

# Yes, she oversees the design

A history thesis about the collaboration between an architecture firm's male and female partner.



Author:

Carlos Damberg  
5437288

Mentor:

Catja Edens

18 April 2024  
AR2A011 | Architectural History Thesis  
TU Delft | University of Technology  
Architecture, Urbanism and Building Sciences

## Table of Contents

Introduction .....	5
Chapter I: Company philosophy .....	7
More collaboration .....	7
Less hierarchy .....	7
Chapter II: Pioneering women .....	9
Early life and career .....	9
Recognised collaborations .....	14
Final designs .....	14
Chapter III: Architecture, family style .....	16
House & Garden .....	16
Conclusion .....	18
Bibliography .....	19



*Fig 1: Introducing the partners of The Architects Collaborative. From left to right, Sarah P. Harkness, Jean B. Fletcher, Robert S. McMillan, Norman C. Fletcher, Walter Gropius, John C. Harkness, Benjamin C. Thompson and Louis A. McMillen. (Gropius & Harkness, 1966)*



## Introduction

Jean B. Fletcher, Norman C. Fletcher, Walter Gropius, John C. Harkness, Sarah P. Harkness, Louis A. McMillen, Robert S. McMillan and Benjamin C. Thompson. These are the names of the eight founding members of The Architects Collaborative located in Cambridge, Massachusetts (Neubauer & Mitchell, 2020). TAC was an architecture company created by companionship. Norman Fletcher, Louis McMillen, Robert McMillan, and Ben Thompson first laid the conceptual foundation for "the World Collaborative," while they were classmates at Yale University. Jean B. Fletcher, Sarah P. Harkness and John Harkness, who knew Walter Gropius from his faculty membership at Harvard finished the collaborative which became TAC.

As previously noted, the vision for The World Collaborative can be traced back to Yale University, where four aspiring architects pursued their studies together (Neubauer & Mitchell, 2020). Norman C. Fletcher described their vision for team-based practice as an "ideal office" (Flowers, 2004, p. 41). However, the establishment of this initiative did not immediately materialize upon the graduation of Harkness, McMillen, McMillan, and Thompson. A important event in the fulfilment of The Architects Collaborative (TAC) was when Norman C. Fletcher and John C. Harkness connected. Both individuals had previously practiced as architects at Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM) in 1943 (Kubo, 2017). John C. Harkness, who did not pursue his architectural education at Yale but instead studied under Walter Gropius at the Harvard Graduate School of Design. In 1945, as the final concept of The Architects Collaborative began to shape, both Harknesses were invited by the Fletchers to join TAC as the sixth and seventh founder. Shortly thereafter, John C. Harkness received an invitation to teach Master courses at Harvard alongside Walter Gropius. Sarah P. Harkness and John C. Harkness proposed the idea of expressing their collaborative vision to Gropius, thereby inviting him to participate (Kubo, 2017). Walter Gropius accepted the invitation from the seven pioneers and became the eighth and final founder. By January 1st, 1946, The Architects Collaborative was fully established and operational.

The Architects Collaborative had a progressive attitude which found Jean B. Fletcher and Sarah P. Harkness in an equal position to the other six founders. This was considered as a rejection to the standard practice of 1945, when TAC was established. This thesis delves into the specific contributions of Fletcher and Harkness, examining how they actively shaped this position and the subsequent impact on their architectural careers.

The central research question that will be answered on completion of the in depth investigation is as follows:

How did the company philosophy within The Architects Collaborative influence representation, equality and recognition of Jean B. Fletcher and Sarah P. Harkness within the company and the public?

The thesis will delve into two significant aspects concerning Jean B. Fletcher and Sarah P. Harkness, focusing primarily on their roles as pioneering architects at The Architects Collaborative. Central to TAC's birth is the progressive philosophy underlying the collaboration, where partners of diverse backgrounds, genders, and experiences preferred to work as equals rather than in hierarchical structures. This progressive approach had a notable influence on the careers of Fletcher and Harkness' careers.

The investigation will extend beyond the professional achievements of Fletcher and Harkness to briefly explore their personal lives. Given the context of both spouses being employed by the same company, particularly in times of the post-war era, societal expectations placed a vast amount of household responsibilities on female partners to manage. Fletcher and Harkness, in a way, collaborated on the navigation of these responsibilities which was essential for the impressive development of their careers.

Upon execution of this research, an extensive literature review will serve as the primary methodology. The study will involve a systematic examination of existing design works, articles, books, and relevant publications concerning The Architects Collaborative but also Jean B. Fletcher and Sarah P. Harkness as individuals. The review of the various sources will provide a nuanced understanding of the thesis subject, allowing for the identification of patterns and variations in the literature. This approach will form the foundation for critical argumentation on the thesis subject, contributing to a deeper insight into the research questions posed.

