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A Study of the Influence of Women Clients on Residential Architectural Design through the Work of E. Fay Jones

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A Study of the Influence of Women Clients on
Residential Architectural Design through the Work of
E. Fay Jones

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Honors Program of the Department of
Architecture in the Fay Jones School of Architecture, University of Arkansas.

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INTRODUCTION

Architectural ideas about housing and the home and cultural ideas regarding gender roles and domesticity are directly related. Architectural design responds to programmatic requirements and patterns of use, but is also a physical record of social values, ideology, identity and status. E. Fay Jones agreed with this dictum, “When a man builds, then you’ve got him – what he builds and the way he builds reveals his basic character – reflects his humanity and his own ineffable inner light which, in our poverty of language, we can only call his spirit.”¹ Residential architectural design is even more personal – designed homes are built representations of their clients’ wants and needs, the architect’s ideology and their inhabitants’ lifestyles.

As cultural ideas change, architectural design responds. In the late nineteenth and twentieth century, waves of feminism and women’s rights movements pushed traditional views of men, women, family and relationships in America to change. At the same time, modernity brought about a shift in architectural thinking. Through modernity there was a split in architectural discourse on the house: house as a ‘machine for living’ versus house as an ‘incubator for domesticity.’ Housing became a priority for many modern architects, focusing on issues such as health, efficiency, new materials and building technology. In the United States and Europe, there was an evolution of residential design in the “context of changing social behaviors and values, especially among the middle class.”² Architectural historians have shown that changing attitudes on family life, public-ness and private-ness of the home, social behavior and education are important factors in the transformation of single-family house design.³ Women have been a particular focus of this research, because of their historical ties to the domestic realm. Therefore, “it is not unreasonable to expect that a significant shift in thinking about the family, gender, or middle-class women’s roles would find expression in the design of houses, nor that some privileged women, given the opportunity to act as clients in their own

right, would seek out new architectural solutions to accommodate unconventional ways of living.”⁴

Many of the most innovative and architecturally significant houses of the twentieth century were designed for women heads of households, including the Farnsworth House (1951) by Mies van der Rohe, the Vanna Venturi House (1962-1964) by Robert Venturi, and the Rietveld-Schroder House (1924) by Gerrit Rietveld. These houses are significant not only as innovative examples of modern architecture, but also for their new approaches to the design of domestic space. The catalyst for innovation was the fact that the clients’ lifestyles placed them outside of the cultural norm. Consequently, when these women “commissioned houses, they turned to prominent architects to design the living environments which would accommodate the breadth and variety of their unusual activities and unconventional lives.”⁵ Women’s visions of a new life were based on a redefinition of domesticity, spatially and physically. The coming together of feminist and modern architectural ideas resulted in some of the most innovative and original residential designs of the twentieth century.

The homes discussed in this paper are a product of both the clients and architects. Women who had the means to commission an architect to design their house had the opportunity to exert their independence and power by creating a space in the world in which they could live more freely. The houses these women desired are symbols of their individual liberty and autonomy. For some women this desire presents itself to the world as a monument, while for others it is about simply having the means and opportunity to carve out a place in which they have control. The architects chosen to complete these tasks must share the clients’ vision for a place of their own and must subscribe to feminist ideas about the redefinition of gender roles and boundaries within the home in order to make the clients’ visualization a success. By pushing past the traditional domestic assumptions and cultural constructions the architects are able to be innovative in the design of domestic space. That these architects and clients shared the conviction that the essence of modernity was the complete alteration of the

home – construction, materials, and interior spaces –is evident in the houses they produced.

Architect Frank Lloyd Wright (1867-1959) designed several houses for women clients, including the Susan Lawrence Dana House (Springfield, IL, 1902-04), the Hollyhock House (Los Angeles, CA, 1919-20), and the Goetsch-Winkler House (Okemos, MI, 1940). Architectural author and professor Alice Friedman discusses the Hollyhock House in detail, stating that it “has a lot to teach us about creativity and about the sorts of new experiences that become possible when conventions of social behavior, program and planning are challenged.”⁶ Many of Wright’s most significant and innovative designs were produced when norms were challenged, and this does not exclude cultural norms of women’s roles and family types. Wright responded to the unconventional nature of these women heads of households by designing for each a house that reconsidered ideas concerning house design and domesticity. In his *Autobiography*, Wright states: “Why should all Usonianⁱ houses...be of so-called domestic mold when all Usonian people are not so? Why should Aline Barnsdall live in a house like Mrs. Alderman Schmutzkoph?”⁷ By responding to the clients’ specific needs, Frank Lloyd Wright provides excellent examples of modern housing design that are an expression of progressive cultural changes of the time period.

American architect and designer E. Fay Jones (1921 – 2004) worked under Frank Lloyd Wright before going on to have a very successful career of his own, winning the AIA Gold Medal in 1990. He designed nearly ninety residential projects throughout his architectural career. Jones commented on Wright’s early impact on him: “Frank Lloyd Wright has been the strongest influence on the work I’ve done.”⁸ Because of Wright’s influence, it is reasonable to assume that some of his progressive views on women, gender roles, and housing design were also passed on to Fay Jones. If so, these ideas would be evident in the built work of Jones, especially in the houses he designed for unconventional clients, such as the Goetsch-Winkler House III and the

ⁱ For more on Wright’s Usonian ideology, see pages 34 – 35.

Alice Walton House. Jones understood each clients' need to have a residence specifically designed to suit their family and lifestyle.

I have never thought that each project has to be an unusual house, a different house. I think that...the owners are going to be different enough, their desires, their patterns of living are going to be different enough that if you solve problems as they are presented by the project, then it's going to turn out to be different from any other house.⁹

The built form of a house is an illustration of the client's family type and way of life. Jones was passionate about architecture and design, as was Wright, and he felt that he put a piece of himself into each of his works. Houses that Wright and Jones designed uniquely to accommodate unconventional ways of living should physically represent this deviation from the norm through the design itself.

This paper is not about style. Style does not necessarily determine the free or the oppressive nature that a house might facilitate within. Fay Jones often said that he worked to avoid style, and that "any style it may possess is its own, coming from its growth as a natural solution to its own unique set of circumstances."¹⁰ A house that appears to be modern may or may not respond directly to the needs of its clients in a meaningful way. This paper is about clients and architects who, because of their ability to reconsider the cultural constructions of gender roles and family types ahead of their time, were able to commission and design a new kind of residential architecture that redefined the traditional boundaries between men and women and between public and private spheres.

This thesis will perform an in-depth investigation of the residential architecture of E. Fay Jones and Frank Lloyd Wright in order to determine the influence of female clients in architectural design. The closed context of the home is an ideal place in which to study cultural changes, concerning ideas about gender and family types, on a personal level. Although a significant amount of Fay Jones's work has been published, there is relatively little existing critical assessment. This thesis will contribute to the field by conducting original research concerning Jones's design ideology, the relationship with and influence of Frank Lloyd Wright,

and a reassessment of the work itself. By focusing on houses built for female clients by male architects, this thesis not only contributes to the existing literature on the subject of women and architecture, but also reconsiders Fay Jones's work through this particular lens.

Chapter 1 will take a closer look into the socio-historical context in which this work is situated and will review the existing literature on the subject of women, architecture and the home. This section will also define differences in key terms, such as 'house,' 'home' and 'domesticity,' in order to facilitate a clear analysis of selected work later in the paper. Chapter 2 considers Frank Lloyd Wright's views and opinions on women and the feminist influences throughout his life before analyzing examples of his residential work. It is known that Wright focused a significant amount of energy throughout his career on his redefinition of the house and new ideas of living conditions in America. He also had many controversial ideas about women and gender roles. This chapter will look at the overlap between these two important aspects of the architect's life. Selected work of Frank Lloyd Wright will be analyzed in order to look more closely at residences designed and built for women clients, specifically the Susan Lawrence Dana House and the Goetsch-Winckler House I. This analysis will be used as an introduction and backdrop to the analysis of the work of Fay Jones and will be acquired through secondary sources and formal and historical analysis.

Chapter 3 will thoroughly examine two houses designed by Fay Jones through the lens of gender and women's influence. Because Jones claims that Frank Lloyd Wright was his strongest influence in his architectural career, it is reasonable that many of Wright's progressive ideas on gender would have also been passed on to Jones. Also, in addition to Frank Lloyd Wright and Fay Jones working together as colleagues, they are linked through their designs for mutual clients: Alma Goetsch and Kathrine Winckler. Analysis and comparison of the houses that each architect designed for these two women will provide a unique look into their commonalities and differences through their design processes. Thereafter, an in-depth investigation of other work by Fay Jones, specifically the Alice Walton House, will serve as a

vehicle for answering specific questions concerning residential design and clientele. The Goetsch-Winckler House III and Alice Walton House provide notable examples of residences Jones designed for women clients in nontraditional family types, a female-couple and a single woman. Although there is relatively little critical assessment of Jones' work, access to primary sources such as archival drawings and the built work itself, as well as interviews with his family and colleagues, will provide invaluable knowledge and gain insight into Fay Jones's work and ideas.

¹ Fay Jones, Writing, Fragments. Fay Jones Special Collections (MC 1373), Series IV, Subseries 2, Box 1, File 4. Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville.

² Alice Friedman, *Women and the Making of the Modern House*, 16.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Friedman, *Women and the Making of the Modern House*, 16.

⁵ Alice Friedman, "Your Place or Mine? The Client's Contribution to Domestic Architecture," 71.

⁶ Friedman, *Women and the Making of the Modern House*, 34.

⁷ Frank Lloyd Wright, *An Autobiography*, 233.

⁸ Fay Jones in *Outside the Pale; The Architecture of Fay Jones* by The Department of Arkansas Heritage, 14.

⁹ Jones in *Outside the Pale*, 26.

¹⁰ Fay Jones, Lecture Notes, "A House of the Ozarks", June 1958. Fay Jones Special Collections (MC 1373), Series IV, Subseries 1, Box 1, File 17. Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville.

CHAPTER 1: “HOUSES, HOMES AND SPHERES”

For the sake of clarity, it is crucial to define particular terminology that will be used frequently throughout the paper. There are problems inherent in using culturally loaded terms such as house, home and domesticity, and it is important to delineate key differences between the meanings of these terms. For the purposes of this paper, a house will be defined as a built object; something architectural and tectonic. A house consists of physical elements that form a dwelling place for human beings. This is different than the definition of a home, which is a cultural construction; the home is personal. Fay Jones has said: “A house can be constructed; a home should be created.”¹ The idea of a home means different things to different people, as shall be seen in the examples discussed in this paper, and is not a universal concept. Expectations about boundaries between public and private space, programmatic requirements, and the relationship of spaces within the house differ from one client to the next. The architect’s task is then to design a house that best facilitates each client’s lifestyle, needs and day-to-day lives.

The idea of domesticity is also important to the understanding of this paper. *Domesticity* is defined as “domestic activities or life”, with *domestic* being defined as “of or related to the household or the family” or “devoted to home duties and pleasures.”² Therefore, **domesticity** describes activities strictly confined to the home. In nineteenth century America, such activities were regarded as a feminine activity, while men worked outside of the home. This belief led to the idea of the separation of spheres, which is a cultural construction in Europe and North America that defines and prescribes different spheres of work for men and women. It emerged as a distinct ideology during the industrial revolution, although the idea of gendered separation of work goes back much farther in Western culture. This notion dictates that men inhabit the public sphere, consisting of politics, economy, commerce and law, while women inhabit the private sphere, performing activities such as childrearing, housekeeping and educating their

children. Women were said to “live in a distinct ‘world,’ engaged in nurturant activities, focused on children, husbands, and family dependents.”³ The metaphor of a “sphere” is a figure of speech that describes what was seen to be women’s place in the patriarchal culture. The definition of a woman’s sphere had a dual function in American culture: it provided a “secure, primary social classification” for women, as well as marked the private home as the spatial boundary of a woman’s place to maintain order, and the “unpaid domestic labor undertaken in that space was the economic boundary”⁴ for women. By defining the woman’s sphere as a boundary, both physically and economically, it becomes clear that this gendered division of labor was a form of oppression for women and allowed little room for deviation from the cultural norm.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, there was a distinct shift in thinking about family, gender and women’s roles. Woman’s organizationsⁱ were created and worked to advocate for the rights and protection of women and children; although their advocacy took many forms, they all shared the conviction that women lacked political, economic and social power and that the American legal system worked to keep women in this subordinate position. “Between the end of the Civil War and the beginning of the Great Depression, three generations of material feministsⁱⁱ raised fundamental questions about what was called “woman’s sphere” and “woman’s work.”⁵ These women challenged both the physical separation of the house from public space, and the economic separation of domesticity from the political economy. This group of feminists are important for this research, because in their mission to redefine housework and

ⁱ Prominent women’s voluntary associations include: The Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, Young Women’s Christian Association, the National American Woman Suffrage Association, the National Consumers’ League, the National Association of Colored Women, the Women’s Trade Union League, the Woman’s Peace Party, the National Woman’s Party, and the American Birth Control League. Some of these organizations represented the outlook of predominately white, middle-class women; others promoted cross-class alliances. Cross-race and gender alliances were virtually nonexistent at the turn of the century. - Kathleen C. Berkeley, *The Women’s Liberation Movement in America*, 6.

ⁱⁱ Dolores Hayden describes ‘material feminists’ as those who dared to define a grand domestic revolution in women’s material conditions. These ‘material feminists’ “proposed a complete transformation of the spatial design and material culture of American homes, neighborhoods, and cities” and “concentrated on “economic and spatial issues as the basis of material life.” – Dolores Hayden, *The Grand Domestic Revolution*, 3.

the housing needs of women (and their families), they “pushed architects and urban planners to reconsider the effects of design on family life.”⁶

“The overarching theme of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century feminist movement was to overcome the split between domestic life and public life created by industrial capitalism, as it affected women.”⁷ Early leaders in the American feminist movement, including Catharine Beecher (1800–1878) had a starkly different strategy for women’s rights than the feminists of the mid to late twentieth century. Beecher argued for the “moral superiority of women based upon their highly developed capacity for self sacrifice,” and advocated for domestic feminism by claiming that “woman’s greater capacity for self sacrifice entitled her to rule the home.”⁸ Like many other women in the mid-eighteen hundreds, Beecher was still in favor of the physical and social separation of women from the public sphere, but her “strategy of domestic feminism was enhanced by two new metaphors of female authority: woman as ‘home minister’ and as skilled ‘professional.’”⁹ In this way, she was giving women the power over the homeⁱ and encouraging self-assertion. Women’s demand for power and authority increased in scope throughout the years, and in the mid- to late-nineteen hundreds feminism had an entirely new meaning. Women revolted against traditional gender and domestic roles, and “challenged domestic conventions within their own homes, protesting the sexual division of labor and demanding that men participate in “woman’s work”¹⁰ and vice versa. Although the feminist ideology has continually evolved since its conception, each stage has had significant impact on cultural ideas of housing, the home and domesticity. Indeed early twentieth century architects and designers such as Frank Lloyd Wright would have been influenced by feminist theories of domesticity and the home, as in Beecher’s *The American Woman’s Home*, complete with architectural examples.

ⁱ In her book *The American Woman’s Home*, 1869, Catharine Beecher and her sister Harriet Beecher Stowe concluded years of agitation for female dominance within the home. Complete with architectural resolution, *The American Woman’s Home* was the culmination of Catharine Beecher’s career as an authority on women’s roles, housing design, and household organization. –Hayden, *The Grand Domestic Revolution*, 58.

This paper is about deviations from the norm of domestic architecture. But what was the ‘norm’ for a single family home in the nineteenth and early twentieth century America? “Four-squares, the bungalows, and the period-inspired houses [constituted] the majority of suburban building in the years between 1890 and 1941.”¹¹ These houses, some designed by architects but the majority erected by speculation builders, came pre-coded with mainstream cultural values that represented what homeowners thought a “house” should be and what it should look like. Architectural historian Alan Gowans uses the term “Comfortable House” to describe these ubiquitous buildings of pre-World War II suburban America. Gowans makes a distinction between the expectations of a prospective homeowner of a Comfortable House and those of a perspective homeowner of an architect-designed house. Potential clients of Wright, for example, would “expect to inform Wright of their needs and then have him show them his vision,” rather than simply accepting the traditional predesigned and readily available house.

Gowans also compares the Comfortable House with Wright’s Usonian Houseⁱ in terms of orientation and style. While the Comfortable House always faces directly towards the street and is surrounded neatly by a picket fence, a Usonian house has an ambiguous front, back and side and does not conform to the norms of the street. “Stylistically, the Usonian house is future-oriented with no applied ornamentation, whereas the Comfortable House often included detailing borrowed from diverse precedents and adhered to a stock design.”¹² Wright redefined the American suburban house through simple maneuvers – changing the orientation, resisting a style, removing ornamentation, and opening up the interior space to flow more continuously, among other things. The economy of his Usonian house appealed to the middle class American, by making contemporary architecture available to the typical civilian. Although arguably it would have been easier for many of these clients to obtain a Comfortable House for equal or lesser

ⁱ Discussed further in Chapter 2, Usonia was a word that Wright used to refer to his vision for the United States. Usonian Houses were small, single-story dwellings designed for middle class families.

cost than a Usonian house, these Usonian clients appreciated contemporary architectural design and what it stood for. “In sum, the Usonian house represented change and the Comfortable House represented stability.”¹³

EXISTING LITERATURE

There are several recurring themes in the existing literature on the subjects of women, domesticity and modernity that ranges from broad, overarching ideas about women and domesticity in general, to very specific inquiries concerning an architect or work of architecture. A strong trend is the oppositional placement of modernity and domesticity, in which the house is placed opposite of the city in its values and meaning. Another theme considers the issues and problems felt by the traditional housewife. Although these writings offer no solution to these problems, they point out the issues associated with traditional structuring and design of the house. Alternatives are offered, however, in case studies that consider houses built for women clients. These exceptions to the rule show that it is possible to re-think the house within a modern context and to design for the specific needs of the clientele.

A constant theme in the existing literature on the subject of domesticity is the idea that the home is anti-modern. These ideas ultimately lead to the separation of home and city, and thus the separation of domesticity and modernism. In “Modernity and Domesticity: Tensions and Contradictions,” author Hilde Heynen discusses the relationship between the home and the modern movement. This essay is part of a larger collection titled *Negotiating Domesticity: Spatial Productions of Gender in Modern Architecture*. Heynen looks beyond the basic delineation between domesticity and modernity, realizing that there are multiple layers and factors at play and that one cannot be too quick to jump to a conclusion about the home and modernity. She references the presence of women in the writings of Sigfried Giedion, Ernst May and Le Corbusier and notes the attention given to the house by modern architects such as Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Walter Gropius, and Le Corbusier. She states that these architects

were aiming for the fundamental transformation of domesticity. Heynen presents a compelling argument that situates domesticity (and the woman) in a peculiar position within the realm of modernity. She offers alternative viewpoints to the stereotypes and references several leaders of the modern movement.

Many authors focus on the woman as being trapped within her own home due to social and cultural expectations and traditions. This theme calls into question the credibility of the identification of the home as a refuge and safe-haven in some of the other literature, written from the perspective of a male who has a life outside of this home. The common feeling of entrapment and unhappiness is the primary focus of Betty Friedan's essay "Excerpts From: The Problem that has No Name." Friedan focuses on the American housewife in the years after the Second World War and provides an overarching discourse on this problem felt by housewives of the twentieth century, including interviews, media from the time period, and personal experience. These issues are not related to the architecture or design of the home or city, but based solely on social constructs and standards. However, the feeling of entrapment and awareness of social boundaries which Friedan discusses could be applied to physical or spatial boundaries that existed both within the home and between the home and the outside world.

Living in a Man-Made World: Gender Assumptions in Modern Housing Design by Marion Roberts examines the relationship between gender and housing design in Britain, primarily in housing projects built after the Second World War. Using social constructs as a basis for housing design and the separation of men's and women's labor roles, Roberts provides an overview of the housing designs of the period and their implications on the relationships between men and women within the home. The author goes on to offer alternative housing designs, so that gender equality might be achieved through the built environment. Finally, in the alternative housing designs, Roberts looks to the assumptions made by policy makers and builders that have effects within the spatial qualities and gender relationships within the home and considers changes which have occurred since the war. This book takes an historical

perspective, considering a wide range of influences and presenting a compelling argument that housing design is physical proof of gender assumptions and traditions.

An important consideration when studying domesticity and modernism is the client. If assumptions about gender relations and traditional family structures are inscribed within the design of a house, as Marion Roberts suggests, then what happens when the client is someone outside of this norm? Case studies of homes that were built in this fashion provide sample alternatives to the traditional housing models of the modern movement. Alice Friedman pursues this line of study in her book *Women and the Making of the Modern House* as well as the essay “Your Place or Mine? A Client’s Contribution to Domestic Architecture.” These are both collections of case studies of homes whose clients were considered unconventional, including women who devoted their lives “not to husbands and children but to other pursuits, to their careers, to charitable work or political activism or to whatever formed the passionate focus of their attention.”¹⁴ She analyzes the designs of two homes by Frank Lloyd Wright, the Rietveld-Schroder House in Utrecht and the built and unbuilt houses of Josephine Baker, as well as Paul Rudolph’s apartment in New York City. Each of the clients for these homes is considered an outsider of the dominate architecture and visual culture of modernism, that had been “shaped by the needs and values of white men and by the imperatives of heterosexual culture and social relations.”¹⁵ Alice Friedman’s work is a significant source on the subject of women and domestic architecture because it proves that, when domestic relationships change, the architecture can respond and cater to it. Friedman encourages her readers to “resist stereotypes” and “go beyond predictable conclusions when dealing with the architecture of the past.”¹⁶ Although the houses she analyzes are exceptions and not the rule of modern domestic design, they offer an alternative view towards domesticity and familial relations and prove that one’s lifestyle can be represented formally in housing design.

In recent anthropological studies, performance theory, specifically the theory of gender performance, has been invented in an effort to theorize sex and gender. While the former is

considered to be biological, the latter is now considered not directly related to sex, but instead to a performance of a role that is related to either femininity or masculinity. The literature on this subject can be related to architectural discourse on the gendering of space and theories of performance. Architecture can also be viewed as a symbol representing an idea or as making a statement about its owner. This thesis will look more into the idea of the representation of an identity through residential architecture.

The remainder of this paper will look more specifically at the ideologies of architects Frank Lloyd Wright and E. Fay Jones and at the houses that each designed for women clients throughout the twentieth century. These houses respond specifically not only to each client's needs but also to broad cultural ideas that were discussed in this chapter. Although the clients chosen for these case studies represent a broad range in terms of class and lifestyle, they are all essentially looking for the same thing – a space which they can call their own and that represents their visions for a better way of life. There are two major areas of concern when looking at houses built for women clients with unique lifestyles: redefined domestic space to accommodate new relationships of the residents, and a reexamined separation of public and private space (within the home as well as between the home and the outside world).¹⁷ These points and many others will be further discussed not only specifically to each case study, but also as a whole in the conclusion.

¹ Fay Jones, quoted in "Wright Said: 'Go Home and Design'; World's Hearing of Arkansas Who Did" by Lin Wright. In the Arkansas Gazette, January 1, 1960.

² Merriam-Webster Dictionary.

³ Linda K. Kerber, "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place," *The Journal of American History* 75 (1988): 10.

