

and therefore a reduction of support for urban design and planning. Stripped of their funding, urbanists toyed with philosophical notions of the relation between public and private and with the use of public dollars to leverage private investments, but eventually the private sector became what was hip. Las Vegas, with its private renditions of the public plazas of Europe, is a good example of the privatization of the public sector, and so is the New Urbanism, which is urban design's take on PoMo. Deconstructivism and Neomodernism—both of them a form of Postmodern nostalgia for Early Modern—seem to have paralleled this swoop to the private sector, their clients being mainly private corporations and nongovernmental organizations.

What I call “special-interest” or “go-for-the-jugular” urban design was a form of practice in the private sector that emerged from the urban renewal activities of the early postwar years, reached a crescendo in the 1970s and 1980s, and continues today. Here urban designers who work for developers or development groups endeavor, as they should, to understand the needs of their clients and, with the backing of the urban renewal agency and the chamber of commerce, to assert these forcefully in the city. They and their clients are more experienced and better funded than other urban designers. Not all private developers go for the jugular, and some community watchdog groups do, but I once heard a planning director say, “I am heartily tired of each bully developer arriving with his signature architect in tow.”

Now we have globalism, and everyone is going to China.

The Influence of Harvard's Urban Design Program

What has lasted since 1956? Because I am neither a scholar nor a historian, I cannot define the post-1956 trajectory of Harvard urban design ideas in any comprehensive way, and writing about the field as a practitioner, I make no claims for other than what I have seen. But having lived a long life and seen a great deal, I can “write the minutes” of the meetings I attended. I can also attempt to define what has lasted by tracing the paths of my teachers' ideas through my own work and beyond. My career does not reflect the norm or average of a career in urban design, since none exists. However, my experience may be relevant to a discussion of Harvard's influence because in the late 1940s the Graduate School of Fine Arts (GSFA) at the University