The exploration of architectural history often unveils tales of innovation, collaboration, and the intertwining of professional endeavours with personal commitments. In this thesis, we delve into the remarkable careers of Jean B. Fletcher and Sarah P. Harkness, two pioneering architects whose contributions left an indelible mark on the architectural landscape of the mid-twentieth century.

The initial chapter of the thesis will elaborate on The Architects Collaborative company philosophy. In 1966 Walter Gropius and Sarah P. Harkness collaborated on the firm's only major monograph, *The Architects Collaborative 1945–1965* (1966). The volume featured introductory texts in which the partners confirmed their continued faith in the collaborative model after twenty years of practice. It was in the early stages of the 21<sup>st</sup> century when TAC's philosophies started to be recognised by more and more historians. Benjamin Flowers, Bryan Marquard and Thomas Watson (19 years later edited by Micheal Kubo) all wrote articles on the founding and organizing of TAC. The company's innovative stance on collaborative practices within the architectural realm, notably ahead of its time, will be examined in detail. Furthermore, the chapter will underscore the pivotal role of collaboration in shaping the dynamics among TAC's founders, with a particular focus on the contributions of Jean B. Fletcher and Sarah P. Harkness.

Moving forward, the following chapter of the thesis will focus specifically on the professional careers of Fletcher and Harkness. Within the company the significant contributions and achievements of Jean B. Fletcher and Sarah P. Harkness were accordingly acknowledged. This chapter will delve into external acknowledgment and recognition of Fletcher's and Harkness' work. Through insightful analyses of interviews by Wendy Cox and Cynthia Phifer, historical publications in the *Arts & Architecture* magazine and scholarly sources written by Micheal Kubo, we unravel the significant contributions and accolades garnered by these pioneering architects, both within and beyond the context of The Architects Collaborative.

In the final chapter of the thesis, the investigation extends beyond the walls of the architectural office to explore familial responsibilities. Both Jean B. Fletcher and Sarah P. Harkness have documented their experiences and strategies for navigating the necessary balance between their professional ambition and familial obligations. We uncover the strategies and experiences that shaped their navigation of the intersection between career aspirations and familial obligations. The content by Fletcher and Harkness in the 92<sup>nd</sup> edition of the *House & Garden* magazine elaborates in detail on their positions as architects and mothers. In addition to this Michael Kubo connects their strategies to the company philosophies practiced by The Architects Collaborative. This literature review sets the stage for a detailed examination of the legacy of Jean B. Fletcher and Sarah P. Harkness, shedding light on their profound impact on the architectural profession and beyond.

## Chapter I: Company philosophy

### *More collaboration*

The Architects Collaborative developed a progressive company philosophy when the founders joined forces in 1945.

*“The great architect working alone walks a narrow path between brilliance and architectural arrogance...” – Walter Gropius*

Instead of attempting the narrow path as described TAC focussed on a “broader road” that avoided specialism (Gropius & Harkness, 1966, p. 8). TAC was exceptional in its fully collaborative practice and rejection of a hierarchical organizational structure (MIT, 1999). TAC didn’t believe dividing their knowledge would benefit their architectural results. They committed to a dialogue between equally experienced and appreciated architects. This meant every partner in the firm was involved in all of the running projects. Everyone was allowed and expected to provide input on design progress and assist in the development on all scales and disciplines. TAC recognised their philosophy was economically and physically more demanding than the more common choice for specialism. Despite this they were convinced that their choice for equal collaboration would seek consolidation and consensus and would result in a product with greater creativity and identity (Gropius & Harkness, 1966, p. 26).

*“A world that believes only in survival through competition must always be at war. And if the winner is preoccupied with winning he may find himself on a mountain he never would have climbed” – Sarah P. Harkness.*

As mentioned before, the horizontal company philosophy was physically more demanding than traditional structures. To meet these demands TAC implemented the role of a ‘partner-in-charge’ (Gropius & Harkness, 1966, p. 16). When a new project was accepted, based on its nature and the partners’ availability, A team of architects and designers was established. The team was guided by a single partner-in-charge.

The Architects Collaborative represented a model of practice distinct from what Norman C. Fletcher and John C. Harkness experienced at Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (Watson, 1988, p. 41). Essential to TAC’s horizontal philosophy were the weekly dialogue. During the meetings all founders and partners of the company were included in a collaborative designing dialogue. For every running project the partners-in-charge elaborated on progress, insecurities and 3<sup>rd</sup> party communication. The additional partners were expected to contribute insights and knowledge. The TAC approach did not involve hierarchy but strived on criticism. In the collaborative designing dialogue everyone was of equal importance to the development of the design. Instead of the design passing different specialised individuals, through collective criticism from different disciplines and experiences, the design’s sophistication and quality improved significantly.

