preservation plans, guidelines, and other planning documents, preferably with a focus on holistic design plans or Modernist design, are utilized. These provide examples of ways to approach encouraging preservation and protection of historical significant portions of the universities. Preservation Bulletins are also addressed to make sure the design guidelines follow and conform to the standards set forth by the National Park Service, which has been tasked with administration of the National Register of Historic Places. Example campus policies and master plans provide examples to support the proposed processes and offer good and bad management approaches.

Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

Analyzing the primary preservation dilemma of the Brutalist-planned campus required examining a number of existing campuses that are of that typology. Considering the general lack of properly identified campus architecture within state databases, most of the data collection of Brutalist-planned campuses was through three sources:

1. Period architectural journal articles
2. Online campus construction or founding dates that fit within the era, combined with online aerial mapping, street views, hands-on examination, and online photographs to confirm Brutalist design.
3. Word of mouth sources, which can include current news articles, blogs,

Wikipedia, etc.

The most viable candidates for comparative studies were chosen to reinforce the primary case study, and in turn this overall study. For example, three initial and viable comparative studies that were identified were Lane Community College, Evergreen State College, and University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, but these increased to include other relevant examples with further data collection. The increase in secondary studies provided a larger contextual look at the variety of the primary preservation dilemma's components.

Data collection's primary limiting factor was location. The comparative studies are primarily from the Pacific Northwest, Southern California, and the Northeast. This limiting factor was the limited timeframe of this study in comparison to the nation-wide phenomenon of Brutalism. Therefore, it was too time-consuming to track down every Brutalist campus. The areas identified are the most easily accessible for this study and also contain many of the relevant examples. Examples not specifically utilized for comparative studies are listed as Brutalist campus resources in Appendix A.

Future Research

Due to the incredible range of Brutalist campuses throughout the United States, this thesis is the groundwork for research that can be greatly expanded upon with time. The Brutalist style shared some of the universal characteristics of Modernism, and it can be seen in all climates and locations in the United States.

Gathering further data on Brutalist campuses can not only further confirm the themes presented in this thesis, but also begin to offer statistics and graphical analysis that would be much more appropriate than the limited, but representative, campuses uncovered and analyzed in this thesis. Creating maps of campus distribution through Geographical Information Systems (GIS) might reveal patterns of development or dispersal of ideology across the United States. Due to the limited time frame of this thesis, concentration has been on the base argument rather than comprehensive data management. Charting the different design aspects seen in Brutalist plans and noting the relative commonness or rareness would also lead into greater insight into whether various features are character-defining because of its use at a single campus or because its relation to a larger trend.

Chapter Overview

The chapters presented in this thesis align with the three components outlined in the research design and methodology, starting with the Chapter II. Both Chapters II and III conduct analysis that builds up to Chapter IV, where the proposed processes for management present an approach to preservation.

Chapter II

This chapter addresses the significance of the Brutalist campus within history. The context of the collegiate environment of the 1950s-1970s is explained first. It then gives a brief background to Brutalism, to help the reader identify the start and cause of the movement, and then outlines the key ideological components

that composed the movement. The social context is also addressed, as it plays a major role in the arrival of Brutalism. Manifestos by Alison and Peter Smithson are then analyzed to present statements made by the Brutalists, in addition to identifying lasting philosophical impacts. Lastly, the two first parts are used to identify the characteristics of Brutalist campuses. Primary features of the campuses are presented within the chapter and help define the significance.

Chapter III

This chapter discusses the primary preservation dilemma that emerges from the host of preservation issues. It focuses on in depth analysis of the preservation dilemma and the resulting issues. Chapter III also introduces the SUNY Old Westbury case study, and discusses the background of the campus and identifies how it relates to the themes presented in Chapter II. Sources of inspiration for the design are then discussed, such as the *Architecture Without Architects* exhibition. The chapter continues by breaking down the components of the primary preservation dilemma and examining them with the SUNY Old Westbury case study. Comparative studies follow the discussion of each component and help in analysis of the issues.

Chapter IV

Concluding the main portion of the thesis, Chapter IV offers proposed processes for management for the Brutalist campuses. The proposed processes are addressed as steps the campus can take, and discussion about each process follows. At the end of the chapter is the conclusion for the thesis, and it briefly reflects on the

topics covered and why these are important not only for the campuses, but also for the field of historic preservation.

CHAPTER II

DEFINING SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BRUTALIST CAMPUS

The Brutalist campus' initial impact from its concrete massing disguises the deep philosophies underlying its design. Misinterpretation of these campuses as dystopian prisons leads to a primary issue of the Brutalist campus: understanding its true significance. Portrayals of Brutalism in science-fiction dystopias, such as *A Clockwork Orange* and *Fahrenheit 451*, support the obscuring bias that continues to present day. The truth behind the architecture and plans was based in social issues of the 1950s to 1970s, which strived towards betterment of society through a host of employed concepts. The first impressions of the geometrical forms can be aesthetically polarizing, but the significance of Brutalist campuses does not just lie in visual impact.

Exploring the framework of Brutalism is key in understanding the origins of values, aesthetics, and ideas that make up the elements commonly seen in the movement's design and its implementation in campuses. This chapter will present the key themes in the movement's history that are necessary for digesting the

Brutalist campus's values and significance, defined under the standards of the National Register. Placing the key concepts and themes presented by manifestos, articles, and analysis within their context serves to better understand the primary question: What is the significance of the Brutalist campus?

There are three main sections of significance within the greater pie of the Brutalist campus that will guide the layout of this chapter. They are 1. The collegiate environment during the 1950s-1970s; 2. Primary themes of Brutalism as a movement; and 3. Themes of the Brutalist campus.

The Collegiate Environment During the 1950s to 1970s

The Rise of the Community College

Inherent in the significance of the Brutalist-planned college is the importance of the community college during this phenomenon. The extensive creation and growth of community and public colleges in post-World War II America was the fuel that allowed for the utopian visions of Brutalist architects and planners. In addition, the new colleges targeted the same social groups that Brutalists were interested and involved with. Before exploring in depth the connections between community colleges, the public college, and Brutalism, the concept and impact of the community college needs to be explored.

Considered a “truly unique American educational effort,” the community college was designed as an easier way to enter into higher education.⁶ This new form

⁶ Edmund J. Gleazer Jr., “Growing Pains and Potentials of the Two-Year College,” *AIA Journal* (March 1970): 33.

of college was designed for social equality and growing upon the population that understood science and technology. With greater understanding, the country could develop more rapidly.⁷ Along with the increased demand of society on education to solve social problems, the community college essentially began in the early 20th Century. Both its beginnings and later explosive growth shared the same themes behind implementation.

It was not until post-World War II America that the phenomenon grew exponentially. From the year 1960 to 1970, public community colleges were established at a rate of 35 to 50 percent growth per year.⁸ In 1967, it was predicted that there would be 50 new community colleges a year for the next ten years by the American Association of Junior Colleges.⁹ The numbers highlight the demand for the concept, and Robert H. Finch, Secretary of the US Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, further supported this when he reported that the administration would introduce legislation that supported the growth of these new colleges.¹⁰

The community college was fueled in part, during this new period of growth, by the demand to increase education among the less privileged and lower-income population.¹¹ They sought to increase interaction between “students of different curricula (academic and trade-technical), different cultural background, and

⁷ Arthur M. Cohen and Florence B. Brawer, *The American Community College* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1989), 1.

⁸ Gleazer Jr., “Growing Pains and Potentials of the Two-Year College,” 34.

⁹ Elisabeth K. Thompson, “9 Community Colleges,” *Architectural Record* (November 1967): 155.

¹⁰ Gleazer Jr., “Growing Pains and Potentials of the Two-Year College,” 33.

¹¹ Thompson, “9 Community Colleges,” 156.

different ages.”¹² By 1970, a quarter of all black college students were enrolled in public two-year colleges in New York City, Chicago, and Los Angeles.¹³ Social responsibility also led to questioning the entire idea of an “Ivory Tower” type of university in the 1960s. Instead a move towards the idea of the “Outlook Tower” became a trend. Former dean of the school of Architecture at Columbia, Charles Colbert, presented this idea at the 1965 ACSA Southwestern Region conference at Tulane University, and it was subsequently published in the *Journal of Architectural Education*. Colbert describes the Outlook Tower as focused on the “overview of our collective potential and opportunities for personal growth” rather than the “inward looking narcissism” of the Ivory Tower.¹⁴

The experimental college was another idea that developed during the rapidly changing collegiate environment, and it would correlate with the use of Brutalist architecture to express the experimental values. Experimental colleges became a popular concept in the 1960s, following the influence of the counterculture movement. They found a strong backing with public colleges, despite the inevitable conflict of taxpayers against the state supporting the experimental rather than the tried and true. The conflict was amplified by the tendency of truly experimental colleges to have very limited enrollment, which was contradictory to the initial purpose of community colleges to be social havens of education for all.¹⁵

¹² Thompson, “9 Community Colleges,” 155.

¹³ Gleazer Jr., “Growing Pains and Potentials of the Two-Year College,” 34.

¹⁴ Charles Colbert, “Ivory Tower and Outlook Tower,” *Journal of Architectural Education*, Vol. 20, No. 3/4 (February – May, 1966): 33.

¹⁵ Alan Wolfe, “The Experimental College – Noble Contradiction,” *Change in Higher Education*, Vol. 2,

Connecting the Brutalist Style with the Collegiate Campus

Given the new, and sometimes experimental, nature of most of these emerging colleges, it was important that, as Professor of Architecture at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign A. Richard Williams states, “innovative and reformed educational programs that respond most directly to future needs of society should be developed in space that is equally innovative and experimental.”¹⁶ Since Brutalism was the cutting-edge in architecture, it made sense to use it to reflect the experimental nature of these campuses.

A strong, unified design was, and has been prior to the mid-20th Century, a concern for the collegiate environment. In the June 1965 article, “College Buildings Should be Part of Unified Campus Design,” author Jonathan Barnett states the reasoning behind this argument. He explains, “The college building as a distinctive building type is thus inseparable from this concept of the college as a campus. A campus building can never be an ordinary problem, because it is part of a complex situation fraught with emotional significance.”¹⁷ The importance of the article is in showing school of thought regarding eclectic versus unity at the time of the Brutalist Movement. It would be important in the ground up design and planning of new and

No. 2 (March-April 1970): p.26-32.

¹⁶ A. Richard Williams, “The Future University as a Metaphor,” *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, Vol. 4, No.4, Special Issue: The Environment and the Aesthetic Quality of Life (October 1970): 117.

¹⁷ Jonathan Barnett, “College Buildings Should Be Part of Unified Campus Design,” *Architectural Record* (June 1965): 144.

emerging community, and public, colleges.

Brutalist design also allowed for “sufficient volume, scale, and speed to permit the development of powerful overall campus forms.”¹⁸ Sometimes entitled an “instant campus,” these campuses were built to deal with the increased student enrollment of the 1950s to 1970s.¹⁹ Quick development, along with understanding of future enrollment demand, often contributed to designs with strong forms that could be replicated in future application. A holistic vision was much easier to create than in previous collegiate campuses, which developed over long spans of time with multiple stylistic trends.

Brutalism and the collegiate environment further were connected because Brutalism offered an architecture that was reasonably priced and able to be manufactured with standardized elements. Articles, such as “Planning Community College Resource Centers,” suggested using Brutalist or standardized design to combat rising construction costs.²⁰ The “systems building” was seen as a solution, and the reasonable cost of concrete made it applicable. Prefabricated elements can be seen throughout many Brutalist community colleges.²¹

Colbert’s Ivory Tower versus Outlook Tower is also connected to the Brutalist Movement, as he relates his argument to the Brutalist tenet of truth in materials. He says, “Perhaps ‘moral materialism’ or ‘material idealism’ are terms of architectural

¹⁸ Mildred F. Schmertz, “Campus Architecture,” *Architectural Record* (January 1975): 123.

¹⁹ UIC, “Instant Campus,” last modified 2008, <http://www.uic.edu/depts/oaa/walkingtour/1c.html>.

²⁰ Louise Giles, “Planning Community College Resource Centers,” *American Libraries* Volume 2, Number 1 (January 1971): 51-54.

²¹ Barnabas Caldar, “Heroic Precast,” *Clog: Brutalism* (June 2013): 46-47.

motivation not as contradictory as we thought.” He further connects the Outlook Tower with the movement through his proposal of increased interaction of student and teacher, as “Each must nurture the other.”²² The focus on interaction can be seen in Brutalist design, initially originating from architects Alison and Peter Smithson.

The aesthetic of the architecture played a role in Brutalist design becoming the preferred architectural style of the community college for another reason: the visual and spatial complexity that can be made with the geometric forms of Brutalism.²³ By creating complex spaces, the campuses could hope to make an architectural statement that attracted the eye [See Figure 3]. With the amount of new colleges built from the ground up, it was important to give an identity to each to set them apart from one another.

Themes of Brutalism

The Social Context

Coinciding with the expansive collegiate growth in America, Brutalism is a reaction to a specific series of events at a certain point in time, and it is vital to understand what culminated in the beginning of the movement. Birthed in Post-World War II Britain and its complex, political environment, Brutalism responded to generational angst, socialism, and architectural revivals. The political climate stimulated, through the actions of an older generation of architects, a young generation who established the footwork for the movement. It is from this young

²² Colbert, “Ivory Tower and Outlook Tower,” 34.

²³ “Visual Complexity and Spatial Variety in a College Building,” *Architectural Record* (January 1974): 122.

generation that the Brutalist Movement materialized, and, like its Modernist roots, it strove towards utopian ideals. The post-war context allowed for not only growth, but also inspired and meaningful design that reflected the period of origin.

One primary influence, which led to the generation of Brutalism as a new style, occurred in post-war Britain with a shifting interest in architecture among the older generation of architects. The interest correlated with the Labour Party, which took power in Britain in 1945 after running under the motto “Let Us Face the Future,” and on a platform to destroy the five “evil giants” of want, squalor, disease, ignorance, and unemployment.²⁴ From this political atmosphere they sought architectural inspiration from other Welfare-State countries, such as Sweden.²⁵

The new architectural direction of the older generation, which the Brutalists rebelled against, culminated in a revival of 19th-Century, brick-building techniques.²⁶ The buildings mainly had cottage and vernacular influences with pitched roofs and brick walls, among other details. An example of one such development is Alton East Housing (1953-1956).²⁷ The younger generation, however, saw the entire devolution to earlier forms as a betrayal to the principles of Modern Architecture. While the popularity of the Labour Party waned in the 1950s, its socialist accomplishments, which included acts like the New Towns Act of 1946, became the fuel of the

²⁴ The Labour Party, “History of the Labour Party,” Last accessed February 28, 2014, http://www.labour.org.uk/history_of_the_labour_party2.

²⁵ Banham, *The New Brutalism*, 11.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 12.

²⁷ Courtauld Institute of Art, “Alton East Estate,” Last accessed February 27, 2014, <http://www.artandarchitecture.org.uk/images/conway/e52491c4.html>.

