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Sheila Fram & Eric Margolis

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Architectural and built environment discourses in an educational context: the Gottscho and Schleisner Collection

SHEILA FRAM and ERIC MARGOLIS

This essay examines architectural photographs of schools produced for consumer magazines like House Beautiful, which helped create aspirations for the rising American middle class during the period 1935–1959. It reveals the way that schools for the upper-middle classes were promulgated as 'role models' for the boom in school construction that accompanied the post-war baby boom. We examined images of exterior and interior school architecture and built environments in the Gottscho and Schleisner photography collection at the Library of Congress. Through Allan Sekula's process of archivisation and the use of constant comparative analysis, we re-organised the images in this collection and identified the prominent middle-class, architectural discourse inscribed on, in and surrounding the schools. We further discuss the maintenance of middle-class ideology through the guiding force of 'conspicuous consumption' patterns – the power behind the prominence of the archive and its accumulation process.

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INTRODUCTION

The Samuel Gottscho and William Schleisner collection of architectural photographs at the Library of Congress (LC) comprises more than 29,000 images including interior and exterior views. Most of the photographs were taken between 1935 and 1955; they represent, predominately, homes, factories, offices, stores, historic buildings, schools and other structures in the north-eastern United States. As the Library of Congress (LC) curators describe the work:

> Gottscho was commissioned to document work produced by architects, sculptors, and artists as well as several major publications included among his clients were *House Beautiful* and *Home and Garden*. Also among his clients were musicians, writers, and the social elite. While not photojournalists, Gottscho and Schleisner's images do serve as a document of social change from a particular vantage point of the middle and upper classes of society.[1]

In other words, the photographs were intended to reflect the possessions and lifestyles of the upper-middle classes back to them in flattering representations through the medium of glossy 'coffee-table' magazines like *House Beautiful,* published by Hearst Magazines. Spigel (1988) points out that 1950s magazines like *House Beautiful*, *Better Homes and Gardens* and *American Home,* 'presented idealized (upper) middle-class depictions of domestic space and were addressed to a female-housewife, middle-class reader. According to audience research studies conducted at the time, the magazines all attracted a largely female, middle-class readership' (337).

While the LC curator may be right that there is evidence of 'change' when the collection is examined diachronically, most change seemed to us more 'technological' than 'social'; our examination found social structures and patterns in the images of the architecture and built environments that were more consistent than variable. Limited images of the 'social', such as a letter of nomination for the architectural photography gold medal from the New York chapter of the American Institute of Architects, highlight the praise the photographers received for capturing a particular lifestyle.[2] We examined 11 images of the architects' miniature school models and two school floor plans, which emphasised the preferred styles of the financial supporters, architects and designers showcased in the archive. In other images we noticed static and repetitive discourses of architectural and interior design styles and tied them to the archive as an institution highlighting the power inherent in the accumulation process. The purpose of our visual study is to show how archives reveal particular ideological structures of social groups as imaged by photographers and reflected back to viewers of the images.

Sheila Fram is an educational researcher and President and CEO of The School Design and Planning Network, Inc. Her recent research focuses on the ways educational built environments impact teaching and learning processes; this research includes an article published in the *Journal of Educational Administration* (2010). As a researcher, her areas of expertise include qualitative and mixed methods research. Forthcoming research methods work will be published in *Writing the Qualitative Dissertation*, edited by Judith Meloy (2011).

Eric Margolis is a sociologist and teaches in the Hugh Downs School of Human Communication, Arizona State University. He is President of The International Visual Sociology Association. His visual ethnography of coal miners was broadcast as *Out of the Depths – The Miners' Story*, a segment of the PBS series *A Walk through the Twentieth Century with Bill Moyers*. An article on school photography, first published in *Visual Sociology* (1999), was reprinted in *Education Policy Analysis Archives* (http://epaa.asu.edu/epaa/v8n31/) and received 'Honorable Mention' for Best Article in an Electronic Journal by the Communication of Research Special Interest Group of the American Educational Research Association. Forthcoming visual work includes an article in *Qualitative Inquiry* (2011) on school as ceremony and ritual, with Drew and Sharon Chappell, and *The Sage Handbook of Visual Research*, co-edited with Luc Pauwels (2011).

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In this essay we compare the images of schools for the emerging white collar, middle classes that C. Wright Mills described, and for the 'old money' haute bourgeoisie who sent their children to boarding schools in the Stamford area. We begin by discussing the archivisation[3] process and how it becomes a powerful social force. We used C. Wright Mills' (2002 [1951]) definition of 'middle class' because it was the express theoretical framework employed during the actual data collection and archivisation processes. We felt it the best way to tease out patterns of American mid twentieth century middle-class ideologies without the dangers of prochronism. We continue by explaining how we developed meanings from re-viewing groups of images and their categories via the use of the constant comparative analysis (CCA) borrowed from Grounded Theory. In the body of the paper, we discuss representative images from the archive that depict essential elements of the middle-class ideology that structured schooling during the 1950s and 1960s in the United States (US).

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ARCHIVISATION

Clearly the Gottscho-Schleisner photographs do not depict typical American schools; they are clustered tightly in upper-middle and upper-class school communities. Where Sekula (1989) and Tagg (1988) examined the 'outliers' of masters and deviants, we were specifically interested in the post-war creation of a new, prosperous 'normality'.