### *Less hierarchy*

The principles of collaboration resulted in a progressive environment which allowed Jean B. Fletcher and Sarah P. Harkness to practice architecture with equal opportunities and responsibilities as their male colleagues (Kubo, 2018). In projects where Fletcher and/or Harkness assumed the role of partner-in-charge, their authority was definitive. Furthermore, even in instances where they did not hold this position, their involvement continued to influence the development of TAC's ongoing projects. Both Fletcher and Harkness seized the opportunity to showcase their talents and serve as sources of inspiration for all fellow partners within the organization. Their visions and ideologies were not mere suggestions to be implemented or dismissed by a male supervisor. Instead, Jean B. Fletcher



and Sarah P. Harkness co-created an environment where their contributions were equally acknowledged and appreciated.

Walter Gropius is occasionally still perceived to be the single founder of The Architects Collaborative. In reality the truth is more nuanced. Gropius wasn't just a designer at this point. In addition to his work as an architect Gropius gained a lot of experience as a writer and educator. This process started during the years when he worked as an architect for the Deutscher Werkbund (Sigfried, 1954, p. 25). By affiliating himself with the Werkbund, Gropius focused on bridging the gap between traditional craftsmanship and modern industrial techniques, a concept that would become essential to his architectural philosophy. This theoretical philosophy was put into practice for the first time when Gropius became the master of the Staatliches Bauhaus in 1919. At the former Grand-Ducal Saxon School of Arts and Crafts in Weimar he continued developing and implementing his view on interdisciplinary collaboration and improved creativity (Sigfried, 1954, p. 27). The birth of collaboration as practiced by The Architects Collaborative was a result of decades of experience and development. This in combination with seven young and motivated architects created an organisation with great potential. Walter Gropius was not the creator of TAC, he was a mentor, he provided structure, was a source of inspiration and played a key role in the success of TAC's practice. However, the foundation of The Architects Collaborative was a true collaboration between eight initiators.



*Fig 2: The Architects Collaborative weekly dialogue circa 1950. Partners from left to right: John C. Harkness, Jean B. Fletcher, Norman C. Fletcher, Walter Gropius, Louis A. McMillen (Watson & Kubo (Ed), 2017).*



## Chapter II: Pioneering women

Jean B. Fletcher and Sarah P. Harkness were no strangers to each other in 1945. Despite them studying architecture in different years, the two founders followed the same architecture program. After their education when Fletcher and Harkness were married and their spouses worked for the same office they even shared an apartment together (Kubo, 2018). Near the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> world war era their paths briefly separated again. Towards the end of 1945 they would collaborate for the first time.

### Early life and career

**1933 -**

*Jean B. Fletcher*

Jean B. Fletcher, who was at this time still known as Jean Bodman, started her journey in architecture in 1933 at Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts. After Smith College Bodman proceeded at the Cambridge School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture for Women which was the first American school to offer graduate training in architecture and landscape architecture exclusively to women under one faculty (Kubo, 2018). Jean Bodman graduated from the Cambridge School in 1941. In 1942, following declining enrolment at the Harvard Graduate School of Design (GSD) during World War II, Harvard began admitting women to its regular programs, making them eligible for Harvard degrees. Bodman started studying at the Harvard GSD in 1942.

**1942 -**

*Jean B. Fletcher*

At Harvard Jean Bodman who was now married and known as Jean B. Fletcher spent a significant amount of time on various models of community planning and design. One of her first projects to receive public attention was her thesis project. Fletcher proposed a migrant workers' community including a factory. During this process Fletcher was supervised by her future co-founder and current professor Walter Gropius. Walter Gropius and Jean B. Fletcher collaborated well. During the start of Gropius' career he worked for the Deutsche Werkbund (Sigfried, 1954, p. 21). Here Gropius gained considerable admiration and experience on design for community and industry. In May of 1945 the magazine Arts & Architecture featured Jean B. Fletcher's thesis project mentioning Fletcher as well as her professor Walter Gropius (Fletcher, 1945).

**1945 -**

*Jean B. Fletcher*

After meeting and later marrying Norman C. Fletcher in 1943 and graduating from the Harvard Graduate School of Design in 1944 the couple started working together. With one on their first publicly recognized achievement being a first prize entry for the design of "A House for Cheerful Living," sponsored by Pencil Points and the Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company in 1945 (Kubo, 2018).