Features of Brutalism
With Collegiate Examples



Exposed mechanical systems
(Evergreen State College)



Articulated surfaces
(Central Oregon Community College)



Unfinished/rough surface
(Cypress College)



Expression/articulation of spaces
(Portland Community College Sylvania)



Directing movement for vistas and interaction
(California State University Long Beach - Brotman Hall)



Unified Visual Image
(North Seattle Community College)

Figure 3 - Features of Brutalism

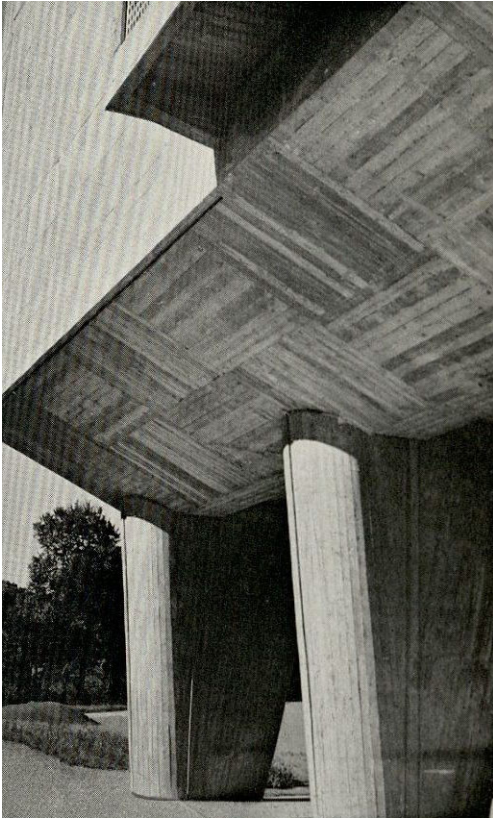


Figure 4 - Unité d'Habitation's brut aesthetic

Brutalist movement in Britain via state-led construction, when the movement began developing in the 1950s.²⁸ This governmental influence also occurred in America, and it is part of Brutalism's significance. Community colleges were examples of that period of American, state-led construction.

Because of the Brutalists' devaluation of their immediate precursors work, they looked to the purer forms of Le Corbusier, Mies van der Rohe, Philip Johnson, Alvar Aalto, and Ernesto Rogers. Especially important was

Le Corbusier's book *Towards an Architecture*,

which was still seen as the ultimate manual on the ideal architecture, despite some failed concepts. Le Corbusier not only contributed literature that inspired them, but also designed the single, most influential building on the material aesthetic of the movement: the Unité d'Habitation [See Figure 4]. The Brutalists use of materials, derived from Le Corbusier's ideas among others, was decidedly the most prominent theme of the movement.

Truth in Materials

In the January 1955 *Architectural Design* journal, architects Alison and Peter

²⁸ Kenneth Frampton, *Modern Architecture: A Critical History* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2007), 262.

Smithson published the first manifesto for Brutalism, or as they called it, the “New Brutalism.” The Smithsons would become the first architects to describe themselves, and their architecture, as Brutalist. They declared, “Our belief [is] that the New Brutalism is the only possible development *for this moment* from the Modern Movement.” Using Japanese architecture, Frank Lloyd Wright, and Le Corbusier as examples, they put a strong emphasis on form and materials in their manifesto, saying, “It is this reverence for materials – a realization of the affinity which can be established between building and man – which is at the root of the so-called New Brutalism.” They continued on to note the social connotations of their new style, declaring, “What *is* new about the New Brutalism among movements is that it finds its closest affinities, not in a past architectural style, but in peasant dwelling forms. It has nothing to do with craft. We see architecture as the direct result of a way of life.”²⁹

The Smithson’s manifesto, while perhaps not as clearly defined as the Brutalist Movement would become, highlights a key component of Brutalist design: the reverence of material. This has become one of the defining characteristics of Brutalist campus, and clear exhibition of materials can be seen throughout their designs. This particular idea of truth in materials found its roots in two sources, one aesthetical and one ethical.

The ethical side first appeared in the 1953 art exhibit *Parallel of Art and Life* [See Figure 5]. Set up by Eduardo Paolozzi, Nigel Henderson, and the Smithsons, it was a precursor to Brutalist architecture and a way of exhibiting the values

²⁹ Alison and Peter Smithson, “The New Brutalism,” *Architectural Design* (January 1955): 1.



Figure 5 - *Parallel of Art and Life*

of the Smithsons and their cohort.³⁰ The exhibit took a series of photographs and discovered parallels where none existed, but the greater importance of the exhibit lay in its chosen images. These were often not categorized as pleasing, but rather truthful, remote, and severe. The reasoning behind this process was that the photograph, “is an artifact, a document recording forever a momentary construction based on reality. Instantaneous, it mocks the monumental; timeless, it monumentalizes the grotesque,” and furthermore that the camera has, “strong moral claims to truth and objectivity.”³¹

The art exhibit was heavily related to the scientific advances of the 20th Century. Royston Landau, author of *New Directions in British Architecture*, describes, “The effect upon the architect of the accelerating growth of information and knowledge has not been... to increase architectural assurance or certainty – to the

³⁰ Frampton, *Modern Architecture*, 264.

³¹ Reyner Banham, “Parallel of Life and Art,” *Architectural Review* 14 (October 1953): 259-261.

contrary it has occasioned an increase in doubt.”³² Concentration on technology and the uncertainty of a modern society with nuclear capabilities would be translated from *Parallel of Art and Life* into the blunt and truthful display of Brutalist architecture. Since technology was a quickly rising focus in education, it became another reason Brutalism edged its way into the collegiate environment. It represented honesty about technology in architecture.

The aesthetical side of Brutalist materiality has its roots primarily in Le Corbusier. He spawned the aesthetic that would dominate the Brutalist Movement, which he entitled “béton brut,” when he designed and constructed the Unité d’Habitation. This is the second primary influence upon the movement. Unité’s “Virgilian dream” housing was intended to create “sociability, mutual assistance, protection, security, [and] economy” for the tenants, as well as be applicable to any location.³³ One primary feature to further bring forth these aspects in his utopian vision, which was never built, was the concept of a network of walkways, highways, and streets on various levels to connect habitations. This concept can often be seen reapplied in larger-scale, Brutalist designs.

While the social design aspects of the Unité d’Habitation were influential upon the Brutalist Movement, the unfinished, rough concrete of the building has been a vital characteristic in its legacy. The Smithsons praised the aesthetic in 1954, saying, “In the béton brut of the Unité a new human architecture has been born.”³⁴

³² Royston Landau, *New Directions in British Architecture* (New York: George Braziller, 1968), 12.

³³ Nicholas Fox Weber, *Le Corbusier: A Life* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2008), 584.

³⁴ Alison and Peter Smithson, *Journal of the University of Manchester Architecture and Planning Society* 1 (Summer 1954): 4.

Brutalism and Planning

The Brutalist Movement was not only architecturally based, but also a system of planning. This plays into the importance of not only singular buildings of the campus, but the campus as a whole. It was clear, during its emergence, “That the job of the architect can now be seen to be concerned, among other things, with strategic planning, economic planning, and rationalization of communications and transport is not simply a matter of commitment or even wishful thinking.”³⁵

Some of the initial ideas of Brutalist planning come from the Smithsons. The Rational Architectural Movement of the 1930s, and its resulting influence, was a point that the Smithsons rebelled against. They claimed, “Where the extent of development is sufficient we can see the working out of the theoretical isolates, dwelling, working, recreation (of body and spirit), circulation, and we wonder how anyone could possibly believe that in this, lay the secret of town building.”³⁶ Therefore, out of this previous line of thought they provided that, “The relationship of the country and the town, the bank and the house, the school and the pub, is conveyed by the form they take. Form is an active force, it creates the community, it is life itself made manifest.”³⁷ They provide, as an example, their Golden Lane project of 1952, where, “The streets were to be joined up to form a continuous network in an attempt to deal with the problem of the really big city, where some change of

³⁵ Landau, *New Directions in British Architecture*, 15.

³⁶ Alison and Peter Smithson, “The Built World: Urban Reidentification,” *Architectural Design* (June 1955), 186.

³⁷ Smithson, “The Built World: Urban Reidentification,” 186.

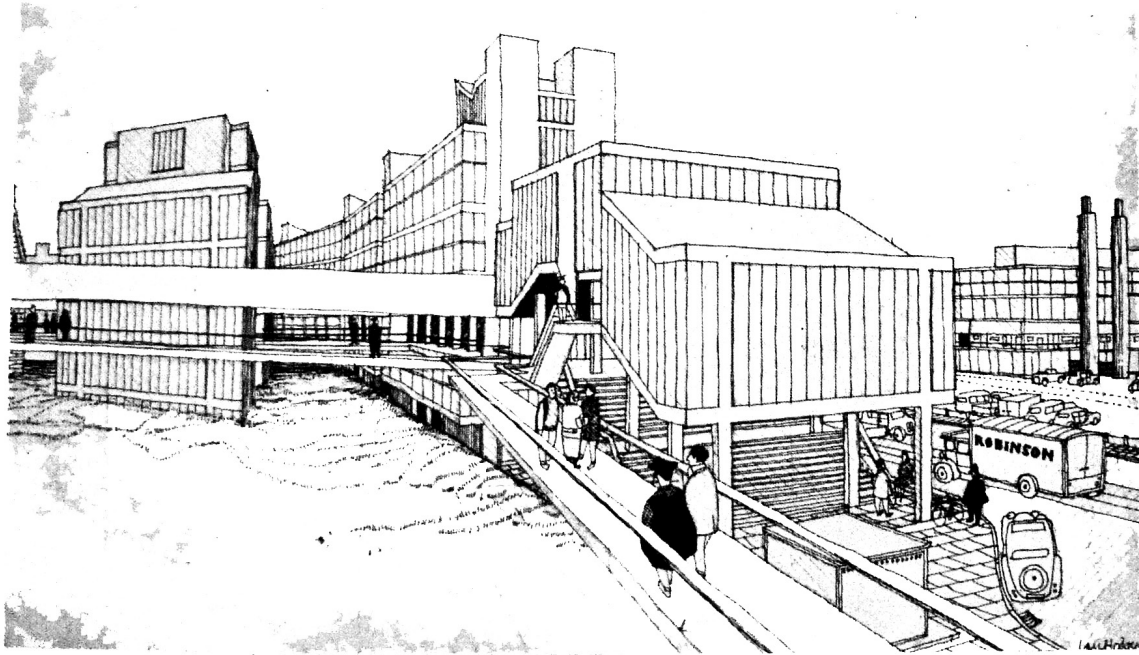


Figure 6 - Sheffield University Extension Drawing

scale comparable to that made in the nineteenth century by the railways will have to be made.”³⁸

These concepts, among others, illustrate the new influences upon planning emerging from the Brutalists. While these materialize in an article about the urban environment, these coincide directly with their collegiate planning designs. The Smithson’s comprehensive design for the Sheffield University Extension in 1953(not built) illustrates an example of the early merging of Brutalist concepts with the campus [See Figure 6].

³⁸Smithson, “The Built World: Urban Reidentification,” 188.

Themes of the Brutalist Campus

Movement and Connection

The Brutalist campus has several unique themes to their design when compared to other collegiate environments [See Figure 7]. The first theme is movement and connection, which serves three main purposes in Brutalist design and campuses. First, it creates interaction between the users of the architecture by creating “streets.” These may be located on the interior of the buildings or as part of the landscape to connect the buildings. The second main purpose is to setup dramatic views of the architecture and landscape by creating complex scenic vista systems for the multi-faceted, three-dimensional, geometric architecture. The final purpose is to serve as a producer of external structure. Internal movement becomes represented in the silhouette and plan of Brutalist design, often as articulated components like staircases. These three purposes of movement and connection are often some of the most significant features of the Brutalist campus, due to the large-scale nature of the collegiate environment.

Alison and Peter Smithson’s Sheffield University Extension utilizes some of the first ideas of movement and connection using Brutalist design, and they referred to that theme as “the generator of Sheffield.”³⁹ While never built, it became an influential Brutalist campus design. The entire plan was connected in a system that utilized what the Smithsons described as “people aqueducts, carrying both students and services to draw-off points.”⁴⁰ It can be seen that movement is a primary concern

³⁹ Alison and Peter Smithson, *The Charged Void: Architecture* (New York: The Monacelli Press, 2001), 108.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 108.

Themes of the Brutalist Campus With Examples



Movement
(SUNY Old Westbury)



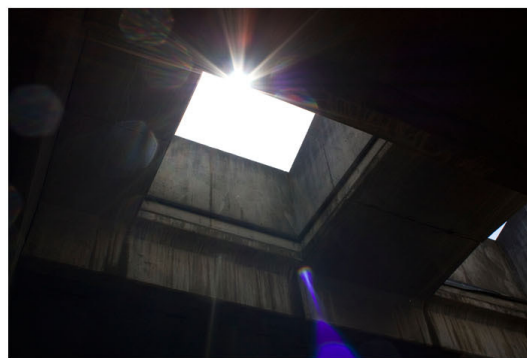
Connection
(Lane Community College)



The Expandable Campus
(SUNY Old Westbury)



Monumentality
(University of California Irvine)



Experience
(Lane Community College)

Figure 7 - Themes of the Brutalist Campus

of the Smithsons, and this becomes a concern of Brutalists. Directing pedestrian traffic, as exhibited in Sheffield, provided for increasing interaction among the students, as well as directing the ways in which the architecture and landscape is viewed. Movement also provided the inspiration for the articulation of the design, as stairwells make-up the towers of the campus and walkways become major features. Internal use became a modifier of external structure.

The automobile was another focus in the layout of Brutalist plans. Often circular ring roads, or similar circulation, surrounds the campuses. They serve to direct traffic, build up an architectural experience, and sometimes provide vistas of the architecture. Parking lots lie among the ring roads and service the car culture that had developed during post-World War II America. Brutalist design, however, did take into account the separation of pedestrians from vehicles, and utilized multi-level design and dense spaces to achieve that goal.

The Expandable Campus

The expandable university was another primary concept in Sheffield. The Smithsons note, "The ring of high-level circulation and service in a continuous building complex makes it possible to satisfy the university's desire to extend horizontally rather than vertically, in spite of the huge volume of building."⁴¹ They state further, "This flexibility is most easily achieved in a simple, repetitive, continuous structure."⁴² In the applicant boom of the Post-World War II collegiate

⁴¹ Smithson, *The Charged Void*, 108.

⁴² *Ibid.*

environment, it was seen as a solution to a necessity. Brutalist architecture provided the forms that could be mass-produced, yet still evoke dynamic visuals for the campus environment. The expandable campus became even more important in the United States, where the community college was about to make its impact on American culture.

The designs of Brutalist campuses were often planned with the mindset of future growth and expansion, due to the collegiate environment's rapidly increasing population.⁴³ Different techniques were used to accommodate the predicted augmentation, and these include expandable building units, growth-centric planning schemes, and dense construction to prevent growth in specific areas.

Gunnar Birkerts, for example, developed several schemes featured in *Architectural Record* of October 1968. These were of community colleges that had expandable building units and growth-centric planning. One such scheme was for Tougaloo College in Tougaloo, Mississippi. Birkerts outlines five stages of construction in the article for indefinite expansion, creating a dense framework that can expand in any direction.⁴⁴ Built on a slope, the architecture has three layers: roads and parking on the lowest, the academic matrix, plazas, and other pedestrian paths in the middle, and dormitories along the top. By composing the architecture for stacked usage, Birkerts planned on increased interaction between faculty and students.⁴⁵

⁴³ "Planning the Community College," *Architectural Record* (June 1964): 123.

⁴⁴ Mildred F. Schmertz, "Designed for Mobility, Both Social and Physical: Three Colleges by Gunnar Birkerts," *Architectural Record* (October 1968): 129-137.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 131.

Paul Rudolph was another architect who utilized a growth-centric planning scheme in his Southern Massachusetts Technical Institute (SMTI) master plan. Based on a repetitive, structural grid that flanked a segmented and spiraling grassy area, the campus was designed to have the ability to expand. This expansion was based on a projected growth of 5000 students by the mid-1970s.⁴⁶ To deal with the future development of buildings, Rudolph designed an aesthetic that he wished to be continued, and whom immediate architects followed, such as architect firm Desmond and Lord's tower. This design aesthetic plays heavily into Rudolph's, and other Brutalist's, strong view of a unified design. To convey this sense of unity, Rudolph utilized several techniques. The first was the use of concrete as the single main material. The second was by creating a system of repetitive shapes using similar details, external fenestrations, and massing along his building(s).⁴⁷ SMTI displayed both of these on a grand scale, and Rudolph remarked on this unity of design by saying, "The campus is intended to be a single building utilizing a single structural-mechanical system, to be constructed of any material."⁴⁸

Monumentality and Experience

The last theme of the Brutalist campus is monumentality and experience. Architectural historian Leland Roth refers to the Brutalist movement in the

⁴⁶ "Campus Architecture," *Architectural Record*, Vol. 157, No. 1 (January, 1975): 124.

