
RESEARCH ARTICLE

Reconsidering 'Minor' Archives: The Case of Australian Architect Nell McCredie

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This paper discusses the recent discovery of the archive of the Australian interwar architect Nell McCredie. Finding this archive was crucial to the identification of McCredie as the author of several Georgian Revival houses in suburban Brisbane from the 1920s and 1930s. From an intersectional perspective, this text examines McCredie's career as a practice outside the canon and presents her design for Uanda House (1928), and her work as a public service architect prior to expanding her career into ceramics. Like it has many other women, gender bias limited her career in terms of both longevity and agency.

The aim of this text is to propose an understanding of McCredie's archive as 'minor'. The 'minor' category for architectural history is a valuable way to reposition canonical 'major' histories, especially in relation to the 20th-century history of modern architecture. In doing so, the 'major' and the 'minor' are understood as connected rather than opposed ideas, following Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's understanding of these concepts. Thus, rather than viewing the work of women and minorities as 'absent' from canonical histories of architecture, this text addresses the historiographical potential of their reconsideration as 'minor', which shifts the discussion from a dichotomous relationship to one of interdependence. McCredie's archive is as an opportunity to develop new frameworks through which to analyse the archives of early women architects.

Introduction

The discovery of the archive of Nell McCredie, an Australian architect, in 2013 provides insight into the state of archival-based research into architecture and the status of women architects in Australia from the interwar period. McCredie was part of the second cohort to study architecture at the University of Sydney, from 1919 to 1923. Her career began as soon as she left school and continued, intermittently, until 1940, when she shifted her focus to commercial ceramics. She designed 13 houses located along the east coast of Australia, along the 2,400 kilometres between Sydney and Cairns. The Uanda House (1928) was the first of McCredie's works to be identified when in 1998 an application to demolish the house was submitted to council. The other 12 houses were identified in 2013, after her archive was found in a piece of furniture. Research into this early architect from Queensland had begun, through various methods, to identify other architectural work that could be attributed to her, but the discovery of her archive was a turning point. Previously, she was principally known as a potter who had first studied architecture. Little to nothing was known of her built work, and it was assumed that her career in architecture

was short-lived because of the consistent, structural discrimination she experienced.

The discrimination McCredie faced was presented in a reflective history of the McCredie Ceramics business, written by her brother, Robert McCredie, and donated to the National Gallery of Australia. He wrote that sex discrimination was the single biggest reason that Nell left architecture: 'In 1923 [1922] three young ladies graduated from the Sydney University in architecture, one being Nell McCredie. Sex discrimination was an unknown phrase in those days but there was a lot of talk about how women could cope in architecture, which had always been a male domain. Employment in this profession wasn't readily available' (McCredie 1974: 1). As many other women have experienced, gender bias limited McCredie's career both in terms of its longevity and of her agency to practise in her own right. Nevertheless, however constrained McCredie's career in architecture may have been, her work still has much to offer to global architectural history.

This paper discusses the potential for small archives, such as that of McCredie, to reposition major histories. In doing so, it will explore the concept of 'minor' as a category for architecture history. The term 'minor' is informed by architectural theorists' reading of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's text *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature* (1986), in which it is argued that the minor possesses latent power in relation to the major. Jill Stoner appropriates Deleuze

and Guattari's ideas and claims that 'minor architectures are, in fact, opportunistic events in response to latent but powerful desires to undo structures of power; and as such, minor architectures are precisely (if perversely) concerned with the privilege and circumstances of major architecture' (Stoner 2012: 4). In these definitions, the minor is not the opposite of the major; rather, they are integral to each other, one cannot exist without the other. Women and other minorities were rarely in a position to push new agendas in architecture, and as such their work may be viewed as less than exemplary. How do historians then situate this work in relation to the canon? This is where the theory for 'minor' – architectures, histories, and archives – becomes a valuable lens through which to analyse the work of architects such as Nell McCredie. The smallness of the minor archive makes it more valuable to larger 'major' canonical archives. Drawing from fourth wave feminism's intersectional approach to equality, this paper is underpinned by an exploration of the 'minor' and its potential to contribute new readings of existing narratives of architecture.

