

faces and frowned.' The fact that she bothers to tell us this suggests that it has some significance. I should like to believe that it shows a woman from an ethnic minority using the issues of gender and ethnicity, which must so often have proved disadvantageous, as positive assets, in a negotiation where the other actors are probably mostly men, bound nowadays by at least some degree of middle-class political correctness.

To summarise, this example has helped us to focus on a number of factors which appear to be important in the form-production battlefield. First there is the question of the power available to the various actors: access to economic or political power, or to valued knowledge or cultural capital. Second, there are the rules according to which the various actors operate in the form-production process. Third, there are the sanctions through which these rules are enforced. And finally there is the issue of initiative: who gets to set the agenda about what?

So far so good: we have developed some ideas which can help us understand what is going on in the negotiations which are central to the form-production process. In the process, however, we have been brought face-to-face with (but rather glossed over) the sheer complexity of these negotiations. Let us now consider the practical implications of this complexity in more depth.

First of all, not only are there many actors, interacting in complex ways, but also they are each addressing issues which are complex in their own right. Each of these issues – even considered separately – comprises a web of loosely-defined considerations, complexly connected into social, political, economic and cultural domains.

Clearly this is a field of work which cannot be carried out by some systematic process of generating and evaluating all the possible options for action. If we try to do so – as some did during the 1960s, for example – we find ourselves in the dilemma identified by the American design theorist John Eberhard, in this amusing (but horribly believable) account from that time:

This has been my experience in Washington when I had money to give away. If I gave a contract to a designer and said, 'The doorknob to my office really doesn't have much imagination, much design content. Will you design me a new doorknob?' He would say 'Yes', and after we establish a price he goes away. A week later he comes back and says 'Mr Eberhard, I've been thinking about that doorknob. First, we ought

to ask ourselves whether a doorknob is the best way of opening and closing a door.' I say, 'Fine, I believe in imagination, go to it.' He comes back later and says 'You know, I've been thinking about your problem, and the only reason that we have to worry about doorknobs is that you presume you want a door to your office. Are you sure that a door is best way of controlling egress, exit, and privacy?' 'No, not at all.' 'Well, I want to worry about that problem.' He comes back a week later and says, 'The only reason we have to worry about the aperture problem is that you insist upon having four walls around your office. Are you sure that is the best way of organizing this space for the kind of work you are doing as a bureaucrat?' I say 'No, I'm not sure at all.' Well, this escalates until (and this has literally happened in two contracts, although not through this exact process) our physical designer comes back and he says with a very serious face, 'Mr Eberhard, we have to decide whether capitalistic democracy is the best way to organize our country before I can possibly attack your problem.'²¹

Lest anyone imagines that it might be possible to overcome this problem with the aid of some new generation of supercomputers – admittedly these did not exist when Eberhard wrote his story – let us remember that we should still be faced with the further level of complexity which flows from the difficulties of co-ordinating and controlling the many members of the so-called 'development team', a difficulty which deepens by the day, because the complexity of the form-production process itself appears everywhere to be increasing, though it has advanced further in some countries than in others. At its most complex, in countries like the UK and the USA, the development process involves many professionals influencing the form-generation process alongside the architect.

In discussing how the development process works, Cadman and Austin-Crowe point directly to issues of co-ordination and control:

In order to be really effective, each of these separate roles must be combined within the development team. Indeed one of the most important functions of the developer is to be able to select and bring together a team of advisers who complement each other and work well together.'²²

And yet things somehow get done. And, more surprising still, they seem to get done more or less to