

“SHITTY ARCHITECTURE MEN”

On Wednesday April 11th, Dean Berke and Emily Abruzzo convened a town hall “in light of recent revelations about prominent architects and subsequent information about the general culture of architecture and architecture education” to discuss how to move forward as a community. Though some of the responses at the meeting were tempered or conciliatory, in its aftermath there has been an explosion of more direct, urgent conversations—both in personal exchanges and in organized meetings—calling for specific actions to be taken. We wanted to capture some of this tremendous energy for change by recording as many of these thoughts and calls for action as possible in this fold.

In an attempt to gather as many responses from as many members of the YSoA community as possible, we sent out a survey to students about the Shitty Architecture Men List and issues of sexual misconduct and bias at YSoA and in the field of architecture. We received 42 responses. We also reached out twice to the entire faculty and staff for their thoughts on the subject. We received one response. We printed as many answers as possible, selected to capture the spectrum of opinions expressed. The answers included in the fold represent only a fraction of

the total responses we received. We strongly encourage you to read the entirety of the responses at yalepaprika.com. In addition to the survey and one faculty response, we are printing a preliminary set of proposals from a group of first year students about specific steps students are taking to combat sexual misconduct and bias.

In editing this fold, we felt that it was important to not shy away from the difficult specificities of bias and sexual misconduct. Although we recognize that an anonymous survey can elicit strong language, we believe that a platform that allows for honesty and directness is needed at this moment. Also, in contrast to more traditional forums within the school, an anonymous platform provides a space for people to relate their emotions and personal experiences.

This bulletin is only a snapshot of the many conversations and actions that are moving forward in the school. So far the lack of faculty response has been discouraging. We hope you’ll join the conversation. Our work here is far from done.

Orli Hakanoglu
Jacqueline Hall
Matthew Wagstaffe

Below are the answers to a survey sent out to the entire YSoA student body. Students were given the option to answer anonymously or not.

What did you think of the town hall with Dean Berke and Emily Abruzzo about the Shitty Architecture Men List and systemic issues of sexual misconduct and bias in architecture?

I appreciated their candor but was disappointed by their apparent failure to understand their own power and ability to wield it toward positive, institutional change. Instead of being the leader at the head of the lecture hall with ideas and energy to maintain the momentum of the conversation, our dean heard us out, disagreed with some people’s feelings, and then left us to do the work of change ourselves.

The most resonant moment for me was the suggestion that Emily and Dean Berke are always a resource to talk to. While that may be true for overt forms of sexual misconduct and bias, it is extremely unrealistic for the moments of implicit biases that undermine one’s capabilities, knowledge, experience, opinion, etc. I’m not even considering the availability component, as both are practicing architects, commute from NYC, and have a plethora of other duties here.

I respect that the Dean acknowledged it and wanted to address the students about these issues.

I was happy they hosted it. I don’t think it replaces a student-run town hall, and I don’t think it was meant to, so students should have our own discussions also. But it means a lot that the administrators prioritize this enough to show up.

Bias and misconduct ultimately are still very personal issues and can be hard to express in a large lecture hall setting. [...]

Though I appreciate the administration addressing student concerns, I believe allowing unsubstantiated accusations to drag our industry through the mud is a mistake. [...]The integrity of our school and our program is not up for question and allowing people to grandstand in the context of filling silence during a town hall is inappropriate.

Disappointing number of faculty present.

[...] I also appreciate that the male students stepped back (whether consciously or not) making it a place where predominantly female students were heard [...]

[...] Rather than a will to provide new solutions and raise higher standards of conduct it appeared as a tentative measure to settle and bury the growing discontent.

How would you describe the school’s culture, particularly with regards to issues of sexual misconduct or bias?

The school has become slightly less biased under Dean Berke.

There is a strong bro culture that is complicit in a lot of problematic situations. Reviews are often dominated by loud men, and student voices are effectively banished. [...]

[...] I think the Dean is willing to hear out what we want and need and is willing to help change things. I think from the people she has invited to speak and culture she is cultivating at the school, we are moving in the right direction.

Old school, conventional; not necessarily based on gender but rather a sense of “showmanship”

which promotes characteristics of machoism, egotism, expertise and a performative, extroverted personality.

Good between students I think? Speaking from personal experience.

