

Here is to Solomon's next lectures, his next project and his next book. But more so to the immense value of education and a university in the life of debate on our shared futures. Love vs. Hope captures all of this. And with appreciation to so many voices at the CED that I have not mentioned here including current faculty whose work I deeply admire. It's a school that I continue to learn from.

Neither / Or is not an Option

Daniel Solomon's *Housing and the City*:
Love vs. Hope is really about both

MICHAEL BELL¹

Abstract: If you found the value of Daniel Solomon's newest book, *Housing and the City: Love vs. Hope*, in the direct urban query and analysis you would walk away with an immense amount of careful, academic but, also simply relevant concern about cities and what is possible – with creativity. In *Love Vs. Hope*, *Love* is calibrated to what Solomon has referred to as the continuous city; a sustained reinvention of historical pattern. *Hope* refers to disruptions or breaks with history; for better or worse, leaps that break the continuity of urban form. Solomon does not consider himself so much a scholar as a thinker, a practitioner and a deeply careful listener – to history, to leading figures from history, but more so to the tenor of the city itself. He read environments, seeking the forces that made them or more so what assumptions made them possible. Solomon does not avoid the stated / official narratives but he is unique in and completely apart from many of his peers in where and how he unearths the subtext of cities; the voices that are less overt, the assumptions unstated (we all make) that need to be unearthed to in fact confront.

Love vs. Hope reveals this in both detail and concept – the effect, both intellectual and material, is that Solomon leaves the reader unable to resort to major dichotomies of our recent histories – divides that often thwart academic discourse and that also leave cities often in the hands of everyone but architects and planners. Solomon moves from the real politic, to the academic as forged in specific eras, but also to the more personal posture of creative intellects.

Love vs Hope should not be held to account for the details I point to, and I don't mean to revise its conclusions. I do think it's important to see the book for its structure and polemical nature; Solomon might not

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want to see it this way, but I think he is creating a collage and series of sign posts; vectors and stoppages that have the effect of setting standards (of thought and action), but also that can dangerously be mis-cues. Solomon is constantly operating between professor and practice. *Love vs Hope* is surely about housing, but it's also a serious call to examine how we forge our identities and steel ourselves: what gives us the confidence to act and how do we acknowledge and craft a modesty that can see the continuity of the city (of lives) as we also try to shape its evolution.

Preface

Leaving 1036 Mission Street I found myself looking backwards, trying to sort out the experience I'd just had. A rapid-fire tour of a new building in San Francisco's Mission District; an affordable housing, mixed use work of architecture designed by Daniel Solomon. On this afternoon Solomon was focused on both completing the building's final few punch list items and also giving me a tour of this and several other works nearby. Solomon was deeply engaged and alternately distracted; he was moving quickly down the street after the tour – ahead of me, already.

1036 Mission is an 83-unit apartment building, and a mixed-use structure. Completed in 2018. Sitting on 1.45 acres, it was both high-density but also carved out, opened and filled with light. The lobby was at least two stories tall, asymmetrical. Light flooded the space down a wall and onto a generous wood bench. It felt more like entering a university library than a housing complex. Security was set deep into the building – a low profile desk that in our case was not populated. The space was relaxed; but you could see the quasi-station points – it was not unlike entering the lobby of Wurster Hall at U.C. Berkeley where Solomon is professor emeritus. Residents were seated on the bench, others took mail from the long elegant bank of mailboxes – a large community room opened to one side. But I was distracted and it was Solomon's fault. He was too fast; knew his work was new and perhaps important, but he was too much in the moment to know how important or at least how complex. By "the moment" I mean too much in the past 30 years of architectural history. I was in the current moment as well, but also back in 1982. I was on the Mission Street of 1982 (when I first visited "the Mission") and trying to get a grip on the phases, the junctures and the ways in which San Francisco had changed and not changed. In 1982 Low-Income Housing

Credits didn't exist; HOPE VI, the federal program to instigate mixed-income development in Public Housing didn't exist. Peter Calthorpe had not yet sketched the early DNA of New Urbanism – “pedestrian pockets”. The Mission district and Mission Street have a long history yet since the dawning of the now defunct dotcom era the neighborhood has rapidly lost diversity. Solomon knows this and was thrilled his work would help keep people who might otherwise leave. The social side of this is critical; but what I was lost in was how abrupt the shift was. On exiting 1036 Mission we were instantly back in the San Francisco of today and the hyper gentrification was obvious, at the next structure. But what also was difficult to sort out was the often-beautiful qualities of Solomon's work: the entry, the upper hallways, the courtyards, the pacing but also the typologies and near autonomy he often strives for. 1036 has wide hallways; it has beautiful light. The buildings have fundamental qualities not seen in most commercial works. The tour of 1036 Mission as well as 1180 Fourth Street deeply affected this writing. They revealed subtlety complex spatial qualities to the work that sustains the “hope” side of “love vs. hope. The tour revealed the split personality of practice; the historical imagination of history; the punch list and the race to build relevant work in a city where gentrification has exceeded any historical definition.²

1. Love vs. Hope (recovering from Hope)

In the still recently published archive – *Team 10, 1953-1981* – interviews, letters, meeting photographs and texts from an array of Team 10 members illuminate a behind the scenes view of Team 10. The voices are a preview of the emerging period of architectural education that followed in the 1980's. The archive brings Team 10 up to 1981, but it is queries and concerns that emerged in the mature work of Team 10 – that reflect on the late 1960's and early 1970's experiences of its major figures – that still seem poignantly unresolved. They have a great deal to do with Daniel Solomon's book *Housing and the City / Love vs.*

2. In 2016 Urban Habitat published “Race, Inequality, and the Resegregation of the Bay Area”. The report describes a deep reversal of gains made in racial diversity in Bay Area cities and counties in the last decade. Link to report: <https://urbanhabitat.org/sites/default/files/UH%20Policy%20Brief2016.pdf>

Hope and I think with the wider tenor of life at Berkeley's College of Environmental Design in the 1980's where Solomon taught.

