

AN OUTLINE OF
CAREERS *for* WOMEN

A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO
ACHIEVEMENT

COMPILED AND EDITED

BY

DORIS E. FLEISCHMAN



GARDEN CITY, NEW YORK

DOUBLEDAY, DORAN
AND COMPANY, INC.

1928

Librarian
Wahr
3-5-29
1960

CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	xi
ACCOUNTANCY	3
Jennie M. Palen, C.P.A., Report Reviewer, Haskins & Sells.	
ADVERTISING	13
Ruth Waldo, Editorial Group Head, J. Walter Thompson Co.	
AGRICULTURE	23
Evelyn W. Smith, President Amawalk Nursery Inc., Amawalk, N. Y.	
ARCHITECTURE	33
Marcia Mead, Member American Institute of Architects	
ART—COMMERCIAL	45
Mary MacKinnon, artist.	
ART—FINE.	53
Mary Fanton Roberts, Editor, <i>Arts and Decoration</i> .	
BANKING	69
Mary Vail Address, Assistant Cashier, Chase National Bank.	
CHILD WELFARE	79
S. Josephine Baker, M.D., Dr. P. H., Pediatrician.	
COSTUME DESIGNING	97
Fifi Wurzweiler, Designer and Foreign Buyer, Edward L. Mayer Company.	
DIETETICS, DIET THERAPY, AND NUTRITION	107
Lulu G. Graves, Consultant in Dietetics and Diet Therapy.	
DRAMA	121
Jane Cowl.	

ARCHITECTURE

By Marcia Mead, A. I. A.

HAVING been occupied for the past twenty-five years earning my daily bread in the business of architecture, there is nothing which bores me quite so much as to have some wiseacre anywhere from sixteen to sixty register his limited outlook by the remark, "Isn't it unusual for a woman to be an architect?" As a matter of fact, women have been in the field for many years and slowly but surely are being recognized.

Looking back over my experience, I realize that my chief difficulties have not been that I could not do the work, but that the minds I have had to deal with were unable to grasp the idea of working with a woman. When I took up the study of architecture, it never occurred to me that to do so was peculiar, or that there was any reason why I should not be an architect as well as Johnny Jones or Christopher Wren, provided I had the brains. Though I may never prove to be a second Christopher Wren, I believe that I am a far better architect than many Johnny Joneses, regardless of their male attributes.

The term "architect" is comparatively new and generally little understood. Webster's latest edition dignifiedly describes an architect as "one skilled in the art of building"; in the highest sense of the profession he is an "assembler of the arts." For the purpose in hand, I should also like to introduce Webster's second definition, just to get the men with us—"An architect is a contriver, a designer, a maker." As Goldsmith says, "A Frenchwoman is a perfect architect in dress." From the beginning woman has been devising, inventing, arranging, and setting in order the living places

of the world. In this sense I feel sometimes that a woman is far better qualified fundamentally for the profession than a man.

It is in the sense of an assembling of the arts that architecture should be considered as a career. The architect designs in collaboration with the structural engineer, to make the building safe and strong; with the plumbing and heating engineers, to make the building clean, sanitary, and comfortable. He works with the decorator, the finisher, and the furnisher to make the building practical and beautiful; the sculptor and the mural painter have their places, which in the last analysis can only be determined by the architect, who knows the fabric of the whole. He works with the landscape designer to surround the building with beauty and attractiveness, and collaborates with the city planner to make for neighbourliness, convenience, harmony, goodwill, and healthful living. While designing is his chief joy, all the elements of a building operation from the plan itself to its remotest surroundings concern him in his diagnosis of a planning problem.

The necessary qualifications for a woman architect are no different from those for a man. She should have imagination and the power to picture the creatures and objects of her imagination clearly, for an architect must be able to visualize buildings inside and out—their surroundings, approaches, vistas, details, and methods of construction—before a sod is turned.

She should have a constructive mind which naturally expresses itself in the work of her hands, an innate sense of beauty and proportion in line and form, and a vital interest in life itself. She must be sympathetic, having a feeling for materials and their possibilities; she must possess the ability to reason and conclude. In other words, she must be blessed with enthusiasm and abundant common sense.

She must be a leader and a diplomat, both difficult to become unless their qualities are inborn to a degree. She must be sensitive to impressions yet not dominated by them, and strongly analytical.

When the novice comes to me for advice and tells me that she "just loves architecture and cannot be happy without it" she impresses me as superficial and insincere, so ignorant is she of its meaning, and I have visions of her early languishing into commercial interior decorating or some of the other so-called effeminate occupations. There is no advice I can give her, for she has nothing on which to build. With the years of application and preparation required, she will surely fall by the wayside.

The importance of robust health cannot be overemphasized. The continuous hours of application necessary will tax her nervous system to the utmost, and if she cannot maintain her balance in the beginning she will lack the poise and control necessary when she would take up practice for herself. The modern woman cannot be the "rest room" variety; she must be fit 365 days in the year. A normal, healthy woman should be so.

