

JULIA MORGAN:
BLUEPRINT FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

Pia Lindstrom Luedtke

“[I] have found an excellent draftsman whom I have to pay almost nothing as it is a woman.”

John Galen Howard

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, a fresh wave of pioneers and dreamers came to California on the newly built railroads. These people continued the state's tradition of exploration, discovery, and social innovation and brought with them distinctive ideas which rapidly re-defined frontier California. This massive population influx was reflected in an increasingly urban state. The Bay Area was particularly affected, becoming more liberal and progressive than the backward and more rural southern part of California.

In the midst of this transformation, two reform movements became prominent by the turn of the century. The first, the women's suffrage and rights movement, peaked between 1900 and 1920 and caused many women to question their traditional roles as wife and mother. However, they often faced hostility when

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they strove for professional recognition and equality in a male-dominated world. The second, the Beaux-Arts movement, put the focus of architecture back on the individual. This was particularly significant because, during this time of expansion, architecture played an important role in the creation of the state's regional identity. Though seemingly different, both movements shared a belief in the freedom of personal expression.

Julia Morgan (1872-1957), an integral yet apolitical figure in both movements, had been the first of her gender to be accepted into the Ecole des Beaux-Arts Architecture School in Paris in 1898 and was California's first woman to receive a state architect's license. She was, in essence, a reflection of California's changing times. Though Morgan has been overlooked in the past, her determined and courageous response to the resistance to her entrance into a male-dominated profession made her one of this century's most significant California pioneers.

Although Morgan did not cross the plains with the first settlers and is not a pioneer in the traditional "Western" sense, the social challenges that she faced were as daunting. She confronted the barriers of prejudice and preconceptions about a woman's position in the workplace and radically re-defined this role for others. Morgan met these challenges quietly, without notoriety or overt activism, and became a role model for other women. Throughout this long and gradual process, she maintained a low and anonymous profile, never once courting fame.

In the study of this ground-breaking Californian, this project has several specific goals: first, to explore the influential forces in Morgan's early life, particularly her family and her education at the University of California, Berkeley, and at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris; second, to research her early career, especially her connections with the many women's organizations which nurtured her career; third to study Morgan's relationship with her celebrated benefactors Phoebe Apperson Hearst and her son, William Randolph Hearst; and last, to define the character and actions of a pioneer and to relate these ideas to the influential accomplishments of Julia Morgan.

I. "Work Itself Overcoming Its Natural Disadvantages"

My own experience is that it is a decided advantage to grow up in the environment one is to work in.¹—Julia Morgan

It seems clear that the Morgan family was encouraging and supportive in its attitudes towards young women and that its progressive values enabled Morgan to succeed, particularly in her academic pursuits and her ability to face verbal and organized opposition.

Morgan was born in San Francisco on January 26, 1872, to Charles and Eliza Morgan. She was the second oldest in a family of three boys and two girls. Several years after her birth, the Morgans moved to Oakland, where she spent most of her childhood. Her stable and upper-middle class family provided a comfortable life which included servants, summer travel, and social gatherings.

An unusual child, Morgan preferred to play with her brothers, often ignoring her sister. Described as stubborn and fearless, she was authoritative among her siblings and many times got her wish.² From the beginning, Morgan had a tremendous ability for hard work and, as one family member remarked, "had the constitution of an ox."³ Sara Holmes Boutelle in her book describes her as a determined and emotionally intense child.⁴ In addition, Morgan had a talent for the arts and took dance and music lessons, playing the violin and piano with great skill.

As a child, Morgan was often sickly, suffering from scarlet fever and numerous ear infections. She never complained and took this challenge in stride. In a letter to her husband, Eliza Morgan remarked about her daughter's illness, "Dudu [Morgan's childhood nickname] has never made a fuss. She accepts the inevitable and is composed and serene. She is a real darling. She sits up in her bed as pleasant as an angel and it will be a week or two before she can leave it."⁵ Her parents were very protective of her, and, although they tried to keep their daughter calm and quiet, they could not contain her active, energetic, and willful nature. Morgan possessed incredible physical stamina⁶ and enjoyed playing with her brothers' gymnastic equipment.⁷

Morgan's parents, particularly her mother, played an important and influential role in her early life. Eliza Morgan was in charge of the family finances and ran the household with an "iron will."⁸ Unconventional by the standards of the time, Morgan's parents supported higher education for all their children in a time when many women did not graduate from high school. They "encouraged her desire to become a professional in a man's world."⁹ Mrs. Morgan especially encouraged her promising daughters to succeed, and the Morgan women developed close, loving bonds. Morgan was very similar to her mother and both were described as quiet, retiring, and shy; neither cared for social events.¹⁰

While analyzing this mother-daughter relationship, Sara Boutelle provides an interesting insight. She comments, "Their [the Morgan daughters] commitment to professional careers is especially remarkable given the absence of any immediate role model. Mrs. Morgan wanted them to fulfill their potential, but she also expressed all the traditional hopes that they would marry and repeatedly urged them to enjoy life rather than studying so hard."¹¹ Nonetheless, "Eliza Morgan was Julia's greatest ally. Her mother's strong belief in her helped her through many difficult times."¹²

Morgan's interest in architecture began during her early years. During this time of growth, development, and scientific advancement in California, her family enjoyed walking through and investigating construction sites around the town. Morgan quickly became interested in mechanical objects, was extremely curious, and found the idea of designing and constructing buildings "exciting and challenging."¹³ She found it stimulating that, similar to solving a difficult math problem, architecture followed a logical process which ended in a tangible, visible project.¹⁴

Morgan was also influenced by Pierre LeBrun, a well-known New York architect and the husband of one of Morgan's cousins. The family visited the East several times during Morgan's childhood and the two met several times. Morgan also considered music and medicine as possible careers, but preferred LeBrun's

artistic models. The two later became valued colleagues and correspondents.

Morgan knew the difficulty of achieving her dream, but possessed great self-confidence. Later, she would be inspired by Sophia Hayden, the first woman to graduate from MIT in architecture and the winner of an all-woman architectural competition at the World Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. Hayden was only four years older than Morgan, and this strengthened her ambition and hope.

Morgan began her education at nearby Riverside Grammar School and at the age of fourteen entered Oakland High School, where she soon developed a reputation for academic excellence. She followed a traditional course of study which included advanced mathematics, physics, Latin and German. Emma Morgan was also gifted academically, but the Morgan brothers lacked their sisters' ambition and "were more easy-going, like their father."¹⁵ Morgan enjoyed and concentrated on her school work, in particular math, and became known as a perfectionist.

When Morgan received her high school diploma in 1890, she discussed her future plans with her mother. In those days, it was typical for a woman of eighteen to become a debutante and to have a coming-out party which represented her entrance into high society. Morgan, however, was not interested in clothes or social events and desired more than travel and marriage. In fact, she described herself as "awkward and shy."¹⁶ Morgan was a fine student and wanted an education instead. Her mother "recognized and admired her daughter's determination to attend college and have a career. She felt it did not matter what Julia decided to do. She [Julia] had a fantastic will power. Anything was possible."¹⁷ With her mother's support, Morgan entered the University of California at Berkeley in the fall of 1890.

Founded in 1868, Berkeley had enrolled its first female students two years later. At the time Morgan entered, approximately 100 of the 450 students at the University were women. During her time there, Morgan seemed to be interested in every-

thing her teachers said. She took careful notes which she revised at night and often stayed in her room in the evening completing her work.

Morgan's interest in architecture grew, and in her sophomore year, she announced her ambition. Unfortunately, there was no architecture school in the West so Morgan entered the closest program she could, civil engineering. Even though Morgan received a solid and highly technical education, she lacked instruction in architectural ornamentation and the use of space.¹⁸ While completing her engineering studies, Morgan published an article entitled "A Structural Analysis of the Steel Frame of the Mills Building." This publication received much attention and one family friend even commented that, "only two or three men in San Francisco would have been capable of writing that paper."¹⁹

Morgan was the only woman in the engineering program at the time, although one or two women may have gone before her, and was often resented by male students who made rude comments at her expense. Also in her sophomore year, Morgan joined the first and only Berkeley sorority, Kappa Alpha Theta. This tightly knit organization was the basis for many supportive, close relationships, and as Morgan met new people from different backgrounds, she began to appreciate her many blessings more and more.²⁰

In her senior year, Morgan met a man who would profoundly affect her life, Bernard Maybeck. From outward appearances, these two very different people seemed to be exact opposites. While Morgan was "prim, shy, earnest, and determined," Maybeck "wore a waist-length beard and self-designed trousers reaching nearly to his armpits and was a kindly wizard who dramatized everything."²¹ He was known for his charisma, free spirit, and unique outlook on life and work;²² one colleague referred to Maybeck as "a barbarian among strictly Renaissance men."²³ However, Morgan was fascinated by Maybeck both as a person and as an architect²⁴ and perhaps understood his similarly unconventional nature.

