DAVID BERLE
Lost in America: Searching for the Entrance to the Residential Home in the
      Post-Modern Landscape
(Under the Direction of IAN FIRTH)

      The residential entrance is the space between the street and the front door and includes such elements as the fence, the entry gate, the garage, the sidewalk, the front steps, and the front porch. In America, essentially all of the entrance elements have evolved as a result of attempts to accommodate the automobile. The sequential movement through the entrance space has been described in terms of both function and pattern language. While design of the entrance sequence is dependent on these practical considerations, individual needs of those residing within the house are often the most meaningful. These needs are determined by the narrative or narratives of the person or persons within the house in addition to the functional needs of the automobile and visitors. The narrative represents individual expression, social status, role of the automobile in the individual's life, regional factors and cultural or ethnic background of the individual or individuals within the house. Opportunities exist for improving the residential entrance based on a combination of symbolic and literal interpretations of the narrative.

LOST IN AMERICA: SEARCHING FOR THE ENTRANCE TO THE

RESIDENTIAL HOME IN THE POST-MODERN LANDSCAPE

by

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to memory of my father, Anton A. Berle. As I grow older, his energy, creativity and humor serve as an inspiration. He designed and built our Japanese-inspired ranch in a typical 1960's suburb almost single-handedly. Our yard was the untouched woods and our lawn was a border of smooth rocks around our house. We never entered our front door, which looked out over the woods. My family and visitors alike approached the house from the dirt driveway, following the round concrete paving stones covered with duck excrement, to the back porch. The back door was the main entry, opening directly into the kitchen. The door was seldom locked. If the door was locked, anyone could open it with a skeleton key from the local hardware store.

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I am especially thankful for the patience and loving support of my daughter, Hannah.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Elements of the Entrance

The residential entrance is made up of several elements that define the space between the street and the house. These elements include: a gateway, a path to the entry door, steps or a stoop, a porch or entry platform, and a door. The carriage, and later the automobile, created the need for the additional elements of driveway and garage. The importance and use of these elements has changed over time. Some elements are clearly visible today; others are almost hidden or reduced to mere symbolic gestures.

The residential entrance has both cultural meaning and personal significance. The experience of approaching the home can be likened to a narrative that tells a story. The entrance begins in a public space and moves to a transitional space, where public and private meet. It then moves to a more private space as the path approaches the threshold. The order of the sequence and the movement through the space reads like a story. There is a sequence of events and a transition from one space to another. There is a beginning, middle and end to the experience, much like a story (Potteiger and Purinton 1998). The story of the residential entrance is about the space between the street and door and how this space is arranged.

The design of the American residential entrance has its roots in the symbolism and ritual of the past, yet has been shaped by modern American culture. Definitions of the entrance elements and spaces within the residential landscape

vary according to personal, regional and cultural differences. The "ceremonial front yard" connects the street to the porch, which leads to the front door (Girling and Helphand 1994). The entry path that originally crossed the front yard to the front door has been retained but its definition and use have changed dramatically.

The porch, a direct descendant of the verandahs, piazzas and loggias of Europe, was built onto the front of early American colonial houses. Originally, the porch was a place to escape the oppressive heat of the south. By the 1800's, the porch had "become an almost universal, and quite distinctive, feature of American domestic architecture" (McAlester and McAlester 1996).

The driveway, too, has changed in use, if not definition, over the years. The word "driveway" first appeared in American dictionaries in 1871. It originally referred to a road to drive on, leading from the main road to the house. (Merriam-Webster 2001) The driveway was typically privately owned and often shared with a neighbor. It was generally a device of the rich, as poorer people in cities lived close to streets and in rural areas lived relatively close to the road. While there was no defined length for the driveway, it was usually long enough to provide a viewing experience along the way, creating a sense of arrival to the house.

In modern America, the driveway has joined the front lawn in status and position in relation to the house. In some cases, the driveway is the front lawn. What started out as ruts in the mud leading from the alley to the back yard, turned into a paved surface area equal to approximately one-third of the residential foot-print. Most driveways in today's contemporary landscape are three cars wide, dwarfing the lawn (Girling and Helphand 1994).

The driveway serves many functions, from children's play area to automo-bile repair site. Automobiles are washed in the driveway and boats are stored there as well. Driveways are also social spaces where garage sales are held, children

play and families talk. They are the main pathway to the house, which is primarily a function of automobile access. The driveway also serves as a "gateway to an almost infinite national network" (Girling and Helphand 1994). With the advent of the automobile, the driveway became a direct link to the highway, connecting the house directly to the highway. The mile or two of ground-level streets connecting the driveway to the highway "counts as no more than the front drive of the house" (Flink 1988).

The definition of automobile storage has also changed over time. Before the automobile, carriages and horses were kept in public stables. Only wealthy people kept horses and carriages in carriage houses or sheds located in the back of the property. Early automobiles were stored alongside carriages. When structures were built exclusively for the automobile they were called motor houses or auto houses. Eventually the word "garage" became the common American name for the structure. The word garage comes from the French word "garer." The direct translation means "to protect" (Cotton 1986). Loosely translated to English, the word defines a storage space. According to J.B. Jackson, Americans chose a French word because it represented a certain status or class, reinforcing the importance of the automobile and garage in American life (Jackson 1997).

Another French word, "porte-cochere," also made its way to the American landscape vocabulary. The porte-cochere originated as a carriage entrance to homes of the French nobility. In America, the porte-cochere provided a new symbolic vehicular entrance into the house, which competed with the pedestrian entrance of the front porch. The porte-cochere was an entrance of prestige in large homes, but in smaller homes, it was often only a small, attached imitation of a functioning porte-cochere (Gebhard 1992). The wealthy had servants who would bring the carriage, and later the automobile, "around" to the porte-cochere. As the

automobile replaced carriages altogether, the servants assumed the more socially accept-able role of chauffeur (Buckley 1992).

Today, the entrance story sometimes bears little relationship to the site or indi-viduals within. The residential entrance offers little indication of what is to come. If there is a path, it merely connects the driveway to the house. A narrow sidewalk leads to the front door, but both sidewalk and door are almost invisible. Foundation hedges have replaced the original front hedge in much the same way the that picket fence was rele-gated to the front porch. By pushing the hedge and fence closer to the house, the point of entry to the semi-private space was moved from the street to the house (Girling and Helphand 1994).

All too often, driveways are poorly designed, as an afterthought. Parking and turn-around space for guests is cut short by limited funds. Frustrated visitors drive over plants and curbs to maneuver, then stumble through the minefield in the garage to get to the kitchen door -- the last place most homeowners want visitors to enter.

The design of the residential entrance has been shaped by the fact that the auto-mobile has become part of our economic and cultural life. It is a central aspect of our entire lives, from birth to death (Wachs and Crawford 1992). A better understanding of the role of the automobile in shaping the residential entrance provides a basis for design-ing an entrance that responds to primary human needs, yet accepts the automobile as part of our daily lives.
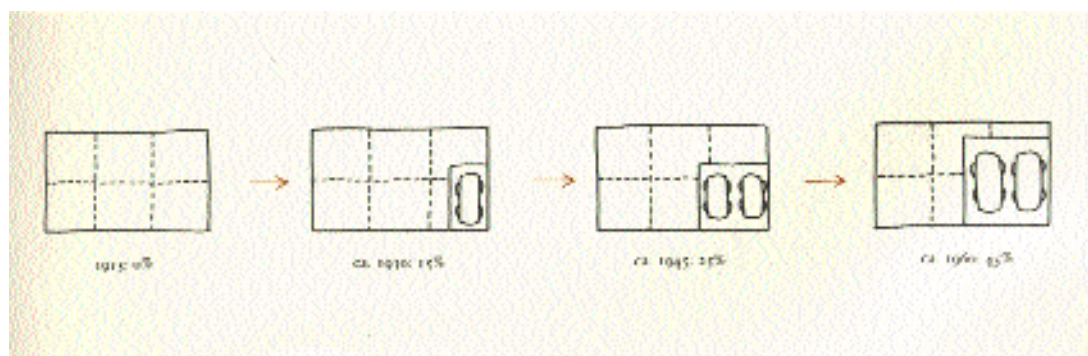
Changes in the proportion of garage to overall house square footage from 1910 to 1960 (McAlester and McAlester 1984)

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the changes in the residential entrance brought on by the automobile and to propose revisions to the entrance patterns described by Christopher Alexander and coauthors in *A Pattern Language* to incorporate more recent ideas.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the thesis are as follows:

1) To provide a historical perspective on the evolution of the residential entrance in America over the past 100 years.

2) To provide a better understanding of the entrance as a space experienced by humans, yet requiring accommodation of the automobile.

3) To present additions to the "pattern language" that speaks to the needs of the individual.

Method and Expected Outcomes

This thesis is intended to examine the current design of the common residential entrance and explore possibilities for change. Significant historical periods of American residential entrance design are evaluated using the four patterns related to the residential entrance from *A Pattern Language,* as discussed by Christopher Alexander and coauthors. The relationship between the pattern language for entrances and the post-modern concern for the landscape narrative is explored. The entrance is viewed as a personal expression of the the individual; therefore, this thesis avoids the temptation to prescribe universal solutions for every individual. Instead, additional considerations are added to the pattern language to stimulate discussion about an entrance sequence that portrays an individualized narrative.

CHAPTER 2

PATTERNS OF THE RESIDENTIAL ENTRANCE

Entrance Patterns

In *A Pattern Language*, Christopher Alexander and co-authors identify certain patterns in everyday life that are "a careful description of a perennial solution to a recurring problem within a building context, describing one of the configurations which brings life to a building" (Alexander et al. 1977). A "language" of patterns form a network, wherein patterns combine to create designs. The patterns convey insights and observations that everyone is capable of making. We use these observations to discern whether a space functions or "comes alive" (Alexander et al. 1977). The patterns provide a specific method of describing one's experience in a space. In the book, four distinct patterns are identified that relate to the residential entrance.

Main Entrance

The first pattern is "main entrance." As Alexander and co-authors explain, "the position of the main entrance controls the layout of the building. It controls movement to and from the building, and all other decisions about layout flow from this decision. When entrances are placed correctly, the layout of the building unfolds naturally and simply; when entrances are badly placed, the rest of the building never seems quite right. It is therefore vital that the position of the main entrance (or entrances) be made clearly and correctly" (Alexander et al. 1977).

The placement of the entrance is critical to the "main entrance" pattern, particularly for visitors. "The entrance must be placed in such a way that people who approach the building see the entrance or some hint of where the entrance is, as soon as they start moving toward the building, without having to change direction or change their plan of how they will approach the building" (Alexander et al. 1977). Finding the entrance should be "automatic." This principle is based on the concept that a person works out the path some distance ahead, and if the entrance can't be seen, the path can't be worked out ahead of time, causing confusion and annoyance. If the entrance is further defined by shape, color or ornament, then it will be easier to view from varying locations and will be even easier to locate within normal sight lines. The entrance can protrude beyond the building line to draw attention to it, or it can be shaded or colored in a different manner. "It is important that the entrance be strongly differentiated from its immediate surroundings" (Alexander et al. 1977).

Doors and facades play a major role in providing cues for entrances. "The door panel hides and reveals the qualities of soul that await beyond the door" (Lawlor 1997). The size and shape influence the experience of passing through it. Doors are often exaggerated

A clearly defined main entrance (Berle 2001).

beyond their functional requirements in order to emphasize the entrance. In contrast, multiple doors without a clear main entry create ambiguity. Symmetrical

buildings, with a central entry point, are the easiest and most traditional form to read. Asymmetrical facades can display the proper locating cue, provided special features are employed to direct attention to the entrance (Gunter 2000).

<u>Family of Entrances</u>

The "family of entrances" pattern applies to the relationship between the "minor entrances," such as minor doorways, gates and openings off each realm, within a larger complex of buildings. The main entrances should form a group and be visible together, and each should be visible from all the others. The entrances should all be broadly similar, for example having a similar type of doorway. "A person who is looking around for one of several entrances, and doesn't know his way around, needs to have some simple way of identifying the one entrance he wants. Then it is possible to pick one particular entrance out, without conscious effort" (Alexander et al. 1977).