The last of a series of published design work by Jean B. Fletcher was a competition entry for Fletchers former university, Smith Collage. Later in 1945 Smith Collage tasked architects to design a new dormitory building. Both the Fletchers collaborated with Norman C. Fletcher's old classmate Benjamin C. Thompson. The design by Jean B. Fletcher, Norman C. Fletcher and Benjamin C. Thompson was awarded with the first prize out of a total of ninety-one entries. The competition was organised by Pencil Points–Progressive Architecture and the Museum of Modern Art in New York, which exhibited the winning entries in early 1946



Fig 3: photograph of (from left to right) Benjamin Thompson, Norman C. Fletcher and Jean B. Fletcher, as first-prize winners of the Smith College Dormitory competition, released in connection with the exhibition, *New Dormitories for Smith College*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York (Museum of Modern Art, 1946).

**1945 -**

*Jean B. Fletcher*

The initiative of forming an ‘ideal office’ was frequently discussed during the design process. It was after winning the competition that ‘The World Collaborative’, as intended by Norman C. Fletcher, Benjamin C. Thompson and two more Yale university friends, started to become more realistic.

**1934 -**

*Sarah P. Harkness*

Sarah Pillsbury studied liberal arts at the Winsor School in Boston (Kubo, 2017). After graduating from Winsor Pillsbury took time to travel. She moved to Europe and lived in Germany for most of this time (Kracauer, 2023). Her daughter Alice told *The Boston Globe* that Pillsbury realised “she wanted to do something that was real” (Marquard, 2013). The step towards architecture fit that desire. Alice mentioned “Architecture fit that bill. It was in the world. It wasn’t painting pictures that would go on a wall somewhere.” In 1940, Sarah Pillsbury completed her architecture training and graduated from the Cambridge School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture for Women.

