

agement than to housekeepers and can lead to very problematic changes in the latter's work situations. Guests are encouraged to opt out of daily room service for environmental reasons (and vouchers), however, this not only disrupts the routine of the workers but the buildup of dirt can also make cleaning more difficult and cause sanitary problems. In the final chapter he presents the difficult situation that arises when hotel management only considers the guests' perspectives and ignores the needs of their room maids. Brody examines the large renovation project of the Hyatt Regency Chicago, where new design choices aggravated the work conditions for the housekeeping staff. The author shows here most convincingly how design choices like hard-to-clean glass walls and heavier bedding can negatively affect workers, even causing health issues. He uses this example also to emphasize the importance of listening to the voices of hotel workers during the design process, calling for codesign as advocated by Elizabeth Sanders and Pieter Jan Stappers. His conclusion turns once more to an example from popular culture, the movie *Maid in Manhattan* from 2002, which cleverly reinforces his argument. Brody ends with an appeal to rethink hotel design and work systems in hotels by incorporating worker suggestions and through this "encouraging more equitable work environments" (162).

The number of studies on hotels from the fields of cultural studies and sociology is still marginal even though it has grown over the last few years. Brody's book is a valuable addition to this corpus of texts, highlighting the rarely studied issue of hotel work and the even scarcer theme of its connection to design choices. His selection of examples allows easy access to the topic and makes this a very readable text and introduction to the field. The personal hotel vignettes and thoughtful choice of illustrations are additional reasons for the book's appeal. By presenting the concept of codesign Brody also provides a realistic and interesting solution for all parties involved: management, hotel staff, and the responsible guest.

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Daniel A. Barber. *A House in the Sun: Modern Architecture and Solar Energy in the Cold War.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2016. xi+336 pp.; 136 color and black-and-white illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$39.95.

Daniel A. Barber's *A House in the Sun* represents a fascinating slice of history that, importantly, con-

tains relevant messages for today, stressing: "Experiments . . . make the world a different place" (10). Taking as a baseline parts of books such as Ken Butti and John Perlin's notable 1980 *A Golden Thread*—a simple historical narrative over a considerably wider period that "describes the major advances in solar architecture and technology that have occurred"—Barber delves in considerably more depth into early twentieth-century solar architectural experiments.¹ Lina Bo Bardi's "historical present" of her last lecture in 1989 also seems apposite to Barber's contemporary quest, with its cautionary "a present that helps us avoid traps" or "helps you avoid the pitfalls" (according to translator/author).² Although solar science and technology have naturally advanced over the intervening period, and the matter of diminishing use of fossil fuels is ever more pressing, mistakes are still made and opportunities missed.

Barber's main focus is the decade and a half after the end of World War II in the US, with some setting of context from the period just preceding it, and his closing section posited briefly toward a future from the 1960s and beyond. The strength of such confinement to the pivotal Stalin-Khrushchev period of the Cold War lies partly in how he explores the sociopolitical canvas, especially relative to energy resources, and partly the insights he gives to individual and influential human drives and reciprocal frictions and factions. In the former case I use *sociopolitical* to embrace perspectives ranging from the particular, such as academic institutions and commercial companies, to generic global power-broking at the highest governmental level.

Barber's narrative also operates thematically more than chronologically. Consequently some readers may find that fascinating characters who surface in multiple chapters provoke affinities or negativities as their actions or words foreshadow current trends. In such varying settings the author borrows the oppositional terms "conventional advocates" and "non-conventional advocates" (121), the latter group not unexpectedly favoring a greater good. For example, Eugene Ayres, manager of research for an oil company, argued in 1948 "that the shift to renewable resources was a moral obligation more than an economic necessity" (84). In contrast with current practice, the manner in which scientists or engineers

¹ Ken Butti and John Perlin, author's note, *A Golden Thread* (Palo Alto, CA: Cheshire Books, 1980), quotation v.