Although Maybeck taught descriptive geometry at Berkeley, he had studied at the prestigious Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris and held casual architectural classes, which Morgan attended. He respected her talent and “recognized her potential and encouraged her to become an architect.”²⁵ Morgan quickly became his favorite student. After graduating from Berkeley, Morgan worked for Maybeck for a year, giving her important practical experience. Under Maybeck’s instruction, Morgan designed her first building, a residence, and directed the construction in October, 1894. During this time, Morgan also took classes at the Hopkins School of Art Instruction in San Francisco.

Maybeck believed that Architecture should reflect the natural surroundings and strongly supported the creative and close relationship between architect and workman. He considered architecture an art and is quoted as saying that “with four sticks of wood, you can express any human emotion.”²⁶ Morgan was influenced by and later adopted many of his ideals.

When Maybeck heard that the Ecole des Beaux-Arts might be ready to accept women, he encouraged Morgan to travel to Paris. Eliza Morgan agreed and offered to finance the trip. Joined by Jessica Peixotto, a long-time friend and economist studying abroad, Morgan visited family (including Pierre and Lucy LeBrun in New York) and stopped at Polytechnic Institute (MIT) to look into enrollment possibilities before traveling to Paris. In her book, Sara Boutelle reflects on this momentous event:

Filled with high purpose and a lively sense of adventure, Morgan and Peixotto sailed for Paris. The Morgans, like Julia’s teachers, had recognized her talent and her determination and they provided financial support for her unconventional plans. Her confidence, her diligence, and her ambition made the Ecole des Beaux-Arts the inevitable next challenge.²⁷

After Morgan and Peixotto departed, an Oakland newspaper ran an article which read:

Miss Julia Morgan’s destination is Paris, where she will spend a year in close study....Oakland will expect and receive much in the future along architectural lines from so thorough and good a student.²⁸

The Ecole des Beaux-Arts was well known not only for its excellence but also for its selectivity. Morgan in fact had two strikes against her from the beginning, for regardless of gender, the school also discouraged foreigners. The school was composed of two classes, and advancement was based on competitions and points. The Ecole curriculum stressed design and theory more than construction and models, believing that experience would develop the necessary practical skills.

When Morgan arrived in Paris in early June, 1896, she presented her qualifications and her letters of recommendation to the Ecole, but was disappointed by the school's discouraging response. She had known from the beginning that she could handle the demands of the curriculum, but receiving permission to take the entrance exam proved to be the more difficult challenge.

Morgan reflects on these early events in her own words:

Almost without exception the American students were preparing for the competitive examinations for the entrance to L'Ecole des Beaux-Arts, but to my regret, these examinations were not open to women, and the best I could do was to enter the private atelier of M. [Marcel Pérouse] de Monclos, drawing at Calarossi's and modeling with [Jean-Antoine] Injalbert,—an experience not entirely regretted as it rubbed one up against students of many nationalities and ideas, but giving more time to the allied arts than to architecture.²⁹

At the atelier, Morgan worked hard and assisted Ecole students with projects for competitions. She often added color to sketches and learned how to prepare the intricate drawings. She slowly became accustomed to the language and began taking courses in architectural history and design. Despite her own doubts and loneliness, Morgan once remarked in a letter to Pierre LeBrun, "I'm so glad I came. It wakes one up so wonderfully."³⁰

Ateliers had a reputation for being chauvinistic and were once referred to as "rough and tumble fraternities"³¹ in which students often poured water over each other and pushed each other off the work benches to relieve the tense atmosphere.³² As the only woman in her studio, Morgan was always treated politely and considerately, but was excluded from the pranks of the other

students and was not taken seriously as an architect. When describing one of her teachers, Morgan commented, “he has been very kind, [but] always seems astonished if I do anything showing the least intelligence, ‘*Ah, mais, c’est intelligent,*’ as though that was the last thing expected.”³³

Morgan was comforted by a visit from Maybeck who had come to Paris on business in February, 1897. He was upset by the Ecole’s conservative position on the acceptance of women and talked to several school administrators on her behalf. In addition, William Aldrich of the American school in Rome and the American Ambassador to France wrote letters to the school supporting Morgan.³⁴

In the early summer 1897, almost a year after Morgan arrived in Paris, a significant event occurred, as described in one of her letters:

I was about to come home when, unexpectedly, the French government decided to admit women painters and sculptors to the competitive examinations for admittance to the Beaux-Arts. They did not say anything about the Department of Architecture, either way, it not entering their heads that there might be women applicants. There was no preparation for such a case and no word against it; so I was given the benefit of the doubt and allowed a chance with the other competitors.³⁵

With renewed hope, Morgan decided “to try for it [the Beaux-Arts],”³⁶ and began to prepare for the examination which would take place early that fall.

Morgan took the exam for the first time in October, 1897, and placed forty-second among 376 applicants. Her high placement was particularly commendable, since her calculation errors resulted from her lack of experience with metrics. However, only the top thirty students were accepted. Her second attempt took place in April, 1898, and she failed again. She performed considerably better, but was graded more harshly than other applicants because the school “did not want to encourage young girls.”³⁷

This discrimination only strengthened Morgan’s stubbornness, and she began to work harder than ever. She was further

encouraged by the well-known architects Honoré Daumet and Jean-Louis Pascal, both former Ecole students. The two showed interest in her work, and Pascal in particular offered helpful criticism.³⁸

Around the same time, the de Monclos atelier closed and Morgan began to suffer from eye strain. She was forced to find a second studio and, through several people including Maybeck, heard of Bernard Chaussemiche. The two originally met to discuss the possibility of starting a women's atelier, and although this did not materialize, their work together continued throughout her days in Paris. Morgan was invigorated by Chaussemiche's support and optimism. She wrote, "He is considered the finest of the younger school of architects—especially as to draughtmanship (sic). He criticizes from an entirely different point of view from M. de Monclos, and it feels like a sort of weight has been lifted—and one could work in a bigger, freer, happier, way."³⁹ The two remained fast friends.

In October, 1898, Morgan took the entrance exam for the third time. In the following passage, she reflects on her oral test:

None of those had tried less than twice. Everybody takes defeat in the most cheerful way, for you are always in the majority....The oral examination broke down a hundred at least. It's the most trying ordeal for its simpleness.... There were thirteen examined before me the day I came up and everybody failed entirely—those big, strong fellows would get up, tremble, turn white, clutch their hands and seem to have no thinking power left.... When I was called there was a room full. I tried to pretend I was not afraid, and perfectly steady, and actually believed it until at the end of the first problem I discovered that my hand was rattling in the air, and the discovery so surprised me, I could not do any more mathematics—it was enough for a pretty good mark, but you see so many did nothing.⁴⁰

Morgan's third attempt was her most successful, and she placed thirteenth. Back in California, the *San Francisco Examiner* read:

CALIFORNIA GIRL WINS HIGH HONOR

Miss Julia Morgan In the Ecole des Beaux-Arts

First Woman Who Has Entered the Architecture Department

Is A Graduate of Berkeley
Stood very near the Head of a Long List of Applicants

Another California girl is added to the long list of those who have won honor for themselves and for their State abroad. The latest on this list is Miss Julia Morgan, who has just successfully passed the entrance examinations for the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, department of Architecture. The honor is all the more marked that Miss Morgan is the first woman in the world to be admitted to this special department.⁴¹

In a letter to Pierre LeBrun on November 14, 1898, Morgan documents her reaction to her acceptance:

The judgement [result of the examinations] was given today and I am 13th—ten French and two foreigners—they take forty [thirty] in all. It's not much but has taken quite a little effort. If it had been simply for the advantages of the Ecole, I would not have kept on after M. Chaussemiche had been arranged with, but a mixture of dislike of giving up something attempted and the sense of its being a test in a small way, of work itself overcoming its natural disadvantages—made it seem a thing that really had to be won.⁴²

Maybeck, LeBrun, and Eliza Morgan continued to offer supportive and encouraging words during Morgan's studies at the Ecole. Distinguishing herself early, she performed remarkably well and graduated to the First Class in under a year. In the advanced class, Morgan placed in at least four school competitions, winning first prize in her last contest at the school. Her accomplishments began to receive recognition outside the Ecole.

Throughout her days in Paris, Morgan remained "hungry for home" but pledged not to express her homesickness in her letters to California.⁴³ She balanced work with other pursuits and was joined by her brother Avery. The two often visited the new sights of Paris such as the Eiffel Tower and the Bridge to Champs-de-Mars. Morgan enjoyed traveling and visited Germany and Italy where she explored and sketched architectural sights. She kept detailed records of her finances and often went without meals to buy books to add to her architectural library, which she greatly expanded while in Europe.⁴⁴

Morgan graduated from the Ecole in December, 1901, and received her Certificate d'Etude a month before her thirtieth

birthday. She had received “the best architectural education then available”⁴⁵ and would carry this “prestige and skill” with her.⁴⁶ Morgan had developed her artistic abilities and “absorbed a classical idiom that would shape her architectural repertoire without constraining it.”⁴⁷ She was now ready for the challenges of the professional world.