We used Sekula's (1989) process of deconstruction for the Gottscho-Schleisner collection. In general, using the collection and its filing system as a unit of analysis is a way to deal with the 'messy contingency of the photograph and the sheer quantity of images' (Sekula 1989, 352). It 'allows the operator/researcher/editor to retrieve the individual instance from the huge quantity of images' (ibid.). More specifically, Sekula pointed out that the filing process has been used either to organise images so as to allow viewers to sample 'representative' images or to access individual images for inspection (ibid.). We employed a 'representative' or 'realist' approach, searching for evidence of ideological structures present among a huge number of images. The repeated presence of such ideological structures is evidenced by the accumulation process – architectural photographers for hire – that produced the archive. The images we chose are representative of the groups of images as patterns and evidence depicting middle-class ideology at the time.

In Sekula's detailed, historical account of archivisation he demonstrated how such a process becomes an institution of power by publicly positioning individuals and groups as exemplars or deviants based on how they were categorised and organised within the collection. The collection of repetitive images and the imposition of archival categories re-presents groups of people as social categories. He was concerned with how great inclusive archives displayed categories and their images as 'traces of the visible bodies of heroes, leaders, moral exemplars, celebrities, and those of the poor, the diseased, the insane, the criminal, the nonwhite, the female, and all other embodiments of the unworthy' (Sekula 1989, 347).[4] Sekula examined the significance of the photographic archive in defining the 'criminal body'. The forensic scientist can either gain knowledge about the 'criminal type' or gain further knowledge of 'individual criminals' (Sekula 1989, 352). He referenced the statistician and positivist sociologist, Adolphe Quetelet, to underscore the importance of frequency, or what Durkheim (1966 [1938]) termed 'social facts': '[Quetelet] argued that large aggregates of social data revealed a regularity of occurrence that could only be taken as evidence of determinate social laws. This regularity had political and moral as well as epistemological implications' (Sekula 1989, 354).

The use of constant comparative analysis and the reorganisation of images away from their original categories aided in deconstructing the prescribed categories and developing questions to create our own patterns from the data. C. Wright Mills' theory of the rise of the middle class worked as theoretical sensitising categories for identifying and categorising those representative images as evidence of the emergent middle-class ideology. Upon identifying the representative images of middle-class ideologies, we more fully recognised the guiding force behind the power of this collection – the 'conspicuous consumption' of a school lifestyle.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: CLASS, STATUS AND POWER

Around the time that many of these photographs were taken, Mills (2002 [1951]) wrote a pivotal book: *White Collar: The American Middle Class*. Mills defined the white-collar lifestyle for the striving middle class that is visible in the photographs. *White Collar* underscored the change from the 'old middle class' of property owners to the 'new middle class' of property-less yet relatively well paid workers; 'their characteristic skills involve the handling of paper and money and people . . . they are masters of the commercial, professional, and technical relationship' (65). As a social group, class, status and power were conflated in the occupations of white-collar

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workers as they became constituted as a homogeneous group (71). Mills' summary highlighted the way the new middle class maintained their lifestyle, noting:

> They deal with symbols and with other people, coordinating, recording, and distributing; but they fulfill these functions as dependent employees, and the skills they thus employ are sometimes similar in form and required mentality to those of many wage-workers. . . In terms of property, they are equal to wage-workers . . . originating as propertyless dependents, they have no serious expectations of propertied independence. In terms of income, their class position is, on the average, somewhat higher than that of wage-workers . . . white-collar groups have successfully claimed more prestige than wage-workers . . . the white-collar pyramids are youthful and feminine bureaucracies, within which, youth, education, and American birth are emphasized at the wide base. (Mills 2002, 75–6)[5]

Mills continued the Marxist analysis of estranged labour; the drive for higher status functioned as a diversion from the alienated position as wage-workers with no ownership of the product. Mills (2002, 228) explained the situation of the post-war, white collar, middle classes this way:

> If there is a split between their work and play, and their work and culture, they admit that split as a common-sense fact of existence. If their way of earning a living does not infuse their mode of living, they try to build their real life outside of their work. Work becomes a sacrifice of time, necessary to building a life outside of it.

Many of the images we (re)viewed depicted the 'working life' of the middle class child and the underlying insecurities of a property-less class defined by income and status.

Post-Marxist definitions of class incorporated ideological constructs such as perceived lifestyle. Weber and his followers added idealistic elements of 'status' to class formulations, incorporating such things as standing in the community, religious affiliation and behaviour, and elements of consumption and style. Katznelson (1982, 204–5) defined class as:

> a historical category, describing people in relationships over time, and the ways in which they become conscious of their relationships, separate, unite and enter into struggle, form institutions and transmit values . . . through a process of self-making, although under conditions which are given.

Extending the definition further, Erik Ohlen Wright (2006, 156) defined class as: 'the relationship between people and economically relevant assets or resources', encompassing relations to the means of production as well as the market capacities of an individual.

However, it was the sociologist Thorstein Veblen (1998 [1899]) who emphasised the importance of the 'display' of class and status through the concept of 'conspicuous consumption'. Based on his observations of various American institutions in the 1890s, Veblen argued that actual class position was less important than perceived status. Wasteful and highly visible patterns of consumption demonstrated higher status to members of the community. Consumption patterns were essential ways that white-collar workers amassed prestige by demonstrating their perceived lifestyle.