Outside the Canon: McCredie's Gender and Geography

The canon in architectural history has been predominantly constructed around the image of individual white men, of solo avant-garde architects within modernity who are projected as custodians of architectural movements. This narrow focus has limited any inclusion of women or other minorities in architectural history. The study of women in architecture and their absence from histories began in earnest in the 1970s (Hammond 2009: 11). However, compounding the problem of the absence of women and minorities in architectural history has been the preoccupation with Western European and Northern American histories as central to the canon. The Australian architecture historians Sandra Kaji-O'Grady and Julie Willis write that 'the architectural theorizing that emerges from the North American and European experience is generalized as a representation of architectural theory everywhere' (Kaji-O'Grady and Willis 2003: 226). Histories and theories of Australian architecture rarely appear in anthologies of architectural history. When Australian histories do appear, they are portrayed as minorities or as representing architecture from non-canonical geographies. Moreover, Willis affirms that a history of women in architecture was lost somewhere in the gap between the male-dominated European-Northern American canon and feminist spatial theory. '[M]ainstream architectural history', she writes, 'has failed to include the contribution of women within, or even alongside, the canon of great men/great buildings. While feminists in architecture may argue that it is desirable to consider the history of women architects separately to that of the accepted canon, the history remains patchy and is often confused with the study of other gender and feminist issues in architecture' (Willis 1998: 61).

In fact, the failure of Australian architects to acknowledge Indigenous culture, history, and architecture has furthered their association with a Western colonial past. Thus, being a woman architect who worked in Australia

created a double discrimination for careers such as that of McCredie. In the interwar period, when she was practising, architects focused on the acclimatisation of British and colonial styles of architecture, which re-affirmed Australia's position as an antipodean colony; much of early Australian architecture history has been assumed to be part of Western European history. There is still much work to be done in decolonising Australia's architectural history, and an important aspect of reconciliation has been the dismantling of Australia's colonial history through a process called 'truth-telling' (Reconciliation Australia 2018). In this context of historiography, the decolonisation of Australian history provides a potential methodology for re-examining the histories of other minorities and women in architecture. As Jane Rendell writes, 'Decolonisation is a key resistance movement, which can be clearly aligned with feminism today through 'intersectionality theory' (Rendell 2018). Rendell refers to Kimberle Crenshaw's seminal work on intersectionality, which 'shows how intersecting social identities, particularly minority identities, relate to systems and structures of oppression, domination or discrimination' (Crenshaw, 1989). Thus, decolonisation and fourth wave feminism share a common ground.

'Minor' as a Category for Architectural History

A well-known Australian song, 'From Little Things Big Things Grow', originally penned in 1991 by Paul Kelly and Kev Carmody and released in 1993 tells the story of the first peaceful protest of the enforced unpaid labour of aboriginal workers on farms managed by European colonists – farms on land that was stolen from Indigenous people (AITSIS 2015). The protest, which lasted eight years, led to one of the first successful land rights claims for a group of Indigenous people in Australia. The lyrics of the song introduce two contrasting parties: the colonial landowner of a cattle station, Lord Vestey, and an Indigenous, traditional landowner, Vincent Lingiari, who was a Gurindji stockman (Kelly and Carmody 1991). The Gurindji people worked, and in some cases were forced into, unpaid labour on the Wake Hill station (AITSIS 2015). In the song, Lingiari and Vestey are portrayed as opposing figures from opposite sides, but their positions of power and authority are unequal in every way (Kelly and Carmody 1991).

The song tells the story of the Wake Hill protest from an Indigenous perspective, which was important because it had previously only been portrayed by mainstream, white media (Reconciliation Australia 2016). As the title of the song suggests, from small beginnings, big things grow. The apparent dichotomies of little-big, mainstream-alternative, major-minor, or large-small are not opposites but are rather bound together by an intrinsic relationship where one is interdependent with, or a response to, the other. Understanding this relationship through the inclusion of diverse histories makes a valuable contribution. The historian Kateryna Longley writes that Australian history has been in turmoil, and will continue to be so until it can recognise its 'minor' histories (1997: 213). Kelly and Carmody's song, as a work of decolonisation activism,

creates a precedent for portraying minor histories within major narratives. The song's method for sharing this history proffers a method for discussing how the stories of women in architecture can exist within the canon of architectural history.

