

planning and, through his metaphors, found ways for urban designers to approach them with creativity as designers, something the Smithsons, with their interest in “active socioplastics,” had aimed for but given up hope of achieving. Through the force of his imagination, Crane was able to apply planning knowledge to Brutalists’ and Team 10’s social ideas, to help make them “operational” (a favorite planning word then). Although in his later career he diverged to other areas and interests, Crane’s contributions at this time place him, in my view, among the foremost thinkers and philosophers on urban design of the twentieth century.

The Penn planning department’s studio pedagogy came from Harvard. The subject of the introductory studio for planners and urban designers was, probably at Perkins’s insistence, a new city in a developing area. In it, the many-layered views represented by the planning disciplines could all be considered together—but at some remove. Placing the city in a distant country allowed students to learn ways of synthesizing broad areas of subject matter without being bogged down in details. Crane, Robert Scott Brown, and I—out of Africa—took avidly to this subject matter. However, our first studio with Crane, “New City Punjab”—although, on the face of it, a true Harvard studio that used Le Corbusier’s program for Chandigarh—was revisionist in the extreme. We applied the “capital web” idea to the infrastructures needed to house the “thousand designers,” in this case urban squatters, in self-help housing in a monsoon climate.

I had brought to Penn interests from my African education and my time in England and Europe, when the Brutalists and Team 10 were emerging. During three years of postgraduate study-travel and work, I had formulated many questions, and Penn’s planning program seemed miraculously to have the answers. The areas of questioning had to do with discovering how people actually lived and wanted to live in cities, as opposed to how planners felt they ought to live. At Penn, courses in urban sociology began to fill in the answers to questions that had stumped Team 10, and Crane’s studios helped us to find ways to use what the planners taught. In England and on my travels, I had developed a critique of late Modernism, a wish to reappraise the architectural doctrine of functionalism, and a particular interest in Mannerist architecture. And, via both Africa and England, I had a growing interest in popular culture, in the impure combinations of folk and urban culture among urban Africans, and in interpretations of American mass culture in the English proto-Pop