II. The Women’s Connection

Although the turn of the century was a time of awakening for many American women, it was also a period which denied opportunity for most. Since few women were encouraged to pursue higher education, a woman’s traditional place remained in the home as a wife and mother. Without proper training, few women were prepared to face the demands of the professions. The small majority of women who did enter the workplace faced strong resistance; many felt that they were not taken seriously. When taking this lack of support into consideration, Morgan’s prolific career becomes all the more impressive.

In response to the needs of working women such as Morgan, a number of organizations and clubs began to emerge around the turn of the century. The Young Women’s Christian Association in particular was active in providing housing, job training, and facilities for recreational activities for low-income women. This organization also provided weekly religious services and discussions concerning “virtuous conduct.” Groups such as the Women’s Christian Temperance Union and the Charity Organization Service stressed “gentleness, love” and personal development,¹ while others, like Sorosis, taught that “women should think for themselves, recognize their social responsibilities, and work to improve their community.”²

These groups naturally wanted to have their own separate meeting places and facilities and began to commission buildings. This relationship is described in a 1931 article:

Men have long had their clubs—for purely social purposes...and enjoyed them. Women only recently have come to this stage, justifying their buildings by their use for public service or self-education, a fact we find reflected in lecture and class and educational elements.³

As Sara Boutelle points out, “The networks that women had developed while campaigning for abolition, temperance, and women’s suffrage had made them aware of, and eager to hire, other women with diverse skills, including architects.”⁴ This “improved status and new professionalism” were favorable factors for Morgan who remained prominent even as other women architects began to practice.⁵

Morgan constructed approximately 15 separate YWCA projects from Honolulu to Salt Lake City and was offered the job as staff architect for the national organization, but did not accept because of her desire to remain with her family, friends, and colleagues.⁶ She also designed the Emanu-el Sisterhood Residence in San Francisco, the Friday Morning Club in Los Angeles, the Saratoga Foothill Women’s Club, The Claremont Club in Berkeley, and the Ladies Protection and Relief Society in Oakland, as well as many others. In addition, Morgan designed numerous churches, hospitals, retirement homes, orphanages, and other community buildings.

Individual women, including many of her friends from Kappa Alpha Theta, also hired Morgan. Grace Merriam Fischer, a former sorority sister, hired Morgan to construct a small house and later provided Morgan with work in conjunction with the YWCA. She recounts the story in her own words:

Don’t ever turn down a small job just because you think it’s beneath you. One of the smallest jobs I ever had was a little two-room residence in Monterey [California]. The lady...was most pleased with the job and [is] now chairman of the YWCA (Berkeley Branch).⁷

This led to many larger commissions and the YWCA remained one of Morgan’s best supporters.

Throughout Morgan’s career, these organizations and clubs provided strong encouragement, both emotionally and financially. At one point, half of Morgan’s commissions came from

women, as individuals or in groups.⁸ It is important to note, however, that Morgan worked within established systems and values and relied only partially on the women's movement for professional support.

Three of these projects, Mills College, Asilomar (a YWCA conference center), and the Berkeley Women's City Club, are particularly worthy of attention.

Soon after returning from Paris, Morgan began her work for Mills College, which was then the only secular women's college in the West. The president at that time, Susan Mills, had raised funds to build a tower to house ten donated bronze bells. The architect was an important consideration and Morgan was finally chosen because of her artistic training and experience with reinforced concrete. The campus then consisted of three or four small buildings and the administration hoped that Morgan would be able to envision a master plan.⁹ In a letter to Susan Mills, Mrs. Frank Marion Smith wrote, "We want this to be a great success for many reasons. One, the greatest of these, it was planned by a woman for a women's college and therefore we cannot afford to make any mistakes."¹⁰

The bell tower, built between 1903 and 1904, was named El Campanil and stood 75 feet. Designed in the California Mission style complete with arches, a red-tile roof, and reinforced concrete, this "gem of a tower"¹¹ is twice as wide on the front and back as it is on the sides and is decorated with twenty urns. Visible from the main entrance of the campus, this building was constructed amidst grass and trees.

El Campanil received favorable reviews and in January, 1904, the Mills magazine printed an article which read:

It is a pleasure in this first number of the White and Gold, for the new year, to announce that work has already begun on the tower, in which the chime of ten bells...will be hung. The plans for this building, which is soon to add new beauty to our campus, have been prepared by Miss Julia Morgan, of Oakland. Those who have been privileged to see them are much impressed by the architectural and artistic skill shown by this lady, and feel assured that when completed this first campanile to be erected on the Pacific Slope will be a model of

strength and refined sentiment. It is interesting also to note that a work of so much promise has been designed by a carefully trained woman architect for a women's college.¹²

Despite this optimism, controversy arose between Morgan and the builder, Bernard Ransome. Ransome did not think that Morgan had enough experience with concrete and met with the donor who agreed to change the material specifications. In addition, he altered the preparation of the bricks. Ironically, Ransome's name was read before Morgan's at the dedication ceremony.

The next major building that Morgan designed for Mills was a library (1905-06). Similar to El Campanil, this balanced and symmetrical building was constructed in the California Mission Style with wrought-iron balconies and arched windows. The Arts and Crafts interior utilizes natural light, and exposed hardwood created a "lofty [and] open" atmosphere.¹³ Paying particular attention to "handicraft details," Morgan even designed the library's furniture.¹⁴

During 1909-1910, Morgan finished the Kapiolani Infirmary which now serves as faculty housing. In the same year, she designed the Mills campus gymnasium, a redwood building with both open-air and indoor facilities, and in 1916 completed the pool annex which was decorated with fireplaces and polished wood. However, in 1912 Susan Mills resigned from the presidency and Morgan's work at the college dwindled when the new president, Aurelia Reinhardt, began to employ other architects such as Maybeck and Walter H. Ratcliff. Nonetheless, between 1924 and 1925 Morgan designed the Ming Quong Chinese Girls School which later became a part of the Mills campus.

Morgan's work at Mills was significant for several reasons. In the first years of her professional practice, the college was her first "conspicuous commission"¹⁵ and provided a welcomed opportunity to polish her skills and gain experience. More importantly, however, when the Mills bell tower and library withstood the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, her skill with reinforced concrete became widely known, and, during the subsequent period of re-building, Morgan received numerous commissions,

most notably the repair of the world-famous Fairmont Hotel in San Francisco.

A similar campus-like project was Asilomar, a women's retreat center not far from Monterey, California. Phoebe Apperson Hearst, a YWCA patron, had hosted several gatherings at her home, but suggested that the organization construct its own conference center and, in 1912, donated 30 acres of land to the YWCA with the condition that the organization would make land and buildings improvements of \$30,000 within the next 10 years.¹⁶ Asilomar, meaning refuge by the sea, was provided for all women to "rest and renew their spirits."¹⁷ Hearst had worked with Morgan since her days in Paris and encouraged the YWCA to hire her to design Asilomar. Eager to support a professional woman, the organization complied with Hearst's wishes and work soon commenced.

By 1913 stone gates, a general meeting building, and tents with beds and wood floors had been constructed. The wood and stone buildings were situated around a central circle and easily blended in with the lush natural surroundings. The Phoebe Apperson Hearst Administration Building consisted of a large gathering room with offices, clubrooms, and rest rooms at either end. It is known for its exposed beams, unpainted wood walls, and fireplaces. The building's high ceilings and views of the coast enhance its rich beauty.¹⁸

In 1915, the YWCA doubled its land at Asilomar and soon after Morgan designed the Grace H. Dodge Chapel. In 1918, development continued and Morgan constructed a dining hall and kitchen, both given by Mary Crocker. The exposed trusses, large windows, bentwood chairs, and stone fireplaces provide a "joyful link" with nature and one author describes these facilities as making "a minimal separation between site and structure."¹⁹ During the post-war period, the Scripps Lodge, a director's cottage, Hill Top (for women employees), View Point Cottage, and Tide Inn (for men employees) as well as a salt-water pool and sites for basketball, volleyball, softball, and tennis were built. Warehouses and garages were placed behind trees and hills and remained hidden from public view.

In 1928, Morgan designed Merrill Hall, her last and probably most well-known building at Asilomar. This building, like many others in this complex, is made out of stone and uses stencils to accent long sections of unpainted wood. Natural light from French doors and arched windows accent this elegant hall. According to Sara Boutelle, Merrill Hall “emerges from stone and sand like one of the natural elements. Reflecting the clients’ and the architect’s feeling for preserving the landscape, it was clearly built from the inside out.”²⁰

Asilomar was a success, not only for its superior architecture, but also for its positive impact on Morgan’s career. One historian comments that, “Designed so successfully that it seems to have grown naturally on the site, Asilomar is perhaps the largest institutional complex ever built in the Arts and Crafts style.”²¹

In addition, Morgan gained recognition within the YWCA. The organization was pleased with her work and continued to offer her commissions. During the construction of Asilomar, one YWCA coordinator commented, “Miss Morgan is A-1, and she is sparing no pains to give us the greatest possible for the least expenditure.”²² As Sara Boutelle suggests:

The use of Asilomar as a conference and training center meant that YWCA personnel and board members from all over the West and even nationally were familiar with its architecture and its architect. It is not surprising, therefore, that commissions for other buildings came from the same source.²³

This conference center appears modern and fresh today and truly enhanced Morgan’s career.

