conference was Architectures of the Moving Image, in acknowledgment of
the need for this field to turn its attention to questions of design, structure,
and space.

Breaking the Ten-to-One Barrier
Compare the attendance roster of an annual SAH conference
to those of the same year’s meeting of the American
Historical Association, American Political Science
Association, the College of Art Association, or Modern
Language Association: historians of architecture, urban
design, and landscape architecture are few. The field is
sparingly populated with scholars who work on disparate top-
ics, attend or participate in occasional conferences, and con-
tribute to journals that are sustained by a small group of
devoted readers.

Many factors underlie and reinforce this, creating a
self-perpetuating circle of relative disciplinary isolation.
Among the most easily remedied factor, however, is a
single technical obstacle. Scholars are usually not able to
document adequately their published work because the
cost of doing so is prohibitive. The ratio of images that
I show in a lecture, compared to the images I publish in
an article on exactly the same material, is on the order of
10:1. I suspect most of my colleagues would say more or
less the same.

Analyzing architecture and urbanism necessitates
mastering a complex and wide-ranging set of skills,
including the ability to decipher the documents that are
the built environment’s stock in trade: architectural pho-
tographs, floor and site plans, sections, axonometrics,
sketches, design and technical drawings, topographic
maps. Most scholarly articles contain too few illustra-
tions for even specialists to critically assess an author’s
claims. Most lay readers and scholars from other disci-
plines, untrained in these specialized visual codes, cannot
be expected to and probably do not try to comprehend
the occasional technical illustration that is typically pub-
lished in a scholarly book or essay.

The scarcity of its practitioners and their discipli-
ary isolation together impoverish contemporary archi-
tectural history. New scholarship, even groundbreaking
works, rarely receive substantive, ongoing discussion and
debate. (Colleagues joke that few undertakings better
epitomize Adolf Loos’s “spoken into the void” than pub-
lishing one’s first scholarly book.) This vacuum of criti-
cal debate, among historians of the built environment
with each other, or with scholars from other disciplines,
inhibits individual scholars’ intellectual growth and vital-
ity in the field as a whole.

*JSAH* online can be an enormous facilitator of such
productive discussions and debates. Circumventing the
high cost of printing, *JSAH* online will allow the pub-
lication of scholarly articles containing many more illus-
trations, and in different kinds of formats, than is the
norm. A greater density of visual documentation will
surely help to make scholars’ arguments more transpar-
ent and comprehensible both to specialists and to oth-
ers. And because the internet is (at least ideally) a
“worldwide web,” a wider range of interested parties—
including scholars from other disciplines—will be able
to access top-notch works of architectural history. *JSAH*
online promises to be one crucial step toward creating
the wider audience and more vibrant scholarly discus-
sion and community that contemporary architectural
history deserves.

SARAH WILLIAMS GOLDHAGEN
Co-editor
*Positions: On Modern Architecture and Urbanism/
Histories and Theories*

Ceci tuera cela: Digitalia and Its Unintended
Consequences
The intended consequences of the rapid rise of digitalia, in
all its polymorphous permutations, are abundantly clear to
anyone in reach of a $200 laptop and a solar-powered bat-
tery. Turn on your HDTV, listen to a downloaded song on
your laptop, watch an On Demand movie or DVD, or talk
to someone on a cell phone while viewing your favorite film
on an MP3 Player as you GPS your way to the iStore.
These are but a sample of the intended consequences of
media-driven digitalia that may one day supplant the analog
world in which we dwell. However, what of the unintended
consequences for those of us who practice the craft of archi-
tectural history, theory, and criticism? Moreover, if one
ascribes to Victor Hugo’s argument about the printing press
killing architecture, what does that say about the relation
of 0s and 1s to traditional print and paper publications, par-
ticularly architectural books and journals?

Analog media will not evaporate overnight anymore
than architecture did owing to Gutenberg and movable