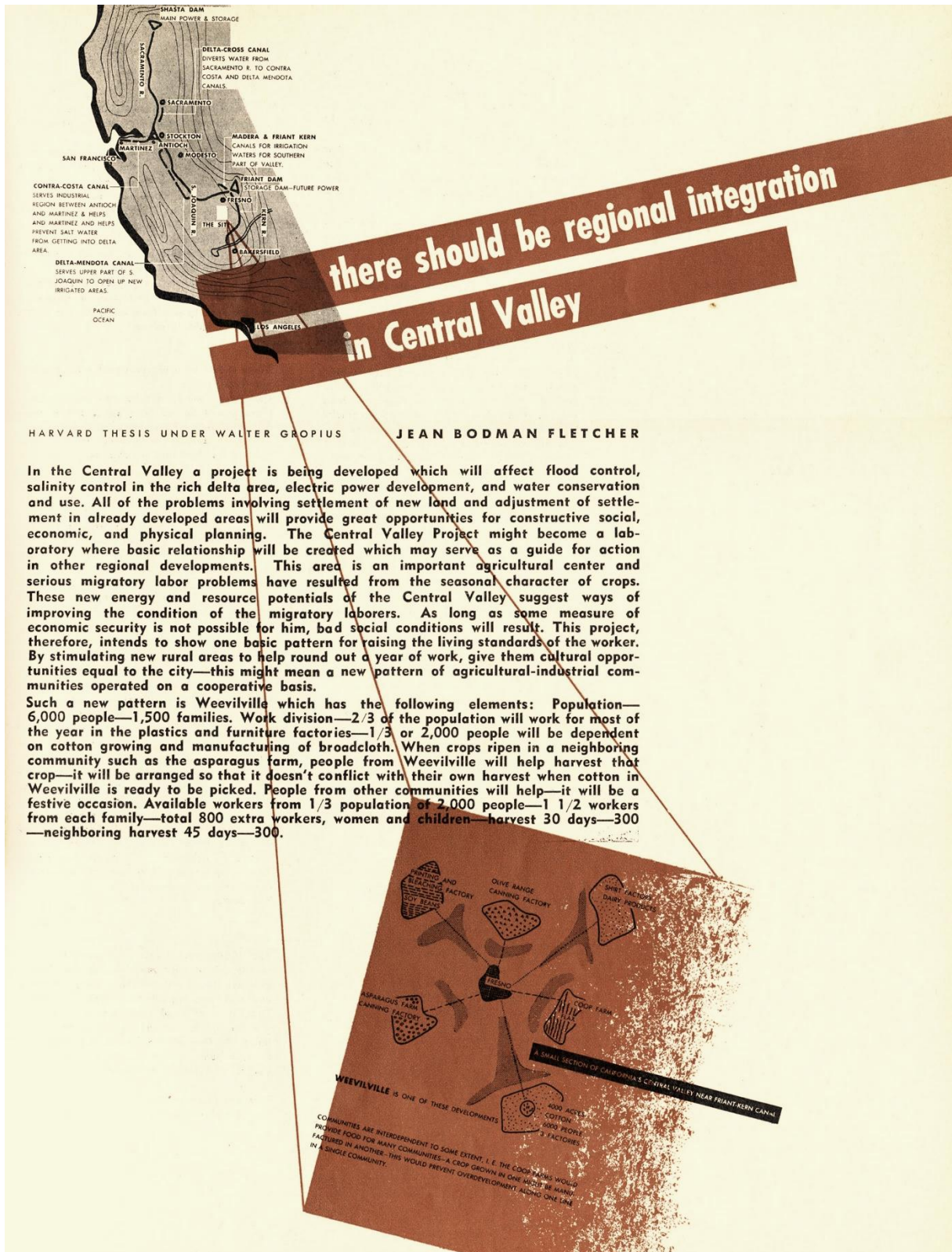


Fig 4: Jean Bodman Fletcher, "There Should be Regional Integration in Central Valley," thesis conducted under Walter Gropius. Arts & Architecture, May 1945 (Arts & Architecture No. 62, 1945).



**1940 -**  
Sarah P. Harkness

After graduating from the Cambridge School Sarah Pillsbury started a small showroom together with her classmate. The showroom was one of the first to house modern furnishings and interiors in Boston (Kubo, 2017). It was at this time when Sarah Pillsbury met and later married John. C. Harkness. Both Sarah P. Harkness and John C. Harkness moved to New York where John. C Harkness was from originally.

**1941 -**  
Sarah P. Harkness

Mr. and Mrs. Harkness moved into an apartment in Manhattan in 1941. Here they both got an interview at Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM). Sarah P. Harkness spoke with Louis Skidmore (Kracauer, 2023). Mrs. Harkness recalled the conversation to pleasant and Skidmore to be kind. Despite the two architects getting along Skidmore told Mrs. Harkness “we have never hired a woman in this office and we never will” (Cox, 2021). Skidmore explained that women will get married and/or get pregnant and leave, stating that because of this reason female employees are “unreliable”. It took SOM just three years to change their perspective and hire their first female architect. At the time such statements by powerful male figures must have been very common. Louis Skidmore decided to hire John C. Harkness and referenced Sarah P. Harkness to the office of interior designer George Daniel (“Dan”) Cooper. Despite the harsh treatment both John C. Harkness and Sarah P. Harkness accepted the offered positions at SOM and for Cooper. At Skidmore, Owings & Merrill John C. Harkness meets and collaborates with Norman C. Fletcher.

**1945 -**  
Sarah P. Harkness

At the end of the war in 1945, Sarah P. Harkness and John C. Harkness moved from New York back to Boston, Massachusetts. Here they had their own small practice in the attic of Sarah P. Harkness’ mothers house. Here they worked on their entry for the Smith College Dormitory competition (Kubo, 2017). The Harkness couple was aware that they were competing with Jean B. Fletcher, Norman C. Fletcher and Benjamin C. Thompson, who eventually won the competition. Sarah P. Harkness and John C. Harkness were rewarded with the second price in the competition.



*Fig 5: photograph of Sarah P. Harkness and John C. Harkness for “New Dormitories for Smith College,” exhibition at The Museum of Modern Art, New York New York (Museum of Modern Art, 1946).*

1946 -  
Sarah P. Harkness

After the completion of the Smith College Dormitory competition Sarah P. Harkness and John C. Harkness received a letter. The letter was from Jean B. Fletcher, Norman C. Fletcher and Benjamin C. Thompson and the letter was a proposal for the Harkness couple to join them in their vision of the 'ideal office'. Norman C. Fletcher also invited his Yale classmates Louis A. McMillen and Robert S. McMillan. McMillen and McMillan both agreed to join the initiative.

In the same week John C. Harkness was approached by Walter Gropius. Harkness completed his architectural education at Harvard where, at the time, Gropius was the head of the architecture master's program. Walter Gropius was aware of John C. Harkness' return to Boston and invited him to teach in his program. After discussing with the others, John C. Harkness met Walter Gropius and pitched their 'World Collaborative'. With Gropius' involvement the seven young architects sought to add "some background to the collaborative idea" of their new company. John C. Harkness stated that their aim wasn't to "make architecture for architecture's sake, but architecture for the sake of a healthy society" (Kubo, 2017). Gropius accepted the proposal and agreed to become the eighth and final founder of The Architects Collaborative.