⁴ Dolores Hayden, *The Grand Domestic Revolution: A History of Feminist Designs for American Homes, Neighborhoods, and Cities*, 13.

⁵ Hayden, *The Grand Domestic Revolution*, 3.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 55.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 56.

¹⁰ Dolores Hayden, *The Grand Domestic Revolution*, 291.

¹¹ Linda Stanford, "An Affordable Dream and Its Contemporaries", 48. In *Affordable Dreams: The Goetsch-Winckler House and Frank Lloyd Wright*, edited by Susan Bandes, 47-58. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press,

1991.

¹² Stanford, "An Affordable Dream and Its Contemporaries", 52.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Friedman, "Your Place or Mine? A Client's Contribution to Domestic Architecture," 70.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 71.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 85.

¹⁷ Friedman, *Women and the Making of the Modern House*, p 17.

CHAPTER 2: “FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT”

Architect Frank Lloyd Wright is well known popularly and professionally for his historically significant portfolio of single-family houses, and it is also known that he had strong, and often misunderstood, opinions about women. Many of Wright’s most renowned residential works were designed for women clients, including the Hollyhock House for Aline Barnsdale (Los Angeles, CA, 1919-1920), La Miniatura for Alice Millard (Los Angeles, CA, 1923), the Dana House for Susan Lawrence Dana (Springfield, IL, 1902-1904) and the



Figure 1: Frank Lloyd Wright, circa 1889.

Goetsch-Winckler House for Alma Goetsch and Kathrine Winckler (Okemos, MI, 1940). These women clients had “deep beliefs about social reform, domestic life, and new roles for women in American society.”¹ Their progressive ideas and unconventional lifestyles led them to commission an architect that they believed would help them achieve their dreams of owning a home particularly suited to their needs. Consequently, their homes facilitated hybrid programs of traditional and uncommon domestic activities and challenged the conventional housing that existed for traditional family types.

More than any architect before him, Frank Lloyd Wright redefined the characterization of a room. His search for an “Organic Architecture” led to the dissolution of barriers within the house that traditionally created box-like rooms and physically divided the space. The result was that the more public spaces merged “subtly and elegantly the one into the other to make what came to be known as an ‘open’ plan.”² When discussing the traditional dwellings of the early nineteenth hundreds, Wright described them as “boxes beside boxes or inside boxes, called rooms...each domestic function was properly box to box.”³ He said that this cellular organization

“never made much sense” to him, so he “declared the whole lower floor as one room.”⁴ Wright also exploded the confining plan of the traditional house by extending rooms outward in separate wings. The result was a plan that did not seem compacted and restrained, but spread out as if it were merging with the landscape. “The house became more free as space and more livable too... Thus came an end to the cluttered house.”⁵

Wright was influenced by the many women that he had relationships with throughout his life. From the beginning, it is known that his mother gave him the Froebel gifts, which Wright later credited as influencing him on the sense of structure and rhythmic design. Nell and Jane Lloyd Jones, Wright’s aunts, also had influence on the young man. They began the Hillside Home School in 1887, an elementary home school which they ran from until 1915. Neither of these women ever married and both had positions of authority throughout their lives,ⁱ something uncommon for women in the very early nineteenth hundreds. Wright dedicated a significant amount of attention to his aunts in his *Autobiography*, stating that they had done “a pioneer work in home-school co-education.”⁶ Wright’s mother and aunts were active in the educational reform movement, and it is probable that the example they set for Wright laid the groundwork for his later ideologies on gender roles.

During the years of 1895 – 1909, it is significant that female architect Marion Mahony Griffin (1871-1961) was intimately involved in Wright’s architectural work. Mahoney was both a close family friend and professional associate in the Oak Park home and studio. She “saw herself as an architect and a professional and conceived of her talent as an artistic gift to be integrated into a life filled with many other creative energies and interests.”⁷ Marion Mahony graduated from MIT with a degree in architecture in 1894,ⁱⁱ and although few architects at the

ⁱ Jane had been the director of kindergarten-training schools in Minnesota; Nell had been the head of the department at River Falls State Normal School in Wisconsin, both before they began the Hillside Home School. They also both served as principles of the Hillside Home School throughout its entire existence. The learning philosophy at the Hillside Home School was “Learning By Doing”, which Wright reapplied in his education program at Taliesin West.

ⁱⁱ Marion Mahony was the second woman to obtain a degree in architecture from MIT. She later became the

time were willing to offer a job to a woman, she was able to find work, become licensed, and make many contributions to the architecture of the time period.¹ She was both a “pioneer among women in design and an important member of feminist reform circles.”⁸ Raised in a household that “fostered gender equality and collaboration in a range of pursuits” including shared household management, Mahony identified as an architect, a collaborator, a social reformer, and a woman. She had beautiful draftsmanship and was interested in the public and private functions of domesticity even before she joined Wright’s studio in 1895. Wright’s years at the Oak Park Studio focused on new approaches to American domesticity and the evolving program of the single-family house. There is reasonable evidence that Marion Mahony played a significant role as a collaborator with and assistant for Wright during this time, and her strong beliefs in the restructuring of gender roles and women’s ability to work outside the home would have had an impact on Wright’s philosophy.⁹



Figure 2: Mamah Borthwick Cheney, 1909.

Frank Lloyd Wright was also strongly influenced by his wives and lovers. Although he married his first wife, Catherine Wright, as a young man and the couple parented six children together, his extra-marital affair with Mamah Borthwick Cheney led him to have new ideas about partnerships of equals and a reconstruction of roles within the home. Mamah Borthwick Cheney (1869-1914) was a well educated woman; she earned a master’s degree from the University of Michigan and had a strong knowledge German and French.

first woman licensed to practice architecture in the state of Illinois. – Friedman, “Girl Talk.”

¹ Professional women were not respected in the field of architecture at this time. However, in “The Magic of America” (Mahony’s memoir and manifesto published in the 1940’s), Mahony stated that she believed that “women should continue to enter the architectural profession, and that they should be willing to do so as the equals of men, putting up with the same sacrifices and physical challenges as men did without expecting special concessions....It didn’t matter whether an architect was a man or a woman, as long as she could do the job.” - Friedman, “Girl Talk.” Mahony was able to overcome some of the discrimination, and many buildings have been specifically credited to her name, including the Mueller House in Decatur, IL and the Church of All Souls in Evanston.

Wright and Mamah (hereafter referred to as Borthwick) began their love affair in 1907, while he was building a house for her and her husband, Edwin Cheney, in Oak Park. Both married with children, in 1909 the two fled to Europe leaving their families behind in Chicago. The affair outraged the public and the media; Wright and Borthwick lost many friends and alliances because of it. While in France, Mamah sought comfort in the feminism of Ellen Key, a Swedish social theorist and women’s rights advocate. Both Wright and Borthwick became “ardent disciples of Key’s liberal, individualist philosophy, which, among other things, championed free, loving partnerships between men and women and denounced legal marriage as a repressive and outdated institution.”¹⁰ Key was internationally known as a leader in the debate on women’s rights, marriage reform, child welfare and educational theory; her most well known texts include *The Century of the Child* (1900) and *Love and Marriage* (1903). Ellen Key later allowed Mamah to translate some of her works into English, and Mamah considered Key both her ally and mentor. The writings made an impression on Wright as well; upon his return to the United States he presented three manuscripts to a publisher in Chicago, along with sufficient funds to subsidize publication, in an effort to share Key’s ideology with an American audience.¹¹

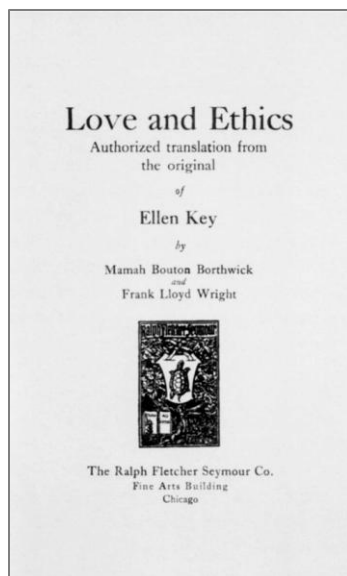


Figure 3: Title Page, *Love and Ethics* (Chicago, 1912)

When the couple finally returned to America, amid public outrage and infuriation, they sought refuge in the house Wright designed and built for them in southern Wisconsin, Taliesin. During their years there, Mamah wrote several letters to Ellen Key describing her situation with her family, children, and Wright. The letters suggest that she “saw her dedication to Key’s philosophy as an all-encompassing spiritual discipline, and as a quest for truth and moral responsibility that shaped both her own actions and those of Frank Lloyd Wright in the years between 1910 and 1914.”¹² In one of her letters, Mamah states, “You have meant

more to me than any other influence, but one, in my life...suddenly in my darkest hour I found you, bearing a torch along the path I was trying to tread.”¹³ From the letters it is clear that both Mamah and Frank worked together on the translations, and Frank’s name also appears on the title page of the English version of *Love and Ethics* (see Figure 3). In the letters to Ellen Key, “Borthwick frequently included Wright when describing her own commitment to Key and the influence that Key’s ideas had on the couple’s life together.”¹⁴ The feminism of Ellen Key had a strong influence on Wright’s ideology of relationships and partnerships within the home. In his *Autobiography*, it is clear that “he took up Key’s challenge in a highly purposeful and public way, calling Borthwick his “faithful comrade” and returning again and again to the theme of collaboration when discussing their life together in these years.”¹⁵ Frank and Mamah’s relationship abruptly ended in 1914 when one of the male servants at Taliesin set fire to the quarters and murdered seven people including Mamah and her two children. Although this was a tragic end to Mamah and Frank’s relationship, Wright took with him the lessons of Ellen Key and continued the work of progressive education that he and Mamah had begun together at Taliesin.



Figure 4: Olgivanna Lloyd Wright, c. 1924.

After his divorce from his first wife in 1922, Wright was married to Maude “Miriam” Wright from 1923 – 1927. Shortly after this relationship ended, he married Olgivanna Lloyd Wright (1898-1985), and the couple was together until his death in 1959. Olgivanna was born in Montenegro in 1898 and was raised in a cultural and stimulating environment, spoke French, Russian and English, and excelled in music and dance. Her mother, “a crusading politician, served as a military leader, setting an example as a woman of accomplishment and serious purpose.”¹⁶ These strong qualities were passed on to Olgivanna, the youngest of nine children. She began her dance career in Montenegro, later moving to the United States. She married Wright in August of 1928.

Olgivanna encouraged and broadened her husband's interest in education, and "Frank Lloyd Wright readily accepted her ideas and adopted as his own her stress on the importance of the holistic development of mind, heart, and body as the essence of an educated person."¹⁷ The year they were married they decided to repair the Hillside Home School and open it as a school of art and architecture. The



Figure 5: Frank Lloyd Wright working with apprentices at Taliesin West, 1945.

Taliesin fellowship was located there until 1935, when Olgivanna and Frank Lloyd Wright moved the entire program to Arizona, and began construction on Taliesin West in 1937. The couple founded the school together based on the program of "Learning by Doing." The influence of Olgivanna's holistic learning method can be seen in the education offered at Taliesin, which emphasized painting, sculpture, music, drama, and dance. Wright asserted that each of the elements of the fine arts would lead to broader learning of architecture. Olgivanna was also very influential on Wright's working career; his Arizona years with her proved to be the most productive of his life, representing more than half of Wright's building and the authorship of his *Autobiography*.¹⁸ After he passed away, Olgivanna Lloyd Wright served as the president of the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation (which owned and operated Taliesin West) until her death in 1985.

Wright's views on women and the dynamics of his relationships were influenced by the strong women figures in his life. His aunts, mother, colleagues, wives and lovers had strong personalities and passions that made an impression on Wright. It is clear that the feminist and educational values, especially those held by Mamah Borthwick and Olgivanna Wright, influenced his ideology of marriage and relationships as partnerships of equals, leading him to reconstruct his idea of gender roles within the home.

This chapter will focus on the two of Wright's designs, the Dana House and the Goetsch-Winckler House, which were commissioned by women clients with unconventional lifestyles. However, other than this similarity, the clients for these houses did not have much in common. The Dana House is a very large, monumental home that was a symbol of the wealth, independence and social status of its owner. At the time it was built, it was the largest house that Wright had designed. The Goetsch-Winckler house, on the other hand, was designed to be built as cheaply as possible with an economy of size and materials, and was funded by two women leading simple lives with modest means. Regardless of the differences in the economic means of each of these clients, the houses that Wright designed for them are particularly suited to the clients' lifestyles and progressive in nature. By drawing parallels between homes built on such opposite ends of the spectrum in regards to budget and exterior expression of identity, it is clear that it was the lifestyle and desires of the clients that Wright was primarily responding to.

DANA HOUSE



Figure 6: Susan Lawrence Dana.

Frank Lloyd Wright's Dana House is a significant example of a new housing type for an unorthodox client. Susan Lawrence Dana (1862-1946) was a wealthy widow and socialite in her early forties when she hired Wright to design her home. Particularly active in her community, she desired not only a dwelling place but also accommodation for her extensive art collection and large spaces for entertaining.¹⁹ The explicit semi-public nature of the program is contradictory to the traditionally private, enclosed nature of a home. For this client, the lines between public and private, visible and invisible, were blurred.

Rheuna Drake (R.D.) Lawrence, Susan's father, was a very successful businessman in

Springfield, IL. An only child, Susan grew up in a traditional household, and it has been suggested that as an adult she was torn between motherhood and the “conventional, middle class life of her mother” on the one hand, and the “dynamic image of her independent, ambitious, and publicly prominent father”²⁰ on the other. She married her first husband, Edwin Ward Dana, in 1883. Unlike Dana’s father, her husband was not successful in his business ventures and was forced to borrow money and eventually go to work for R.D. Lawrence. After suffering the death of their two infant sons, Edwin also passed away in a mining accident in 1901. Susan’s father died that same year. The traumatic passing of her father and husband left Susan at the center of an all-female household; Susan’s elderly mother, her maternal grandmother, and her father’s cousin Flora were all living with R.D. Lawrence when he passed. However, the death of her father and husband, along with her very large inheritance, left her free to live and build in the lavish style that she desired.

The young heiress was said to be very good-looking and charming, “a beauty with blonde hair and a full figure.”²¹ She dressed fashionably, but with a “dynamic flair that set her apart.”²² Susan aspired to the public identity of her father, and although there were few such opportunities available to women at this time, she capitalized on every possible resource. As a child, Susan’s parents had her educated in art and music; she made many art projects for local competitions and played the piano. When she was older, she became a socialite at the top of the Springfield social ladder. Her activities were often documented in the local papers, including bits about her dating, travelling, and even being ill. In 1894, she became a charter member of a Springfield women’s club. During this time, there was a “feminist dimension to the club movement which promised a sisterhood”²³ outside of the home. Although this dimension caused many critics to accuse the women of abandoning their husbands and children, Dana pushed forward by chairing the Art Department and delivering presentations to the women that were described as “progressive” and “liberating.” She also used the women’s club as an avenue to display her impressive artistic talent. She energetically supported several social campaigns,

including women's rights movements, equality for African Americans, social services and the arts. Mrs. Dana also boasted an impressive library, including works by Voltaire, Goethe, Mark Twain and George Sand, and texts on the subjects of comparative religion, human sexuality and astrology.

Many years after the death of her first husband (and construction of her new house) Susan was remarried. By the time of her second wedding in 1912, she had had more of an opportunity to establish herself socially as an individual. Her second husband was a Danish singer, and when they wed he was twenty-six years of age while Susan was nearly fifty. He passed away within a year of their marriage, and in 1915 she married a third time; this marriage lasted much longer. It is interesting that in some documents Susan referred to her third husband as "Charles A. Lawrence-Gehrmann," suggesting that she regarded their relationship as an equal partnership.ⁱ The couple divorced in 1930, and Susan ultimately switched her surname back to her maiden name, Lawrence. However, she was always known publically as Mrs. Dana.

Susan didn't waste any time after her father's passing before securing funds from her inheritance and seeking out Frank Lloyd Wright to begin work on her new home; her first meeting with Wright was sometime during 1901 or 1902. There is some controversy regarding

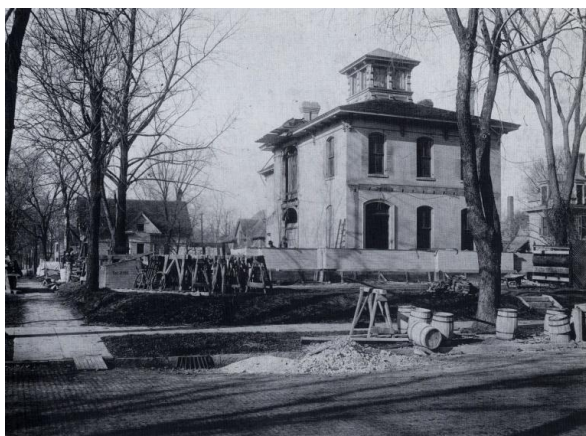


Figure 7: R.D. Lawrence's original villa, with walls of the new house going up around it.

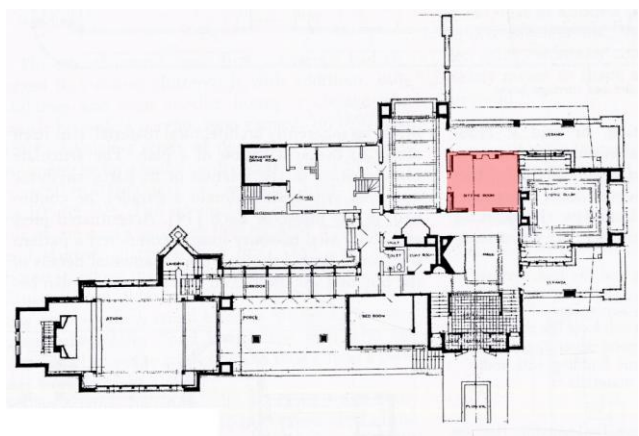


Figure 8: Dana House, Preliminary First Floor Plan. The remnants of the original villa is highlighted in red.

ⁱ It has not been proved whether Charles legally changed his last name to Lawrence-Gehrmann.

how quickly (and legally) she was able to acquire her inheritance money, contrary to her father's wishes in his will.ⁱ Consequently, both Dana and Wright referred to the project as a "renovation" to R.D. Lawrence's existing home on all legal drawings and documents, when in reality the final product completely engulfed the original structure, leaving only glimpses of the original home on the interior, probably for sentimental reasons. And although Mrs. Dana would not be the only person living in the house, but her mother and cousin as well, the project was very much about Susan expressing her independence and new social identity. Strong-minded and independent, she was prepared to stop at nothing in order to make her visions become reality.

Frank Lloyd Wright describes this project as "a home designed to accommodate the art collection of its owner and for entertaining extensively, somewhat elaborately worked out in detail."²⁴ The residence was constructed from 1902 through 1904 and at the time was the largest house Wright had ever built.ⁱⁱ For Susan, it would be more than a house. It would be a "beacon of culture and high society," as well as a memorial to her father, the man whose money built it, and finally a public representation of her identity and status.

Dana gave Frank Lloyd Wright an unlimited budget to build the house, and Wright did not hesitate to take advantage of her generosity. The 35-room house ended up costing an estimated \$60,000.00, at a time when an average eight-room house would cost \$4,000.00. The site for the home was a corner lot, crowded by the railroad on the north side. The site covered approximately a third of the city block, and on the south side had a grand exposure on Lawrence Avenue (originally called Douglas Avenue) of 241 feet. The first and second levels of the house held 9200 square feet, with an additional 1700 square feet of finished space in the

ⁱ A judge ruled that R.D. Lawrence's will was not entitled to probate or record because two witnesses testified that R.D. did not sign in their presence. The will was turned over to Susie, and although she was directed to preserve it, the will was never seen again and the Judge gave Susie permission to withdraw it from county record. Through this maneuver, no one else could access the contents of the will and Susie obtained sole control of R.D.'s belongings. – Roberta Volkmann, "Susan Lawrence: The Enigma in the Wright House", 21.

ⁱⁱ At the time this house was built, Frank Lloyd Wright's body of work included 60 houses in the Chicago area and two in Kankakee, Illinois. –Volkmann, *Susan Lawrence: The Enigma in the Wright House*, 25.

basement that included space for unusual programs such as a billiard room and bowling alley.

R.D. Lawrence's Italianate villa measured approximately 30 by 34 feet. (See Figure 7) Wright's original drawings for the house retained much of the existing structure; however as time went on less and less of the old house was preserved. (See figures 8) He said later: "Yes, she wanted the old dwelling preserved for sentimental reasons, so I set it aside as an interior Living Room, furnished with old furniture. But they soon kept it closed."²⁵ Wright designed a south-facing home that, together with the enclosed garden spaces, undoubtedly dominated its site. He clearly meant to "shape and define as much space as he could."²⁶ Wright started with the plan, as he usually did, stating, "A good plan is the beginning and the end, because every

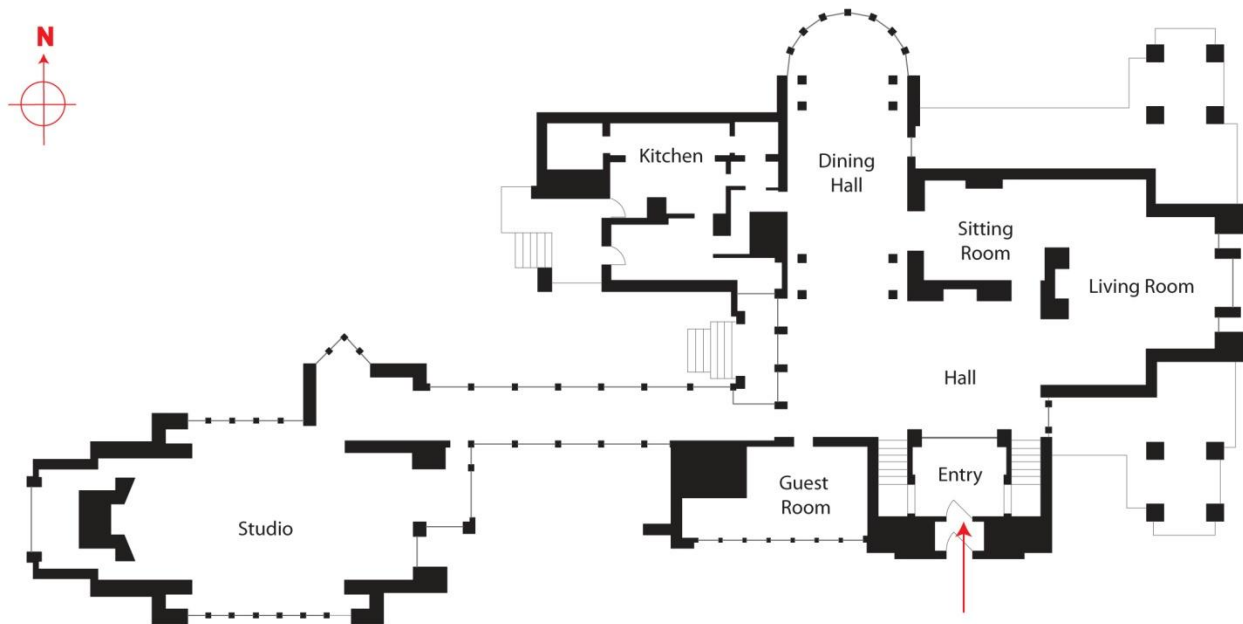


Figure 9: Dana House, First Floor Plan.

good plan is organic...it in itself will have the rhythms, masses and proportions of a good decoration if it is the organic plan for an organic building with individual style – consistent with materials."²⁷ The plan for the Dana House is articulate and rhythmic, seeming to have an inherent pattern of movement or growth across the site.

