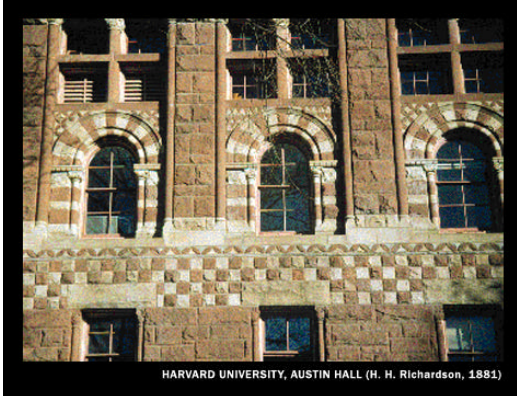


Clues, Cues, Choices, and a Critical Question



Those seeking cues and clues to understanding current yet contrasting collegiate architectural trends might benefit from seeing two historic examples within a hundred yards of each other, at Harvard University's North Yard.

Austin Hall (H. H. Richardson, 1881) exemplifies the polychromatic, singular, and unique design concept. The asymmetrical facade glows in all seasons with its textured combinations of pink granite, two shades of sandstone, and idiosyncratic fenestration patterns.

Gordon McKay Laboratory (Coolidge, Shepley, Bulfinch and Abbott, 1953) exemplifies geometric simplicity, with a few materials carefully proportioned. The reflective glass mirrors the adjacent skyline and landscape; light and texture changes with time of day and season.



Austin is self-contained. Few would be equal to the task of adding to Richardson's master work. McKay could grow in several directions without losing its design integrity, and in fact, did expand with three stories added in 1961.

A critical question: should the campus building be a design statement complete unto itself, or a design, which in time, might be extended as needs change.

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