Conspicuous consumption patterns were particularly important for this project specifically because they must be highly visible. The Gottscho-Schleisner collection focused on middle class 'memorabilia' and was produced for magazines that taught readers and viewers how to emulate and mimic upper middle-class patterns of consumption. Perhaps more importantly, photographs and architectural plans were produced to circulate among specific stakeholders: school boards, architects and political elites who played active roles in constructing schools. All of the photographs in the collection emphasised the ways that middle-class lifestyle was portrayed. Thus, the interior and exterior images of schools as built environments highlighted a contained visual education designed to reproduce a middle-class ideology.

THE COLLECTION PROCESS

We purposely narrowed our focus to this particular collection of photographs; in part because we are educators, we were students and we want to further understand how archives such as these positioned us as students and teachers within a dominant class imaginary. Our interest in schools and schooling prompted a simple search for the keyword 'school', which produced more than 1400 hits from this massive archive of nearly 30 000 images. We searched for images based on sub-categories of: auditoriums, art education, cafeterias, church schools, educational buildings, gymnasiums, music education, playgrounds, religious education, schools, vocational education, lockers and other keywords. Then, we reorganised these images looking for repetitive consumption patterns that highlighted lifestyle. We re-viewed such categories as gymnasiums, playgrounds and various forms of education (e.g. art) to

investigate initial consumption patterns. At this point, we began inductively to develop meanings from reorganising the images.

PHOTOGRAPHIC MEANING: THE HERMENEUTIC PERSPECTIVE

Photographs may enjoy a specific indexical connection to the objects in front of the lens, but few today take Fox Talbot's (1989) purely positivist view that cameras are 'pencils of nature' (ii). Currently there are two dominant positions on photographic meaning. The first is a 'post-positivist' emphasis on the indexical connection tempered by the recognition that the image is crafted by the photographer, and available technology, and photographic meanings are at best probabilistic statements (Philips and Burbules 2000). One of the prime spokespersons for this position is the filmmaker Errol Morris (cf. Morris 2007a, 2007b, 2007c, 2007d). The other position is that photographs are polysemic and their meanings are 'up for grabs'. John Tagg, in his application of Foucault to the study of photography, draws attention to power: 'Photography as such has no identity. Its status as technology varies with the power relations that invest it. Its nature as a practice depends on the institutions and agents which define it and set it to work' (Tagg 1988, 63). Similarly, Allan Sekula denied that photographs 'transmit truths', 'reflect reality' or are 'historical documents'. He argued that 'The very term document entails a notion of legal or official truth, as well as a notion of proximity to and verification of an original event' (Sekula 1983, 195). Sekula interrogated power relations in a way that is central to our concern with the Gottscho-Schleisner Collection: 'How is historical and social memory preserved, transformed, restricted, and obliterated by photographs?' (Sekula 1983, 193).

We structured our use of Sekula's archivisation process and the use of constant comparative analysis (CCA) with an emphasis on hermeneutic perspectives, which assume photographs exist as texts with no meaning other than semantic and semiotic interpretations. Additionally, the framework for comprehending and critiquing the meanings we attributed to the photographs took into account Goffman's (1979, 6) symbolic interactionist observations about objects – among which we include photographic objects:

> There is a very deep belief . . . that an object produces signs that are informing about it. Objects are thought to structure the environment immediately around themselves; they cast a shadow, heat up the surround, strew indications, leave an imprint; they impress a part picture of themselves, a portrait that is unintended and not dependent on being attended, yet, of course, informing nonetheless to whomever is properly placed, trained, and inclined. . . . Presumably one deals here with 'natural indexical signs', something having 'iconic' features.

In our efforts to confirm and disconfirm meanings during our own meaning-making process we kept in mind Herbert Blumer's (1969) premise that people continually modify their understandings with each new social situation. Thus, we reflected upon the school experiences and social situations in which we developed personal meanings that we attributed to elements in the images. Finally, in examining more than 1400 photographs, there was a 'montage effect' as one views and categorises image after image; they can be congruent – each one adding to a taxonomic category – or contradictory – raising questions about created categories or introducing new groupings. To aid in resolving contradictions, we looked at bodies and objects in the images and the function of the space. Clocks hanging on walls told the time of day the photographs were made; writings on chalkboards gave us a glimpse of the curriculum; the positioning of students suggested educational theories at work. The entire project was guided by Nick Peim's summary of the phenomenology of seeing; he observed:

> [that] as 'human subjects' [we] cannot be written out of the identity of the things that we see. How we are positioned, what perspective we take on things, where we 'come from' – all these factors of subject identity are involved in determining the nature of the things in the world that we inhabit. (Peim 2001, 177)

THE ANALYSIS PROCESS

We used constant comparative analysis and a theoretical framework to identify evidence of repeated architectural discourses. CCA was originally used in Grounded Theory studies during initial open coding that involved organising and reducing of the data to develop core categories (Glaser and Strauss 1967). Patterns and themes emerged from the data during this coding process through induction (Patton 1990, 390). CCA works effectively to tease out initial patterns and their codes. However, the comparison process can only work effectively if the researcher 'devise[s] rules that describe category properties and that can, ultimately, be used to justify the inclusion of each data bit that remains assigned to the category' (Lincoln and Guba 1985, 347).

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We separated photographs based on repetitive built environment features and spaces such as open spaces, closed spaces, recreational areas and designated common and restricted areas. We categorised spaces based on perceived function such as studying space, play areas, work areas and so on. Proceeding from initial to axial codes, we reorganised the images again, inductively developing codes to deepen and strengthen themes by examining emergent categories for consistency and mutual exclusiveness (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Glaser 1978; Strauss 1987; Charmaz 2001).[6] We continually examined each category to understand how the categories organised images and architectural discourses. We counted the numbers of images within categories and noted commonalities; we searched for 'null' categories and examined existing categories with few images. For example, we did a search by 'subject' and found only seven images existed in the collection category 'Handicapped persons – Education'. These images were of 'the Blind' sitting in Braille or crafts classes, 'peeling apples in the kitchen' and 'weaving at the loom'.