⁴⁷ Tony Monk, *The Art and Architecture of Paul Rudolph* (Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley-Academy, 1999), 11.

⁴⁸ Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, Paul Rudolph, and Gerhard Schwab, *The Architecture of Paul Rudolph* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1970), 152.

United States as “American Monumentality,” pointing to a key characteristic of the architecture. Intended to inspire responses to its users, the Brutalist campus has very heavy, large, articulated forms throughout its design. It is both monumental and experiential. The campus plan responds to the design by creating dramatic spaces that can be used to compress and release the user’s experience as they walk around the campuses. Use of both light and darkness emphasizes spaces and sculptural forms throughout, and the play with light is formed with wide-open spaces or compressed stairwells. The design serves to create an experience.

Placement of the campuses can be related to imparting a sense of monumentality on the user as they approach and experience them. As will be seen in the case study SUNY Old Westbury, hills and topography are tools to convey the monumental mystique that harkens back to ancient times. Terrain lifting heavy forms conveys that visual as the user looks at and from the design. However, sometimes the monumentality is negatively viewed as inspiring to be the ruin like an old fortress, an everlasting and stoic visual.

CHAPTER III

SUNY OLD WESTBURY CASE STUDY

Not far from the glistening skyscrapers of New York City rests SUNY Old Westbury, a public college born under the experimental regime of the SUNY system. Architects John MacLean Johansen, Victor Christ-Janer, and Alexander Kouzmanoff designed a college that reflected the regime and the overarching Brutalist movement. Out of the design emerged the Academic Village, a geometric complex of concrete, Brutalist design that is one holistic vision based on Mediterranean hill towns. As the architecture and plan of the college ages, changes within the campus plan are inevitable, but it is important to evaluate how this affects the historic character of the campus and minimize the impact. The SUNY Old Westbury case study illustrates the issues Brutalist campuses face and the resulting penultimate, primary preservation dilemma.

Like other Brutalist campuses, SUNY Old Westbury poses several unique preservation issues because of its distinct plan. The interconnecting, holistic design of heavy concrete can be a difficult landscape to alter and add to. The complex

significance of the various features adds to this difficulty. One primary preservation dilemma emerges from the issues the campus faces: Incorporation or modification of elements within the dense, concrete-heavy environment that does not break the fluidity or movement of the holistic, interconnected nature of Brutalist design.

One part of the primary preservation dilemma derives from the often-misunderstood significance of the Brutalist campus. Elements such as raised walkways, sky bridges, and the way these features express movement are significant features that, when removed, lessen the impact, meaning, and historical significance of the campuses. When complex scenic vista the interconnecting elements form are interrupted, the original architectural intentions are damaged. Unlike the vistas seen in other architectural styles, Brutalist vistas are complex because of the repetitive, articulated aesthetic of the designs that sprawl outwards and are not typically limited to a rectangular footprint. Emphasis is on the viewing experience as users move about the plans, rather than on specific points and primary facades. The general lack of grandiose entrances in Brutalist architecture in favor of a focus on forms within spaces is another part of the complex vistas.

The second part of the primary preservation dilemma is the materiality and inflexibility of the landscapes and plans. Plazas, concrete structures, and issues of sustainability play into this dilemma, and bring forth questions on how new elements can be added within the often hard-to-modify plans. While most campuses deal with diagnosing the best way to incorporate new elements, Brutalist design is particularly difficult because of the heavy forms, concrete, and specialized usage in favor of an open plan that is easily modified.

SUNY Old Westbury is a showcase of the primary preservation dilemma, and it represents the current struggles of Brutalist campuses. From the dilemma, there are six derived preservation issues: immobile forms, expansive concrete open spaces, movement and interruption, modification and connectivity, incorporation of new elements in an interlocked landscape, and sustainability.

SUNY Old Westbury's Background

From SUNY Old Westbury's construction in 1972 to its current plans for major modification to address growth and its aging nature, it has gone through the typical life of the Brutalist campus. SUNY Old Westbury's architectural history is also an important reminder of why Brutalist campuses are significant. It illuminates an under-appreciated vision representative of the larger movement portrayed in Chapter II.

Following nation-wide collegiate growth, the State University of New York system began in 1948 as a system of incorporated state colleges to address the return of World War II veterans and a demand for more education.⁴⁹ At first it had an unclear institutional mission, but this evolved in the 1950s into a system that complimented private colleges in the state, filling a market for students that more expensive colleges excluded. It developed into an expansive, ground-breaking system during the 1960s when it spent two billion in construction and introduced a host of new programs and ideas. These ideas included a program without a

⁴⁹ Peter A. Janssen, "The State University of New York: An Overview," *Change*, Vol. 6, No. 6 (Summer, 1974): 38.

defined campus at Empire State College, new mature adult programs, and delayed admissions options, along with specialized colleges in subjects like environmental science and forestry.⁵⁰ By the year 1974 it had become the largest university system in the world, with 382,000 students, 15,000 faculty members, an \$875-million budget, and 72 institutions across the state.⁵¹

Two proponents of experimental education led to its development into the SUNY system. Chancellor Samuel Gould was the first, and in the 1960s pushed the system beyond traditional practices. In 1968 he was featured on the cover of *Time* magazine. Chancellor Ernest L. Boyer followed after Gould's resignation in 1970, and continued the progressive agenda of the 1960s. Their groundwork set the tone for Harris Wofford, SUNY Old Westbury's first president, who followed the SUNY System's experimental agenda and sought to create a representative environment at Old Westbury.

Although the permanent campus was not built until 1972, the faculty and students within the temporary facilities debated how to incorporate experimental ideology successfully. Along with his staff, Wofford began analyzing how to creatively organize the school. Ralph Keyes, a student planner at Old Westbury, noted that this team would use such phrases as, "ending the lockstep march," "creative tension," and "asking the larger questions."⁵² All of these phrases signaled this strive towards innovation and establishment of a creative laboratory. Keyes, however, is quick to

⁵⁰ Janssen, "The State University of New York," 39.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 38.

⁵² Ralph Keyes, Harris Wofford, Jacqueline Grennan, Roger Landrum, and Larry Resnick, "The College That Students Helped Plan," *Change in Higher Education*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (March - April, 1969): 12.

note his doubts.

After his experience in the planning process, Keyes questioned the college's ability to innovate despite their claims otherwise. One complaint he had was of the seminar-forum class format. He states that these "hip" students had a different agenda, and that, "Individuality is the program, and the dated take of community conflicts with their alienated near-nihilism."⁵³ The underlying dissention was not only directed towards the lack of innovation, but there was also dissention among professors who had different ideals than the students. One professor related them to, "proud, but soiled" babies who wished to learn their own way.⁵⁴

The struggle between the experimental ideal and the less extravagant reality resulted in the dissatisfaction of the first generation of students and the eventual change in students recruited. Following the first generation, however, students arrived interested in establishing careers. Their new, targeted audience included, "the poor, minorities, blue-collar workers, housewives, servicemen, and those returning to school to start new careers." The diversity in students, rather than the smaller crowd an experimental college attracts, would become a staple of SUNY Old Westbury.⁵⁵

John D. Maguire, the college's second president, led the period of change.⁵⁶

⁵³ Keyes et al., "The College That Students Helped Plan, 16.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 17.

⁵⁵ The State University of New York, "U.S. News Ranks SUNY Schools Among Best in the Nation," last modified August 27, 2008, <http://www.suny.edu/sunynews/News.cfm?filename=2008-08-27%20final%20US%20News%20Rankings.htm>.

⁵⁶ Earl Lane, "The 'New' Old Westbury," *Change*, Vol. 4, No. 7 (September, 1972): 22

The core curriculum was further developed and made a requirement, career-oriented programs were initiated, and everything became better defined and more specific. Because the changes reflected the new population of students in the SUNY Old Westbury system, it became a disappointment to those who hoped it would be more than a “glorified community college.”⁵⁷ Leslie Purdy, of ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior Colleges in Los Angeles, California, further criticized Maguire’s changes. She also criticized the transitional period of the college as being neither experimental nor a great example of an open-admission university.⁵⁸ Purdy’s argument is somewhat valid, but considering it was transitioning during this complaint, it is not entirely constructive criticism.

In 1971, Maguire addressed the concept of the experimental community college in his article, “Less Than a Year Into a Presidency: Or, What’s a Sober Guy Like Me Doing In a Place Like This?” He cited several reasons why the public college had a hard time becoming experimental, and one major reason was funding.⁵⁹ Another, which Maguire noted as SUNY Old Westbury’s greatest strength and weakness, was, “deep diversity, passionate convictions, groping together.”⁶⁰ Despite the radical transition between possible future directions, however, the firm of Johansen, Christ-Janer, and Kouzmanoff designed the campus as an experimental space.

⁵⁷ Lane, “The ‘New’ Old Westbury,” 23.

⁵⁸ Leslie Purdy, “Old Westbury,” *Change*, Vol. 4, No. 10 (Winter, 1972/1973): 9-10.

⁵⁹ John David Maguire, “Less Than a Year Into Presidency: Or, What’s a Sober Guy Like Me Doing In a Place Like This?” *Soundings: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 54, No. 1 (Spring 1971): 13.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

SUNY Old Westbury's Hill Town

Situated within a wooded portion of the campus, the monolithic Academic Village rises from the hill it rests upon. The idea emerged from Johansen, Christ-Janer, and Kouzmanoff, three established architects. Johansen was one of the “Harvard Five” and had several notable designs prior to SUNY Old Westbury: the U.S. Embassy in Dublin(1964), the Morris A. Mechanic Theater(1967), and the Goddard Library at Clark University(1968).⁶¹ Kouzmanoff was notable faculty at Columbia University for many years and had a background in Beaux-Arts and Modernist design.⁶² Lastly, Christ-Janer was another notable architect who worked alongside the Harvard Five and had a strong presence in Connecticut.⁶³

The Academic Village’s form was based on a Mediterranean hill town. The idea was of, as Johansen remarks, “an accretion of many habitable enclosures as though they had grown together casually over time,” and the use of three separate, colliding grids give the impression of this merging [See Figure 8].⁶⁴ Johansen often repeated the idea of organic growth in his designs, as he sought inspiration from biological specimens, such as barnacles, and the organic growth resulting from their

⁶¹ John M. Johansen, *John M. Johansen : A Life in the Continuum of Modern Architecture* (Milano: L’Arca edizioni, 1995).

⁶² Caroline Rob Zaleski, *Long Island Modernism: 1930-1980* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2012), 271.

⁶³ National Trust for Historic Preservation, “Victor Christ-Janer,” last modified 2009, <http://www.preservationnation.org/travel-and-sites/sites/northeast-region/new-canaan-ct/architects/victor-christ-janer.html>.

⁶⁴ Johansen, *John M. Johansen*, 87.

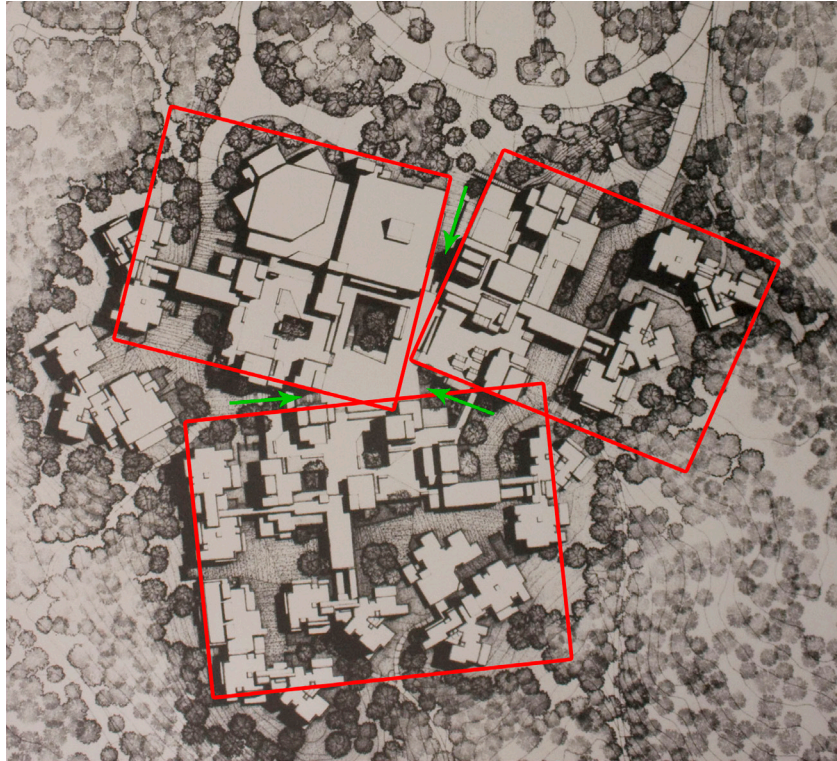


Figure 8 - Generalized grids of the Academic Village

response to the environment.⁶⁵ The concept of vernacular, dense townscapes, on the other hand, was an idea that had permeated the architectural circles at the time, and Moshe Safdie's *Habitat '67* is another example of a dense, communal environment. Popularity of the concept can be related to Bernard Rudofsky's *Architecture Without Architects* exhibit and book, which displayed images of vernacular townscapes and was shown at the Museum of Modern Art from November 9, 1964 to February 7, 1965.

Rudofsky described the increased influence of vernacular architecture on the architect as a result of the waning of historic forms in an age when, "banking houses or railroad stations do not necessarily have to resemble prayers in stone

⁶⁵ John M. Johansen, "John M. Johansen Declares Himself," *Architectural Forum* (January/February 1966): 66.

to inspire confidence.”⁶⁶ He also described the purpose of the vernacular influence as a way to, “help free ourselves from our narrow world of official and commercial architecture.”⁶⁷ The exhibition brought fourth the important point of a communal enterprise in architecture, rather than emphasis on the individual architect.

The ideas that emerge with this type of architecture include an emphasis on landscape. The vernacular buildings blend in with their surroundings, adapting to the landscape rather than creating a new landscape. It can be seen why this ideology attracted the attention of Brutalist architects and planners, since they had admiration for truth in design. In addition, ideas that were regaining popularity in the 20th Century, such as prefabrication, standardization, flexibility, and mobility, are also common themes within vernacular construction.⁶⁸

Throughout the exhibition, there was a concentration on the idea of the hill town. The Italian hill towns of Positano and Anticoli Corrado are the first of these images and are followed by Mojacar, Spain [See Figure 9]. Described as a “fountain of youth” to those that “have not yet been reduced to appendages to automobiles,” these hill towns are displayed as idealized communities that have withstood time.⁶⁹ The strong, visual images that *Architecture Without Architects* presents would have doubtlessly been an influence in Johansen et al.’s SUNY Old Westbury Hill Town design. Not only would the exhibition have influenced their

⁶⁶ Bernard Rudofsky, *Architecture without Architects* (New York: Museum of Modern, 1964), Preface.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.



