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Ageless Hope:

Diversity's Effects (Access & Equality) on Accreditation

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Abstract:

In 1994, the cover of the February issue of *Progressive Architecture* (PA), featured an article entitled: "Can this Profession be saved?" The following year, (September 1995), *PA* continued its examination of the architecture profession, this time focusing on "The Schools: How they are Failing the Profession." In January 2003, the *Chronicle of Higher Education* added to this literary invasion by deploying a missile across the bows of architecture education with an article entitled: "The Multiple Failures of Architecture Education." All three of these articles paint a very pessimistic picture of the state of architecture education and forces one to question the grand narratives of architecture education.

What these articles do not examine is that the major burden of educating African American and minority architects is being carried by only seven accredited schools of architecture at historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) who graduate 50% of all African American students in professional architecture programs. An immediate concern raised by these articles was whether the focus of these articles would be more positive if the other 106 predominantly white schools of architecture (PWIs) devised programs that embraced underrepresented and marginalized students and/or fostered a more diverse architecture discourse. Another concern focuses on the lack of a proactive position by the leadership of National Architecture Accrediting Board (NAAB) to encourage diversity in architecture education (they would add "equality and diversity standards" to their accreditation criteria against the school of architecture's mission and goals.)

Let me explain, there is no dictum of political correctness, quotas or expectation of quotas implicit in this proposal to expand the pool of minority and underrepresented architecture students throughout the non-HBCU architecture programs. However, a lack of initiative or effort on the part of NAAB's leadership to create a climate of diversity within architecture schools implies a passive rather than active belief in the values of difference in the architecture education community. This paper will present solutions derived from and implemented by regional accrediting agencies, the result of which harvested positive effects of diversity on accreditation. Architecture educators will learn a great deal from their efforts.

Problem Statement

What I want to find out is how architecture accreditation can incorporate "diversity standards" as one of the criteria for evaluating architecture programs to affect positive changes in how underrepresented and marginalized students can gain greater access to all architecture schools accredited by NAAB.

The present and past condition for the underrepresented and marginalized in the architecture profession have been dismal, and the future looks just as disappointing. Unless drastic actions are taken by leadership architecture education organizations like NAAB to encourage architecture schools to emancipate the underrepresented and marginalized, the future for minorities in architecture will be as pernicious as have past and current conditions.

What the literature has to say about the state of the underrepresented and marginalized in architecture education and practice.

Three decades ago, Urban League President Whitney Young chastised the architecture profession for having only 1% African American participation in the profession, and here we are three decades later having made negligible progress (Landsmark, 2003). Furthermore, of about 120,000 licensed architects in the United States, only 1,408 (1%) are African-American (Mann & Grant, 2004).

There are currently 113 schools offering National Architecture Accrediting Board (NAAB) professional programs in architecture, leading to the Master of Architecture (M.Arch.) or Bachelor of Architecture degree (B.Arch.) (http://www.naab.org/cal_cat1724/cal_cat.htm). Nearly fifty percent (50%) of 1,069 African American students enrolled in an accredited Bachelor of Architecture program in 2002/03, and the 199 African American students enrolled in an accredited Masters of Architecture program in 2002/03, were being educated by 7 (HBCUs) Historic Black Colleges and Universities (AIA/NOMA)[1] schools offering NAAB accredited professional programs (NAAB Statistics Report, 1989/99-2002/2003). These HBCUs are Florida A&M, Hampton, Howard, Morgan State, Prairie View A&M, Southern (lost accreditation in 2003), and Tuskegee University (Mann & Grant, 2004). This implies that the 7 accredited professional architecture programs at HBCUs educated an average of 100 African American architecture students per school per program. On the other hand the remaining 106 accredited professional architecture programs at predominantly white institutions educated less than 7 African American architecture students per school per school (Brazley & Poggas, 2004; NAAB Statistics Report, 1989/99-2002/2003).

According to NAAB's statistics Report (1998/99-2002/03) of a total of 1,914 full-time architecture faculty, 4% are African Americans, 23.7% are women, .6% are American Indians, 4.1% are Asian/Pacific, and 5.75% are Hispanic faculty. This same report stated that out of a total of 1,156 tenured architecture faculty, 3.6% are African Americans, 17.5% are women, .52% are American Indians, 3.4% are Asian/Pacific, and 4.4% are Hispanic faculty.