Just like the wide scope of transgressions on the list, this school reflects the full spectrum of sexual misconduct from subtle microaggressions to overt sexual misconduct. We are not separate from the problem; we are mired in it. [...]

How would you like to see the culture of YSoA change?

I want an administration that actively seeks student input on decisions that affect students, and does so in a regular, formalized, and publicized manner. I want students to spend more time engaging with one another (inside and outside of studio courses) about the real issues we face as students, architects, residents of New Haven, people... I want students to have time to do this.

[...] We need more diversity and representation in the faculty—women but also women of color.

I think all faculty who offer unpaid “internships” for GRADUATE STUDENTS should be penalised! I’m looking at you Eisenman, MFG and Joel Sanders!! How dare you?! How on earth can you parade around telling us to value ourselves and our education and place in this profession when YOU are the ones advocating for that sort of devaluation! [...]

I think there really needs to be a system in place to field concerns and deal with the rampant mental health problems that

this school CAUSES. This is not Marilyn’s job and it’s ridiculous to force it on her.

[...] The people who handle complaints or feedback should have no interest in covering up alleged misconduct, they should be an independent body or a body that equally represents the administration, the faculty and the students. [...]

[...] The administration needs to take a firm public verbal stance on what behaviors they will not stand for, reiterating this stance to students and professors alike so it becomes ingrained. This statement needs to be verbalized and woven into the school’s culture; it needs to be excavated from wherever it lies cryptically embedded in the school Bulletin [...]

I’d like faculty to undergo training about how to prevent, discuss, and talk about implicit and explicit bias, as it relates to gender, race, class, identity, and beyond.

What do you think of the Shitty Architecture Men list?

Seems like a combination of legitimate grievances and some petty complaints, but generally is an outgrowth of an outmoded culture that silences and buries complaints to avoid change and protect those in power. I think if we had a better response and system in place to deal with these issues we wouldn’t need to make such a list.

Libel. I absolutely believe that some of the men on the list behaved inappropriately, maybe in the ways described. However, as it stands, an online sheet circulated through dozens of offices and school with free editing can not be taken as truth.

It is rather Yale-centric and the fact that the administration took so long to address the matter is concerning. [...]

[...] On the one hand it’s incredible that people have the opportunity to voice experiences that are pretty much impossible to bring to light without the protection of anonymity. On the other hand, an anonymous, crowd-sourced list just can’t be treated as fact. I also think it’s really complicated, and potentially unfair, to put serial sexual harassers on the same list as people who have “condoned sexism”—the whole architectural community has condoned sexism! [...]

[...] I found it pretty difficult to see YSoA names on there, and am still struggling to accept that these people are at our school. [...]

[...] Personally I was quite shocked to see that someone that had harassed me was on the list and was reported to have harassed several other women. In a way I felt validated. I felt entitled to have felt fear and disgust when the incident happened. I am mad that no sanction has been taken against that man and that he is still free to harass other women after me and certainly will. I think this list is useful to identify recidivist predator behaviour. [...]

How would you like the administration and faculty to respond to the SAM list and systemic issues of sexual misconduct and bias in architecture?

The administration MUST hire a third party person to deal with diversity and inclusion measures; NOT just a title IX coordinator. Many of the issues under this broad umbrella term

of “sexual misconduct and bias” fall outside of the scope of Title IX and, as such, go unreported and unresolved.

I would really like to see the administration and faculty look at the SAM list with the nuance it deserves. Dean Berke and Emily’s “disappointment” in the list was frustrating. [...] The list’s imperfections are a mirror reflection of the imperfections of “official channels.” The need for anonymity must be taken seriously. We live in a world where people who come forward with allegations of sexual misconduct are shamed, scrutinized, and driven from their fields. Only very recently has this started to change, but even when people are taken seriously, the emotional labor required to report publicly is enormous and people’s very intimate personal lives are made public.

I would rather they didn’t.

Please don’t write it off. Voices are trying to be heard.

A public statement (to the world) acknowledging the existence of many allegations, that Yale is implicated in this (both through allegations made with Yale-affiliated persons and because it is a prominent institution within the discipline), and what it is going to do in response would be a start.

I think that by bringing this discussion to the forefront of our school’s many ongoing conversations, part of the list’s job has already been done.