Figure 9 - Hill town image from *Architecture Without Architects*

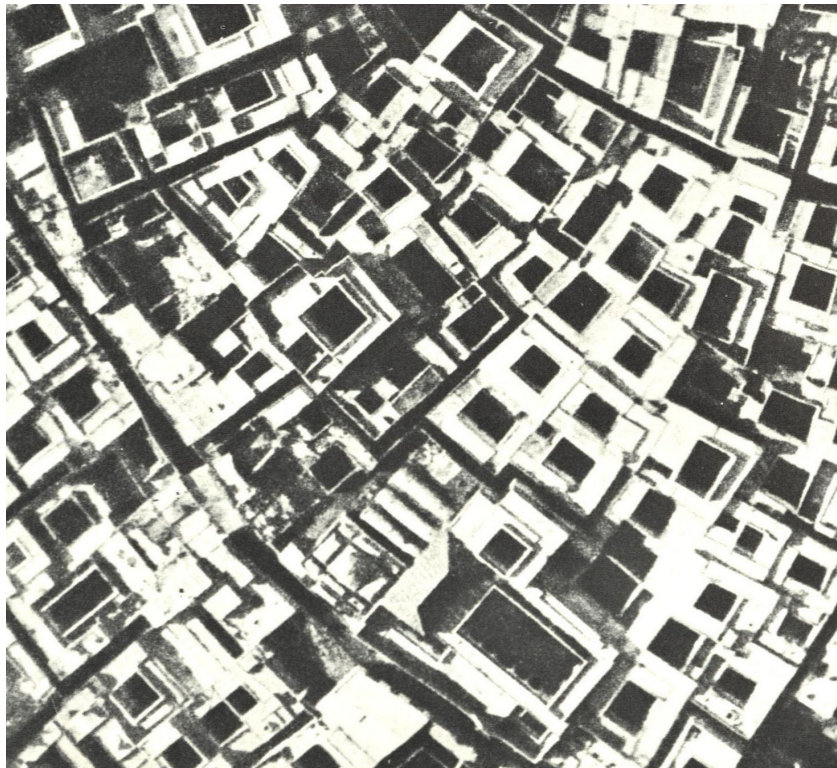


Figure 10 - Aerial image from *Architecture Without Architects*

general hill town concept, but other related ideas as well.⁷⁰ Image 54 in *Architecture Without Architects* is an aerial of the Islamic town of Marrakesh, Morocco [See Figure 10]. When compared to the plan of SUNY Old Westbury, it is easy to see a similar patterning of a complex with geometric buildings surrounding courtyards. The intricate layout of the town can also be seen as an influence in Johansen et al.'s design.

The original college master plan called for five “cluster colleges,” which would be dispersed around the edges of the site, and a central core with some shared facilities [See Figure 11].⁷¹ Johansen et al.'s Hill Town, now known as the Academic Village, was intended as the first cluster college. By the time of its construction, it was within the later years of the Brutalist movement, as the movement essentially terminates three years later. Johansen commented on the project that it was belated, and by 1972, when it had finished, his interests had shifted to a “lightweight sheet-metal vocabulary,” but because of cost it continued as concrete.⁷² Kouzmanoff's Campus Center would later adapt to sheet metal, and Johansen would use the aesthetic in his famous Mummers Theater (Oklahoma City).⁷³

The Academic Village was organized with academic buildings serving as the central point on the hilltop and dormitory quarters “cascading down the slopes

⁷⁰ Et al. will be used to condense the firm of Johansen, Christ-Janer, and Kouzmanoff for writing purposes, and it does not mean that Johansen is necessarily any more prominent in the design than the others.

⁷¹ Stanley Abercrombie, “Hill Town on Long Island: A New College Campus in Old Westbury,” *Architecture Plus* (December 1973): 57.

⁷² John M. Johansen, *John M. Johansen*, 87.

⁷³ Mummers Theater would also become the subject of a preservation debate.

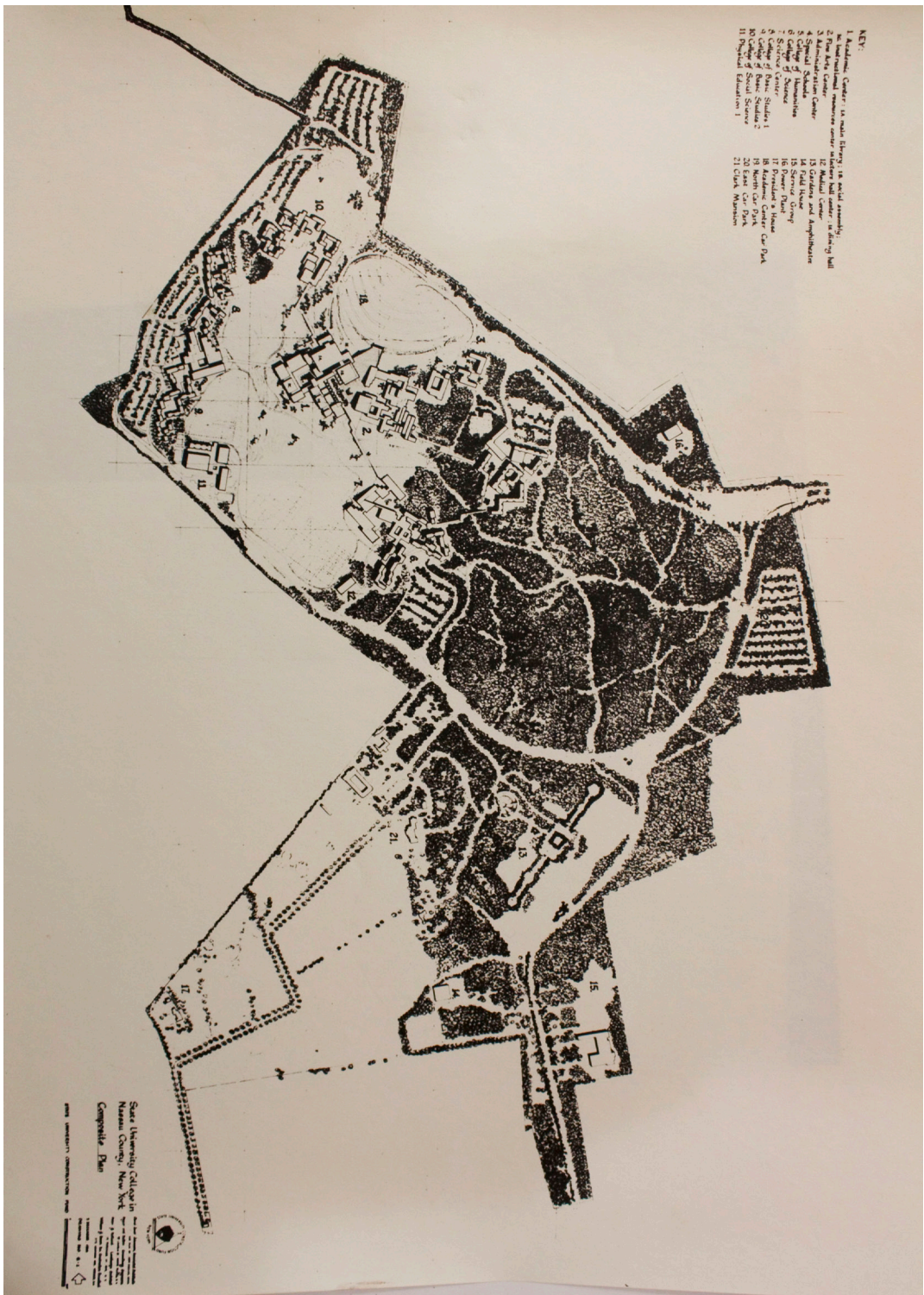


Figure 11 - Original "cluster college" master plan of SUNY Old Westbury



Figure 12 - Academic Village model close-up



Figure 13 - Academic Village model

of three sides” [See Figures 12 and 13].⁷⁴ Entrance into the complex was designed to be only through, as Johansen put it, “small bridges, steps, and courtyards quite like we known in Greece or medieval Italy.”⁷⁵ There were, however, other outlets for emergency contingencies. The design was surprisingly loose for academic usage, because of the experimental agenda, and had no clearly defined academic departments. Instead, the defined spatial elements included a library, an auditorium, and many study rooms. The rooms that rise out of the complex’s rooftop are examples of some of the study rooms [See Figure 14]. Because of the Academic Village’s density, it allowed a program of study to “draw upon any number of classrooms or offices necessary for temporary use.”⁷⁶ As a result, Johansen et al. intended the organization of the academics to emerge organically within the design, and his inspiration from the organic growth of biological specimens can be seen here.

After its completion, the State University Construction Fund (SUCF) disbanded the architectural group as a trio, and instead gave them singular projects on the campus. Kouzmanoff was the only one to stay under their employment, however, and he completed the Campus Center, which was intended as the hub for the cluster colleges [See Figure 15]. The original, cluster-college master plan, however, was abandoned in 1982, and the abortion of the plan resulted in a disconnect between the Academic Village and the rest of campus, which has

⁷⁴ John M. Johansen, *John M. Johansen*, 87.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*



Figure 14 - Historic photo of Academic Village

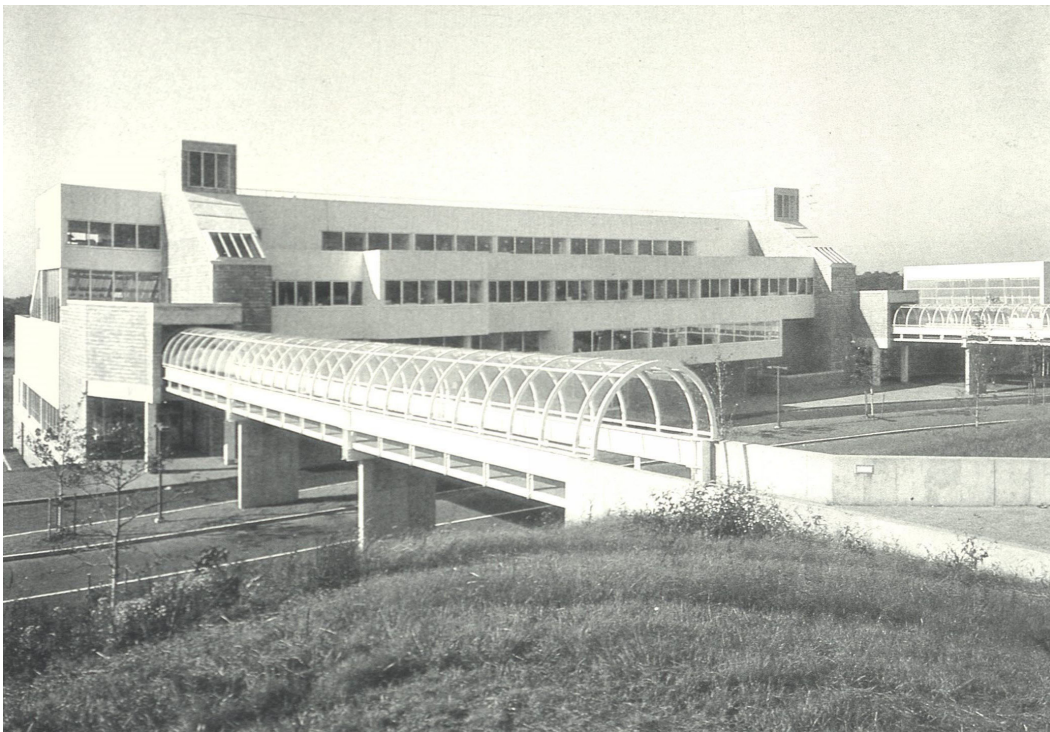


Figure 15 - Campus Center building, designed by Kouzmanoff

grown around the Campus Center. Furthering the negative image of this portion of the campus, an article on the Academic Village's architecture in *Architecture Plus* declared that the SUNY Old Westbury campus was a rejection of the Modern movement and part of "A pervasive idea among architects... [To] return to the free, the loose, and the picturesque – an idea not only pervasive but dangerous."⁷⁷

SUNY Old Westbury and the Primary Preservation Dilemma

With looming alteration and demolition on the horizon of most, if not all, Brutalist campuses, the question is: what *are* the preservation dilemmas these campuses face and what has caused them? SUNY Old Westbury is an excellent case study in this topic because of the dramatic changes set, and projected, to occur. Since the Academic Village's construction, the complex has aged and deferred maintenance has caused the buildings to fall into disrepair and increasing obsolescence. Alterations to the historic fabric, albeit only minor details, have slightly hurt the material integrity of the Academic Village, and include the removal of exterior globe lights, new paving on the plazas, and the replacement of historic wood railing with all metal railing.⁷⁸

Issues of SUNY Old Westbury's preservation arise from the 2011 Facilities Master Plan that proposed massive alterations to the academic village (the historic Brutalist portion). It culminates into the one penultimate preservation dilemma that can be seen throughout Brutalist campuses. Described at the beginning of the

⁷⁷ Abercrombie, "Hill Town on Long Island," 57.

⁷⁸ Zaleski, *Long Island Modernism*, 275.



Figure 16 - Targeted demolition area (within red boundary)

chapter, that primary preservation dilemma is: Incorporation or modification of elements within the dense, concrete-heavy environment that does not break the fluidity or movement of the holistic, interconnected nature of Brutalist design. The alteration process at SUNY Old Westbury has already begun, but examination of the dilemmas the campus is facing can provide framework for a blueprint in understanding the dilemmas and steps towards adaptation [See Figure 16 for affected area]. The proposed alterations of SUNY Old Westbury highlight a series of issues with the current plan, where any form of preservation is too far removed from the objectives.

The various issues that emerge from the primary preservation dilemma include the immobility of the design, expansive concrete open spaces, complex circulation patterns that help define significance, modification of holistic elements, incorporation of new elements in an interlocked landscape, and related sustainability issues. Each issue can be examined through the lens of the case study, and complimented by secondary studies that affirm the broader context of these issues among Brutalist campuses nationwide.

Immobile Forms

Adaptable, light, and flowing are *not* terms that are typically used to describe Brutalist architecture. Concrete may be great medium to bring across a vision, but after it is set-in-place, it faces difficulties with change over time. This first part of the preservation dilemma is often a catalyst for initial change, and is a factor in the other parts of the preservation dilemma. Recent, famous examples of problematic forms

include the ultra-specialized Prentice Women's Hospital in Chicago and difficult-to-maintain Third Church of Christ Scientist in Washington, D.C., both of which are demolished. SUNY Old Westbury is yet another victim of immobility.

One of SUNY Old Westbury's architects, Johansen, envisioned architecture as adapting to the electronic age, and his designs represent this in physical forms. Ironically, the heavy, concrete massing seen in SUNY Old Westbury's campus resist changes in incorporating new technology and wiring, an essential in the technological world of today. The issues seen in interior functions are relevant to the plan of the campus because lecture spaces, which typically make up the core built space in Brutalist design, become targets for alteration. The current planner at SUNY Old Westbury cites another problem with the existing buildings. The smaller spaces in the building can't adjust to increased class size.

Expansive Concrete Open Spaces

Seen as the catalyst for change at SUNY Old Westbury, along with funding issues, the dense central core will undergo massive change. Concrete open spaces make up the core of SUNY Old Westbury, creating a central gathering point. The plazas are important visual spaces that connect the seemingly random, concrete components that rise out of the complex. As a significant landscape feature of Brutalism, the concrete plaza is a symbol of public gathering and movement, often composing the core. Although they were designed for gathering, they have often failed to live up to their initial intent, and the expansive spaces are now seen as barren, usable space.

Alteration to these spaces should be sympathetic as to not hurt the cohesion and significance of the holistic design. Unfortunately, SUNY Old Westbury is an example of inappropriate modification in relation to historic character. SUNY Old Westbury plans to lobotomize most of the core where these plaza spaces are, and demolish three out of four, or 75%, of the plazas. To create a new central space, the plan incorporates an open, circular area south of the original central space on the central circulation path [See Figure 17]. The new area not only disrupts movement, which will be addressed later on, but also institutes a new core in an area where it was not supposed to be.

The proposed new core would detract from the design for several reasons. The first being the shift off the highest point in elevation, where the original design specifically put the core. The campus closely adheres to the topography of the landscape, following the slopes and referencing the topography in its hill-town design [See Figure 18]. The “truth” of the landscape comes across in the design, and moving the core off the highest point hurts the carefully planned, initial vision. The change in topographic relation, however, is minor compared to relation to the built environment.

Shifting the core to its planned position involves placing the periphery buildings within a new context. Previously, they were used as physical, and aesthetic, boundaries of the “Village Street,” the name of the ring-like, primary circulation around the campus. With the new core, they become part of a primary space, despite their original, secondary nature. The change in vision is a dramatic difference from the original design, greatly affecting the integrity and significance of the entire



Figure 17 - Altered circulation and core



Figure 18 - Relation of Academic Village to topography

academic village. The new, circular design also contrasts with the strong, rectilinear forms of the campus. There are ways to mitigate the removal of the core, but because of the core's importance within the academic village, these are minimally effective.