As it is written, the "family of entrances" pattern describes a pedestrian approach in a higher density community than the typical American residential neighborhood. This pattern describes the needs of the visitor as compared to the needs of the frequent or habitual user of the entrance. In America, the approach is by auto-mobile and the subdivision takes on the role of the building complex as characterized in *A Pattern Language*.

Subdivision entrance to a "family of entrances" (Berle 2001).

The entrance to the subdivision and the numerous homes in the neighborhood can be described as a family of entrances, all linked visually with the main entrance to the home. In a manner of speaking, the entrance to the American subdivision has replaced portions of the individual entrance sequence and therefore are worthy of equal consideration with the other patterns when evaluating the evolution of the residential entrance.

For the visitor, wayfinding becomes important within the "family of entrances" pattern. Way finding is the process through which visitors orient themselves to the entrance and the manner in which they understand the spatial organization of the entrance space. Way finding is aided when the visitor is provided distinctive, differentiable elements such as a neighborhood map or street signs. On a residential scale, maps may seem unnecessary; however, we use house numbers and mailboxes as a way of identifying our location when we order a pizza or receive our mail (Kaplan, Kaplan and Ryan 1998).

Entrance Transition

The front entrance is a place for greeting visitors and acts as a transition zone between the public space of the neighborhood and the private space of the home. In most cases, we make a distinction between these two spaces. The actual point of entrance contains information people need to find and identify it and anticipate what will be found within. "The entrance itself symbolizes and accommodates our transition from one realm to another" (Farbstein and Kantrowitz 1978).

As one moves from the home, feelings of territorial control and responsibility diminish, depending on the social links between neighbors. The collective space that includes porches, steps and yards is a "bridge" between the private home and public spaces. Residents expect to have some degree of control over who has

access to these territories (Taylor 1988). The fence, porch, and front door are "cues" that indicate how far one penetrates depending on who one is. In this way communication and access are controlled (Rapoport 1982).

The entrance transition can have different interpretations, depending on whether the individual experiencing the transition enters as part of a daily routine, or enters for the first time. In either case, the "entrance transition" pattern elaborates and reinforces the transition that entrances generate. There should be a transition space between the street and the front door. A path should connect the street and entrance through this transition space. The transition space should be marked with a change in view, light, sound, direction, surface, and level (Alexander et al. 1977) The speed at which an entrance is perceived can also affect the experience of entry. "If the transition is too abrupt, there is no feeling of arrival, and the inside fails to be a sanctum." Farbstein and Kantrowitz add, "time, sequence, and movement are essential components of how we experience spaces" (Farbstein and Kantrowitz 1978). This pattern functions in much the same way as the transitional spaces of spiritual entrances, where the outside world is shed before entering the sacred place. "Transition is a key factor in spiritual experience" (Barrie 1996).

Gateways can be used to create a sense of transition (Alexander et al. 1977). Gates mark the transfer from one domain to another and signify the nature of the residence (Gunter 2000).

Elaborate gateway indicating driveway entrance (Berle 2001).

Entry gates mark the transition from the public realm to the private, providing a space for mentally turning inward and arriving home (Lawlor 1997). The opening in the fence and gateway have traditionally served as a symbolic point of entry or transition from the street to a space that was less public. While most fences and gates in residential neighborhoods serve more symbolically than functionally, there is nevertheless a sense of "defensible space" within the borders of fences and gates (Ford 2000).

Brick columns establish a gateway to this house (Berle 2001).

The sequence from public space to the house is: public space, to semipublic space, to semiprivate space, to private space. When this sequence is absent or interrupted, the consequences can be significant. "Social and psychological problems leading to anomie and crime are likely to rise when the private front door leads directly to undefined public space with no intermediate nooks and crannies to claim" (Ford 2000).

A gateway serves as a landmark, a point at which to pause and consider entering. It also provides information about what lies ahead (Kaplan, Kaplan and Ryan 1998). Landmarks serve as locating devices, particularly at high automobile speeds or in identical suburban neighborhoods. Landmarks may be natural elements such as trees or rocks, or they may be humanly constructed features such as a curve in the road or a distinctive house color (Kaplan, Kaplan and Ryan 1998).

Gates also impose a degree of control and communicate where to enter a destination zone (Gunter 2000). Gateways and partitions work together to "signal

transition between outside and inside" (Kaplan, Kaplan and Ryan 1998). In order for the gateway to be effective, a partition must exist, whether it's real or perceived. On a residential scale, the partition may be a fence, hedge, tree row or even a change in topography. (Kaplan, Kaplan and Ryan 1998).

On the other side of the gate is the front yard. The front yard is the part of the individual's space exposed to the public. First impressions of a person or family are created by the home's exterior. The front has become more important in creating a good impression as the use of the automobile has increased. Front doors are decorated and entrances adorned to identify where guests are supposed to enter, though most who pass by never do. Something as basic as outside seasonal decorations can facilitate and encourage social contact (Gunter 2000).

Our perception of the accessibility of the house is determined by our ability to read the the circulation system and determine where to go. Entrance elements such as doorways, driveways and windows provide cues to locating the points of transition. "The difficulty in finding good examples of well-articulated transition points between circulation systems may well indicate that this is a neglected aspect of architectural communication" (Gunter 2000).

Well-articulated entrance sequence (Berle 2001).

Car Connection

"Car connection" is a pattern that acknowledges the place of the automobile in our daily lives. The parking place for the automobile should be close to the main entrance, so that the shortest route from the parked automobile into the house, both to the kitchen and to the living room, is always through the main entrance. The "car connection" pattern suggests that the actual car parking area and entry walk be designed as a "room" that permits walking together and conversation between individuals at some point along

A close close connection between garage and house does notrequire the two to be attached (Berle 2001)

the way from car to house entrance The "room" should be designed to creates a "positive and graceful" environment. "A proper car connection is a place where people can walk together, lean, say goodbye; perhaps it is integrated with the structure and form of the house" (Alexander et al. 1977).

CHAPTER 3

EVOLUTION OF THE RESIDENTIAL ENTRANCE

<u>The Entrance Prior to the Automobile</u>

Ideas of the Designers

Most houses in America have traditionally had a primary entrance

Initially, the main entrance faced the street or country road. The alignment of the

house placed the front door in line with the street. As towns grew, some wealthier

people built away from the town center, creating larger country estates in the "sub-

urbs." The distance from the street to the house grew, providing opportunities for

planned entrance experiences.

Andrew Jackson Downing, a leading landscape designer in the mid-1800's,

wrote about the approach to the house in his popular magazine, *The Horticulturist*.

Inspired by the works of Humphrey Repton, Downing wrote a book titled *A

Treatise on the theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening*, in which he

described the ideal private road to the house. "It should therefore bear a propor-

tionate breadth and size, and exhibit marks of good keeping, in accordance with the

dignity of the mansion" (Downing 1844). Downing used the word "drive" to

describe a road "intended for exercise more secluded than that upon the public

road, and to show interesting portions of the place from the carriage, or horse-

back." He recommended that the approach drive be sufficiently long to allow time

to get the idea of the whole property, yet not to interfere with the convenience of

access. Downing suggested that the drive should only be curved if there were just

cause. For Downing, creating views, primarily of the house, was just cause to

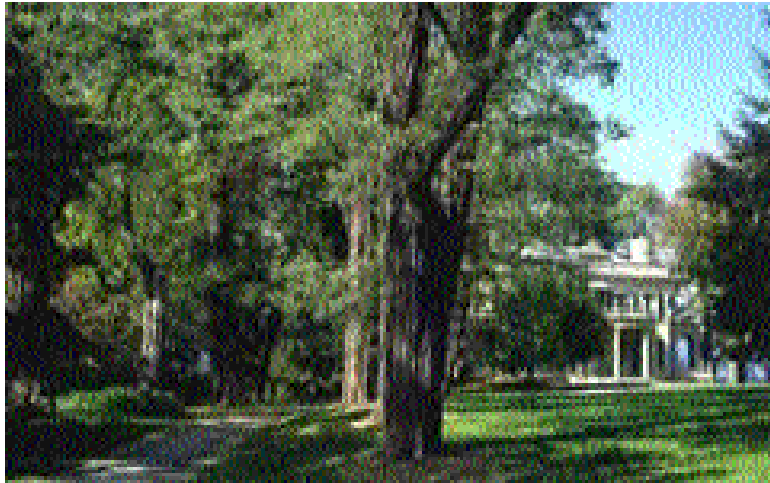curve the drive (Downing 1844). Walks were to be similar to the drive, but they were "intended solely for promenades, or exercise on foot." The "genius of the place must suggest the direction, length and number of walks to be laid out" (Downing 1844).

Pastoral view of Downing's Montogomery Place (Downing Website 2001).

Professor Charles Sprague Sargent was a well-known figure of the late 1800's who popularized certain landscape aesthetics. Sargent edited *Garden and Forest* magazine, a popular magazine of the late 1800's. He offered specific guidelines for walks and drives that, in much the same way as Downing, established a common vision of the drive and entry to the residential home (Birnbaum and Karson 2000). Sargent thought driveways were an unattractive imposition upon the landscape, "which have no real beauty in themselves, and therefore should be used with care and discretion" (Sargent 1888). To Sargent, the gravel paved drive was a divisive element in an otherwise picturesque landscape.   He upheld the open lawn aesthetic of a Capability Brown landscape to the point of discouraging the use of anything but grass walks leading to the house. The smallest drive and walk widths possible would preserve "the lawn as a place for grass." The purpose of the lawn was to "afford a simple sheet of verdure to delight the eye with its reposeful breadth" (Sargent 1889).

Sargent presented design guidelines that suggested a combination of convenience and beauty, with the view from the street being of "paramount importance" (Sargent 1889). In a slight variation from Downing, Sargent wrote that the drive should be curved, even in situations of smaller-size properties. Sargent contradicted himself somewhat when he advocated "that the main doorway should be placed in the side of the house" in situations where there was a stable in the back yard, to create a less "offensive" drive that would not bisect the lawn (Sargent 1888).

Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr. was probably the most prominent landscape designer in the second half of the nineteenth century. In addition to writing many articles and books on landscape design principles, Olmsted contributed articles to *Garden and Forest*. Responding to a letter to the editor regarding the location of the main entry of a house, Olmsted referred to the driveway as "a sweep of gravel" that should not be placed on the side of the house that possess the most "pleasing natural beauty" (Olmsted 1888). One difference between Olmsted and Sargent was Olmsted's suggestion to place the public entrance on the same side of the house as the drive, but that this side door would be "less fine" than the front entry (Olmsted 1888).

Olmsted believed strongly in the separation of carriage and foot traffic, as witnessed in the extensive dual trail system of New York's Central Park. With the community design for Riverside, Illinois in 1869, Olmsted and Carl Vaux realized their dream of a picturesque community. Houses were set back at least 30 feet and roadways were 30 feet wide, lined with trees. Although there were common areas of green space, connected by the boulevard, the yard was the private estate of each individual, with each lot approximately 100 feet x 200 feet (Girling and Helphand 1994). Riverside established a pattern for the picturesque neighborhoods that

would be imitated in some form or another for years to come. The pattern included widely spaced houses and unfenced, generous yards, along with set-backs from the street (Southworth and Ben-Joseph 1997).