I would sound this warning note to the would-be woman architect: do not be a "grind." I understand that several young women in one of our architectural schools have had to give up their work because of nervous breakdowns. I venture to say that they were grinds. Men know better than woman how to relax and play, which is something we can learn from them. Women are also inclined to have too many irons in the fire. The professional woman must approach her work with the singleness of purpose with which a man approaches his life work.

A woman should expect no favours. The pleasant little gallantries of social life cannot be expected in the routine of a busy day, but she need be none the less womanly or capable of commanding the respect of the men with whom she associates. There is room in the field of architecture, as well as in the other walk of life, for men and women to work side by side harmoniously to success.

Opportunities for education in this country are now unequalled. The greater number of schools of architecture have been made graduate schools, that is, requiring two years of college work for entrance as a foundation for the technical

training, because a good grounding in languages, especially in French and Italian, higher mathematics, free-hand drawing and sketching, are essential prerequisites. I should also like to emphasize the need for constant study in English. It is sometimes difficult to impress upon young people the importance of knowing their own language. High-school English is not an adequate foundation for any profession.

The usual technical school covers four years of training, but I would advise this to be lengthened to six, interrupted with two alternate years of work in an architect's office. This will give a real appreciation of one's objective which can be secured in no other way.

Many of the best architectural schools are open to women. I was so fortunate in my training as to have equal opportunities with men, but I regret to find that my Alma Mater has fallen down on this standard and introduced some discriminations against women as enrolment has increased.

The reason for these discriminations would be ludicrous if they were not pathetic. Not more than ten women are permitted in this fold of more than a hundred men. This is even worse than the situation at Oxford, where one woman is permitted to enrol to every four men. A Fellow at Balliol is quoted as saying, "Even in this effeminate modern era, I still feel myself a man and I confess that I am appalled at the suggestion that I must gather three more of my kind before I am equal to one woman."

Foreign study is invaluable to one's training, for over there the story of the ages can be read first hand in the brick, stone, and mortar as laid by the original builders. To touch this old work, to visualize those generations of master builders and to feel their urge, gives one a knowledge and comprehension of the significance of building as nothing else can do.

To attend the School of Beaux Arts in Paris is the dream of the student of architecture. If I am correct, it was the late Fay Kellogg, a woman architect, who was instrumental in opening this school to women some twenty or twenty-five years ago. Twenty students are admitted each year, and the

standards are high. An American woman tried for admittance this year, but was unable to make the grade.

Modelled somewhat after this school is our own Beaux Arts Institute in this country, which is an atelier system of teaching design. The programme of the Institute is followed by the best schools here, and many independent ateliers are maintained under the direction of architects who are interested in advancing the education of their draftsmen.

The student body of an atelier is self-governing. The admission of women to the independent atelier depends upon the vote of the student body and the viewpoint of the master architect, but in the coeducational schools they are admitted usually on the same basis as the men. The Beaux Arts Institute is one of the greatest powers for education outside the regular schools, and furnishes opportunity for study to many an ambitious draftsman who cannot afford a university education.

The American Academy at Rome is our own school. It is controlled by the American Institute of Architects, and its standing abroad is as high as any of the foreign schools. It is founded upon the principle of collaboration of the sister arts, and the students of architecture, mural painting, sculpture, and landscape architecture, work together on a single problem.

The requirements for entrance for architectural students are a college training and not less than two years of work in a technical school. Two students in each subject are admitted each year on a competitive basis, the reward being a scholarship for three years of study and travel under the direction of the school.

The cultural advantages of association in the Academy with the students of music, archæology, and literature cannot be overestimated.

The Academy was organized by some of our most noted architects, who in their zeal forgot to take into consideration the interest of women in architecture and made it a man's school. I understand that now they are negotiating in regard to the admission of women into this holy of holies. A woman

in one of our leading architectural schools came to the front in a recent competition for the scholarship. If she had won, would she have been admitted? Some day a woman will win, and I believe that day will find the door open to her. Co-education is a wholly American ideal, and if our schools abroad would be characteristically American, they, too, must be coeducational.

With all the technical education in the world the securing of a job in an architect's office marks an epoch in the draftsman's life; it is then he realizes that he is just beginning to find out what it is all about, and the real test of his training starts. This is why I recommend that some practical experience be interspersed with technical studies, so that the jolt will not be so great. The word "draftsman" has become the universal term for the potential architect, whether man or woman, and I shall so employ it here.

The first job must be obtained often against odds, as the inexperienced worker finds out, and for the woman it may be doubly difficult. Often a woman may start as typist or secretary, in which capacity she can get excellent knowledge of specification writing, interviewing of clients, dealing with contractors, and so on. However, traditions tend to keep her in this position, as the men will usually be favoured when there is drafting to do.

This seeming marking of time while occupying one's self with office routine will be found to be of value later, when one gets into business for oneself. Nothing of office routine is taught in the schools, and, if one is constantly busy on the boards, she has little time to study the mechanics of business.