Wright's scheme for the home is clear throughout all the drawing iterations of the plan:

there is a dominate mass that contains all of the living spaces in the house, with a secondary studio that is attached to the main house by a long corridor. He was able to create a generously open and flowing ground level by moving all of the obstructions and many of the service spaces down to the basement, including a vault, bathroom and coatroom. This is a good example of Wright's statement that he "declared the whole lower floor as one room....then screened various portions of the big room for certain domestic purposes like dining, reading,



Figure 10: "Flower in the Crannied Wall," looking north into the hall.

receiving callers."²⁸ The entry to the home is on the basement level, but visitors are quickly directed up to the main level via the stairs that move up and around the "Flower in the Crannied Wall" (see figure 10). Once on the main level the visitor is in a large living hall, with visual connections to the living room and dining room. Although there is a guest bedroom suite located on the first floor, most of the private spaces are lifted above on the second level. The first level is public in nature, and would be able to accommodate large numbers of guests as a result of the continuity of space.

Three spaces in the Dana House merit special attention: the gallery, the reception/entry area and the dining room. The gallery captures space on two levels, the lower level containing a library and then rising two levels up to a barrel-vaulted ceiling (see figure 12). Wright described the gallery as being "designed as a gathering place for the artistic activities of the community, and to accommodate the collection made by its owner."²⁹ The reception area contains an interior fountain and an arched fireplace, and the dining room is a two-story space with a barrel-vaulted ceiling. A major destination for social events, the room rises up to a ribbed ceiling, seeming more like a dining hall than merely a dining room (see figure 11). Wright said, "Human beings must group, sit or recline, confound them, and they must dine – but dining is much easier to manage and always a great artistic opportunity."³⁰ In the Dana House, Wright capitalized on

this opportunity and created monumental dining space particularly suited for entertaining important guests. All of these spaces have a public nature to them.



Figure 11: Dana House, Dining Hall



Figure 12: Dana House, Gallery

Susan used her house as a “meeting place for organizations and charities as well as elegant parties.”³¹ Serving as a hostess was one of the few social roles available to women at this time, and her home allowed her to perform this role with vim and vigor. Wright used structural steel to construct large spaces with high ceilings for the dining room, the reception hall, and the gallery. The barrel-vaulted dining room is large enough to seat up to forty people. By reserving the more intimate private spaces for the upper level, Wright gave Susan a house

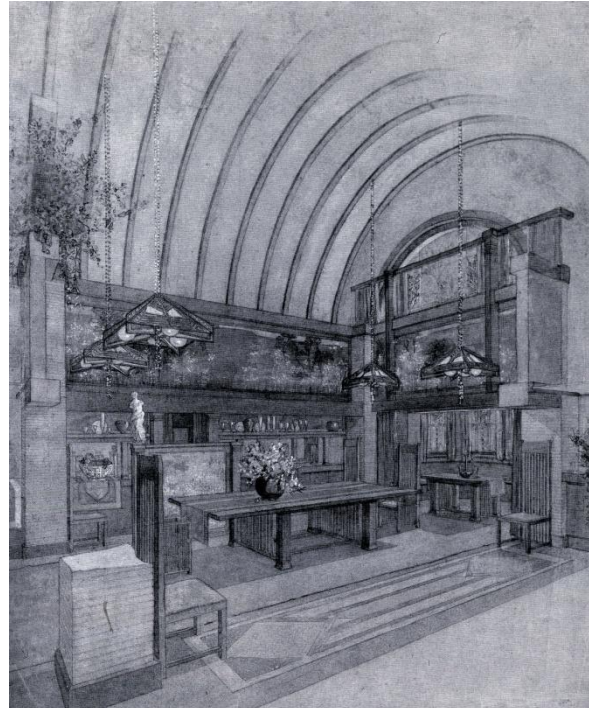


Figure 13: Dana House, sketch of the dining room, Frank Lloyd Wright.

with the capacity to entertain important guests, as well as display her extensive art and book collection. The main level has a museum-like quality that is reminiscent of an Italian villa and communicates to the visitor the prominent status and social personality of its owner.

It is significant that Marion Mahony was working for Wright in the Oak Park Studio during the time this project was designed and constructed and that the Dana house was drawn by Mahony for publication many years later in 1911. Although it is difficult to determine the level of influence Mahony had on the design of the house, it does resemble many projects she completed on her own after she left the Oak Park Studio. Regardless of the amount of work she did on this particular design, her presence in the architect’s office as a strong-minded feminist and her close relationship with Wright and her family no doubt made some impact on Wright’s thinking about women’s space.

The Susan Lawrence Dana House “focuses attention on questions about gender, cultural assumptions, and architectural conventions – critical elements in the history and analysis of houses designed and built for women clients.”³² It is one of several houses Wright

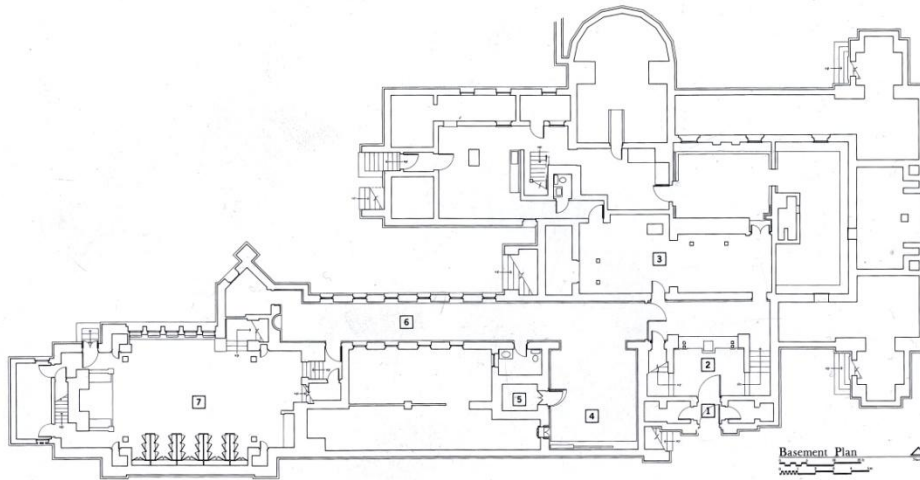


Figure 14: Dana House, Exterior Photograph

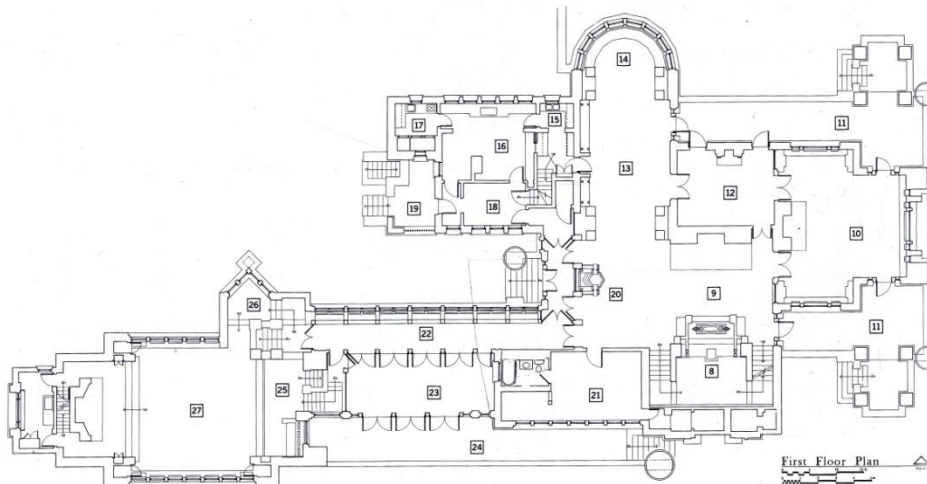
designed during the first half of his career built around “feminist and progressive social or educational programs” serving both “public and private functions, acting as a gathering place for intellectuals and artists, and as a show place...”³³ for Mrs. Dana’s extensive art collection. For Susan, it seems that her desire to build this house was primarily about the expression of her economic power and status. The timing of the project corresponds to the first time in Susan Dana’s life when her identity was not dependent on another – she was an independent woman rather than a ‘daughter’ or ‘wife’. When she saw the opportunity to gain status and economic power for herself, she was very quick to take control of the situation, allotting for herself the majority of her father’s money and immediately putting it to use building her house. Although there are gender implications explicit on the interior of the house, the exterior is a public statement Dana is making to the world about her position in society. The monumental exterior is not a gendered expression, but purely an expression of economic power and status.



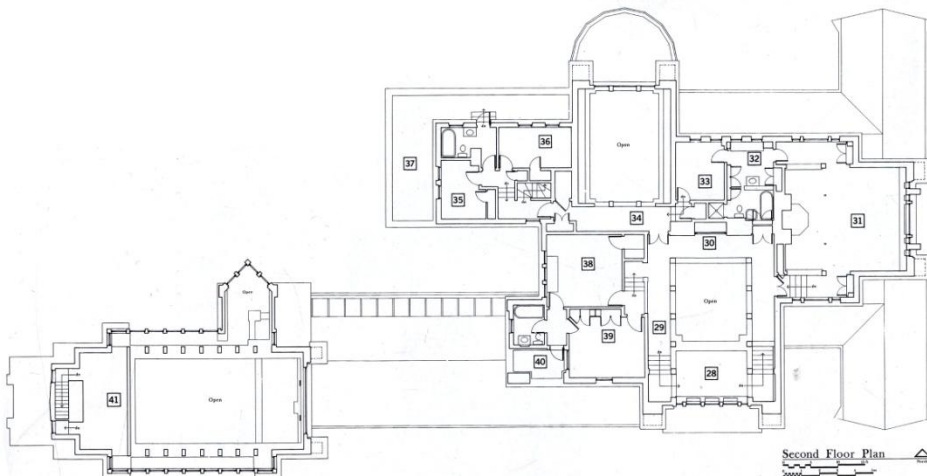
Figure 15: Dana House, Longitudinal Section



53. Basement plan: (1) vestibule; (2) entry; (3) cloakrooms; (4) billiard room; (5) safety vault; (6) bowling alley; (7) library.



54. First-floor plan: (8) "Flower in the Crammed Wall"; (9) living hall; (10) living room; (11) verandas; (12) sitting room, or den; (13) dining room; (14) breakfast alcove; (15) serving pantry; (16) kitchen; (17) pantry and refrigerator room; (18) servants' dining room; (19) service porch; (20) "Moon Children" fountain; (21) bedroom suite; (22) corridor and conservatory; (23) porch; (24) south terrace; (25) stairwell to library; (26) stair landing to studio; (27) studio.



55. Second-floor plan: (28) landing above living hall; (29) gallery; (30) player organ; (31) master bedroom; (32) dressing alcove; (33) nursery; (34) hall; (35) west servant's room; (36) north servant's room; (37) servants' porch; (38) bedroom; (39) dressing room; (40) loggia; (41) balcony.

Figure 16: Dana House, Plans (Basement, First Floor, and Upper Level)

GOETSCH-WINCKLER HOUSE I



Figure 17: Alma Goetsch, with her poodle "Littlebit," taken after 1949.



Figure 18: Kathrine Winckler, c. 1921 - 1925

Alma Goetsch (1909 – 1968) and Kathrine Winckler (1898 – 1976) were two of Wright's most interesting clients, in that these two self-made women of the early twentieth century commissioned not only one, but three house designs by nationally recognized architects; only two of these houses were built, and both still stand today as significant examples of modern architectural design. The story of these women's lives and their pursuit of their architectural desires is compelling, and their two shared homes are physical artifacts that reveal a lot about themselves.

Alma and Kathrine led very similar lives: both were born and raised in Wisconsin, both were graduated from college before moving to Chicago to work as artists, both achieved Master's degrees, and eventually they met when they became colleagues at Michigan State College in 1928.³⁴ The women worked as both artists and art professors, and throughout the time they were employed at Michigan State College, together they comprised the entirety of the

art department. Goetsch and Winckler are remembered by their students as being very influential, both educationally and politically. Former student Mary Sue Kantz Preston remembers them as “the most interesting and influential teachers I had in school, and afterward in my teaching and painting.”³⁵ She remembers that the women very much enjoyed teaching and enjoyed their students, “treated them as equals, sympathized with them, understood and were an inspiration to them.”³⁶ Another student describes Alma and Kathrine’s distinct approaches to the education of their students. Alma directed most of her efforts to creating teachers; she taught “how to teach art to children, how to inspire them to be creative, how to organize the best environment in which children might explore and discover art.”³⁷ Kathrine preferred to work with undergraduate students to help them arrive at an understanding of the nature of a creative act. She “inspired her students to look within themselves to find the depth of aesthetic experience and to explore the personal challenge of making a painting.”³⁸ Both women were active in their communities, participating and leading many local, state, and national art education associations.³⁹ Their unconventional lifestyles are proof of their free-thinking nature and independent attitudes.



Figure 19: untitled, watercolor on paper, Alma Goetsch, 1947.



Figure 20: title unknown, Kathrine Winckler, circa 1960.

Goetsch and Winckler first became roommates in a rented apartment in 1931. Although their reasons for making this decision are not known, the choice was convenient, economical, and practical; it was not considered proper for respectable women to live alone at this time.

Regardless of the reason behind their decision, by 1938 they were ready to undertake a “major physical, emotional, and financial endeavor that eventually became a lifelong commitment, one not all that different from a childless marriage.”⁴⁰ They made the decision to build a home together.

Goetsch and Winckler were first introduced to Frank Lloyd Wright through the *Usonia II* cooperative. *Usonia II* was of a group of eight professors from Michigan State College (Goetsch and Winckler were two of the founding members) who formed a group with the hope of building their own new community. The group commissioned Frank Lloyd Wright to design seven homes for them and their families (Goetsch and Winckler would live together) on a shared plot of land at Herron Acres.⁴¹ “They chose Wright because they were aware of his design ideology; Sidney Newman, one of the leaders of the group, wrote in a letter to Wright: “I am well aware of the fact that you desire to build in a manner suited to the people who are going to occupy the home.”⁴² For Wright, the *Usonia II* project was only an increment of his larger, evolving concept of *Usonia* and *Broadacre City*.

Wright’s concept of *Usonia*ⁱ encompassed his visualization of a uniquely democratic and cooperative lifestyle, and was thought of as an increment of his *Broadacre City*. *Broadacre City* was a much wider concept of suburban development that he first proposed in 1930.ⁱⁱ *Usonia II* was Wright’s first actual opportunity to apply the doctrine of *Broadacre City* to a real situation. The *Usonia II* co-op was interested in forming a new kind of community in which everyone would have a home particularly designed for their lifestyle, with shared public spaces for gardening and other activities. Sidney Newman explained their project in a letter to Wright:

We are planning to build houses averaging about five to six thousand dollars each. Each individual is to receive a home site, and is to build his own home as

ⁱ Wright borrowed the term *USONIA*, meaning United States of North America, from Samuel Butler who used it in his novel “*Erewhon*”, 1872.

ⁱⁱ Wright’s concept of *Broadacre City* was first unveiled at a Princeton Lecture in 1930. The concept is both a planning statement and a socio-political scheme in which one acre of land would be given to each family in the United States. It is the antithesis of the city and dense urban development.

an individual project. The [cooperative] group project would include the determination of the types of architecture and building materials..., the location of sites and surrounding acreage, the location of a road or roads, and similar problems... Frankly, being young instructors, we are not in a financial position where we are able to pay large fees for such services as we realize we need. However, we believe in the necessity for landscape and architectural planning in a project such as ours, and desire such services if we can obtain them at a reasonable cost.⁴³

Frank Lloyd Wright responded

positively to Newman's request, and in a letter back to the group he wrote "My dear Newman: Of course I am interested in a project such as you describe. But enough light should have dawned on your group by now to realize that the idea of a competent architect's fee (10% of completed cost of building) is too much for small householders to pay is one of the things

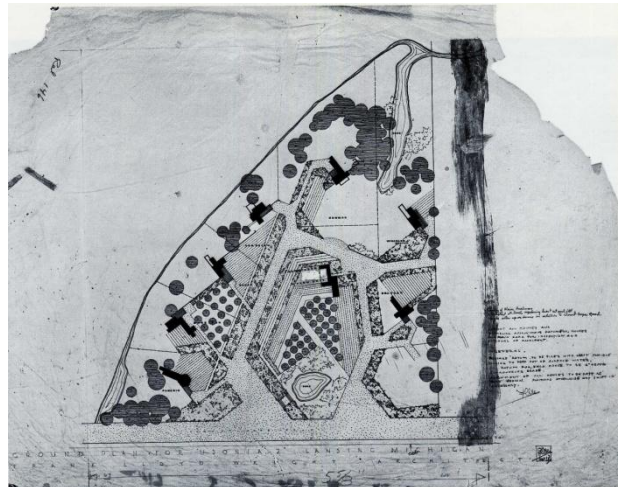


Figure 21: Plan for Usonia II, September 1, 1939. © 1948 The Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation

(perhaps the very thing) that defeats the small homeowner from the start."⁴⁴ Although Wright's response comes across as slightly sarcastic, the group and Frank Lloyd Wright had reached an agreement by the next month, and Wright started his design work for the project.

Unfortunately, because of many external factors and disagreements, primarily the inability of the group to obtain loans for the project, the plan for *Usonia II* eventually fell through. However, Alma Goetsch and Kathrine Winckler were not ready to give up on their dream of owning a Wright-designed home. The two women bought a different plot of land on Hulett Road in Okemos, Michigan, and independently hired Frank Lloyd Wright as their architect.

At this point in Wright's career, he was acutely interested in the concept of affordable housing, a genuine need that was responsive to the socioeconomic situation that was caused by the Great Depression. The idea of small, moderately-priced housing was of ultimate importance to Wright during the early developmental stages of his Usonian ideology. In

describing his first Usonian houseⁱ, built for Herbert Jacobs in Madison, Wisconsin, Wright explained that it was necessary to give up or eliminate complications in the project and to be economic about the systems and construction of the house “if we are to achieve the sense of spaciousness and vista we desire in order to liberate the people living in the house.”⁴⁵ And what was it that Wright wanted to give up? Visible roofs, garages (a carport would suffice), basements, interior trim, radiators (the house would be heated through the floor) and light fixtures, unattached furniture, painting (wood best preserves itself), plastering, and gutters.⁴⁶ He explained that these elements were unnecessary and that the American people no longer had a need for them. “It was an expression of Wright’s philosophy of organic architecture that each Usonian house...was carefully sited to take full advantage of both the idiosyncrasies and needs of the individual client and the beauty and privacy that was available on the individual plot.”⁴⁷ At minimum cost, Wright gave the Jacobs family a home that fulfilled all of their desires, ensured their privacy from the street, maximized the garden area of their small lot, and gave them a spacious interior.⁴⁸ Kathrine and Alma visited the Jacobses in their Usonian home, confirming that they wanted one for themselves.

In addition to being a response to the problem of moderate-cost housing, the Usonian House was also Wright’s response to the evolving American lifestyle. New roles for women, less time being spent in the home, and a more informal lifestyle led Wright to design homes that were less formal and with more spatial variety. In his *Autobiography*, Wright described the clients of Usonian Houses as reflecting “a cross section of the distinctly better type of American – I should say Usonian to be specific – most of them with an esthetic sense of their own, many of them artistic, accomplished, and most of them traveled...people who are rich in other things than money.”⁴⁹ Alma and Kathrine were the perfect fit. His Goetsch-Winckler House would be only the second built Usonian House, yet it was known to be his favorite one.⁵⁰

ⁱ The first Usonian home was built for \$5,500.

On October 25, 1938, Goetsch and Winckler sent their first letter to Mr. Wright. Referred to as 'The Idiosyncrasy Letter', Alma and Kathrine explain to Wright many of their desires and expectations for the project. They introduce themselves in a very straightforward way: "We are both somewhat under forty years old, hale, hearty, energetic, much engrossed in our work (we teach art at Michigan State College – I suppose we might as well admit it) and united in a common desire to have you build a house for us."⁵¹ Kathrine reveals their budget for the house, as well as a list of activities for which they would like to have space. The activities include sewing, weaving, typing, painting, cooking, canning and preserving, entertaining, reading, and washing and ironing.⁵² She asks Wright for two separate bedrooms, each with a bath and a shower. She conveys the problems the two are having with their current apartment and looks forward to having an appropriate amount of space for all of their desired activities. Because one of the major problems with their current residence is the lack of storage, Winckler devotes several sentences explaining the need for storage space in their new home.

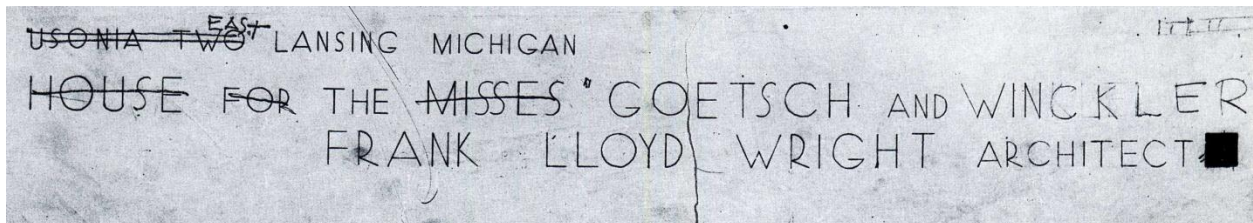


Figure 22: Header from a preliminary plan for the Goetsch-Winckler House, Frank Lloyd Wright

In the letter, both of the women share with Wright very specific needs and wants, as well as information about themselves and their bodies. For example, Kathrine writes "I am unhappy unless I can cross my long legs under the table, (most of my 5'7" is in my legs.)"⁵³ Alma also reveals to Wright her height of 5'2", and pleads "please put a few pantry shelves down where I can reach them."⁵⁴ Further, Alma reveals her fear of mice and insecurity about living in the country, while Kathrine shares her ideas about windows and views and asks specifically for a place to occasionally hang a picture or print. All of these requests prove that Goetsch and Winckler expected an authentic customized home built specifically for their needs. As expressed in the letter, they were tired of the generalized design of their living arrangements that did not fit

their lifestyle. Instead of adjusting to a different way of living, these women decided to build a home that instead was adjusted for them.