How Solomon and the CED community of faculty engaged this period, the immediate aftermath of Team 10, in retrospect seems to have been as the transformed conscience – of Team 10 – if not its formal languages. The book, edited by Max Risselada and Dirk van den Heuvel, left me thinking that the Berkeley Solomon helped shape (and that I entered first a student then faculty member) was an early barometer of what the nation's architecture schools struggled with and at times paved over and hid. A struggle with scale, with the limits of architectural vs. urban design and planning, but more so with the increasing distrust of the patronage of government (in housing, in particular) and of architects simultaneously doubting their own authority and authorship.

Love vs. Hope, in the form of autobiography, polemic and historical lens, shines a light on this period. In some ways stubbornly not letting go of a time, but also elegantly and patiently begging us to not forget the scale of concern for life – for people – but also the literal mechanics of building and building from, that was at the core of rebuilding cities after World War II. *Love vs. Hope* operates where the city and architecture meet – at a scale where innovation, change, evolution, disruption are born. The effect is to see change as it emerges from the discipline of architecture, but also from the state, from the investors, from the users and owners – from people. With some edge to the commentary Solomon critically suggests change often arrives in near-reckless ways (as “Hope”); mis-readings of history and place and need have offered superficial results. The architect assuming postures that are based in these mis-readings misses the literal facts before them and the subtle signals from history.

Team 10, 1953-1981, was published by NAI Publishers, Rotterdam in 2006. The extensive archive includes several passages scattered throughout the volume on George Candilis. In the late 1960's / early 1970's Candilis reflects on the decade long construction of housing and urban planning at Toulouse le Mirail. The text places Candilis' observations in the context of him calling for a self-critique –

of Candilis-Josic-Woods work at Toulouse, but also of key components in Team 10's formal/spatial and ultimately social mechanisms. A key question that arose was that of *formal repetition*; in architectural form, in construction (and standardization – did it help with construction quality?) and in this case in housing design. The notes reveal something I had never even imagined in the context of Team 10; an emerging and overt sense of vulnerability and doubt that was only visible once they were deeply and well into the realization of their work. Candilis was asking Team 10 to face the literal scale and social ambition of their work, but also their own viability in the politically contracting welfare state that had been their patron and a conscience and ethical identity for their social cause. That state was under duress, it was shrinking, but also Candilis was realizing the scale of the role he played in thousands of people's lives; in the design of their daily lives.

I have to admit at the outset that I've known Daniel Solomon since 1986 – I met him when I was a student at Berkeley and later co-taught with him at the College of Environmental Design, Department of Architecture. We've had an ongoing conversation since that ebbs and flows and that has always been fueled by both of us returning to things that *register* – things we left unresolved in conversations. This often includes me pushing him to consider a subtext that sometimes rings true; and is sometimes shot down in minutes. Solomon is not shy to debate; his confidence comes from having been very hard on himself – even diminishing his own achievement, but I also think it comes from the everyday of practice and a lifetime of working with clients for whom polemics have little value. When he does shoot back he is not defending himself, or trying to be smarter, but often is simply saying he didn't see something in his work, or that history was not what I (or someone else) am saying it was. He does not exaggerate his claims and I've often felt this allowed him to put his work out there in a fair way. He will tell stories of his earliest commissions and losses of opportunities; he is clear eyed about his work and experience.

Over a six-year period I worked closely with Stanley Saitowitz and Daniel Solomon teaching design studios in various matrices at

Berkeley. While at Berkeley I began what I imagined would become a new CED journal that instead evolved into a book project. With my partner Sze Tsung Leong (also a CED alumni, later editor of the *Harvard Project on the City*) we published this as a compendium of essays on architecture and urbanism titled *Slow Space* (New York: Monacelli Press, 1998). *Slow Space* was completed at Rice University and deeply influenced by the context of Houston and sister cities such as Los Angeles (a comparable post-war sprawl) or Detroit (a comparable post-1970's disinvestment). Overarchingly urban in its direction, *Slow Space*, was accompanied by a parallel project titled *16 Houses: Owning a House the City*. The two works were in many ways a form of reconciliation with what I'd been exposed to at Berkeley – a search for an ethics of architecture in the context of the wider urban milieu that left architecture a very small actor in the emerging and deeply uneven global economy (of Houston in particular). In the context of *Love vs. Hope* Solomon shows strains that are more historical. Solomon's context moves from San Francisco, to Los Angeles but also to Rome and Vienna, to Columbia and Berkeley – from the histories he was taught to the ones he experienced. *Slow Space* made a direct reference to New Urbanism (of which Solomon is a founder) in its introduction: we claimed that New Urbanism was reducing the discussion of urbanism to a static form of geometry (of town planning) in ways that neglected (or masked) the liquidity (the flow) and deterritorializing forces of globalization. *16 Houses* was more directly architectural: while it traced the devolution of the public sector's direct funding for Public Housing (a decline in the welfare state) it also asked what might architecture offer in such a macro political and economic shift. *Love vs. Hope* is similar in its scope, and I think Solomon elegantly refuses to offer a simple answer. New Urbanism was far from a by-stander in all of this: the mid-90's Clinton Administration HOPE VI programs – HUD / congressional funding mechanisms for the repair and renovation of by then neglected Public Housing – made New Urbanism the official architectural/urban language the program. They literally are signers of the HOPE VI funding act. Despite all of this, Solomon, seems to have kept an intellectual distance from New Urbanism and in reading *Love vs. Hope* you can see the arc of his career before and apart from his affiliation with key New Urbanist leaders such as Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, Andrés Duany and

Peter Calthorpe. Love vs. Hope shows Solomon as a professor and in some ways using tenure to sustain some distance from practice.