Educating the Marginalized and Underrepresented

- NAAB's statistical report for the 2002/03 academic school year reveals that approximately 13% of total student enrollment for B. Arch programs are 'persons of color'; African American students were 3.64% of the total.
- Fewer American Indian students, Asian/Pacific Islander students and Hispanic students (B. Arch only) were enrolled in architectural programs in 2003 than 2002.
- Fewer African Americans and American Indians students graduated from B. Arch programs in 2003 than 2002.
- Fewer American Indians and Asian/Pacific Islander students graduated from pre-professional programs in 2003 than 2002.

[1] AIA/NOMA: American Institute of Architects/National Organization of Minority Architects.

American Institute of Architects (AIA) Membership of the Marginalized and Underrepresented

- AIA Membership Department data show as of 2002, there are 86% male and 11% female architects, (3% are unknown).
- AIA Membership Department data 2002 statistics show there are 69% Caucasian, 1% African American, 2% Pacific Islander/Hispanic, 3% Asian, 25% undeclared heritage, and 0% Native American/Alaskan.
- Of the 48 members of the AIA Board of Directors, Asian, Hispanic and African American have only one member each. There are five women on this Board (Ilozor and Grant, 2004).

Object of the Study:

The objective of this study is to question the grand narratives of architecture education and to inquire about questions of equity that are virtually ignored. What issues are not looking at?

1. Based on the NAAB's statistics above, can we conclude architecture is education only for the elite?
2. Are underrepresented and marginalized architecture students welcomed non-HBCU architecture schools of architecture?
3. Is it the responsibility of non-HBCU architecture to educate the underrepresented and marginalized architecture students?
4. How can NAAB passively continue to accredit and reaccredit architecture programs which do not reflect the diverse demographics of the United States?
5. How can the leadership of NAAB "get away with" their present thinking/action concerning underrepresented and marginalized students? (What is NAAB really saying when its own studies for the 2002/03 academic school year reveals that approximately 13% of total student enrollment for B. Arch programs are 'persons of color,' African American students were 3.64% of the total)?

Challenges to the grand narratives of architecture education and practice

What is the National Council of Architectural registration Boards (NCARB) really saying when only 1,408 (1%) of about 120,000 licensed architects in the United States are African-Americans (Mann & Grant, 2004). What are the deans of non-HBCU architecture schools saying when of 1,914 full-time architecture faculty only 4% are African Americans? What else can be done to make architecture education and the profession more diverse?

According Ted Landsmark, President, Boston Architectural Center and Chair of the American Institute of Architects Diversity Committee, "The profession will not become more diverse until our schools do, because graduation from an accredited program is a prerequisite to entry into the profession (Landsmark, 2003).

Based on the analysis above, there is no doubt that there is a problem with a lack of diversity within the architecture profession and especially architecture education. The growth of the underrepresented and marginalized in architecture has stagnated.

I am in complete agreement with Mr. Landsmark when he says that, "Our schools generally have the means and intentions of increasing diversity, but most fail to reflect the society…, and little has been published by the National Architecture Accrediting Board (NAAB)…on best practices (Landsmark, 2003). The charge for diversity in architecture education has to be championed by the accrediting agency (NAAB). The National Architecture Accrediting Board must have the courage to take bold steps to increase diversity in architecture education by following the examples of the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, and Middle states Commission on Higher Education.

Precedent "A:"
Institutional Accrediting: The Western Association of Schools and Colleges

The Western Association adopted a standard in 1988 requiring the 137 colleges it accredits to foster ethnic diversity on their campuses. The standards also say that such diversity should be reflected in the makeup of the institution's faculty, student body, and governing board (Courtney, 1993).

