the thread of this struggle can be seen to run throughout the American domestic work.

After his time with Smeaton, Latrobe then went to work for three years in the architectural office of Samuel Pepys Cockerell following the death of Cockerell’s mentor Sir Robert Taylor. The influence of Taylor’s crisp Palladian houses and of Cockerell’s more idiosyncratic designs runs through all of Latrobe’s later works. Latrobe’s departure to America was likely caused by mounting debts and the premature death of his wife. Early efforts to establish a reputation with published works in Virginia were followed by attempts to develop family connections in Philadelphia. Latrobe stowe to “define architectural practice in America for an unenlightened, sceptical populace” (192), a struggle reflected in the reduced quality of his commissions and his consequent straightforward designs. Simple neo-Palladian houses with thin construction and slightly attenuated proportions (to provide the height of rooms required to manage a hot climate) are a clear step down from the sophisticated stone enterprises at Hammerwood and Ashdown; as the authors write, “a struggle reflected in the reduced quality of his commissions and his consequently straightforward designs. Simple neo-Palladian houses with thin construction and slightly attenuated proportions (to provide the height of rooms required to manage a hot climate) are a clear step down from the sophisticated stone enterprises at Hammerwood and Ashdown; as the authors write, “an architect can become successful only if clients provide commissions” (514). However, the succession of houses do illustrate how Latrobe reinterpreted recurring design themes of his English work in an American context. Indeed, the process of watching Latrobe’s American work evolve through the pages of this book is one of its great pleasures and allows the reader to distill visually the defining features of what the authors assert is “the first consciously American domestic architecture” (588).

The “big break” must have been Latrobe’s meeting with the future president Thomas Jefferson as early as 1798, “through their mutual activities in the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia” (359). By 1802, President Jefferson had called Latrobe to begin work on the dry docks in the new federal capital, then under construction. Alterations followed on the president’s house—originally designed by James Hoban in 1792—which Latrobe described as “a great sow” (371). Although internal changes were not executed, those celebrated White House porticos that appear so prominently and regularly on CNN are the result of Latrobe.

Perhaps the most memorable and for the authors one of the “most creative and rational” of the American houses is the Pope Villa (circa 1810–13) at Lexington, Kentucky, where the “unorthodox front façade, with its ‘upside-down’ arrangement of huge, triple windows in the second story and small, single windows in the first story, reflected Latrobe’s distinctive distribution of public and service services” (586). A delightful circular central space inspired loosely by Palladio’s Villa Rotunda and Lord Burlington’s Chiswick House links the lower service and upper public stories of the Pope Villa. Latrobe’s building demonstrates how good proportion and planning could create architectural delight even with flimsy stud wall construction and local red brick. That Pope Villa survived is miraculous given an astonishing “gingerbread” reclad in the 1840s through 1860s, subdivision into ten flats during the 1950s, and a devastating fire of 1987. The remaking of its key interior spaces has not yet been carried out but it should, as this building is of international significance.

By the time of the Pope Villa, Latrobe was heavily engaged in his public works on Capitol Hill and at Baltimore Cathedral. Although it is noted that the “scenic route” through the Pope Villa is a reinterpretation of the planning in Latrobe’s southwest wing of the Capitol, the inevitable influence that these large concurrent works must have had on his domestic practice is barely discussed. Baltimore Cathedral is mentioned only twice in this lengthy tome, and one is left to wonder how Latrobe’s work on this building influenced his later houses, or indeed whether the experimental early houses such as Ashdown informed aspects of the cathedral. This feeling of omission makes wider comparison to other architects difficult to develop. The obvious closest parallel, Sir John Soane, evidently had much better luck with his later house designs. Wealthier clients and established patrons enabled him to develop highly detailed and sophisticated houses well into his career; for instance, the reworkings of Moggerhanger (1812) and Marden Hill (1818) and the rebuilding of Wotton (1820) all enabled him to experiment with wider themes and concerns that developed into and from his public works. Whether Latrobe’s domestic and public work cross-fertilized each other is not clear, although his final project, the State Bank of Louisiana (1819–20) in New Orleans, suggests that this may well have been so. A wonderful section of domes and apses reveals him to be an innovator to the very end.

One completes this book wondering what would have happened if Latrobe had stayed in England—more elaborate country houses in and around East Sussex maybe, but certainly this was a case of England’s loss being America’s gain.

Peter Pennoyer and Anne Walker
The Architecture of Warren & Wetmore

Mark Alan Hewitt, Kate Lemos, William Morrison, and Charles D. Warren
Carrère & Hastings Architects

Jeffrey T. Tilman
Arthur Brown Jr: Progressive Classicist

The works under review are united by a desire to restore the reputations of American architectural firms whose
achieved were eclipsed by the modernist bias of twentieth-century architectural history. These monographs undoubtedly establish the contemporary significance of these firms, but whether they challenge the modernist parameters of historical analysis, which first relegated their subjects to oblivion and even opprobrium, is another question.