Under the Clinton Administration HOPE VI quickly enacted the demolition of 300,000 +/- Public Housing *hard units* (actual apartments). The nation's Public Housing Authorities went from holding 1.3 million hard units to approximately 1 million over a span of four years. The lost hard units were *replaced* with as many or more Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) *soft units*; the new apartments (homes) were funded by tax credits (Treasury/IRS instruments awarded to nonprofit developers who then sold and syndicate their value to a wealthy corporation for equity). Instead of direct government investment state assistance takes the form of deferred tax revenue – in effect it is “off the books”. The lost dwellings were transferred from being for the poor and working poor (those making 30% or less than area median income) to being affordable (for those making 70% or more of area median income). The wider matrix called for mixed-income housing development and was accompanied by other HUD programs to help instigate this. In what had been solely Public Housing development sites it moved what had been more centrally planned, designed, built and operated Public Housing closer to a type of normal market based real-estate's development. Towards a quasi-privatization of affordable housing. Solomon has built in this in this milieu for two or more decades and has staked a position here that would advocate for the people it serves but also for how it breaks development down to a smaller often near-building scale. It is an urbanism and social agency that revolves around single buildings, often woven or distributed into the urban fabric of cities. The sleight of hand here is, however, sincere: in disaggregating the federal funds from large scale development the former (post-New Deal) welfare state is in effect distributed into a finer architectural as urban grain. As many 3.1 million units of LIHTC incentivized housing were built in the United States since 1986 (when the Reagan era tax law created the instruments). If the goal was to bring the grain of federal funds closer to the per capita distribution of people and need (forgetting for a moment the loss of actual Public Housing hard units) what Solomon helps give rise to is a quasi-autonomous form of architecture that in meeting that grain is thereby relieved of being the full representation of the state.

That is, if Team 10 felt the pressure to be both urban planning and architecture – i.e. equity and everyday life – as well as the construction of infrastructure and domestic space, by the late 1960's it was inheriting criticism of the state as criticism of Team 10. Solomon's building, are not without inflection to everyday life and the subtlety of human need, but they are also at times classical in their form making and structural in how they shape public space. They are works of architecture often with a capital A. In their distributed array, they are not, however, a *total* environment as Team 10's work was.

Solomon's career and work occur wholly in the aftermath of globalization; the 1970's post Bretton Woods economy. Here again Solomon's architectural rather than urban design direction sustains him. As the flow of money became more liquid in an era of globalization the incantation of place in New Urbanism seemed to become more static. Its forms harkened to the urbanism of a pre-global economy – even a pre-industrial economy. Solomon, throughout *Love vs. Hope* seems to chafe at this. He knows too much urban and architectural history to not see the limits of this, and while he clearly falls on the side of a tighter grain and continuous form of historical place, he also fuses that incantation of place with a nuanced reading of how place and its forms emerge. This is particularly true where he speaks of concepts of fabric and monument in cities – and what he sees as New Urbanism's simplification of this dichotomy.

When I first got to know Solomon, he was emerging as an architect *with* an urban direction. I recall him speaking of professional work with the major land holder Catellus (in California and the west). Catellus held historic railroad rights of way that had long ceased being used for railroad work. Solomon as I recall was engaged with Catellus to help them develop properties; a particular concern was to give the developments a small grain or scale without literally and legally going to the effort to break them up as property. Far from Team 10, this work was nonetheless about the scale of patronage, about the forms of control over property that by nature the public suspects as inordinate – form of control and power that had to be in part hidden to be palpably sustained.

This was a moment when Solomon shot back quickly: this was a real project; real legal and financial history and it needed an answer now. Solomon rarely spoke of a buildings being realized in isolation of the wider urban context, but he also was not an urban planner by training nor did he demonstrate a desire to go far beyond the precinct or practice of the building. The building was a kind of safety valve, a governor on the exertion of power over people's lives. It also allowed him a way to access what he more likely sees as the discipline of architecture – it also kept the state at bay, the client and to some effect the personal side of the user. Solomon was in retrospect something closer to Aldo Rossi in speaking of the city thru architecture; seeking the limits of the practice as a fuse to the role of money and other forms of power.

I recall at that time sitting in on a lecture by Edward Blakely, Professor of City Planning at the CED. In this lecture I never forgot Blakely describing the elevated freeway infrastructures that racially divided Oakland and segregated populations from work, from transportation, from access to better lives and jobs. Today this would be largely seen in the context of social justice and equity; at that time, it felt like the front end of schools of design, planning and architecture beginning to see how form manifests itself as power. Berkeley was thrilling in this regard. At the CED the fusion of design and social ethics was everywhere; the fusion of progress vs. place and the side effects or forms of damage that works that claim progress often make were part of every discussion.