A certain period spent in a builder's office making shop drawings, listing materials, estimating and getting a knowledge of the building game from the builder's point of view is also time well spent, though unfortunately this experience does not add to a draftsman's prestige with the architect, who is prone, for this reason, to discount her architectural ambitions. But whether it be the position of office boy, monitor of the job files, or what-not, her opportunity in a busy office will come, if her pencil has any aptitude at all.

As in other professions so no less in architecture, laboratory work presents a woman's greatest difficulty, and the question of her presence in the drafting room seems to be the supreme barrier. As long as a woman is a pioneer, she must assume responsibility for the atmosphere there. The men are held unaccountable and if they fall for her pretty face she pays with her position, and more than that, makes the situation difficult or impossible for the woman who follows her.

She must remember, too, that time is money. While the purpose of her position is indirectly for her to learn, she is there primarily to make money for the business, and in these cost-accounting days, if she allows her time to be wasted in romancing, she is a poor investment and will not last long. She is abundantly justified in sending about his business any man who so forgets himself as to take her time from her work. It is a pity that this vigilance is necessary, but there are always some spineless and inconsiderate ones to watch out for.

While the head draftsman will teach her much and direct her to a great extent, she must acquire the habit of digging out her own information. Even if it proves to be wrong, the effort will register; if she has a solution for her problem, she can more easily be set right. Her training should enable her to draw accurately on her own account, gradually progressing from simple drawings and details to more complicated work, as she gains skill and knowledge of practical requirements.

The office working day is about seven hours, but during a busy season the draftsman may be expected to work overtime. If there is much overtime required, they are paid, usually, about one and one-half times their regular hourly rate.

Incomes are not large. One must have had considerable experience and be a very good draftsman to receive from \$75 to \$100 a week; he seldom attains more than \$200. In such a case he is rather taken into the business as an associate partner or is rewarded with a percentage of the profits. In a small reasonably busy office the income from the business

should net not less than \$100 a week for each principal, after expenses and overhead have been accounted for. Less return from the business than this indicates the need of constructive study of the business methods of the office with the object of establishing them upon a more sound basis.

Although there are other phases of the work in which one may specialize, experience in an architect's office is fundamental. Advancement depends to a degree upon opportunity, but primarily upon the preparation and application of the individual. The days of unpaid apprenticeship are over, but beginners should consider the job above the salary; yet it does not pay to underestimate one's possibilities. I would say this especially to the woman draftsman, for her possibilities may be discounted for her in advance. She should ask for what she thinks she is worth, then see to it that she earns more than she is paid. Under such conditions, promotion will come.

She should seek responsibility and make herself essential to the business. Architecture in practice is fluctuating. At times work will be piled high, with more than one can do, and again there will be little on the boards. The work is done on so narrow a margin that all employees cannot be carried over. The woman who has made herself indispensable is the one who will be retained.

In the past it has been difficult for draftsmen to get experience in field work or supervision of construction. Architects are beginning to realize that much more intelligent work will be done on the boards if the draftsmen have contact with actual construction. The tendency is more and more to put a draftsman in full charge of a job, both in the office and in the field. The younger men are sent out also when their time can be usefully employed in this connection. Women will find it difficult to get this all-around experience. They must seek it as diligently and aggressively as possible, for the men almost invariably will be given the first opportunity.

In some of the larger offices, visiting days are now being established, when groups of draftsmen are sent out to craft shops to observe the practical relation of planning to the

other arts. The enthusiasm thus created is proving the experiment worth while.

The ultimate goal of most draftsmen is independent practice. It is the tradition of one of the leading firms in New York City that, if a draftsman is satisfied with his daily job and does not give evidence of an ambition eventually to practise for himself, he shall be dropped; but the young man who forges ahead for personal recognition in his work is either taken into the business as an associate or is helped to establish himself independently. Such is the spirit of truly great architects.

To establish an office, some capital is required, and as a rule one or two commissions should be in sight before the momentous step be taken. In any case, a margin of safety of funds for a year ahead ought to be assured, for architecture is more or less of a luxury and is the first occupation to feel business depression.

Competition, in any sense, in the practice of architecture is not a goal. It may sometimes be a means to an end, but it does not spell regular business. Competition, as too often indulged in, is unfair and unethical and is beside the present question.

The responsibilities of the architect to her time are great, and demand the best that is in her. Education never ceases, and monotony is an unknown word. New ideas, new methods of expression, new materials, the progress of the sister arts, all demand an open and inquiring mind, if one would express one's era in one's handiwork. Building is the "printing press of the ages," and we are the humble scribes of history.

The late Dr. Hamlin of Columbia University expressed his high regard for his profession in this saying: "The mistakes of the minister are never known; the mistakes of the doctor are sometimes buried six feet under ground; the mistakes of the lawyer are often in evidence six feet above ground; but the mistakes of the architect are monuments to his limitations as long as his buildings stand." Architecture is the expression of life itself and must be so carried on as to command respect from generations to come.

Without the influence of woman, architecture will lack the warmth, breathing beauty, and comfortable proportions that she has it in her nature to contribute. I do not expect the average man architect of to-day to grant this, but I have faith to believe that history will eventually reveal, by the new and human quality in architectural development, woman's advent into the field.