After core categories were established highlighting various discourses as patterns, we returned to Mills' definitions of 'middle class' as a theoretical framework to confirm which categories of data formed a 'middle-class discourse'. Although CCA has not been used extensively to study the complexity involved in the structure of discourses and their ideologies (see Fairclough 1995 for examples of how to analyse discursive patterns), it helped us to identify many visible patterns and Mills' class analysis helped to pinpoint which patterns were relevant to our analysis of historical images of school built environments during the 1950s.

From these methodical steps we came to appreciate the power of the accumulation process and the complexity of photographic meanings in an archival context. We noted kinds of images that were in great abundance, and conversely, those that were scarce or nonexistent. The complexity of the archive required us to examine structural and spatial organisation to uncover discursive patterns as evidence of ideology.

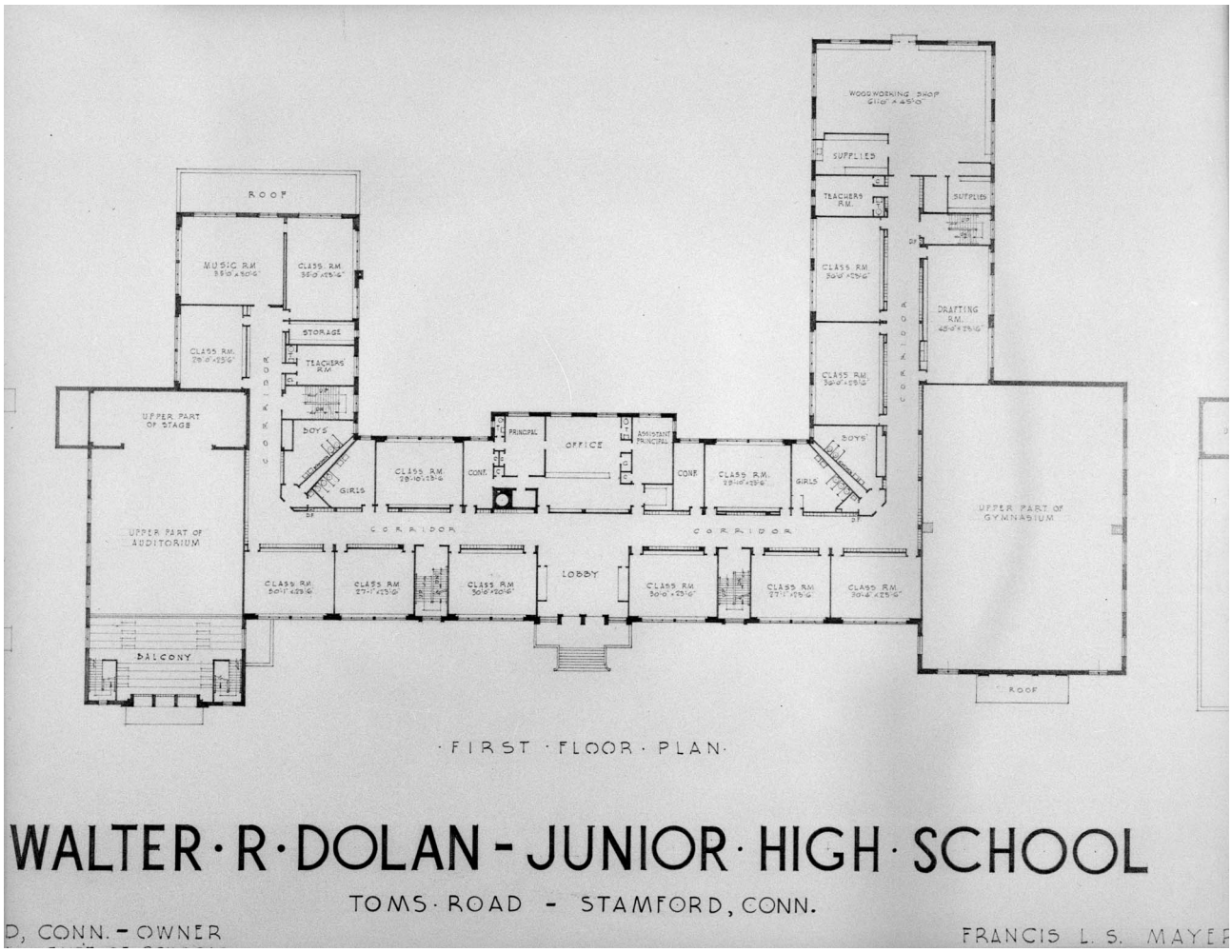

FIGURE 1. Dolan Junior High, first floor, 1952. 1935–1955. Source: Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Gottscho-Schleisner Collection [Call Number: LC-G613-61347].