Following is a list of what the Western Association of Schools and Colleges expected from the institutions and visiting accrediting teams:

1. Both institutions and our teams were asked not to define the challenge of diversity – or its attainment – solely in terms of numbers of minority-group students or faculty, staff, or governing-board members.
2. The visiting team was to look for presidential and faculty leadership in affirming that "diversity" does not mean a narrow effort to benefit only members of minority groups, but a commitment of talent and resources to widen everyone's intellectual grasp and personal understanding.
3. Campuses should have written plans on how to achieve diversity that have been subjected to broad and searching discussion. The plan should address:
    a. Curricula.
    b. Recruiting and retention strategies for students and faculty and staff members.
    c. Student –life programs.
    d. Academic support for students.
    e. The plan should have goals and some way of assessing whether the goals are being achieved.
4. Each visiting team was expected to address diversity issues in their report evaluating the institution in the following manner:
    a. In a collegial spirit, they (the visiting team) analyze the institution's self-study.
    b. Ask questions.
    c. Report perceptions, problems, and opportunities that becomes evident during the visit.
    d. Praise worthwhile efforts that are under way (Stephen, 1990).

Precedent "B:"
Institutional Accrediting: Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (Commission on Higher Education)

In 1988, Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (Commission on Higher Education) also added a set of "diversity standards" to be met by institutions seeking accreditation and reaccreditation. Visiting accreditation teams were to look at college records to determine if the composition of the student body, faculty, governing board, and the administration demonstrated a serious policy of recruiting and retention of minorities that would result in the institution reflecting the demographic character of the nation (Bloland, 2001).

The "diversity standards" proposed by the Middle States and Western Commissions received their share of supporters and critics. At one point, the Middle States Commission "diversity standards" caught the attention of then Education Secretary, Lamar Alexander, who asked the department's advisory panel on accreditation, the National Advisory Committee on Accreditation and Institutional Eligibility, to study the issue and report back to him. Hundreds of faculty and college administrators wrote to Secretary Alexander with advice on whether he should continue the department's recognition of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (Jaschik, 1991).

The majority of university presidents in the Middle States region were quite supportive of the "diversity standards," as indicated in their letters to Secretary, Lamar Alexander. According to Roger H. Martin, President, Moravian College, "(The diversity standard) was only one of many recommendations and standards in the revised 'Characteristics of Excellence,' and there was no indication in the statement that colleges' commitment to diversity carries greater weight in accreditation decision than planning and resource allocation, curricula, outcomes assessment, administration, plant and equipment, budgeting and accounting, or any other considerations (Martin, 1991)."

"Diversity appears as a standard for educational institutions because of our conviction that we must deal with the larger concerns of society as they affect the educational process if we are to fulfill our educational missions. The focus on diversity in evaluations will serve to heighten the consciousness of each institution," said President Fanton of New School for Social Research in her December 13, 1990 letter to Education Secretary, Lamar Alexander (Fanton, 1990). In its analysis of including 'diversity standards' in architecture accreditation, NAAB can take courage from President Oscar I. Remick (of Westminster College) who in his April 29, 1991, letter to Secretary, Lamar Alexander, stated that, "Westminster College has found the commission's "diversity standards" an incentive to move even more quickly and decisively to achieve goals previously set" (1991).

Precedent "C:"
Specialized Accrediting: Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications

Richard C. Kunkel, member of the National Advisory Committee on Accreditation and Institutional Eligibility, said that he would favor diversity standards by specialized accrediting groups. He said it was legitimate for professionals in journalism, teaching, or other fields to define the training their professionals needed. "Colleges that did not agree could simply avoid seeking accreditation from that profession," he said (Jaschik, May 15, 1991). The Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications in September 2003 adopted the following revised standards. They will go into effect in September 2004 and will be applied in accreditation reviews starting in the 2005 - 2006 academic year (http://www.ukans.edu/~acejmc/index.html).

Diversity and Inclusiveness
The unit has a diverse and inclusive program that serves and reflects society.
Indicators:

(a) The unit has a written plan for achieving an inclusive curriculum, a diverse faculty and student population, and a supportive climate for working and learning and for assessing progress toward achievement of the plan.

(b) The unit's curriculum fosters understanding of issues and perspectives that are inclusive in terms of gender, race, ethnicity and sexual orientation.

(c) The unit demonstrates effective efforts to recruit women and minority faculty and professional staff and supports their retention, progress and success.

(d) The unit demonstrates effective efforts to help recruit and retain a student population reflecting the diversity of the population eligible to enroll in institutions of higher education in the region or population it serves, with special attention to recruiting under-represented groups.