Several architectural theorists and historians have worked to build the definition of a minor architecture, including Jennifer Bloomer, Joan Ockman, Karen Burns, Hugh Crawford, and Jill Stoner. While definitions might diverge among these authors about what a minor architecture can be, they share the opinion that minor architecture is a critical posture. Bloomer (1995) is careful to assert how major architecture does not work against the minor, or vice versa, but that they are interdependent. In referencing Bloomer's work, Crawford writes that 'minor architecture is not a style, not a specific form that could fall within or be added to existing categories. Rather, it is a critical stance and therefore remains in the category of language' (Crawford 2010: 381). Stoner's definition for a minor architecture eloquently shifts the term away from literature, as originally theorised by Deleuze and Guattari. Stoner writes, 'In architecture as in literature, these traits exist in multiplicities, as both figurative and literal mechanisms, as both acts and consequences. But such multiplicities are deceptively light; they do not produce an excess. Instead, minor architectures perpetuate conditions of lack. More absence than substance, their spaces (like those of minor literature) are knowingly impoverished' (2012: 4).

Burns argues that there is no singular definition for Deleuze and Guattari's 'becoming minor' theory in architecture. She says the theory can be used to 'distinguish itself from the "major architecture" or the canon' (Burns 2013: 23). At the same time, Ockman also presents the minor as a useful way to navigate away from the canon. In 'Toward a Theory of Normative Architecture', Ockman writes, 'Deleuze and Guattari's theory of minor literature can suggest to those who have long been excluded from the major territory of architecture – groups like women and African-Americans, for instance – ... a different strategy' (Ockman 1997: 152). Minor architectures become situated within the minor of architectural history. The minor category's reframing of previously marginalised architectural histories is significant for developing new discussions on early women working in architecture. Ockman also asserts the role of minor histories in relation to major histories; rather than being interpreted as opposing points, the major and minor architectures and their histories are always in relation to one another: 'It must be stressed that the relationship between minor and major architecture that is being proposed is to be understood as a historical condition in which that which is major is constantly redefining itself in relation to that which is minor, and that which is minor is always potentially challenging or hybridizing that which is major' (1997: 123).

The capacity for the minor to reposition the major illustrates the latent power possessed by the minor, which Deleuze and Guattari argued in their original theory. This repositioning of the major can be found in McCredie's

architecture. Rather than viewing women and minorities as either absent or present from mainstream histories, reconceptualising them as minors that operate within the major shifts the discussion from a dichotomous relationship to one of interdependence. Situating McCredie's work within architectural history means contending with multiple marginalising factors, including not only her gender and geographical location but also the humble and revivalist houses she produced in her career.

McCredie's Domestic Architecture: The Uanda House

In Europe during the late 1920s, Le Corbusier designed the Villa Savoye (1928–31), Mies van der Rohe the Barcelona Pavilion (1929) and Eileen Gray the house known as E1027 (1926–29). It was a paradoxical time. The white male avant-garde architects were made in a domain that also constrained women's careers within architecture, often limiting women to designing houses (Bilznakov 1985: 121). The predominant position for women who have been regarded as avant-gardes in domestic architecture was as either collaborator or client (Colomina 1999: 465; Friedman 2006). Milka Bilznakov writes that 'women seldom build monuments for powerful clients', and as these are the type of buildings of most interest to historians, any recognition of women who designed modest, efficient homes has been very limited (Bilznakov 1985: 123).

The feminist historian Deborah Sugg Ryan makes the distinction between 'suburban modernity' and 'modernism' in her research on interwar domesticity'. In the history of design, modernism is situated as good design and suburban modernity as bad, and as such modernism has a place within the canon and suburban modernity does not (Sugg Ryan 2018: 103). Sugg Ryan goes on to explain that suburban modernity was read as feminine: 'Suburbia was associated with a particular kind of feminized modernity that embraced the trappings of mass culture, such as magazines, cosmetics and cinema' (Sugg Ryan 2018: 91). Many women architects in the first half of the 20th century were limited to producing suburban houses, as was the case for McCredie.