Solomon was often somewhat cool to the heat of the debates – *Love vs. Hope* shows him able to criticize himself, but also his partners in positive and creative ways. It shows in wildly inventive thinking as well – in *Love vs. Hope* he reprimands his own compatriots in New Urbanism for overly simplifying a key dichotomy between monumental building types and urban fabric in architecture and urban planning. He points to a more liquid mode of *fabric* that he sees as literally (geometrically) and historically (evolutionary) more active and nuanced. In this realm fabric is complex and qualitative, like monuments, it is also being born of and it can be disruptive. In a short passage on page 167 of *Love vs. Hope*

Solomon shows he's willing to counter a movement he helped form (by challenging what he sees as a reductive side of New Urbanism), but also launch a reading of form that is stable and dynamic at once (simultaneously). Sometime his "love" of the city stymies what is otherwise an abstract and animate reading of form. Solomon describes what he called motion and flow in urban fabric and chastises New Urbanism for making the dichotomy too static. To put this in context, and risk some criticism myself; a reader could imagine Solomon's observation within the opening paragraph of Lars Lerup's *Stim & Dross: Rethinking the Metropolis* (Assemblage no. 25, 1994). Lerup begins his essay with a view to what might be the fabric of Houston.

"Houston, 28th Floor; At the Window. The sky is as dark as the ground; the stars, piercingly bright, a million astral specks that have fallen onto the city. On this light-studded scrim the stationary lights appear confident, the moving ones, like tracer bullets, utterly determined, while the pervasive blackness throws everything else into oblivion. The city a giant switchboard, its million points switched either on or off. Yet behind this almost motionless scene hovers the metropolis, and the more one stares at it the more it begins to stir."

Lerup continues:

"Visible patterns in the glass may be few, but the individual points and their various qualities and constellations are many: cool and warm, red, green, but mostly yellow. Closer – or better, in the lower portion of the glass – the moving lights easily match the intensity of the far more numerous immobile ones, suggesting the monstrous possibility that none are definitively fixed. All is labile, transient, as if it were only a question of time before these lit particles would begin to move - billiard balls on a vast felt-covered table – unless the table is not in itself a fluid in motion? Physicists abstract from these flux-fields features such as smoothness, connections to points-particles, and rules of interaction (among sources, sinks, cycles, and flows). "Where space was once Kantian, [embodying] the possibility of separation, it now becomes the fabric which connects all into a whole." "Nothing on the plane is stationary, everything is fluid, even the ground itself on which the billiard balls careen." ³

3. Lerup is referring to Martin Krieger's *Doing Physics: How Physicists Take Hold of the*

So, what is the risk in the above? Solomon and Lerup were colleagues at Berkeley for two decades; the faculty included Christopher Alexander and Donlyn Lyndon, immense voices at the nexus of architecture and cities; but also, it included Clare Cooper Marcus whose post occupancy survey methods might have helped Candilis better understand the people Team 10's work housed (heuristically modeled by the state). Berkeley's faculty included an extraordinary range of voices who had imagined their own trajectory – thousands of miles from post-war central Europe and its state developments. Thousands of miles away from the eastern schools that had shaped the reception of this work in the United States. Solomon and Lerup would seem academically far apart by the references they relied on (and colleagues they cultivated) – and the wider CED faculty certainly did not believe they were solving Team 10's aftermath. Its provocative to so simply contrast them here, but it's hard to not see the CED as a hot bed of intense professors, for whom the battle's described in *Love vs. Hope* were real. It forged a creative zone where strong and talented personalities often clashed – frequently around how the architect (and their education) was to imagine the person they worked for and with. It would be impossible to mention the scope and depth of this faulty in a short essay; but it included Horst Rittel (*wicked problems*); Spiro Kostof and designers who were deeply connected to the Bay Area and place, but also to more universal aspect of modernism. The later includes Gary Brown house's in the Berkeley Hills and Howard Friedman offices and campus/factories for Levi Strauss. For a long period of time this was held together and cultivated by Richard Bender, CED Dean, who today will tell you how carefully and intricately he saw the faculty's talents and ideas. He saw well past the conflicts that sometimes spilled over into public view. *Love vs. Hope* traces experiences from Solomon's entire career even as he is still deeply active as well. It would be hard to see the book apart from the academic context of his debates – apart from the CED.

2. *A New Utopia and Blank Slate*

A new utopia and blank slate or a modest entry to the historical fabric? Solomon is descriptive of his work in literal ways. Parts of *Love vs. Hope* enunciate the figure-ground of San Francisco, its fabric in a drawing by John Ellis (page 42) and another by Florence Lipsky (page 43). The Lipsky drawing showing the grid of San Francisco meeting the hills in part gives context to the Solomon's reading of *acceleration* and *movement* in fabric. This is not New York's grid but something far more topographic and also occupied by a host of wooden low-rise structures (not New York's masonry and steel). These are buildings often made by hand. Lipsky is mentioned in the context of Anne Vernez-Moudon's book *Built for Change*. Stanley Saitowitz drawings gave similar form to the city; Saitowitz, like Solomon, has practiced a form of urbanism by way of architecture. Like Solomon he also recognized the immense scale the hills give San Francisco and the often near uniformity of building types that become more unique by site. An *active* fabric allows historical context to persist and change; buildings themselves innovate and grow within type. It also allows place to be the conception of its own propensity to change. Change is born within (within the fabric).