The issue of a concrete core was successfully addressed at Cypress College, another Brutalist campus dating back to 1966, and it illustrates alterations to a campus initially designed as bi-level.⁷⁹ The core of the campus utilized raised walkways and plazas, which they termed as piazzas. In the 2000s, Cypress College decided to remove large portions of the piazzas because the "bi-level circulation created dark and narrow passageways beneath the piazza and a number of problems with way finding and circulation through the campus."⁸⁰ In place of a central piazza, they adapted a new design for the center of campus [See Figure 19]. This alteration can be considered a success, despite removal of historic fabric, for multiple reasons.

First, although there was a mass removal of the piazza it can be considered successful because it left reasonable portions of the piazza still intact. The remaining sections convey part of the imagery, aesthetic, and intent of the whole. In addition, the sections have plans for future use. The plans are to make the piazzas more inviting, as they are currently barren and unattractive. The previous overabundance of this space meant, large events aside, only a small percent would have been used. In effect, though there is a loss of historic fabric, it creates functional space and does not attempt to freeze the campus in time.

In addition, because the new core of Cypress College responds appropriately

⁷⁹ HMC Architects, "Cypress College 2011 Comprehensive Master Plan," 150.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

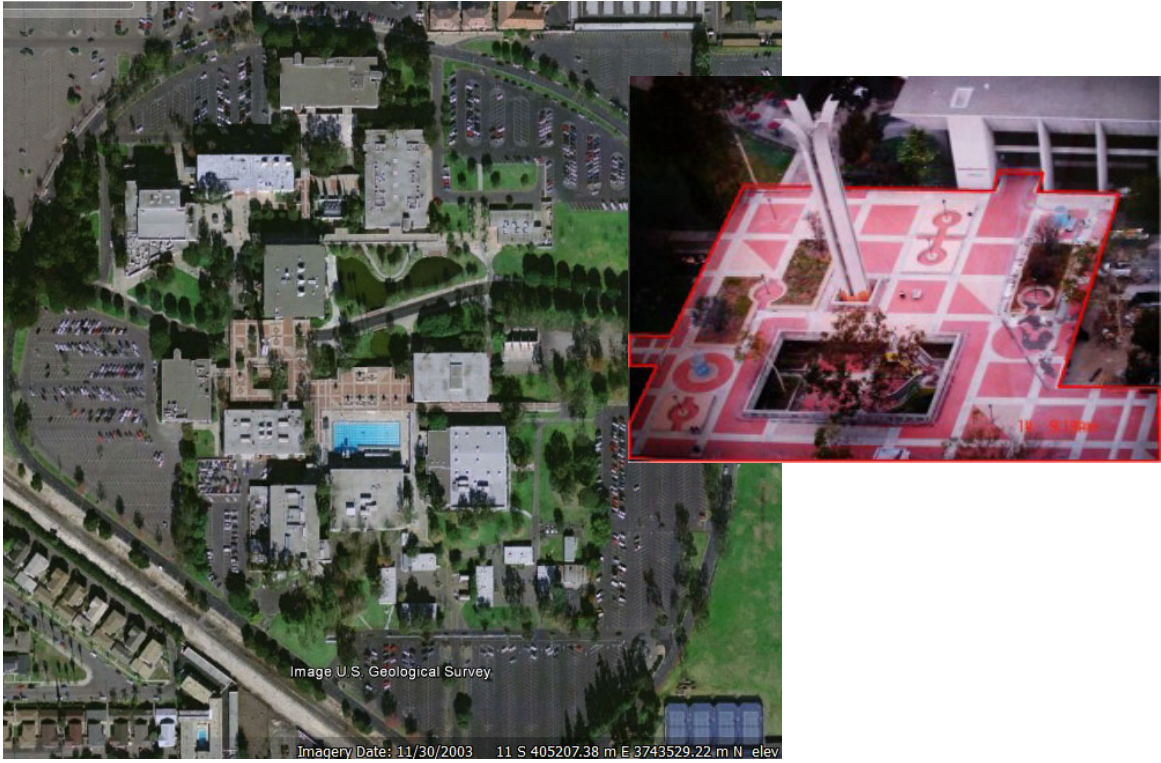


Figure 19 - Cypress College core alterations

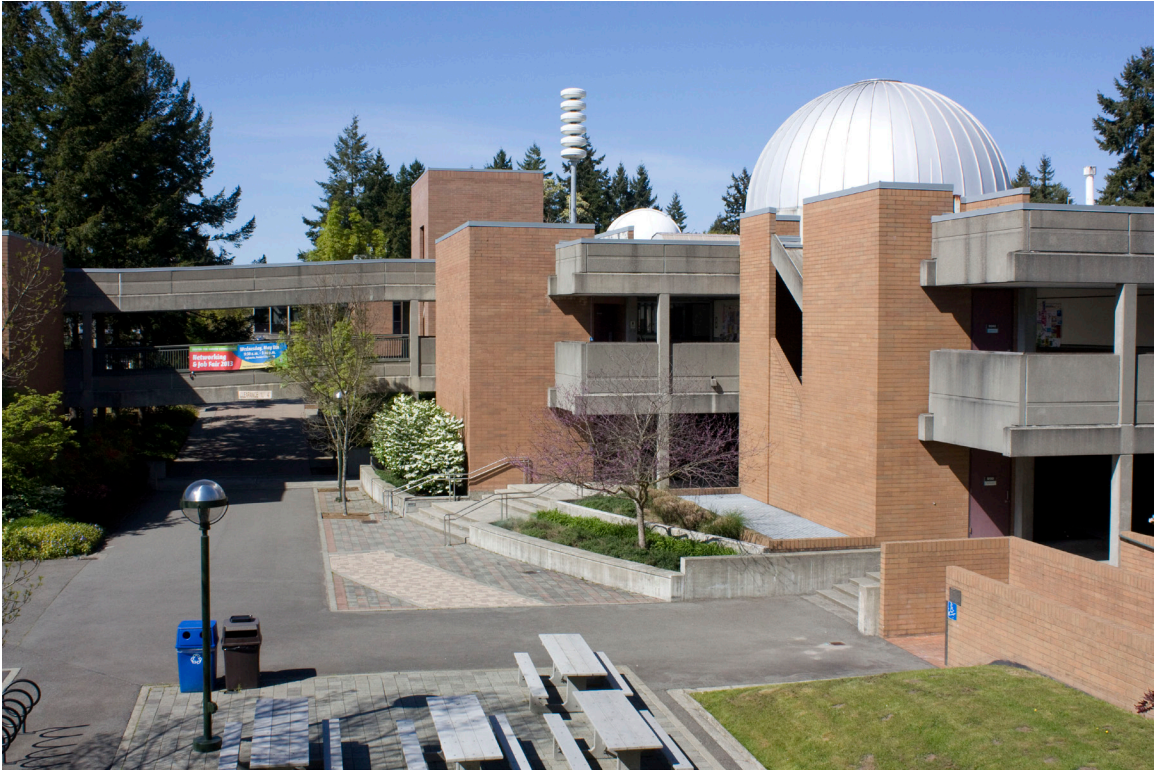


Figure 20 - Example of the dense built environment at Bellevue College that repeats around core

to the historic campanile, which acts as a symbol of the college and a focal point for students, Cypress College is an example of successful alteration in plan. The new buildings match the overall aesthetic set forth, but more importantly respond to the campanile by curving around it. Although the new buildings create a barrier where there was once the piazza, it keeps that feeling of connectivity that would have been lost with, for example, a large, open, green space.

Other Brutalist campuses face land limitations that impact potential, campus-core alterations. For example, the dense campus core of Bellevue College (1966) in Bellevue, Washington leaves few options for new construction. Placing a new element within that landscape would be difficult to accomplish without disrupting the design aesthetic [See Figure 20]. Bellevue College dealt with this situation in its

master plan by using existing parking space for new elements, and creating parking garages to replace the altered parking areas.⁸¹ In effect, the preservation dilemma of altering the heavy, cohesive concrete of the campus core has been avoided. Bellevue College acknowledges the concepts set forth in the original plan, which focuses on a contrast between the hardscape of the courtyards and the surrounding, natural environment. “Respect for the natural qualities of the site” was a mandate of the 1966 master plan, again showing the clustering effect of Brutalist campuses in an effort to keep wooded areas around the campuses.⁸²

Movement and Interruption

Demolition of the plazas at SUNY Old Westbury highlights another component of the primary preservation dilemma: the complex movement networks in Brutalist design. While plazas serve as the nodes of SUNY Old Westbury, a complex circulation stems off from them in the form of raised walkways, staircases, and a ring path. Movement becomes a vital characteristic of the Academic Village’s character, and is the next element under fire with the upcoming alteration and demolition.

The complicated movement system at SUNY Old Westbury’s campus is based around a ring-shaped circulation pattern within the academic village known as the Village Street [See Figure 21]. The Village Street is a primary, wide path that separates the inner core of the village from the peripheral buildings. Secondary paths, which travel towards the core and the exterior, stem off of the Village Street.

⁸¹ LMN Architects, “Bellevue College 2008-2018 Master Plan,” 4.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 46.

As these paths travel inwards, they compress visual experience. They travel in between the buildings then release upon the open plaza spaces of the core. As the user moves about the campus, these visual dynamics are important to the spatial experience of the various architectural components. Johansen et al. orchestrated the experience to feel like a medieval village, forcing the user to enter using only these defined pathways. Interruption of this circulation network would possibly result in a loss of the experience.

With the proposed alterations to SUNY Old Westbury, the circulation will drastically change with the demolition of most of the core. The resulting new open space allows for a route from the newer section of the campus that meets part of the existing circulation in the form of a circular, open space. The peripheral buildings, because of the changing space, in effect become a new core. By altering the movement pattern, an entirely different focal space and view shed is created, changing the medieval village dynamic the architects envisioned.

Paul Rudolph's Southeastern Massachusetts Technological Institute (SMTI), known today as UMass Dartmouth, is another example of the importance of movement in design, and how it has been preserved through the years. With the master plan drawn up in 1963, SMTI was designed as a pedestrian campus with a core of a spiraling mall that is open to the movement of people and a parking system that encircled this core. The design takes a classic campus design, such as the University of Virginia, and reframes the movement so that the strict, linear colonnades of that campus are disintegrated at SMTI. Movement is not restricted



Figure 21 - Circulation pattern at Academic Village. The Village street is the green, bold line, secondary movement from village are dotted, green lines, plaza space in yellow, and raised walkways in red.

within the campus confines.⁸³ Another prominent movement pattern at SMTI is the ring road, conveniently named University Ring Road. Like SUNY Old Westbury, it serves as a viewing platform for the architecture, though it is automobile-centric at SMTI [See Figure 22].

Both of these movement patterns have been retained, as well as the landscapes they focus on, both natural and physical. The landscape at SMTI is a flat space of pine and shrub, so when Rudolph planned the campus, he focused on creating an expansive, open design that seemed to stretch onwards with the landscape. While different from the more enclosed SUNY Old Westbury campus, it displays an ideal that expresses the exquisite movement patterns. It should be noted that the presence of a central, green space and its less restrictive movement patterns, compared to other Brutalist design, might have had an important impact in the preservation of SMTI's circulation.

Modification and Connectivity

Connectivity in Brutalist campuses enhances and directs movement, and it creates a holistic experience that compels the user to become immersed in the forms. The connecting elements have their own movement patterns, but are also significant, aesthetic elements. The next issue of the primary preservation dilemma deals with the consequence of removing or altering the connecting elements upon the campus's character.

One of the largest upcoming alterations to SUNY Old Westbury, as mentioned

⁸³ Moholy-Nagy, *The Architecture of Paul Rudolph*, 23.

before, is the removal of the majority of the Academic Village core. As a result six out of seven, or 86%, of the raised walkways, will be severed. These walkways are key features that connect the core and periphery and create a connected, immersive environment. Several different types of raised walkways serve multiple functions in the design and enhance the simplistic, geometric forms. Without the raised walkways, not only is the architect's intent and Brutalist philosophy of movement and connection altered, but it also lessens the impressiveness of the design.

The first style of raised walkways in the campus, and the most common, are large, raised walkways that connect the periphery buildings to the core [See Figure 23]. These raised walkways also contain room space within an enclosed portion for study rooms, offices, or classrooms.⁸⁴ Important to the immersive environment of the ring path beneath the raised walkways, they make the core and peripheral buildings one holistic vision.

The second style is a simplistic, raised walkway that connects different portions of the core. These serve to direct the visual experience towards different parts of the core, as well as help compress the visual experience of the paths below before they release upon plaza spaces [See Figure 24 and 25]. The increased connectivity of the walkways helps with the initial concept of the organic departments, which ideally would ebb and flow through the buildings. Removal of the raised walkways will in effect sever the connectivity of the academic village. The previously connected elements will be disjointed and lose strength as an image.

Problems resulting in the removal of these significant elements are not just

⁸⁴ One of the walkways does not have any interior space, but features similar characteristics.

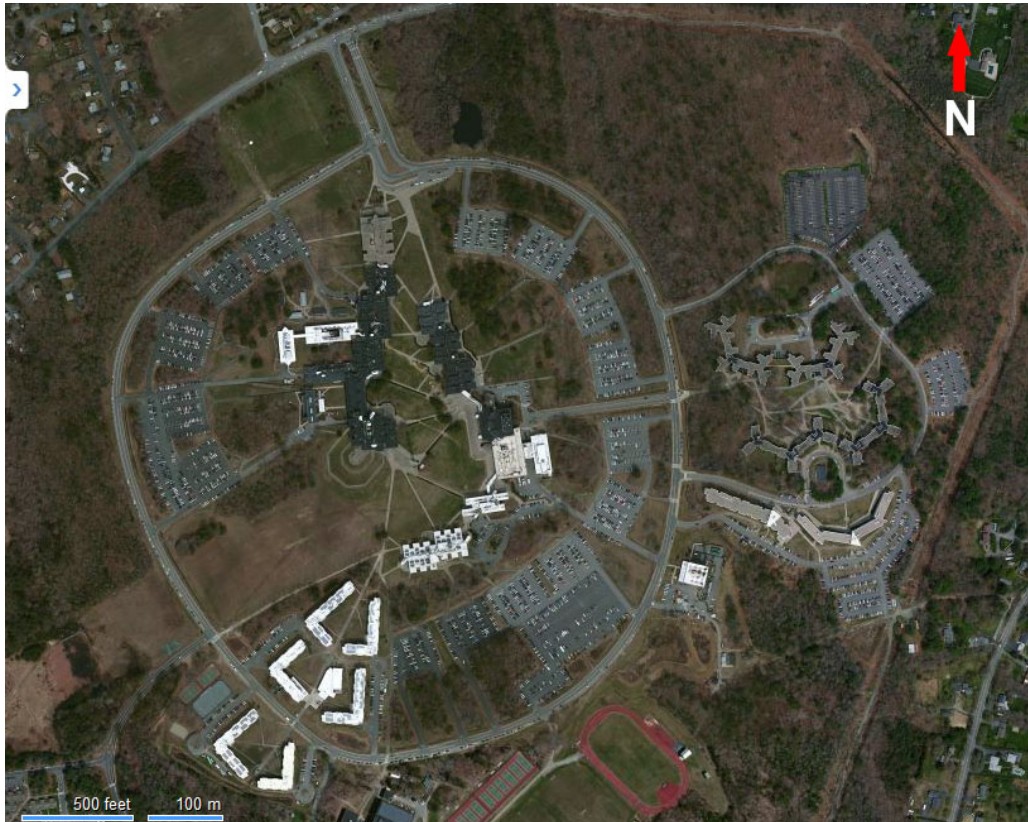


Figure 22 - UMass Dartmouth (SMTI) aerial, showing designed movement patterns at the campus



