

The position of women in the architectural practice

History Thesis

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Prologue

As a woman studying architecture at the faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment at the TU Delft, I never felt ordinary because of my gender. Around me there have always been many women students and teachers who I could look up to. However, during my studies, I started to be confronted with the stigma of male domination in the architectural profession, such as lectures on important architects in history that were mainly about men. Outside of the faculty, I have also been confronted with this stigma, for example, by people's reactions when telling them that I study architecture: "You study architecture? You must be one of the few women there!". Furthermore, looking at different architectural practices, almost all partners were men even though many women were working there. This image of gender inequality is also seen in research about women in architectural practices. A study by Stratigakos (2012) shows that in the 21st-century, women are discriminated against in job offers, payment, and acceptance in practice and of their designs. Furthermore, women who want to pursue a career in architecture got tips such as to dress and act like a man (Stratigakos, 2012). Because of these confrontations, I became fascinated with the question of what the relationship is between the architectural profession and the position and recognition of women within, which is the topic of this history thesis.

Introduction

Less recognition, lower payments, and fewer job offers than men; are just some examples of factors that women have been coping with globally when pursuing a career in architecture (Stratigakos, 2012; Walker, 2000). Even though there is progression in the acceptance and numbers of women in architecture, gender inequality in architectural practices is a given to this day. For example, in architectural education in the United Kingdom (UK), the ratio of women and men has been almost equal since the 21st century (Darling & Walker, 2017; Green, 2019; Waite, 2021). However, the latest statistics show that only 29.6 percent of the certified architects in the UK are women (Waite, 2021), which is only a 3.6% rise in a quarter of a century (RIBA).

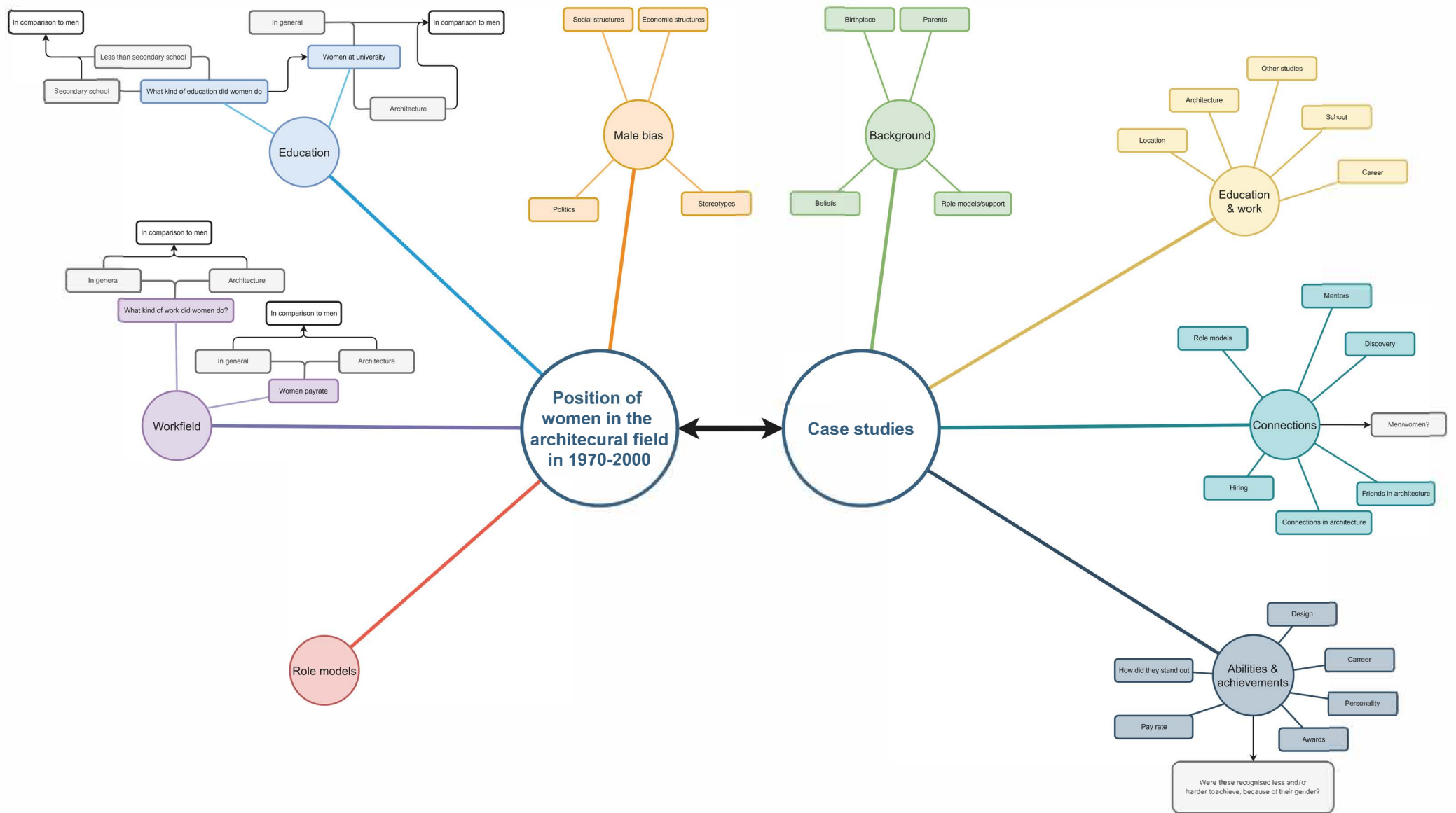
Even big names of women in the architectural profession have been exposed to gender inequality, such as Zaha Hadid, who opened her practice in London in 1980 (Fontana-Giusti, 2016). In Hadid's words, *"Many women are a part of a team, and even if the woman is the lead person, they're always seen as the second fiddle, no matter how good they are"* (Hadid, 2005, p.134). Another noteworthy figure in architecture is Patty Hopkins, who co founded an architectural practice in 1976 with her husband, Michael Hopkins (Hopkins Architects, n.d.-c). Patty Hopkins also experienced gender inequality, such as being photoshopped out of a picture with five other architects, which were all men (Quirk, 2017).