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THE MIDDLE CLASS IDEOLOGY

School Structures Supported by Income

Stamford, Connecticut was a wealthy white collar metropolitan area on the main commuter train line to New York City. The total population, as reported by the 1950 Census, was 190 950 ('Detailed Characteristic' 1950, 7–91). Headquartered near Stamford schools were Fortune 500 companies including both Pitney Bowes and Xerox. The US Census Bureau reported counts by gender and occupation of such a workforce, which included 7184 male professional and technical workers and 3587 females (1950, 7–129). There were 9334 male salaried managers and officials and 1034 females (ibid.). 12 090 male craftsmen were recorded and 616 female craftswomen, such as bakers (ibid., 7–131). The count for male operative workers (e.g. machinists, mechanics) was 10 685 (ibid., 7–132). In keeping with general post-war employment patterns, total employed male workers equalled 19 350 while the total employed female workers was 9766 (ibid.). From 1950 to 1959, the state of Connecticut experienced a 6% rise in personal income, led by an 11% rise in factory earnings in manufacturing (Graham 1960, 11–12). Per capita average personal income was one of the highest in Connecticut at $2,817 by 1957 (Graham 1960, 13). The disposal per capita income for the state reached $2,444 (ibid.). Such numbers highlighted the growing consumer economy. In addition, the nearby corporations were direct beneficiaries of a socialisation of costs strategy, where the investment of their property taxes in modern comprehensive schools had a direct return in the form of a skilled and disciplined workforce.

No doubt these companies employed parents of many of the students attending the nearby schools. In the Stamford metropolitan area these were the 'baby boom' years and 36.2% of the population was under the age of 19. Schools were built to accommodate growing numbers of children. Local 'high tech' companies anticipated labour needs to replace retiring workers and to expand the workforce to meet consumer demands. Mills (2002) argued that 'mass education has also been one of the major social mechanisms of the rise of the new middle-class occupations' (266). The abundance of photographs with a 'school' theme in the Gottscho-Schleisner collection confirms the importance of education to the rising middle classes. Establishing the importance of education began with the planning stages. Gieryn (2002, 42) described the initial phase of representation and the building of ideological support for a school project by 'wooing' stakeholders:

> the design process is simultaneously the representation of an artifact in graphic, verbal, or numerical form, *and* the enrollment or enlistment of those allies necessary to move the artifact toward material form . . . an evolving artifact is shaped to fit the wants and needs of those who must be on board to move it off the drawing board.

Such 'wooing' was a verbal element of middle-class discourse and the 'caption' of information that defined the significance of the architectural plans for this class group. For example, the architectural plans of Walter R. Dolan Junior High School in Figure 1, reveal the expansiveness of the school both as an 'economy of scale' (cost advantages gained from expanding) and as an institution containing large numbers of students and workers. The school was commissioned in 1949 in the lead years of the baby boom; Francis L. S. Mayers was the architect who developed the plans and Vuono Construction Company was chosen to follow through with the actual construction of the school.[7]

In Figure 1, the classroom spaces are recognisable by their size and capacity to accommodate a large number of bodies. In the days before the office 'cubical', classrooms were the early training grounds for future white collar workers at the nearby companies –

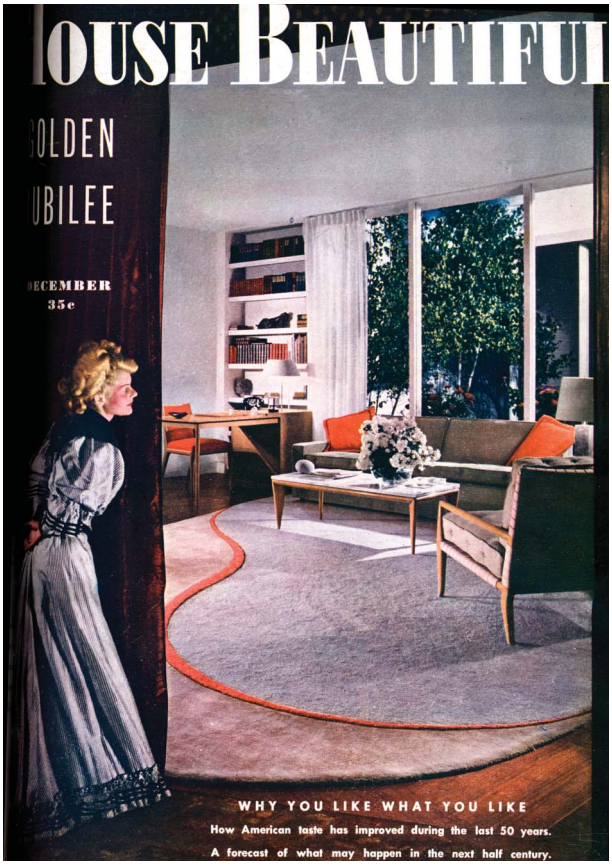

FIGURE 2. *House Beautiful*, 1946 edition, front cover. Reproduced courtesy of Hearst Magazines.

important stakeholders whose property taxes helped build the new schools.

Schools like Walter S. Dolan Junior High School were modern, factory-style structures designed to meet the needs of a growing industrialised community and emulate the actual working environment of future labourers and white collar workers (Dudek 2000, 10–11). The schools were institutions designed as an assembly line for churning out high-wage workers. The images captured the low-slung office-like buildings and well-lit classrooms with differentiated technological functions. Ultimately, the architectural photographs were produced for consumption by two groups of stakeholders: taxpayers striving for upward mobility and corporate executives anxious for a trained and well socialised workforce.

The collection description noted that, 'Many of the photographs were commissioned by architects, designers, owners and architectural publications, and document important achievements in American twentieth century architecture and interior design'. Upward mobility entailed recognising what must be achieved and the images of the schools offered an example of the place your children should go to achieve such prestige, and what the school looked like as an identifier of middle-class status. In sum, schools – and specifically photographs of schools for upscale magazines – had become representations of conspicuous consumption.