I think the faculty and students mentioned on that list that are at the school should be investigated and sanctions should be taken if the allegations are verified. A discussion between students and the faculty—all the

faculty, not only the few that think this is an important issue—should be organised to discuss how to move forward and bring the standard of conduct at the school to a much higher level.

How do you think the student body could respond to the SAM list and issues of sexual misconduct and bias in architecture?

Read the list, completely and critically. Take that conversation out of google docs and into the studio and classroom. Never hesitate to call out a professor for inappropriate behavior or to help/defend a classmate. This goes especially for white/cis/male students.

Do not work for or with these people regardless of how reputable the name is.

I think it is the students' responsibility to bring awareness to the issue. The only way to break bad habits is to call attention to them. Perhaps the students should draft an ethical code or a code of conduct and ask that the student body and the faculty all sign it?

I think the student body should institute a stronger and more organised structure with student delegates whose roles are clearly established so they can be involved and engaged in administrative meetings, discussions and decisions in a much more effective way than students are currently. There is no force pushing the administration to make any decisions or offer proactive solutions to the issue of sexual misconduct if they cannot be held accountable by another body.

Act with heightened awareness of our own actions and try to engage each other in dialogue about what it is that creates a constructive, positive environment for everyone at our school. I think it's on us to create a culture of positive norms that we foster through discussion and frank engagement with one another. We should enable each other to speak and be attentive listeners. I don't think the solution to these problems can come completely from the top down; we need to evolve the culture and support the idea that sexual misconduct, from students and faculty alike, is not acceptable.

Do you feel comfortable talking to members of the faculty and staff about your experiences with sexual misconduct or bias?

No: 47. % Yes: 21.1%

Other:

Depends on the person and issue but generally not.

Depends on the faculty member.

Maybe only someone like Marilyn Weiss, if it ever happened to me.

Sometimes. I mean after the fact it's easier, but some of the biggest perpetrators have been at this school the longest and have the highest positions.

I would feel comfortable talking to faculty about an issue that I think requires disciplinary or legal action. For other issues I would prefer an electronic system like Callisto.

If no, please explain. What do you think is the best mechanism for reporting?

A student is just not going to go to the dean with a complaint of sexual misconduct, no matter how welcoming or encouraging they are. We want to be recognized for our achievements, not first known by the dean because of a bad experience someone else forced upon us. I think having a designated person to go

to, with zero connections to academic experience in the school, would be a good start.

A gender parity mission of some sort that can guide and advise students who experience sexual misconduct over and above Title IX. Someone who can guide us on the legalities involved if we file a formal complaint. The fear of being threatened, intimidated or humiliated often increases after filing a complaint as more often than not these cases are closed because of "lack of evidence."

[...] I think there should be a question in our end of the semester evaluations that specifically addresses experiences with sexual misconduct and bias. The answer to this question should remain anonymous and can only be read by the Dean or, potentially, a new admin member whose job it is to address these kinds of issues.

Automated system or app.

Through a fellow student first.

Q: Do you have a personal experience with harassment, assault, or discrimination that you'd like to share?

[...] There was a faculty member who gave an unprompted rant on why diversity and inclusion politics have no place in architectural education, which was super uncomfortable.

Minor incidents at YSOA but more serious breaches in the past when a work colleague touched me inappropriately at the office Christmas Party [...]

A symposium guest from another institution was hitting on me in a way that made me feel uncomfortable.

Too many to count. I was told that because I went to school in the Middle East or "the middle of nowhere" I was not good enough in comparison to my Ivy league classmates. I was told that I come from a culture of peasants and slavery, "nothing good comes out of the Middle East anyways."

[...] Mansplaining ... All. The. Time! [...]

I had experienced harassment in my undergraduate institute when I was a TA for a senior professor. I filed a formal complaint and then it turned out this issue was faced by multiple students for years but nobody spoke of it openly.

I have a few stories regarding sexist comments towards me from a faculty member. As he is still part of the faculty and we continue to work together, it feels too compromising to write about it here in the current climate. My hesitation illustrates how hard it is to talk openly about these issues. [...]

[...] Routine microaggressions from well-intentioned but clueless male peers. Unwanted comments about my appearance, people not respecting my personal space, interrupting me or talking over me, people only addressing the men when I'm in a group, people assuming I can't do basic tasks. (i.e. woodshop. I know how to use the damn table saw, you don't need testosterone to operate one.)