This thesis aims to show the historical development of women in the architectural profession in the UK from 1950-2000. The chosen period and location illustrate a specific period in gender history of the UK where women were studying architecture and pioneer woman architects were recognised, but the field was still male-dominated. This historical development is analysed by two pioneer women architects: Zaha Hadid and Patty Hopkins. The research question is:

'What is the relation between pioneer women architects and the general position of women in the architectural work field in the second half of the 20th century in the United Kingdom?'

The aim is to find similarities and differences between the general position of women in the architectural profession and the case studies. Furthermore, the case studies will show different perspectives and approaches of pioneer architects on the gender inequality of that time. The chosen methodology consists of an analysis of the position of women in the UK during 1950-2000, more specifically in the architectural field. Primary sources used are (gender) statistics and articles from 1950-2000 on education, the work field, male bias, and role models in the UK (figure 1). The main secondary sources used are books and articles about gender history in society, and the architectural education and profession in the UK during 1950-2000. Furthermore, an analysis of the career and life of the case studies is made by looking at primary sources such as interviews and images and secondary sources such as articles describing their lives. Lastly, the findings are compared to be able to answer the research question.

Figure 1: research topics (own image)



1. Society and gender

Internal and external factors influence the possibilities for women to pursue a career in architecture. In this chapter, an overview is shown of education and work in the second half of the 20th century in the UK, focusing on gender. The influences of social structures, economic structures, politics, stereotypes, and the lack of woman role models are discussed. This background information is essential to understand the career paths of the case studies Zaha Hadid and Patty Hopkins and their relation to the general position of women in the architectural work field.

1.1. Education

Education is of importance to this research as from secondary school on; it has affected the opportunities in later life. This is seen in gender stereotypes and the possibilities for women to get into universities and pursue careers. The background had an accompanying role in these possibilities, which is illustrated in the case studies in chapter two.

1.1.1. Schools

In the UK in the second half of the 20th century, there were two main school types: state schools accessible to everyone¹ and expensive independent schools where most pupils came from families of the higher class (Marwick, 2003; Rosen, 2004). Independent schools provided chances of holding higher positions in the later career (Rosen, 2004). Next to the inequality of wealth and status, these schools also played a role in the inequality of gender. This is shown in the fact that girls' education was taken less seriously and that in boys' schools, an apparent gender stereotype was seen in the distribution of functions: almost all academic functions were executed by men, but the cooking, nursing, and secretarial positions were held by women (Rosen, 2004).

1.1.2. Higher education

The differentiation of society and gender is also seen in higher education. In the 1960s, 45% of children from professional families entered higher education. In contrast, only 4% of the children of skilled labourers did so (Rosen, 2004), which shows that someone's background had a significant influence on their later chances. Besides, men attending universities was almost three times as much as women (figure 2). Even though gradually it would become easier to get A-levels for women and therefore qualify for higher education, there were still not many women getting accepted into universities (Rosen 2004)

Figure 2: % men/women in full- and part-time higher education, UK

	1965-66	1999-2000
Men	310.000 (71%)	923.300 (46%)
Women	127.300 (29%)	1.091.800 (54%)

Note. Taken from "Transformation of British Life 1950–2000: A Social History (1st ed.)" by A. Rosen, 2004, p. 83, *Manchester University Press*.

¹ State schools in this period shifted from a system that selects children on their academic ability (Foster et al., 2018), to a school system that strives for equal opportunities for all children (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, n.d.-a).

During the 1970s and 1980s more women were enrolling in universities². However, women's colleges were not provided with as much quality as men's colleges, and in the mixed colleges, the ratio was in favour of men.

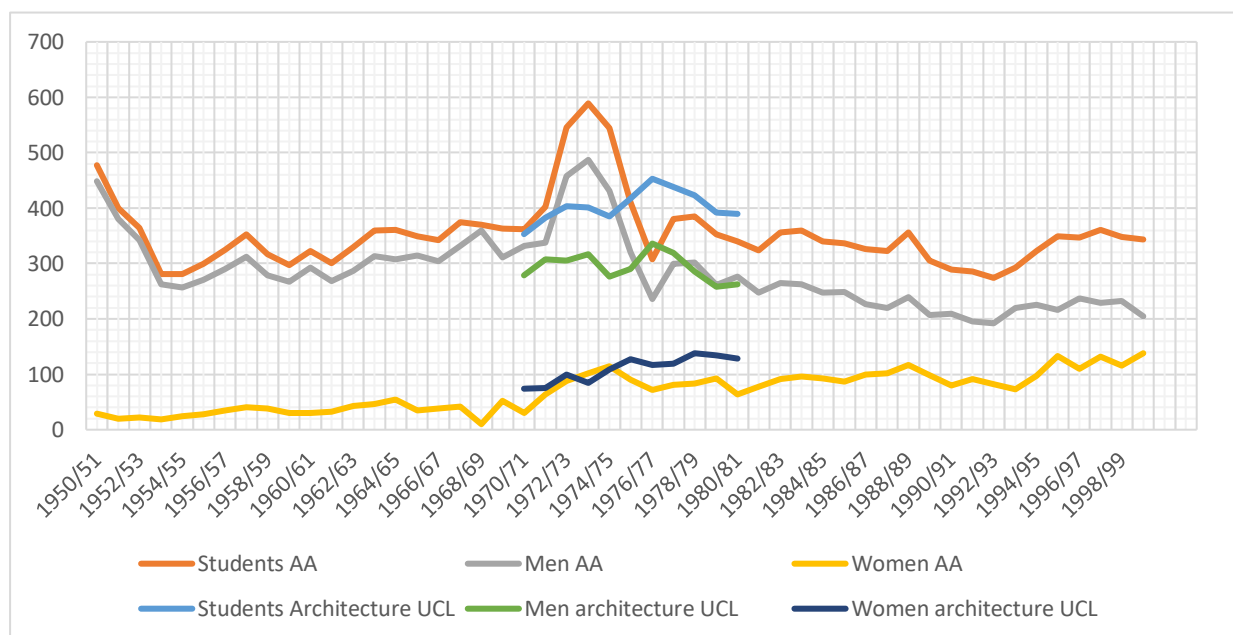
In conclusion, the possibilities for women to get higher education in the second half of the 20th century increasingly improved; however, the chances were still not in favour of women.