Curvilinear streets of Riverside (Girling and Helphand 1994)
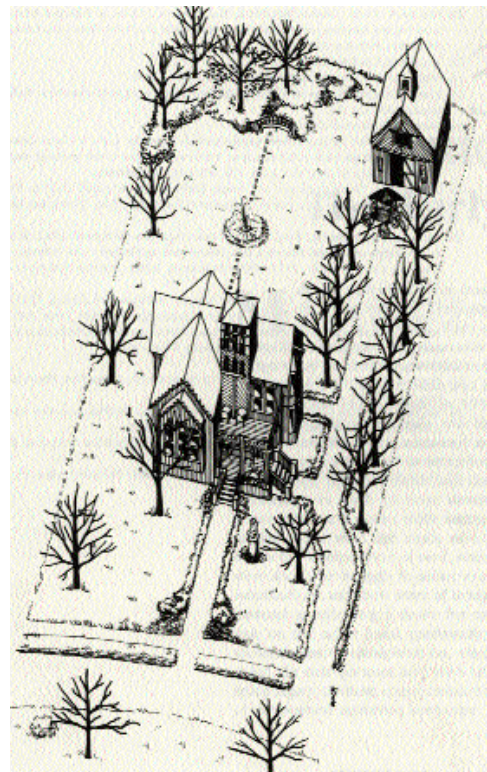
Olmsted's final project was the approach drive to Biltmore Estate in Asheville, North Carolina. The private estate of George W. Vanderbilt embodied many of Olmsted's ideas of conservation, planned natural landscape and picturesque beauty. The extensive scale of the estate required a three-mile approach drive, designed for carriage access. The approach drive became a defining element in the over-all landscape plan. The approach drive pro-vided the "sensation of passing through remote depths of a natural forest," even though much of the surrounding woodland had been previously logged. Olmsted designed the approach roadside as though he were painting a picture. Using native plants and many exotic plants as well, he created a

Riverside house and carriage house (Girling and Helphand 1994).

series of views and vistas as complex and rich as had been seen anywhere in America. The visitor was "immersed in a rich passageway of scenery" where the

"art to conceal art" philosophy of Olmsted was practiced. This approach was in sharp contrast to the abrupt transition of the entry court to the manor house, increasing the dramatic experience of arrival (Messer 1993).

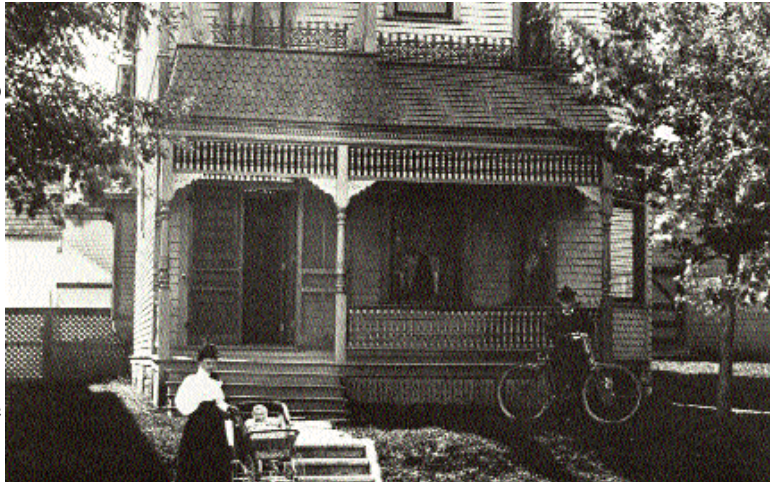<div align="center">Typical Entrance Patterns of the Period</div>

During the late 1800's, the design of the house began to change. Rooms became more specialized. Wealthy and middle class homes had clearly defined "public" and "private" spaces, in much the same way southern plantation and northern industrialists' homes had previously. The public side of the house faced the street and the rooms became progressively more private as you moved to the back. The public entrance hall served as a "mediating space between the front porch and the library, parlor, and dining room" (Clark 1986). Social conventions dictated that the stairs to the bedrooms above were to be used only by family members. Homeowners began to embrace the new technologies of phone, lights, ventilation and sanitation. All of these ideas were promoted by the newly emerging plan-book industry (Clark 1986).

The "main entrance" pattern for most houses was clearly identifiable from the street (Smith 1985). Doors were wide and framed with sidelights and transoms, suggesting the presence of a parlor within. (Schroeder. 1993). By 1870, detached housing had emerged as the suburban style of choice. House plan books depicted houses as isolated structures surrounded by a yard (Borman, Balmori and Geballe 2001).

The neighborhoods of the pre-automobile period established a new pattern for the "family of entrances." The homes of Riverside were connected by a series of walkways and winding streets. The simple entrance sign delineated the beginning of the community and residents within as members of that community (Girling and Helphand 1994).

For most houses, the "entrance transition" included the grounds around the house, divided into public and private spaces (Clark 1986). The lawn represented a barrier, separating the household from the dangers of the city. It also served as a means of transition from the public street to the very private house (Borman, Balmori and Geballe 2001). Plan-book writers depicted the front yard as a place for recreational activities such as croquet or badminton (Clark 1986). Paths or steps typically connected the street or sidewalk directly to the front porch and entry door (Smith 1985).

Typical Victorian front entrance (Clark 1986)

Stairways and steps kept the house separate from the streets. People who could afford it lived up away from the streets. They built up to get away from the mud of the street and occasional flooding that might occur in low areas. Grand steps indicated nicer living spaces above (Schroeder 1993). In the late 1800's, steps provided an intermediate between private and semi-private space. For the lower classes, the steps were a

High steps creating a sense of seperation from the street (McAlester and McAlester 1996)

substitute for the parlor, where people would sit and talk with neighbors. Decorative posts, Greek columns and wrought iron railings were used to beautify steps and porches (Schroeder 1993). As street traffic increased and became noisier and dirtier, steps further reinforced the separation -- emphasizing the value or importance of the porch (Ford 2000).

The front porch entered American architectural design sometime in the middle eighteenth century, starting first in rural areas and in warmer climates. House plans showed new homes with attached outdoor living spaces called verandas, piazzas and porches (Clark 1986). Initially, porches were a place to rest and cool off but not necessarily a point of main entry. As porches grew in popularity they "functioned as the buffer zone between the privacy of the house and the community of the neighborhood" (Kihlstedt 1980). As the porch became an important element in the "entrance transition," a hierarchy of spaces developed that went from front porch, to hall, to parlor, to library or sitting room, and then to the dining room. Each of these spaces represented a level of privacy that went from least private to most private, respectively. To reach the dining room meant a reduction in formality between the visitor and host. The front porch served as an outdoor parlor and a platform from which to view the street. Families would spend time on the porch. Neighbors would come for conversation and the ritual of courting would often take place on the front porch (Kihlstedt 1980).

During this period many changes also appeared in the layout and design of the residential lot that affected the "car connection." Most of these changes were in response to the increasing mobility of people, particularly the wealthy. Before the automobile, not every urban dweller owned a horse and carriage. They either walked or rode public transportation (Cotton 1986). The automobile was not considered in the design of Riverside, yet the design had "drives" that were laid out

for carriages. These drives were really picturesque streets and did not serve individual homes (Southworth and Ben-Joseph 1997).

The porte-cochere first appeared in American luxury hotels and apartment buildings in the late 1800's. Later, wealthier homes included the porte-cochere. As a rule, horses and carriages were kept in public stables, removed from the house. Some wealthier homeowners
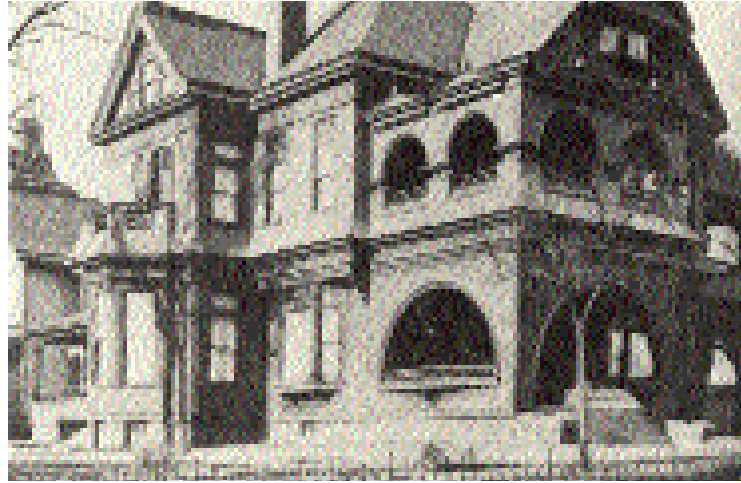
1880's house with porte-cochere (McAlester and McAlester 1996)

had carriage houses in their backyards (Ford 2000). Servants would bring the carriage around for the owner.

The Entrance in the Early Automobile Years

Ideas of the Designers

In the early 1900's, a movement began against the elaborate and ornate houses of the previous period. Simple bungalows, "Colonials" and "prairie-style" homes rose in popularity with architects and plan-book writers. Houses became less pretentious. Front parlors were replaced by "living rooms." Floor plans changed to create a more direct connection between kitchen and front door. The kitchen had an outside entrance, too, for deliveries and service entrance. This period also saw a decline in the number of household servants, bringing about changes in the home interior such as more efficient kitchens and the elimination of back staircases for servant access to the upstairs (Clark 1986).

The garden city of Radburn, New Jersey, designed by Clarence Stein and Henry Wright in 1924, further defined the shape of the suburban neighborhood. Radburn was not designed to give priority to the automobile; it was built as a concerned response to the technological advances of the automobile. "The designers and the home buyers of Radburn had grown up with the automobile and had personally witnessed its formidable and often devastating impact on society and the city" (Girling and Helphand 1994). Pedestrians and vehicles were separated, residential streets for local traffic were designated, streets were narrowed, and cul-de-sacs blocked thoroughfares -- all in an effort to restrict traffic flow (Southworth and Ben-Joseph 1997). Automobiles could only enter as far as the narrow cul-de-sacs that served the back of each housing cluster (Maguire 1998). Each resident's driveway was off a narrow lane with a cul-de-sac at one end, and emptied onto a "feeder" road at the other end.

Radburn alley (Radburn Website 2001)

This design essentially created two front yards: the drive through the entry yard, which lead to the parking garage and kitchen, and the front yard that faced the public space, which was a shared open green space (Girling and Helphand 1994).

Radburn houses were turned "in" to face the common area, away from the point of automobile access. Instead of looking on to a private front yard, each house looked toward a public recreation area. By having the main entrance

reached by foot, Stein and Wright hoped to encourage foot travel, and to remove the car from being the focus of family life. The houses of Radburn had two principal entrances: a motor entrance and a pedestrian entrance (Buckley 1992). The third door to the Radburn houses was a rarely used formal entry door into the living room (Girling and Helphand 1994). This floor plan made the entrance to the house unclear, and despite Wright and Stein's best efforts, the door from the driveway and the entrance to the kitchen became the main entrance (Cunningham 1998).
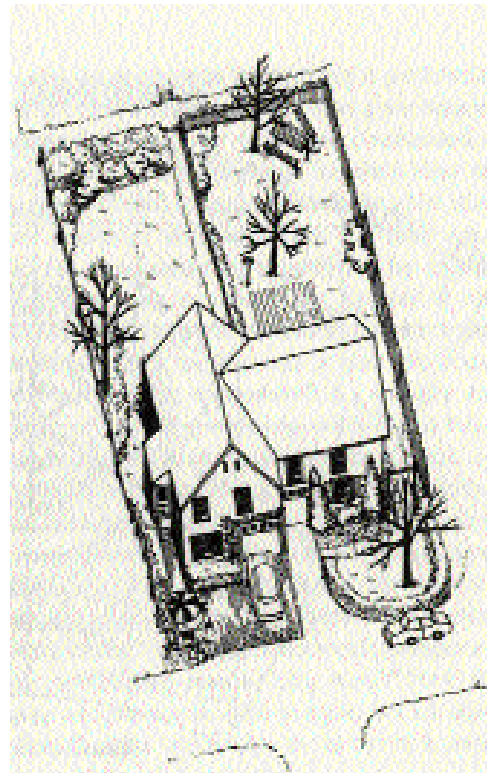
Alley access to typical Radburn house (Girling and Helphand 1994)

Much of the early interest in designing for the automobile during this period came from architects such as Frank Lloyd Wright. Wright integrated the garage into many of his designs (Flink 1988). Some of his early houses had carports, while others had basement garages, taking advantage of natural changes in elevation. Frank Lloyd Wright's vision for a community designed in response to the automobile was much different from the Radburn design. Although the plan was never actually realized, Broadacre City represented a departure from the picturesque suburban community. Wright embraced the technology of the time and sought to utilize the automobile and other technological advances to benefit the individual within the community. Broadacre City was a mix of agrarian and suburban lifestyle, with each resident owning approximately one acre. The home was the most important unit in the city, but the gas station was the community center.