In the late 1960's the housing project at Toulouse le Mirail was still under construction as Candilis began to exit the scene – largely, but not fully realized it now could house a significant portion of the 20,000 people it was designed for. There was a burgeoning awareness that the work had taken a decade to build, (was it obsolete in ways before done?) and that the post war reconstruction and then welfare state that undergirded such works was waning. Protesters called for less central control over building; students demanded professors disengage from work so centrally / top-down controlled. Candilis in an interview speaks of coming to the conviction that the people who shall live in a place – an architectural work of this scale – should have some hand in building it. In the United States one can think of the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) originally founded in 1964 under the Johnson Administration, and led by Sargent Shriver. OEO required local actors to be part of development and programs where federal funds met neighborhoods. It was in part a way to show the positive effect of federal funds and to thwart abuse of such funds. OEO also

helped defuse criticism of a welfare state by helping make it more accountable to people. When I first encountered the Team 10 archive in 2006 – it seemed to shine a light on my entire architectural education and while there are literal connections to Berkeley (Giancarlo De Carlo was a guest at the CED and in conversation with Donlynn Lyndon and Richard Bender, for example) they also retroactively give some context to the wider post-modernism and later post structuralism that dominated the school's many of us teach at. There are still *wicked problems* (Rittel's term) at play in the world, there is still top-down forms of power, but they more likely manifest into the calculus of banking and trading systems, in institutional forms of segregation and exclusion. Power is dissimulated into what Michel Foucault often revealed as a formal means of power over people and territory.

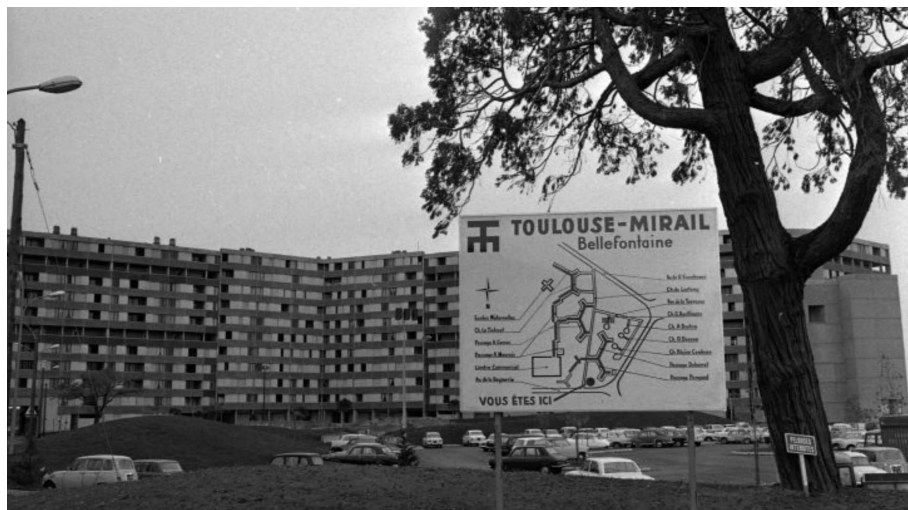
I often felt that Team 10 was a missing part of my education; a kind of phantom and immense scale of work that was being *put away* (retired) by one generation as we began our own education. Populations were heuristically modeled by Team 10; social ambition was correlated to a formal apparatus of often exquisite care and proportion (Adèle Naudé Santos, worked with Candilis as she emerged from school, and can discuss the famous 120-degree angle prevalent in the building forms); means of construction were industrialized with the 'hope' that they might raise the standard of living for people (even as they made it materially less local). For my generation this work seemed to have been transformed from liberator to oppressor – I can't recall hardly a class where it was shown. In the archive one finds Candilis opening these questions himself – in *Love vs. Hope* I feel Solomon is doing something similar. He is diagnosing his work; at times its refreshing and a bit startling to see his criticisms of peers, but he does not fully spare himself either. With some humor I took this as a formidable use of academic tenure – I was grateful to see Solomon use his academic standing to instigate debate and like Candilis call for self-and institutional criticism.

Faced with criticism from both within and without Team 10 on the cusp of the 1970's seems to realize that they must re-cast their way to engage society – not, per se, its forms, not even its scale in the end. But to recast how the ideals of an *emergent* and *self-organizing* social life that the architects imagined could flourish in their works. Perhaps facing an inevitable generational backlash, or something far

larger, the 1970's students asked who their professors worked for – they demanded an ethical reply to the concept of client, of patronage (Aldo van Eyck and Jacob Bakema were, according to editors Risselada and van den Heuvel, censured by TU Delft for acting as a “lackey of capitalism” “even after they had themselves actively contributed to the democratization of decision-taking in the Architecture Faculty). The editors also note a rising tide of consumer culture that they see as contributing to the distrust between people and government, between makers and users. This would only accelerate in the post 1970's global economy and the nature of place in relation to commodities would be further exacerbated. Solomon's earlier book, *Global City Blues*, touches on this; in *Love vs. Hope* he is more open ended about how we got here, and polemical about how to think it through. I'd venture the struggle Team 10 was facing in the 1960's and early 70's was a sign of something far larger than generational change and something that is today still barely resolved – a kind of ethical concern that has shaped architectural schools since and that places architectural practice in yet newer forms of crisis in relation to who we work for. This is where I think *Love vs. Hope* is based and why Solomon is still asking for answers. This is, in a way, his most important work. One can put aside his conclusions and only abide his polemics – the scope of this book's concern is vital and alive in this way.