Figure 23 - Covered portion of one raised walkway type at SUNY Old Westbury

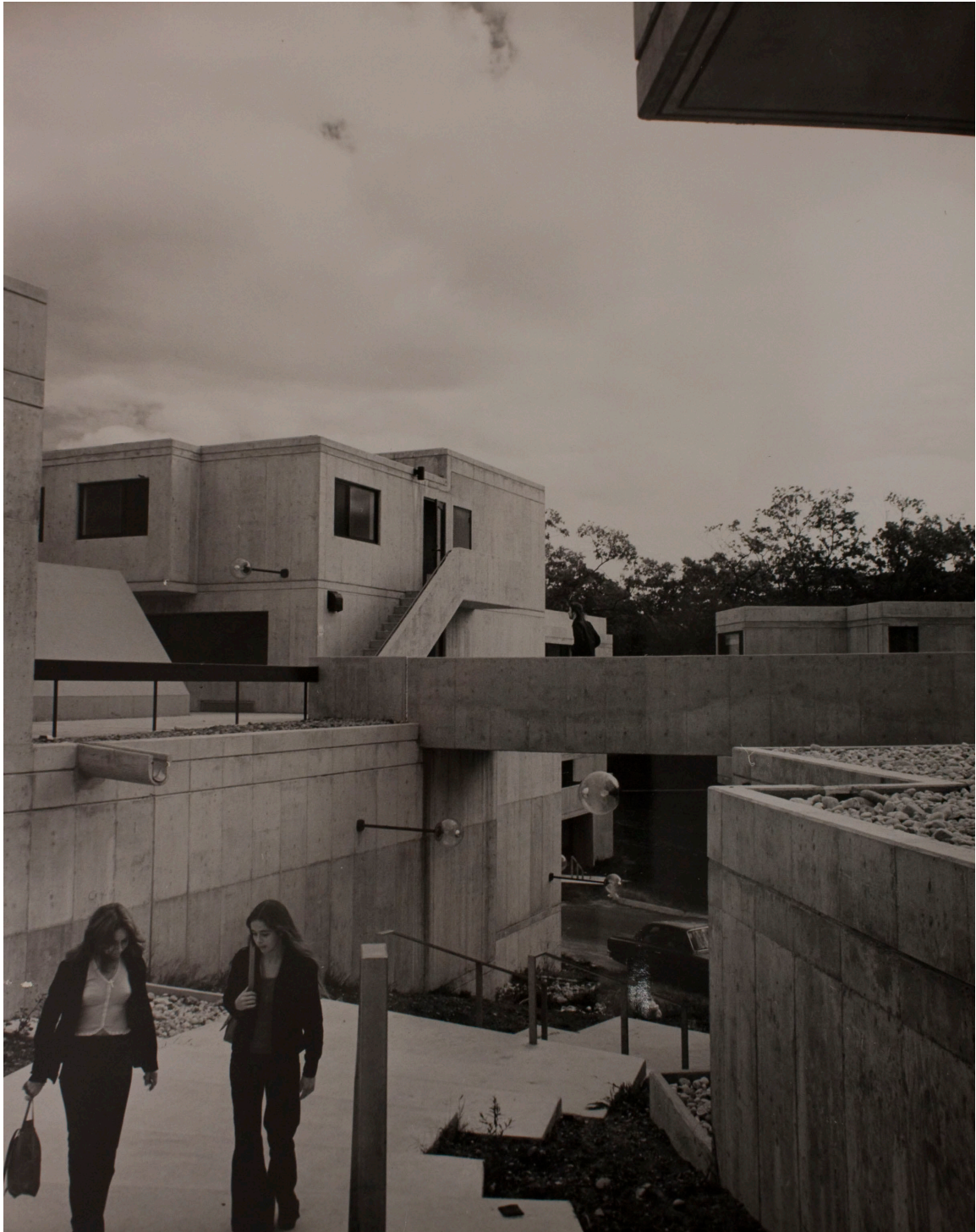


Figure 24 - Second raised walkway type at SUNY Old Westbury, and the compression of movement underneath it as the user approaches the core



Figure 25 - Second raised walkway type at SUNY Old Westbury, and the compression of movement underneath it as the user approaches the core

limited to SUNY Old Westbury, but also to other Brutalist campuses where the raised walkways and sky bridges are used as major design elements. Lane Community College's Main Campus in Eugene, Oregon, built in 1966-1968 and designed by architecture firm Balzhiser, Seder, and Rhodes, is an example of a landscape where the raised walkways are vital to the architectural vision and connect the components of campus.⁸⁵ The significance of these elements in the design can be best seen in the 1970 movie *Getting Straight*. As the movie opens, the concrete landscape of LCC becomes the scenery of the movie, and its character comes across through the angles used to film the movie [See Figure 26]. The masses of people making their way throughout campus illustrates the effect of the landscape on movement, though it is exaggerated for both comedic and political purposes. While the portrayal of the Brutalist campus in the movie as both a positive and negative can be further explored, the importance of the raised walkways as a significant feature and tool for



Figure 26 - Image from *Getting Straight*, showcasing Lane Community College's architecture

⁸⁵ University of Oregon, "Building Oregon," accessed April 30, 2013, http://boundless.uoregon.edu/cdm4/item_viewer.php?CISOROOT=/archpnw&CISOPTR=15732&CISOBX=1&REC=1.

connectivity and movement is without doubt. LCC faces similar, upcoming plans to remove raised elements of the campus like SUNY Old Westbury.

The 2011 Long Range Planning Report illustrates the proposals to change the current Brutalist landscape between the buildings into quads [See Figure 27].⁸⁶ While the quad is undeniably a favorite collegiate landscape, by removing the connecting, raised walkways, the campus loses the elements that define it and elevate the significance of the surrounding architecture.

Another comparison can be made between the aforementioned Cypress College, whose core was bi-level and was removed. The difference between Cypress College and LCC, arguably, is that LCC's proposed alterations are much more extensive, and the walkways are more about connectivity than large, open spaces. Also, the aesthetic present in most of LCC's buildings is more reliant upon the walkways than Cypress where the strong vertical buildings have more powerful stand-alone imagery [See Figure 28 and 29].

Incorporation of New Elements in an Interlocked Landscape

Connectivity and Brutalism go hand-in-hand, and when new elements are placed in such an interlocked landscape, it becomes another part of the primary preservation dilemma. At SUNY Old Westbury the addition may be just as dramatic as the demolition. It will be a challenge to potential architects to avoid the appearance of an alien presence in the Academic Village. Considering how to

⁸⁶ The Urban Design Lab of the University of Oregon, "Lane Community College: Long Range Planning 2011 Report," 10.



Figure 27 - Lane Community College's proposed alterations from master plan



Figure 28 - Overview of Lane Community College's interconnected architecture



Figure 29 - Character of Cypress College's buildings

position the building so it isn't a disconnected element will be important in the thought process moving forward.

Outside of the discussion of aesthetic, which in itself is a complex issue, there are ways to minimize the disconnect when adding new elements. For example, incorporating raised walkways into other parts of the Academic Village can help retain a sense of connectivity. Examining campuses other than the SUNY Old Westbury case study is the best way to address incorporation of new elements within an interlocked landscape. The comparative studies have tangible examples of new incorporated elements both good and bad.

Evergreen State College is a great example of the dilemma and approaches to incorporating new elements within the Brutalist landscape, with both good and bad solutions. Cited as one of America's most beautiful campuses by *Forbes*, Evergreen State College defies the typical categorization of Brutalist architecture as ugly.⁸⁷ The college began in the early 1970s, and a range of architects designed the buildings during those years rather than the usual singular architect or firm. Despite the variety of architects involved, one cohesive campus developed under the guidance of the original master plan. In order to limit the sprawl of the campus, the area known as the "Core" serves as the urban center of campus.⁸⁸ From the hardscape of the Core's center, the built landscape slowly dissipates into the forest.

⁸⁷ "America's Most Beautiful College Campuses," last accessed April 2, 2014, <http://www.forbes.com/pictures/ekkf45i/evergreen-state-college-olympia-wash/>.

⁸⁸ Evergreen State College, "Buildings at Evergreen," last accessed 5/29/2014, <http://www.evergreen.edu/facilities/buildings/core>.

A new building, Seminar II, was added to Evergreen State College in 2004.⁸⁹ Mahlum Architects placed the building within a wooded section that had been between the Red Square and buildings on the east side of campus [See Figure 30]. The building works well within this setting because it doesn't disrupt any important movement. It is complimentary to the adjacent Red Square, and it works with the concept of the campus dissipating into the forest. Another new element was the addition to the top of the Communications Building [See Figure 31]. The colorful "hat" on the building does not overpower the existing building, but compliments it by being a bold spot of color. Both of the above modifications to the plan are low impact and respect the existing built environment and plan. The Brutalist vision through connectivity and movement has been retained.

There are, however, future plans for Evergreen State College that begin to propose deviation from key features. The first example of planned, poor incorporation of elements is the proposed addition to the lecture hall. As a central image on the campus, and a uniquely shaped building with a great example of a Brutalist, concrete finish [See Figure 32], the proposal to cover the existing building would completely change the centrally located area. Alteration of Evergreen State College's core almost begins to correlate with the same issues at SUNY Old Westbury. The central areas of Brutalist campuses are highly significant and therefore important to retain because they are the heart of the connectivity. Being prime real estate, they are continually targeted.

Future additions target other key features of Evergreen State College's

⁸⁹ Evergreen State College, "Buildings at Evergreen."

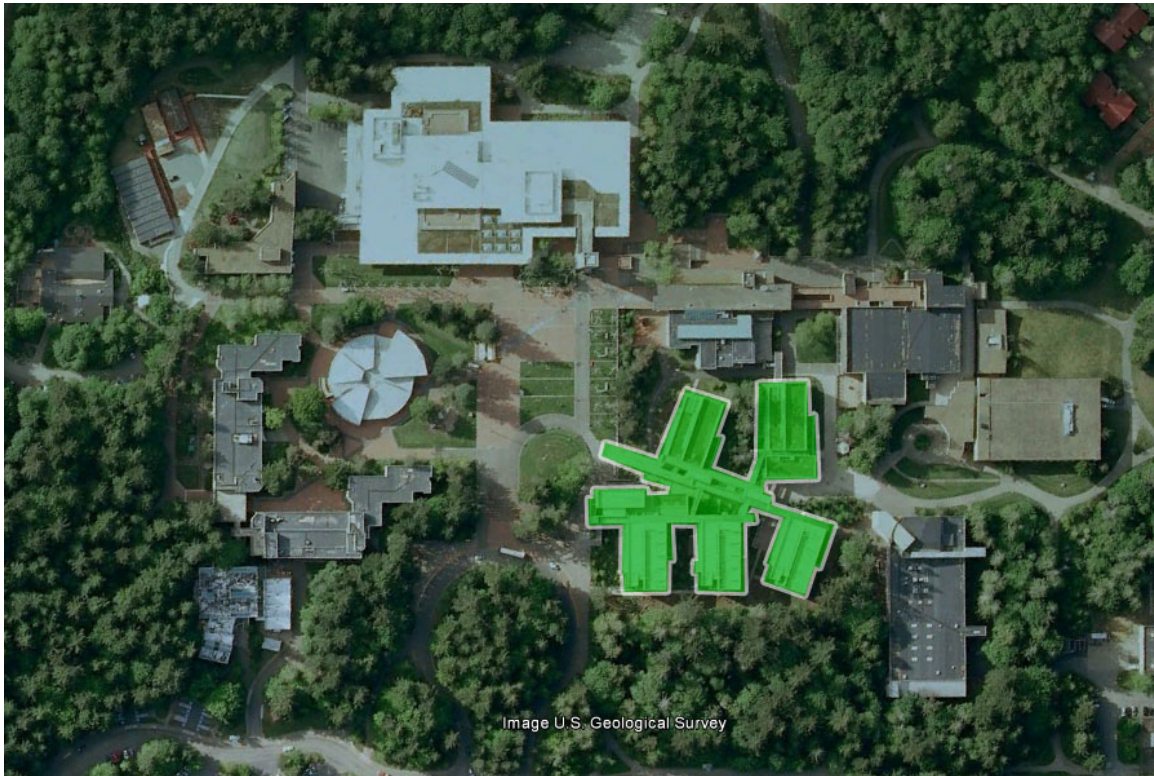


Figure 30 - Seminar II Building (in green), and its position at Evergreen State College



Figure 31 - Addition placed on top of building at Evergreen State College



Figure 32 - Central Lecture Building at Evergreen State College
Brutalist character. The College Recreation Center, the Brutalist phase built in 1972 by Robert Billsbrough Price FAIA & Associates, exhibits some important design elements like exposed, mechanical systems and a raised walkway to the College Activities Building. In the master plan, the significant Brutalist features are labeled as detracting to the campus environment, and because of this may be targeted as well.

Golden West College (1966) in Huntington Beach, California addresses the problem of adding new buildings within a very monotone and connected built environment by placing new buildings outside of the central areas. The new Learning Resource Center/Library is located at the edge of campus where the parking lots meet it [See Figure 33]. The location was once a path into campus, but with the new building it blocks what would have been an open view into parking



Figure 33 - Learning Resource Center/Library at Golden West College and its placement on the edge of campus



Figure 34 - Golden West College's landscape

lots. There are positives and negatives to this approach, but this approach avoided impact upon the central areas of the campus, keeping the landscape elements intact in a very landscape-centric campus [See Figure 34]. Because of the simplistic architecture, the negative spaces on the campus rather than the built environment really define the campus, and even though a movement system was disrupted with the Learning Resource Center/Library, it is an effective incorporation of a new element within a campus. The drawback to this solution is the campus becomes less inviting to the pedestrian.

Sustainability

SUNY Old Westbury and the Brutalist campus suffer from the residual effect of car culture. They are typically located outside of dense, urban areas and their layout is often centralized on the campus grounds, with an exterior perimeter of parking lots. The parking lot “tundra” located on the perimeter of the campus functions, whether intended or not, to encourage travel via cars and discourages walking to the often disconnected campuses. SUNY Old Westbury is an example of this effect. The original Academic Village features a prominent parking lot that sets back the complex from the road. Nearby development further aggravates this issue, since it is primarily suburban housing, meaning that this will be a heavy commuter college. Some of this issue is hard to avoid because of the shorter-term community college curriculum, which does not necessarily encourage any student’s to make housing investments for the temporary arrangement.

An example of the car-centric focus in a city environment is Cypress College

in the city of Cypress, California (located in the greater metropolitan area of Los Angeles). A circular drive around campus creates a psychological edge to the campus. The parking lots, which are connected to the drive, further emphasize the psychological edge [See Figure XVIII]. An article for Miami-Dade County's North Campus even describes the reasoning for this common phenomenon as "parking areas and buildings are so disposed, however, that no car is ever parked farther than a five-minute walk from a building."⁹⁰

With sustainability as a trending topic Brutalist campuses are being forced to reevaluate these issues. Campuses, like Eugene, Oregon's LCC, have programs that are transitioning to downtown Eugene. While the appearance of LCC downtown does not substitute for the main campus, long-term transitioning of disjointed campuses is an interesting prospect to examine, even if it may not be a plausible option.

⁹⁰ Thompson, "Community Colleges," 155-170.



Figure 35 - Cypress College's separation from neighboring development with parking lots and ring road

CHAPTER IV

PROPOSED PROCESSES FOR MANAGEMENT

Analyzing SUNY Old Westbury and other comparative studies has presented evidence of the primary preservation dilemma the campuses face. Each has unique, but comparable, problems that need to be addressed if the significance of the campus is to be retained. The following proposed processes for management hopes to begin a dialogue to address the adaptation of the campuses as they age. The processes, however, do not mean the campus needs to be a fly in amber. Rehabilitation and adaptive reuse are more applicable concepts within the field of preservation when it comes to the ever-changing campus environment. Preservation can instead be limited to key character-defining features, spaces, and buildings rather than the environment as a whole. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties outlines the differences between the four main preservation approaches, which includes the concepts rehabilitation and preservation.⁹¹ Rehabilitation can be difficult because of the holistic nature of the Brutalist campus, but respectful adaptation can exist.

⁹¹ *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*, last accessed May 14, 2015, <http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/standguide/>.