Broadacre assumed "universal automobile ownership" and "mobility was natural and a fundamental human longing" (Girling and Helphand 1994).

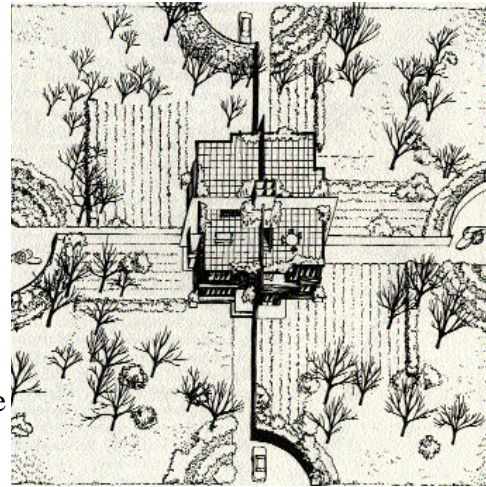

Brodacre yard layout (Girling and Helphand 1994)

Frank Lloyd Wright's "usonian houses" introduced the carport and made it necessary to walk down the driveway and under the carport to find the front door" (Flink 1988). As the automobile became more popular, Wright embraced the concept of mobility that the automobile would provide. In the Robie House of 1936, Wright designed a carport for the automobile. This was a much less formal entry than the traditional axial front entrance from the street that had predominated until the advent of the automobile. The entry was less formalized and more subdued. The Robie House, with its detached garage, gave more prominence to the entry view to the garage, over the front door (Kihlstedt 1980).

When the automobile was first introduced, a majority of owners were wealthy and stored their automobiles either in public garages or in the backyard stable (Goat 1989). In the early years, there was a common fear of the automobile as a source of gasoline fumes and even explosion. This, coupled with narrow city lots, prevented building garages next to the house, so the automobile was relegated to the rear of the lot for some time. According to J.B. Jackson, this arrangement completely ruined the backyard (Jackson 1997). As the garage moved closer to the house and began to become part of the house front aesthetic, some architects called for locating the garage next to the front door. Some even suggested that the garage become the entrance to the house. Early experiments with this concept

retained the central axis of the front entrance, yet made the garage the center of the axis and the primary opening in the house (Kihlstedt 1980).

Typical Entrance Patterns of the Period

During the early automobile period, the "main entrance" pattern continued to consist of a path or steps connecting the main sidewalk to the front porch and door (Smith 1985). As the carport and garage moved closer to the house, however, the connection to the front door began to change. The "entrance transition" pattern followed a hierarchy of order that moved from the primary street, to the cul-de-sac, to the driveway, to the garage, to the kitchen and on to the living room.

Radburn affected the "family of entrances" pattern in two ways. First, the hierarchy of streets and alleys, separated from major roads, reinforced the concept of a self-contained subdivision, accessed by a few entry streets. Second, since the kitchen faced the cul-de-sac, which emptied out onto the street, garages served as a connecting link to

1920's neighborhood street (Clark 1986).

neighbors' houses (Girling and Helphand 1994). The naming of streets in the early automobile years continued a metonymic use of names. New streets were named after residents in the area or other descriptions of the locality (Potteiger and Purinton 1998).

During this time, the rise in automobile use changed the "entrance transition" pattern almost overnight. Except in experimental communities like Radburn, the view from the porch became filled with dust and noise. Homeowners slowly moved inside or retreated to the backyard.

The automobile also brought with it the need for its own storage, changing the "car connection" pattern. The automobile occupied space while in motion and when standing still. The need for parking lead to a new sense of priorities and thus affected architecture (Kay 2001). At first, garages were imitations of fancy carriage houses or replicas of the house itself. As early as 1911, writers and architects were discussing the standardization of the garage (Gebhard 1992). By the mid-1920's, the car began to complement the house as an indicator of social position and prestige, so the automobile itself became an ornamental for display (Kihlstedt 1980).

Radburn was the first sign of "awareness of the garage as an essential adjunct to the dwelling - even there it was segregated to the rear" (Jackson 1997). Early driveways, on the other hand, were to be as inconspicuous as possible and were not considered an ornament (Campbell 1921). Driveways were often constructed of two concrete tracks leading to

Concrete driveway strips (Berle 2001)

the garage. This was as much to hide the driveway as to save on cost (Goat 1989). An article in the 1921 issue of *Home and Garden* suggested that the "entrance to

the property should reflect the character of the house and garage" (Campbell 1921). The driveway followed a hierarchy of order that passed the front entrance, then on to the kitchen and then to the garage.

<u>The Entrance from Early Modernism through the 1960's</u>

Ideas of the Designers

The modernist movement introduced an aesthetic based on a strong visual and practical relationship between house and yard. Ornamentation was minimal and there was a general lack of formality. Designers established a modern approach to design that was not based on historical precedent and that was socially responsible. Until the Depression, ownership of automobiles increased significantly, making the driveway and garage essential components of the landscape. The modernists responded to this need by creating entrance designs that further integrated the automobile into the landscape.

Garrett Eckbo was an innovator of the modernist movement among landscape architects. He was an outspoken proponent of design based on "the technical, social, and cultural changes that have occurred in the world in the past hundred years" (Eckbo 1950). He advocated the "establishment of good relations, both functional and esthetic, between a building and its site." Early modernism "explored the potentialities of new techniques, new materials and new space concepts to the limits of its physical resources" (Eckbo 1950).

Eckbo thought the side yard was wasted space and that driveways were not efficiently designed. He divided indoor/outdoor space into four areas: 1) the public approach or access that included the front yard or lawn, walk and driveway; 2) the general living area that included an outdoor porch, patio, court and space for games; 3) the private living area that included a sleeping porch and private sunbathing; and

4) the workspace for storage, service yard, children's play yard, etc. (Eckbo 1950).

Although the International movement based in Europe inspired Eckbo, he developed his own style of design that combined the pure functionalism with considerations for the personal experience. Eckbo felt the entrance should "convey a feeling of comfort and hospitality, beyond the ordinary entrance walk" (Eckbo 1950). Steps and path should be more than circulation elements and they should be carefully related to both the scale of human use and the general scale of the specific landscape. Landscape designs of the day ignored the potential usefulness of the space between the foundation and the property lines, and according to Eckbo, the residential home was part of a whole neighborhood and couldn't be entirely separated. It should reach out to meet the community (Eckbo 1950).

Eckbo considered the experience of the visitor in his designs. He also used the concept of landmarks in creating the entry sequence. "People orient themselves in the physical world much more simply and naturally in relation to landmarks than such intellectual abstractions as verbal directions, signs or maps" (Eckbo 1950). The house was to be approached through a front yard or entry garden, which is a transition space from the noise, exposure and movement of the street (Eckbo 1964).

Like Eckbo, James Rose was part of a group of landscape architects who sought to define a new landscape aesthetic. He used plants "which have first a strong spatial or architectural meaning in his design; i.e., that relate to circulation, enclosure, division of space, privacy and the community in an interspatial way." Rose avoided the conventions of the front lawn as the entrance marker and advocated "an entrance that marks itself" (Snow 1967).

Rose suggested the idea of "the entrance as a ritual" (Snow 1967). He recognized that the front entrance was inaccessible and seldom used. Through a

series of project photos, Rose demonstrated the difficulty in making the front private, accessible, gracious, dignified and architectural all at the same time. The average 'builder's house' of the time ignored levels and slopes, making it difficult and unrewarding to get to the front door (Snow 1967.) The service entrance is "glimpsed," but separated from the living area of the house at the entrance. The service entrance should be recognized by designers as part of the landscape rather than camouflaged from the street as an afterthought (Snow 1967).

In 1961, John Simonds wrote *Landscape Architecture* for architects and landscape architects. The book outlined the planning process for the various components of the landscape. Specific guidelines for driveways and entrances are of particular interest in that they very clearly define the problems and design considerations of the modernist movement.

Simonds combined form, spatial organization and approach sequence in entrance planning. "A planned sequence is a conscious arrangement or organization of elements of spaces. It has a beginning and end that is usually, but not always, the climax." There is an emotional response evoked by a well-planned sequence, with particular attention to spatial modulation and space cadence. The book treated pedestrian movement as equally important as automobile traffic (Simonds 1961).

The approach drive was considered the "factor of first importance" in locating a house. Specific instructions provided for alignment of the drive in relation to discharge from the vehicle and accentuating views of the house. Simonds used the term "theme modulation" to describe the transition from drive to house entrance, to parking court and return. He described the "experience of arrival" as a "transition of character and scale from the highway to the house" (Simonds 1961).

Simonds approach to design was based on the "the realization that a plan has meaning only to man, for whom it is planned, and only to the degree to which it brings facility, accommodation, and delight to his senses, and inspiration to his mind and to his soul. It is a creation of optimum relationships resulting in a total experience" (Simonds 1961) This approach represented, not only a departure from the pastoral approach of the early 1900's but the pure functionalism of the early modern movement in architecture. Simonds, along with other landscape architects like Eckbo and Rose sought to define the entrance space in new terms. The new description went beyond the desire of the past to create a beautiful entry or a scenic view from the window.

For a time, the works of Eckbo, Rose and other modernist landscape designers were popular, particularly on the west coast. Popular books such as Sunset's *Entryways and Front Gardens* even featured their innovative designs for driveway entrances (Doty and Johnson 1965). But the massive demand for housing after World War II created a movement in the building industry that saw the direct influence of designers on residential design wane with the proliferation of popular magazines and plan-books. Builders and developers needed to build houses as cheaply as possible, so repetitive house plans with minor alterations in fenestration and color became the norm. Floor plans changed to accommodate a more relaxed life style and changing family roles. Kitchens were moved forward in the house. The backyard, and in particular the patio, became the place of outdoor activity. The front porch was reduced in size or eliminated to save money (Clark 1986).

One of the earliest post World War II planned communities was Levittown, New York. Levittown became an example of mass-produced, simple, affordable homes. Each house and front yard were almost identical. Automobiles were origi-

nally parked in the street or even the front yard. The architecture allowed for future additions of garages and family rooms (Girling and Helphand 1994). Until the1960's, Levittown was a model for planned subdivisions that was rubber stamped across much of America. In the 1960's, new planned communities such as Reston, Virginia would try to create a pedestrian-friendly environment, but for the most part, it would prove to be just a

Cape Cod house plan in Levittown (Levittown website 2001)

glorified subdivision that relied heavily on the automobile. Reston has a hierarchical road system similar to Radburn, tightly grouped buildings (town houses and apartments) fronting narrow entry drives and parking backed onto small private yards. The excessively wide streets and the need to use an automobile to move to other parts of the Reston community contradicted the pedestrian-friendly amenities.

The1960's and 1970's were a period of transition in landscape design. The popularized ideas of modernism were reduced to "cookie cutter" patterns repeated in development after development. The shift toward post-modernism began with the recognition that the patterns did not hold true for every individual. In an effort to focus on the functional needs of the changing residential environment, modernist landscapes were built to facilitate the movement of the automobile, discouraging other forms of human movement (Freund and Martin 1993). Understanding of the concept that purely functional design did not necessarily translate into comfortable human space advanced the ideas of post-modernism.

Typical Entrance Patterns of the Period

The modernist period saw a lot of changes in the residential entrance, particularly after World War II. The "main entrance" pattern of the modernist period represented a major departure from that of the past. The decreasing formality of social life meant that the main entry was into the living room and dining room. The element that projected furthest was no longer the porch, but the garage. As the main entry moved to the garage, the kitchen became the

Garage extends beyond the front door of this early-1960's split-level (McAlester and McAlester 1996)

first interior space encountered. "The prominence of the driveway and direct entry into the kitchen from the garage turned the suburban home into an extension of the street" (Flink 1988).