Love vs. Hope is from its outset a purposeful conundrum: are we really to choose one or the other. We need both. If the immense scale of Toulouse seems a past venture (safely ended) what would we make of the housing crash of 2008 – more people's homes were foreclosed on in the two years after 2008 (with little responsibility) than were ever built inside every form of social housing in the United States since the Catherine Bauer written Housing Act of 1937. Public Housing and its later evolution into Low Income Housing Tax Credits at the national level; Mitchell Lama and the Urban Development Corporation in New York City; and every other means of state or non-profit instigated housing in the United States does not add up to what was lost after 2008. Architects may have retreated from the scale of Toulouse; but

housing development did not retreat in scale. The post-1971 / post Bretton-Woods forms of globalization and financial speculation that ensued as Candilis walked away from Toulouse exploded in scope. This enabled the deep and enveloping financialization of what was otherwise a distributed form of small-scale, single-family houses in the United States. A housing form we endemically saw as *of* and *for* the individual (as anti-urban). The housing systems, repetitive and scalar to each house/household were, of course, aggregated into a deeply active and nuanced form of globally traded financial instruments. This formed a *fabric* of money (and housing) – leveraged in time and extrapolated into untenable values it came crashing down at a financial scale that threatened a second Great Depression. In the United States household debt had grown from being equivalent to 18% of GDP in 1947 to nearly 100% by 2006. The greatest share of the growth, however occurred in the post 1970's era and then explosively between 1999 and 2006. In the post Bretton Woods climate. *Love vs. Hope* is part autobiography; that is perhaps the *love* part (Solomon is remembering his home); the hope part is the *not* letting go of the creative possibility in disruption and perhaps large-scale change. Solomon will tell you he does not know housing policy as an expert might; this may be true, but he knows it far more intricately than virtually any architect. What he would claim to know is housing *form* and *urban form* and *Love vs. Hope* I think shows this residue of human's building – over decades. It is where he places his most full bet. But Solomon's entire career has also occurred against the backdrop of that post 1970's economy; without a central state-based client to be a direct patron Solomon forged a career that often relied on non-profits who were funded at the nexus of private and government monies. His work is deeply imbricated in the nexus of architecture as commodity, of home as an asset and speculative instrument, but also as architecture and home as a hedge against large and aggregate forms of power. The love side of *Love vs. Hope* sustains that grain; the hope side, I think still begs for something disruptive. I think our entire profession and in particular our schools seeks that. We are often treading water, dealing in hesitant bets with forms of authority and money we don't trust; our work is often deeply hedged pitting progress against doubt.



Toulouse Le Mirail, Bellefontaine District, November 13, 1970. Photograph: Fonds André Cros, The City Archives of Toulouse. Source: <https://www.toposmagazine.com/toulouses-infamous-mirail/#!/foto-post-11120-1>.

Castro Commons, San Francisco, California. Daniel Solomon Architect, 1982. Solomon's work on in fill housing in San Francisco spans nearly four decades. Photograph credit: Gwendolyn Wright.

Before I attended Berkeley, I knew Solomon's work from a publication in "Architectural Record"; it was the *Record Houses* annual edition of the magazine as I recall. He published a work for San Francisco, called *Castro Commons* – a small apartment house for the Castro neighborhood built in 1982. I have not looked at it in some time, but I recall three aspects of this design: it was enclosed in thin flush wood siding (a careful geometric – even modern – pattern and yet also vernacular); it used a 4x4 wood post for outdoor structure (a cube like form of wood, again modern in syntax and yet a back-porch SF vernacular); and it had two master-bedrooms in a recognition that the households might not be a nuclear family. Solomon in the 1980's had begun to trace the city's materiality; its forms and its evolving private and social life. *Love vs. Hope* here were simultaneous. Startling and beautiful (even comforting). It was a change in the very fabric of the city.

Love vs. Hope does have another conundrum at play: if its largest goal is to make place more equivocal in the making of architecture; it begs the reader to wonder – can a book frame its polemics in the context of historically pivotal thinkers. Fellini, Heidegger and Nabokov appear in Chapter 14 – I follow the argument made, but have yet to try to sort out if Solomon might have instead found voices inside his practice or the communities he worked in. In the 1980's San Francisco had a narrow but long swath of Public Housing at the base of the Hyde Street cable car in North Beach (as it met Fisherman's Wharf). Today the ship-like modern housing of that site (place) has long been removed and replaced by a neo-vernacular Low Income Housing Tax Credit development.⁴

It is effectively not the same form of housing, not the same political or financial structure (it went from Public Housing to LIHTC) and not the same level of income (and poverty or social need). I lived near that site several times in my life and am still startled at how fully but not quite erased this development is. Throughout *Love vs. Hope* Solomon shows a detail of knowledge about San Francisco and its

4. SF Public Housing – <https://www.sfgate.com/news/article/Projects-near-the-Wharf-to-be-raized-3120691.php>

streets and places; at the risk of seeming superficial I wonder if there are more characters from the places he has worked that might show up. The North Beach/ Fisherman's Wharf Public Housing came down in 1996 – the nationwide project of HOPE VI begun at HUD was funded in those years and at the national level eventually dismantled 300K plus Public Housing hard units. In Houston, another CED voice, Dana Cuff, had worked several years earlier to help save parts of a Public Housing development known as Allen Parkway Village (APV). In the later 90's I worked in Houston's nearby Fifth Ward. In Cuff's case she became a colleague of Lenwood Johnson, an advocate and resident of APV; I worked closely with Reverend Harvey Clemons on new housing in the Fifth Ward – Clemons was also pastor of the neighborhood's most prominent church. Solomon must have a deep network of people inside his development teams and indeed living in his works – people who in part made the works. In the end I believe the incantation of Fellini, Heidegger and Nabokov is an acknowledgment of his academic life; *Love vs. Hope* shows a professor in practice; in the context of history and its shadows and light; and in the realization that ideas can take hold for better or worse. That the local is far from safe – at risk of being coveted and owned by the non-local.