Many of the interior images of the schools showcased the 'right' furniture and the right styles of living. Thus, one can see a style of living in Figure 2, the cover of the December 1946 'Jubilee' edition of *House Beautiful*, and in Figure 3, a 1953 interior foyer image from Greenville school. In Figure 2, the mid-century 'Danish Modern' colours and style, the placement of the furniture and the large 'picture window' were the essence of contemporary style. The woman is depicted admiring the room as a spectator or owner, and the viewer is promised that inside they will discover 'Why you like what you like'. In Figure 3, one can see this same style and interior arrangement replicated in Greenville school's foyer. The message to visitors is that this is the best home-like school environment for your children. The message is one of art, style and beauty – and perhaps that this is one of many standards that you must strive for and maintain.

FIGURE 3. Greenville School, foyer, 1953. Source: Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Gottscho-Schleisner Collection [Call Number: LC-G-612-62790].

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School Environments that Maintain Status

The class/status that comes with income for the high-wage positions underscores levels of conspicuous consumption. Education and occupational achievements were valued more than flamboyance as the criteria for esteem (Mason 1981). As such, possessions gave people the means to act a part and the confidence to carry out the part (Sartre 1956).

A Discourse of Power

One level of prestige plays out in the boastful manner, which Mills (2002, 232) described:

> We do not wish to show how we work, for in most cases others will soon have learned our tricks. This explains all the bragging. 'The work I have to do!' exclaims one employee when he has only three letters to write . . . This boastfulness can be explained by a drive which impels certain people to evaluate their occupations very low in comparison with their intellectual aspirations but very high compared with the occupations of others.

It would seem that these bragging rights are common in middle-class discourse. 'Keeping up with the Joneses' entails a game of intellectual ping-pong with those who see you play your part. Along with such banter follows the presence.

The Power to Maintain Status

Bragging takes on a different form among the visual representations of the old ruling class. Visual bragging is seen in the Gottscho-Schleisner photographs of opulent schools like Deerfield Academy. These schools were not for the upwardly mobile white collar functionaries churned out in Greenville or Dolan. Modernity is out; tradition is as it always has been. It is interesting that in the majority of these photographs children and teachers appear as mere 'props' accenting old yet elegant architectural spaces.

FIGURE 4. Deerfield Academy, main building, 1961. Source: Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Gottscho-Schleisner Collection [Call Number: LC-G613-76802].

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Figure 4, for instance, focuses the viewer's eyes upon the grandeur of the architecture and park-like grounds. The image is reminiscent of architectural models where miniature bodies accentuate the landscape. Bodies are used in architectural photography to define the function of spaces, but in Figure 4 their presence highlights expansive grounds, access routes, social spaces and the opulence of the traditional environment. Tree trunks visually imply a sheltering environment for male students dressed in sports jackets and carrying books. Visual bragging becomes a technical element of photographs both of the upwardly mobile factory schools and the boarding schools for the old money elites.

In the design of the school, bragging and achieving took place in specific spaces – classrooms, the auditorium and playing fields. An essential element – indicative of the levels of prestige and status in a school environment – are 'showcase' spaces. They are found in almost all schools but are especially important in the upwardly-mobile, middle class schools where they signify achievement, and in upper-class schools where they became part of the school's tradition. In Figure 5, Dolan's showcases are located in the 'foyer' for optimum viewing of the best student projects at the school, athletic achievement or other accomplishments.

Showcases function as signs of prestige for students, parents, teachers, coaches and the school administration. Furthermore beyond evidence of status, showcases help define what is considered achievement and what is considered the best. These elements of school architecture mimic and foreshadow the hierarchies of power in valued occupations.

School Environments as Symbols of Power

Mills (2002) described the power relations of the modern corporation, which are learned as part of the (not so) hidden curricula of schools:

> In so far as modern organisations of work are large scale, they are hierarchies of power, into which various occupations are fitted. The fact that one takes orders as well as gives them does

FIGURE 5. Dolan Junior High, showcase area, 1952. Source: Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Gottscho-Schleisner Collection [Call Number: LC-G613-61185].

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FIGURE 6. Mr. Miller's Office, 1959. Source: Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Gottscho-Schleisner Collection [Call Number: LC-G613-74022].

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> not necessarily decrease the positive gratification achieved through the exercise of power on the job. (Mills 2002, 232)

Perceived power on the job translated into higher status and having gained a specific amount of prestige from the roles of executive and manager. Prestige was announced by displays of age, race, class and gender along with ordinary role performances of mid-twentieth-century America. As Erving Goffman (1979, 21–2) noted:

> We are all in our society trained to employ a somewhat common idiom of posture, position, and glances, wordlessly choreographing ourselves relative to others in social situations with the effect that interpretability of scenes is possible . . . however posed and 'artificial' a picture is, it is likely to contain elements that record instances of real things . . . Due to the warranted reputation of various behavioral settings and to the conventions of self-presentation, we will be able to infer something about the social identity (age, sex, race, class, etc.) of these strangers, their personal relationship to one another, their mood, and their current undertakings, these last, typically, only broadly categorized.

In the photographs people might be just 'staffing' to highlight the beauty and function of the built environment, but they can only work in this way if the viewer understands the choreography of class, status and power. One must expect – take for granted – that older white males behind desks are administrators with the power to command students, women and younger men.