(e) The unit has a climate that is free of harassment and discrimination, accommodates the needs of those with disabilities, and values the contributions of all forms of diversity.

Accreditation site visit teams will apply this standard in compliance with applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

Evidence:

1. A written plan
2. Syllabi and other course materials
3. Records and statistics on faculty and staff hiring and on promotion and tenure decisions
4. Records and statistics on student recruitment, retention and graduation
5. Records on part-time and visiting faculty and speakers.

As architecture educators and practitioners, we do not need external agents to further analyze or magnify the problem that neither education nor practice is reflective of the demographics of the United States.

- When three decades ago, Urban League President Whitney Young chastised the architecture profession, for having only 1% African American participation in their profession and negligible progress since then (Landsmark, 2003) we have a problem.
- When out of the 113 accredited architecture programs, 7 (HBCUs) Historic Black Colleges and Universities (AIA/NOMA) schools offering NAAB accredited professional programs are educating 50% of African American architecture students (NAAB Statistics Report 1989/99-2002/2003) we have a problem.
- When of the 48 members of the AIA Board of Directors, Asian, Hispanic and African American have only one member each and five women in this Board (Ilozor and Grant, 2004) we have a problem.
- When the AIA Membership Department data 2002 statistics show that there are 69% Caucasian, 1% African American, 2% Pacific Islander/Hispanic, 3% Asian, 25% undeclared heritage, and 0% Native American/Alaskan, we have a problem.
- When according to NAAB's statistics Report 1998/99-2002/03 out of a total of 1,914 full-time architecture faculty, 4% are African Americans, 23.7% are women, .6% are American Indians, 4.1% are Asian/Pacific, and 5.75% are Hispanic faculty, we have a problem.
- When this same report stated that out of a total of 1,156 tenured architecture faculty, 3.6% are African Americans, 17.5% are women, .52% are American Indians, 3.4% are Asian/Pacific, and 4.4% are Hispanic faculty, we have a problem.
- When the NAAB statistical report for the 2002/03 academic school year showed approximately 13% of total student enrollment for B. Arch programs are 'persons of color' and African American students were 3.64% of the total, we have a problem.
- When fewer American Indian students, Asian/Pacific Islander students and Hispanic students (B. Arch only) were enrolled in architectural programs in 2003 than 2002 (NAAB Statistics Report 1989/99-2002/2003), we have a problem.
- When fewer African Americans and American Indians students graduated from B. Arch programs in 2003 than 2002, we have a diversity problem. When fewer American Indians and Asian/Pacific Islander students graduated from pre-professional programs in 2003 than 2002.

When we have these issues we can conclude there is a diversity problem.

This paper has presented a discourse of the underrepresented and marginalized in architecture education and its practice. By unmasking past and current practices, the author aims to lend support to the marginalized and encourage positive inclusive transformation with architecture education (Foucault, 2000). What would we find about our educational mission, values, beliefs, and philosophy relative to power relations, social conditions, equity, and justice as these impact increased diversity in architecture schools and consequently architecture practice? Are we really part of the solution or as Brown (1993) so uncomfortably alleged, part of the problem (McGregor, 2004).

A suggestion has been made as to why it is defensible and essential for this accrediting body (NAAB) to foster equity, diversity and multiculturalism in their own activities and in architecture learning environments (Simmons, 1998). NAAB now has an opportunity to begin meaningful and honest discussions with its constituents as to whether we should actively pursue diversity in all architecture programs through the addition of a "diversity standard" or maintain the status quo.

Next Steps: *"Rules in Use"*

NAAB's "diversity standards" will enable schools of architecture to explain their *rules in use*[2] as it relates to diversifying their architecture programs. Alternatively, intermediate step can be take to find out why some architecture schools (like those located in HBCUs), have modified their *rules in use* to produce positive outcomes (performance indicators), while other institutions with similar *rules in use* do not produce the same outcomes. What are the external forces that would affect the *rules in use* of those institutions which have little or no indicators of diversity programs to attract the underrepresented and marginalized aspiring architects? The object of this next step in the research process in not only to find out the *rules in use* of the NAAB accredited programs, but to ultimately show these schools of architecture the consequences of what they are doing by not diversifying their programs, rather than telling them what to do.