Certainly one of Morgan’s best-known buildings is the Berkeley Women’s City Club, which after its completion in 1931 was called “a supreme achievement.”²⁴ The building included rooms for educational, recreational, and cultural activities as well as “grand staircases,” private dining and tea rooms, an auditorium, a library, a beauty parlor, residential accommodations, and a pool with lighting for night-time swimming, quite unusual for its day. One author comments that:

The six-story building with vaulted arches and cloister-style arrangements built around two interior [tennis] courts makes subtle but

effective visual allusion to the emerging status of women. Within a generally Mediterranean design, there are numerous references in form and decoration to Gothic motifs usually applied to ecclesiastical buildings and institutions of higher learning. Through the inclusion of these forms, Morgan drew visual parallels between the aims of what was then the women's movement and institutions established for spiritual and intellectual betterment.²⁵

In "The Berkeley Women's City Club," published in the April, 1931, edition of *The Architect and Engineer*, Julian C. Mesic discusses the importance and architectural triumph of this building:

The Berkeley Women's City Club is symbolic of the changed status of women and their broadening outlook. That they have wrought this change by their own efforts, indicated a deep living force with which the world will reckon further. It is logical that the building should radiate vigor gracefully.... Over and above the individual success is the contribution to construction, art, and architecture.²⁶

Within many of her buildings for the YWCA and other organizations, Morgan expressed women's concerns. In her book, Sara Boutelle discusses, "[Morgan's] success in promoting the interests of women in her buildings." She also observed a sense of affinity between Morgan and her women clients, further explained in the following passage:

Morgan understood women's organizations, their goals, and their limitations, not just because of her gender, but also because she shared their determination to improve the lives of individuals and groups who could not take social action on their own. Because of her own compassionate and pragmatic character, the idea of building new solutions to new problems always appealed to her.²⁷

Since many organizational structures, especially the YWCA, included a swimming pool, gymnasium, and dormitory, Morgan had to incorporate a wide variety of facilities in these buildings. "Their commissions were often for buildings new to the architectural profession, meant to serve the diverse needs of women's associations of all types"²⁸ and provided new and unique architectural challenges for Morgan.

Given the difficulty of catering to women's organizations, it is quite extraordinary that Morgan was not only able to fulfill

these requirements but also to complete her task in an artistic and almost spiritual manner. Of particular interest is her care and sensitivity to expense and quality when designing these buildings. She was interested in the individual and tried to embody a sense of pride in her architecture. A prime example is the San Francisco YWCA. During one planning meeting, the conversation went as follows:

Morgan: I found that we have a little extra space here...my idea is to have one or two little private dining rooms with little kitchenettes so that the girls can invite their friends, and cook a little meal.

Board: These are minimum wage girls there. Why spoil them?

Morgan: That's just the reason.²⁹

A Board member describes the same meeting:

Miss Morgan wanted...to have a room where the girls could do sewing, have a sewing machine, and have a little beauty parlor, and could do their laundry....The next time that we were together she planned these rooms....She just quietly did what she wanted to do. And so she had great success.³⁰

The relationship between Morgan and women's organizations was beneficial for both parties, almost symbiotic. While Morgan offered women a professional model to support, the YWCA and others provided Morgan work and an opportunity to perfect her talents. Her work for women's organizations also provided a chance to showcase her talents outside the women's network and this public exposure brought her more commissions. On a more personal note, "Morgan's sympathies were engaged and her imagination fired by...social needs brought to her attention by a network of women clients."³¹ Morgan's horizons were certainly broadened by these experiences with the women's movement around her.

III. "Long Distance Dreamers"

Around the turn of the century, a "Western Renaissance" swept through California as the state's cultural institutions strove to equal those of the East. At the same time, however, the people

of the West searched for their own distinct identity and unique artistic style; many struggled with the question, “What does it mean to be Californian?” During this period, the wealthy encouraged and promoted the arts. Many, like Phoebe Apperson and William Randolph Hearst, wanted to be a part of the area’s self-definition.

About the Hearsts, Robert C. Pavlik once wrote:

[They] were strong motivating forces behind a regional identity for California as expressed in its art and architecture. As world travelers, they had seen and experienced the great centers of civilization, and, like so many of their west-coast contemporaries, they were determined to create a great cultural center on the state’s golden shores. They believed California would be the inheritor and perpetuator of greatness, as Athens and Rome reincarnate.¹

The Hearst family, William Randolph in particular, played a significant role in the definition of the California Dream and “the state’s heritage and its future.”²

When Hearst stated that he wanted “to do something a little different”³ at San Simeon, he was not only referring to a building that “reflects the dreams, values, and aspirations commonly held by the state’s wealthy leaders at the turn of the century,”⁴ but also to Julia Morgan, the castle’s unconventional architect. Her work for the Hearsts spanned her whole career and developed into a successful artist-patron relationship. Only a talented artisan like Morgan could realize Hearst’s dream of molding California into a “new Eden.”

Most likely, Morgan first met Phoebe Apperson Hearst while attending Berkeley, where Mrs. Hearst was particularly active in the lives of the women students. She offered constant support and often invited groups over to her house “to talk, for tea parties and musicales, and for a chance to see her fabulous art collection.”⁵

Several years later, Mrs. Hearst and Maybeck met in Paris to discuss the progress of an international design competition for Berkeley’s master plan. While in France, they stopped in to see Morgan, Maybeck’s former student. Because of her interest in women’s causes, Mrs. Hearst understood Morgan’s difficulties.

She was impressed by Morgan's "ambitious goals" and a strong bond formed between the two women. As one of "Maybeck's boys," Morgan received a monthly stipend. Before leaving Paris, however, Mrs. Hearst offered Morgan increased monetary support. In the following letter, Morgan declined:

If I honestly felt that more money freedom would make my work better, I would be tempted to accept your offer—but I am sure that it has not been the physical work which has been or will be, hardest, for I am used to it and strong, but rather the months of striving against homesickness and the nervous strain of examinations.

Now that my brother is here and a place is won at the B.A., really mine now it seems, the work ought to be a pleasure whether housekeeping or study.

Your kind words at the depot were so unexpected, so friendly, they give and still give, more help than you can guess, and I will thank you for them always.⁶

When Morgan returned from Paris, this friendship was renewed. Soon after, she began her work at Berkeley where she aided John Galen Howard with the development of the campus. With Mrs. Hearst's support, Morgan assisted with the design and detailing of the Hearst Memorial Mining Building. Although she was alone in the field as a woman, her talent and training quickly became apparent.

Mrs. Hearst was pleased with Morgan's work and, in 1903, she was named assistant supervising architect for the Greek Theater. It was while working on this project that Morgan first met William Randolph Hearst. In a rush to complete the reinforced concrete structure on time, Morgan hung banners over the incomplete sections for the dedication ceremony.

During the same period, Morgan assisted Maybeck in the building of Wynton, a vacation home for Mrs. Hearst on the McCloud river near the Oregon border. When Maybeck's original structures burned down years later, Hearst would hire Morgan to reconstruct the site.

Mrs. Hearst continued to enjoy Morgan's architectural designs and began to commission her for works away from Berke-

ley. From 1903-1910, Morgan worked on her first major solo commission for the Hearst family, the Hacienda del Pozo de Verona (an old hunting lodge) in Pleasanton, California. Refurbished in the Spanish style, the original ranchos were expanded into a social center and a gathering place for Mrs. Hearst's many charities. The luxurious Hacienda contained a music hall, a swimming pool, verandas, a sunken ballroom, stables and sport facilities and was richly decorated with European art.

A co-founder of many women's clubs, Mrs. Hearst was known for her "patriotic efforts [and] eagerness to support the new class of working women"⁷ and remained "interested [in women's organizations] without ever being belligerent about it."⁸ Providing important exposure and connections, she encouraged Morgan to design and construct buildings for these new organizations. This continual support led to commissions for Morgan to build the King's Daughters Home in Oakland, the YWCA Building at San Francisco's Panama Pacific International Exposition, and Asilomar, among others.

The two shared a close kinship. As one person comments in *The Julia Morgan Architectural Project*, "Each enjoyed the exhilaration of working with the other's extraordinarily able mind."⁹ Morgan was always thankful for Mrs. Hearst's generosity, and in 1919, she expressed this "affection and admiration"¹⁰ in a letter:

So through it all is the thread of your kindness since those Paris days when you were so beautifully kind to a most painfully shy and homesick girl. My mother's and yours are the greatest "faiths" put in me, and I hope you both know how I love and thank you for it.¹¹

Mrs. Hearst's death a month later was a great loss for Morgan.