Peter Pennoyer and Anne Walker have organized their study of Warren & Wetmore into chronological periods, and within these, by building type. The book is generously illustrated, primarily with historical photographs of facades and interiors but also with some building plans and street views. A portfolio of new color photographs allows the reader to appreciate the opulent palette the architects preferred. There is a catalogue raisonné that specifies whether a building is still extant and a select list of architects who worked for the firm. Footnotes for the most part are from historical sources, primarily architectural publications or newspaper articles.

The firm of Warren & Wetmore was formed in 1898, and the two principals remained active into the 1930s. Whitney Warren (1864–1943) and Charles D. Wetmore (1866–1941) moved in the highest social circles. Warren was educated at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in the atelier Daumet, spent ten years in Paris, and always maintained strong connections to Europe. He considered his most important commission not to be the Grand Central Terminal (1904–13) in New York, but the University Library (1922–28) in Louvain, Belgium, which was an outgrowth of his preoccupation with the destruction of historic buildings in World War I.

Wetmore was trained not as an architect but as a lawyer. (It was actually Leonard Schultze who was often in charge of the design work.) Wetmore had an interest in real estate development and was known to play hardball in dealings with his competitors. In fact, the authors blame him for the lawsuit brought by Reed & Stem, the firm’s partners at Grand Central Terminal, which Warren & Wetmore lost and which cost Warren his membership in the American Institute of Architects.

The Grand Central Terminal led to the commissions that shaped the firm’s oeuvre for two decades. Although Reed & Stem had won the competition for the railroad station, Warren used his social and professional connections with William K. Vanderbilt, chief executive of the New York Central Railroad, to insinuate his firm into the commission. The authors relate the predictably turbulent and sometimes unsavory history of the building process and celebrate the sequence of grand rooms, ramps, and shallow staircases that stage the circulation to the trains. This bravura performance they credit to “Reed’s practical planning and Warren & Wetmore’s architectural genius” (84).

As the Allied Architects, the two firms designed a number of terminals for the railroad in other cities, and Warren & Wetmore also designed several others on their own. But the bulk of the firm’s commissions were in New York City, many of them for luxury apartment buildings and hotels on real estate opened up when the railroad tracks were subsumed as part of the Grand Central Station project. The authors indentify the financiers and developers of these mises en scènes for the very rich, which almost single-handedly defined the urban character of Park Avenue from 47th Street into the mid-30s. At “The Mansions,” 270 Park Avenue, three triumphal arches crossed Vanderbilt Avenue as it passed through the building, and an Italian garden framed by an Ionic colonnade ran for almost a block. Warren and his wife moved in 1922 to 280–90 Park Avenue into an apartment with a double-height living salon that measured 20 by 46 feet. Warren & Wetmore’s concern with architectural details is the stuff of Pennoyer and Walker’s analysis, and quotations from contemporaneous sources suggest that Warren & Wetmore residences were hailed as le dernier cri in privileged living.

The authors’ focus on ornate details suggests a relation between stylistic élan and social status. However, their study raises issues that beg for further consideration. The biggest missed opportunity concerns the lack of discussion of the urban impact of the firm’s work. The authors rarely step back from the individual buildings, even though they credit Warren & Wetmore as “inventors of the modern cityscape” (146). Maps plotting the location of their buildings in New York City and more street views would have added a lot. The general lack of analysis of plans and sections limits understanding of the firm’s conception of the new social mores encouraged by their luxury hotels and apartment houses, the calibration of public and private spaces, and the calculations necessary to turn a profit for developers and investors. Such considerations would have better established the range of the firm’s achievement, but admittedly such sharp-focus analysis would have washed out the nostalgic light that colors this study.

The 11-pound, two-volume boxed set Carrère & Hastings Architects seems the product of another era—an oeuvre complète to rival the early twentieth-century four-volume monograph on McKim, Mead & White. The wide margins, heavy stock, and light sheen of the paper that enhance the elegance of the gray-toned historical photographs all suggest that the work of Carrère & Hastings deserves to share the honors accorded their more celebrated contemporaries. Although on first impression the photographs appear more significant than the brief essays, in fact, the essays by the four authors are substantive; they explain the particulars of each commission and, like the introductory essays that introduce the firm, are often elegant in precision and argument. A roster of the architects who worked for the firm supplements the text.