The "family of entrances" pattern began to change as well. As early as the 1920's, many American communities mandated the front lawn, disallowing fences and requiring well-kept front yards. Zoning and building codes began to set the house further from the street, with the lawn taking up the space (Ford 2000). Beginning in the 1930's, the neighborhood aesthetic was becoming institutionalized through magazine articles. *Sunset* magazine extensively featured the ranch designs of architect Cliff May. *Life* magazine featured articles by Royal Barry Wills and his Cape Cod style homes. "To a significant extent, the 'private' look of some of postwar suburbia, with the living room turned toward the back of the lot,

can be traced to May's ranch house plans" (Martinson 2000). Subdivisions of the 1950's introduced different kinds of street names that were often named for distant places that bore no relationship to the site.

Levittown (McAlester and McAlester 1996)

These new names were selected with the potential for wider circulation and consumption, but they created a "conflation of images and vagueness" (Potteiger and Purinton 1998).

The "entrance transition" pattern was affected by the changes in how the front yard was utilized and the shift in recreational use of the automobile. Socially, the personal freedom and mobility of the automobile offset the need for a large house. The home became used less for recreation, so the front porch and parlor essentially "fell into disguise and atrophied," being replaced by the garage (Kihlstedt 1980). In this way, "motoring was in some ways analogous to sitting on the front porch. The car offered a place to sit, socialize, and watch the passing scenery" (Buckley 1992).

By 1945, the typical ranch style house had no hall, no parlor and a mere vestige of a porch (Kihlstedt 1980). By the 1950's, the front porch had all but disappeared (Buckley 1992). During this period, most driveways provided the primary access to the house for pedestrians, and the automobile became the primary mode of entrance transition into the home (Gebhard 1992). The front walk, with

its curbside "landing strip," represented a departure from the previous designs of Downing and Olmsted. Instead of hiding or disguising the walk, additional connections were often made between street, sidewalk and house. Paths and sidewalks were made of various materials, often in combination or in different patterns to designate a walk or important connection (Doty and Johnson 1965).

Of all the patterns, the "car connection" probably changed the most during this period. As cars became safer and more durable, the function of the garage shifted from maintenance to storage. Two bay garages become more popular as many families increased their ownership. As the garage moved closer to the house for convenience, "loose connections were made via covered walkways, pergolas and breezeways" (Cotton 1986). Architects of the 1920's complained about the appearance of the simple utilitarian garages being built and suggested that "artistic" garages be carefully integrated into the home landscape and reflect the style of the house (Goat 1989). Builders found it was much cheaper and easier to heat and wire a garage if it were attached to the house. As house sizes shrank, the garage could increase the apparent size of the house (Goat 1989). Garages were actually seen as an asset, adding symmetry or balancing a porch. As the garage became integrated into the house, critics complained that the automobile was not an interior ornament and that having the garage door occupy so much of the front facade was offensive and aesthetically inappropriate (Kihlstedt 1980).

By the mid-1930's, progressive-minded architects no longer were concealing the garage. After the Depression, community garages declined, and the garage became "codified in the architectural landscape" (Goat 1989). In the 1950's, vehicular space became increasingly dominant (Ford 2000). Driveways that had served as parking lots until the 1950's became cluttered and noisy. The solution was to move the garage forward and shorten the driveway (Ford 2000). Garage doors widened as cars became

wider and longer and lot sizes shrunk. By the late 1960's the driveway and garage took up much of the front yard. Alleys which became popular in the early 1900's to accommodate the rear lot garage fell

Dominance of the garage in a 1960's ranch house (Snow 1967)

out of favor when the garage moved closer to the house (Ford 2000).

After World War II, automobiles were designed to be wider and longer. The automobile outgrew the backyard and the narrow driveway leading to it. Wider frontages on new suburban house lots allowed placement of the garage next to the house. As many families began to own more than one car, the garage became more accepted as a "reception room" for formal car arrival, "where you drive within the walls of the house yet enter the front door ceremonially (Gebhard 1992). The garage was considered to be part of the mechanics of the house, much like plumbing and wiring. It was considered ideal for the garage to be located at the family entrance (Gebhard 1992). A door from the garage lead to the "mud room" which was a kind of "decompression chamber" (Jackson 1997). The garage became a "room on wheels" and was given prominence in front of the house. It provided the connective link between the stationary element -- the house -- and the world beyond (Kay 2001).

During this period, the garage essentially replaced the front door as the symbolic and functional entrance. (Buckley 1992). A 1958 issue of *Home and Garden* featured a photograph of a house of the future with a "living garage," in which a Chevy was parked inside the living room, just across from the divan (Kay 2001).

For a brief period in the post-war era, with the full support of the modernist movement, the carport was almost as popular as the garage. Promoted by popular literature, such as *Sunset* magazine, the carport provided a modern look to the house and served the purists through a "symbolic feeling of modernist functional minimization conveyed by the form of the carport" (Gebhard 1992). By the late 1960's the carport lost out to the enclosed garage for many reasons. Enclosed garages offered possibilities for concealed storage and the opportunity for future expansion. Expanding families converted carports into family rooms

1950's carport (McAlester and McAlester 1996)

or workshops. The increased number of family-owned cars made the carport obsolete (Gebhard 1992).

The Entrance and Post-Modernism

Ideas of the Designers

In response to what seemed to be meaningless abstract spaces, the post-modern movement began to look beyond the purely functional relationships between people and space. In their 1972 book, *Learning from Las Vegas*, Venturi, Brown and Izenour state that architecture built for the needs of the automobile serves as a point of demarcation between modernism and postmodernism. The automobile filters the driver from the world, altering the view. All the senses are diluted compared to the pedestrian experience. The automobile contributes to the deauthentication of sense experience.

The automobile distorts the sense of place, and our postmodern city has surpassed our ability to map places (Freund and Martin 1993).

Architect Robert Venturi is critical of the architecture of modernism, arguing that its emphasis on space, form and structure is "irrelevant, socially coercive, inappropriate, and out of touch" with the age of electronics and automobiles (Trachenburg and Hyman 1986). It is evident that symbolism and historical precedent are fundamental sources of inspiration for Venturi's work. In the Lieb House, Venturi uses allusion to suggest a grander entrance to a relatively small house. He accomplishes this by varying the width of the entry steps from the width of the house at the bottom, narrowing at the top of the steps to the entry door width. The Hershey House has an ornamental circular opening on the front facade, reminiscent of the Classical porch. The lower level garage of the D'Agostino House is a "beautiful element" acknowledging the need for automobile access and storage, as opposed to entering through a "mean garage into a back door to the kitchen" (Venturi, Brown and Izenour 1972). With the Vanna Venturi House, Venturi incorporated a symbolic

lintel and arch above a recessed porch to create "a precarious tension grips the observer and involves him actively in its formal and symbolic dynamics" (Trachenburg and Hyman 1986). The Vanna Venturi House

Arch over recessed entryway of Vanna Venturi house (Venturi 1979)

isolates the facade from the rest of the house and thus marks it as the point of transition from public to private space. Moreover, Venturi views roadside architecture as a

form of architectural communication and the plethora of roadside signs as another form of cultural expression. The original plans for Venturi's Brant House called for a standard green expressway sign to be located where the driveway diverges from the central road. The sign would have read "THE BRANT HOUSE" (Venturi, Brown and Izenour 1972).

One of the archetypical forms associated with entry is the arch. The arch is a classic form, symboliz-ing entry or passage. From its earliest use as a triumphal arch in Roman architecture, to its cur-rent use by Robert Venturi, the arch is part of our collective con-sciousness. To the Romans the arch was a "kind of yoke under which the army and general passed in order to cleanse them of blood guilt." It represented a sense of rebirth or absolution (Giedion 1971). Today, the arch serves as a landmark, or point of transition.

1960's ranch with arched entryway (Berle 2001)

To Venturi, lawn art and vernacular ornamentation on houses stand out and meet the needs of the big lawn spaces and fast automobile movement (Freund and Martin 1993) "Yard ornaments have the symbolic role of identifying vast space just as ruined temples did in English parks or the urns in Le Norte's parterres" (Venturi, Brown and Izenour 1972). Whether it's styling changes provided by the developer or the additions of the owner, vernacular elements such as lamps in win-dows or a wagon wheel in the front yard support the individuality and identity of

the owner. Venturi sees precedent in the "suburban symbols" such as the sweeping lawn, brick gateway, rail fence, curving street, and even columns, coach lamps and foundation plantings

Clutter to some, art to others (Berle 2001)

(Venturi, Brown and Izenour 1972).

Within the post-modern movement, there is disagreement on the residential entrance design. Venturi embraces the automobile, and creates designs that accommodate the automobile in our lives. But not all post-modernists share Venturi's appreciation for the vernacular adaptations to the automobile. Neo-classical architects like Robert Stern and Andres Duany would prefer to hide the automobile. Duany's design guidelines for the planned communities of Seaside, Florida and Celebration, Florida illustrate a strong desire to inter-

Typical Seaside street (Southworth and Ben-Joseph 1997)

pret the modern house in terms of a classical vocabulary (Duany Plater-Zyberk and Speck 2000).

Post-modern architects have struggled to develop an individual entrance narrative that includes the automobile. Some draw on the tradition of the garage as an outbuilding, while others make the garage disappear into the earth. Designers like Venturi and Jencks celebrate the massive size the garage requires by turning it into an over scale signature for the house. Bart Prince, an architect in Ohio, designed an entrance for a client that incorporates a helicopter-landing pad with a car court. A fabric-covered porte-cochere in the middle of the parking pad marks the entrance to a stair and tunnel leading to the helicopter garage. Prince's intention was to make the helicopter and cars part of the garden.

Steve Izenour of Venturi, Scott, and Brown and Associates created a "drive-in" house in Connecticut. The entire first floor is basically given up to the cars, with a large symbol of a ship's wheel above the garage entrance. His goal was to create "tension and excitement" by combining the scale of the car and the pedestrian. Similarly Chad Floyd, also an architect, "made something" out of the garage for a house he designed in Connecticut. He placed two garages at the

Izenour's drive in" home (Betsky 1999)

entrance to a car court. The garages serve as a gateway and help define the site. The courtyard became a place of arrival, providing a sense of entry. Frank Gehry turned a garage into a piece of sculpture in a Los Angeles residence by stretching the proportion slightly and placing a bedroom turned at an angle on top of the garage structure. The garage is like a guardhouse for the rest of the house (Betsky 1999).

George Hargreaves is one of the few nationally recognized post-modern landscape architects who designs on the residential scale. Hargreaves searches for meaning in the landscape. His work combines the interplay of nature and culture with the interplay

and variations of site-generated design. His designs are based on a series of areas that extend the indoor-outdoor connection of house to the outside space. Hargreaves rejects the pastoral con-

Chad Floyd's dual garage entry (Betsky 2000)

ventions of the past, yet his work has links to the picturesque, particularly the possibilities of accident, decay or neglect and the use of ruins to create allusions to historical events (Beardsley 1995). Hargreaves' work "fuses the physical and narrative aspects of place" (Frey 1989). Hargreaves uses the narrative aspects of the design to play the forces of nature and culture against the permanent force of the land form. He has the ability to connect the individual to the energy of the site, creating a personal experience that is different for each person (Rademacher 1996). The Villa Zapu is a large estate project of Hargreaves' that includes a dramatic entry walk connecting the auto court to the house. The walk is a curving path that takes its form from the

Hargreaves creates a dramatic entry to the Villa Zapu (Rademacher 1996)

flanking waving bands of grasses (Hanson 1996).

Typical Entrance Patterns of the Period

The "main entrance" pattern today is somewhat confusing. Recent attempts to better define doorways with symbolic arches and Victorian details have not resolved the conflict between the garage and the front door as main entry . The orientation of most houses and most current floor plans still place the front door out of sight and out of reach for visitors.

The biggest change in the "family of entrances" pattern occurred with respect to revisions in the subdivision entrance. In an effort to relate more to the site or local history, many subdivisions are

Although no other surface stone is present in this subdivision, the stone is indigenous to the site (Berle 2001)

named with local references and streets after natural features that once existed near the site. While there is a danger in masking the real history of the site by naming a subdivision after a natural element that was eliminated by the development, it does represent an attempt to maintain the cultural relationship to the landscape. Subdivision entrances also became

Empty guardhouses serve to "welcome" visitors (Berle 2001)

embellished with columns, stonewalls, and even gate houses in an effort to evoke a sense of history, even if the reference is out of context.