Despite the loss of his mother, William Randolph Hearst continued to support Morgan. Due to Morgan's long time connection with his family, it seemed only natural that Hearst should hire her for his many major building projects, the first of which was the Herald Examiner Building in Los Angeles, commissioned in 1915. This building was designed in the Mission Style and included the traditional arches, decorative iron, and plaster-work. Hearst remarked after the building was completed:

Miss Morgan, the architect, commendably accomplished the task of constructing a building that is thoroughly practicable, for all newspaper demands and which, I am glad to note, combines with its efficient qualities those pleasing traits reminiscent of an architecture which is identified with the beautiful and romantic history of Los Angeles and of California. I think she has accomplished the result happily and effectively from all points of view.¹²

Soon afterwards, Morgan and Hearst began work on the “Enchanted Hill,” a project that would last over 20 years and bring them both fame and exposure. Hearst adored the ranch on “Camp Hill” near San Simeon, and in many ways, visiting the area was like coming home for him. Shortly after his mother’s death, Hearst walked into Morgan’s office and stated that:

Well, I’m a little tired of camping out on that campground up on the hillside.... I want to build something a little bit more comfortable and I was in this old bookstore in Los Angeles the other day and I was looking over some of these “bungalow sets.” The one that appealed to me most is this one.... I know you won’t think much of the title, but nonetheless, it does rather please me in its general lines. It is this one, the Swisso-Jappo-Bungalow.¹³

The project soon developed from a simple dwelling and grew into a magnificent complex which housed Hearst’s extensive art collection. With great truth, Morgan herself once commented that, “I am building a museum [at] San Simeon. I am not building a residence.”¹⁴

Morgan worked at San Simeon on the average of three weekends every month during actual building. She would leave her office after work on Friday night and take the six-hour train ride to San Luis Obispo. Arriving at two in the morning, Morgan then took an hour and a half taxi ride to San Simeon and had little time for rest before meeting Hearst for breakfast. She made this trip over 500 times, but was often too busy to mingle with the Hollywood crowd and maintained a low profile at the site.

From the beginning, it was apparent that this was going to be a monumental task, both in terms of the recognition it would bring Hearst and Morgan and the physical difficulty of the construction. The first challenge that Morgan encountered at San Simeon was the isolated location. Halfway between San Francisco

and Los Angeles, the complex was approximately 50 miles from the nearest railroad station. Morgan first constructed a dock, a road leading up the steep hill, and water, power, and sewage systems. The accessibility and transportation of materials were difficult throughout the project.

Morgan was also involved in many non-architectural concerns at San Simeon. Keeping a close eye on the project, she controlled the finances, paid the workers, and hired and maintained a steady work force, despite the resistance of many craftsmen to working in this remote area.

Hearst himself posed many difficulties. He was often demanding and a large portion of time at San Simeon was spent on reworking, additions, and demolition. "Often it seemed as if the San Simeon project were one long struggle to satisfy a fickle client and circumvent his interference, for Hearst constantly changed his mind about what he wanted."¹⁵ The majority of the correspondence between the two was the discussion of changes, and over the course of the project, Morgan rebuilt a pool two times, moved a fireplace twice, relocated three large trees, and added a new structural system to a section of the main house when Hearst wanted one more story built. When Morgan visited San Simeon, Hearst felt free to make notes on her carefully prepared blueprints, and referring to Morgan's designs, he once wrote that "Mine are *not* ordinary drawings."¹⁶

Another challenge was the incorporation of Hearst's antiques. Mrs. Hearst once stated that "Every time Willie feels badly, he goes out and buys something."¹⁷ Morgan had to accommodate this expansive art collection, which included tapestries, statues, silver, paintings, panels, stained glass windows, ancient tile work, and furniture from European castles.¹⁸ In addition, she dealt with numerous art dealers and also oversaw the cataloguing of Hearst's collection. Although Morgan became frustrated and impatient at times, she never complained.

Hearst and Morgan were always on the lookout for new designs to incorporate at San Simeon and the complex progressed quickly. By the early twenties, the three guest houses were com-

plete, and in 1925, Hearst held a housewarming in the main house. Work continued for many years, but slowed during the Great Depression, and by the early forties, Hearst and Morgan began to focus their attention on other projects.

San Simeon's "Bastard-Spanish-Moorish-Romanesque-Gothic-Renaissance-Bull Market-Damn the Price"¹⁹ architecture is spectacular. Together, the buildings consist of over 140 rooms, each of which incorporates unique historical objects. Each structure has a plain tile roof, intricate decorations, and smooth walls which reflect sunlight like Spanish Missions.²⁰ Morgan linked the complex's many facets by "a plan of walks, flower beds, [and] landscape features that [brings] all together into a harmonious whole."²¹

Certainly the best-known building at San Simeon is Casa Grande. Its two arched towers resemble a Spanish country church; when discussing them with Hearst, Morgan once remarked that "the fine 'looming-up effect' grew on [her.]"²² The building boasts an assembly hall complete with tapestries, a sixteenth century ceiling, and a dining room housing an Italian dining-table, silk banners, wooden figures of saints, and five-hundred-year-old Spanish choir stalls. Morgan took uncharacteristic pride in Hearst's challenges like this intricate structure.

Morgan also designed San Simeon's gardens. Fashioned in the California-Mediterranean style, the grounds are filled with a variety of trees, flowers, and vegetables and are accented by art work which ranges from ancient sarcophagi to Art Deco sculptures.²³ Morgan directed the "placement of statuary, fountains, ponds, pergola, animal shelters and pits, and planting schemes,"²⁴ and her "asymmetrically symmetrical" terraces add an essential imbalance to the gardens.²⁵ In addition, Morgan constructed a poultry farm and a large private zoo.

Morgan and Hearst both shared an interest in pools, and special attention was given to San Simeon's. The Neptune Pool, called "the most sumptuous swimming pool on earth,"²⁶ is highlighted by marble work and an ancient, engraved Greek temple. Blue and gold Italian glass tile decorates the indoor Roman Pool,

a “glittering blue Grotto” which took over three years and \$400,000 to build.²⁷

Apart from the architecture, an interesting contradiction arises concerning Morgan and her relation to the fame of Hearst’s ‘Castle.’ While some historians feel that the project increased public awareness of her work, other authors believe that Hearst and the building itself overshadow Morgan’s success. John Beach, in defending her accomplishments, remarks that, “What is overlooked is how deliberately, how compellingly, and how powerfully it fulfills exactly that intention [to be a place of fiction], while simultaneously accommodating efficiently, and even matter-of-factly, the complex and sybaritic Hearst life-style.”²⁸ In conclusion, the building is truly a California landmark and “personifies [the state’s] bizarre combination of aspiration realized and insubstantial fantasy.”²⁹

From 1924 to the early forties, Morgan worked on the second largest Hearst project, the reconstruction of Wyntoon, an area of 65,000 acres not far from Mt. Shasta in Northern California. Over the years, the complex had been badly damaged and, when Maybeck’s old castle had been cleared away, Hearst decided to construct a set of buildings to house his German art collection.

In keeping with the mountainous location, Morgan and Hearst decided on a mysterious, Bavarian style. The complex includes swimming pools, tennis and croquet courts, and a movie theatre. Named “Cinderella,” “the Bear,” and “Sleeping Beauty,” three guest houses are playfully decorated with murals and stone mantles, porcelain stoves, and chandeliers. Ancient fountains accentuate the architectural charm. Morgan remained deeply interested in both San Simeon and Wyntoon; the two are equally extraordinary.³⁰

Toward the end of the project, Morgan began slowing down as her energy dissipated with age. She loved Wyntoon, which became her retreat from both ill-health and the professional difficulties experienced by most architects during World War II. This fairy tale world brought out her natural enthusiasm, and she delighted in the location’s beauty.

San Simeon and Wyntoon were not Morgan's only commissions from Hearst. She also remodeled the San Francisco Hearst Building in 1937, built several radio stations for the Hearst Globe Wireless Company, constructed the Hearst Cosmopolitan Headquarters in Hollywood in 1928, and, between 1925 and 1926, designed the Phoebe Apperson Hearst Memorial Gymnasium at Berkeley. Several of Morgan's designs for Hearst never fully materialized such as a complex in the Grand Canyon, of which only a small cabin was built, and the unfinished Barbicor Hacienda in Chihuahua, Mexico.

In the early 1940s, Hearst commissioned Morgan for one last project, the "Medieval Art Museum" in San Francisco. It was based on a Spanish monastery, Santa Maria de Orila, which was dismantled and brought to the United States. Now in her seventies, Morgan wanted to "build a source of pride for the city."³¹ Unfortunately, the project was never completed since the building materials were badly damaged in a fire and the city's interest cooled.

