CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

One of the primary needs and desires of any life form is a sense of security in its environment; a security that is derived and potentially satisfied through a longing for contact with other life and architecturally, a contact with form and space. (Ittelson and Proshansky, p.217 App.E; Johnson and Marano p.34 App.E; and Gibson p.123-133 App.E)   Contemporary architecture of the mid and late twentieth century seems to have been influenced or responsive to the artificial mediums of the Electronic Age, leaving the more mechanical and physical senses needing and searching for more.   The 'effects' of theological, social, economic, and more recently political and cultural climates on architecture have masked the necessary 'affects' of physical, sensitized, and somatic form and space on the human body and mind. (Eisenman, The Affects p.44 App.E; Pearson p.68 App.G)   This contemporary architecture contains inherent geometries, topologies, and formal dimensions that inadvertently create inadequacies, rendering contemporary society artificial and detached from the more primary and subtle modes of the subconscious body and mind's structures and devices.   The human condition requires a sense of contact or enveloping, which in contemporary times is left only with a detached sublimation or an artificial connection. (Kuspit, Clement p.50 App.G; Wilson p.66 App.B; Freud p.71 App.A)   In the past, the traditional and classical notions of architectural form and space have received

a great deal of critical evaluation and refinement through the hands of time and experience, achieving a much more holistic and completed attention to the human model.   However, a void still exists in these former methods which exposes itself in the degeneration and deformation of its interstitial and residual spaces; a void which lurks in the blurred, dulled, and recessed shadows of the hierarchically dominant forms and spaces.   By the displacement of these lesser spaces, there is a production of static or interference in the 'effectiveness' of these refined forms and spaces; a direct cause and solution to the reality of a human detachment from the physical environment. (Rapoport, History p.303 App.E; Hogarth p.62 App.H; Lobell p.205)   An emphasis on the interstitial and residual spaces, engendered by the implications of the more traditional and classical spaces, will heighten the smoothing affiliations of these secondary spaces thereby strengthening the primary spaces' ability to 'affect' the search for contact and envelopment. (Kipnis, Towards p.46 App.A)   Since these secondary spaces are by definition dependent, they will posses imposed geometries; in addition to the human aesthetics' inherent geometries of critical evaluation and refinement, from which a design process can evolve bearing much resemblance to the natural mutation of evolution's own 'natural selection' process. (Alexander, A Pattern p.926 App.H; Skalski p.102 App.H)   A sensitivity to the physical and somatic qualities of these secondary spaces leads to a 'total awareness' (or 'architectural contact'); based on subtle, subconscious implications of interstitial and residual architectural structures and devices.

To test this hypothesis, the Pratt Campus was studied for 'interstitial' and 'residual' spaces resulting from 'classical' / 'hierarchical' spaces; and then a selection of one campus site (the Main Building entry hall) was made to serve as one possible iteration of this theoretical study process.   The analysis of the Pratt Campus made clear various developments over time of the expanding nature of the building forms and urban spaces, in addition to several attempts to unify the diversified growth into a balanced compositional group of classical spaces, hierarchically arranged.   However, in the process of these historic events and actions, there arose the presence of secondary, unplanned, almost accidental, spaces; i.e. interstitial and residual spaces.   Some of these spaces resulted from a simple neglect of design consideration, in their lack of functionality due to their confining dimensions or impractical orientations and locations to the more primary spaces on campus.   Others were bound by a development over time, through the increasing, elevated focus on adjacent forms and spaces that devalue and detract the attention away from their nearby secondary spaces.   And finally, at a more abstract and conceptual level, some of the secondary spaces became interstitial and residual as a result of human behavioral and usage patterns in or around the adjacent or relational primary spaces, rendering the secondary spaces transparent or sometimes near invisible.