Thomas Hastings (1860–1929) and John Merven Carrère Jr. (1858–1911) became partners in 1885. Both had attended the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, though in different ateliers, and on their return both worked in the office of McKim, Mead & White. Mark Allen Hewitt says they were “among the best-connected architects of their generation” (21).
Their first major commission, as William Morrison relates, was the Ponce de Leon Hotel (1885–88) in St. Augustine, Florida, a pioneering example of the luxurious resort hotel, notable for its distinctive Spanish colonial classicism and panoply of social amenities. But it was winning the New York Public Library competition in 1897 that established the firm as civic architects. Kate Lemos’s essay on this commission, which is so central to Carrère & Hastings’s work and reputation, provides an institutional history of the library and an extended tour of the building as well as the branch libraries designed by the firm.

Hewitt’s analysis of the firm’s country houses, which is grounded in his earlier study of the building type, takes up most of volume two. He skillfully delineates the firm’s contribution to the development of the country house: “more than any other firm of their era, Carrère & Hastings understood the complex problem of translating European precedents to the American scene” (2:11). He credits them with unifying house and site through “the discipline of axial composition to organize space and the system of taxis in the orders to create scale and hierarchy in their houses and gardens” (2:13). His suave analysis of the individual buildings supports these generalizations.

If Hewitt admires Hastings’s fluent classicism and composition, Charles D. Warren values Carrère for his active engagement with issues of government patronage and new technologies. Born in Brazil and educated in Switzerland and France, Carrère is presented as a cosmopolitan with a distinctive concern for the relation between good government, urban planning, and architecture. Warren connects the firm’s commissions for the House and Senate Office Buildings (1904–5) in Washington, D.C., and the Manhattan Bridge (1908) to Carrère’s efforts to advance the Tarnay Act and active zoning. Significantly, he finds the same preoccupation with a unity of building and context in the firm’s urban projects that Hewitt delineates in his study of the country houses. With Carrère’s death in 1911, Hastings became less involved in the firm, which was finally dissolved in 1929.

This monograph makes the case for the value of multiple authors whose diverse viewpoints expand our understanding of the workings of the firm. The brevity of the individual discussions suits the heft of the volumes, which invites piecemeal forays rather than lengthy immersion, and the overall architectural quality and civic importance of Carrère & Hastings’s work emerges clearly.

The problems with the book are mainly logistical. The photographs are not referenced in the texts. The catalogue raisonné, arranged by date in volume two, is valuable, but turning back and forth to check it is arduous. The minimal captions of the photographs seem a bit precious, and the lack of an index in volume one is painful. Footnotes at the end of each section, rather than at the end of each volume, would have lightened the work of consulting them.

While the authors of the monograph on Carrère & Hastings broadly associate the firm’s preoccupation with classically ordered ensembles with the political and social climate of the time, Jeffrey Tilman’s study directly ties the work of Arthur Brown Jr. (1874–1957) to an ideal of a public realm characterized by enlightened institutions aligned with the larger good. Tilman’s characterization of Brown as a “progressive classicist” alludes both to his politics and to his approach to the classical language. Making intensive use of Brown’s professional and personal papers and information about the history and political context of the buildings, Tilman builds the case for Brown’s preoccupation with designing large-scale, visually coherent compositions for progressive-era America.

Chapters alternate between chronological overviews of select commissions and closer studies of the San Francisco Civic Center, the work on the Federal Triangle in Washington, D.C., and the campus plans and buildings at Stanford and Berkeley universities. Tilman’s approach, sustained through lively writing and numerous illustrations of drawings that document the design process, emphasizes Brown’s pursuit of big motifs and strong classical linkages to establish civic significance.

Unlike Warren & Wetmore and Carrère & Hastings, Brown was not part of the East Coast establishment but practiced in California, where he benefited from a well-connected social network. He established his reputation through a series of important competition successes, most notably that for San Francisco City Hall (1912–16). Although practicing from 1905 through 1927 with John Bakewell Jr. as Bakewell & Brown, as the designing partner, Brown is the subject of this study.

Brown studied at the University of California, Berkeley, with Bernard Maybeck and at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts at the atelier Laloux. Tilman’s analysis establishes the Beaux-Arts basis of Brown’s ideas about the importance of professional collaboration as well as the adaptation of old typologies to new uses and of classicism to new materials. His comparison of the types and scale of programs set for the Ecole’s concours and the commissions that Brown later received challenge ideas about the lack of practicality of an Ecole des Beaux-Arts education.