Not that I'd like to share.

I was harassed by another student at a school party. [...] Since that day I have been carefully avoiding that student.

What do I expect of the leaders in my community who have been implicated by the SAM list? Whether or not the allegations are true, interactions are affected by their presence on the list.

I think that blatant offenders should step down and/or be fired. I think all offenders should address that they're on the list and use that as a way to take a step back and question if how they operate in the world is acceptable. They also may be doing things subconsciously, in which case it could be used as a learning tool.

The claims need to be verified but as classmates and colleagues we also have rights to access some of that information.

We need to stop protecting these people. However, we should not tarnish their reputation without taking a moment to think about our position first.

I hope they know they are on a list and are shaking in their boots. We all know what you have done.

I expect anyone implicated by the SAM list to address it, and explain themselves.

I expect them to at the very least not pretend like it doesn't exist.

[...] I think it is important that they acknowledge why they are on the list, take the steps necessary to apologize to whomever was affected by the interaction, and then make real changes in how they speak to people/interact with people, etc. Many of the people on the list show patterns in their behavior that clearly need to change—even if this behavior is a pattern, it is not okay to continue treating people in such a way that results in their name being on the SAM list.

Q: Do you feel that Title IX is an adequate system to address issues of sexual misconduct at the school?

No: 7 Yes: 2

Other:

[...] Title IX feels like something of a last resort, and there should be a more accessible first recourse that people can access.

Yes, but too much of a delayed process.

No. It systematically fails victims of assault, harassment, and misconduct.

No. There needs to be a secondary group that addresses biases deemed less severe by policy, but are equally important.

Of course not! It tackles the serious issues of rape and physical assault but doesn't come close to dealing with the everyday aggressions women and POC have to deal with every single day! [...]

How do think the conversation should continue?

Student town halls are always helpful.

Through workshops, discussions, and continuing education for students and faculty.

Working groups, implementation of Callisto, firm and professor vetting

Students have come up with a list of tactics, some of which involve the administration. The administration should make a public statement addressing their cooperation on these issues, timelines, etc. They should do it quickly and openly, rather than letting it fade into another opaque system of working groups and private meetings.

[...] Part of what was missing in the town hall discussion was what men have to do in order to be a part of this process. It should not be left entirely up to female students to expend

physical/emotional labor to get the school to do something or confront its problems. Men can begin by addressing themselves on this issue.

CHANGE IT. JUST CHANGE IT COMPLETELY.

Hopefully and patiently. It is important for us to remind ourselves that systematic issues do not change overnight, but to emphasize that no system is permanent. If we can acknowledge the ability we have to change our personal biases and bad habits that fuel a culture of discrimination, and work hard to make these personal corrections, culture will follow suit.

More town halls, more student writing, more student conversations, less timidity among the student body in talking about difficult issues. I want to stress that the administration needs take responsibility and accept that radical cultural restructuring needs to take place [...]

Anything else?

All professors who do not pay interns should be required to start paying interns or should be fired.

Dear Men, We understand you are a feminist and that you respect women and don't mean to offend or hurt us, BUT you do and sometimes you don't realize you are doing it. We may appear to snap and shout but let me let you in on a secret. We as women have to deal with little mini dismissals every day and not only do we have to pick ourselves back up after everyone of these interactions, we also have to play the internal game of "do I say something?" Now, if we decide yes I do have enough energy to say something, it goes to my next favorite game, "how do I tell him?" Then women have the delightful choice of either politely and thoroughly explaining why we didn't like that touch on our backs or those funny but kinda sorta undermining jokes, or the red hot shouty short-but-sweet last straw gut reaction. Now, neither are pleasant for you, but understand that these reactions are not pleasant for us either. Hand holding wasn't in any manual I have read on how to be a woman. Please understand that it's not really just about you and our little interaction with you. Often by that point it's become one of hundreds of interactions that have piled up to the point where we are exhausted and hurt and sad and just need an outlet. So pardon the patronising talk or the shouty jerk reaction. Just know it's not personal but also, clean up your act ... stop stroking my back!

Just a plea to exercise journalistic integrity in how Paprika! asks questions and how it selects responses for publishing.