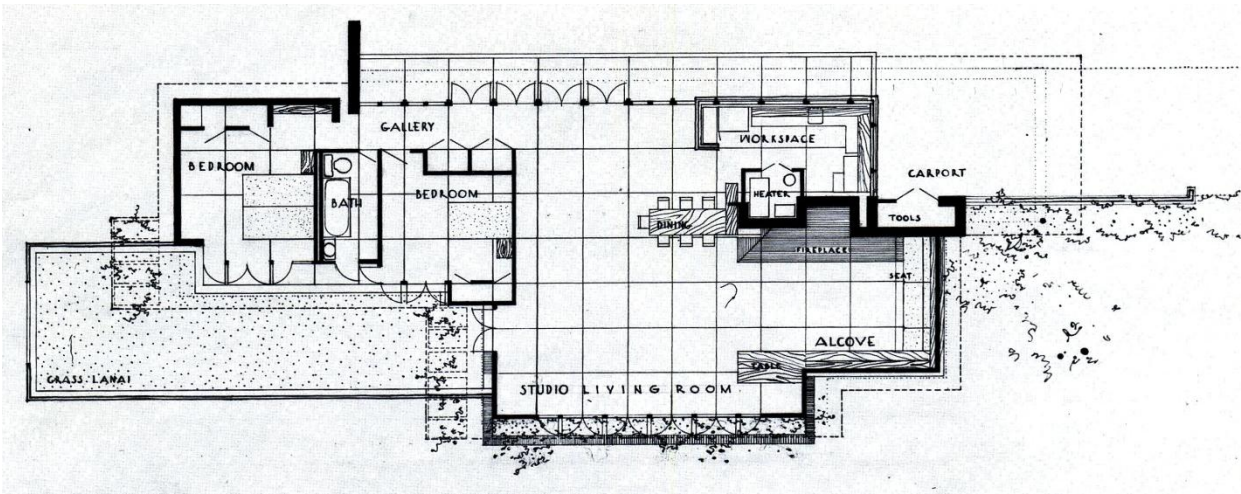


Figure 23: Goetsch-Winckler House, Plan, Frank Lloyd Wright

The Goetsch-Winckler House I was originally designed as a part of the *Usonia II* project, then was essentially adapted to fit the new site location. An early drawing of the house shows a large communal space on one side, with two private bedrooms of approximately equal size on the other. This basic scheme is consistent through all of Wright's iterations of the Goetsch-Winckler I design (see figure 22). Each bedroom held a bed, table and wardrobe and was accessible both from the gallery hallway and from the enclosed grass lanai. Winckler's bedroom (the west room) originally had access to the exterior on the back of the house, but this feature was eventually removed. Iterations of the plan show minimal changes, including the placement of the women's shared bathroom, the amount of storage space, and the presence or lack of a basement. In the early drawings of the house, Wright labels it "House for the Misses Goetsch and Winckler," although over time he edits the title to become "The Goetsch and Winckler". (See figure 21) This edit is significant because he removes the qualifier "Misses" and begins to refer to them using their last names only, effectively removing their gender from their identification.

The Goetsch-Winckler House I "was an expression of Wright's philosophy of organic architecture that each Usonian house...was carefully sited to take full advantage of both

idiosyncrasies and needs of the individual client and the beauty and privacy that was available on the individual plot.”⁵⁵ Wright’s final design for the home is very similar to his early drawings, and his response to the clients’ wishes is visibly present. The plan is asymmetrical, with the private spaces towards the northeast and the public spaces (living, dining, cooking, and working) on the more open southwest corner. The plan is organized in four strips: the workspace to the gallery, the alcove, the dining space to the enclosed lawn, and the south window bay. In response to their desire for informal entertaining in conjunction with other diverse activities to take place in the home, Wright designed a ‘studio living room’. This 750 square foot hub is open and airy and is able to facilitate many different activities. There is a larger, open space for working, a smaller alcove space for sitting or reading, a dining table with seven chairs for entertaining, and a workspace (kitchen) that is separate, but still feels a part of the whole. The continuous and multi-purpose spaces are constantly borrowing from one another. The extensive glazing in this area gives it even more of an open feeling, and provides views to broad vistas on three sides. Windows on the south overlook a drop in the topography and provide for an

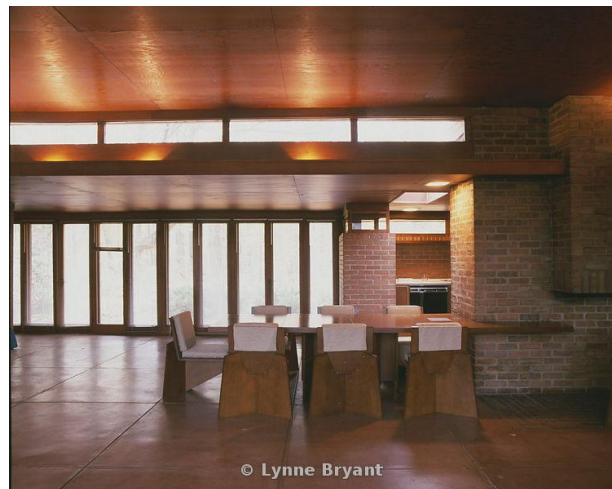


Figure 24: Goetsch-Winckler House, Interior Photograph showing the dining area, and the glass wall at the entry of the house.

expansive view with wide boundaries. In the Idiosyncrasy Letter, Winckler had said “All my life I have resented the little holes in walls that people call windows and as I stood in Jacob’s bedroom I realized what it must mean to step out of bed in the morning and see earth and trees and sky all at once.”⁵⁶ The living area that Wright designed is exactly as she was describing. The entrances to the bedrooms are pushed back away from the studio living room. Goetsch’s bedroom is located closer to the center of the house (she had expressed her need to feel secure in her bedroom), while Winckler’s bedroom is pushed out to the exterior of the house

(she had told Wright about her love for the country.)



Figure 25: Goetsch-Winckler House, Interior Photograph showing the Studio Living Room and Alcove

Just as the spaces within the Goetsch-Winckler House flow together seamlessly, Wright also created a design in which all of the elements of the house also flowed together. For example, it has been said that this house was formed “almost entirely around machines,” meaning that “the machines and their domains create the house, rather than being separate elements in it.”⁵⁷ Elements such as the dining table, fireplace, worktables and benches, and appliances such as the refrigerator, sinks and shelves are seamlessly integrated into the design of the home. “They are not only fixed in the space: they fix the space.”⁵⁸ For example, the dining table physically divides the kitchen space from the living space, but spatially seems to bring the two together by overlapping from one space to another and creating a sense of continuity. All of these elements create areas of specific use around them without physically dividing the space into separate rooms. Although there was limited space available for the Goetsch-Winckler House, Wright used particular elements to both divide and unite the spaces and created room

for a very specific and limited number of activities, particular to the desires of his clients.



Figure 26: Goetsch-Winckler House, Interior

But not only did Wright respond specifically to the women's requirements, the house he designed is a physical manifestation of the relationship between those living in it. The female couple, or roommates, was a domestic type outside of the cultural norm in the early twentieth century. The relationship between the

women was "frequently represented as a partnership of equals requiring both privacy and community."⁵⁹ This relationship was very different from the conventional partnerships of married couples, in which the man was the head of the family unit, and the woman was secondary. The house that Wright designed for Alma and Kathrine is evidence of this kind of equal partnership. The space is focused on the common area, which is not unusual for Wright's designs. The balance of public to private space, the informality of the living space, and the layout of the bedrooms are evidence of Kathrine and Alma's lifestyle. The continuous nature of the public space and the informal relationship between the kitchen (workspace) and dining area and studio living room are set up perfectly for the kind of entertaining that the women liked to do, and the spaces could be easily transformed from entertainment space to working space for the women's art. The bedrooms are of equal size and share a modest bathroom between, both with an entry from the hall and both with access to the outdoor lanai. The balanced nature of the



Figure 27: Goetsch-Winckler House, Interior Photograph

bedrooms is unique in the example of these clients, and neither room was referred to as the "Master Bed Room" in any of the drawings as was common in houses for heterosexual couples

with children. The women were co-inhabitants of one space, and their relationship was a partnership of equals. Wright designed the house specifically to meet these needs, and the house itself is a built record of this.

The Goetsch-Winckler House is “the quintessential manifestation of the Usonian house idea that Frank Lloyd Wright conceived in the 1930’s as his answer to the problem of the modest-cost home.”⁶⁰ The two women lived very happily in the Wright-designed home, often making time to show it to curious visitors and guests throughout the years. One guest in particular, Fay Jones and his family, visited the women in their Usonian house in 1953. Over a decade later, when the women retired and wished to move to a less harsh climate, they would call upon Fay Jones to design them a new space in which to live the next phase of their lives.



Figure 28: Goetsch-Winckler House, Exterior Photograph showing the carport and overhanging roof.

¹ Friedman, *Women and the Making of the Modern House*, 11.

² Charles Moore, Gerald Allen and Donlyn Lyndon, *The Place of Houses* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston), 73.

³ Wright, *An Autobiography*, 142.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*, 143.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 132.

⁷ Alice Friedman, “Girl Talk: Marion Mahony Griffin, Frank Lloyd Wright and the Oak Park Studio.”

⁸ Friedman, “Girl Talk.”

⁹ For more on Marion Mahony and her complex relationship with Frank and Catherine Wright, see Alice Friedman’s article “Girl Talk: Marion Mahony Griffin, Frank Lloyd Wright and the Oak Park Studio.”

¹⁰ Alice Friedman, “Frank Lloyd Wright and Feminism: Mamah Borthwick’s Letters to Ellen Key,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 61, (2002): 141.

¹¹ Friedman, “Frank Lloyd Wright and Feminism,” 140.

¹² *Ibid.*, 143.

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- ¹³ Mamah Borthwick to Ellen Key, May 1910. Friedman, "Frank Lloyd Wright and Feminism," 143.
- ¹⁴ Friedman, "Frank Lloyd Wright and Feminism," 146.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁶ Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation, "Historic Legacy," online article taliesin.edu/history/html. Accessed on March 2, 2013.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁸ Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation, "Historic Legacy," online article taliesin.edu/history/html. Accessed on 3/ 2/13.
- ¹⁹ Friedman, *Women and the Making of the Modern House*, 12.
- ²⁰ Dana-Thomas House Foundation, "Dana-Thomas House," 3.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*
- ²² *Ibid.*
- ²³ Dana-Thomas House Foundation, "Dana-Thomas House," 3.
- ²⁴ Frank Lloyd Wright, from *Frank Lloyd Wright's Dana House* by Donald Hoffman, 13.
- ²⁵ Frank Lloyd Wright, letter to Charles C. Thomas, January 25, 1950. From Donald Hoffman, *Frank Lloyd Wright's Dana House*, 16.
- ²⁶ Hoffman, *Frank Lloyd Wright's Dana House*, 14.
- ²⁷ Frank Lloyd Wright, "In the Cause of Architecture: The Logic of the Plan," the *Architectural Record* LXIII (Jan. 1928), 149.
- ²⁸ Wright, *An Autobiography*, 145.
- ²⁹ Hoffman, "Frank Lloyd Wright's Dana House," 13.
- ³⁰ Wright, *An Autobiography*, 145.
- ³¹ illinoishistory.gov, "History of the Dana Thomas House," 9.
- ³² Friedman, *Women and the Making of the Modern House*, 15.
- ³³ Friedman, "Frank Lloyd Wright and Feminism," 147.
- ³⁴ Diane Tepfer, "Alma Goetsch and Kathrine Winckler: Ordinary Extraordinary Architectural Patrons," 29.
- ³⁵ Mary Sue Kantz Preston, Gallery Bulletin, Kresge Art Gallery, February 7-25, 1979. University Archives and Historical Collections (Wells Hall 249/C), UA 2688, Box 4, Folder 25. Michigan State University, East Lansing.
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁰ Tepfer, "Alma Goetsch and Kathrine Winckler," 31.
- ⁴¹ <http://michiganmodern.org/>, accessed January 20, 2013.
- ⁴² Tepfer, "Alma Goetsch and Kathrine Winckler," 33.
- ⁴³ Sidney Newman, East Lansing, to Frank Lloyd Wright, Taliesin, July 5, 1938.
- ⁴⁴ Frank Lloyd Wright, Taliesin, to Sidney Newman, Michigan State College, Lansing, July 8, 1938.
- ⁴⁵ Frank Lloyd Wright, Architectural Forum, January 1938, 77-80.
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁷ Anatole Senkevitch, Jr., "Usonia II and the Goetsch Winckler House: Manifestations of Wright's Early Vision of Broadacre City," *Affordable Dreams*, 4.
- ⁴⁸ John Sergeant, *Frank Lloyd Wright's Usonian Houses: The Case for Organic Architecture* (New York: Whitney Library of Design, 1875), 16.
- ⁴⁹ Wright, *An Autobiography*, 450.
- ⁵⁰ Susan Banders, "Affordable Dreams: The Goetsch Winckler House and Frank Lloyd Wright", xi.
- ⁵¹ Kathrine Winckler and Alma Goetsch, East Lansing, to Frank Lloyd Wright, Taliesin, October 25, 1938.
- ⁵² Tepfer, "Alma Goetsch and Kathrine Winckler," 31.
- ⁵³ The Idiosyncrasy Letter, 1.
- ⁵⁴ *Ibid.*
- ⁵⁵ Senkevitch, "Usonia II and the Goetsch Winckler House," 6.
- ⁵⁶ Kathrine Winckler, The Idiosyncrasy Letter, 2.
- ⁵⁷ Moore, Allen and Lyndon, *The Place of Houses*, 176.
- ⁵⁸ *Ibid.*
- ⁵⁹ Friedman, *Women and the Making of the Modern House*, 18.
- ⁶⁰ Senkevitch, "Usonia II and the Goetsch Winckler House," 1.

CHAPTER 3: “E. FAY JONES”

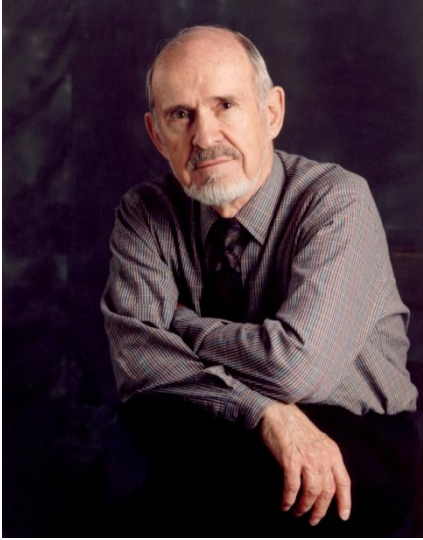


Figure 29: E. Fay Jones

E. Fay Jones was born in El Dorado, Arkansas, on January 31, 1921. His journey to become an architect took longer than usual; he took Civil Engineering courses for several years before being commissioned on Ensign in the U.S. Navy in 1941. Three years later he returned to Fayetteville, and although he could have remained in the Navy as an officer he chose to return to college and enrolled in the new architecture program at the University of Arkansas. He received his undergraduate degree in 1950

and then completed the Masters of Architecture program at Rice University in 1951. Afterwards he accepted a teaching job at the University of Oklahoma, where he stayed for two years before moving back to his home state.¹

Like Frank Lloyd Wright, Jones is well known for his extensive number of residential projects; he built nearly ninety homes in his lifetime. He worked for the majority of his career out of Fayetteville, Arkansas, while teaching at his Alma Mater. His work was well received; among many other notable recognitions he was awarded the AIA Gold Medal in 1990. Although he was independently very successful, he never passed up a chance to comment on the vital influence of Frank Lloyd Wright on his career, even at his Gold Medal acceptance speech. As discussed in the previous chapter, Frank Lloyd Wright had many progressive ideals about women, housing, and the home. Because of the extent of his influence on Jones, it is reasonable to assume that some of these thoughts and views passed on to him.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JONES AND WRIGHT

Without knowing it, Frank Lloyd Wright played a very critical role in the commencement

of Fay Jones's career; Jones decided to become an architect only after watching a documentary on the Johnson Wax Building (Frank Lloyd Wright, Racine, Wisconsin). Jones stated: "When the film was over, I suddenly realized what I wanted to do. And from that day on I had a purpose. No, I had two purposes: I wanted to be an architect and I wanted to meet Mr. Wright."² Jones had his first chance to meet Wright in 1949 in Houston where Wright was to receive the AIA Gold Medal Award. At that point Jones was in his fourth year of architecture school, and although he could not afford to purchase a ticket for the convention, travelled to Houston and convinced a security door man to let him listen to Wright's acceptance speech from the back of the hall. Fay attended the event with one of his professors, John Williamsⁱ, who introduced him to Wright later that night, giving him the opportunity to have his first conversation with him.³ Wright, on the way out of his AIA acceptance speech, used the students that Williams had brought to the convention as a kind of cover to dodge the media. He took Fay's arm, leading him through the Shamrock Hotel and proceeding to point out all of the problems and faults with the building design.⁴

A couple of years later, approximately around the time Jones was finishing his graduate degree at Rice, he contacted Wright again. This time, he wrote a letter to him asking for a job. In the letter Jones explains to Wright his education and work background and pleads with him saying, "I believe I can be worth that much to you, if you can only use me. I want to be an architect (in the true sense of the word); I want to learn the necessary virtues by working for you. I know of no other who can teach me the things that I must know."⁵ Jones said that he was aware of the Taliesin Fellowship Programⁱⁱ, but was unable to afford it at the time. Despite this, Wright's response was simply that Jones would need to apply to the Fellowship Program if he wanted to come to Taliesin.⁶

ⁱ John Gilbert Williams was the founder of the architecture program at the University of Arkansas.

ⁱⁱ Starting in 1932, the Taliesin fellowship program was an apprenticeship in which talented scholars, artists, and architects went to Taliesin West to work under Frank Lloyd Wright in his "Learn by Doing" program that he called the "Frank Lloyd Wright School of Architecture."

While Jones was working in Oklahoma under Bruce Goff,ⁱ he met Wright for a second time, when they had the opportunity to have dinner and coffee together. During this meeting, Wright invited Jones to visit Taliesin West. The next year (1953) Jones traveled to Arizona for the Easter holiday. During this visit he told Wright he wanted to study there, Wright urged him to apply, and when he did he was accepted. Married and with children, and a little older than the usual Taliesin West apprentice, Jones and his family moved to Arizona during the summer of 1953, with Jones finally having the opportunity to work under his mentor, Frank Lloyd Wright.

During his time at Taliesin West, Jones felt that he grew tremendously not only as a designer, but as a person in general. In a letter to Wright a year later, Jones states:

The summer of work – of active participation in the Taliesin life – which you so generously provided my family and me has helped us find enthusiasm and energy for trying to live more meaningful lives. Even in retrospect Taliesin has had more and more to say to us. Our desire to put more initiative into our daily tasks has been sparked, our feelings have been sharpened, and new sensitivities at the very core of life have been discovered. We can never express enough gratitude for that.⁷

In almost every letter Jones sent to Wright after that summer, he mentions the strong life-impact that his time at Taliesin had on him and his family and is constantly praising Wright and his ongoing work. Jones and his family frequently traveled back to Taliesin to celebrate Easter with Wright and the other workers, and often exchanged letters with Wright and his Taliesin staff.

Once again playing a tremendous role in Jones's life and career, it was Frank Lloyd Wright who encouraged Jones to return to Arkansas to

pursue his architectural goals. At the end of the fellowship period, Jones sat down with Wright to



Figure 30: Wright takes afternoon tea with the Fellowship apprentices and their families.

ⁱ Bruce Goff (1904-1982) was an American architect best known for his housing designs, primarily in Oklahoma. He worked for the University of Oklahoma from 1942 to 1955, acting as chair of the School of Architecture for all but one year of that time. He was an advocate of Organic Architecture.

discuss his next move and his future. Jones commented on this conversation later in a letter to Wright, stating: “I remember last summer, when talking over my plans with you, you advised, ‘Go to Arkansas, they are a small group – young and unspoiled; maybe you can do some good there.’ So I am here and trying.”⁸ He sought employment at the University of Arkansas, was hired to begin that fall, and started his practice in Fayetteville. Jones agreed that this was a good location to build architecture and referred to the “Arcadian” beauty of the Ozark hills in many of his lectures. In Fayetteville, he was successful both in academia and in practice. One of his previous employees, David McKee, commented on Jones’s relationship with Wright during this time: “They were very close. I’ve heard wonderful stories with Fay talking about Mr. Wright and you could tell there was a mutual admiration between them.”⁹ And when asked what Fay’s biggest inspiration in his approach to residential projects was, McKee’s answer was “Definitely, Frank Lloyd Wright.”¹⁰

Many years later, in 1958, Jones invited Wright to visit Arkansas and give a lecture at the University. Wright finally made a visit to the state, which Jones described as the “highlight of our year...”¹¹ While he was there, Wright commented on the landscape: “It seems less spoiled than the rest of the country.”¹² His visit to Arkansas was not only a major event for the school of architecture and the state, but proof of Jones and Wright’s close relationship.

The combination of Fay Jones’s personal success and his intimate relationship with Frank Lloyd Wright led to countless lectures and speeches in which Jones was asked to discuss Wright’s work and the influence it had on himself. One notable event was the “Borrowings and Lendings” Conference held at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee in 1977. The purpose of this conference was to discuss architects’ borrowings from and lendings to popular architecture; thus it was very



Figure 31: Fay Jones greets Frank Lloyd Wright as he arrives to Arkansas. April 1958.

appropriate that Jones was invited to speak in this context. This was many years after Wright's passing, and by this time there had been a great deal of emulation of his work. Charles Moore, one of the curators of the event, explained to Jones that they had invited him to speak because "of those architects who are doing it the 'Wright' way, you seem to be doing it the 'right' way."¹³ Jones said that he wasn't exactly sure which "right" Moore meant to start with a "W", but either way he considered it a compliment.¹⁴

During the lecture, Jones explained the nature of the influence that Wright had on him and acknowledged the debt that he owed to Wright. Jones said, "To be properly influenced – to borrow principles or a philosophical stance from another source – is not to copy but to give a purpose, a direction and discipline to one's own work."¹⁵ This kind of influence is not mimicry or imitation, but a deep understanding of principles and beliefs that manifests itself in original design work. Jones wrote:

If an architect is to establish any credibility he cannot imitate another architect's work. It was my extreme good fortune to have been able to work for and study under this country's greatest architect by far – I learned a great deal from Frank Lloyd Wright but I never tried to adopt his personality or his mannerisms – or copy his work. I have never tried to be a "little" Frank Lloyd Wright...¹⁶

For Jones was not only inspired by Wright, but by those who had indeed inspired Wright. Jones explained that although Wright was creative and imaginative, "he did not invent or originate all of the principles that formed the foundation of his work."¹⁷ He described architecture as a continuum in which he and Wright understood concepts of the past, understood their place in the present, and gave deep-rooted ideas new interpretations that reinvested the old with new meaning. And it is not enough to simply reapply principles of the old. As Jones once said "[O]ne cannot be judged by one's inheritance...it is what one does with one's legacy that counts...it is through our work that we verify and validate our lives."¹⁸ Jones felt that he truly understood Wright's principles of Organic Architecture and worked to translate them into his works in the hills of Arkansas.

Jones lectured often on the principles of Organic Architecture, explaining that the three

most important were the building to site relationship, the whole to the part relationship, and the nature of materials. He went on to explain that the most fundamental aspect of the organic idea was that architecture must begin and end with the site: "It is merely striving for a perfect place with no edges."¹⁹ This idea can be seen clearly in the works of both Wright and Jones, and many times their buildings have been described as being "of" the site rather than "on" it. "The house is always expanded by the landscape. The landscape is enhanced by the house – and living in that place, life is enriched."²⁰ Many of his housing ideas recalled Wright's, for example in his *Autobiography* Wright wrote, "It was impossible to imagine a house once built on these principles somewhere else."²¹

Regarding the part to whole relationship, Jones passionately described architectural details as "more than just nice things to notice... [they are] a manifestation and expression of the intensity of caring – and caring is a moral imperative."²² He also noted that Wright's most simple definition of Organic Architecture was: "The part is to the whole as the whole is to the part."²³ Both Wright and Jones are known for designing every last detail of their projects, including built-in furniture, furnishings, light fixtures, door handles, and more. Wright wrote, "I have tried to make my clients see that furniture and furnishings...should be seen as a minor part of the building itself, even if detached."²⁴ Jones was obviously influenced by Wright's philosophy on this approach, as can be seen in his work. For example, in Jones's own house he designed and built all of the furniture, except for the piano.