*Fig 6: The Architects Collaborative, founders and partners, circa 1951. Bottom row from left to right: Jean B. Fletcher, Walter Gropius, Sarah Pillsbury Harkness. Top row from left to right: Benjamin Thompson, Norman C. Fletcher, Robert McMillan, Louis A. McMillen, John C. Harkness (Kubo, 2017).*

### Recognised collaborations

**1948 -**

*Jean B. Fletcher &  
Sarah P. Harkness*

One of the first collaborations between almost all founders was Six Moon Hill. Fletcher and Harkness implemented their concepts of independent living at Six Moon Hill, a residential development comprising single-family homes for TAC partners and staff. Situated on a communal twenty-acre plot, the land was collectively purchased and subdivided into individual lots along a purpose-built road (Kubo, 2018). Each family had the freedom to design their residence according to their requirements and the land's topography. Additionally, the community shared amenities such as a communal open space, swimming pool, and a cohesive architectural style. The development grew fast, quickly providing housing to 30 families. The Fletchers crafted a split-level dwelling featuring a two-story block with bedrooms above and a versatile children's playroom below, connected to a single-story wing housing the kitchen, living, and dining areas. The architecture of the Harkness residence at Six Moon Hill reflects a thoughtful integration of form and function within the collaborative community. Designed to harmonize with the surrounding landscape, the house embodies a balance of modern aesthetics and practicality, offering spacious interiors tailored to the family's lifestyle while maintaining coherence with the communal architectural language of the development.

### Final designs

**1948 -**

*Jean B. Fletcher &  
Sarah P. Harkness*

Jean B. Fletcher's untimely death due to breast cancer on the 13<sup>th</sup> of September 1965 deeply impacted The Architects Collaborative. As one of the firm's founding members, Fletcher's visionary contributions were crucial in shaping its ethos and direction. Her passing not only deprived TAC of her creative insights and leadership but also instigated a period of introspection and reorganization within the firm (Gropius & Harkness, 1966, p. 8). The loss of Fletcher underscored the importance of planning and collaborative decision-making processes, prompting TAC to prioritize these aspects in the future. Despite the profound grief felt by her colleagues, Fletcher's enduring legacy continued to inspire innovation and excellence within the architectural community. One year later in 1966 TAC published their first collaborative monograph, this partially to acknowledge and honour Jean B. Fletcher (Gropius & Harkness, 1966).

**1976 -**

*Sarah P. Harkness*

Near the end of her career Sarah P. Harkness' eyesight worsened (Marquard, 2013). However, that did not mean the end of an era. Harkness focussed more on writing and teaching. She focussed on creating sustainable and comfortable spaces and tried to let this show in her work. Another topic was building for the disabled. In 1976 she collaborated with James N. Groom and published her book titled 'Building without barriers'.

In 1973 Sarah P. Harkness was asked to fill a consultancy position for the American Institute of Architects (AIA). She later served as a member of the AIA Board of Directors (1972–75) and as Vice President of the AIA (1978), the first woman to hold both positions (Kubo, 2017). She was elected a fellow of the AIA in 1979.

Even after The Architects Collaborative closed its doors due to bankruptcy in 1995, Sarah Harkness's dedication to community and collaboration endured. As the final surviving founding partner of TAC, she remained a resident of Six Moon Hill, dwelling in the home she and John C. Harkness had jointly designed, until her passing in May 2013.





*Fig 7: Photograph of Sarah P. Harkness at the American Institute of Architects (Kubo, 2017)*

### Chapter III: Architecture, family style

Jean B. Fletcher and Sarah P. Harkness occupied multiple roles as founders, partners, and architects, yet their responsibilities extended beyond their professional roles. Both women were also mothers. Notably, the Harkness family comprised seven children, while the Fetters had six (Kubo, 2017). Despite societal norms that predominantly assigned domestic duties to women during this period, Fletcher and Harkness demonstrated a departure from these traditions. They embraced an progressive approach to managing their professional and private roles. Fletcher and Harkness implemented a system at TAC, whereby they alternated shifts between morning and afternoon sessions, each maintaining a five-day workweek schedule. Assisted by a shared domestic aide, they balanced the demands of overseeing two households and tending to the needs of thirteen in total.

This system harmonised with the partner-in-charge philosophy at The Architects Collaborative. The weekly dialogue and external input allowed Jean B. Fletcher and Sarah P. Harkness to manage their individual processes without falling behind in comparison to their colleagues. In addition the company philosophy prevented them from losing the connection to the other projects whilst they were out of the office. At the time of the foundation of TAC both the Fletcher- and the Harkness family had two children (Kubo, 2018). The statements by Louis Skidmore, despite them being regrettably shallow, prove that the female half of a family was completely responsible to manage household tasks. The statement underscores societal norms dictating women's sole responsibility to abandon all other activities she was pursuing prior to marriage. Fletcher and Harkness proactively prevented being forced to abandon the things they loved to spend time on.