Thus Mr Miller sits serious, poised and attentive for the photographer (Figure 6). No doubt posed in collaboration with the photographer, he is apparently passing judgment on documents in front of him and, by extension, on the young gentleman with downcast eyes fidgeting with his hands. When we include private offices like Mr Miller's as a space within larger structures it is possible to see how spatialisation is essential to maintaining power as a normal taken-for-granted social relationship inscribed in both the built environment and the body. Hierarchies of social class and status require that authoritative figures be recognisable by interactions and displays of symbolic capital. Symbolic capital includes the resources available to an individual or group based on prestige that they have amassed, or what Bourdieu (1979, 291) summarised as 'the acquisition of a reputation' and 'an image of respectability and honorability' that can be mobilised into powerful status

positions. Mr Miller's demeanour symbolically displays his reputation.

In Figures 4 and 7, Deerfield Academy is clearly portrayed as a symbol of power and an institution of privilege. More importantly, elite boarding schools like this are among the central social institutions devoted to teaching the hierarchies of social class and status. While reviewing photographs under the 'educational building' category, many buildings were positioned in the distance to show grandeur. Visual distance is a symbol of access or of exclusivity. The private Deerfield Academy, with its expansive lawns and classical building style symbolises wealth and the exclusivity of its clients. Figure 8 portrays a similar elegance.

Rooms like the Deerfield library proclaim a class lifestyle, but in contrast to the white-collar Dolan environment, the interiors of elite schools like Deerfield Academy educate future leaders of industry, politicians and entrepreneurs. Similar to the twentieth century upper middle-class schools in England: 'The elegant spatial ambience of the interiors illustrated the manner in which good architecture design could raise the quality of the educational experience' (Dudek 2000, 18). Dolan public school, despite its fancy suburban neighbourhood, signals upward mobility for future white-collar workers; whereas Deerfield Academy, a private school, signals accessibility to those who already have the money to pay for their child's high status in society. It is interesting to note that in an age when school safety was not an issue – at least for the schools in the Gottscho-Schleisner Collection – almost none are surrounded by gates or fences. Access is limited by prestige the school is understood to have, visually designating the legitimate users of the school.

In this context, surveillance presumes observing legitimate users. Foucault's (1995) limited discussion of school emphasised surveillance in the context of power.

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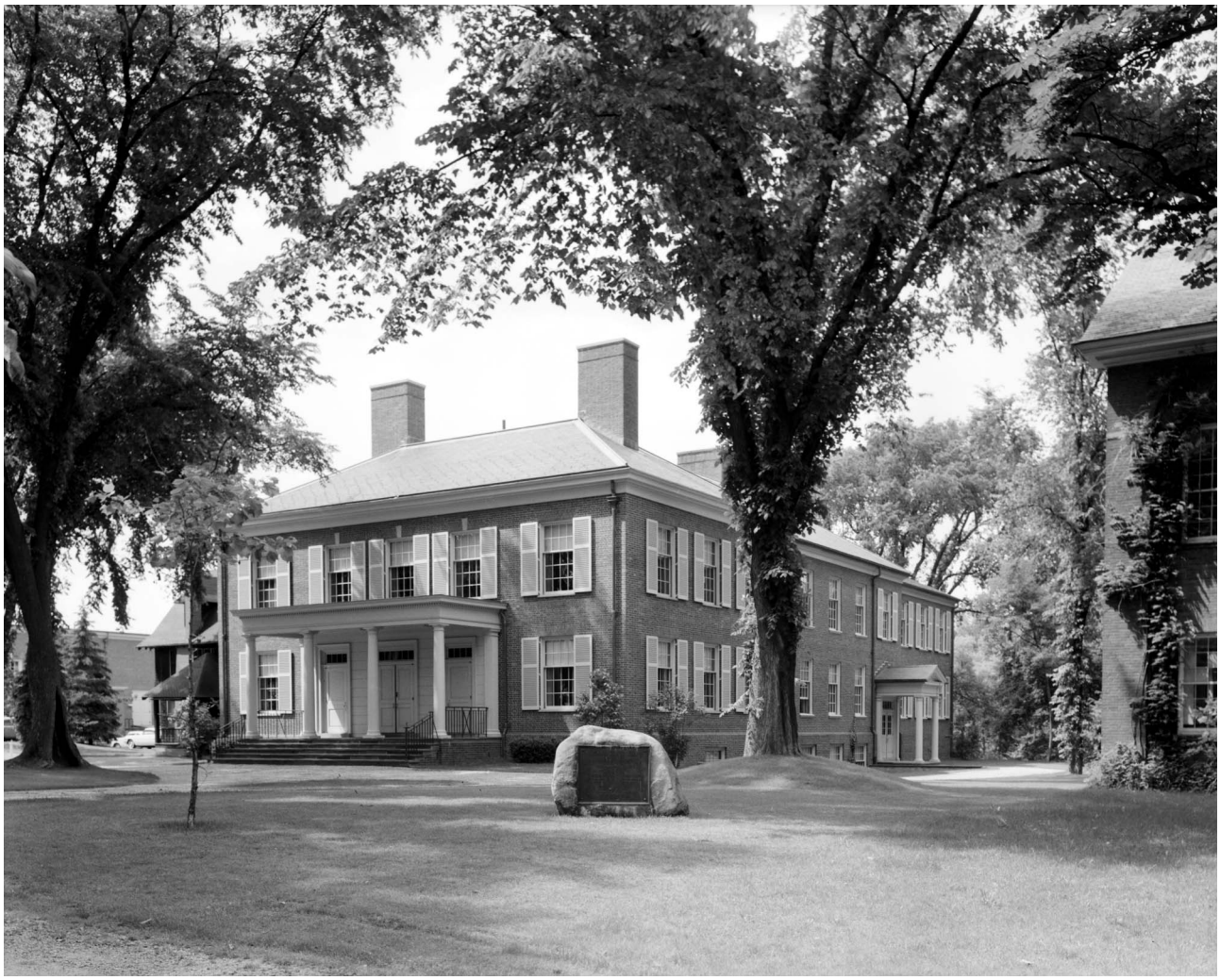

FIGURE 7. Deerfield Academy, exterior, 1963. Source: Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Gottscho-Schleisner Collection [Call Number: LC-G613-79250].