Lastly, on the nature of materials, Wright stated in his *Autobiography* that "there could be no organic architecture where the nature of materials was ignored or misunderstood. How could there be? Perfect correlation is the first principle of growth."²⁵ Jones also felt passionately about using appropriate materials for his work; he has said, "A material should not be cheapened or embarrassed by having an inferior job to do in which it loses its character – it should be displayed favorably."²⁶ Jones was known to employ local materials for most of his works, including local flagstone and rough-sawn wood from the Ozark hills.

During many of these lectures, Jones accompanied his words with images of built work. He usually included houses that he had designed in Arkansas, and while introducing them he said, “Admittedly, these houses are personal and somewhat romantic notions about patterns of humane living – always praising nature – always celebrating the place.”²⁷ The similarities in Jones’s and Wright’s ideas on houses and living, and the dedication of each to this issue throughout their lives draw another parallel between their careers. As discussed in the previous chapter, Wright dedicated much of his career to the reconstruction of the American single-family house. He transformed the confined nature of the traditional house to an open plan and rethought the basic elements of construction. He said, “My sense of ‘wall’ was no longer the side of a box. It was enclosure of space affording protection against storm or heat only when needed. But it was also to bring the outside world into the house and let the inside of the house go outside.”²⁸ Wright explained that he was working at the wall, and it was starting to function more as a screen in order to open up the space, to “finally permit the free use of the whole space without affecting the soundness of structure.”²⁹ After he had rethought all of the elements of a house, he came to view the house as “livable interior space under ample shelter.”³⁰ “Wright varied the concept of the house that his clients knew and wanted to the location and specific needs of the moment.”³¹

Jones had similar ideas on housing and the home, no doubt many of which he learned from Wright. Jones felt strongly about the specificity that each design should have for its particular owner and for the owner’s particular lifestyle. He said, “An idea based on the needs and desires of Mr. and Mrs. Adams should grow into a home for them. The Adamses’ home will not be like the Smiths’ or the Joneses’. The Adamses are not the Smiths or the Joneses anymore than a pine is an oak or an elm.”³² Jones understood that each client was different and that the space he designed for them should be a reflection of that difference. When speaking of the design process for a residential project, one of Jones’s previous employees stated, “We’d spend a lot of time listening to clients’ programmatic issues that would come up and go through

multiple iterations of schemes to fit the house to that particular person's family's lifestyle. You'd think there'd be a lot of similarities, and there are some, but there are also nuances that we try to find out and [then] address those particularities.³³

Jones was also very passionate about the idea of a single-family house in general. "If there is to be for us a paradise, will it not be a house in a garden?"³⁴ He felt that a house should make its inhabitants more aware of life itself and that it should facilitate a bond between human beings the natural environment. He thought of the house both as the setting "for the events and rituals of daily living" and as a place that should "nourish the human psyche."³⁵ Jones felt that to design a house meant to take on many obligations both to the clients and to the landscape. Housing was not something that he took lightly; he poured an extensive amount of time and effort ensuring that the built work would serve its inhabitants to the best of its ability. He had a vision for a new way of living, not unlike Frank Lloyd Wright, and dedicated much of his career to make that vision a reality.

The house Jones built for himself and his family exhibits many of the qualities that describe Fay's housing philosophy. His "House of the Ozarks" was constructed in 1955, not long after Jones and his family moved back to Fayetteville following their summer at Taliesin. Consequently, the

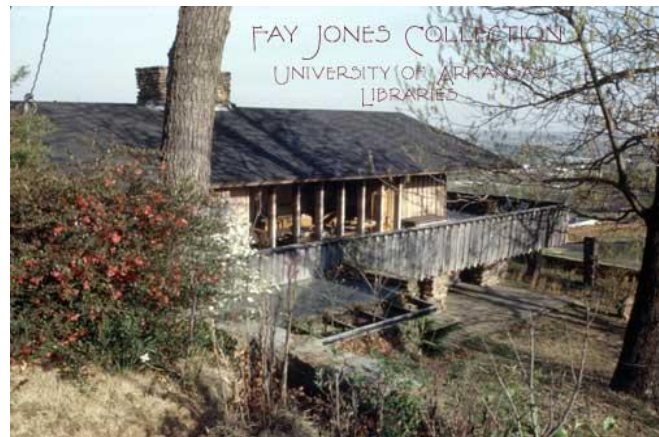


Figure 32: House of the Ozarks, Fay Jones

educational experience he had with Frank Lloyd Wright was still very fresh, and he was consciously working to translate the principles of Organic Architecture into his own design philosophy. Like all of his housing designs, he did not have a preconceived notion of what the house would look like, but let the conditions of the site determine the final outcome. It was not a simple task to design a house to fit on his complicated site, and Jones spent much time reconfiguring the plans to find a solution dictated by the natural breezes, sun path, and contours

of the hill. Jones has said that he actually prefers to work with what some would call a “bad site,” rather than a conventional flat lot in town.³⁶ A good example of his method is provided by the boulder that was uncovered during the initial stages of construction of his house. Rather than have the boulder removed, Jones



Figure 33: House of the Ozarks, Interior

incorporated it into the plans and made the natural boulder an integral part of the entrance hall. Speaking of his house he said, “This house is an experiment – an attempt to create an example of indigenous residential architecture – a house in the nature OF, thus natural TO the Ozarks.”³⁷ The regionalism of the northwest Arkansas is evident in the materials Jones used for the house, local flagstone from a nearby site. Jones made all of the furniture for his house himself, based on the organic idea of part to whole relationships.

Jones conducted a study of the single-family house throughout his career. The ideas behind the design of his own house show up in many of the houses he designed for other clients. Jones described his house projects in many of his lectures, for example:

They are all small buildings, rather simply made, to which many quite modest lives can respond. Their owners are generally people of simple tastes and gentle manners, and most of those owners or clients played a large part in determining the outcome... These buildings were not made to be fashionable, or to win prizes, but only to please those who would use them – and to seem to belong to the places where they are built.³⁸

Jones viewed the design and construction processes of a house as collaboration between himself and the client; he always worked to suit the design to the particular lifestyle of the person or family that would be living in it, and always became well acquainted with the client, their tastes and personality, before beginning the endeavor of designing their living place. Jones refused to rely on traditional mainstream values that determined what a “house” should

look like and how it should function on the interior.

In 1990 Fay Jones travelled to Houston to accept his AIA Gold Medal. He began his speech by paraphrasing the words of Frank Lloyd Wright from the night he made his Gold Medal acceptance speech, saying “No man ever rises so high or sinks so low that he does not value the approbation of his fellow man.”³⁹ Jones went on to tell the story of the first time he had met Wright, and once again gave him credit for the vast influence he had on Jones’s career. He said that, when he had sneaked in the back of the hall on the night of Wright’s acceptance speech, “there was no way I could have dreamed – or fanaticized that night – that someday (41 years later) I would be accorded that same signal honor.”⁴⁰

This chapter discusses in detail two houses designed by Fay Jones: the Goetsch-Winckler House III and the Alice Walton House. These designs will provide a unique angle in which to study Jones’ ideas about interrelationships within the home, gender roles, and women in general. Goetsch and Winckler have already been introduced in the previous chapter, and the comparison between their Usonian House and their Jones house will bring up important similarities in the design approach of Wright and Jones. The Alice Walton house provides an example of work done later in Jones’ career for an independent single woman with means similar to Susan Lawrence Dana.

GOETSCH-WINCKLER HOUSE III

In 1953 Fay Jones and his family visited Alma Goetsch and Kathrine Winckler at their Usonian home in East Lansing. The women were already familiar with Jones’s work from a publication in *Progressive Architecture, House Beautiful*.⁴¹ A decade later when it came time for the women to retire, they decided to leave Michigan in hopes of finding a new home to live out the rest of their lives together. They were looking for a new location: a less harsh climate, a stimulating cultural community, preferably with a university, and a vital regional architect. Although they also considered Oklahoma and North Carolina⁴², the women ultimately decided

on Arkansas during a visit to the state; while at dinner at the Jones home Kathrine turned to Alma and asked, “What’s wrong with Fayetteville?” Alma replied, “Kathrine, I was thinking the same thing.”⁴³ They purchased a sloping site near the peak of Mt. Sequoyah in Fayetteville and were excited to work with Fay Jones. In a letter to Jones, Goetsch wrote: “We keep congratulating ourselves that we know how to pick the right architect.”⁴⁴

At first, the notion of working with Goetsch and Winckler intimidated Jones.⁴⁵ He admired the Goetsch-Winckler House I, designed by his mentor, and was very aware of its esteemed reputation. When the women first approached Jones about designing them a house, he was worried that they would want a “Wright House” in the Arkansas hills. He was relieved when they described to him something very different. Rather than requesting a duplicate of their Usonian House in Michigan, they were eager for a completely new architectural experience for a new phase in their lives. Fay Jones was able to give them just that.

Fay Jones named the house he designed for Alma and Kathrine the “Goetsch-Winckler House III,” because, many years after their first house in Okemos was built, Frank Lloyd Wright actually designed a second house for the couple. This house was called the Goetsch-Winckler House II. Although the women were very fond of their first house by Wright, after World War II they became concerned that they would soon find themselves at the center of a suburban community due to the postwar building boom in the area.ⁱ They also had a need for additional storage space and possibly an extra bedroom. Their solution was to commission Wright to design them a second house in a new, more remote location. They acquired a plot several miles outside of town; Wright and Olgivanna visited in 1947 and stayed with the women in their Usonian home. The women had few requests for Wright: equal or lesser amount of floor space than their current home, three bedrooms rather than two, and a studio. Regardless of these

ⁱ It is interesting to note that the Jacobs family, the owners of Wright’s first Usonian house, also commissioned Wright to design them a new home in a more remote location. Their second Wright house was built after the war between 1948 and 1949.

requests, a year later Wright designed them an astonishingly large and dramatic house. Although of magnificent design, the house was far above their means. At this point in Wright's mature architectural career, he was not so concerned as he had been with the problem of the moderate-cost house. Although the women greatly admired the second house he designed for them, the construction of it was not possible within their means and the project never materialized.⁴⁶

In July 1965, Alma Goetsch sent a letter to Jones explaining that the women had finished up at Michigan State University and were ready to "consider new things."⁴⁷ They planned a trip to Arkansas for the end of July during which time they would buy the land for their new house and meet with Jones. After the trip, Alma sent another letter to Fay that included a program list that she and Kathrine had come up with, not unlike the 'Idiosyncrasy Letter' they had sent to Wright before designing their first house. She wrote: "Kathrine and I have formed an outline of the things we thought about for the house. Probably we have asked for too much. We live in a casual manner and really are simple people, and if some of these considerations are impossible, we will adjust easily."⁴⁸ She ended the letter by wishing Jones to "have a good time dreaming about a home on that beautiful lot."⁴⁹ In every letter that she sent to Jones, Alma expressed the ladies' excitement and eagerness to start the process of moving to Arkansas.

The program list that Kathrine and Alma mailed to Jones is very interesting. The majority of the list is devoted to the art studio, and the amount of attention these women give to the requirements for this space shows that they were both very passionate about their art. It is reasonable to think that now that the women were retired, each would have more time to devote to their personal interests and hobbies. The program that they came up with supports



Figure 34: Kathrine Winckler, *Ferrochrome*, 1953; oil on Masonite

this thought. Kathrine provided Jones very specific information about the kind of art she was planning to do in this space, including accurate dimensions of materials (masonite, enamels and a sculpture kiln) and specific requirements for the amount of storage space, shelves, and tables. Alma added to the list that Kathrine made (saying that she and Kathrine would share the studio space), including some additional requirements such as a shower stall, a toilet, a sink and more storage. Alma also asked for a direct entrance to the studio space from the living space.

Goetsch and Winckler dedicated the majority of their lives to the public education of art as well as developing their own personal artistic styles. Goetsch worked with many forms of fiber art and was an excellent seamstress. Most of her later work was in silkscreen. In 1962 she stated, "I work abstractly and with known subject matter. I'm vitally interested in color and try to use as exciting color in my prints as I possibly can."⁵⁰ Winckler was also interested in color, and from the program list we learn that she worked with many media, including painting, enamels, drawings, watercolor and ceramics. She also mixed many of her own pigments. The program

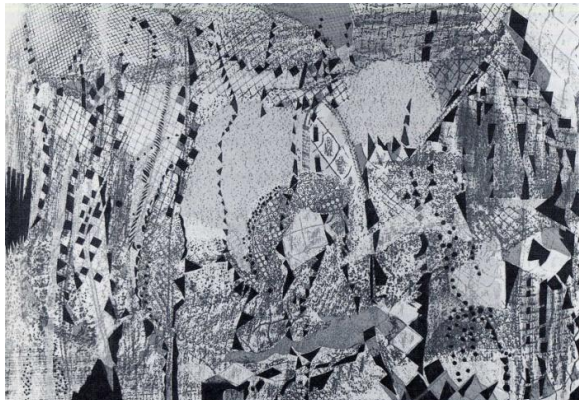


Figure 35: Alma Goetsch, *Weeds and Old Lace*, serigraph; 1961.

list that they provided for Wright is evidence of their strong dedication to and interest in the arts, and their continued pursuit of their personal development as artists throughout their lives. For these women, art was their most accessible form of self-expression and a statement of their independence. They dedicated their lives to their work, and through their work they made a contribution to the culture, while obtaining a feeling of self-worth and individual liberty.

The remainder of the women's program list is much less specific; from their experience working with Wright they learned what was important to them and what was not. For the living space they had few requests: bookshelves, wall space and shelf space with a raised fire place floor, "easier for tired backs."⁵¹ The women wanted a bird-feeding station to be visible from the

living area and requested that the floor space be on one level (another sign of their age). They left most of the spatial decisions up to Jones. The program list declares “sleeping space is not as important as living space.” Rather than giving requests regarding the spatial qualities of the house, they mainly shared desires regarding appliances and features.ⁱ As for the outdoor space, space, they asked for “maybe a flower box easily accessible instead of garden space. Or maybe a stone garden (we are physically lazy.)”⁵² Alma and Kathrine trusted Jones to design them a space that fit their personality and lifestyle. Alma shared with Jones, “Our chief form of entertainment is good conversation and we hope to find people who like good talk. I, especially, like to cook, but nothing fancy.”⁵³ Jones, understanding the women’s desires and expectations about their new space, designed the house accordingly.

Jones also understood that the retired women were on a budget and, like Wright did for their first Usonian home, tried to be as economical as possible. In a letter, he explained to the women, “I had to make a few changes in the interest of getting the cost down,” and when he received figures from the contractor that were higher than expectedⁱⁱ, he explained, “I am doing all I can to cast this concept in simple, inexpensive (but sound) materials with simple detailing to squeeze the cost as far down as it will go...A bit of your patience might be required before the project is completed.”⁵⁴ Jones understood that he could still design quality space on a limited budget; he has said, “[T]he most economical enrichment of all is light on a shadowed wall.”⁵⁵ Alma and Kathrine were the kind of clients that appreciated that kind of thing; in their letters to Wright about their Usonian house they often commented on the many patterns of light they continued to discover and observe long after they moved in. As artists, these women appreciated good design and could recognize it when they saw it.

ⁱ For example, they wanted an intercom system between rooms and between bedrooms and studio, specific shelf sizes in the bathroom and kitchen, two ovens, two showers but one bathtub, etc.

ⁱⁱ The contractor estimated the project at \$45,000 - \$58,000. Jones felt that these figures were “somewhat alarming,” and made some changes to the design and materials in an effort to lower the cost.

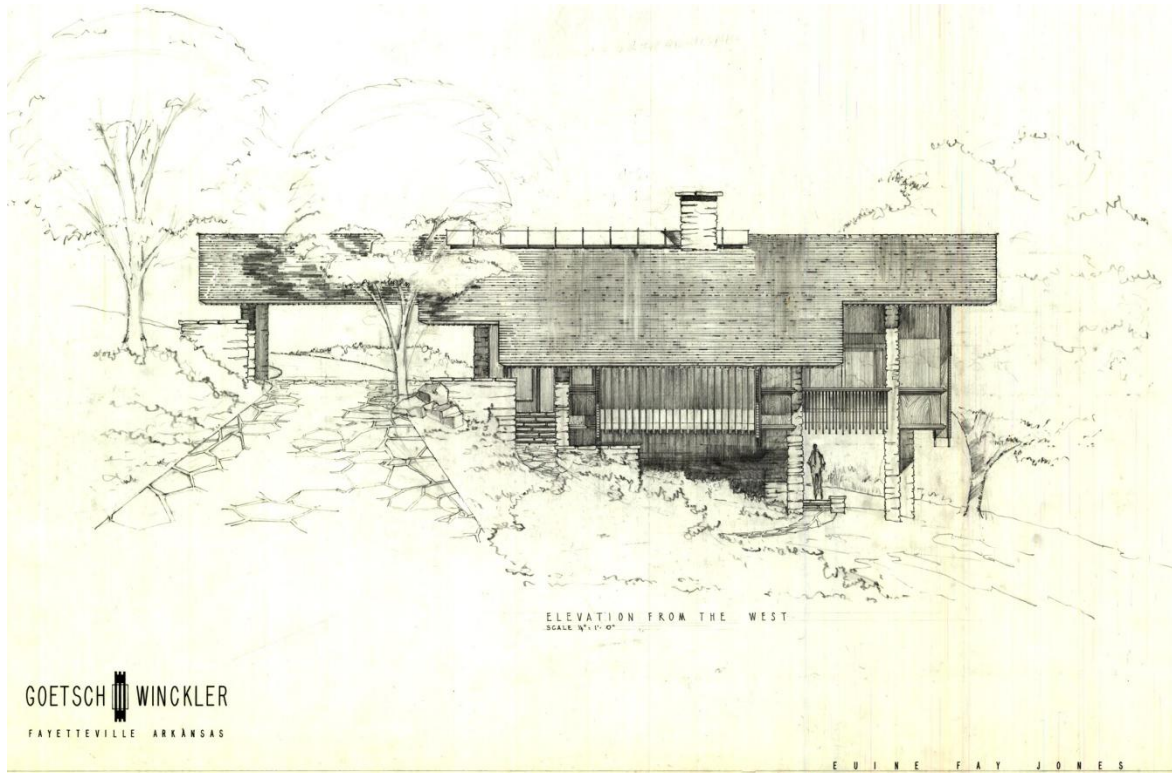


Figure 36: Goetsch-Winckler III, East Elevation, Fay Jones

Goetsch and Winckler were eager for a new architectural experience, and the differences in their houses began with the extreme difference of the sites. Their Michigan home sat on a nearly flat site, in sharp contrast to their wooded lot near the peak of Mt. Sequoyah in Arkansas. This new site had a steep incline and provided a sweeping view out toward the scenic Ozarks. As for the house itself, Goetsch and Winckler requested a sloped roof with a generous overhang, rather than another flat roof like their Usonian home.⁵⁶ They preferred to use local materials, flagstone and a light-toned wood, rather than a red concrete floor divided into four-foot squares as Wright designed. The result was a completely new architectural experience. The women appreciated both of their houses, but for different reasons. “They loved their new home and appreciated it for its craftsmanship; they admired their previous house, more of a product of the machine, for its modernity.”⁵⁷

Jones's design for Goetsch-Winckler III was a "bilaterally symmetrical soaring structure or natural stone and western cedar on the interior and stone and redwood on the exterior. The house "appears to be 'of' the landscape, rather than 'on' it."⁵⁸ The bedrooms are on each side of the house, mirror images of one another, each with their own bathroom and exterior balcony. Jones was very economical with the private spaces of the house. Each bedroom has just enough space to be comfortable, but no more. As the women had pointed out in their program list: "sleeping space is not as important as living space." The more public spaces – living area, dining area, and kitchen - make up the spine of the house and are spatially continuous, the fireplace being the only physical division. The large fireplace dominates and grounds the space.

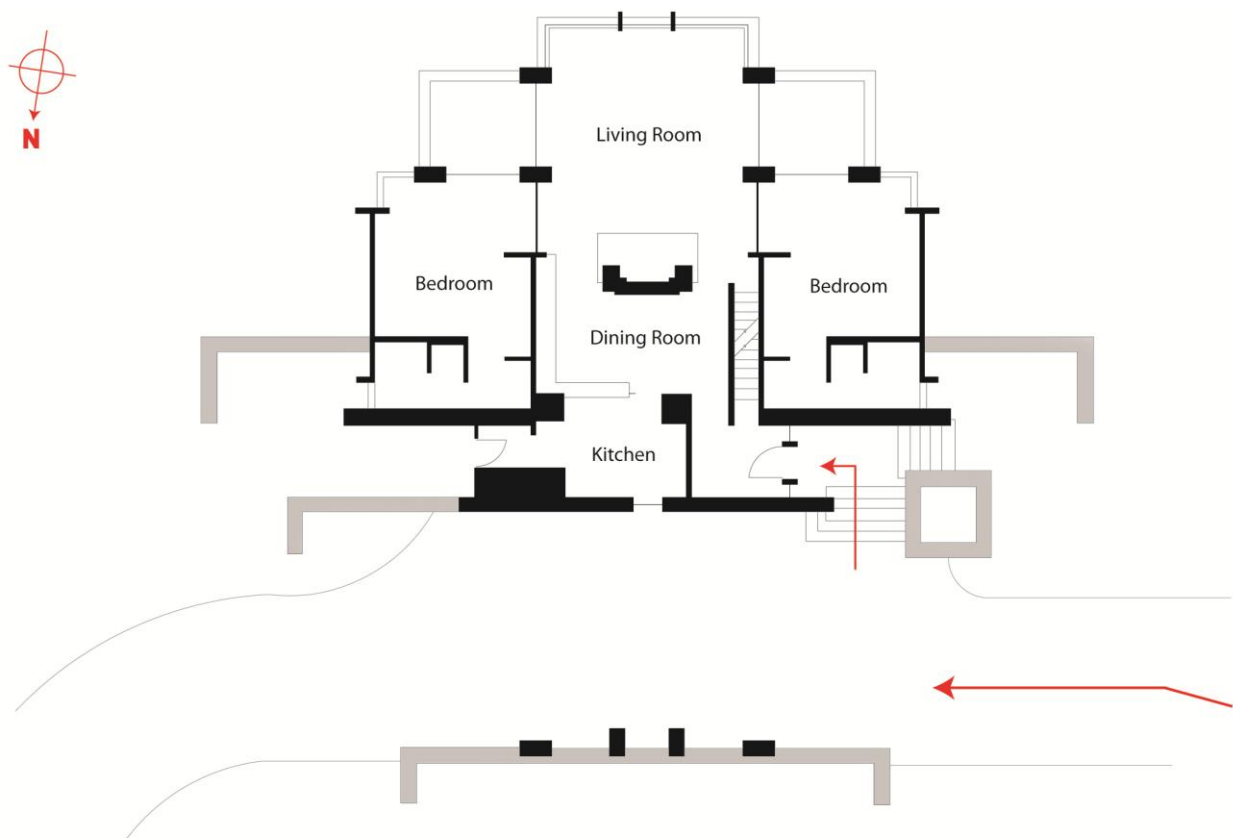


Figure 37: Goetsch-Winckler III, plan.