1.1.3. Higher education in architecture, with the focus on the AA

The Architectural Association (AA) was founded in 1847 and is the oldest unconstrained school of architecture in the UK (Architectural Association, n.d.). The inequality and improvements in gender in the AA are representative factors of the position of women in architecture that are further illustrated in chapter two with the case studies who also attended the AA.

Gender inequality is seen among others in the suspicion that a limitation on women students was used under the radar after the WWII until the early 1970s (Darling & Walker, 2017). As an extension of the representation of women, the ratio of students in the AA is seen in figures 3 and 4, which show that women were underrepresented in the second half of the 20th century. To compare this to other architecture studies at that time, in the University College London (UCL) from 1970/71 – 1980/81³ is seen that there were more women studying in the AA, but women were also underrepresented. In 1970, an increase of women students in the AA is seen, resulting from the women's rights movement and possibly because of the accessibility of local authority grants for some students (Darling & Walker, 2017)

Figure 3: ratio men/women students in architecture studies (own image)

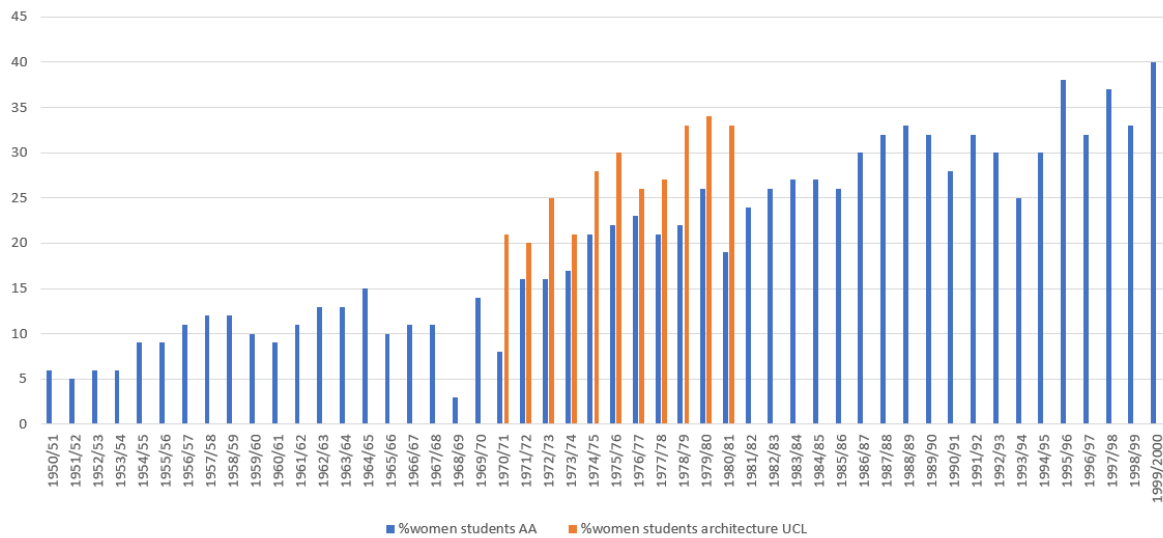


Note: sources (Darling & Walker, 2017, p.9.; R. Winckworth, e-mail, March 4 & 7, 2022)

² During this time the UK was struggling with dropping birth-rates and economic problems, which led to less funding of teacher training colleges, which were mostly occupied by women (Rosen, 2004).

³ This period is used, because these were the records that were found.

Figure 4: % women students in architecture studies (own image)



Note: sources (Darling & Walker, 2017, p.9.; R. Winckworth, e-mail, March 4 & 7, 2022)

Not only careers in architecture were pursued; for example, in the 1960s, some women AA graduates were working for the Ministry of Education (Darling & Walker, 2017), which meant they could influence the equality in education. However, none of them had senior positions (Darling & Walker, 2017), which shows that their influence was limited. Around the mid-1970s, women started to be more represented in the academic staff of the AA, and the first woman President of the AA council, Jane Drew, was established in 1969. Even though the ratio was still in favour of men (Darling & Walker, 2017), this could show a shift in influence and more women role models for students.

1.2. Women and work

Work is an essential subject to this research because the opportunities were not favouring women due to societal expectations and gender stereotypes. Although the women's rights movement was strongly developing, the effects of gender inequality were still seen in work life. These factors influenced the possibilities for women to pursue a career in architecture, which is also seen in the case studies in chapter two.

1.2.1. Societal influences on women's abilities to work

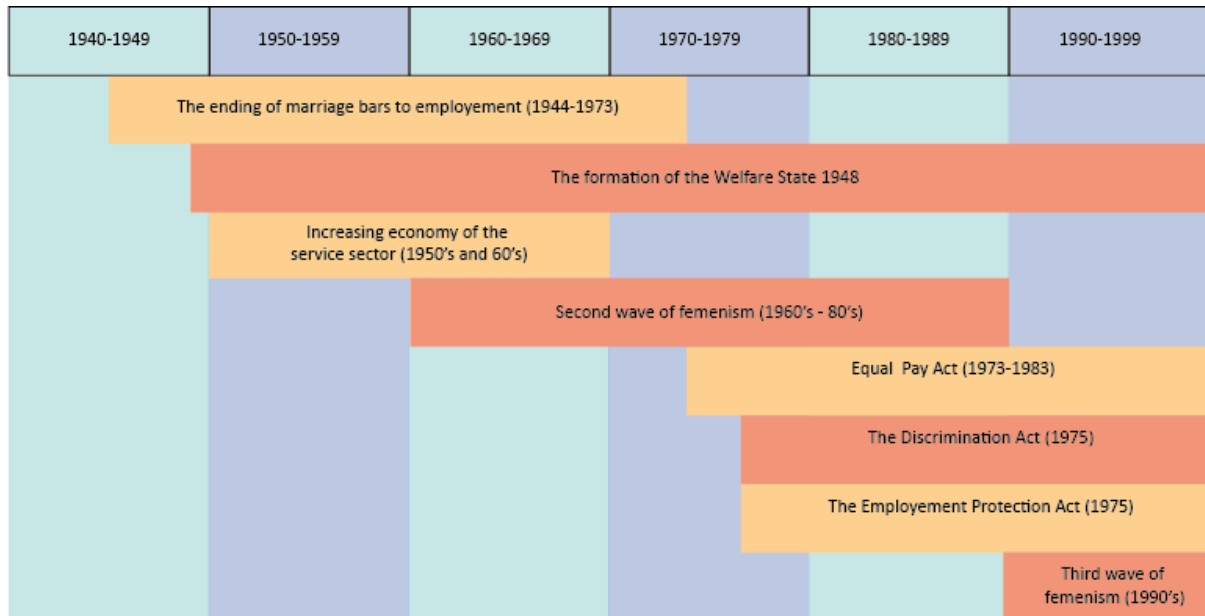
The cultural assumption in the UK was that the primary role of women was to be a mother and a housewife, which is shown in the fact that most women in the UK saw marriage and maternity as their main careers (Rosen, 2004; Marwick, 2003). This cultural expectation stood in the path of women who did want to pursue a career in a professional context. However, in the second half of the 20th century, several laws and movements increased the possibility of a career as a woman (figure 5), such as the availability of more part-time jobs, payment and treatment rights⁴, and rights to stay at their positions⁵ (Rosen, 2004).