FIGURE 8. Deerfield Browsing Library, 1961. Source: Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Gottscho-Schleisner Collection [Call Number: LC-G613-76540].

FIGURE 9. Dolan Classroom and teacher, 1952. Source: Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Gottscho-Schleisner Collection [Call Number: LC-G613-61182].

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He viewed school architecture as 'enclosed, segmented space, observed at every point, in which individuals are inserted in a fixed place, in which the slightest movements are supervised, in which all events are recorded . . . in which each individual is constantly located, examined' (197). When re-viewing Figure 1, the linear hallways become elements of the surveillance discourse and viewing the individual through the windows of the classroom doors facilitates examination of the student and the teacher. In Figure 9, the large windows in the classrooms become additional viewing portals from outside of the building. Thus, being 'observed at every point' is fully understood as a viewer standing inside the environment and outside in an expansive environment constructed for this purpose.

In retrospect, the collection of photographs of rising middle-class schools depicts an institution dependent upon surveillance disguised as a celebration of a middle class, school lifestyle. In the expansive grounds and 'old fashioned' architecture of the private academy there are many places outside the panoptical eye. We see in the photographs that we analysed the staging of different forms of normality for the camera. Tagg (1988) situated photography as having an identity only through its use by agents. In our study, the camera was a tool used to establish the dominance of a middle-class ideology. The collection of 'architectural' photographs produced by the use of the camera becomes an 'intermediate good'[8] used to complete the production of the archive. The meticulous efforts of the photographers to capture a rising middle-class school lifestyle underscore the significance of the archive. The archive, first established by groups of investors commissioning the images, gains power through the viewing process. Being preserved and made accessible by the Library of Congress establishes the archive as an institution designed to maintain the dominance of the ideology it represents.

CONCLUSION

Allan Sekula's initial question helped us to further focus our research during the collection and analysis processes: 'How is historical memory and social memory preserved, transformed, restricted, and obliterated by photographs?' (1983, 193).

At first glance, the Gottscho-Schleisner collection in its entirety appears to be a type of electronic magazine celebrating the lifestyles of the middle classes during a certain period of American history. In images of Deerfield Academy, we saw open common spaces where less formal interactions took place (cf. LC-G613- 76542, LC-G612-T-42407). On the other hand, there were images of traditional classrooms and auditoriums that preserved schooling memories as well (cf. LC-G613-76543, LC-G612-T-42409). Schools like Dolan and Greenville compared with Deerfield Academy and other elite schools in the community were designed to educate, but also to create and distribute, a workforce stratified by class and status. The reproduction of these built environments normalised a middle class lifestyle.

Mills' definition of 'middle class' helped us to recognise the persistence of power through the conspicuous consumption patterns exclusive to two different social class and status groups. We employed our memories of schooling in interpretation to obliterate the superficial notion that photographers were hired to simply 'document work produced by architects, sculptors, and artists', as the LC curators described (See Note 1). By breaking down and analysing patterns through Sekula and Tagg's analysis of the archivisation process and the use of CCA, we uncovered the restrictive power behind the accumulation process and the archive as the final product.

Archives, such as this one, function to reproduce and disseminate examples of consumption that defined specific class groups. The Gottscho-Schleisner Collection became an institution of power through support by the Library of Congress and its accessibility to anyone with access to a computer and the internet who can view the collection. The archive and the photographs within exist as a power to publicly disseminate an American middle-class ideology. As viewers of this collection, we gained a better understanding of how photography collections become institutions of power.

NOTES

[1] This quote can be found on the web page: http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/gottscho/gottabout.html.

[2] See LC-USZC2-4244 DLC. Since the number of images we can reproduce is necessarily limited, where necessary we used Library of Congress Call Numbers, the images can easily be found on the website.

[3] The use of the term, *archivisation*, may have been a result of Jacques Derrida's 1994 paper presentation at a conference on the 'Memory: The Question of Archives'. In Steedman's (2002) book, *Dust: The Archive and Cultural History*, she states that the use of the term was a result of that speech event, though Derrida never coined the term.

[4] It should be noted that when Sekula wrote about photographic archives in 1989, the enormous online collections like American Memory or the Gottscho-Schleisner collection were not yet in existence.

The technological developments of digitisation and the Internet have dramatically enhanced accessibility and, hence, the power of the archive.

[5] Mills was not the only sociologist thinking along these lines, William F. Whyte wrote *The Organization Man* in 1957 and David Riesman was pondering *The Lonely Crowd* (1950).

[6] For a more detailed discussion of methods for studying historical meaning see Margolis 2011.

[7] Ms Sarah Arnold, the Public Affairs Officer, of the Stamford Board of Education was kind enough to share this historical information with us.

[8] Intermediate goods are tangible products used as inputs in the production of other goods (Sullivan and Sheffrin 2003, 301).

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