*"A man wouldn't want to stay in his office 24 hours a day, and there is no reason a woman should stay home all that time." – Sarah P. Harkness.*

Over multiple occasions Jean B. Fletcher and Sarah P. Harkness sought publicity regarding their situation in the male dominated world of architectural practice. Instead of focussing on criticising society they chose to inspire women in similar situations to change circumstances so they won't have to sacrifice ambition. In 1947 Fletcher and Harkness published a total of three times about their household arrangements. They featured in The Christian Science Monitor, The Boston Sunday Globe and the 92nd edition of House & Garden. The later featured an progressive article on residential design for feminism (Fletcher & Harkness, 1947, p. 146).

House & Garden is a lifestyle magazine that typically focuses on interior design, home decor, gardening, architecture, and entertaining. It often features articles, photographs, and tips related to home improvement, decorating ideas, landscaping, and gardening. House & Garden aims to inspire readers with creative ideas for enhancing their living spaces and outdoor areas.

The article starts with a checklist for women. The checklist was in Sarah P. Harkness' style, Harkness was always considered to be a great thinker and theorist at TAC (Marquard, 2013). The checklist was not there to convince anyone of her perspectives or to change female behaviour. The checklist was to enlarge awareness and allow women who stayed home to reconsider their home-situations.

#### *House & Garden*

In the following content of the article Jean B. Fletcher and Sarah P. Harkness explain the system responsible for making a physical house a functional home. The architects explain that this system is something that can be individual or personal and can be designed to improve its performance. Once again collaborations played an important role in the progressive system proposed by Fletcher and Harkness. Examples can be found in sharing certain aspects of a home. A shared garden, garage or even laundry room can still provide multiple families with the required facilities, while maintenance can be split amongst the users and therefore leaving the individual with more time to use as they see fit.

**Check list for your house**

(YES NO)

*Is your house planned to fit your needs?*

*Is your house easy to run, pleasant to live in?*

*Does it afford privacy for every member of the family?*

*Are there children, the same age as yours, nearby?*

*Are there friends for you yourself, in the neighborhood?*

*Are sitters and helpers available?*

*Are the schools near, so the children can walk to them?*

*Are the streets not too dangerous?*

*Are there good shops nearby?*

*Have you easy transportation to business districts, theaters, other parts of town?*

*Is your husband's office less than an hour from home?*

*Is the country close enough for walks and picnics?*

**If you can answer "yes" to most of these questions, you are probably in the right house, the right neighborhood for you.**

*Fig 8: Checklist to enlarge residential awareness for women (Fletcher & Harkness, 1947).*

Next to these efficiencies Jean B. Fletcher and Sarah P. Harkness highlighted an important human factor. They advocate that within a community there must always be a balance between privacy and companionship (Fletcher & Harkness, 1947, p. 147). Fletcher and Harkness state that in a functional home the same principles should be applied. A house should not be a collection of rooms with individual purpose and a connecting hallways. A house that feels like a home has area's where functions overlap and residents meet. Here a resident finds interaction instead of isolation. The successful implementation of this principle hinges upon the residents' collective pursuit of a harmonious balance between privacy and companionship. Fletcher and Harkness translated these design philosophies into reality through their involvement in the development of Six Moon Hill, crafting a residential community tailored to their individual preferences and desired balances. As both their families and The Architects Collaborative expanded over time, they witnessed firsthand the enduring benefits of their planned communal creation.

## Conclusion

In the final chapter of this thesis, the focus shifts to a comprehensive reflection on the key findings and contributions made throughout the research journey. Here, the aim is to synthesize the main arguments, discuss their implications, and offer insights into the potential for future research. By revisiting the research objectives and summarizing the major findings, this section provides closure to the study while highlighting its significance within the broader academic context. To do so the research question that was posed in the introduction of the thesis will be answered.

The central research question as stated in the introduction is as follows:

How did the company philosophy within The Architects Collaborative influence representation, equality and recognition of Jean B. Fletcher and Sarah P. Harkness within the company and the public?

Upon examining figure 1 on page 3 and delving into the narratives surrounding The Architects Collaborative (TAC), one might easily assume the company to be the brainchild of the renowned Walter Gropius. In addition, research has not consistently recognized the contributions of the other seven partners. Among these overlooked figures are Jean B. Fletcher and Sarah P. Harkness, both graduates of the Cambridge School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture for Women. These two women, characterized by their passion and ambition, had crossed paths on multiple occasions prior to the establishment of TAC. Notably, both Fletcher and Harkness received first- and second-prize entry in the Smith College Dormitory competition, underscoring their prowess and shared dedication to architectural excellence.

In 1946, The Architects Collaborative (TAC) introduced a progressive company philosophy centred on collaboration, marking a departure from traditional hierarchical structures. This philosophy fostered equality and encouraged open criticism among all participants in the dialogue, arguably critical to the success of Jean B. Fletcher and Sarah P. Harkness, as well as their counterparts Norman C. Fletcher, John C. Harkness, Louis A. McMillen, Robert S. McMillan, and Benjamin C. Thompson. Together, these seven young architects envisioned an 'ideal office' and meticulously organized the organization to provide all necessary tools for achieving maximum results in post-war modernist architecture.