⁴ Women had to be paid and treated equally for the same work and maternity pay was mandatory (Rosen, 2004).

⁵ Women received the right to stay at their jobs after getting married and the right to get back to their jobs after giving birth (Rosen, 2004).

However, this search for equality was not always seen back in reality. In general, women still got paid less than men for the same job, and in part-time jobs, which women mostly occupied, there was a shortage of equal benefits and legal protection (Rosen, 2004).

Figure 5: laws and movements with influence on women’s career possibilities
(Own image)



Note: used sources (Civilservant, n.d.; Kenton, 2020; Hall, 2018; Rosen, 2004; Wilde, 2019)

1.2.2. Women in the architectural work field

After graduating, it could be difficult for women in the second half of the 20th century to find work in architecture. Women during this period needed more flexibility in the number of work hours due to their societal role of being a mother and wives (Caven, 2006). If financially viable, possible solutions were to start their own practice (Caven, 2006) or to start a husband-and-wife partnership (Darling & Walker, 2017). These solutions are seen in chapter two as the different approaches that Zaha Hadid and Patty Hopkins used to start their practice.

Furthermore, even though women performed just as well as men in architectural education, women in architecture felt discriminated against in employment. The ability to get promoted was seen as a gender issue (Fowler & Wilson, 2004). The research of Fowler and Wilson (2004) also shows that even women without children were less likely to get hired because of the belief they would cost the company once they would. Lastly, they show that unequal pay was believed to result from women having children.

This gender inequality can be seen in the statistics of women in architecture. For example, only 5% of the registered architects in 1975 were women (Fowler & Wilson, 2004) and 26% in 1995 (RIBA). Furthermore, women were underrepresented in senior positions (Fowler & Wilson, 2004) and in receiving architectural awards (figure 6).

Figure 6: women in architectural awards (own image)

	Description	Timeline	Ratio men/women	UK wins	Region
Pritzker Prize	This award is seen as the Nobel Prize of architecture	1979 - now	10% women (5/50) First women in 2004, Zaha Hadid	25% women (1/4) Zaha Hadid is the only woman out of the UK.	International
RIBA Royal Gold Medal	One of the biggest honors for architecture in the world	1980 - now	9,5% women / groups of women (4/42)	12,5% women / groups of women (2/16)	International
Stirling Prize	This award is received by the UK's best new building	1996 - now	circa 25% practices with women as founders	All	UK

Note: used sources (Designboom & Neira, 2019; RIBA,2021; RIBA 2022; The Hyatt Foundation, n.d.; Valencia, 2022a; Valencia, 2022b)

1.3. Conclusion

The importance of gender inequality in education and work life in the UK in the late 20th century on the position of women in architecture is illustrated in this chapter. The secondary school and gender stereotypes affected women's opportunities to get into architecture where gender inequality was also a problem. In pursuing a career in architecture after graduating, women were conflicted with unequal rights and the cultural assumption of having to be a mother and housewife. However, it was also a time of changes and improvement of women's rights, and different ways of pursuing a career in architecture for women were possible. This will be illustrated in chapter two, where an oral history of the architects Zaha Hadid and Patty Hopkins will be shown.

2. Case studies

In this chapter, oral history will show two women architects of the second half of the 20th century who had their practice in the UK. These architects are Zaha Hadid and Patty Hopkins, who both show different approaches to starting an architectural practice as a woman while coping with gender inequality.

2.1. Zaha Hadid

Figure 7: Zaha Hadid portrait (Zaha Hadid Architects, n.d.-b)



2.1.1. Background

Chapter one shows that the opportunities and disadvantages a person got in life started with the family a person was born into. A wealthy family gave advantages in getting a good education and, therefore, more chances for a later career. Furthermore, the family could function as a support system or a role model to help a person pursue their dreams.

Zaha Hadid was born in 1950 in Baghdad into a wealthy international and multicultural oriented family (Fontana-Giusti, 2016). According to Hadid, in the interview with JOMagazine, being from Iraq made it easier for her to pursue a career in architecture than being from a Western country. She explained that an Arab family is not only about the husband, the wife, and the child, but you have your whole family as a support system. This type of family, in her opinion, makes it easier for a woman to have encouragement. However, she experienced prejudice for being Arab (JOMagazine2003, 2010), making her background an advantage and disadvantage at the same time. Something to consider is whether this feeling was mutual for most Arab women or a lucky coincidence for Hadid and her inner circle because she came from an international family. Furthermore, a small family could also be a support system, which concludes that it may not be about the size of Hadid's family but their beliefs.