Goetsch-Winckler III follows the rules of Organic Architecture, specifically in that it seems to be of the place, growing from the slope of Mt. Sequoyah. The house is looking out from the side of the hill, similar to but more dramatic than their Usonian home, resulting in impressive views from the living room and bedrooms. The entry to the house is accessible down five steps of flagstone, also used for the floor of the house and terraces. Upon entering through a door on the west side, one would turn south towards the living room, look past the large fire place, and be confronted with the large glass wall with the view of the mountains behind. Once inside, the public space of the house is continuous and flows together seamlessly. “The house unfolds with sensory, tactile, and cerebral

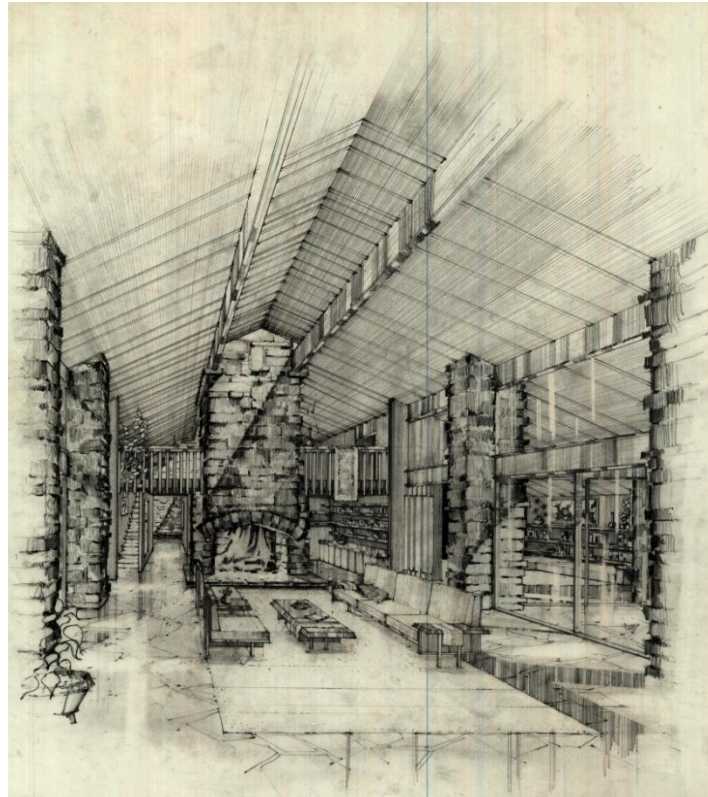


Figure 38: Goetsch-Winckler III, Interior Rendering, Fay Jones. Looking north from the living room, towards the upper level studio, fireplace and dining area.

experiences. With a sense of calm and well-being, smelling cedar among the pervasive woody aroma, one approaches the house by means of a porte cochère/carport sheltered by the generously overhanging roof.”⁵⁹ On the way to the living area a visitor would have a view of the kitchen and the dining area, all spatially open and connected. The living space is the final destination for visitors, and is open to the other spaces of the house as well as the exterior balconies. By placing the bedrooms on the outer edges, the view in the public space is directed south toward the mountains. As one approaches the large wall of glass, the space opens up, becoming a two-level space that is overlooked by the upper level studio. The Goetsch-Winckler House III is situated very appropriately on its site, and Jones was successful in integrating it with

its surroundings. The multiple levels of the house function perfectly for a site with this slope, and the house seems to be perched on the side of Mt. Sequoyah, physically reaching out to the view beyond.

Another rule of Organic Architecture is present in this house: the part to whole relationship. To ensure continuity, Jones took control of the design on every scale. Along with the lighting fixtures and other built-ins, Jones designed the dining-room table with six chairs, the living-room furniture, and the dining-room cabinet. Through the design of the details Jones made a reference to the Usonian house Wright designed for these clients. "Throughout the house the cabinet doors feature brass piano hinges and thus recall Wright's innovative use of this same elegant hardware for the cabinets and interior doors in Goetsch-Winckler I."⁶⁰ But in this house, Jones uses the hinges so frequently that they create a significant pattern that unifies the whole interior.

Although in the program list the women agreed to share a studio space, Jones designed two studios, each based on the women's work habits as they described them to him. There was plenty of natural light available to accommodate Alma, the "daytime person", for her watercolors and printmaking. Her studio is on the upper level of the house, and overlooks the living area.

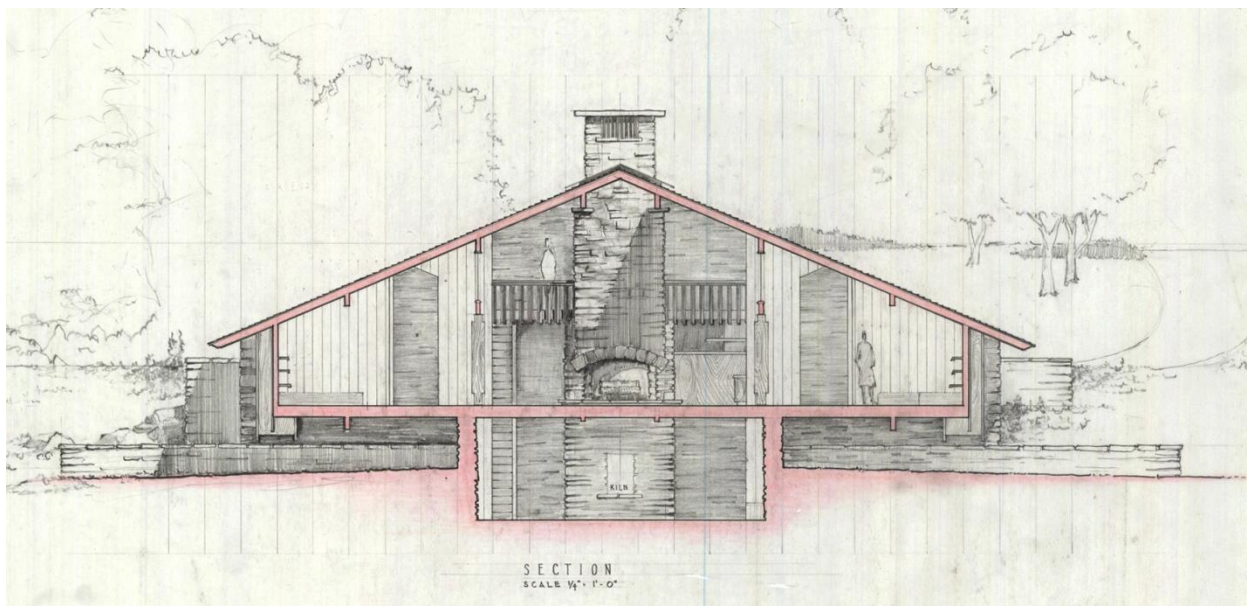


Figure 39: Goetsch-Winckler III, Section, Fay Jones. The section shows each woman's studio, Alma's located in the mezzanine, and Kathrine's below the living space in the basement.

There is a skylight above and a view towards the glazed wall to the south of the living space. This upper studio feels as if it is a part of the other public spaces in the house. For Kathrine, the “brooding, chain-smoking, nocturnal worker,” Jones designed a studio on the basement level of the house below the living room. This studio could be entered directly from the exterior and provided a suitable space for her to install her kiln within the stone of the fireplace shaft. Unlike Alma’s workspace, this studio is not visible from the living area of the house; upon entering the house, a visitor would not be aware of the basement below. “Thus the house functions on three levels. Goetsch’s printmaking loft is on top of the dining area, and below the dining area is Winckler’s kiln and studio.”⁶¹ In section, the result of this configuration is a central core of public space, with each woman’s privatized space on the outside edges. This is not unlike the plan, in which the public space forms the central spin of the house, with the private bedrooms located on the outside edges.



Figure 40: Goetsch-Winckler III, Interior Photograph looking south through the living room from the balcony

Alma Goetsch and Kathrine Winckler were very excited about their move to Arkansas and their new life in the Fay Jones house. Tragically, soon after the construction of Goetsch-Winckler III was complete and the women moved in, Alma Goetsch developed cancer and passed away in April of 1968, not even three years after her retirement. The loss of her lifelong companion was a traumatic event for Winckler, and she was never able to work on her art again.ⁱ She directed some energy into projects for the local environment, but mostly stuck to herself and lived out the rest of her days looking out her

ⁱ Her kiln was never installed in the studio Jones designed for her.

large glass wall towards the Ozark mountains. Goetsch passed away in Fayetteville in 1976.ⁱ

Working with both Wright and Jones, Alma Goetsch and Kathrine Winckler were very active and involved clients. Their interest and dedication to the arts made them crusaders for modern architecture. They moved to Fayetteville in 1966 in order to be present during the construction of their new house; “the stonemason remembered that they reverently watched him cut and set the stone. The women believed that such traditional artisans possessed an innate sense of design.”⁶² Educators at heart, they were always eager to show off their first house in order to educate the “hordes of visitors” who were interested in Wright’s new ideas of architecture. “We are always pleased to show it to people who are interested,” wrote Winckler, “but I confess it is sometimes a bit irksome to live so publicly.”⁶³ The women informed Wright in a letter that there they had visitors to the house daily, and at least one large group tour per week. Many of their art students were also entertained in the house. A former student of the women wrote, “I had been one of many students, members of the faculty, and visitors from all



Figure 41: Goetsch-Winckler III, exterior, 1965.
Photo: Al Drap



Figure 42: Goetsch-Winckler III, Kathrine's bedroom suite from living room, 1965.
Photo: Al Drap

over the world who had had the pleasure of being entertained by “Goetsch and Winckler” in their unique and gracious home.”⁶⁴ Another student recalls the generosity of the women who loved to

ⁱ Alma Goetsch and Kathrine Winckler do not have tombstones; each donated their body to science, another example of their progressive nature.

entertain: “One of my fond memories of them was their generosity in sharing their NEW Frank Lloyd Wright home with their students....I loved being invited to that aesthetically pleasing home to enjoy Alma and Kathrine’s gracious hospitality.”⁶⁵ Even the bankers, the professionals that originally denied funding for the *Usonia II* project, were interested in seeing the house and its new kind of construction. Winckler wrote, “[W]e did not feel inclined to show it to them because nine years ago their kind kept the Mt. Hope Road project from materializing. But we decided to educate even these money lenders.”⁶⁶

Living ahead of their time more ways than one, clearly these two women possessed the incredible foresight to commission three significant examples of American modern architecture. Winckler expressed this foresight when she wrote, “I have contributed to the cultural growth of the community by building (with Miss Alma Goetsch) a house designed by Frank Lloyd Wright.

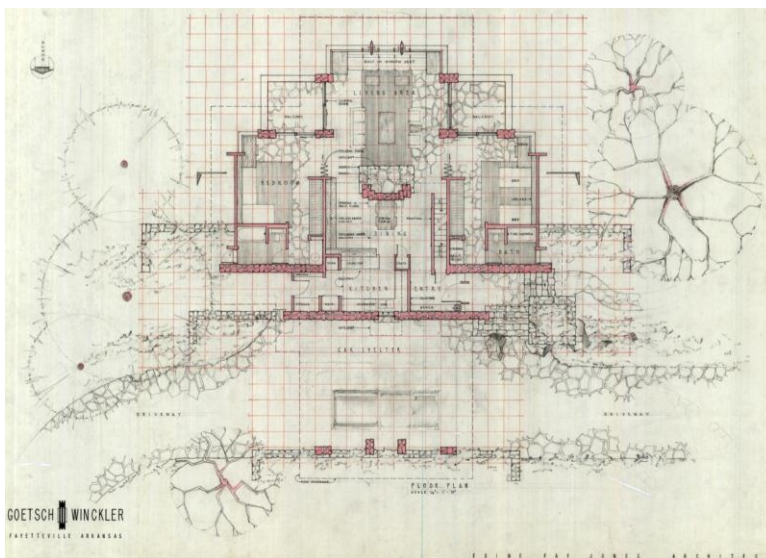


Figure 43: Goetsch-Winckler III, Plan, Fay Jones

This house has received national acclaim and has been visited by hundreds of people.”⁶⁷ They committed their lives to their cause, enduring many frustrations along the way both professionally and personally, but they made choices and ordered their priorities and in turn accomplished something extraordinary. Goetsch and

Winckler surpassed many boundaries placed on women in the early twentieth century, and their contribution to American architecture is truly incredible. These two women understood the significance of their first home’s becoming a major asset to their community.

ALICE WALTON HOUSE

Similar to Susan Dana, Alice Walton, a client of Fay Jones in the early 1980's, had the means and opportunity to construct a house for herself that would fulfill her personal needs and lifestyle, as well as facilitate a vision of how she wanted to live. Although she was even wealthier than Mrs. Dana, Walton had a very different idea of how she wanted to live and what she wanted her house to say, or not say, about her.



Figure 44: Alice Walton, © Patrick McMullen

Alice Walton (1949 -) is one of the four heirs to the Wal-Mart family fortune. She, the only daughter and youngest child of Sam and Helen Walton, grew up as a member of the 'Richest Family in America.' Regardless, Alice describes growing up as a "beautiful, rural, American childhood."⁶⁸ The family did not come into their fortune until later, when the children had grown. The Waltons often took camping trips, where Alice would spend time with her mother painting watercolors. Thus began her interest in art. Many years later, Alice began her practice of art collecting with works of that same medium. Alice was graduated

from Bentonville High School, vice president of her class, in 1967. She completed her BS degree at Trinity College in San Antonio in 1971, subsequently going to work in the family business for a brief period. Only one year later she became an equity analyst and moved to New Orleans, taking a job as a broker with E.F. Hutton.⁶⁹

As a female broker she encountered many apprehensive investors, most of whom were older men. Walton was one of the first female account executives in her company, managing more than four billion dollars in portfolios. She promoted a seminar for women investors based on the fact that "women in this country own more than 60% of assets in the public investment area, but control only 20%."⁷⁰ She also enjoyed proving the male investors wrong when they doubted her and has said that they were often surprised when she did a good job. Always

career oriented, during her time in Louisiana she was also taking classes at Tulane University towards her M.B.A.⁷¹ In his 1992 biography, Sam Walton wrote “She is the most like me – a maverick – but even more volatile than I am.”⁷²

Alice Walton moved back to Arkansas in the late 1970’s and began her life-long hobby of raising horses. Like her other siblings, she sought to avoid publicity and to maintain a low profile throughout her life. Alice became involved in many civic efforts in Arkansas; she has been referred to as “the booster” of the family and has put a great deal of energy into improving conditions in Northwest Arkansas, the home of Wal-Mart. In 1990 she became the first president of the Northwest Arkansas Council, a non-profit development group that brought together influential leaders in the area such as her father, Sam Walton, J.B. Hunt and Don Tysonⁱ. As for her participation in this group Alice was described as “a leader among leaders,” leading the group in their campaign to construct I-540, a much needed four-lane highway connecting Bentonville to the rest of the area. She also spearheaded the construction of the Northwest Arkansas Regional Airport (XNA) in 1998. The area had been trying to build a new airport since the 1950’s, a project which many thought would never be accomplished. At the dedication of XNA, Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton, who was elected as President of the United States two years later, spoke of Alice Walton in his opening statement:

I have found that there is in any project like this a certain squeaky-wheel factor; there are people that just bother you so much that even if you don’t want to do it, you’d go on and do it anyway. I would like to pay special tribute to the people who were particular squeaky wheels to me – starting with Alice Walton, who wore me out.⁷³

Like many of the other women discussed in this paper, Alice Walton is an advocate of modern architecture. She feels very strongly about giving back to the community and is a patron of American art. These qualities, combined with her substantial inheritance,⁷⁴ gave her the

ⁱ Sam Walton was the founder of Wal-Mart (the largest retailer in the world) and Sam’s Club, based out of Bentonville, Arkansas. Johnnie Bryant “J.B.” Hunt was the founder of J.B. Hunt Transport Services (the largest publicly owned trucking company in the USA) that is based out of Lowell, Arkansas. Donald Tyson was the President and CEO of Tyson Foods (the second largest meat producer in the world) based out of Springdale, Arkansas.

opportunity to make a generous contribution to the people of northwest Arkansas. In the 2000's, Alice hired Boston architect Moshe Safdie to design a 200,000 square foot museum on the 120 acres of land formerly owned by her parents in Bentonville, Arkansas. Her American Art Museum, named 'Crystal Bridges' after a nearby spring, holds an admiral collection of works by American artists from the Colonial era to the present. She has acquired many very significant pieces and has positioned herself a recognized force in the art market. Walton is a patron of both art and architecture. She has commissioned two works of modern architecture: her house by Fay Jones, and the museum. Regarding Crystal Bridges, the building itself is just as much an American work of art as the contents inside. These commissions establish Alice Walton as a strong cultural force and advocate for American art and architecture.

Walton had a vision for what she wanted to accomplish, personally, professionally and philanthropically, and was willing to do whatever it took to see it through. She said, "We needed economic development in this part of the state, and the only way to get it was by creating the infrastructure. The roads and the airport."⁷⁵ This is just one example of Alice's mission: she saw a need in the community, and because she was a woman with the means and opportunity to do something about it, she did. Her development projects throughout the years have been impressively successful.

As a child, Alice Walton knew Fay Jones from the design and construction of a house for her parents, the Sam and Helen Walton House. The Walton family had a reputation for being very frugal, despite their significant financial success. Sam Walton started the company in a small store in Bentonville, *Walton's 5&10*, in 1950. Despite his small beginnings, Sam Walton accumulated the biggest family fortune in America, and by the time of his death in 1992 the company was worth ninety billion dollars. While Sam was the business-minded one of the family, Helen did not back down from expressing herself as an individual and was known to encourage the family to participate in social and civic efforts. In his autobiography Sam describes Helen as "her own woman" and explains: "I obviously have opinions, but Helen is one

who's going to answer bluntly about what she believes in if questioned. Really, she's a bit of a feminist."⁷⁶

The Waltons contacted Fay Jones in the late 1950's. They had acquired twenty acres on a rural site in Bentonville, with a small creek, mossy stones, and plenty of trees. For Jones, "it was love at first sight" when he first visited the Walton's property. He designed an L-shaped house that spanned a small water fall and reflecting pond that he created by damming the creek.ⁱ Helen took charge as the primary client for Jones. It is also said that it was Helen's financial resources that enabled the couple to go ahead with the construction – she had equity in her parents' ranch in Oklahoma that allowed the couple to acquire loans from the bank.⁷⁷ During construction, it was Helen who consulted with the architect and approved the work. A previous employee of Jones commented on Helen's involvement, stating "she was very engaged, she would show up a lot at the office."⁷⁸ Helen was a very active client, and had strong opinions about how the house should be. And "Alice was the same way."⁷⁹

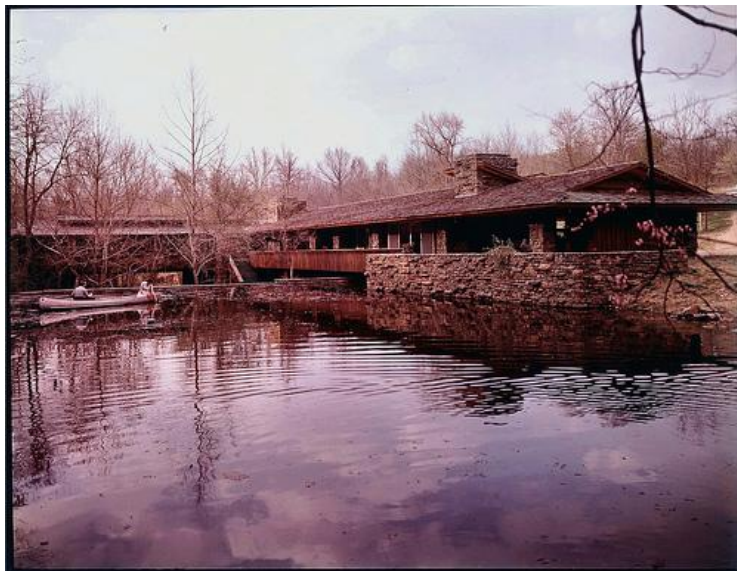


Figure 46: Walton Residence, viewed from across the pond



Figure 45: Walton Residence, Interior Photograph showing the living space.

ⁱ At first, Jones was worried that the Waltons would not be able to afford the 5,500 square foot house he designed for them, because "he had just one little store on the square...the estimated cost was \$100,000." Jones says he remembers "holding my breath for a while to see whether they'd go along with it." - Vance H. Trimble, *Sam Walton*, 86.



Figure 47: Walton Residence, Exterior

The Waltons moved into their new house in October of 1959, the year their oldest child entered high school. In 1972, a lightning bolt hit the house and burned down over half of it. Again, the couple called upon Fay Jones to design their second home. Also again, Helen took charge of working with Jones. Sam would come to the meetings occasionally and, as Jones recalled, “Sam would say, now Helen, do we really have to do this?”⁸⁰ Helen’s answer was usually yes. The second house was built similar to the first one, but was slightly enlarged for entertainment purposes. This time, not only did the couple have a larger budget for the house, but their children were all grown and lived on their own. The new design “had the same basic outlines, but they could afford nicer materials.”⁸¹

The house Fay Jones designed for the Walton Family was an L-shape in plan, spanning the river and framing the pond Jones created by damming a creek. The longer bar of the house contains all of the primary spaces of the house: bedrooms, living space, dining space, and the kitchen. The shorter bar (which spans the waterfall) contains a game room. The two primary gathering spaces in the house are the living space and the game room. One enters the house

on the north side into the living room and has a view through the space out to the pond area. The whole house seems to be primarily open towards the interior of the “L,” and there is a continuous balcony wrapping this space that provides access down to the pond. The master bedroom is located at the east end of the main bar, along with the kitchen. The other bedrooms are located at the west end at the joint of the two bars.



Figure 48: Walton Residence, outdoor living space. Fay Jones is second from the left. Photo: Maynard L. Parker, 1961

liked and what she didn't. For example, a note taken by one of Jones' associates states, "Mrs. Walton doesn't want the edge strip to have the piece that sticks out 1/2". Doesn't want to dust it."⁸³ She was very specific about her demands, and it was not uncommon for her to make requests or approve changes without Sam's approval. The house design included a workroom specifically for Helen to contain a sewing machine, typewriter, file cabinet, worktable, and shelves for storage.

Sam commented on the house Jones designed for his family briefly in his autobiography:

This house we live in was designed by E. Fay Jones, who lives down the road in Fayetteville and is a world-famous disciple of Frank Lloyd Wright. And even though I think it cost too much, I have to admit it's beautiful – but in a real simple, natural kind of way...We're not ashamed of having money, but I just don't believe a big showy lifestyle is appropriate for anywhere, least of all here in Bentonville where folks work hard for their money...⁸⁴

The house Jones designed for the Waltons suited their needs perfectly. It was big enough to fulfill Helen's desires for entertaining friends and family, but still mostly hidden from outside view in the wooded area. It is also at the end of a private drive, so from the road all one can see is the Fay Jones-designed gate to the property. They were comfortable in their house, but did not "boast about having the prettiest house in town."⁸⁵ The Walton family was not aiming to make a statement about their financial means or status with their house, although they had the resources to do so. The family has a tradition of being humble and unpretentious, as stated by Sam in the excerpt above. Sam states often in his autobiography that he hoped to pass on these values to his children and grandchildren.