Although we must condemn any sexual misconduct and work towards a better community environment, and although we must acknowledge the importance of equality and a sense of belonging for everyone, I observe that these recent events have created some kind of "division" between genders and a sense of immaturity in being oversensitive. Let's be careful not to forget there are good men out there too and recognize sexism can go BOTH ways.

There are certain faculty members and administrators who are known for their inappropriate remarks. Many say that it's too difficult for them to change, or that they are too old to change, or that they are too valuable to the school so we need to let it slide. I don't think that these are excuses for not addressing microaggressions. If a faculty member is teaching advanced, graduate-level content, then

they must also be able to learn to be respectful, empathetic constituents in our community.

This response is excerpted from a longer response which can be found in its entirety at yalepaprika.com

SAM or Shitty Architecture Men: While I totally support the immediate response and reporting of inappropriate behavior, I am a little wary of anonymous postings such as this. A friend once likened unsigned student evaluations to drive by shootings and the method of generating the SAM list may be subject to the same critique. I would rather see things like that addressed in real time or by informed reporting and proper investigation carried out swiftly and energetically. Title IX is a positive force in all of this, but I am in no position to evaluate it.

Notes from Equality in Design

Action Points

Following the Town Hall meeting with Dean Berke, many students in the YSOA community felt frustrated and dissatisfied. However, the turnout at the event made it clear that this conversation was long overdue. In a meeting the following day, students from Equality in Design picked up this momentum to discuss steps the school needs to take in order to create a respectful environment. Over the course of subsequent meetings, students identified the major issues of bias and sexual misconduct that occur in our field's academic and professional settings. Although these issues need to be addressed throughout the field, we want to focus on our own community first, fostering productive change within Rudolph Hall that students will take with them once they begin their professional pursuits. The student initiatives currently underway are as follows:

- 1. Students will create their own educational curriculum surrounding issues of bias and sexual misconduct for incoming students. EID wants to welcome new students to the school with an orientation event that teaches clear codes of conduct and shared tools for describing the types of behavior that lead to incidents of sexual misconduct or bias.**
- 2. Students will seek input from the newly appointed Dean of Diversity and Inclusion at the the School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. We are hoping to host him for a discussion about the importance of his role and what a similar appointee could do for YSOA. We will advocate for the hiring of someone in this role.**
- 3. In the absence of a Career Services initiative to vet firms who come to the Career Fair, we will create our own vetting system.**
- 4. We will use the walls of Rudolph Hall to begin a poster advocacy campaign to educate the community about examples of misconduct and bias.**

This plan for change will start with the current student body—by holding ourselves accountable to these same standards, we look forward to bettering the YSOA community by creating a culture of acceptance and respect.

The school's culture regarding issues of sexual misconduct or bias has improved but I think the conversation must continue. Exactly how this should happen is less clear to me except to say that it should include all students and faculty and all genders in a variety of forums. Men must stop these behaviors and women must be empowered to resist. Things will change only if both men and women redefine themselves. Collaboration is essential to this endeavor.

—Peter de Bretteville

Derailing

Communication and empathy are the keys to creating a culture at YSOA that values inclusivity, mutual respect, and equality. As we seek structural changes within our institution and the broader discipline of architecture, it is essential that we collectively discuss our beliefs, our past experiences, our aspirations for the future, and our adversities. However, conversations that get to the heart of lived experience and reveal patterns of marginalization tend to, by their very nature, also involve confronting the biases and privilege of other participants. Put simply, designing an open and welcoming environment in Rudolph Hall requires better tools for active listening and constructive dialog about difficult topics.

We would also like to refer YSOA to a helpful and educational resource, The Derailing Document from Speak Up.org. The Derailing Document is a handbook of example conversations in which one person shifts the focus of a conversation away from the main topic and, in doing so, silences the other participant and reinforces existing inequalities. Reading through 15 categories of derailing statements is a startling and sobering exercise, especially given the ease with which we recognize each statement as all too familiar. The Nit Picking example recalls something said by a coworker last week; the Strawman was set up by a peer in a section discussion; the False Analogy was made by a critic in the mid-review; the Tangent was something we said ourselves.

Read this document to remove the need for someone else to explain their frustration. Use this document as a manual for empathetic conversation. Share this document to help others be better heard. A link can be found at yalepaprika.com or by visiting <http://speak-up.org/derail/>.

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