On a more personal note, Sara Boutelle calls the relationship between Hearst and Morgan "a collaboration of extraordinary magnitude."³² Not only did they produce many spectacular buildings, but the two also shared "a genuine and respectful friendship...which included [Morgan's] ability to enjoy his enthusiasm and his humor in what were often challenging moments."³³ Morgan had a similar spirited sense of humor. When Hearst, complaining about a gardener, wrote that, "He makes me cry," the ironic and understated beginning of her next letter read, "I am sorry you had cause to weep."³⁴

The two shared a common interest in architecture and the California landscape. Morgan once commented that, "if he had chosen that career he would have been a great architect."³⁵ While Hearst relied on her organizational skills, Morgan was "impressed that he could understand her architectural drawings."³⁶ Both shared a desire for quality and Morgan saw "integrity" in Hearst's "genuine love of antiquity and of accomplishments of the past...and understanding of history and art and horticulture."³⁷

In this unique relationship, Morgan was Hearst's equal and was greatly valued for her intelligence. They discussed architectural designs almost constantly, often to the neglect of others, and Hearst was known to give her his full attention when she was at San Simeon. Walter Steilberg, one of Morgan's assistants, once commented:

She sat directly across from Hearst, and they were talking back and forth, and gesturing, and he was drawing things, and she was drawing things....It wouldn't have surprised me at all to see a little spark travelling from one skull to another, back and forth, because these two very different people just clicked.³⁸

Certainly of utmost importance in this relationship was Morgan's flexibility. Her ability to adapt to her client's wishes was tremendous, especially since Hearst's "needs' bore faint resemblance to those of ordinary humanity."³⁹ One author comments, "Morgan understood that Hearst's passion for building represented a deep, psychic need and she accommodated all of his whims and alterations."⁴⁰ Morgan was able to accept his childlike and "willful behavior"⁴¹ and "knew that Hearst, because of his wealth, lived in an unreal world in which he expected things to be exactly the way he wanted them...Hearst and she worked together very well...most of the time."⁴²

Indeed, Hearst's "propensity to change his mind...caused major problems."⁴³ He was often unrealistic and sometimes did not have adequate funds for his inflated plans. One of Morgan's engineers stated, "[This] was the trouble. It didn't give Morgan a real chance to use her talent as a planner. She was like a man playing the piano backwards."⁴⁴

Morgan, however, was by no means dominated by Hearst. In fact, Sara Boutelle hypothesizes that Morgan brought out his best. Modesty was Hearst's greatest sacrifice and for Morgan he was "his most charming, a devout amateur in the best sense of the word."⁴⁵ In the *Julia Morgan Architectural History Project*, Morgan's nephew comments:

Many people simply kow-towed to him in every way, shape, and form. Whether she approved of the place or not, she wasn't going to

sacrifice her principles...I think that was her price—that she was able to build things on a scale that in private enterprise would be virtually impossible.⁴⁶

This “empathetic friendship based on the closest professional association” flourished “despite Hearst’s mercurial temperament,”⁴⁷ yet Morgan remained the creative, rational force.

Many people agree that Morgan, Hearst’s mother, his wife, and Marion Davies were equally the most important women in his life. Walter Steilberg, one of Morgan’s colleagues, agrees; “I don’t mean there was any romantic idea at all, but there was a very strange, in a way, sense of comradeship there.”⁴⁸ Simply, these two outwardly dissimilar people shared a common bond. “Miss Morgan and Mr. Hearst had this in common—they were long distance dreamers. That didn’t mean that they necessarily had the same dreams, but they were looking ahead, way ahead.”⁴⁹

This prolific “bond” left a lasting legacy and allowed Morgan not only to shape Hearst, but also to mold California’s architecture and history. The two provided a great service to each other. While Morgan was able to actualize his dreams into tangible architecture, her patron brought her talents to the public’s eye. The Hearst Castle remains her most well-known work; for many, it is an atypical claim to fame for a so quiet and reserved an artisan.

IV. An Unwilling and Obdurate Heroine

Miss Morgan is a pioneer among western women architects. She is regarded in her profession as the one outstanding architect.¹

Berkeley Daily Gazette, May 15, 1929

Morgan reached her goal of becoming an architect and met this challenge confidently. She was seemingly not motivated by wealth, rank, or fame, and her lack of interest in material gain attests to her personal ethics. Never earning more than \$10,000 a year even while working on projects such as San Simeon, Morgan generously shared the office’s profits with her co-workers.² She

had a personal impact on those around her, and her concern for others makes her a fitting role model.

As an architect, Morgan's professional success was based on commissions. From this standpoint both the quality and quantity of her work are extraordinary, but her accomplishments run deeper. She had "impeccable credentials"³ and was known for her "mastery of practical knowledge" and attention to detail and craftsmanship.⁴ Similarly, Walter Steilberg, a long-time colleague of Morgan, noted that, "Not only was she one of the most talented of the West Coast architects; she was also far more accomplished in the area of building technology than any of the men I have known."⁵

In *Making America; The Society and Culture of the United States*, Leland M. Roth discusses American architecture and writes:

Building is based in the art of compromise, for every building represents the end result of countless adjustments and changes and is a judicious balance of conflicting needs and aspirations on the part of the client, the architect, and the builder. Americans, perhaps more than any other builders, have been caught between divergent needs and desires—between the impulse to build pragmatically and efficiently and the simultaneous wish to realize a conceptual ideal. What they want is pragmatic perfection.⁶

Morgan "offered thoughtful compromise between the facts and the fairy-tale"⁷ and therefore helped to resolve these "divergent needs and desires." As there was no signature Morgan style, but rather a "Morgan stamp,"⁸ she truly designed for the client, both financially and stylistically. This flexibility was the downfall of many architects, but Morgan's concern for the client's "physical and spiritual needs"⁹ was her strength. As Allan Temko remarks, "This great Californian deserves in American architecture at least as high a place as Mary Cassatt in American painting, or Edith Wharton in American letters."¹⁰

Morgan's architecture also relates to her success in a different light. When reflecting on her work, one notices the wide variety of styles in which she worked. Is this perhaps related to Morgan's challenge as a professional woman? Although Sara Boutelle strongly disagrees, author Joan Didion wrote, "Morgan

was immensely eclectic—adaptable to a fault. She would construct whatever fantasy a client seemed to require, which is perhaps the only distinctively feminine aspect of her career.”¹¹ On the other hand, John Beach remarks, “It may be that the drive to be as competent in every way as the men in her profession inhibited or subdued her creativity, made her more cautious as a designer than she might have otherwise been.” However, when considering the beauty of San Simeon, this may indeed be what Beach himself calls “a dangerous conjecture.”¹²

Morgan had a warm yet reserved personal style and shunned publicity. It would be inaccurate to portray this “unwilling and obdurate heroine”¹³ as an overt activist. Similarly, Morgan did not want to be remembered as a “woman architect,” and it is essential to note that she “is one of the important architects of American history,” regardless of her gender.¹⁴

This personal modesty had a definite effect on Morgan’s professional success, often shielding her from criticism. “Morgan never protested...injustices. Her passion for professional anonymity, however, served in part as an antidote to sexual discrimination, since by minimizing her own visibility, she maximized opportunities for independent, unprejudiced evaluations of her work.”¹⁵ Not desiring special treatment, Morgan “played by the rules...[and] won [her considerable victories] by quiet, determined perseverance and a peculiar sense of self-confidence and self-effacement.” Finally, John Beach presumes that “she courted near obscurity to escape possible ridicule and condescension.”¹⁶

Despite her efforts, Morgan was subject to criticism like everyone. On a rare personal note, many colleagues described the difficulty of working for such a “strict perfectionist” and felt that Morgan set an example of diligence and skill which they could not match. Her work habits were also scrutinized and co-workers became dissatisfied with the fact that she alone met clients. In addition, Louis Schalk, one of Morgan’s draftsmen, disapproved of her practice of hiring young women. He believed that an all-male studio would prove more efficient, and commented in a letter to Morgan:

No doubt you have often wished at least one girl would amount to something, but I believe that there will not be another in 10 years.... You cannot quote yourself as an example because I firmly believe that you are one in centuries, as a woman architect.¹⁷

However, most criticism of Morgan was concerned with her architecture. Some critics believed that she was a follower, a “journeyman,” and lacked artistic originality. Early in her career, Chaussemiche once commented, “She will make a very good architect. Her taste in ornamentation, however, will require correction. In common with compatriots, Miss Morgan mixes style a little too much, but this slight fault will pass away.”¹⁸

Despite the criticism, the real testament to Morgan’s accomplishments is the current rediscovery of her work. In an ironic way, she is successful by her own criteria. Morgan once stated that “my buildings will speak for themselves,” yet, “she could not help to be pleased to know, however, how well her constructions speak for themselves.”¹⁹

If Morgan was a success, can she also be called a pioneer? I feel that this is an accurate description of Morgan’s role as a professional woman. She patiently broke new ground for others both at the Beaux-Arts and in California in general, and “with a minimum of fanfare, collected many firsts during her 85 years.”²⁰

In fact, *Women in American Architecture: A Historic and Contemporary Perspective* describes Morgan as “the most prolific... of the pioneer women architects.” The book further distinguishes Morgan in the following passage:

Like most pioneers, the architects described in this chapter can be considered “exceptional women.” They were certainly exceptional for their time. All three—Sophia Hayden, Marion Mahony, and Julia Morgan—...were determined in their pursuit of their professional goals....[and] the buildings they built were of public significance. The difference among them is one of degree in the fulfillment of the exceptional woman’s role: Hayden’s professional career ends with her first and last building; Mahoney’s wanes after her marriage; and Julia Morgan attains full expression and success at the price, however, of an unrelentingly absolute commitment to her professional work.²¹

Morgan prepared others for this same path by supporting scholarship funds for women college students and promoting

woman professionals. Ginger Wadsworth writes that, “Many talented young artists, men and women, earned their reputation with Julia because she encouraged and recognized their skills.”²² Morgan commissioned women artists, such as Maxine Albro, Marian Simpson, Margaret Herrick, and Doris Day, and many later developed successful careers apart from her.²³

More importantly, Morgan encouraged and hired women architects, Charlotte Knapp, Dorothy Wormser, Elizabeth Boyer, and C. Julia Mesic to name several,²⁴ and by 1927, 6 out of 14 employees were female.²⁵ Morgan offered these women emotional and financial support, encouraged them to complete their architectural training and licensing, and maintained close contact with former female employees. They did not, however, receive special treatment; all of Morgan’s employees faced high expectations.