Not only did Hadid's parents functioned as a support system, but they also inspired her. Research by Fontana-Giusti (2016) shows that her mother was an artist. Her parents would take her on inspiring architectural trips, which could have inspired Hadid's artistic and architectural side. Furthermore, her parents took her seriously when talking about, for example, her architectural models, which could have stimulated her self-confidence (Fontana-Giusti, 2016).

In the 1960s, her parents sent Hadid to multiple boarding schools in Europe to get her education (Fontana-Giusti, 2016). She studied mathematics in America until she changed her path in 1972 when she started studying at the AA in London (Zaha Hadid Architects, n.d.-c). This shows that Hadid, due to her family, had access to the kind of education she wanted and needed and, therefore, could develop her skills.

2.1.2. Architectural education

As explained in chapter, the opportunities in education were not the same for women as for men. Hadid was part of the UK's secondary school system in the 1960s because she went to a boarding school there (Qureshi, 2020). In chapter one is shown that these schools provided gender stereotypes and inequality, but also chances for higher education. In 1972 Hadid was part of the 16% of women who studied at the AA (Darling & Walker, 2017), even with lower chances because of her gender, but with the privilege of good education and wealthy parents. It was a time with a gradually increasing number of women on the academic staff. Together with the encouragement of more individual freedom and independence of students at the AA (Darling & Walker, 2017), which could have been an inspiration to women students. Around the 1970s, some students received the opportunity to be employed in the teaching staff of the AA immediately after graduating, among whom Zaha Hadid⁶ (Darling & Walker, 2017).

Even though there is inequality to be seen in the position of women in the educational system of architecture, in Hadid her opinion, the problem of the position of women in architecture is not as much about education and how well they perform in architecture school. In the interview with JOMagazine, Hadid said: *"People who were with me in school or people that I taught, many women architects were mostly better in class than men. Men wouldn't like to hear that but, well, equally good. Continuity is a problem, and I think people excite anything in a level of confidence, encouragement, and support, and that doesn't exist everywhere."* (JOMagazine2003, 2010, 0:35). This leads back to her understanding of the benefits of having a supportive family. Not only Hadid's family was part of her support system, but also colleagues and her teachers (JOMagazine2003, 2010).

2.1.3. Architectural work field

Chapter one shows that the cultural assumption was that women had the primary role of being a mother and a wife, which stood in the way of pursuing a career in architecture as a woman. Furthermore, even though the rights for women's employment progressed, women still felt discriminated against in employment and their ability to be promoted and recognized in the architectural profession. Despite these factors, Hadid made architecture her primary role. She took the approach of starting her own practice and did not have a husband or children. Her remarkable way of designing and her character helped her achieve her goals. However, it was not an easy road for Hadid, which is shown in for example her experience of gender inequality in the architectural profession.

At the AA, Hadid made connections that would be an addition to her social and professional network. Rem Koolhaas and Elia Zenghelis were her tutors. After graduating, she started working for them at the Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA) in Rotterdam and became a partner there in 1977 (Fontana-Giusti, 2016). In 1980 Hadid started her practice in London.

In the interview with JOMagazine, Hadid expressed her opinion on biases in the architectural profession: *"I don't think it's the profession...I think people are biased."* (JOMagazine2003, 2010, 0:19). However, she did recognize that the architectural profession is not equal. According to Hadid, the problem is not only that the architectural profession is male-dominated, but also related industries, such as contractors and developers (Manufacturing Intellect, 2016). In addition to this at the AJ Women in Architecture Awards, she said: *"Unfortunately, [to have their authority recognized] women have to make a lot of effort. There should be more respect and support."* (Mark, 2014b, p.10).

⁶ In the mid-1980s she also taught at Harvard (Fontana-Giusti, 2016).

Hadid experienced and perceived the difficulties of being a woman architect. For example, when Hadid won the design contest for The Peak Leisure Club in 1982 (Zaha Hadid Architects, n.d.-a), she was not well known yet, which was shown in the prejudice of them assuming she was a man: *"They called me "Mr. Hadid"* (Manufacturing Intellect, 2016, 1:19). Furthermore, she stated in another interview: *"There are many people whose partners or husbands are taken more seriously than they are, almost automatically. It's not the doing of the husband. People automatically refer to the work of the male... But in the past, if I were to go to a site with a male assistant, they would talk to him and not to me. And with many women it's the same thing...I don't know where the difficulty starts; I think it starts at the office. I'm sure it starts at school as well, but not so much."* (Hadid, 2005, p.134).

Even though Hadid recognized the problems of gender inequality, she may not have identified to a great extent with being a woman architect or that her designs were different because of her gender: *"I actually know men who think more like me than other women. I can't really say, "this is like this because I'm a woman", but I am a woman, so it's an outcome of that."* (Manufacturing Intellect, 2016, 10:00). Hadid pointed out that the profession is not only hard for women; it is a difficult profession to succeed in general (JOMagazine2003, 2010).

2.1.4. Abilities and achievements

Hadid's approach and background are of importance to her career, image, and design skills. She was seen as a unique person with unique designs, which may have been critical to her ability to pursue a career in architecture. Hadid had a very artistic approach to her designs. Her primary way of expressing her architectural ideas visually was with calligraphic drawings⁷ and paintings (Zaha Hadid Architects, n.d.-d)., which gives a combination of art and design (figure 8).

Figure 8: Zaha Hadid painting (Hadid, 2006, p.115)



Next to an artistic one, Hadid also had a social agenda. For example, according to Hadid, the Contemporary Arts Center had the role of becoming an addition to the civic space of New York by becoming a public place that the users should enjoy (Manufacturing Intellect, 2016).

Being perhaps the most well-known woman architect in the world, for Hadid, the important thing was not fame but doing qualitative work and experimenting (Hadid, 2005). In the interview, Hadid (2005), Hadid talked about the disadvantages of fame. Problems that occurred according to Hadid were that she was known for her designs not being built and as a crazy architect who did wild stuff. She said that people could not relate to her because of female stereotypes and being Iraqi after the

⁷ These drawings were inspired by the Avant-Garde and in particular artists Malevich, Tatlin, and Rodchenko (Zaha Hadid Architects, n.d.-d).