Jones was less modest about the house than the owners were, for him it was a "creative achievement that deserved attention and recognition."⁸⁶ He included slides of the house in many of his lectures on Organic Architecture⁸⁷, and it won a national honor award from the AIA in 1961. In 1978 photographs of the house were also published in the Architectural Digest⁸⁸, without the name of the client. Jones stated: "I look back on that as a prime example of my work. Architecturally, I was very pleased with the outcome."⁸⁹

As an active client and as a woman in general, Helen set an example for her daughter Alice. Sam commented on his relationship with Helen, "But I'll tell you this: she doesn't ask me what she should think, and I'd be the last person on earth to try to tell her... We've been happy together, but we've stayed independent to pursue our own interests as well."⁹⁰ The couple operated as a partnership within the home. Alice learned from both the independent, strong-willed nature of her mother and the business-minded frugality of her father, and the house that she commissioned Fay Jones to design has many qualities similar to those of her childhood home in Bentonville.

When Alice Walton moved back to Arkansas from New Orleans in the late 1970's, she commissioned Fay Jones to design a house for her in Lowell, Arkansas. Jones's office started working on the house design in 1982, and Alice began the project being very involved. In 1983,

however, Alice was in a severe vehicle accident and suffered a broken leg and a serious bone infection. Despite her father's acquisition of the top doctors in the country Alice went through a total of 22 operations on her leg. Because of these extensive medical issues, she was not able to be as involved in the construction process of the house as she would have liked. A former high-school classmate of Alice's and an associate in Jones office commented on the situation, saying, "She was in the hospital and out of reach for a long time during the construction of the house, which must have frustrated her to no end being the kind of person who wants to be right in the thick of it."⁹¹

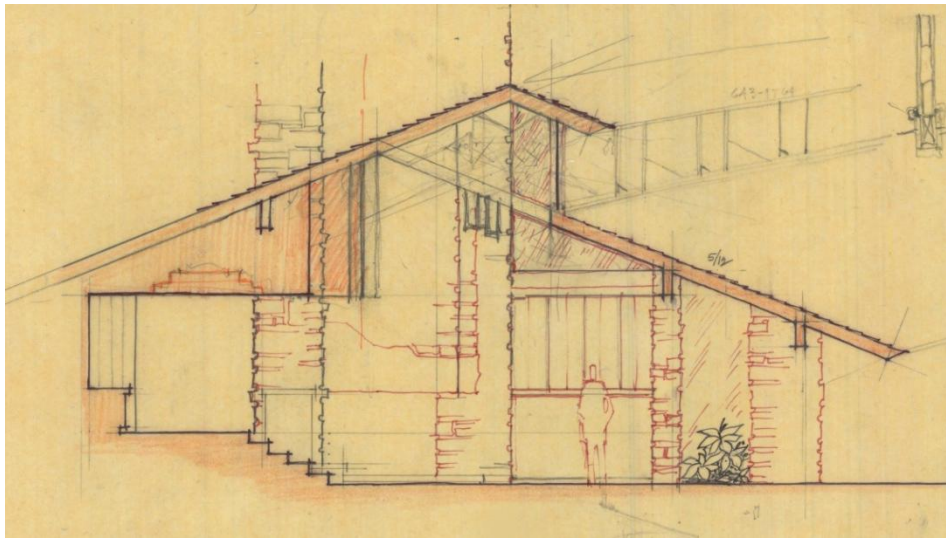


Figure 49: Alice Walton House, Section Sketch, Fay Jones

The design process lasted several months. During this time Jones and his associates worked out the details of their design, while the overall scheme was relatively unchanged. Jones's design for Alice Walton's house began and ended with the site. On early site and plan sketches, Jones marks the direction of the sun, the direction of the breezes, and the views out toward the country side and towards Alice's barn. These features of the site determined the orientation, placement of openings, and locations of outdoor terraces of the house. Throughout the schematic design, and through the presentation drawings, Jones offered two schemes for the house. Although very similar, there were some differences in the layout of the more public space of the house. Presenting Ms. Walton with two options for the house gave her more of a

choice in the process. Although she was not able to be present for as many meetings throughout the design and construction as she probably would have liked, Jones still presented her with options. Both schemes are based on a “bar” idea, in which the house runs parallel to the



Figure 50: Walton House, driveway

road and the public and private spaces are located at separate ends of the bar. In each scheme, Alice’s private spaces – bedroom, bathroom, dressing room, and study – are located on the northeast end of the house. The public spaces – living area, dining area, and terraces – are placed at the southwest end. The linearity of the plan, in both instances, allows the separation of public and private within a one level house.

Of the two schemes, Walton and Jones eventually moved forward with scheme number two. This scheme was more elongated than number one and provided more interior space on the public end of the house. The house sits just off a dirt path, facing away from the road towards the southeast. It sits low to the ground and is very horizontal. A carport extends from the house towards the street, similar to but larger than the carport in Goetsch-Winckler III. One enters the house through a door accessible from the car shelter.

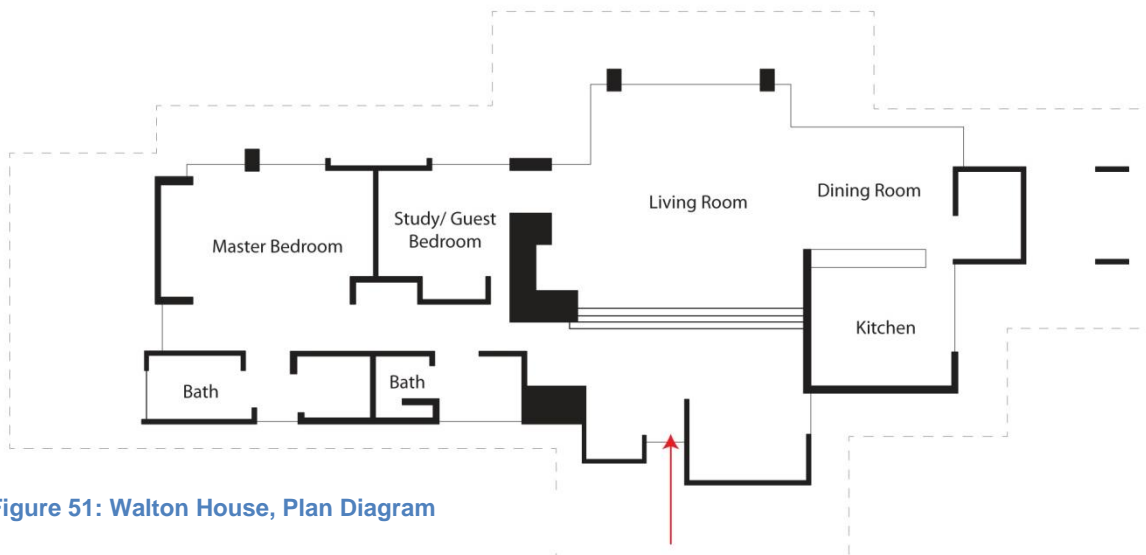


Figure 51: Walton House, Plan Diagram



Alice Walton House - Site Plan

Walton's house is shown in black.

To the north of the house is a guest house, which Jones designed for Walton in 1991.

The building complex to the south contains Walton's barns.

The street dead-ends at the barns, ensuring no traffic passing by Walton's house.

Figure 52: Site Plan, Alice Walton House

Susan Lawrence Dana's house was very frontal and addressed the street with a monumental facade. Alice Walton's house takes the opposite approach, turning its back on the street and focusing its attention on the countryside beyond. Jones used many of his common tactics in order to achieve inconspicuousness for this relatively large house. First, the placement of the house is on a slight slope, which slopes down away from the road. The side of the house facing the street, and the carport area, is very low to the ground. As one moves farther away from the street, the house opens up to the landscape. Another tactic Jones used was to place all of the service spaces of the house – bathrooms, mechanical rooms, and laundry room – on the side of the house facing the street. These rooms traditionally do not have windows or openings to the exterior. The result is a relatively closed-off facade, and does not allow views inside. On the contrary, the southeast façade of the house is very open and transparent,

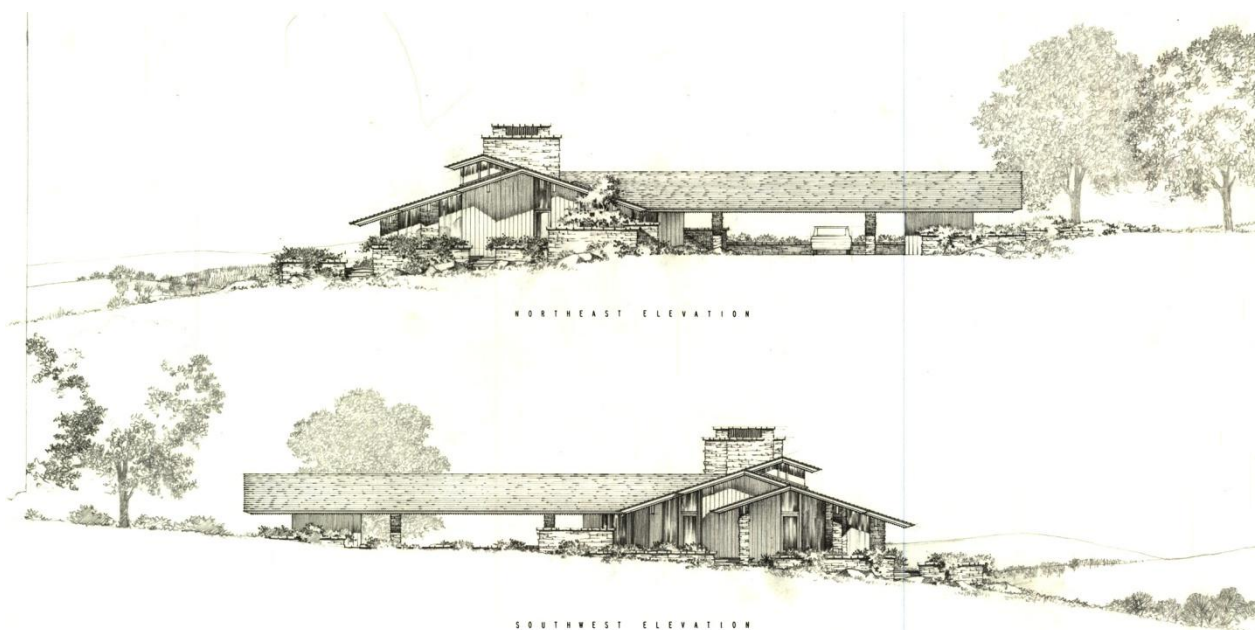


Figure 53: Walton House, Northeast and Southwest Elevations, Fay Jones

allowing spectacular views from the bedrooms, living room and dining room. The final strategy Jones used to make the house discreet is the orientation of the driveway. Although the house is right next to the road, one must drive past before turning into the property. This detail was added very late in the design process; the direction of entry did not show up until the

construction-drawing phase. This detail makes the house not easily seen, and added trees and vegetation further screen the house from the road.

Upon entering the house under the car shelter, a visitor would have a view all the way through the house and out the large windows in the living area. The bar scheme Jones used produced a very long, but shallow house. The shallowness of the house generates a transparency from one side to the other. Although much larger than Goetsch-Winckler House III, a level of informality is still present. Although there are distinct spaces, or rooms, in the house, it is hard to delineate a clear boundary for each. The spaces seem to merge into one another, and the transparency from space to space promotes that feeling. Rather than being closed off from the public, the kitchen is visible from the dining room, and from the kitchen one can see through the dining space and out the glass wall towards the southeast. The low ceilings of the house also give it a more relaxed, informal feeling.



Figure 54: Walton House, Interior Photograph, living space



Figure 55: Walton House, Interior Photograph, living space looking towards entry

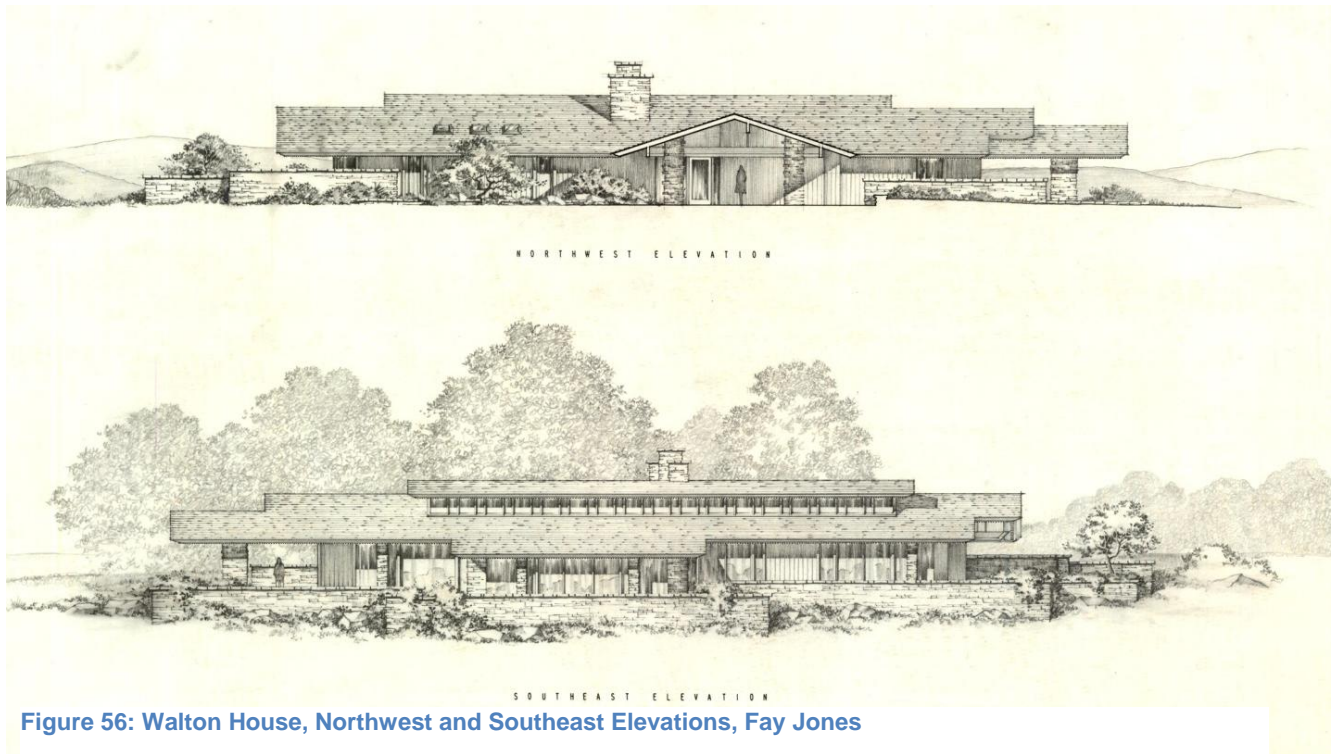


Figure 56: Walton House, Northwest and Southeast Elevations, Fay Jones

The materials Jones used for Walton's house are similar to what he often used for residential projects: local wood and flagstone. These materials contribute to the house feeling "of the place" rather than on it. The arrangement and layout of the house is somewhat similar to the primary bar of Sam and Helen Walton's House. Without a large family, Alice of course would have no need for the extra "game room" space of the secondary bar element. Also, Sam and Helen Walton's House needed more bedrooms, and there was a hierarchy in those bedrooms: the master bedroom was not connected to the other rooms, but located at the opposite end of the house beside the kitchen. Alice's house contained only one bedroom, with a study that could double as a guest room. Both of these spaces were on the northeast end of the house, with the entire southwest end devoted to more public functions – the dining room, living room, kitchen and outdoor terraces.

Walton spent a year recovering from her extensive leg injuries at her family's farm in

Kingston, Oklahoma. Once she was healed, she moved back to Arkansas into her new Fay Jones home. While living there she started her own investment company in Fayetteville and became involved in the Northwest Arkansas Council. Walton lived in her house in Lowell for many years, but eventually moved to Texas in 1998.

When speaking of her father Alice has said, "I learned about determination from him. Dad could see things simply. He knew how to take risks. I'd like to think that I have some of that."⁹² Through her determination and financial privilege Alice has established herself as a cultural force. She has commissioned two significant works of modern architecture and has put together a substantial collection of American art. Walton has had a presence in the public sphere, politically and professionally, and has worked to form her identity through these outlets. Consequently, her house is significant in the discussion about gender and architecture and about the role of the patron.

¹ Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville

² Lin Wright, "Wright Said: Go Home and Design; World's Hearing of Arkansan Who Did," in Arkansas Gazette, 8A. Friday January 1, 1960.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ David McKee, who worked with Jones for 16 years, shared this story with me during an interview on February 22, 2013.

⁵ Fay Jones, Fayetteville, to Frank Lloyd Wright, Taliesin, April 1, 1951. Fay Jones Special Collection (MC 1373), Series I, Subseries 3, Box 2, File 1. Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville.

Correspondence between Jones and Taliesin is from the Fay Jones Special Collection in the University of Arkansas Library Archives. Unless otherwise noted, all letters to and from Jones cited below are from the Jones Special Collection.

⁶ Eugene Masselink (Wright's secretary), Taliesin, to Fay Jones, Fayetteville, 1951.

⁷ Fay Jones, Fayetteville, to Frank Lloyd Wright, Taliesin, February 28, 1954.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ David McKee, Interview, February 22, 2013.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ Fay Jones, Fayetteville, to Eugene Masselink, Taliesin, June 18, 1958.

¹² Fay Jones, Lecture Notes, Core Lecture Material. Fay Jones Special Collections (MC 1373), Series IV, Subseries 2, Box 1, File 2. Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville.

Unless otherwise noted, all lectures, speeches and notes cited below are from the Fay Jones Special Collection.

¹³ Charles Moore, according to Fay Jones, Lecture Notes, "After Frank Lloyd Wright" presented at the "Borrowings and Lendings Conference", April 28 – May 1, 1977. Fay Jones Special Collections (MC 1373), Series IV, Subseries 2, Box 1, File 5. Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville.

¹⁴ Jones, Lecture Notes, "After Frank Lloyd Wright," 1977.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Fay Jones, Writing, Fragments. Fay Jones Special Collections (MC 1373), Series IV, Subseries 2, Box 1, File 4. Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville.

¹⁷ Fay Jones, Lecture Notes, "Teaching about Learning from Frank Lloyd Wright" presented at the Society of Architectural Historians Conference, 1983.

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- ¹⁸ Fay Jones, AIA Gold Medal Acceptance Speech, presented at the AIA National Convention, May 19, 1990.
- ¹⁹ Jones, Lecture Notes, "After Frank Lloyd Wright," 1977. . Fay Jones Special Collections (MC 1373), Series IV, Subseries 2, Box 1, File 22. Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville.
- ²⁰ Fay Jones, "Looking into Houses", writing notes. Jones Special Collections (MC 1373), Series IV, Subseries 2, Box 1, File 4. Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville.
- ²¹ Wright, *An Autobiography*, 145.
- ²² Jones, Lecture Notes, "After Frank Lloyd Wright," 1977.
- ²³ *Ibid.*
- ²⁴ Wright, *An Autobiography*, 145.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*, 148.
- ²⁶ Jones, "Looking Into Houses".
- ²⁷ Jones, Lecture Notes, "After Frank Lloyd Wright," 1977.
- ²⁸ Wright, *An Autobiography*, 141.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, 142.
- ³¹ John Sergeant, *Frank Lloyd Wright's Usonian Houses*, 164.
- ³² Lin Wright, "Wright Said: Go Home and Design."
- ³³ David McKee, Interview, February 22, 2013.
- ³⁴ Jones, "Looking Into Houses".
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*
- ³⁶ Fay Jones, in "Living In Arkansas; Fay Jones Finds Wright Way to Build" by Ruth R. Malone in the Arkansas Gazette, May 4, 1958.
- ³⁷ Fay Jones, Lecture Notes, "A House of the Ozarks", June 1958. . Fay Jones Special Collections (MC 1373), Series IV, Subseries 1, Box 1, File 17. Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville.
- ³⁸ Jones, Lecture Notes, Core Lecture Material.
- ³⁹ Jones, AIA Gold Medal Acceptance Speech
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid.*
- ⁴¹ Tepfer, "From Frank Lloyd Wright to E. Fay Jones," 39.
- ⁴² *Ibid.*
- ⁴³ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁴ Alma Goetsch, East Lansing, to Fay Jones, Fayetteville, January 24, 1966. Fay Jones Special Collections (MC 1373), Series II, Subseries 1, Box 21, File 11. Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville. Correspondence between Jones and Alma Goetsch and Kathrine Winckler, East Lansing, is from the Fay Jones Special Collection in the University of Arkansas Library Archives. Unless otherwise noted, all letters to and from Jones cited below are from the Jones Special Collection.
- ⁴⁵ Jones shared this thought with Diane Tepfer during an interview 25 years after the construction of the house. *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁶ Tepfer, "From Frank Lloyd Wright to E. Fay Jones," 39.
- ⁴⁷ Alma Goetsch, East Lansing, to Fay Jones, Fayetteville, July 1, 1965.
- ⁴⁸ Alma Goetsch, East Lansing, to Fay Jones, Fayetteville, September 10, 1965.
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*
- ⁵⁰ Alma Goetsch made this statement in regards to an exhibition of her work in 1962. News release, Department of Information Services, Michigan State University, November 11, 1962. Diane Tepfer, "From Frank Lloyd Wright to E. Fay Jones," 30.
- ⁵¹ Alma Goetsch and Kathrine Winckler, East Lansing, to Fay Jones, Fayetteville, September 10, 1965.
- ⁵² *Ibid.*
- ⁵³ *Ibid.*
- ⁵⁴ Fay Jones, Fayetteville, to Alma Goetsch and Kathrine Winckler, East Lansing, 1966.
- ⁵⁵ Jones, Writings, Fragments, August 1980.
- ⁵⁶ Tepfer, "From Frank Lloyd Wright to E. Fay Jones," 39.
- ⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 42.
- ⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 40.
- ⁵⁹ *Ibid.*
- ⁶⁰ *Ibid.*
- ⁶¹ *Ibid.*
- ⁶² *Ibid.*, 42.
- ⁶³ Kathrine Winckler, East Lansing, to Frank Lloyd Wright, Taliesin
- ⁶⁴ Mary Sue Kantz Preston, Gallery Bulletin, Kresge Art Gallery, February 7-25, 1979. University Archives and Historical Collections (Wells Hall 249/C), UA 2688, Box 4, Folder 25. Michigan State University, East Lansing.
- ⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

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- ⁶⁶ Alma Goetsch and Kathrine Winckler, East Lansing, to Frank Lloyd Wright, April 11, 1949.
- ⁶⁷ Tepfer," From Frank Lloyd Wright to E. Fay Jones," 43.
- ⁶⁸ Alice Walton, "Onward and Upward with the Arts: Alice's Wonderland", by Rebecca Mead, in 'The New Yorker', June 27, 2011.
- ⁶⁹ Vance H. Trimble, *Sam Walton: The Inside Story of America's Richest Man*, 183.
- ⁷⁰ Trimble, *Sam Walton*, 184.
- ⁷¹ *Ibid.*
- ⁷² Sam Walton, *Made In America*, 74.
- ⁷³ Bill Clinton, XNA Dedication, 1998. Cited by Andy Serwer in "The Waltons/Inside America's Richest Family", *Fortune*, November 15, 2004.
- ⁷⁴ In 2004, Alice Walton was named the "Richest Woman in America".
- ⁷⁵ Alice Walton. Cited by Andy Serwer in "The Waltons/Inside America's Richest Family", *Fortune*, November 15, 2004.
- ⁷⁶ Walton, *Made In America*, 75.
- ⁷⁷ Trimble, *Sam Walton*, 86.
- ⁷⁸ David McKee, Interview, February 22, 2013.
- ⁷⁹ *Ibid.*
- ⁸⁰ Fay Jones, cited by Bob Ortega, In *Sam Walton We Trust: The Untold Story of Sam Walton and Wal-Mart, the World's Most Powerful Retailer*.
- ⁸¹ *Ibid.*
- ⁸² Trimble, *Sam Walton*, 173.
- ⁸³ Office Notes, Walton, Sam and Helen, Res. 2 (Rebuilt Residence, 1973). Fay Jones Special Collections (MC 1373), Series II, Subseries 1, Box 48, File 2. Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville.
- ⁸⁴ Walton, *Made In America*, 8.
- ⁸⁵ Trimble, *Sam Walton*, 86.
- ⁸⁶ *Ibid.*
- ⁸⁷ Jones used the Walton House as an example of building and site relationship at the Borrowings and Lendings conference, and many other lectures. Fay Jones, "After Frank Lloyd Wright" Lecture Notes, 1977.
- ⁸⁸ *Architectural Digest*, 1978, v. 35: Oct-Dec. 76-83.
- ⁸⁹ Vance H. Trimble, *Sam Walton*, 86.
- ⁹⁰ Walton, *Made In America*, 76.
- ⁹¹ David McKee, Interview, February 22, 2013.
- ⁹² Alice Walton. Cited by Andy Serwer in "The Waltons/Inside America's Richest Family", *Fortune*, November 15, 2004.