The "entrance transition" remained much the same throughout the 1970's and 1990's. In some instances, particularly some lower income houses, the porch has been reduced to a wooden deck or is non-existent. Many middle and higher income house plans retained the porch primarily in sym-

Narrow walk leads to unused door (Berle 2001)

bolic form. While there have been some attempts at re-emphasizing the front walk, most walks to the front door remain narrow and hard to see.

The garage has solidified its position as the primary "car connection." Some newer house plans turn the garage to face away from the street to divert attention from the garage, but it still remains the point of entry to most houses. The previous interest in small, fuel-efficient automobiles has given way to a preference for much larger utility

Typical entrance with wide garage and short drive (Berle 2001)

vehicles, and now, almost every family member with a driver's license has their own automobile (Rosenbloom 1992). While the garage itself has become wider, the driveway has become narrower and shorter to save costs.

The changes in the residential entrance in the post-modern period have been subtle and reflect a mix of design opinions. One opinion is represented by the "neo-classicists" attempting to revive architectural styles of the pre- and early-automobile periods. On the other side are those like Frank Gehry, that utilize elements from the past, yet have defined a new pattern in house design. In middle of the spectrum are "eco-designers" concerned with issues like water conservation and "green architecture" and "traditionalists," who who have not strayed far from design patterns of the 1960's and 1970's. While it is difficult to clearly describe the post-modern period until there is more distance to give a historical perspective, it is safe to say, that there is no general agreement on what constitutes desirable entrance patterns today.

CHAPTER 4

ENTRANCE PATTERNS IN THE POST-MODERN CONTEXT

Certain realities of size and space dictate minimal standards for elements of the entrance such as driveways, walks, and doors. People walk the straightest path possible, sometimes to the detriment of the surrounding landscape. A dinner party guest will trip on uneven surfaces, slip on wet slate, or twist an ankle stepping on unsure footing. The automobile requires certain space for parking and turning around. Architectural standards recommend specific guidelines for walks and driveways based on current accepted standards.

Beyond the purely functional aspects of the pattern language are the psychological experiences of those entering the house. For the visitor, the experience is new and unfamiliar so the sequence involves wayfinding and being welcomed on arrival. For owners or residents, the experience becomes more habitual over time and the sequence is one of winding down or transitioning to a private space.

Main Entrance

The "main entrance" pattern focuses primarily on finding the main entrance. It seems logical to assume that visitors will come to the front door when it is placed in the middle of the house facing the street; moreover, the front door is typically the widest door in the house, and it is generally adorned with lights and shiny fixtures. In spite of these efforts, the garage continues to be the point of entry for nearly everyone. This is because the garage is the largest opening and is within a direct line of sight from the street. The garage is the shortest walk into the

house and provides excellent weather protection. There is little reason for anyone to go out of their way to find another entrance. For the resident, finding the main entry has become routine and typically is the shortest distance from parked automobile to the kitchen door.

One solution to the problem of visitors finding the owner-preferred entry would be to eliminate the front door altogether. In *Geography of Home*, Akiko Busch argues for keeping the front door because the front door "reminds us of a time when public and private rituals structured people's lives" and it "appeals to our sense of arrival" (Busch 1999). The question then becomes one of symbolism versus functionalism. The front door is important to the arrival sequence because it represents the formal opening to an inner, private space. However, the front door would provide a better symbol if it were visible for more than a split second from a passing automobile.

Part of the solution might involve moving the front door to the garage. This would still be in keeping with the original "main entrance" pattern that suggests a single entry, yet it would redefine the main entrance to suit the pattern of most users. We need only remove the junk and improve the garage decor to create a more desirable entry experience in a location where entry is already understood.

Signs are so much a part of our culture, yet the main entrance is seldom clearly marked. Two of the most commonly understood entrance cues were lost when name plaques and address markings were moved from the front door to the curb. One form of main entrance marking that has persisted, and in fact increased in popularity, is the ritual of decorating the front yard in support of seasonal holidays and personal events such as giving birth. Retailers have realized the marketing potential of seasonal lights, wreaths, and yard decorations and now sell decorations for every conceivable holiday. One result of the strings of mini-lights and

faces on leaf bags is that the main entrance is easy to find on Christmas or Halloween. If we erect these signs on holidays then it is conceivable that similar signs could be utilized year-round. Retailers have recognized the value of signs in attracting attention at high speeds. We recognize bright colors, neon lights and even "bizarre" signs because they are part of American strip mall development. With the obvious exception of annoying night lighting, we should design an entrance that reveals the main entry in a way understood by the individual home-owner and those who visit the home.

Family of Entrances

The intent of the "family of entrances" pattern was to describe a communi-ty. The residential equivalent of "family of entrances" is the neighborhood, or more specifically, the subdivision. The front of the individual house is just part of that family. This pattern has been misinterpreted by some to mean that all entrances should look alike. The exteriors of many contractor-built homes of today appear to be a col-lection of "borrowed" historical elements. While each of these houses exhibit a slightly different collection, the result is a neighborhood of very similar houses. The subse-quent assumption is that today's subdivisions adhere to the "family of entrances" because of this similarity. The pattern was not intended to suggest absolute conformity, but the description does suggest a limitation on personal expression in entrance design.

One step back from the "family of individual entrances" is the neighborhood entrance. Here the history is slightly different. Since the early subdivisions, developers placed signs and labels at the front entrance. The design of these entrances tended to follow trends set by the wealthier subdivisions. The use of columns and gates is a common thread from high-income to low-income neighborhoods. The trend is toward more grandiose signs and entrance landscaping. The dilemma is that at some point the

entrances will all look alike and not act as distinguishable landmarks. Post Properties, an Atlanta property management company, initiated the practice of showy floral dis-

plays at the entrances to their developments. Initially, this served to distinguish them and their neighborhoods. Now, visitors can't distinguish a Post development by plantings alone because almost every

Seasonal decorations make this ordinary house stand out (Berle 2001)

apartment complex and subdivision has some type of floral display.

Some subdivisions strive to create a narrative to little effect, introducing landmarks that are often tacky and out of context with the surroundings. In some ways this is a false narrative, but they do establish a clear identity for the family of entrances within. The post-modern theorist Charles Jencks calls this type of sign "bizarre juxtaposition" (Jencks 1979).

To improve upon our current implementation of the "family of entrances" pattern we must either be more creative in distinguishing the entrances to subdivisions or provide

Entrance to Post Properties development in Atlanta, Georgia (Berle 2001)

better mapping systems for visitors. Subdivision developers might learn something

from the American retail industry and its years of experience in creating landmarks

and entrances. The golden arch is recognized worldwide as the place to purchase

hamburgers, just as the
shell and star identify
petroleum stations.
Interstate signs need
only display the shapes
and colors of chain
restaurants and we
know to slow down and
turn at the next exit.

Early Shell Gas station (Shell Website 2001)

Subdivision entrances should take advantage of natural or locally relevant symbols

of entrance such as rock outcroppings or specimen trees. A simple landmark such

as a preserved red barn can distinguish an entrance while retaining a sense of place

and history.

Another way to create a sense of place in subdivision entrances is alluded to

by Potteiger and
Purinton in their sug-
gestion to "rename"
streets and subdivisions
as an effective strategy
to claim space for
groups traditionally
without power. In the
case of most of today's

Entrance to Stonehenge, a subdivision in Athens, Georgia
(Berle 2001)

subdivisions, where street names were chosen from the top down, not the bottom up, renaming offers an opportunity to restore lost identity and place in history (Potteiger and Purinton 1998).

There is a potential conflict between the "family of entrances" description of similar entrances and the "main entrance" prescription for a well-articulated entry. Resolving the apparent conflict in creating an individual identity for the main entrance while creating a well-defined family of entrances poses a challenge and suggests the advantage of employing separate designers for the subdivision plan and individual house plans.

Entrance Transition

When we transition from the street to the front door we are crossing to a different world. The time period in which the transition occurs has been reduced to the minute or so it takes to turn into the driveway, turn off the automobile, and lock the doors. The transitional path is the short walk through the garage to the kitchen door. The "entrance transition" pattern is based on the assumption that the transitional space will be experienced on foot; therefore it provides little guidance for creating a sense of homecoming for the individual and welcoming for the visitor traveling at our current speed of entry.

In some respects, the subdivision entrance has replaced the individual entrance. The subdivision sign and columns serve as a gateway to the homes. Some subdivisions are gated, requiring clearance from a guard or electronic keypad to pass. Others place an empty guardhouse at the entrance as a gesture suggesting controlled access. The drive through the neighborhood replaces the walk to the front door and the driveway entrance becomes the front door. The public-private foyer space is in the garage. In this description of the "entrance transition," the

curvilinear layout of the subdivision streets provides the pastoral experience; how-ever, the wide street widths of most subdivisions and a general lack of human activity in the streets speeds traffic and provides little sense of homecoming (Girling and Helphand 1994).

The classic symbol of entrance transition, the gate, is still used at the subdivision entrance, and occasionally at the entrance to wealthier homes. Brick columns that have generally replaced a functioning gate often appear out of context, as they have no moving parts and the columns read as elements more formal than the houses that are forthcoming. The more informal southern vernacular gateway consists of automobile tires painted white. Those of higher social classes may snicker at the tires, yet the tires effective markers that translate to "gateway."

Fences have been eliminated by covenants and gates have become too expensive for most homeowners, leaving the driveway and walk entrance with shrubs and maybe a mailbox to suggest transition to the semi-private space within the entrance. In the early 1960's, many houses had two pitzer junipers planted at the driveway entrance as living gates. When these guardians of the gate grew to such a size that they hindered visibility, they were criticized and subsequently removed from the land-scape vocabulary. In an attempt to restore a sense of entrance transition to today's land-scape, design guidelines for many developments such as Seaside specifically require fences in

Barbed wire around "cute" yard sends mixed message
(Berle 2001)

certain neighborhoods (Mohney and Easterling 1991). However, the dilemma of keeping others out while welcoming guests to the home becomes a real balancing act when designing the entrance transition.

Front porches are another traditional point of entrance transition. The American porch has been institutionalized as a symbol of entrance transition ever since it was first introduced. Though we seldom use the front porch, many houses retain the symbol. Some people go so far as to add furniture to a cramped space to suggest use. Duany recommends returning the porch to the size and stature of pre-automobile days. Many of his design guidelines for new communities call for increased porch sizes to promote a sense of community (Duany, Plater-Zyberk and Speck 2000). There is

Narrow porch leaves no room to rock (Berle 2001)

evidence that suggests a willingness among homeowners to use the front porch more if it were larger than today's minimal designs, providing some opportunity for activity to take place. However, contrary to Duany's assumption that "if we build it they will come," there are strong forces such as television, the Internet and air conditioning that act to keep people off the front porch (Wilson-Doenges 2001). The porch can serve as a point of entrance transition only if it is used. Therefore, if the porch is to be used for entrance transition, it should respond to the needs and uses of the homeowner, the least of which will probably be watching street traffic. Placing various electronic and telecommunications connections along

with some screen against insects might draw people out on to the porch, but then they might be too busy to notice anyone arriving. Another solution would place the entrance porch at the actual point of entry, which for most people brings us back to the garage.

Car Connection

Since *A Pattern Language* was written, automobile use has increased significantly. The greatest opportunity to improve the residential entrance rests with the understanding that the "car connection" pattern and the entrance narrative are interdependent. The original "car connection" pattern challenged designers to establish a single entry that might then connect to either the kitchen or the living room. There was no mention of the garage, or its place in the entrance sequence, only a description of a transitional space where people could stop and talk. Although the use of the garage as the primary entrance is a relatively recent pattern, it is a pattern that has developed in spite of the efforts of the professional designers and planners. Contrary to the intentions of these professionals, individuals, acting on their own, have developed a pattern that places the garage in a specific location within the entry sequence.

Accepting this pattern of garage use allows us to move beyond the "new urbanist" ideal of ridding the landscape of the automobile and garage in order to design an entrance that will be understood and used. With this in mind, we can revisit the suggested pattern of single entry, with the understanding that the garage will most likely be that entry. This suggests that one way to prevent visitors from entering the kitchen first is to place the preferred entry room next to the garage. For some this may still be the kitchen. For others it may be a formal foyer.