Gulf War worked against her. It felt to Hadid that it was more about her personality than about her work. However, focusing on her character, she found a sense of freedom in doing as she wished in her architectural and teaching career because they did not know how to handle her (Hadid, 2005). However, when Hadid started to have many successful projects abroad, there was a late appreciation in the UK for her which repaired her reputation of being known for non-building (Fontana-Giusti, 2016). Her reputation in her career in the UK and outside kept growing, and she received several awards. The most remarkable one might be that she won the Pritzker Prize as the first woman in 2004, which is seen as the Nobel Prize for architecture (Fontana-Giusti, 2016; The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, n.d.-b).

Figure 9 & 10: Zaha Hadid portraits

Figure 9, source (McCartney, 2016)



Figure 10, source (Bailey, 2016)



Hadid's persona of being a hard-working architect, a lead designer, and a unique character is shown in how she is portrayed (figure 7, 9, and 10). Her portrayals are offered in a professional, artistic, open, and outgoing matter, showing power and a sense of being unique. It seems like her portraits say: "I am the architect, and I am proud of it".

The role of being a woman architect is essential in the story of Hadid and the impact she had on other women. Even though Hadid did not call herself a woman architect or feminist, she became a role model to many women architects in a male-dominated profession (Fontana-Giusti, 2016). Hadid said about this topic: *"I never thought of myself as a role model. But I was told this many years ago by a friend, and while I didn't realise it then, I notice more and more as I go to give lectures that a lot of female architects and students come and talk to me afterward."* (Hadid, 2005, p.134)

2.2. Patty Hopkins

Figure 11: Patty Hopkins portrait (Hopkins Architects, n.d.-b)



2.2.1. Background

Chapter one shows that the opportunities and disadvantages for people in the UK were closely related to the kind of class they were born into and what type of education they could get. Having money for an independent school could give better chances for a later career. Furthermore, having surroundings where people could inspire you could be important for a person's direction in later life.

Patty Hopkins was born in Stoke (UK) in 1942 (Crown Copyright, n.d.). She was born into a presumably wealthy family with a father as an orthopaedic surgeon and a mother as a GP (Wainhouse, 2017). She went to a boarding school in the UK, which was mostly, at that time, an all-girls school (Wainhouse, 2017). Her inspiration for architecture did not start as much with her family but with a lecture she got at boarding school: *"I had an aunt who was an architect and a grandfather who was an architect on some different sites. Although my aunt lived in South Africa and my grandfather was dead, so I didn't really know... But we had a lecture at school one evening. I was at boarding school, a very protected sort of environment and an art historian came and talked about buildings and paintings. And I thought oh my god, I have never seen anything like that...my rather narrow education hadn't sort of accomplished that, and I just thought they were so beautiful. So I was responding just to the sort of aesthetic really... So then I sort of started saying I wanted to become an architect."* (Wainhouse, 2017, 18:20). After the inspiration that this lecture brought her, she found a way to get into the AA before even finishing school. In the interview with Owen Wainhouse, she said: *"But I thought I would like to leave, and I found the Architectural Association. If you took the exam, you didn't need A-levels, which is absolutely disgraceful. But this is in 1960. So...I pass the exam...and they took me. And so, I left school, halfway through A-levels, which I shouldn't have done, one should always finish things off, you know, but I was thrilled."* (Wainhouse, 2017, 20:45)

Patty Hopkins' determination and background allowed her to pursue the education of her choice. In her background, Patty Hopkins had women role models in her family to look up to, with her mother and aunt having pursued their careers, which could have helped her confidence in pursuing her career in architecture.

2.2.2. Architectural education

Likewise to Hadid, Patty Hopkins came from a wealthy background and therefore could have a good education. In 1959, Patty Hopkins was part of the 10% of women who studied at the AA (Darling & Walker, 2017), and one out of five women in her year of circa 60 pupils (Mark, 2014a). Contrary to Hadid's time at AA, there was not much progress yet in the number of women in the academic staff.

Patty Hopkins was 17 years old when she started at the AA (Mark, 2014a), a high pressure school, even without the prejudice of being a woman. In Patty Hopkins' words:

"It still is and was suited to people with more experience, you know, I personally think it's more of a sort of post-graduate school really. It isn't, but it's more suited to...so I found it darn difficult, because I wasn't used to using that part of my brain." (Wainhouse, 2017, 21:38). But it was also a place to build valuable experience and professional and personal connections. In the AA she was taught by people that came back from the war, which gave a specific optimistic view on architecture. In Patty Hopkins her words: *"We thought architecture was going to change the world"* (Wainhouse, 2017, 35:10). One of these tutors was Neave Brown, who Hopkins explained would become a good friend: *"He was my tutor for a year. Because most tutors had a little practice... they taught part time... and then he became a friend, because then we moved into one of the houses he did, so we became good friends, we were there together for about eight years."* (Wainhouse, 2017, 35:35).

As an extension of her education, she left for a while to work for Frederick Gibberd to gain practice (Wainhouse, 2017). Patty Hopkins met her husband at the AA when she got back (Mark, 2014a; Wainhouse, 2017). During her speech at the Women in Architecture Luncheon, she talked about this: *"At the Architectural Association...I bumped into a cool mature student, Michael Hopkins. My mother came up to town to see the flat I was moving into – Michael's house – and by the end of dinner we were getting married, which hadn't been on my agenda, I was only 20, Michael 27."* (Mark, 2014a, p. 16). This shows that her mother's beliefs were on the same page as society in general: Patty Hopkins had to become a wife and mother, which could be a challenging job to combine with pursuing a career in architecture.

2.2.3. Architectural work field

Likewise to Hadid, when Patty Hopkins started her career, even though their rights were improving, women still felt discriminated against in the architectural profession. Contrary to Hadid, who went against the stereotype of the society of having to become a wife and mother and became what could be seen as a 'traditional architect,' Patty Hopkins took the approach of combining becoming a full-time mother and wife with being an architect by starting a part-time practice for herself and later on working part-time in a husband-and-wife practice. To make this work, a good network and resilience were critical.

According to research by Darling & Walker (2017), the last type of practice had advantages such as an easy way to communicate ideas and joint finances. However, they explain that women found themselves preoccupied with taking care of the children and the household. At the same time, the recognition of their practice went to their husbands. Even if the husband would recognize the wife's contributions, cultural gender assumptions were that the husband was the designer and lead of their concepts (Darling & Walker, 2017).