There are seven processes this thesis proposes that Brutalist campuses should use to begin to protect their historic character. The processes listed in this chapter are specific approaches that are especially important for Brutalist campus management. They are designed to build upon existing planning frameworks to preserve historic resources on campuses. It is recommended that other general processes not mentioned in this thesis also be implemented, such as creating a budget and timeline, identifying participants, and educating those participants on the process of a preservation plan. Education may include involvement in seminars offered by the National Preservation Institute, such as “Preservation Planning for Campuses, Complexes, and Installations.”⁹² Involving preservation consultants may be another excellent way to ensure appropriate steps are taken.

It is recommended that literature addressing items such as preservation plans be read to address more general, or procedural steps to creating a plan, or for other information to include in its development. Scholarly papers, such as “An Analysis of Campus Planning Strategies: Wesleyan University’s Center for the Arts,” and example plans mentioned in this chapter should also be examined for comparisons and ideas, since different Brutalist campuses may need varying approaches.⁹³

⁹² National Preservation Institute, “Preservation Planning for Campuses, Complexes, and Installations,” last accessed May 11, 2014, <http://www.npi.org/sem-presplan.html>.

⁹³ Gretchen A. Hilyard, “An Analysis of Campus Planning Strategies: Wesleyan University’s Center for the Arts” (Thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 2006), 55-71.

The Processes

Process One: Research History of the Campus

The first step seems basic, but it is important not to overlook for several reasons. Understanding where the campus falls within the spectrum of Brutalism's relationship with the collegiate environment is the first reason. The college could be an experimental offshoot similar to SUNY Old Westbury and Evergreen State College, or it could be developed for underprivileged or working-class citizens that could not afford four-year colleges. The plan and design of the campus will most likely portray the varied audiences, and its design significance might be derived partially from its background history.

Another reason why the individual history of the campus should not be overlooked is because of the variation of architectural ideas of the Brutalist movement. Brutalist campuses have similar ethics and aesthetics, but the approaches taken to reach that point differ. For example, the hill-town influence of SUNY Old Westbury is a relatively specific design concept that correlates with the larger interconnected movement theme of Brutalist campuses. Different aspects, therefore, need to be considered when determining how to retain specific architectural visions outside of the generalized Brutalist campus's overarching philosophy.

Discovering the intentions for growth of the design also can help one understand and evaluate the significance of this specific campus elements. Gunnar Birkerts collegiate designs are examples of this.⁹⁴ At his Brutalist reimagining of

⁹⁴ Schmertz, "Designed for Mobility, Both Social and Physical," 129-137.

Tougaloo, a historically black college in Mississippi, three seemingly alien buildings sit among other vastly different gable-roofed buildings [See Figure 36]. The initial impression seems a strange, disconnected concept, but when Birkerts drawings of Tougaloo are examined, the intended, cohesive vision is much more obvious. The placement of the buildings do have reasoning, but it was gambling that the future would appropriately respond, something that does not always happen. Glen Oaks Community College in Michigan is another design by Birkerts that might seem strange at first glance.⁹⁵ The dense, concentrated form of the campus doesn't give very much indication of the intended axial development, outside of the unique, arrow-shaped parking lot [See Figure 37]. When the original stages of construction are examined, the clear geometric, and axial, growth pattern is recognized and the vision of the current form is clearer.

Another point to research and to draw upon are the social components of the plan. It is important to understand the non-physical components, such as experimental ideas the founders of the campus drew upon or words they might have used in formation of the campuses. Also, intended movement of the users and interaction concepts employed by Brutalist architects are significant. These are equally important to the physical fabric of the campuses and are part of the cultural components of Brutalist campuses. When evaluating, preserving, or modifying the campus these should be kept in mind.

⁹⁵ Schmertz, "Designed for Mobility, Both Social and Physical," 129-137.

Process Two: Conduct a Survey of Historic Resources on Campus

With the understanding of the specific and broad historical contexts, like the briefly described Birkerts examples, a survey of historic resources on campus can be taken. Conducting a survey will give the planning office a greater understanding of what elements they have that are historically significant. Generally elements will derive their significance from being connected with the original plan. One can begin with a reconnaissance level survey of the resources followed by an intensive level survey of elements or spaces with the most significance (both survey types are described in detail in National Register Bulletin 24, Chapter 1).⁹⁶ The reconnaissance level will allow a broad overview of all elements, historic and non-historic, while an intensive level survey will allow for a better understanding of the factors that make specific spaces important and how to retain them.

With a Brutalist campus, which is so interconnected, it will be especially important to include the interconnecting components alongside the buildings and spaces. Character-defining elements and spaces, as seen in Chapters II and III, are vital components of the campus's significance due to the often-common construction date for all the historic buildings. Sometimes repetitive design aesthetic and unornamented forms increase the vitality of the described components as well, and the components become, in a sense, a sprawled-out ornamentation for the buildings. Approaching the components as surveyed resources will ensure elements like raised walkways, plazas, and circulation will be addressed in addition to the buildings.

⁹⁶ Patricia L. Parker et al., *National Register Bulletin 24: Guidelines for Local Surveys* (Washington D.C.: National Park Service, 1985).

When addressing repetitive buildings and spaces of the plan, it will important to address them according to several factors. Much like a residential neighborhood of cookie-cutter housing, the buildings with the major alterations to character-defining features can be considered non-contributing. There is another factor, however, to address in addition to typical applications. Location within the historic campus can be the determining factor in whether parts of the Brutalist campus are more important to retain than others. Core buildings will be more important, as seen in the SUNY Old Westbury Case study, and some peripheral buildings may be deemed less significant in conveying the overall significance of the campus if there is a pressing need for alteration.

Since campus expansion is a recurring issue, it may be better to locate new alterations to the campus plan on the edge of the interlocked Brutalist campus rather than disjoint and separate the components that are much more significant when connected. However, the existing plan needs to be kept in mind so new buildings don't just become unorganized blobs outside of the core. Planned expansion of the existing plan can assist in this. A ranking system for the campus may also be of use in determining whether they are contributing or non-contributing to the historic character and to what degree.

A survey of plaza spaces, among other open spaces, should be conducted as well to determine if vast concrete plazas, piazzas, or other Brutalist features are significant enough to retain in favor of altered use. Specific characteristics should be identified, evaluated, and also compared to the broader Brutalist movement. This will allow an understanding of what space-specific characteristics are significant



Figure 36 - Aerial of Tougaloo College



Figure 37 - Aerial of Glen Oaks Community College

to retain. The National Park Service's seven aspects of integrity should be utilized in conjunction with the significance and history of the Brutalist campus to help make justifiable decisions. Those aspects are location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.⁹⁷ Here are some example questions of the seven aspects applied to Brutalist campus spaces and elements, which can be adjusted to address buildings as well:

Location: [Most likely not a concern for Brutalist campus spaces because of their heavy forms that are not typically moved] Are the spaces and components in the same area as intended?

Design: Does the space still help to convey the experimental and social ethics of Brutalist design or the architect's intentions?

Setting: Is the space still interconnected with its surroundings to convey movement and connectivity of Brutalist design?

Materials: Are unfinished, or rough, concrete surfaces still present?

Workmanship: Can board-forms, and other construction techniques, still be seen in the concretes? Are mechanical systems still exposed?

Feeling: Do the sculptural forms still convey truth in design? Does the space feel holistic and uninterrupted?

Association: Does the space convey significance related to the Brutalist campus and the collegiate themes the 1950s to 1970s?

⁹⁷ National Park Service, "Section VII: How to Evaluate the Integrity of a Property," in *National Register Bulletin 15* (1997), 44-45.

A more in depth look into landscape factors is important as well. A Guide to Cultural Landscapes Report describes the different factors of landscapes.⁹⁸ They are Natural Systems and Features, Spatial Organization, Land Use, Cultural Traditions, Cluster Arrangement, Circulation, Topography, Vegetation, Buildings and Structures, Views and Vistas, Constructed Water Features, Small-Scale Features, and Archaeological Sites.

Much like Cypress College's decision to remove part of its bi-level piazza layer because of lack of use, among other issues addressed in Chapter III, informed and educated decisions on whether or not removal is justified needs to occur and new elements need to respect the existing landscape. Historic analysis may not have been a factor in Cypress College's decision at that point in time, but it now should be taken into account with the aging of the Brutalist campus around and past the fifty-year mark.

Process Three: Develop a Preservation Plan

The third step utilizes the information gleaned from the survey of historic resources to develop a preservation plan, or preservation-focused section, of the master plan. The plan allows for a set-in-place system that can help guide and give campus-specific processes, design guidelines, and/or treatment approaches for Brutalist campuses. For example, the University of Oregon has "Policy 7: Architectural Style and Historic Preservation" in its *2011 Campus Plan*, as well as

⁹⁸ Robert R. Page, *A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Process, and Techniques* (Washington D.C.: National Park Service, 1998), 53.

a 2008 *Campus Heritage Landscape Plan*.^{99, 100} Both documents, and their relative components, address how to respectively add, alter, or preserve buildings and spaces on the campus.

Because of most Brutalist campuses' age, it is generally expected that their master plans do not have specific sections addressing historic resources. Since they are reaching the age where they are becoming historic, Brutalist campuses need to begin to address their cultural origins and the architecture, spaces, and features that represent that history. The campuses might not all be past the fifty-year historic mark, but they are very near to it. Having relevant staff to address preservation planning, if financially feasible, is important in ensuring long-term resource management.

Brutalist colleges of later years, like the early 1970s, can be described under "Fragile and Short-Lived Resources in *National Register Bulletin 22*."¹⁰¹ While Brutalist colleges are far from "fragile," they fall under a circumstance where, "by their nature, are subject to circumstances that destroy their integrity before 50 years have elapsed. Such resources are viewed by scholars and the public as 'old' even before 50 years have elapsed."¹⁰² At colleges that weren't necessarily Brutalist-planned from the beginning but had incorporated large-scale Brutalist design that

⁹⁹ Campus Planning and Real Estate, "Policy 7: Architectural Style and Historic Preservation," in *2011 University of Oregon Campus Plan* (Eugene: University of Oregon, 2011), 49-52.

¹⁰⁰ Campus Planning and Real Estate, ed., *Campus Heritage Landscape Plan* (Eugene: University of Oregon, July 2008).

¹⁰¹ Marcella Sherfy and W. Ray Luce, *National Register Bulletin 22: Guidelines for Evaluating and Nominating Properties that Have Achieved Significance Within the Past Fifty Years* (Washington D.C.: National Park Service, 1998), 5.

¹⁰² Sherfy and Luce, *National Register Bulletin 22*, 5.

meshed with existing fabric, for example Tougaloo College, the campus plan should also determine what is the defining character of the campus and what should be a more important influence on any modification of the campus plan. Tougaloo College, however, is a rarity.

Stanford University has a series of preservation guidelines in their plan that can serve as examples of how to approach historic resources on campus. While Stanford University has a much more established history with involvement from Frederick Law Olmstead in the creation of its plan, it has several useful documents that would be beneficial for any Brutalist campus to adapt as a policy.¹⁰³ The University Architect/Campus Planning & Design Office's "Historic Stewardship" document has some processes that can be taken outside of their Stanford context. One of the processes is a list of the University Architect Office's responsibilities.¹⁰⁴ The responsibilities mentioned are:

1. Compatible use
2. Retain and preserve historic character
3. Recognize historic period
4. Retain and preserve significant changes
5. Preserve distinctive features
6. Repair rather than replace deteriorated historic features
7. Clean using the gentlest means possible

¹⁰³ Karen Bartholomew, "Stanford Campus: A Blend of Spaciousness and Enclosed Quad," *Stanford Historical Society* Vol. 10, No. 2 (Winter 1986), 3-4.

¹⁰⁴ University Architect/Campus Planning Office, "Historic Stewardship," last accessed 5/15/2014, http://lbre.stanford.edu/architect/sites/all/lbre-shared/files/docs_public/process_%20historic%20buildings.pdf.

8. Protect and preserve significant archaeological resources

9. Compatibility

10. Reversibility

Most of the above responsibilities can be apply to Brutalist campuses. The eighth responsibility might not seem to have much relevance with most Brutalist campuses, but should still be noted for several reasons. First, though it might be presumed that large-scale civil works might have destroyed existing prehistoric resources under the landscape, it has been found that disturbance was less than anticipated or there were pockets of undisturbed soil in numerous cases.¹⁰⁵ Second, campuses past the fifty-year mark could have archaeological sites associated with them, as defined by federal laws such as Section 106.¹⁰⁶ Overall though, examining the overarching responsibilities that Stanford addresses, rather than taking specific guidelines, lets the colleges adapt their own guidelines as relevant to their campuses.

The relatively strict policies of the more well known historic campuses might not be the right fit for some of the less-significant examples of Brutalist collegiate designs, as determined by Process One and Two. Each campus-planning department needs to weigh the pros and cons of existing plans and try to incorporate one that both protects historic character and works with the campus's goal. The plan should also be compatible with the processes proposed in this thesis.

¹⁰⁵ Matthew Diedrich (Oregon State Historic Preservation Office Archaeologist) email discussion with the author, May 15, 2014.

¹⁰⁶ National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 Public Law 89-665; 16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.* (1966).

Process Four: Regularly Maintain Facilities

Regularly maintaining historic facilities prevents aging Brutalist campuses from having functionality issues and keeps the buildings usable. Stereotypes or opinions on the appearance of Brutalist forms both contribute and is contributed to by deferred maintenance. At SUNY Old Westbury maintenance issues appear throughout the historic Brutalist portion. Although portions slated for demolition may have contributed to the current condition, it is more than likely that this was a pattern leading up to that decision [See Figures 38 and 39]. Deferred maintenance has been proven as a factor leading up to demolition.

Brutalist components within campuses can also be subject to several types of maintenance issues for the same reasons they are significant: their sculptural forms. Crosley Tower at the University of Cincinnati illustrates an extreme, but relevant example.¹⁰⁷ Steps should be taken to identify and evaluate possible solutions to existing problems for examples like Crosley Tower. Sometimes, however, it may not be financially feasible to retain elements within the Brutalist campus.

Cypress College is another example of maintenance issues. In 2002, Cypress College had a structural and safety issue with its bi-level piazzas. A large portion of the piazza's railing and attached concrete fell, but luckily no one was injured.¹⁰⁸ Water damage had rusted the connecting portions over the years. It was repaired and extra measures were taken to assure it would not happen again, but the piazza's structural issues were the catalyst for removal of the core piazza, as mentioned

¹⁰⁷ Adam Koogler, "Cincinnati's Four-Headed Monster," in *Clog: Brutalism*, ed. Kyle May et al. (Canada: Clog, June 2013), 58.

¹⁰⁸ Margie Lewis, "Piazza Railing Falls; No Injuries," @Cypress, April 1, 2002, 1.

earlier.

Process Five: Transition New Elements

It is important to consider how to connect or transition new elements into the Brutalist campuses when they are proposed. This step was partially addressed within the Incorporation of New Elements in an Interlocked Landscape section of Chapter III. Campuses must work with the flow of the transition of Brutalist movement patterns and ensure they aren't suddenly interrupted. Placement of new elements should be in non-intrusive areas that were pre-determined not to alter the historical significance of the campuses to a large degree. Spaces should not be abruptly different between any new buildings or structures, but rather responsive to existing design, much like how Cypress College responded to the campanile in the alteration of its core. The new building also responded to the general aesthetic and layout of the surrounding buildings and spaces.

In examples like Evergreen State College, where the concrete landscape transitions into nature, ensure that same theme is present in new architecture. The University of Oregon, because of its extreme stylistic diversity, showcases both good and bad transitional elements, but also exemplifies why that university has listed in its 2008 Campus Heritage Plan policy refinements, "Integrate Historic Landscape Characteristics into New Elements and Areas."¹⁰⁹ The University of Oregon is far from a Brutalist Campus, but it showcases the importance of proposed Process Five in a longer-term scenario. It is something Brutalist campuses aren't yet experiencing,

¹⁰⁹ Campus Planning and Real Estate, ed., *Campus Heritage Landscape Plan*, 12-13.