Another solution accepts dual entries and simply disguise the kitchen entry instead of disguising the garage. Many of the entrance designs of Eckbo and Rose did just that. They knew then what we are still struggling to accept-- that the automobile dictates where we enter the house. Instead of hiding this fact or ignoring it, they created entrances that directed visitors to the front entry. They did this by creating courtyards that combined parking with visitor receiving areas, with a clear path to the front door. Often, driveways passed in front of the entry door, leaving room to drop off visitors. In this design, homeowners pulled forward into the garage or carport and enter the kitchen, but visitors clearly understood where to enter the house (Eckbo 1950; Snow 1967).

"New Urbanists" want to move the garage out of sight or disguise it somehow. Moving the garage further from the entry would provide more space to create an entry experience; however, the problems of easy access and weather protection from the early automobile days would resurface if the garage were simply moved to the rear of the property. At one point in the history of the automobile, researchers were developing technology that would allow the standard automobile to connect with an automated freeway control system to modulate speed and prevent collisions. This technology would replace the servant who parked the car; therefore making the porte-cochere an acceptable entry element once again.

Another alternative suggests parking the automobile directly inside the house. The precedent for this comes from the 1950's and 1960's when we experimented with living out our lives in the automobile. We went to drive-ins to see movies and eat dinner in the automobile. We entertained the family with Sunday drives and we vacationed in the automobile. We courted in the automobile and we even put wheels on the house and traveled in motor homes. Today, we spend more time in the automobile than we do in the living room. Perhaps, bringing the auto-
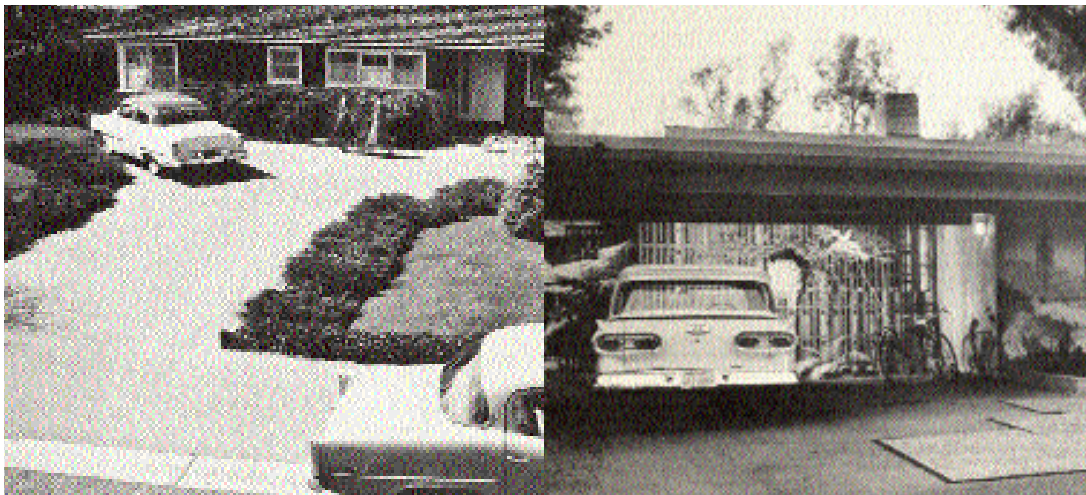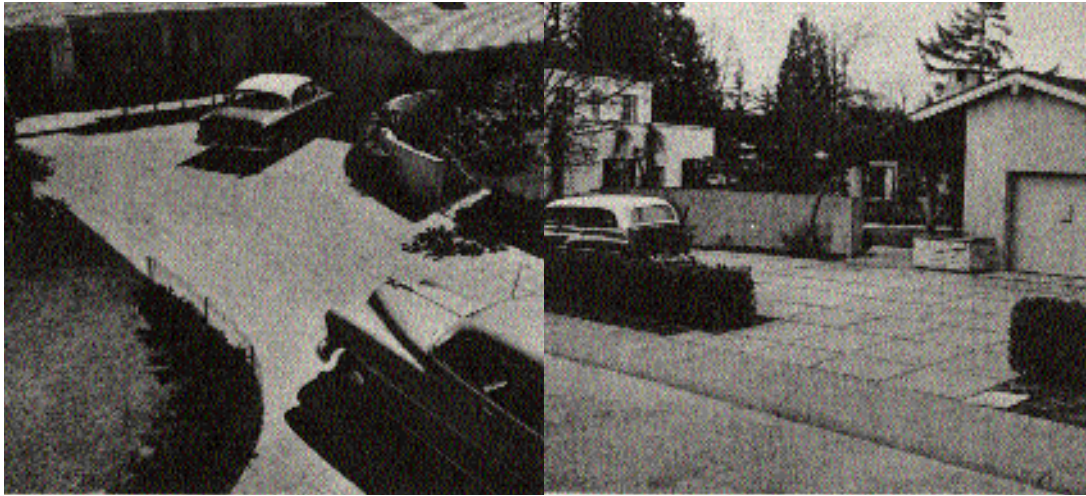
Variations of the 1950's car court (Doty and Johnson 1965)

mobile all the way into the house is the solution. If petroleum were no longer the

fuel of choice, we could
open the front door and
make room for the auto-
mobile. The automobile
could be parked in a re-
designed foyer, folding
out or opening up in
some way to provide
seating, sound systems

Dining in the garage or parking in the dining room (Moses 2001)

and lighting. The leather bucket seat is essentially a La-Z-Boy recliner so it is not

hard to imagine a sports fan watching a game from inside the automobile.

Part of our reluctance to accept or acknowledge our dependence on the auto-

mobile seems to be based on a sense of guilt associated with the contradiction of

environmental issues the automobile represents or a simple unwillingness to

acknowledge the degree of our dependence on a machine. Some of the designs

depicted in the 1965 edition of Sunset's *Entryways and Front Garden* suggest a

view toward the role of the automobile in the entrance that may be worth re-exam-

ining. Understanding and accepting the role of the automobile in our lives is but

one way to redefine an entrance sequence that more clearly represents the personal

reflects our present needs.

CHAPTER 5

THE ENTRANCE NARRATIVE

The automobile has changed the residential entrance, but this simple fact need not prevent us from designing an entrance that speaks to the person and not the machine. When the automobile was first introduced, landscape designers incorporated the automobile into a scenic landscape picture, with winding driveways and Victorian-style garages. The modernists responded to the functional needs of the automobile, creating an entrance that imparted a degree of status and prominence to the automobile. When mass-produced, houses lost a sense of individuality and the entrance became just another pattern from the plan book. -- so much so that it is difficult to recognize where, in America, you are. Venturi describes it best when he states that, "they (modern architects) build for Man rather than for men" (Venturi, Brown and Izenour 1972). The interest of post-modernists in the narrative of the landscape has brought the question of individual interpretation to a platform equal with functional concerns.

A Pattern Language was written during a transitional time from modernism to post-modernism. The descriptions of entrance patterns improved the dialogue between designers and users by providing common sense guidelines that describe the entrance in terms of human responses. Since that time we have developed a greater appreciation of the importance of history and sense of place in the design of spaces. We have learned that regardless of a person's cultural background, education or social status, the residential entrance expresses a narrative that is specific to the individual (Potteiger and Purinton 1998). How the story is told varies with the

individual, and therefore, there is no single pattern for designing the residential entrance. Individuals will seek to adapt their entrances to reflect the site, their cultural background, their disposable income and their individual personality. By amending the original entrance patterns to include the personal narrative, we can develop a vocabulary to suit the "auto-centric" landscape of today.

The Narrative as a Basis for Entrance Design

As in literature, the entrance narrative can be structured to tell a story. "The sequence of moving through a series of settings becomes analogous to a linear narrative" (Potteiger and Purinton 1998). The arrival sequence can include routines, rituals, daily journeys and even crossing the threshold. They are all processes that relate to the residential entrance and are an unspoken narrative that requires the viewer find the stories and become the narrator (Potteiger and Purinton 1998).

Spirituality has historically provided inspiration for the entrance narrative. Spiritual paths and sacred journeys are part of our collective experience, either consciously or subconsciously. Virtually every religion has stories that tell of some journey or passage. These stories typically describe the journey of the hero that involves a physical trial or a spiritual quest. All of these narratives share a common storyline of preparation, trial, and revelation. Either through heritage or personal experience, exposure to places of worship such as synagogues, temples, churches, mosques and shrines provides a shared experience for most Americans. These places have a clear delineation of entry, a place of transition and a shedding of the outside world. There are often a number of paths to take, requiring choices which reflect the character of the individual. "A spatial sequence provides a symbolic narrative as one travels along it and increasingly anticipates the arrival at and attainment of the sacred place" (Barrie 1996). Paths to sacred places have a tendency to

follow a clear order and direction and have clearly defined edges, creating a strong sense of unity within the path (Barrie 1996).

Individual perception and experience govern our responses, particularly as they relate to one's surroundings. How an individual feels in a particular space is not determined by sight alone. Sounds, smells, and textures are also part of that experience. Movement through space adds the elements of time and sequence to our spatial experiences. Part of the narrative includes experiencing the differences in topography, the changes in views and the varying degree of difficulty in moving through the space (Barrie 1996). When we view a space, our eyes visually appraise the space and then process that information, based on past experiences and preconceived ideas and biases. The mind collects segments of information about the space and then assembles them in a fashion that is familiar to us. We tend to select for regular, symmetrical and stable forms (Barrie 1996).

For a spatial experience to depict a true narrative, there must be a sequence of events. For the entrance sequence the two basic events are typically arrival at the front yard and passage through this space to the main entry of the house. The structure of the sequence is often framed by elements that create points of transition or change (Potteiger and Purinton 1998). One of the problems facing both the frequent user and the visitor is that this experience happens so quickly there is little time to develop a story. In order to create a richer or more complex experience the narrative sequence should have more than two events (Potteiger and Purinton 1998).

A writer utilizes a variety of devices to give a story narrative force and a landscape designer can impart meaning in the entrance sequence by employing similar devices. Potteiger and Purinton identify four major tropes, or schemes by which people construct meaning, that figure throughout their treatment of landscape narratives. The four tropes are: metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, and irony.. Metaphor

is used in a landscape narrative to convey meaning, usually by replacing one element for another or in the use of place names that allude to another time or locale. Metonymy is a form of association, that typically translates in a landscape to a site-specific association or a relationship with certain events, periods, people and styles. Synecdoche occurs in a landscape narrative when a part of something is employed to represent the whole. This can be particularly effective when attempting to represent an entire ecosystem, for example. Irony in the landscape narrative raises questions by mixing elements such as items representing "high" and "low" culture together with the intent of producing a hybrid or merely to provoke debate (Potteiger and Purinton 1998).

The narrative is expressed consciously as in the case of a uniquely styled entrance or unconsciously as in the case of a conventional entrance that conforms to existing neighborhood standards. The entrance patterns can be structured as a narrative that are represented by a series of passages or phases experienced by the individual or visitor. The type of narrative chosen should reflect the individual, emphasizing certain aspects relevant to the individual. For most of us, the home "embraces a wide range of feelings and experiences of a personal nature. Home is associated with privacy, security, belonging, responsibility and self-expression" (Gunter 2000). The entrance narrative should vary, depending on one's interpretation and expression of one's individuality, one's social class, the role of the automobile in one's lifestyle, the regional and local character and one's cultural or ethnic group.

Expression of Individuality: There can be different interpretations of an entrance sequence, but development of a narrative that speaks to the individual, either consciously or subconsciously, should be the primary consideration.