CONCLUSION

Fay Jones and Frank Lloyd Wright each had a particular ideology about housing and the home. Both architects intensely studied the single-family house throughout their careers and devoted considerable time and effort to the design of a new way of living. Jones and Wright looked past cultural assumptions of domesticity and were innovative in their approach to residential design. Both architects subscribed to feminist ideas regarding the redefinition of gender roles and boundaries and spent their careers working for a complete alteration of the home, including construction techniques, materials and interior spaces, as is evident in their work. This rethinking of the house was a fundamental part of the modern architectural movement. The general characteristics of architectural modernity include the simplicity and clarity of form, the open plan and concept of interlocking, universal space. Architectural modernism was tied to a much larger cultural movement taking place, stemming from industrialization, that involved changes in gender roles, family structure, etc.

Wright was influenced by the women in his life – family, clients, lovers – and Jones was influenced by Wright. The progressive ideas that Wright developed regarding single family housing were passed on to Jones, and Wright's study of the house was continued and transformed by Jones. Jones felt very passionately about the design of single-family houses, as shown in his writing:

A house can be constructed; a home should be created. A home fulfills many inner desires of the people who occupy it. Every person is different. This fact makes it imperative that the designing of the home begin with a generating idea based on the understanding of the needs of the people who live in it. Every part of such a home should relate to that idea. If this is faithfully accomplished, the result is more than the sum of so many pieces. The dwelling will stand alone. It will be a naturally beautiful expression of an idea.¹

Jones understood the difference between a house and a home. As an architect, he designed houses. By designing to the best of his ability and by getting to know his clients on a personal level and designing for their lifestyle, he facilitated the creation of a home. Jones

understood that every client was different; he was able to figure out how to adjust and to work with each client and design a house that would fit that person's particular lifestyle. This understanding allowed Jones to design houses perfectly suited for his clients, regardless of their gender, family type or lifestyle.

The houses discussed in this thesis have many common features although they are unique in terms of budget, scale, clients' backgrounds and time period of construction. One common theme in houses designed for women clients is an expansion of the definition of the house that includes additional spaces for various work or leisure activities. All of the clients discussed here included spaces in their program that may not have been traditionally found in a residence. For Susan Lawrence Dana, this difference comes in the form of spaces for the display of art, as well as very large entertainment spaces. Similarly, Alice Walton is also known to display very expensive works of art on the walls of her home. Walton also built her house on a large plot of land in the country, which would allow her enough space for her hobby of raising horses. Goetsch and Winckler's houses contain work areas (or studios), more strictly defined in the Fay Jones house, which gave them space for their artistic endeavors. By commissioning well-designed residential and work spaces that fulfilled each client's needs and wants, these women were creating a space in which their lifestyle was both supported and sustained. For the women clients discussed in this paper, especially Dana, Goetsch and Winckler, living their life as single women without children placed them outside of the cultural norm. Therefore, the houses they commissioned for themselves represented a counter to the cultural standards of their time and gave the women a place in which their decision not to marry was validated.

With the redefinition of the spaces that make up a house comes a shift of the balance between public and private space. Regarding Susan Lawrence Dana's house, the private spaces are all lifted up above the main level. The result leaves the majority of the ground level available for public functions, such as entertaining, dinner parties and meetings. For Dana, the public function of the house was her principal concern, a fact evident in Frank Lloyd Wright's

design. The Goetsch-Winckler houses also adjusted the proportion of public and private spaces, but in a different way. In each Goetsch-Winckler House and the Alice Walton House, the public and private spaces have a less formal relationship, seeming to flow seamlessly from one to the other. Susan Dana, Alma Goetsch, Kathrine Winckler and Alice Walton were all known to entertain others in their home, but there are differences in the way they wished to do so. While Dana desired a very formal, monumental interior space, Winckler, Goetsch and Walton preferred a more casual interior for smaller get-togethers. For these women, the formality of the house was reduced.

Another important theme in these houses built for women is the importance of representation and spectacle. In order to understand these houses in a larger context, one must analyze them with a bifocal lens that looks separately and collectively at the interior and exterior expression of the houses. Each house is a representation, stylistically and spatially, of its occupants. On the interior, gender specific sensibilities foster a rethinking of the different spaces and their relationship to each other. It is not necessarily about making a “gendered” space; in a way these spaces could even be considered “degendered.” The interiors discussed in this paper are specifically suited for the clients’ lifestyles rather than being determined by the cultural construction of gender roles and norms. These are interior spaces designed for the people that live in them.

The exterior expression of these houses is different from the interior space. While the interior space is about the relationship between the inhabitants and their way of living, the exterior is about the relationship between the house and the outside world. Each woman had something different that she wanted her house to say about her. In addition to functioning as the spatial barrier between the public and private realm, the façade of each house is an expression of the client’s identity, social status and economic power. For example, Susan Lawrence Dana had the rare opportunity for a woman of her time to create an independent identity for herself. In the early nineteenth hundreds, women were expected to be married and have children and were

therefore identified by their relationship with others – mother, wife, or daughter. Unfortunate circumstances that left Susan childless, widowed and fatherless put her in the unique position to gain an independent identity and financial power. After her father's death Susan acted swiftly to secure the funds from the inheritance, aware of the new social standing the money would allow her to attain for herself. Because there were not many options for women at this time, she turned to the activity of entertaining to allow her to climb the social ladder. The monumental quality of her interior space suggests a “new level of formality and importance for the activities of the women who lived in them.”² Dana's house is the culmination of all of these circumstances and desires. The monumental expression of Susan Dana's House is a symbol of her economic power, and it is clear that she wanted to use the house to make a statement about herself.

Although Alice Walton had similar means and opportunity available to her as Susan Lawrence Dana, as seen in Chapter 3 the outward expression of her house is very different. Built in the 1980's, it must be considered in a very different context from the Susan Lawrence Dana House. Although both houses focus attention on questions of gender, cultural assumptions and architectural conventions in residential design, they do so in a different way and in different time periods. The reason for the differences between Dana's and Walton's approaches to outward expression very likely is the result of the time period in which each house was constructed. In the 1980's, more women were work out outside of the home; roughly fifty-one percent of women held a paid position in 1980 compared to only twenty-one percent in 1900 (see Table 1, 86). Although men still had more power than women, the dichotomy of gender roles and the separation of labor had dramatically declined. Alice was a business-woman, working in finances and even starting her own company. Because other routes were available to her in which she could create an identity for herself, she was able to express herself outside the home.

Alma Goetsch and Kathrine Winckler came from very different means and backgrounds than did Dana and Walton. Both Alma and Kathrine were known to live simply, and they

appreciated good design when they saw it. In the same way that the interiors of their houses were very informal, the exterior projection was also informal and inconspicuous. These houses were not about expressing the women's social status, but had a deeper message about the power of freeing oneself from cultural assumptions. These women chose to go against the traditional norms and not to marry. By choosing to live together they made an informed economical decision that allowed them the opportunity to construct the house that they desired. Although the idea of commissioning an architect-designed home is out of reach for most people in the middle class, these women were fearless and achieved a major feat, not only once, but twice. The exterior expression of their houses represents a house for every person, yet it is still unique to them.

The common themes to the four houses link them in unexpected ways. To better understand the commonalities and differences presented by the houses above, especially the theme of representation and spectacle, it is helpful to situate the houses on a timeline. Throughout the twentieth century in America there was a gradual 'breaking down' of the idea of separate spheres. This process had already begun in 1902 during the construction of the Dana House, albeit in small increments, but was not so obvious until the post-World War II period. Further, it was not cemented as a normalized condition for women to work outside of the home until the feminist efforts of the 1960's and 1970's. Situating the four houses on this timeline – Dana House: 1902, Goetsch-Winckler I: 1940, Goetsch-Winckler III: 1965, and Alice Walton House: 1982 – the slow but continuous break down of the boundaries that shaped the women's sphere can be brought to light.

With industrialization and other economic changes in the eighteen hundreds, men began leaving the home for work, and the idea of separate spheres was conceived. Women became confined to the private space of the home, and most were not involved in paid labor: less than ten percent of women worked outside of the home for pay in the year 1860 (see Table 1, 86). The concept of separate spheres assigned women strictly to the private realm of the house,

U.S. Women and Work, 1820–2000

Year	Percentage of Women in Paid Employment	Percentage of Paid Workers Who Are Women
1820	6.2	7.3
1830	6.4	7.4
1840	8.4	9.6
1850	10.1	10.8
1860	9.7	10.2
1870	13.7	14.8
1880	14.7	15.2
1890	18.2	17.0
1900	21.2	18.1
1910	24.8	20.0
1920	23.9	20.4
1930	24.4	21.9
1940	25.4	24.6
1950	29.1	27.8
1960	34.8	32.3
1970	43.3	38.0
1980	51.5	42.6
1990	57.4	45.2
2000	60.2	46.5

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1970* (Washington: GPO, 1975); *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 2002* (Washington: GPO, 2002).

Table 1: U.S. Women and Work, 1920 - 2000

while men could move between the private house and the public sphere of work and politics.

In the eighteenth century the idea of a parlor began to emerge in American households. A parlor is defined as “a room in a private dwelling for the entertainment of guests.”³ This room gave the homeowners the opportunity to invite a visitor in for entertainment or conversation, while shielding the rest of the working-rooms of the house (kitchen, bathrooms, sleeping rooms, laundry rooms, etc) from view. The entertainment function of the parlor defines it as a semi-public space. In the eighteenth and nineteenth century, the achievement of this extra room was a symbol of social status given only to those who could afford the luxury of an extra space in their house. The parlor was the mediating room between the separate spheres of private and public – it was the room in which the outside world encountered the private sphere of the

household, and vice-versa. The parlor allowed the public sphere to encroach upon the private. The strict delineation between the semi-public parlor and the private spaces of the rest of the house gave the parlor a formal character. The room was like a stage, in which all of the background spaces were hidden and covered. The invisible boundary between the separate spheres was made physical by the built boundary between the semi-public and private rooms in the house.

The parlor can be seen as one of the first steps in the breakdown of the separation between public and private spheres. While it was unacceptable for women to socialize in most locations outside of the home at this time, they were able to entertain and engage in conversation through the use of the parlor, while allowing the remainder of the house to remain private. This idea was already widely accepted when Susan Lawrence Dana began the construction of her house in 1902. The Dana house used the paradigm of the parlor, but pushed it to another level.

Susan Dana utilized the construction of her house as a vehicle to improve her social status. The design of her house redefines traditional boundaries between the private and public sphere by dedicating the majority of the space of the house to a semi-public function. While the traditional parlor only occupied one room of the house, Dana's entertainment space occupied the entire basement and ground floor level. Wright used the idea of the parlor, but expanded it in scale and function; Dana's house included a billiard room, bowling alley, extensive spaces to display art and a grand dining hall.

Susan Dana desired a public and political lifestyle. She understood that, at the turn of the century, in order for her to achieve such a lifestyle she must do so within the culturally accepted woman's sphere of the home. This is not a unique example of a woman using the space of her house to facilitate public functions: the Hollyhock House (1921, Los Angeles) by Frank Lloyd Wright follows a very similar idea. The client, Aline Barnsdale (1882-1946), wished to pour her wealth into a center for art and theater in California. The wealthy woman purchased

a full city block in Los Angeles, planning to construct a theater and a large residence for herself, as well as residences and apartments for her principal associates, visiting directors and actors, shops and extensive gardens.⁴ What these two women had in common was the desire and means to construct a cultural or entertainment center and the desire to have a public identity. In the early nineteenth hundreds, the only opportunity for women to facilitate this type of public program was through their domestic realm.

By 1940, with the construction of Goetsch-Winckler I, there had been some cultural changes regarding gender expectations and women in the workplace, although still only twenty-five percent of women took part in paid labor (see Table 1, 86). Both Alma Goetsch and Kathrine Winckler achieved a college degree and moved away from home as single women to work as professionals. Although they were still resisting the cultural tradition of becoming wives and mothers, their lifestyle was much more accepted in the 1930's than it would have been in the 1900's. Single, working women living together as roommates during this time would not have been uncommon – it was economical and practical. However taking the step to commission an architect-designed house together would have been a very unusual action. This decision was a confirmation, both to the women and to the public, that their living arrangement was not temporary, but a permanent lifestyle.

Goetsch and Winckler made it clear to both Wright and Jones that they enjoyed being able to entertain within their house. Without the means to create large spaces specifically for this semi-public function, Wright was innovative in his use of space to accomplish the women's request. As discussed in Chapter 2, Wright created an 'open' plan by redefining the characterization of a room. He dissolved the barriers within the house that traditionally separated each function into a specific space, creating box-like rooms. The result was a plan that did not seem restrained, that was a merging of the public, open spaces of the house. An example of this result is the "studio living room" which Wright designed in Goetsch-Winckler I. Wright's design moves also resulted in a less formal relationship between the private and semi-

public spaces. For example, the kitchen became more open. Traditionally, kitchens have been closed off from the dining and living space, but with a decrease in households that had maids and servants came an inclusion of this workspace with the rest of the house. The function of the parlor was to provide an entertainment space within the domestic realm that still hid all of the functional spaces of the house. Even in the Dana house, the kitchen is adjacent to but hidden from the dining area. The opening up of the kitchen is an explicit example of the women working against this traditional formality of spatial division. In the Arkansas Goetsch-Winckler House, built in 1965, the kitchen is one of the first spaces visible to visitors once they enter the house. The placement of the kitchen would allow one to both prepare a meal and socialize with visitors simultaneously. It is reasonable that women clients would push for the inclusion of this space within the rest of the house because traditionally they were the ones confined to the kitchen. This informal nature of the cooking and dining spaces, integrated with the remainder of the living spaces, creates a more open and spatially continuous interior and is another step in the breakdown of the separation of spheres.

By the time Alice Walton began the construction of her house in 1982, the efforts of the feminist movements had resulted in a further breakdown of the separation of labor; it was much more acceptable for Walton to choose to live her life as a single, working womanⁱ. She was involved in the family business, served on and led community councils and committees, and eventually started her own financial consulting firm; these activities promoted her identity within the public sphere. Dana, who wished to have a public identity but had to achieve one through the spaces of the private sphere, did not have these same opportunities. By the 1980's, Walton was free to lead a life outside of the constraints of the domestic realm. And in the 2000's, she commissioned a large scale public art museum. When Susan Dana, and also Aline Barnsdale,

ⁱ Alice was married twice while she lived in New Orleans. She wed her first husband, Laurence Eustisill, in 1974, divorcing him in 1978. Later that year she married Hall Morehead, but was divorced again shortly after.

wished to construct a cultural space to be used for the public display of art, they had to do so within the domestic realm. Alice Walton, however, was able to do so entirely in the public realm. This ability helps to explain the obvious differences in approaches to residential design in the Walton and Dana houses.

With industrialization came the conception of the idea of separate spheres. Women were confined to the private sphere of the home and were prohibited from taking part in public activities. The invention of the notion of the parlor allowed the public space to intrude into the private home. For women, the parlor was an appropriate space in which they could socialize, entertain, and engage in conversation. Eventually, privileged women with means and opportunity expanded on principles of the parlor and used the design of residential space to accommodate more public functions. Although it was still unacceptable for women to participate in politics or to socialize in many public spaces, it was acceptable for them to entertain within the realm of their home. With the intrusion of this public space into the private house came a breaking down of barriers for women in the public sphere. As time passed, it became more acceptable for women to have a presence outside of the home, enabling them to be involved in the workplace and in politics. As the cultural barriers between women and the private sphere dissolved, the physical barriers between the private and semi-public spaces of the house also began to fade. The house became less formally divided and the entertainment space was integrated with the other spaces of the house, much unlike the strict separation between the parlor and the workspaces. Further, as women gained more power and position in the public realm, they relied less on the space of their house to accomplish public functions. For example, rather than using the domestic space as an art gallery, Alice Walton commissioned an entirely separate building to fulfill this function, completely distinguishing it from her private space.

By taking into account the cultural and social changes that took place throughout the twentieth century and viewing the construction of these houses as a part of that timeline, the role that each woman played in the gradual breakdown of the separate-spheres ideology

becomes clear. Women with means, opportunity and determination used their houses to fulfill specific functions that negotiated the boundaries between public and private space. Each woman was pushing the envelope and working to break down traditional boundaries of separate spheres, but they were doing so within the restrictions of each time period. As cultural pressures and expectations evolved, women's dependence on the house as a social mediator lessened. The evolution of these cultural changes is observable in the houses discussed in this thesis.

The houses discussed above were built by male architects for women clients. The architects did enhance the women's view of their way of living through design, but they were also influenced by the women's view and way of life. Alice Friedman discusses the influence that Wright's women clients had on his approach to design:

It is clear that Wright's women clients played a formative role in shaping the new approach to domesticity that is arguably his most outstanding contribution to 20th-century architecture. [His women clients and acquaintances] not only provided him with opportunities and financial resources to build many of his most important and highly visible houses, but also served as active participants in the redefinitions of family life, education, religion, and domestic ritual that inspired and shaped these projects.⁵

The houses constructed through the collaboration of architect and woman client are a result of both the architect's progressive design ideas and the client's progressive lifestyle. It is also interesting that all of the women chosen for discussion in this paper were at least somewhat involved in the arts. Alice Walton and Susan Lawrence Dana were both wealthy heiresses who collected art and desired to facilitate the public display of art. Dana was educated in art and dance as a child; Walton liked to paint watercolors as a hobby, and had been doing so since she was young. Alma Goetsch and Kathrine Winckler were very committed to the arts, devoting their lives to its production and education. It is possible that the artistic knowledge that these clients possessed made them more appreciative and aware of quality architectural design. Their artistic interests might have led these women to commission modern architects in the first place.

Architectural ideas about housing and the home and cultural ideas about gender roles

and domesticity are directly related to each other. Architectural design responds to programmatic requirements and patterns of use, but also is a physical record of social values, ideology, identity and status. As cultural ideas change, architectural design responds. In the late nineteenth and twentieth century, waves of feminism and women's rights movements caused traditional views of men, women, family and relationships in America to change. At the same time, modernity brought about a shift in architectural thinking. It is important to consider the architects and clients in this thesis in their historical context. Modernity's principles of universal design were appropriated to fit the specific desires of each situation. Although each outcome is unique, all of the houses discussed above are similar in that they are all hybrid domestic types that stand out in twentieth-century architecture because the architects and clients were willing to experiment with the design.

The discoveries made through this research do not alter the legacy of Jones, but intensify it. As an architect Jones had a vision and a particular ideology about the single family house. This thesis proves that his vision was adaptable to different kinds of clientele and family types. Jones was able to both continue his study of the house and fulfill his client's expectations simultaneously. The clients considered in this thesis played a major role in the design of their houses. The nontraditional lifestyle of each was a catalyst for innovation for the architect. By choosing to live their lives as independent women and by making a place for themselves in the public sphere of society or the workplace, these clients pushed the envelope culturally and argued against the separation of spheres. The houses they commissioned are evidence of these values, and placed on a timeline they show the gradual changes in women's lives in American society. In this way, the houses are a physical recording of changing views on women, family, gender and the home in American culture throughout the twentieth century.

¹ Fay Jones, quoted in "Wright Said: 'Go Home and Design'; World's Hearing of Arkansan Who Did" by Lin Wright. In the Arkansas Gazette, January 1, 1960.

² Alice Friedman, *Woman and the Making of the Modern House*, 12.

³ Merriam-Webster Dictionary

⁴ For further information, see Alice Friedman, *Women and the Making of the Modern House*, 32-63.

⁵ Alice Friedman, "Girl Talk."

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- Figure 3: Title Page, *Love and Ethics (Chicago, 1912)*.** Alice Friedman, "Frank Lloyd Wright and Feminism: Mamah Borthwick's Letters to Ellen Key." *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 61 (2002): 140-151.
- Figure 4: Olgivanna Lloyd Wright, circa 1924.** Published in "The Fellowship" Friedland & Zellman, 2006, page 44. Acquired from the archives of the Chicago Sun Times. Restored by Douglas M. Steiner.
- Figure 5: Frank Lloyd Wright working with apprentices at Taliesin, 1945.** Constantino, Maria. *Frank Lloyd Wright Design*. New York: Barnes and Noble, 1995.
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- Figure 7: R.D. Lawrence's original villa, with walls of the new house going up around it.** Donald Hoffman, *Frank Lloyd Wright's Dana House*. Mineola: Dover Publications, Inc, 1996.
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- Figure 10: "Flower In The Crannied Wall," looking north into the hall.** Statue designed by Frank Lloyd Wright and Richard Bock. Photograph from Donald Hoffman, *Frank Lloyd Wright's Dana House*. Mineola: Dover Publications, Inc, 1996.
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- Figure 41: Goetsch-Winckler III, Exterior, showing the living room from the south, 1965.** This photo was taken close to the time of completion of the house. Photo: Al Drap
- Figure 42: Goetsch-Winckler III, Kathrine Winckler's suite from the living room, 1965.** This photo was taken close to the time of completion of the house. Photo: Al Drap
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