The company philosophy adopted by The Architects Collaborative significantly influenced the professional trajectories of Jean B. Fletcher and Sarah P. Harkness. It fostered a culture of open communication among colleagues, leading to precise documentation of their collective achievements and facilitating public appreciation and understanding of their vision for the built environment. As pioneers at the inception of TAC's company philosophy, Fletcher and Harkness merit full recognition for their instrumental role in shaping the trajectory of their careers.

## Bibliography

Brooks-Walker, B. (1947). *No Woman Should Stay Home: Two Cambridge Wives Solve Career Problem*. The Boston Sunday Globe, A9.

Cox, W. (2021). *Sarah Pillsbury Harkness: Legacy of craft within modernism* [Interview]. Historic New England.

Wendy Cox is a Professor of Architecture at Norwich University and a registered architect since 1996 with a private practice, Studio Twentyseven, located in Warren, Vermont, and Vinalhaven, Maine. Her dual research areas are developing theories connecting the physical sciences with the architectural discipline and the before and beginning of the historic mid-twentieth century historic firm The Architects Collaborative, focusing on work by early female architects. In addition, she teaches modern architectural history and theory and design studios and seminars examining social justice and resilient design through cultural critique.

Fletcher, J.B. (1945). "There Should be Regional Integration in Central Valley." *Arts & Architecture* 62, 25–29.

Fletcher, J.B. & Harkness, S.P. (1947). *Architecture, family style: two women architects look at today's houses, tell how they affect family life*. *House & Garden* No. 92. 146–149.

Flowers, B (2004). *The Architects Collaborative (TAC)*. Academia.

Gropius, W; Harkness, S. P. (1966). *The Architects Collaborative 1945-1965*.

Henley, H. (1947). *Two Girls Share as Equal Partners in Modern Architects Collaborative*. *The Christian Science Monitor*. 10.

Kracauer, C. P. (2023). *Architecture, Family Style – The Lives and Work of Sarah Harkness and Jean Fletcher*. New Angle: Voice, BAAF.

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of December of 2023 the Beverly Willis Architecture Foundation (BAAF) published an episode of their 'New Angle: Voice' series about Jean Bodman Fletcher and Sarah P. Harkness. The podcast features multiple speakers and is hosted by BAAF executive director Cynthia Phifer. Phifer herself is an architect, married to an architect and a mother of two. The podcast features narratives from Sarah P. Harkness (originally recorded in an interview by Wendy Cox), Joseph Fletcher, Micheal Kubo, former TAC employees Perry Neubauer & Gail Flynn and current six moon hill residents.

Kubo, M. (2018). *Pioneering Women of American Architecture: Jean Bodman Fletcher*. University of Houston, BAAF

This source is an online journal highlighting the education and careers of various female architects and designers in the United States of America. Michael Kubo wrote a chapter on the female founders and partners at TAC, including Jean Bodman Fletcher. Kubo is a researcher and writer who completed extensive research on The Architects Collaborative and its founders. The source itself is not of the academic kind. However, Micheal Kubo and the Beverly Willis Architecture Foundation are very clear in their resources and therefore can be a good starting point for in-depth academic research.

Kubo, M. (2017). *Pioneering Women of American Architecture: Sarah Pillsbury Harkness*. Rhode Island School of Design, BAAF

The chapter on Sarah Pillsbury Harkness has similar content to the chapter on Fletcher. It starts with an introduction on the education of Harkness and follows with an extensive elaboration on her career as an architect.

Marquard, B. (2013). *Sally Harkness, 98; cofounder of The Architects Collaborative*. The Boston Globe Museum of Modern Art. (February 1946). *New Dormitories for Smith Collage, exposition & press release*. Free Press.

Neubauer, P.K. & Mitchell, L (2020). *TAC- The Architects Collaborative*. Free Press.

Sigfried, G (1954). *Walter Gropius Work and Teamwork*, New York: Reinhold, 1954

The Architects Collaborative. (January 1946). *Statement of Aims*. Arts & Architecture 63, 28–29.

Watson, T. (1988). Kubo, M (Ed). (2017). *Architecture and the Corporation: The Creative Intersection*. Free Press, 41-45.

This chapter highlights very detailed information about the founding of The Architects Collective. Kubo elaborates on the background of the individual eight founders, on their education and the individual connections that lead to the founding of TAC. Later in the Chapter Kubo writes about the influences of Walter Gropius' ideology on design practice. This part of the chapter is expected to give additional insight on how this influences the careers of Sarah P. Harkness and Jean B. Fletcher.