3. Coda: *Begin at the End*

As *Housing and the City: Love vs Hope* reaches its conclusion its final four chapters ramp up to today – to a statement on the budget at the Department of Housing and Urban Development (in 1976 vs. 2016), and to an image of homelessness on a San Francisco street and refugees on a boat in the Mediterranean; chapter 15 is devoted to a reading of a core history/theory class at Harvard's GSD; chapter 17 is devoted the state of the Congress for New Urbanism at 30 years. If *Love vs. Hope* were written to support something and dismantle something the two chapters and the eventual conclusion are a letdown: Solomon is a professor, and despite the outward appearance of his ultimate conclusions these chapters show him aware of the way influence is formed as much as he is aware of how vulnerable even formidable entities are. Some of this is clear in simply the cadence of the book's concluding chapters; even

if one feels its unfairly written (at times). He discusses not just the role historian/theorist K. Michael Hays plays in shaping discourse over this past 30 plus years, but the actual syllabus from his course at the GSD. Similarly, he devotes a chapter that questions New Urbanism's short history and a claim that not only is self-criticism overdue, but that he has some sympathy for those who see it as ossified. He is asking if New Urbanism is by necessity and thru self-inflicted wounds estranged from the academy – he thinks it is. With Hays he sees a course that is devoted to reinventing the modern project in part by casting the populist rejection of it as philistine. Solomon takes some time to get to this point but what matters as *Love vs. Hope* reaches its conclusion is that Solomon is trying to bridge a divide and in doing so he is in part dismantling both goal posts and foundations and thereby possibly the divide itself. He knows there is a division but that it may be somewhere more profitably defined.

It's rare I think to read such direct calls for self and outward criticism, but it would be a mistake to see these as an attempt to undo one position and turn it into another. Solomon's invoking Hays is not, I believe, an attempt to seek a change in the core classes at the GSD (or Berkeley or Columbia or UCLA...). I also don't think he is seeking to bring New Urbanism to a more reflective mode or become something it's not. *Love vs. Hope* is written for something larger than this – Solomon is seeking a key to his own experiences: he is doing so in the form of book and the meter and texture of the short chapters here are working analogically. He is asking us to *reason* with him, if one idea seems plausible what if you consider this one. He is polemical this way and very much a teacher/professor.

But there is a bigger picture and I think the reader has to seek this out or fall victim to the string of insights and details that each chapter offers. Solomon can be ironic as well; I'd think it's unfortunate if that image eclipses access to the book's depth – the author surely intends this as a means to alert you to the way he hopes to break down received histories. The reference to Hays is, however, far more resonant. Hays emerged a major force in architectural history and theory in the 1980's. His reputation is immense and his body of work is easily available – he does not need an introduction, but his work does go thru phases and like Solomon his decades long tenure as a professor means he is exposed a

changed political economy and constituency of place.⁵ While Berkeley had ways to access architectural theory the school offered no course like Hays' when I was a student at the school. At the time Michel Foucault was often on the Berkeley campus, hosted by Paul Rabinow⁶, but also the Rhetoric department was deeply influential – as I recall the comparative literature section at Moe's Books on Telegraph Avenue was thick with post-structuralism. Hays' earliest writing appeared in Yale's architecture journal, *Perspecta*: a particular essay, titled *Critical Architecture* appeared in *Perspecta* 21 and under the wider editorial spectrum of questioning the then resurgent themes of architectural autonomy. The editors laid out a series of essays and projects that showed architecture as historically a form of vernacular; as a form of autonomy and type, but also as type inflected by and shaped by people and place. Hays writing on Mies van der Rohe seemed detached from place in the way the editors imagined. Steven Holl, for example, published a selection of his work on urban and rural types – offering ways in which architecture in effect made the city. Hays wrote that Mies' architecture was both deeply empirical and lucid as fact, but that under light, and as built, becomes optically impossible to read. It “tears a cleft in the surface of reality.” In later writing Hays begins to address architectural history and theory and the passage of time since he became a professor himself. This is the writing by Hays that Solomon's writing might instead address. In the closing paragraphs of his introduction to *Architecture Theory Since 1968*, published in 1998 (MIT and Columbia), Hays wrote that younger readers (those students Solomon imaged in Hays' class) may have such an “altogether altered” relationship to consumption that they may be hesitant to engage in practices that resist the dominant economies of the city.⁷ Hays did not specify a vein of consumption (of media, of commodities, of the metals in a Mies' column) but as a reader I interpreted this broadly as a historical reference to the role of commodities in urban theory. To the neo-Marxism of his writing and others such as Frederic Jameson. Hays' career up to that point traced the rise of the global economy and the volume on theory in taking a post-1968 theatre also traced the deep changes in the

5. I recall my Berkeley undergraduate students who had gone on to Harvard for graduate school mailing me Hay's syllabus – I assume Solomon had the same experience as I did in a pre-email era.