In the 1920s and 1930s, McCredie was mostly designing Georgian Revival bungalows, such as Uanda House (1928) in suburban Brisbane (**Figure 1**). McCredie's work was well within its context, however, as interwar Australian architecture had not yet made strides to adopt modernism, especially in housing. Instead, architects were consumed by discussions about climate – how best to adapt British styles of architecture to the Australian climate while assisting in the acclimatisation of British migrants (Hogben 2000: 97). As Harriet Edquist writes, in the interwar period it was still the case that 'colonial architecture upheld the *status quo*' (Edquist 2008: 62). However, in Queensland, a uniquely vernacular style of house, although still informed by colonialism, emerged late in the 19th century and flourished in the interwar period. The houses, known as 'Queenslanders', were most likely a response to the warmer climates found in Queensland. McCredie's designs for houses in Queensland were a

unique blend of this vernacular style, the 'Queenslander', with revivalist colonial styles of architecture. They provide evidence of an architect experimenting with new and climatically driven approaches to housing.

The Georgian Revival features of McCredie's houses included a symmetrical front façade with little ornamentation, a portico entrance in the centre, and simple hipped roofs. Her designs also incorporated vernacular elements unique to Queensland of the time: constructed and clad with local timber, creating a weatherboard cladding very much part of their physical and geographic contexts. McCredie was not alone in producing this style of house in the interwar period; as Sugg Ryan writes, 'for some architects and critics, the Georgian period became the model for modern English "good design"' (Sugg Ryan 2018: 133). In the interwar period, advances in housing were curtailed by the Depression, as well as the rationing of building material immediately after WWI and in the lead up to WWII. In response, the designs for new homes were mostly modest (Sugg Ryan 2018: 40). Suburban modernity was frowned upon by architects not just for aesthetic reasons but for its representation of an aspirational working class (Sugg Ryan 2018: 97). McCredie's design for Uanda House represents a colonial 'nostalgia for an imagined old English past, so bemoaned by Modernist critics, which took hold in the architecture, design and decoration of the suburban interwar house' (Sugg Ryan 2018: 46).

When Uanda House was discovered in 1998, it was described by one local heritage architect as a 'mongrel' (Allom 1998: 9). Although the descriptor was meant to diminish the perceived heritage value of the house, this hybrid eclecticism was not uncommon in interwar housing; Sugg Ryan describes them as 'half-baked pageants' of revivalist modernism (Sugg Ryan 2018: 47). In *Brisbane House Styles 1880 to 1940*, published in 1998, the

historian Judy Rechner lists interwar styles such as Spanish Mission, Mediterranean, Georgian, English, Kentish Gable, and Functionalist within the chapter titled 'Derivative'. She describes these styles as 'derived from overseas influences ... some owners favoured these styles, but they were never as popular as vernacular styles' (Rechner 1998: 21). To defend the heritage value of the house, historians promoted Uanda House as innovative in its domestic planning and labour-saving devices (**Figure 2**). The laundry chute between the bathroom and laundry, located in the house's undercroft, was admired, as was the purpose-built joinery for the breakfast nook (Harper 1999: 43). This method for assessing the house played into the trope, although not intentionally, of women being superior home designers due to their innate domestic capabilities, reinforcing the patriarchal position that women were limited to designing houses and diminishing their professional aspirations within architecture (Volz 2017: 105). Therefore, not only does analysing McCredie's archive require working with a small amount of material, but the researcher must also contend with the perceived significance of her work itself within architectural history.