² Lina Bo Bardi, "An Architectural Lesson," in *Stones Against Diamonds* (London: Architectural Association, 2013), 109–12; Zeuler R. M. de A. Lima, "A Wonderful Tangle," in *Lina Bo Bardi* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013), 205.

of one kind or another interacted with architects during this period represents a rather different dichotomy of utility and aesthetics, one ever pertinent to all those professionally engaged with the built environment—sometimes in Barber’s narrative also conforming to a conventional/nonconventional divide.

Key players such as redoubtable scientist and inventor Dr. Maria Telkes appear in various contexts—from the second chapter “What Is a House?” to the conclusion “Architecture and Environmentalism.” Similarly, doctrines such as environmentalism and environmental politics are presented in the introduction and have primacy in the conclusion. In between, we have the “ethics of environmental responsibility” and how it permeated emergent global and political exchanges (63). One may consider Barber’s story, built on solidly researched foundations, as a nonfictional allegory replete with meaning for how influence and power operate. Today, much of it, like that wielded by multinational corporations, is undemocratic, perhaps ironic given that the Cold War supposedly represented democracy versus totalitarianism. But the account of the push in the 1950s to spread US influence via solar technology to developing countries was indeed competing with the reach of the USSR, while a mythical freedom remains on the US power agenda a quarter of a century after the establishment of the Russian Federation.

For all the clout of Cold War politics and its inheritance, it is the solar-architectonic zing attributable to respective roles of individual entrepreneurial champions that sustains the reader. And although Barber is frank about the solar failures, for example, the problems Telkes experienced with phase change material (PCM) stratifying and leaking, readers may be aware that the early problems have been solved and architects have been involved in the marketing of innovative new products. Similarly, issues of poor control in that early period can now be tackled electronically by a smartphone app or by building management systems. At any rate, Barber maintains topical interest with a fascinating weave between science and design and between active and passive solar techniques. Particular highlights are Telkes in action with architects, including Aladar Olgyay, twin brother of Victor Olgyay and both famed for bioclimatic comfort charts and an early compendium of “solar control and shading devices,” and the architectural spectrum of solar innovation via submissions for the 1957 “Living with the Sun” competition.

But the concluding section curiously does not cover the next three decades of the Cold War, in-

dicating instead a hiatus in the 1960s prior to a renewed interest in the 1970s after two wars in the Middle East. We are not told of European precedents such as Emslie Morgan’s 1962 St. George’s School near Liverpool or the 1967 Trombe-Michel wall in southeast France, or of the term “passive solar design,” apparently coined in the US in 1974, or the “First National Passive Solar Conference” held at Albuquerque in 1976, hosted by Los Alamos National Laboratory.³ Los Alamos of course resonates with the Cold War as the site of initial US nuclear development. Also missing is David Bainbridge’s Passive Solar Institute in California, with his 1978 and 1980 editions of *Passive Solar Catalog*, paralleled by the First European Passive Solar Competition of 1980 and the Second in 1982. And it might have been interesting to conclude the Cold War period with the first “Passive House” (Passivhaus) in Darmstadt-Kranichstein, Germany, in 1988. This arguably would have introduced a persistent, and still current, debate regarding the theoretical clarity of passive-solar design, since some promote its irrelevance for the concept of Passivhaus, while others are equally adamant about the potential complementarity of Passivhaus and passive-solar principles.

Presumably Barber has deliberately left the reader to fill in such blanks. On balance, his metaphorically deep drilling-down below a series of critical solar achievements in the 1940s and 1950s should establish sufficient momentum to architecturally extrapolate through the long remaining Cold War years and a similar period beyond that finale in 1991 to today’s troubled world, with *A House in the Sun* still an enticing mirage on the horizon.

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Juliette Wells. *Reading Austen in America.* New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017. 256 pp.; 18 black-and-white illustrations, appendix, index. \$20.93.

It is a truth traditionally acknowledged that Austen scholars in the academy do not ask the same questions or have the same concerns as nonacademic lovers of Austen. However, Juliette Wells, Elizabeth Conolly Todd Distinguished Professor of English at Goucher College, writes books that both groups of Austen lovers should enjoy. *Reading Austen in America* tells the story of the first editions of Austen’s novels in North America and of the families who

³ Bruce Anderson, ed., *Solar Building Architecture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990), 92.