Despite this concern, Morgan had a shrewd business sense. In 1920, Rose Luis, a Berkeley architecture graduate, was denied a position in her office because Morgan did not want to risk losing commissions with a single-sex firm and was careful to maintain a balance of men and women.²⁶

Morgan understood the difficulties of being a woman architect and was sympathetic to her colleagues’ struggles. In *California Alumni*, October 23, 1915, she stated:

Few women persevere as architects although many take up the study. Many are impatient to reach the top of the ladder too soon, matrimony takes others, but the greatest lures are the teaching positions in the high schools. There is a large field for women there, and as the salaries are good one cannot blame them for accepting unless they are determined to become architects.²⁷

Although Morgan encouraged other women in her field, this was a difficult task. Morgan North comments, “the women in the office...were largely in secondary roles [to the men],” and in the same interview, Susan Reiss wonders if “Morgan was able to make herself clear enough to these women...about how much she really valued them.” During her lifetime, the number of woman architects remained low, and no one appeared to have Morgan’s determination and commitment. Her niece discusses this disappointment in the *Julia Morgan History Project*:

Mrs. Coblenz' comment on the women who did try to follow her—she called them “Mrs. Morgan’s female children”—was that they all disappointed her, because they let things such as husbands, children, easier jobs, etc., influence their staying there. Because she was a very exacting, demanding person, and felt that they should appreciate the fact that they were constantly learning.²⁸

Morgan was always reluctant to be used as a role model and “refused to allow her success to be used as evidence that women could compete and succeed.”²⁹ There is even some uncertainty about Morgan’s impact as a pioneer. In the article “A Distinguished Generation of Woman Architects in California,” Harriet Rochlin agrees that female architects have historically been rare, but conjectures that Morgan’s career came during a favorable, not a hostile, time. She writes, “It is now clear that in California, roughly from 1900 to 1929, the first women breaking into architecture were more hospitably received than at any time before or after...A handful launched distinguished careers and made historic contributions to an emerging regional architecture.” Rochlin cites co-education, plentiful work, supportive mentors, and the women’s rights movement for inspiring “dozens of California women” with “pioneer fervor to prove themselves as professionals.” In her view, during this period, “talent and dedication outweighed gender.”³⁰

Even Morgan herself doubted her leadership role, although she maintained great hope for the future. This is shown by her statement in the *Christian Science Monitor* of November 27, 1931:

I think it is too early to say what contribution women are making in the field of architecture. They have as clients contributed very largely except, perhaps, in monumental buildings. The few professional women architects have contributed little or nothing to the profession—no great artist, no revolutionary ideas, no outstanding design. They have, however, done sincere good work along with the tide, and as the years go on, undoubtedly some greater than other architects will be developed, and in fair proportion to the number of outstanding men to the number of rank and file.³¹

Morgan’s professional role affected the women’s movement as a whole, and despite her reluctance, she clearly was a

model for others. Cary James remarks that “Julia Morgan [became] a living embodiment of the ideals of the women’s movement. She was an independent working woman, intelligent, well-educated, and highly successful.”³² Morgan was a source of pride, as shown by this article in a 1929 newsletter of the Berkeley Women’s City Club, given in response to Morgan’s honorary Doctor of Laws from the University of California:

It is a great happiness to see her [Morgan’s] genius so broadly recognized and appreciated. For a woman to have achieved such distinction in a field...which has so comparatively recently been invaded by women is an achievement which is a cause for rejoicing by women in all creative fields of endeavor. This honor to Miss Morgan becomes, therefore, through Miss Morgan, a gift to all.³³

Morgan’s life serves as an example of the changing roles of women, of new growth and awareness, and her work for the YWCA and other groups illustrates the increasing cohesion of women and their organizations. Her choice of profession was also important. The article entitled “Women in Architecture: Historic Beginnings” begins:

Not surprisingly, working women, some of them architects, were responsible for the...dissemination of some of the most advanced thinking about the domestic environment. Traditionally, of course, the house as a building type has been inextricably linked with women’s social and sexual roles, offering opportunities first for their enslavement, and later, their liberation.³⁴

In Morgan’s time, other women were also making headway in architecture, and she was, simply by her career choice, in the company of reformers.

Matina Horner writes, “American women have played an integral part in founding, settling, and building our country. Some we remember as remarkable women who—against great odds—achieved distinction in the public arena.” In both the literal and figurative sense, Morgan is indeed a “community builder,”³⁵ and Ginger Wadsworth confirms, “Julia was a part of the women’s movement even though she did not call herself a suffragist.”³⁶

Finally, Cary James comments:

Though she never sought fame, Morgan fought for the right to practice a traditionally male profession. By her dedication—and sheer talent—she won the respect of her colleagues and clients. Encouraged throughout her career by women,...she gave as much to the women's community as she gained from it, employing women architects, sponsoring women's students, and paving the way for women who hoped to follow her.³⁷

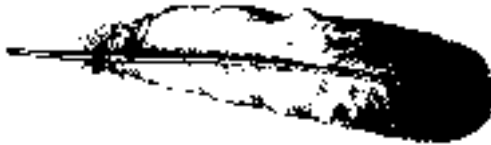
In 1929, the University of California at Berkeley presented Morgan with an honorary Doctor of Laws degree. The citation for this honor offers a beautiful and fitting remembrance. This description reads:

Distinguished alumna of the University of California;

Artist and Engineer;

Designer of simple dwellings and stately homes,
of great buildings nobly planned to further the centralized
activities of her fellow citizens;

Architect in whose works harmony and admirable proportions
bring pleasure to the eye and peace to the mind.³⁸



Section I: “Work Itself Overcoming Its Natural Disadvantages”

¹ Sara Holmes Boutelle, Julia Morgan Architect (New York: Abbeville, 1988) p. 19

² Ginger Wadsworth, Julia Morgan: Architect of Dreams (Minneapolis: Learner, 1990) pp. 12-13

³ Cary James, Julia Morgan Introduced by Matina C. Horner, “American Women of Achievement Series” (New York: Chelsea House, 1990) p. 29

⁴ Boutelle, p. 21

⁵ Ibid., p. 21

⁶ James, p. 29

⁷ Wadsworth, p. 12

⁸ Ibid., p. 10

⁹ Mary E. Osman, “Julia Morgan of California: A Passion for Quality and Anonymity,” American Institute of Architects Journal June 1976: p. 45

¹⁰ James, p. 29

¹¹ Boutelle, pp. 21-22

¹² James, p. 29

¹³ Wadsworth, p. 19

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 20

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 14

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 15

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 15

¹⁸ James, p. 36

¹⁹ Boutelle, p. 23

²⁰ Wadsworth, p. 19

²¹ Patricia Failing, “She Was America’s Most Successful Woman Architect—And Hardly Anybody Knows Her Name,” Artnews 80 January 1981: p. 67

²² Boutelle, p. 23

²³ James, p. 40

²⁴ Wadsworth, p. 20

²⁵ Osman, p. 45

²⁶ James, p. 40

²⁷ Boutelle, p. 25

²⁸ Wadsworth, p. 21

²⁹ Boutelle, p. 29

³⁰ Ibid., pp. 29-30

³¹ Ibid., p. 30

- ³² Wadsworth, p. 22
- ³³ James, p. 43
- ³⁴ Failing, p. 67
- ³⁵ Boutelle, p. 29
- ³⁶ Ibid., p. 30
- ³⁷ Ibid., p. 30
- ³⁸ Failing, p. 67
- ³⁹ Boutelle, p. 31
- ⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 31
- ⁴¹ Ibid., p. 30
- ⁴² Ibid., pp. 30-31
- ⁴³ Wadsworth, pp. 22-23
- ⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 23
- ⁴⁵ James, p. 47
- ⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 47
- ⁴⁷ Boutelle, p. 39

Section II. "The Women's Connection"