McCredie's Work as a Public Service Architect

Uanda House was a private commission, but McCredie also worked as a public service architect for the Workers Dwelling Board of the Queensland State Government, from 1925 to 1929. The drawings found in her archive reveal that she was the author of several houses while working there, which is significant as architects were not permitted to sign their drawings in this department. She designed modest, affordable houses that were funded through low-interest government loans to families. The Workers Dwelling Board built 23,515 houses between 1910 and 1940, a significant contribution to housing and



Figure 1: Uanda House, by Nell McCredie (1928), in 2015. Photograph by Shiftchange, *Wikimedia*, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Uanda.jpg>.

thus a major part of Queensland history. However, because architects working for the State Government never signed their drawings, individual workers had not been identified until the discovery of McCredie's archive. In the 1980s historians wrote that the Workers Dwelling houses were mass produced and not designed by architects (Bell 1984: 68). In 1994, however, Rechner wrote a thesis about these houses in which she noted that some architects had likely been involved and that the lack of signed drawings made this impossible to determine.

The discovery of McCredie's archive provides concrete evidence that architects worked at the Workers Dwelling Board. Furthermore, McCredie's use of Georgian Revival influences for residential architecture is evident both in her private commissions, such as Uanda House, and in the affordable houses she designed for the Workers Dwelling

Board, such as the house at Herston (**Figure 3**). McCredie's contribution to domestic architecture is her adaptation of the Georgian Revival style to the hot and humid climate of Northern Australia. In the interwar period, houses that assisted women in their demanding, physical domestic labour in hot climates was a principal and shared concern (Volz 2017: 112). The artificial division between a masculine and feminine approach to domestic architecture in the first half of the 20th century has rendered men's contributions to housing visible and women's invisible. The efforts of women architects from that period to improve the domestic lives of other women can, and have been, sidelined as merely a product of their marginalisation: this work was not necessarily the best use of women architects' talents. However, limiting their careers to domestic architecture contained and diminished their early endeavours.

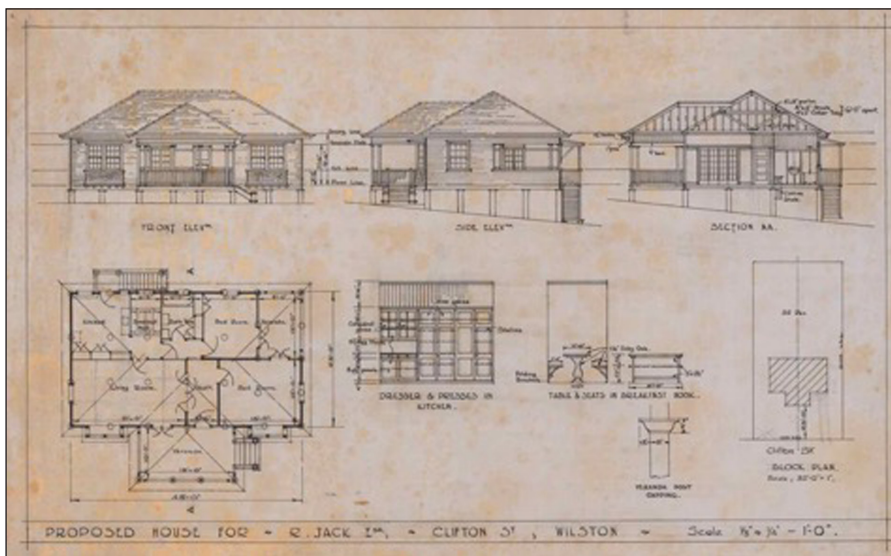


Figure 2: Plans of Uanda House, by Nell McCredie (1928). McCredie Archive, Courtesy of Jenny Ostini, Canberra.