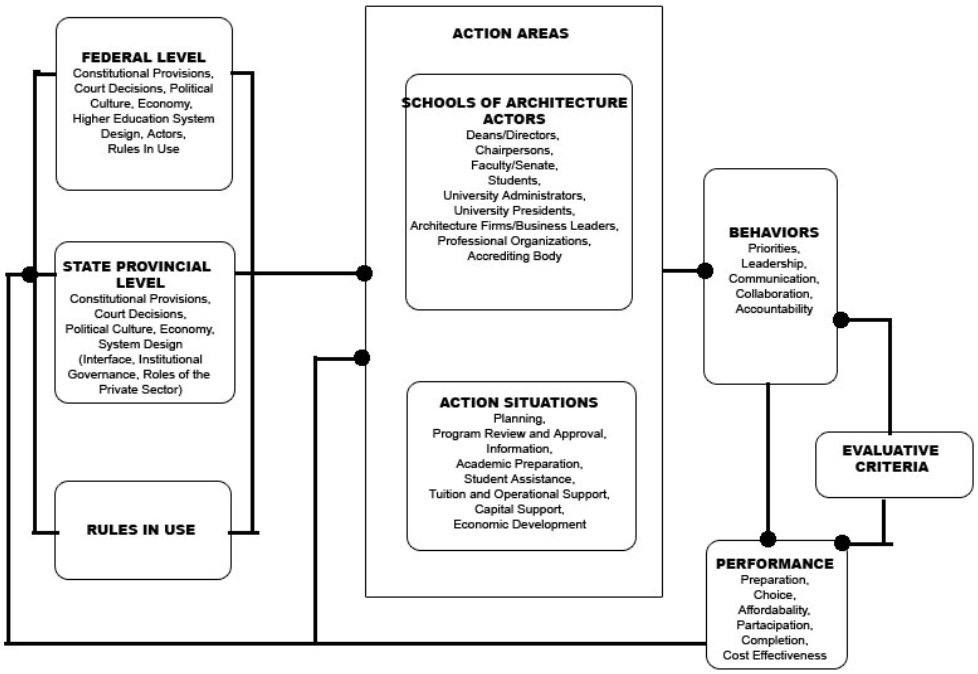

Figure 1: Performance Outcome Diagram (source: "Explaining Differences in the Performance of Higher Education Systems. Dr. Richard C. Richardson, Jr., New York University, 2000.

[2] In his March 27, 2004 presentation to a group of Higher Education PhD. Students at Morgan State University, Professor Richard C. Richardson of New York University defined "Rules in Use" as the values and norms which influence the operation of an institution.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, I'd like to quote from Foucault:

"The movement by which, not without effort and uncertainty, dreams and illusion, one detaches oneself from what is accepted as true and seeks other rules -- that is philosophy. The displacement and transformation of frameworks of thinking, the changing of received values and all the work that has been done to think otherwise, to do something else, to become other than what one is -- that too is philosophy...It is understandable that some people should weep over the present void and hanker instead, in the world of ideas, after a little monarchy. But those who for once in their lives have found a new tone, a new way of looking, a new way of doing, those people, I believe, will never feel the need to lament that the world is error, that history is filled with people of no consequence, and that it is time for others to keep quiet so that at last the sound of their disapproval may be heard" (Chagani,1998).

Appendix 1:

Recommendation for Diversity's Effect on Accreditation:
"Lessons for Architecture Education"

Five Recommendations to build Diversity into Architecture Accrediting

1. NAAB should develop diversity standards and guidelines that include requirements and suggestions for creating a more diverse and multicultural environment for all architecture programs which manifestation will be reviewed by visiting accreditation teams.
2. NAAB should use media and published materials to promote diversity and multiculturalism, both directly and indirectly.
3. NAAB should develop and disseminate policy statements and guidelines related to inclusion and cultural pluralism.
4. NAAB should encourage administrators to include in the structure of their architecture department provisions for subunits to emphasize multiculturalism and diversity as part of their mission.
5. NAAB should develop and sponsor special forums and workshops on diversity and multiculturalism for member accredited programs in architecture (Simmons, 1998).

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