Entire neighborhoods are built with similar entrances and setbacks, yet in many instances, individual owners change their entrance as their needs and resources change.
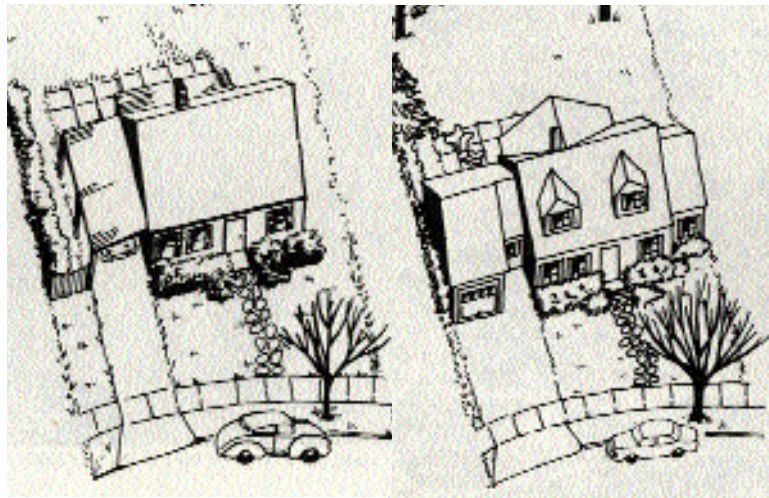
Levittown house before and after individual renovations
(Girling and Helphand 1994)

Four indivualized mobile homes (Harvard Website 2001)

Row of shotgun houses indivualized by the owners (Berle
2001)

Garages are made into rooms, landscape plans are changed, and driveway parking is expanded. In other instances, houses remain the same, either by covenant or by choice of those seeking conformity.

Many psychologists believe that the home is linked to our sense of self and identity and can be regarded as an extension of the self. The structure and layout of the entrance provides an opportunity for self-expression. "The home can be created as a mirror image of those valued aspects of self-identity such as the 'artistic me' or 'intellectual me', but then becomes a place where the person can just 'be themselves'" (Gunter 2000).

We cannot assume that everyone will interpret the entrance space in the same manner. Designers and users react very differently to environments; indeed, many believe that it is the user's construction of meaning that is important, not necessarily the work or intent of the architect, however famous. One concern about post-modern architecture is that the use of metaphor or subtle references may only represent the designer's, rather than the user's narrative It is also interesting to note that when homeowners make changes in their entrances, these changes tend to be more decorative and less permanent than architectural renovations (Rapoport 1982). The ability of an individual to understand a designer's interpretation of an entrance sequence depends on the ability of the designer to develop a narrative that suits that individual. With or without designers to guide them, individuals tend to read and reconstruct their environment in a way that means something to them.

The range of individual expression within a small and relatively homogenous social group is evident upon observing the entrances to various professors homes. While the professors within the School of Environmental Design all have a similar education and work in the field of landscape architecture and historic preservation, each has developed an entrance narrative that expresses their own attitude to dwelling. In most cases this is a through a conscious effort to seek order in the landscape, but in a few cases it is the result of a decision to leave the entrance landscape as they found it.

Entrances to homes occupied by family in the S.E.D. at UGA (Berle 2001)

Entrances to homes occupied by family in the S.E.D. at UGA (Berle 2001)

Entrances to homes occupied by family in the S.E.D. at UGA (Berle 2001)

To create a narrative based on individual self-expression understandably requires a degree of knowledge of the individual. A home builder has to choose whether to develop a narrative with input from future residents or design something that will attract a certain type of individual. It is easier and cheaper for subdivision developers to do the latter, resulting in the social grouping of like individuals.

Expression of Social Status: Wealth and social status are major factors in shaping an entrance sequence.

The resources available to the individual have a tremendous effect on the manner in which we present our houses to the public. Wealth determines the amount of property we can afford and the size of our entrance space. The number and type of amenities such as lights, brick columns or paving materials is also directly related to wealth.

Although the move to the suburbs in the post-war era was participated in by all the economic classes, the reasons varied. Lower class and middle income home buyers flocked to the suburbs for "value" and room to grow. Upper class home buyers sought privacy and the opportunity to make a social statement (Martinson 2000). The very process of neighborhood selection is based in part on wealth or perceived social status. One study has identified a correlation between outside building materials and perception of social status in residential houses. "Red brick and wooden shingles were regarded as indicative of higher social class, whereas weathered wood and concrete block were associated with low social class" (Gunter 2000)

Girling and Helphand have divided the front yard space into three distinct "residential yard typologies" that reflect the influence wealth can have on the landscape. In general, landscapes in lower income neighborhoods are without social pretentions and tend to demonstrate a vernacular expression of place or conscious state-

ment of individual taste. The automobile is housed in a carport or open driveway and the remainder of the front yard space is used for multiple purposes, most informally. Any fences or other boundaries are informal, and typically there is a high degree of visibility from the street.

Landscapes in middle-income communities are more formally organized, and express a concern for social status or conformity to a neighborhood norm. They are typically designed by the owner. The automobile is housed in a garage and the driveway is primarily for parking the automobile. The front yard space is public, but often

House of modest means (Berle 2001)

Middle-income house (Berle 2001)

Gates to wealthy estate (Berle 2001)

separated by wooden fences and hedges, creating a more formal boundary from the street. The driveway is used for multiple purposes (Girling and Helphand 1994).

The landscapes of the wealthy tend to be highly designed and maintained. Automobiles are parked in elaborate garages and the entry drive takes on the appearance of the estate drive. The front yard is formal, and often separated from the public street with security systems. Visibility from the street is limited (Girling and Helphand 1994). "The front yard and its lawn, its upkeep and layout are indicators of taste, status and lifestyle of the family who owns it" (Rapoport 1982)

Expression of the Role of the Automobile in One's Lifestyle: The visibility given to an automobile, inside or outside its garage, is an expression, conscious or unconscious, of its importance in the life of the homeowner.

Contrary to popular belief, the automobile was designed as a practical mode of transportation and not a rich person's toy, even in the early years it was across class boundaries (Flink 1992). However, this has not prevented the naming and customization of our automobiles to reflect our individual preferences. "Names are drawn from distinct referent systems -- history, politics, science, mythology, art, etc (Potteiger and Purinton 1998). Automobile

The Ford Edsel became a symbol of mechanical and market failure (Fleischer 2000)

names have traditionally encoded a narrative that suggests attitudes such as dignity, in the case of the Chevy Cavalier, or preferences such as speed, in the case of the

Dodge Road Runner. Some automobile names, like the Rolls Royce or Edsel, acquire their own connotations. Interest in expressing our individualism through our automobiles is evidenced by the multitude of accessories available from which to choose. An entire industry has developed that caters to those who want customized automobiles with shiny wheels and colored emblems. The type of automobile we drive reveals some of who we are, or at least whom we wish others to think we are. "Soccer moms" drive mini-vans or SUVs. The Mazda Miata has become the "mid-life crisis" automobile for middle class white males. Little old ladies drive older model Cadillacs. Which of these roles we associate ourselves with determines, to a certain degree, the type of automobile we choose to drive.

Some argue that the automobile remains the best form of transportation for the masses because we have designed our transit system to fit the automobile. The door-to-door capability of the automobile provides a mobility we have come to expect (Webber 1992). Frank Lloyd Wright considered this mobility a right of every individual. And while not

The motor home is as important to some as the home (Berle 2001)

every American owns an automobile, far more own automobiles than own houses (Webber 1992).

Post World War II predictions of a nationwide, automated mass transit system have not materialized. The automobile, or at least some version of an individually owned and operated vehicle, will probably remain a viable form of trans-

portation for a majority of Americans for some time to come. The new urbanists blame many community-related problems on the automobile and might do away with the automobile altogether if they could. And while this may seem like a noble idea, "it is naive to expect a total reversal in the suburban employment, housing, and low-density commercial patterns that fuel the growth in use of the car" (Rosenbloom 1992). However, it is possible that the automobile will be fueled by a means other than petroleum and that the specific dimensions of the automobile will be different from those of the current "urban assault vehicle." It is also reasonable to assume that the use of public transportation will increase with rising costs of fuel and parking. Prying the steering wheel loose from American hands will not happen easily or quickly. For those individuals in the future who elect not to rely on the automobile for primary transportation, entrance patterns will require adjustment to provide for amenities such as bicycle racks or bus shelters close to the house. For these individuals, the garage may remain as the point of entry, but its function as automobile storage may no longer be part of the story.

Expression of Regional and Local Character: Regional differences affect the expression of specific needs and preferences in residential design. American climactic regions vary greatly, affecting the use and design of entrance spaces. Common patterns of house design

Severe winters require protection for both people and the automobile (Lyon Farm 2001)

and use are associated with particular regions. For example,in warmer climates, houses are generally designed to facilitate greater use of outdoor amenities. Theses commonalities tend to provide a framework, but this still leaves plenty of scope for individual expression.

Expression of Cultural or Ethnic Group: Our cultural background not only affects our individual preferences, it also provides a shared pattern language among those with a similar background.

Like the interior of the house, front yards are decorated in a way which reflects the cultural preferences of the owner. The front yard carries the informa-tion that people want to convey to the public. We have images of the front yard, entry walk, and driveway that are drawn from our knowledge, interests and values. For most people, the image of "front" brings to mind the porch, driveway, lawns, mailboxes, front doors, as opposed to our image of the "back," with decks, sand boxes and gas grills. In American culture, we place the automobile in front because it is important to us (Farbstein and Kantrowitz 1978).

This cross-cultural recognition may not translate to a similar understanding of what should be the "front" of the house. In some cultures the front of the house faces a specific direction, such as a Navaho house that faces east, or certain African houses that face west. In America, the fronts of most houses face toward the street even if this orientation does not coincide with the functional entry point (Rapoport 1982).

Color preferences are also associated with the cultural environment in which we are brought up. Preferences for the range, brightness and combinations of colors indicate something about the cultural influences to which the occupants of houses are sensitive. For example, it has been found that in Asian cultures there

is a widespread prefer-
ence for the color
white. Cultures con-
nected to countries with
warm, sunny climates
show a preference for
using multiple colors.
(Gunter 2000).

Colors suggest a cultural background different from theneighbors of this Athens, Georgia house (Berle 2001)

However there
is a common image of
the American entrance
space that includes a manicured lawn, with a driveway and garage facing the street,
a walkway to a porch, and a front door leading to a foyer or entrance hall. In
between there are various ornaments and amenities such as brick columns, fences,
lamp posts, and landscape plantings. The image is completed with brass door fix-
tures and lamps, accenting the door. This vision of the American entrance is pro-
moted by advertising and the media, although is is not expressive of the diversity
of the American population.

Some Americans find comfort in this conventional media image. This may
be a reflection of our general unwillingness to change that which is most familiar
to us, or it may suggest shortcomings in the patterns themselves. The tendency,
either consciously or unconsciously, to gravitate to historic or symbolic elements
such as the pastoral front lawn, the front porch or even an unused formal entry,
often defies practicality and logic. The gateway and arch are symbols that may not
speak directly to our daily needs or preferences, but almost everyone, regardless of
cultural heritage, recognizes brick columns at a subdivision entrance or an arch in

the garden as a point of entry or transition (Rapoport 1982).

The arch remains a symbolic elment for people of many cultures and income levels (Berle 2001)

Searching for definition or meaning in our environment occasionally leads us to pattern language bor- rowed from other cul- tures. One example of the use, or possible misuse, of culturally different pattern language is the use of feng-shui. Barnes and Noble currently lists over 369 book titles on feng-shui. Feng-shui has its roots in the Chinese teachings of Taoism and Shamanism. The basic concept is that energy flows through a space differently depending on how the space is arranged. The objective is to enhance the positive forces of energy and deter the negative forces (O'Connell 1999). Taken out of context, principles of feng-shui may be just another fad, but applied properly, in the right context, feng-shui may provide solutions for those who feel some connec- tion to its philosophy.

Conclusions

In order to design an entrance sequence that is meaningful it is necessary to construct a narrative that speaks to the individual. Daily users of the entrance may have different needs and perceptions than the visitor, but in most situations, it is possible to speak to both. Much can be gleaned from the past, especially narratives that evoke spiritual relationships to the movement through space. The relationship between the individual and their domain, including a domain shared with others,

should not be considered soley in terms of functional needs. In many instances, a truly functional entrance evolves as a result of the application of an individual narrative. Further study of the residential entrance should focus on developing an expanded vocabulary of historical, symbolic and literal interpretations of the entrance narrative that can coexist with the automobile.

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