6. <https://guides.lib.berkeley.edu/c.php?g=901488&p=6487003>

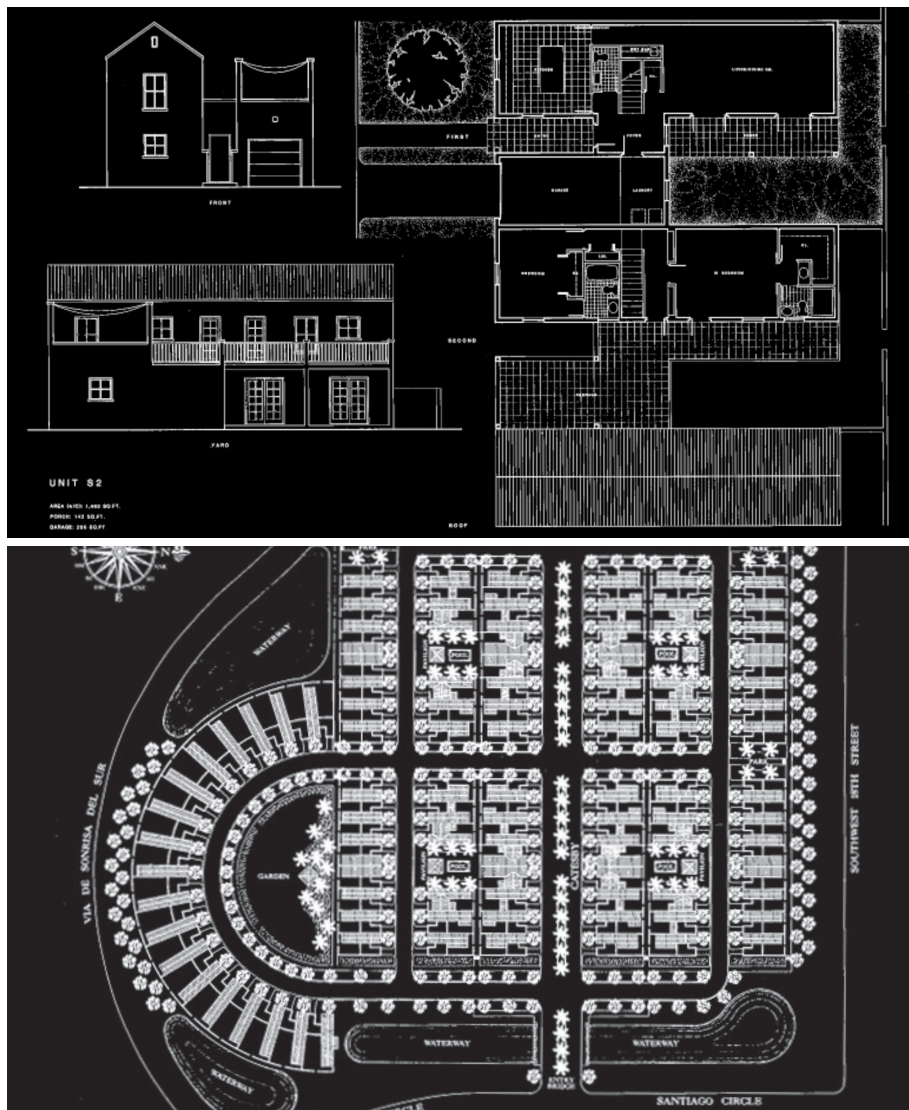
7. K. Michael Hays, *Introduction*, in K. Michael Hays (ed.) *Architecture Theory Since 1968*, MIT Press, Cambridge, 1998, xiv.

political economy of the world. In the 30 years since 1968, personal consumption (consumer spending) in the United States had increased from 58 percent to 65 percent of GDP. Now, in 2019, it is nearly 68 percent. The economic ground shifted under cities, under nations, and under architecture. Hays felt that a new generation was more willing, if only by necessity, to participate in or inflect commodity systems from within. In other words: the negative criticism based in Adorno that Solomon notes in Hays syllabus becomes more vulnerable and less attractive in Hays later thinking (at least he believes to his own students).

Team 10 felt that the rising consumer society around them, in the 1950's and 60's, had altered theirs and their users – people's – relation to a welfare state (as economy and city form). Thirty years later a deeply influential historian/theorist – Hays – was enunciating that the depth of commodity culture was such that it seemed to eclipse the imagination for something (anything) other. New Urbanism estrangement from the academy – if this is so – is often heralded as a form of “getting the job done” – New Urbanism is engaged with the real politic of the real world. But it is in itself deeply imbricated in commodity culture of every kind. What is often lost in all this is a finer discussion of what motivates creativity and agitates the designer towards change in the first place – before figures like Hays or Solomon and Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk (DPZ) gain notoriety. New Urbanism begins in part in tactics that Hays might have deeply approved of – as a way to avoid often the destructive normalizing forces of capital in real estate development. Forces that are often anti-urban in their place making. In describing a DPZ project before New Urbanism was formed DPZ write of “guerilla tactics” designed to subvert the status quo of suburban zoning, land use and development:

“When it was built in 1983, Charleston Place was the first traditional development based on an urban pattern to be executed in Florida in forty years. The project uses some of the best traditions of the American small town, which is understood to contain the following normative physical elements: a small-scale street network which becomes the primary ordering device, a housing type which may be perceived as an individual object but also defines the public realm, and a landscape pattern which is formally integrated with the order of the street.”

“Such elements were at odds with the “marketing principles” of post-war



Master Plan of Charleston Place, Boca Raton, Florida, USA, 1983.

development, as they were proscribed by Euclidian zoning codes. Only the manipulation of certain zoning definitions enabled Charleston Place to be built. Streets were labeled “parking lots” in order to circumvent enormous setbacks, walkways were labeled “jogging paths”, and so on. Despite the guerilla tactics, Charleston Place helped bring traditional urbanism back into the collective conscious of the urban planning and design profession.”

“However, despite its social and economic success, Charleston Place falls well short of being a true neighborhood. The zoning precluded an intended connection of this residential district with any adjacent retail, which could have provided a “downtown” for the residents.”⁸

Love vs. Hope cannot be held to account for the details I point to, and I don’t mean to revise its conclusions. I do think it’s critical to see the book for its structure and polemical nature; Solomon might not want us to see it this way, but I think he is creating a collage and series of sign posts. He posits vectors and stoppages that have the effect of setting standards (of thought and action), but also that can dangerously be mis-cues. Solomon is constantly operating between professor and practice; *Love vs. Hope* is surely about housing, but it’s also a serious call to examine how we forge our identities and steel ourselves: what gives us the confidence to act and how do we acknowledge and craft a modesty that can see the continuity of the city (of lives – Love) as we also try to shape its evolution (of Hope).

8. See: <https://www.dpz.com/Projects/8808>