Patty Hopkins started her part-time practice after graduating, while her husband partnered with Norman Foster (Wainhouse, 2017). In the interview with Owen Wainhouse, she spoke about this: *"Well I had a little practice at home, with three children, you know quite small, which I really enjoyed, I did an exhibition for the hospitals and things for friends and my parents, you know nothing really grand. But it was sort of a half time thing."* (Wainhouse, 2017, 23:26). In 1976 Patty Hopkins became a founding partner of Hopkins architects, together with her husband, which they started in

their own home (Wainhouse, 2017), seen in figure 12. They had a division in the roles that they executed in the practice:

“My role has always been obviously when we were here, and the children were growing. But it was an incredibly useful situation. Because when they came back from school, I was up there.” (Wainhouse, 2017, 24:35). Being able to work from home and having help, made it possible for Patty Hopkins to make her part in the practice while being a wife and mother: *“I worked in the mornings with au pair help. Far from being frustrated, I have always revelled in my varied role.”* (Mark, 2014a, p. 16). *“Michael definitely has always led on design; he has a very strong sense of how things should be. Frankly there has always been so much to do at work, that I’ve been happy. I’ve been supported. I’ve been more concerned with detail, I’ve been the, it sounds a bit boring actually, but I have been the reminder about the important things. Obviously, he has worked close with our current partners and all of the previous partners on the bigger jobs. We’ve worked together on some things. What is kind of inevitable, he is probably, certainly until recently, he has been the starter of all the main projects.”* (Wainhouse, 2017, 28:45).

Not only their division in the practice was important for Patty and Michael Hopkins to make it work, but also having friends in the field helped the couple build a network for their practice and build a name. For example, they got the first educational building they designed, the Fleet Infant School in the 1980’s, through a friend (Wainhouse, 2017): *‘We had a good friend, Colin Stansfield Smith, who was the chief architect of Hampshire. He was a very impressive, influential chap, very nice. And he basically as far as I remember asked us if we wanted to do a school in Hampshire’.* (Wainhouse, 2017, 5:06). In this project Patty Hopkins had the role of being the lead architect (Wainhouse, 2017), in contradiction to what Patty Hopkins had said about Michael always being the main designer.

Figure 12: Hopkins House (Hopkins Architects, n.d.-a)



2.2.4. Abilities and achievements

Patty Hopkins is remarkable because she followed many different roles in her professional and personal path, such as being a mother, wife, architect, organiser, contractor, and owner-manager. In this way, Patty Hopkins could be seen as not a ‘traditional architect’ but an architect in a broader sense. Furthermore, the way Patty and Michael Hopkins set up their practice has been a good strategy for Patty Hopkins to achieve much in her career. However, their husband-and-wife practice strategy was also followed with presumptions and fewer credits for Patty Hopkins compared to her husband.

As mentioned before, Patty and Michael Hopkins started their practice at their own house: *“This house became the focus of our new house and our new practice space. We had three young children, so it was all a bit chaotic.”* (Wainhouse, 2017, 10:15). *“I acted as the main contractor, co-ordinating the various elements of the building.”* (Mark, 2014a, p. 16). For the next studio she claimed the role of contractor again: *“Within eight years we had outgrown the floor of the house and a studio we had to take opposite. We needed a bigger office...I again acted as main contractor...we moved in 1985 with 20 staff. It was another good advertisement for the burgeoning practice.”* (Mark, 2014a, p. 16). At one point, for their practice, she was a factory owner for a while: *“while the Patera factory in Stoke-on-Trent was producing the components for our building, they went bust and I ended up taking over the factory, which I ran, as owner manager, remotely for a few years”* (Mark, 2014a, p. 16). Hopkins her resilient, adaptive, and family character is also seen in the professional and reserved way she is portrayed (figure 11, 13, and 14).

Figure 13 & 14: Patty Hopkins portraits

Figure 13, source (Miller, 2001)



Figure 14, source (Miller, 2017)



While being in a husband-and-wife practice, the question is what Michael’s view was on Patty Hopkins. In her speech at the Women in Architecture Luncheon, she illustrated this with the time someone asked her about her role in their practice:

“It is the sort of question one dreads: how can one encapsulate 38 years into a single sentence? I can hardly remember any of it. I stumbled out something like: Michael came up with the concepts and I supplied the detail. So, our friend Humphrey Burton, who was asking the questions, said ‘Oh you mean like choosing the door handles?’ at which Michael exploded. No! So, I asked Michael the other day what did he think my role in the practice was? He said: ‘the practice wouldn’t have developed without you. You were the glue and the oil.’” This shows Michael’s belief and respect for her in Patty Hopkins’s opinion.

Not being recognised for her importance in their practice is also seen by her being photoshopped out of a picture of the BBC with other architects, which were all men (figures 15 and 16). Therefore, The BBC showed a biased view of architecture (Waite & Mark, 2014) and Patty Hopkins’ importance.

Figure 15: Patty Hopkins in the picture ([[Original picture with Patty Hopkins in it]], 2014)



Figure 16: Patty Hopkins photoshopped ([[Patty Hopkins photoshopped out of the picture]], 2014)



While working in a husband-and-wife practice, Patty Hopkins in 1994 was the first woman to receive the RIBA Royal Gold Medal for Architecture (Wainhouse, 2017, RIBA, 2021), which the couple received together for an extraordinary impact on the development of architecture (RIBA, 2022).

2.3. Conclusion

The possibility to pursue a career in architecture as a woman was influenced by multiple conditions such as background, education, network, society, personality, and chances. Zaha Hadid and Patty Hopkins came from wealthy families and had a good education. They attended the AA, where they made personal and professional connections, which helped them pursue a career in architecture. Besides, they both had family, friends, teachers, and colleagues to support them in their careers. But even though Zaha Hadid and Patty Hopkins succeeded in having an architectural practice, they still had to cope with gender inequality and stereotypes.