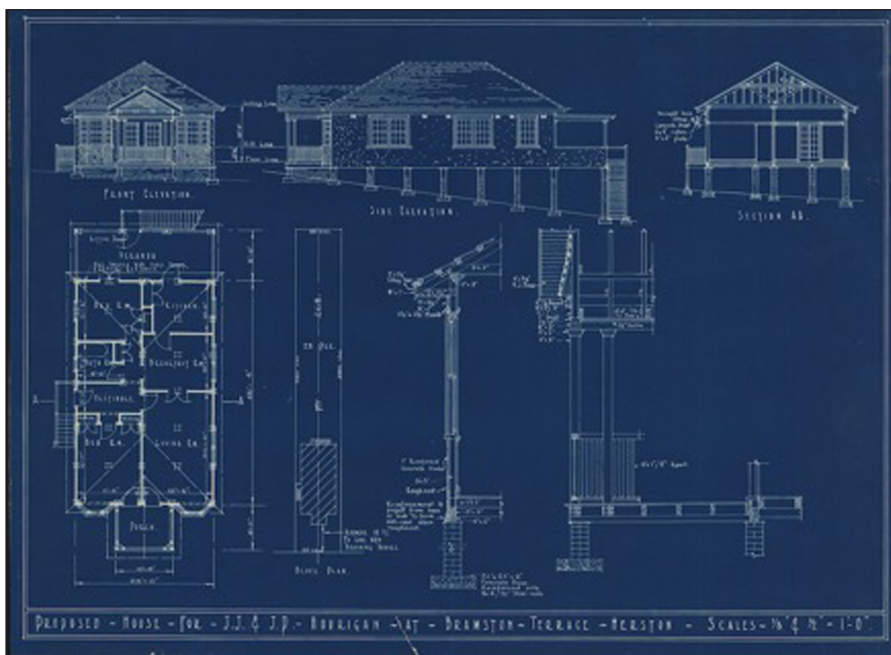


Figure 3: House at Herston, in Brisbane, Australia, for the Workers' Dwelling Branch Department, by Nell McCredie (c. 1928). McCredie Archive Courtesy of Jenny Ostini, Canberra.

Historians need to pay more attention to the specific social context in which these women were working, because any territory gained, no matter how small or minor, made a significant contribution to women's lives in the interwar period – not as individuals, but for all women (McLeod 2004). Mary McLeod argues that the rationalisation and scientific approach to domestic work demonstrated in the planning of houses by these women should be seen as definitively part of the modern movement: '[T]he idea that housework could be rationalized and made "scientific" meant that all women – even homemakers – could see themselves, and be seen, as rational and scientific. Though rarely acknowledged in such terms, the functionalism and rational planning of Modern domestic architecture were similarly connected to women's identities' (McLeod 2004).

On Minor Archives and Smallness

McCredie's archive is a minor archive that helps to reposition a major history. While McCredie's archive of work might be considered minor to the major histories of the Workers Dwelling Board and the Queensland Government's Department of Public Works, it allows new readings of those histories. Prior to the discovery of McCredie's small archive, and the identification of the houses that she designed, documentation of her work relied on oral and social histories for descriptions of her contributions to Australian architecture in the interwar period. Social and oral histories have been essential methods to 'break the silence' for women and other minorities in the dominant Western male version of architectural history (Gosseye 2019: 10), and such an archive as McCredie's, however small, only serves underpin those alternative histories.

McCredie's minor archive, even in its smallness, elicits another dimension for analysis, alongside the canon of architecture. Even a single drawing or a fragment of an archive can elicit whole new histories. Material histories and archives are inherent to the discipline of architecture, manifested through the architect's drawings. As Jonathon Hill writes, 'the history and status of the architect and the architectural drawing are interwoven with those of architectural design' (2003: 169). The size of an archive does not diminish its value to architectural history and historians need to be willing to work with the archives of women architects that are sometimes small. This smallness might come in the form of the physical size of the archive, but it might also be small in the (in)significance or quality of the work.

The material artefacts of architecture authored by women architects, especially drawings, are integral to the way that architects are perceived in history. Hill notes that 'the architect and the architectural drawing are twins, born at the same time, interdependent, and representative of the same idea' (Hill 2003: 170). Likewise, architects' archives of drawings are helpful in identifying individual architects. Drawings and photographs of buildings are the medium through which historians attribute significance and critically evaluate an architect and their work. Hill remarks:

Based on art history, architectural histories often discuss the building as an object of artistic con-

templation and imply that this is the familiar experience of the building. The drawing mediates between the writer and the reader, who is encouraged to view it as the font of creativity and to equate the experience of the drawing with the experience of the building. The object of architectural discussion is often the drawing and the photograph because they, not the building, more closely fulfil the desires and expectations of the architect and the architectural historian for an object of artistic contemplation. Due to its limited material presence, abstract representational codes, association with the world of ideas, and exhibition in galleries and museums, the architectural drawing aligns architectural design and architecture with intellectual labour and the individual creation and appreciation of the artwork. (2003: 170)

Hill's argument reinforces the idea that increasing the visibility of the work of women architects, such as with photographs and drawings, is necessary within the profession's history. Thus, an important step to discussing the material histories of women in architecture is accessing their minor archives.