- ¹ Cary James, Julia Morgan Introduced by Matina C. Horner, "American Women of Achievement Series" (New York: Chelsea House, 1990) p. 63
- ² Ibid., p. 63
- ³ Julian C. Mesic, "Berkeley Women's City Club," Architect and Engineer 105 (April 1931) p. 25
- ⁴ Sara Holmes Boutelle, Julia Morgan Architect (New York: Abbeville, 1988) p. 83
- ⁵ Ibid., pp. 83, 84
- ⁶ James, p. 71
- ⁷ Ginger Wadsworth, Julia Morgan: Architect of Dreams (Minneapolis: Learner, 1990) p. 58
- ⁸ Ibid., p. 63
- ⁹ Boutelle, p. 55
- ¹⁰ Patricia Failing, "She was America's Most Successful Woman Architect—And Hardly Anybody Knows Her Name," Artnews 80 (January 1981) p. 69
- ¹¹ Wadsworth, p. 32
- ¹² Boutelle, p. 57
- ¹³ Ibid., p. 59
- ¹⁴ Ibid., p. 59
- ¹⁵ Mary E. Osman, "Julia Morgan of California: A Passion for Quality and Anonymity," American Institute of Architects Journal (June 1976) p. 45

- ¹⁶ Boutelle, p. 89
¹⁷ Wadsworth, p. 66
¹⁸ Boutelle, p. 89
¹⁹ Ibid., p. 92
²⁰ Ibid., p. 95
²¹ Ibid., p. 95
²² Ibid., p. 89
²³ Ibid., p. 95
²⁴ Failing, p. 70
²⁵ Ibid., p. 70
²⁶ Mesic, pp. 25, 33
²⁷ Boutelle, p. 87
²⁸ Ibid., p. 127
²⁹ Wadsworth, p. 64
³⁰ Ibid., p. 64
³¹ Boutelle, p. 127

Section III. "Long Distance Dreamers"

¹ Robert C. Pavlik, "'Something A Little Different': La Cuesta Encantada's Architectural Precedents and Cultural Prototypes," California History: The Magazine of the California Historical Society (Winter 92/93) p. 467

² Ibid., p. 476

³ Ibid., p. 472

⁴ Ibid., p. 476

⁵ Ginger Wadsworth, Julia Morgan: Architect of Dreams (Minneapolis: Learner, 1990) p. 19

⁶ Sara Holmes Boutelle, Julia Morgan Architect (New York: Abbeville, 1988) pp. 170-171. The original letter is in the archives of the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

⁷ Ibid., p. 170

⁸ Walter Steilberg, "The Work of Julia Morgan and Walter Steilberg" an oral history (conducted in 1974), in "The Julia Morgan Architectural History Project," Regional Oral History Office, University of California, Berkeley, 1976, vol. 1, p. 54

⁹ Taken from the article, "She Built for the Ages," Kappa Alpha Theta Newsletter 1967. The article is reprinted in the "Julia Morgan Architectural History Project," Regional Oral History Office, University of California, Berkeley, 1976, vol. 1, p. 170b

¹⁰ Boutelle, p. 174

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 92. The original letter is in the archives of the Bancroft Library.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 174

¹³ Patricia Failing, "She Was America's Most Successful Woman Architect—And Hardly Anybody Knows Her Name," *Artnews* 80 (January 1981) p. 70

¹⁴ Wadsworth, p. 73

¹⁵ Cary James, Julia Morgan Introduced by Matina C. Horner, "American Women of Achievement Series" (New York: Chelsea House, 1990) p. 80

¹⁶ The Julia Morgan Collection, The Robert E. Kennedy Library, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. This letter is dated September, 1925.

¹⁷ James, p. 75

¹⁸ Wadsworth, p. 73

¹⁹ Failing, p. 70

²⁰ James, p. 77

²¹ Wadsworth, p. 76

²² Boutelle, p. 188

²³ Pavlik, p. 472

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 474

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 472

²⁶ Wadsworth, p. 95

²⁷ James, p. 83

²⁸ Therese Heyman (introduction by), Architectural Drawings of Julia Morgan: Beaux-Arts Assignments and Other Buildings, an exhibit at the Oakland Museum, 1976 (Oakland: Oakland Museum, 1976) This quotation comes from the exhibit catalogue's companion article "Julia Morgan: An Architect from Oakland" by John Beach, first page (The article is unnumbered).

²⁹ *Ibid.*, first page

³⁰ Boutelle, p. 217

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 238

³² *Ibid.*, p. 174

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 174

³⁴ The Julia Morgan Collection. These letters are dated June 2 and 3, 1926.

³⁵ Wadsworth, p. 74

³⁶ James, p. 85

³⁷ Morgan and Flora North, "Julia Morgan, Her Office, and a House," an oral history (conducted in 1973, 1974), in "The

Julia Morgan Architectural History Project,” Regional Oral History Office, University of California, Berkeley, 1976, vol. 2, p. 181

³⁸ Steilberg oral history, vol. 1, p. 63

³⁹ Failing, p. 70

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 70

⁴¹ Wadsworth, p. 84

⁴² James, p. 83

⁴³ Boutelle, p. 184

⁴⁴ Wadsworth, p. 89

⁴⁵ Boutelle, p. 176

⁴⁶ North oral history, vol. 2, pp. 219, 220

⁴⁷ Boutelle, p. 176

⁴⁸ Failing, p. 71

⁴⁹ Steilberg oral history, vol. 1, p. 61

Section IV. “An Unwilling and Obdurate Heroine”

¹ The Julia Morgan Collection, The Robert E. Kennedy Library, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. Record Group 1, Box 02, Series 06

² Patricia Failing, “She Was America’s Most Successful Woman Architect—And Hardly Anybody Knows Her Name,” Artnews 80 (January 1981) p. 71

³ Sara Holmes Boutelle, a personal letter to the author, dated August 21, 1993

⁴ Mary E. Osman, “Julia Morgan of California: A Passion for Quality and Anonymity,” American Institute of Architects Journal (June 1976) pp. 47, 48

⁵ Sara Holmes Boutelle, Julia Morgan Architect (New York: Abbeville, 1988) p. 45

⁶ Luther S. Luedtke, ed., Making America: The Society and Culture of the United States (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1992) p. 215. Taken from the essay “A New Architecture, Yet Old,” by Leland M. Roth.

⁷ Osman, p. 48

⁸ Ginger Wadsworth, Julia Morgan: Architect of Dreams (Minneapolis: Learner, 1990) p. 44

⁹ Failing, p. 69

¹⁰ Cary James, Julia Morgan Introduced by Matina C. Horner, “American Women of Achievement Series” (New York: Chelsea House, 1990) p. 105

¹¹ Failing, p. 68

¹² Therese Heyman (introduction by), Architectural Drawings of Julia Morgan: Beaux-Arts Assignments and Other Buildings, an exhibit at the Oakland Museum, 1976 (Oakland: Oakland Museum, 1976) This quotation comes from the exhibit catalogue's companion article "Julia Morgan: An Architect from Oakland" by John Beach, fourth page. Endnote covers the information from "On the other hand" to the end of the paragraph.

¹³ Beach, fourth page

¹⁴ Boutelle letter

¹⁵ Failing, p. 68

¹⁶ Beach, third and fourth pages. This endnote covers information from "Not desiring special treatment."

¹⁷ Boutelle, p. 44 and 86. Both the paragraph and the quotation are included.

¹⁸ The Julia Morgan Collection, Record Group 1, Box 02, Series 06

¹⁹ Failing, p. 71

²⁰ Osman, p. 44

²¹ Susan Torre, ed., Women in American Architecture: A Historic and Contemporary Perspective (New York: Whitney Library of Design, 1977) pp. 64, 70. Both the paragraph and the quotation are included.

²² Wadsworth, p. 93

²³ Boutelle, pp. 84-85

²⁴ Ibid., pp. 85-86

²⁵ James, p. 62

²⁶ Boutelle, p. 86

²⁷ Ibid., pp. 86-87

²⁸ Flora and Morgan North, "Julia Morgan, Her Office, and a House," an oral history (conducted in 1973, 1974) in "The Julia Morgan Architectural History Project," Regional Oral History Office, University of California, Berkeley, vol. II, pp. 222, 223. Both the paragraph and quotation are included.

²⁹ Beach, fourth

³⁰ Harriet Rochlin, "A Distinguished Generation of Women Architects in California," American Institute of Architects Journal (August 1977) p. 38. This endnote covers everything from "There is even some uncertainty" to the end of the paragraph.

³¹ Boutelle, p. 87

³² James, p. 62

³³ The Julia Morgan Collection, Record Group 1, Box 02, Series 05

³⁴ “Women in Architecture: The New Professional, Historic Beginnings,” Progressive Architecture (March 1977) p. 38

³⁵ James, pp. 7, 8 from introduction by Matina S. Horner. This endnote covers everything from the beginning of the paragraph.

³⁶ Wadsworth, p. 63

³⁷ James, p. 105

³⁸ Boutelle, p. 49

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