Zaha Hadid and Patty Hopkins show different strategies and characteristics in starting an architectural practice as a woman. Zaha Hadid chose to make being an architect her primary role and represents the more 'traditional' practice of being the lead architect and designer. On the contrary, Patty Hopkins chose to combine her practice with being a mother and wife and represented an adaptive form of practice, where being an architect can be many things.

The definition of an architect, according to Cambridge Dictionary (2022), is: "a person whose job is to design new buildings and make certain that they are built correctly". However, the practices of Zaha Hadid and Patty Hopkins show that this is a very narrow definition and that architects can have many more roles.

Conclusion

In this history thesis the central question is *'what is the relation between pioneer woman architects and the general position of women in the architectural work field in the second half of the 20th century in the UK?'*

To be concluded about the general position of women in architecture during this time is that inequality of opportunities started early in life. The family a woman was born into influenced her career path with its amount of wealth, support, and inspiration. Wealth influenced the type of secondary school a woman could attend and, therefore, the possibility of being accepted into an architecture school. However, secondary school was also a part of gender assumptions and a lack of women role models, which could influence the self-belief and mentality.

It was hard for women to get into architecture schools due to external reasons, as mentioned above, and internal causes such as a quota on female students. However, when being accepted as one of the few women, there was a lack of women role models in the academic staff, which meant students would mostly be taught by men.

After graduating, even though the rights of women in the work field slowly progressed, the cultural belief was that women's primary role was to be a housewife and a mother. This was shown in the acceptance of women in architectural practices. Getting a part-time job was difficult in an architectural practice, which made combining work with being a mother almost impossible. Furthermore, even for women who chose to make architecture their full-time career, they got discriminated against in employment, promotion, acceptance, and recognition because of their gender. A strategy, however, to pursue a career in architecture and become a 'pioneer woman architect' was by opening their own practice when having the finances and network to make this work.

This research shows that even though it is hard to pursue a career in architecture for anyone, the gender inequality in the architectural work field and society gives extra barriers to succeed as a woman. It shows that women architects struggled to find out how to combine the work-life with the private life. Zaha Hadid and Patty Hopkins came from wealthy families and had good education. They attended the AA, where they made personal and professional connections, which helped them pursue a career in architecture.

In a way, Zaha Hadid's approach was choosing not to be the woman that society wanted her to be but making architecture her primary role. She gave this her all with credit to a support system consisting of her family, teachers, and colleagues. When she started her firm, she did experience gender inequality, such as assumptions that she was a man or people in the work field directly talking to her assistant, which happened to be a man. She also saw gender inequality in the work field, such as husbands being taken more seriously in a husband-and-wife practice. However, she also noticed that in the years she worked as an architect, the work field progressed, and women were more accepted. Furthermore, Zaha Hadid's artistic approach, persona, and work ethic were reasons she succeeded in opening her practice and becoming a role model to other women.

Patty Hopkins took another approach, namely starting a husband-and-wife practice. Instead of letting society or people in the field choose her role, namely being a mother and housewife and nothing more, she searched for possibilities to combine them. Due to having the network and finances to start their practice at home and for au-pair help, she could make her many roles work: mother, wife, architect, contractor, and owner-manager. Even though her husband was the leading designer, he recognized her significant role in their practice. However, others did not always do the same, which is illustrated in, for example, the incident where she was photoshopped out of a picture with essential architects of that time, which were men. Patty Hopkins, her adaptive, appreciative, and hardworking persona, helped her be a cofounder of a practice and an inspiration to many.

The question that arose from this research is if there is only one definition of being an architect and what 'success' is. During my architectural education, I was taught that becoming an architect means being a designer of the built environment and, in most cases taking the lead, which is also shown in the dictionary term of being an architect. This image of 'the architect' is the more traditional practice established in Zaha Hadid's career. The 'traditional' form of practice is often connected to making it in the architectural field and 'being successful.' However, Patty Hopkins's career shows that it is unnecessary to act like this 'traditional architect' to 'succeed'. Her type of practice was a more resilient and adaptive one, but also a less recognized one. Furthermore, both Hadid and Patty Hopkins show different roles as an architect. For example, architect as designer of small and big projects, architect as contractor, architect as owner-manager, architect as teacher, and architect as social actor. The image of an architect that society and the profession produced is not always true to reality. This is also shown in the definition of "success" because most recognition goes to the people that most resemble this image, even though other roles may be of equal importance.

Discussion

In this history thesis, using the two case studies and their different practices gives an original addition to a topic on which a lot of research has already been done. Chapter one provides an overview of existing research on gender inequality (in the architectural field) in the UK in the second half of the 20th century, used to understand the study cases. However, more diverse literature could have given a broader perspective on this topic. Furthermore, more research on gender inequality in architecture, in general, could have been used to make the problem that this thesis discusses more understandable.

The two case studies show different approaches to dealing with this gender inequality. In further research, it could be interesting to examine more case studies to find out if there are other approaches than those shown in this research. Other women who used the same approaches could give a broader and more in-depth comparison of the different practices and strategies. Did it only work for the two case studies of this research, or were there more women who used the same strategy and got recognized? Also, finding case studies of women who attended other architecture schools than the A could show additional information found in this research. With further research, a broader perspective of gender inequality in the architectural profession of that time could be established. Furthermore, the case studies could have been done more in-depth by looking at information such as more interviews, more articles, own writing of the women, and more people who knew them and talked about them.

Epilogue

Writing this history thesis allowed me to gain experience in a topic that has been fascinating to me for a long time. Male domination in the architectural world and practices was something that I was familiar with, but I did not know much about. This history thesis has educated me on architectural practices and women in architecture, which opportunity I am appreciative of. Doing research about architects and 'getting a look into their lives' was something I had not done before but found incredibly fascinating and educational. I believe that oral history writing can be extremely helpful in understanding and learning about a topic, especially when done in combination with existing research.

The thesis has also made me aware of historiography and interpretation. Society and the architectural work field have made a stand in definitions such as what an architect is, who a woman architect is and what success is. However, I learned that it is important to sometimes look outside those definitions and find others by using history and experience.

Lastly, I would like to thank Birgitte Hansen, who tutored me during my thesis and provided me with new knowledge during this experience.

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