The difficulty in locating women's minor archives has inhibited the inclusion of women's work in anthologies of architectural history. In Jasmine Rault's work on Eileen Gray, she discusses the issues in locating Gray's archive; some items were acquired by museums and a significant section of the archive was maintained privately until it was donated to the National Museum of Ireland in 2003 (2011: 8). To address the difficulty in locating this material, institutions have actively promoted the donation of women's archives, and in 1985 Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University established the International Archive of Women in Architecture, much of which has now been digitized and is accessible from anywhere in the world. Julie Collins, a collections manager for the Architecture Museum at the University of South Australia, attributes the absence of women's work in archives to women discarding their work at the end of their careers, and that institutions must encourage and advocate for more women to donate their work to dedicated archives (Collins 2012: 184). However, there needs to be greater acknowledgement of archives that exist outside of institutions, especially the archives of non-canonical and marginalised practitioners.

In 1987, in Australian art and architectural historian Joan Kerr's critical essay, 'Architectural History and Practice in Australia', she calls for the discovery of more women artists and architects, writing that the discovery of two early women architects from Australia, Marion Mahony Griffin and Florence Taylor, were 'not enough to discover in the attic; we need to discover far more women there' (Kerr 2009: 240). For Kerr, these archives are not to be found in formal or institutional collections, but in private hands: in the attic or the garage or under the bed, needing to be uncovered and brought to the attention of the public. The discovery of McCredie's archive in the draw of a desk provides a tangible example of the obstacles encountered in locating the material work of women architects.

The discovery of women's archives is not enough by itself; historians have to be willing to work with small, sometimes insignificant archives. Women were often in positions of little authority and unable to develop or explore unique or significant approaches to architecture. They were often also relegated to completing what has been considered minor forms of architecture, such as suburban housing and interiors. Their careers were limited to designing spaces that have traditionally been maligned in architectural history. Jane Rendell writes about how these spaces are 'marginalised within gendered binaries in mainstream architectural discourse such as the domestic and the interior' (2018). It is also possible that women have attempted to donate their work to archives in the past, only to have the work rejected due to its size or perceived insignificance. As Nupur Chaudhuri, Sherry Katz, and Mary Elizabeth Perry write, 'postmodern critiques of the archives have continued to challenge assumptions of archival neutrality and have raised critical questions about whose history gets archived and, hence, preserved' (Chaudhuri, Katz, and Perry 2010: xiv). In the same vein, queer historian Jordy Rosenberg observes that, 'there are many things missing from the archives but sometimes even what is there can obscure more than it reveals' (Hyde 2019: 19).

Fragmented, incomplete, discarded, and absent archives of architects' work are not restricted to the careers of women architects. Beatriz Colomina writes about the challenges presented by the lack of material in Adolf Loos' archive; the material that exists is dwarfed by the excesses left behind by Le Corbusier. However, this lack of material has not prevented volumes of literature being written about Loos, although, as Colomina writes, 'all investigations of Loos have been marked by his removal of the traces. All of the writing is in, on, and around the gaps. It is even about those gaps, often being obsessed with them' (1994: 19). To expand on Colomina's point, the correlation between the amount of archival material and historical interest is not necessarily a direct relationship. Perhaps, then, it is not the lack of archival material that inhibits the study of women's careers in architecture but rather the lack of a willingness to engage with smaller, 'minor' archives. Chaudhuri, Katz, and Perry argue that even the discovery of a single document in an archive about a woman's life can reveal entirely new readings of existing histories (2010: xiii).