Tilman demonstrates that the lessons of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts play out variously in Brown’s work. At Berkeley City Hall of 1908, Bakewell & Brown’s first important civic commission, the firm responded to the region’s preoccupations with fireproof construction after the San Francisco earthquake of 1906 by designing the building in poured-in-place reinforced concrete. The “chunky, over scaled” giant Ionic order was not only appropriate to the material but recollective of the classicism associated with early California (39). The concrete buildings Brown designed for the San Diego Train Terminal (1915), Pasadena City Hall (1924–27), the San Francisco Art Institute (1924), and Temple Emanu-El (1926) in San Francisco offer stylistic variants of this boldly direct classicism. Tilman’s analysis of these works establishes both Brown’s signature use of domes and towers to create civic status and his revision of historical typologies. Courtyards and arcades,
often with changes of level due to hillside sites, invite public use and create ensembles of functions, even in relatively small commissions.

The highlights of the book are Tilman’s extended discussions of San Francisco City Hall and the Federal Triangle. The former is a study in design development. In it he establishes Brown’s ability to settle on a parti—in this case a grand, domed space to distribute the functional spaces within—and to locate the city hall as the focal point of the new multiblock civic center. Then through meticulous analysis of sketches and preliminary drawings, he traces Brown’s tenacious pursuit of an ordered relation among the elements, suggesting a metonymy between classical order, social coherence, and institutional transparency.

Tilman credits Brown with the general plan for the Federal Triangle, which he reworked for Edward Bennett, introducing the distinctive apsidal courtyard backed by a circular plaza. In his telling of the design history of the Federal Triangle, Tilman demonstrates how hard it was for architects, even those who worked with the classical language, to agree on its appropriate deployment.

Brown, who loved an architectural flourish, found himself at odds with—and more often outvoted by—architects associated with the Commission of Fine Arts who shared the more decorous approach of the East Coast architects’ proposals for the project.

Given the achievements of this relatively short book, it may be churlish to ask for more. Brown’s adaptation of classicism to concrete construction invites more specific discussion. Additional attention to the actual links between Brown’s “progressive” classicism and progressivist politics would have helped to define precisely Brown’s conception of an American civic realm.

In all these books, although much less so in Tilman’s, phrases like “Beaux-Arts,” “City Beautiful,” and “American Renaissance” and words like “modern” and “progressive” are sometimes deployed as if they are self-evident in meaning. However, the fine grain of a monograph on individual architects’ oeuvres should have afforded the opportunity to explore and redefine familiar terminology. Doing so would have helped to erode the now-exhausted polemical dichotomy between classicalists and modernists. The authors take as a given that the classically ordered civic realm, as an incontrovertible public good as well as an appropriate response to the conditions of American cities and society at the turn of the century, was challenged by a rising interest in European modernism. Because the authors do not adequately engage the substantive reasons for modernism’s appeal, they are not able to explain as well as they might the declining reputations of the American architects who subscribed to classical tenets. If the authors had more directly located the work within the architectural debates of the time, they would have advanced their efforts to delineate the ongoing significance of the architects considered in these books.

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Notes
1. For studies on modern living in hotels and apartment houses, see Robert A. M. Stern, Gregory Gilmartin, and John M. Massengale, Metropolitan Architecture and Urbanism 1890–1915 (New York, 1983), 272–306; Elizabeth Collins Cronley, Alone Together: A History of New York’s Early Apartments (Ithaca, 1990); Elizabeth Hawes, New York, New York: How the Apartment House Transformed the City (New York, 1993); and Marianne Lamonaca and Jonathan Mogul, eds., Grand Hotels of the Jazz Age (New York, 2005). This last study has particular relevancy because of Schultz’s role in the firm of Warren & Wetmore. Weaver also was associated with the firm on several apartment buildings, see in particular Keith D. Revell, “The Skyscraper and the City: Schultz & Weaver’s New York Hotels,” in Lamonaca and Mogul, Grand Hotels, 66–85.
2. A Monograph of the Work of McKim, Mead & White, 1879–1915, 4 vols. (New York, [ca. 1917]).

One of the central tenets of modernity has been the belief in the critical role of childhood to the formation of the self and the destiny of the nation. Nowadays, the defining discourse of life is concerned with the moment of procreation, in the legal status and genetic inheritance of the unborn child. Yet, the waning of the political and cultural importance of childhood also provides the historical distance necessary to contemplate what was promised to be “the century of the child.” If there is any advantage in studying the architecture of childhood as a distinct academic field, it resides in the prospect of exploring the utopian premises and internal contradictions of this incomplete project.

The two books under review are part of a broader movement that became visible with the 2002 conference “Designing Modern Childhoods,” organized by Marta Guzman and Ning de Coninck-Smith at the University of California, Berkeley. Both writers participated in that event: Solomon organized the playground exhibition accompanying the conference, while Van Slyck presented a paper on the summer camp. These publications represent two of the field’s principal perspectives: the designer-oriented approach, which positions the architecture of childhood as monuments of the modern movement, and the childhood-studies approach, which interprets these environments as documents for deconstructing the beliefs, practices, and policies that constitute modern childhood.