From these three criteria for the development of 'interstitial' and 'residual' secondary spaces, the selection of the Main Building entry hall was made, since it held a little of all three characteristics, but most significantly having an emphasis on the latter.   In addition to containing 'interstitial' and 'residual' spaces, the entry hall seemed to be the ideal model in that it is a transitional space, while at times acting as a collective and internalized space.   Transitional spaces primarily consist of movement behavior, placing an attention on limited exposure to an environment and immediate reactions in perception. While, in contrast, a more collective and passive spatial type will consist of primarily stationary and reclined behavior, focusing on a longer duration of exposure to the environment and indirect reactions in perception. Therefore, by selecting a space that is first transitional and second collective, the effects of the immediate physical environment and perceived spatial envelopes can be better studied, without eliminating the potential to study longer exposure effects (Hall, Handbook p.21 App.D).

The first criteria of an interstitial and residual space was fulfilled by the entry hall's concentrated size and overload of requirements generated by other programs: handling the pedestrian traffic of six independent doorways and a waiting area for elevator usage, in addition to serving as an information source locating the office directory and campus newspapers. Any unplanned gatherings of socializing passerbys or the occasional tour group will instantly turn the perceived space claustrophobic.

Second, the space becomes devalued by the Romanesque, stone portico on the exterior of the entrance. The adjacent, exterior portico becomes a much more inviting space visually, audibly, and environmentally, through a classically refined condition, producing sensations of tranquil release in the cool, shaded, and secluded atmosphere filled with tactile rich materials of stone and wood.   When views of this space are forced upon the interior entry hall through a full height glazing system, the only result possible is the degeneration and deformation of the interior space by the displacement of the occupant's perception, ultimately drawing them outdoors.

Most importantly and the subject of a more interesting nature, is the third criteria, a perceptual detachment as a result of the occupant's behavioral patterns and usage.   As far as usage is concerned, the most frequent occurrence is the passing of people from the external street to an internal classroom or office or vise-versa (this accounting for sixty percent of the hall's activity).   Because of the existing nature of the interior designed space, compounded by the two above, stated factors, the perceived threshold, enveloping, and

proxemic qualities of the entry hall space become nearly invisible to the senses (Canter, Psychology p.37-41 App.B; Hall, Handbook p.19-21 App.B). Even during the remaining fractional activity of waiting in a location or place for the arrival of the elevator, the entire sense of 'place' and sensory experience is essentially lost by the confusion and distraction of passing people or the allure of the scenery and activity outdoors. Behavior and traffic patterns dominate the location and means of waiting for the elevator, and the opportunity for a sequential development from street to classroom or classroom to street is incomplete and lost. Reinforcement of a possible sequential space is lost through the transparent nature of the entry hall's spatial thresholds (Kipnis, Post-Analytic App.A). The space's analytic threshold is physically defined by plaster walls and acoustical drop-ceiling tiles, all painted in the institutional-wide 'Pratt White' pigment; all of these materials creating a generic and desensitized experience adding to the transparent nature of the space. The space's contextual threshold is primarily lacking in any unique qualities or providing for any unique occurrences, thereby leaving a similar condition as the analytic threshold, with only a conceptual model of a 'generic' space having almost no conceptual impression or recollection of the space's threshold condition. And lastly, the space's post-analytic threshold is defined by the various political, cultural, theological climates within the entry hall (Pearson p.70 App.B), however these issues are typically latent to the extent that they are practically unnoticed because of the extremely short periods of time spent by the average occupant passing through the space (in most cases less than a minute, even when waiting on the elevator) or because of the lack of any design feature to accent or call attention to these latent issues (Rapoport, History p.282 App.B).

As a result, all of these factors play into the degeneration and deformation of this entry hall space, in relation to the other more primary and planned spaces; and ultimately into the potential this secondary space has on the 'effective' quality the primary spaces can maintain, and the 'affective' quality the secondary space can produce (Eisenman, The Affects p.43 App.G). By narrowing the study to a single, particular type of movement behavior inherent to the entry hall space; influences from body and form proxemics can illustrate spatial 'affects' on perception and ultimately movement behavior; validated through proxemic measurements (Wilson p.64 App.G). After there is an understanding of these spatial 'affects' occurring within this entry hall's secondary space, adjustments can be made to refine and increase their 'effectiveness' (Alp p.151 App.L); thereby strengthening any existing or new architectural connections, with the occupants of the space.