Smallness is often encountered upon the discovery of an archive by early women in architecture. An archive might consist of a few photos in different locations, newspaper articles, and oral histories, requiring the historian to pour more energy into the collection of disparate items than the analysis of their material constructs. Smallness is also a result of women whose careers were cut short by employment laws that enforced retirement upon marriage, taking leave for care responsibilities, or simply leaving the profession due to the limited opportunities (Van der Plaats 2015: 189). Another factor that prevents historians from engaging with women's archives is the perceived (in)significance of the work and a lack of willingness to write about architecture that is less than avant-garde or that is not seen as groundbreaking. When women working

in architecture in the past were marginalised and had to work within the existing patriarchal structures of the profession, they were left with very little room for the creation of radical or revolutionary architecture.

In Ockman's research on the marginalised architect Jefim Golyscheff, she describes the process of assembling 'disparate facts' in the building of minor archives and how this process leads to a constant, shifting repositioning of major histories (Ockman 1990: 77). Ockman also points out the problem of focussing on the absence and presence of minoritised architects in history: 'The problematic of the marginal subject, like any other, can all too easily fall prey to a tautological or reciprocally confirming subject and method. In the end, it may be unclear if our work is a *parable* or a *parody*. Nonetheless, such unaccustomed illumination – whether indirect or 'ultraviolet' ... may well be the potential of the minor historiography' (1990: 98). As Ockman asserts, a minor historiography proffers a lens that intercepts the closed loop of absence and presence of marginalised subjects in mainstream histories, activated via the minor's ability to reposition major histories.

In the case of studying McCredie's archive, the process has involved overlaying the sources from institutional 'major' archives with the material found in the McCredie private collection. This process has provided insight into McCredie's career as well as a more detailed reading of the institutions with which she was involved. The most significant of these findings has been the evidence that architects were involved in the design of a large proportion of houses built in Queensland in the interwar period. These architects worked directly with clients to design modest dwellings to personal taste and created climatically responsive homes with labour-saving devices.

Conclusion

In Hilde Heynen's work on 20th-century domestic architecture, she begins to provide some direction for reconsidering the avant-garde for modern domestic architecture. She proposes an alternative for the avant-garde, transgressive instead of heroic, as a way of shifting the emphasis away from the masculine in modernism. She writes that, 'if the avant-garde can be alternately understood as either heroic (pursuing the unknown) or transgressive (oriented towards the everyday), modernism's qualification as consistently masculine is problematized too' (Heynen 2005: 5). It is this transgressive approach to the avant-garde that is most useful in the analysis of McCredie's architectural work in its orientation towards the everyday. Building on Heynen's point, Ockman's minor historiography also makes the case for the quietly transgressive rise of alternatives to the exhausted model of the avant-garde and 'the shock tactics associated with the militant tradition of the avant-garde. These tactics', she says, 'are not only exhausted by now but sadly misdirected. Instead, the strategy of a minor architecture might be incremental, subtle, and persistent' (1997: 124).

Sugg Ryan also remarks on the turn to material culture in design history and that it is through objects and physical archives that we evaluate perceived 'values' (2018: 103). However, even upon discovering drawings of buildings by

women architects, historians have struggled to situate their architecture within, alongside, or outside of the canon. As such, the challenge of working with McCredie, and other early women architects, is developing a new framework through which to analyse their work. It is not simply a matter of absent archives; there also needs to be a willingness to work with small archives of sometimes questionable significance. Historians need to find ways to work with the same 'gaps' that Colomina describes in Loos' archives when it comes to the discovery of women's archives. This is where the category of 'minor' is a useful tool for analysis. Fourth-wave feminism, underpinned by intersectional approaches to histories, promotes the space in which these minor architectures and histories can co-exist with major narratives. Taking prompts from de-colonist activism, architectural histories outside of the canon have the potential and latent power to revise, shift, and even reposition mainstream representations of a male-dominated architecture.

Competing Interests

The author has no competing interests to declare.

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How to cite this article: Volz, K. 2020. Reconsidering 'Minor' Archives: The Case of Australian Architect Nell McCredie. *Architectural Histories*, 8(1): 24, pp. 1–9. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5334/ah.408>

Published: 18 December 2020

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