Figure 38 - Corrosion on metal rail



Figure 39 - Organic growth in the gutter

where increased stylistic differences can, if not appropriately addressed, hinder historic character.

The University of Oregon contains examples and elements of Second Empire, Greek Revival, Beaux Arts, Georgian Revival, Italianate, Italian Renaissance Revival, Romanesque, Art Deco, Modernism, Brutalism, Post-Modernism, Contextualism, and “New” Modernism. How then does the University of Oregon define its historic character so it can integrate “historic” landscape characteristics into new elements and areas? To establish what the character of the University of Oregon was, three eras were identified, the Inception Era (1876-1913) and the Lawrence/Cuthbert Era (1914-1946), and the Mid-Century Era (1947-1974).¹¹⁰

Analysis of the different areas and landscapes determined the primary historic characteristics of the campus, and when the primary features are compared to the secondary and tertiary, it is clear that the Inception Era and the Lawrence/Cuthbert Era created the main defining characteristics of the campus.¹¹¹ Primary landscape features included the 1914 campus plan, the Memorial Quad, the Women’s Memorial Quad, and more. Elements around those example landscape features also tended to be more significant. It is clear that the orchestrator of the 1914 campus plan, Ellis F. Lawrence, created and expanded upon the initial Inception Era plan to create what would define the historic character: axes and open, beaux-art planned-green spaces flanked by primarily brick buildings. New elements and spaces, therefore, should attempt to integrate and transition as to not interrupt

¹¹⁰ Campus Planning and Real Estate, ed., *Campus Heritage Landscape Plan*, 28-38.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 47.

spaces of primary significance.

A great brief case study at the University of Oregon is the Lillis Business Complex (2003), a contextualist building that attempts to adapt to its location on the Memorial Quad.¹¹² Although not Brutalist, it is an example of new construction in a sensitive, historic space. From a stylistic perspective, the Lillis Building Complex echoes the characteristics of the buildings around it, which helps appropriately transition it into the campus plan [See Figure 40]. The concrete plaza space with inter-dispersed plantings appropriately transitions from the quad across the road to the main entrance. At the rear of the building, it is not intrusive to the significant Deady Hall Walk Axis or the landscape around it. In that sense, it was sensitive. However, it lies on top of the Dads' Gate Axis, which was intended to be a clear connection to the Memorial Quad. The building attempted to respond to that by having a large glass atrium that was intended as a visual connection, but the reflectivity of the glass does not work with the original intention. For that reason, it also does not integrate into the historic character of campus. Despite the inconsistencies, it still was an attempt at transitioning a new element, which is the goal of Process Five.

Process Six: Make Spaces Welcoming and Useable

When there is a lack of inviting elements in a Brutalist space, it amplifies the starkness of the space [See Figure 41]. If the spaces are displayed as uninviting, the users of the campus most likely will regard them as such. Adding outdoor furniture,

¹¹² University of Oregon Libraries, "Lillis Building Complex," last accessed 5/15/2014, <https://library.uoregon.edu/guides/architecture/oregon/lillis.html>.

shade, art, and greenery can turn the once desolate spaces into places deemed useable by the campuses users. The addition of the described elements can also be a reversible, non-intrusive way of making the spaces loveable, and a great way to encourage continued use of the spaces.

Creating shade with greenery may mean implementation of irrigation systems to ensure healthy growth. Designating more square cutouts in plazas to increase foliage will ensure that the spaces can be used on hot, sunny days. Bench seating that is complimentary to the environment can even be added underneath the new shade. By utilizing methods like those described, the overall image of the plazas and courtyards can be modified but not lose its character. Other more extreme transformations of spaces have been conducted at campuses to make them attractive.

To better understand approaches of adapting existing spaces, UMass Dartmouth will serve as an in-depth example. There were both positives and negatives with the approach, but in the end it created a striking space that was usable. At UMass Dartmouth a glass enclosure renovation/addition, or “atrium,” was placed over both the west and east sides of the connection between the library and the rest of the campus.¹¹³ In addition, the library interior was revamped, adding ADA-approved ramps, lighting, new furniture, and carpets. The renovations are an example of low-scale versus large-scale space modification. Starting with the simpler library interior renovation, these changes are far from radical and will likely

¹¹³ Fred A. Bernstein, “Wrestling with Rudolph,” *Architectural Record*, Vol. 201, No. 2 (February 2013): 70.

increase the usability of the space, therefore allowing for continued use rather than demolition. Jennifer McGrory, associate project manager for Austin Architects, choice of reds, oranges, and purples as a color palette calls to mind Rudolph's Christian Science Center at the University of Illinois, Urbana, and are an accurate reflection of his aesthetic.¹¹⁴ Everything else added is a matter of practicality and poses no threat to the design concept, and in some ways enhances the effect, as the new lighting emphasizes the concrete's texture. Librarian Catherine Gardner also noted that the building is much more popular now, making the library renovation easy to call a success with the above information.¹¹⁵

The more extreme glass enclosure portion should also be considered a success (though perhaps not to the same exact degree as the library renovation), because, first and foremost, it was able to keep the building from demolition. So the next question is, how was the original concept altered to make it appealing enough to keep? Due to the dark enclosed nature of the link, designLAB, the firm that worked on the space, sought to make it more usable as per the wishes of the university. Librarian Gardner claimed that the space below was "only useful to skateboarders and students playing the live-action game Humans Versus Zombies."¹¹⁶ The solution was therefore determined to enclose the area in glass to utilize the expanse as reading and meeting rooms, addressing the issue of light and openness. However, by doing so some of Rudolph's ideas became somewhat

¹¹⁴ Bernstein, "Wrestling with Rudolph," 74.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*



Figure 40 - Lillis Business Complex at the University of Oregon



Figure 41 - Uninviting space at Lane Community College

compromised.

The first compromised viewpoint is his rebellious aesthetic against the simplicity of the glass-box design. One would wonder what Rudolph would say seeing a giant glass enclosure over his complex forms. However, there is a positive experience that comes out of this simple glass-box. The original interior forms were retained so people are in close contact with them. Despite this, Fred A. Bernstein brought up a comparison in his article on the renovation to the temporary enclosure of the statue at the center of New York's Columbus Square, which brings up a second compromised viewpoint.¹¹⁷ This second compromise is on scale. Since Rudolph designed the campus to be at a "fast vehicle" scale that could be seen from a distance, this glass-boxed segment completely loses that aspect. This loss of an ability to see the architect's, or artist's, work from a distance was also the problem with the Bernstein's comparison of the Columbus Square statue, which lost that aspect for a time period. The more successful side of the building is the west side where the glass atrium is not as tall or prominent, and where there is a gesture of articulation with the stainless steel sunscreens, although nothing near the amount of articulation it covers.

Overall, despite the compromises, the renovation is a limited success because the size and repetitive nature of the campus is a helpful factor in this situation. Because it affects one of a multitude of buildings, a renovation of this size does not completely change the character of the campus. The glass-box design, though perhaps not appropriate on an architect's building that made it a

¹¹⁷ Bernstein, "Wrestling with Rudolph," 70.

point to rebel against those principles, at least allowed the buildings character to be preserved underneath it. If, in the future, more appreciation for Rudolph is gained, the renovation has a degree of reversibility to it. The plainness of the glass also emphasizes Rudolph's articulations in the interior portion like a museum of sculpture, as well as on the outside. However, Brutalist campuses should not jump to the conclusion that everything should be revamped and placed in atriums. There must be a degree of control in proceeding with renovating spaces, but in a time period where Brutalist buildings are threatened for demolition, the renovation at SMTI provides example methods for doing so.

Some lessons can be learned for other buildings that face threatened status. The first is that an interior renovation, like that of the library, can be the first step in changing attitudes about the building. Creating a brighter interior through lights and colors can change perceptions. Another thing learned from SMTI is that the support of a firm like designLAB is vital in convincing the people in charge to think of reuse rather than demolition. One last thing learned is that there might have to be compromise to save a building, but the goal is to limit that compromise in a way that keeps the architect's original concept.

Process Seven: Outreach

Not only is it important for the planning office to understand the significance so the design is not compromised, but the users of the campus as well. Brutalist architecture, unlike Greek classicism or Gothic architecture, is not an instantly recognizable design aesthetic to most because it does not have a long or established

history, and this affects popular support. Without a base support, much like a building's foundation, the Brutalist design will crumble. Increasing the public knowledge of the designs will allow for better management down the line, instead of allowing reactionary suspicions to run rampant, such as believing Brutalism was supposed to intimidate and discourage student gathering.¹¹⁸ Other rumors were spread because of Brutalism's aesthetic as well, including one at Paul Rudolph's famous Yale Art and Architecture Building where students supposedly tried to burn down the building.¹¹⁹ While these phenomena are now a part of the mystique of Brutalist architecture, whether or not a positive or negative one, there still needs to be more understanding on what the real design intention was, and not just dystopian fallacies. In an age of information, it is crucial to follow the trends, and making sure that truthful historic information is readily available.

A brief history section on the college's website is the first step for campuses that have not yet done so. The well-known UMass Dartmouth has a great website for example, but this has been propelled by the popularity of architect Paul Rudolph.¹²⁰ A website, however, is only helpful if someone is searching for it. To encourage the spread of information, there are several techniques that can be utilized. One method might be adding brief information to sign designs. A student waiting outside the building, for example, might be intrigued by something like a QR Code next to an

¹¹⁸ J. Bryan Lowder, "Were Brutalist Buildings on College Campuses Really Designed to Thwart Student Riots?" *Slate Design Blog*, last modified October 18, 2013, http://www.slate.com/blogs/the_eye/2013/10/18/campus_brutalism_were_the_buildings_designed_to_thwart_student_riots.html.

¹¹⁹ Mark Alden Branch, "The Building That Won't Go Away," *Yale Alumni Magazine* (February 1998), last accessed 5/15/2014, http://archives.yalealumnimagazine.com/issues/98_02/AA.html.

¹²⁰ "History of UMass Dartmouth," last accessed 5/12/2014, <http://www.umassd.edu/about/historyofumassdartmouth/>.

architect's name and date of construction. Simple tidbits of information in commonly looked-at places serve as advertisements for the design. A downside would be keeping up with the constantly changing technology, and the QR Code is already being replaced by alternatives that are being developed to make the experience better.¹²¹

Involving architectural historians or scholars is another approach to increase knowledge and appreciation. Lectures or brief seminars on the design of the campus can educate both students as well as outsiders about the design intent. History, or other, departments and school clubs can help advertise and ensure that these will be attended. With the complexities of Brutalist design, and just the name "Brutalist" itself, the talks will be sure to attract both scholars and the curious. One last option for outreach is having a campus heritage week, or something along that line, where both traditions and history can be explored.

While these are a variety of ideas, something just as simple as posting historic photos to a facebook account, tweeting a historic image or fact, or using another social media outlet can increase awareness to followers. Articles, like "Hashtag History: Using Social Media to Teach, Research, and Engage the Public," can assist in learning how to successfully utilize technology to get outreach for the Brutalist campuses.¹²² Brutalism has already infiltrated social media and blogs because of its powerful imagery and photographic qualities - see blogs like "Fuck Yeah Brutalism"

¹²¹ Incitrio, "Why QR Codes Failed and What's Next to Replace Them," last modified January 13, 2014, <http://incitrio.com/why-qr-codes-failed-and-whats-next-to-replace-them/>.

¹²² Joanne Bailey, "Hashtag History: Using Social Media to Teach, Research, and Engage the Public," last modified December 2, 2014, <http://jbailey2013.wordpress.com/2013/12/02/hashtag-history-using-social-media-to-teach-research-and-engage-the-public/>.

on Tumblr and “Beautiful Brutalism” on Pinterest.^{123, 124} Explore all the trending outreach options that are available, and ensure that the campus’s heritage becomes part of the college’s brand. Even though the way of communicating information has changed, it still comes down to appropriate and targeted advertising. Just like a business, without advertising Brutalist campuses have a higher risk of failure.

Conclusion

Brutalist campuses do not need to be victims of change in architectural taste. If they begin to adopt processes to retain their historic character, they will be able to keep what makes them unique visions for generations to come. The unprecedented amount of growth in the collegiate environment allowed architects and planners to develop a comprehensive vision that has rarely been achieved at such an intensive level. Managing the vision through the processes will, hopefully, allow for more careful approaches to managing the preservation dilemma of the Brutalist campus. Each step, or process, will aid in the advancement of cultural preservation for the campus. An understanding of the significance of the Brutalist campus provides hope for threatened campuses.

This thesis, however, is not just a tale of one style; it has been a trend that has continued for each generation of architectural design. People will, at one point or another, disregard a style for various reasons. Victorian design was considered

¹²³ “Fuck Yeah Brutalism,” in Tumblr, last accessed May 15, 2014, <http://fuckyeahbrutalism.tumblr.com/>.

¹²⁴ Alan Fears and Pippa Kahn, “Beautiful Brutalism,” in Pinterest, last accessed May 15, 2014, <http://www.pinterest.com/fearsandkahn/>.

cluttered and old-fashioned during the Modernist movement, and Modernist design was considered bland and idealistic not long ago. With the return of what can be called “New Modernist” design, the cyclic nature of love and hate is clear, just as music and clothing have trends. Perhaps Brutalism will come back as a truly new “New Brutalism,” but will major works like Johansen et al.’s Academic Village be irreversibly altered in significance by then? Outside of activism, it will be primarily up to the campus authorities to determine that fate. At the community college level, there will be less alumni support than big-brand schools.

Find and appreciate Brutalist campuses for what they are. That is a challenge this thesis proposes to you, the reader. They are everywhere, yet fall out of sight and mind very easily. They aren’t the Mediterranean grandeur of classical design, the exquisiteness of gothic architecture, or the imperial might of the Second Empire style; they are American monumentality of the 20th Century, social beasts of the 1950s-1970s, sculptural forms bringing experience into architecture, and raw design expressing truth in material and architecture.

APPENDIX

LIST OF KNOWN BRUTALIST CAMPUS RESOURCES

1	Name	Location	Type
2	Alameda College	Alameda, California	Community College
3	Bellevue College	Bellevue, Washington	Community College
4	Berkshire Community College	Berkshire County, Massachusetts	Community College
5	Central Oregon Community College	Bend, Oregon	Community College
6	Community College of Allegheny County	Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania	Community College
7	Corning Community College	Corning, New York	Community College
8	Crafton Hills College	Yucaipa, California	Community College
9	Cuyahoga Community College	Cleveland, Ohio	Community College
10	Cypress College	Cypress, California	Community College
11	Delware Technical and Community College	Wilmington, Delaware	Community College
12	Edmonds Community College	Lynnwood, Washington	Community College
13	Evergreen State College	Olympia, Washington	Public College
14	Glen Oaks Community College	Centreville, Michigan	Community College
15	Golden West College	Huntington Beach, California	Community College
16	Lake Michigan College	Benton Harbor, Michigan	Community College
17	Lane Community College	Eugene, Oregon	Community College
18	Merritt College	Oakland, California	Community College
19	Miami Dade Kendall Campus	Miami, Florida	Community College
20	Miami Dade North Campus	Miami, Florida	Community College
21	Mount Hood Community College	Gresham, Oregon	Community College
22	North Seattle Community College	Seattle, Washington	Community College
23	Portland Community College Sylvania	Portland, Oregon	Community College
24	Rochester Community and Technical College	Rochester, Minnesota	Community College
25	SUNY Buffalo (North Campus)	Buffalo, New York	Public University
26	SUNY Old Westbury	Old Westbury, New York	Public College
27	Tougaloo College	Jackson, Mississippi	Private College
28	Union County College	Cranford, New Jersey	Community College
29	University of California Irvine	Irvine, California	Public University
30	University of Chicago (Circle Campus)	Chicago, Illinois	Public University
31	University of Massachusetts Dartmouth	Dartmouth, Massachusetts	Public University

This is not a complete list, but rather Brutalist campuses consulted in the formation of the thesis. It is meant to be a starting point for any further research on the subject.

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