



figure 4. 13

Campus entrance gate, inside view.

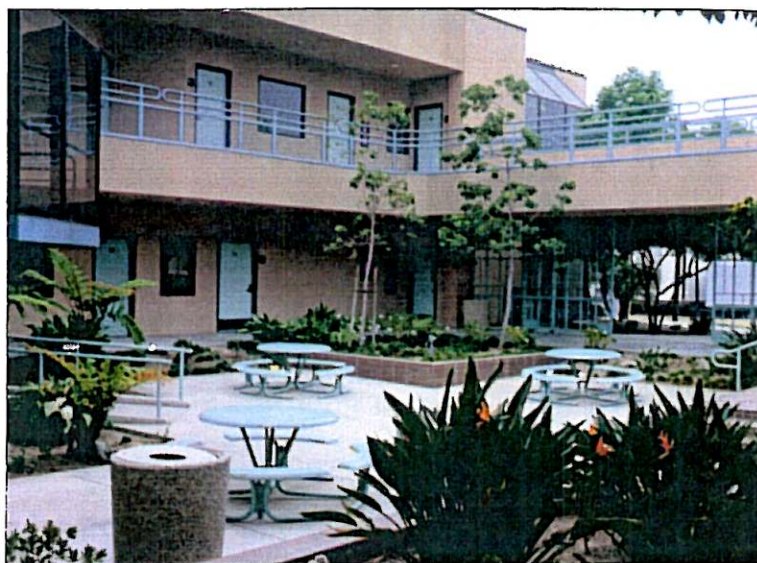


figure 4. 14

Open-air courtyard.

courtyard, which is recessed (see figure 4. 15 page 83). Two of the corners are occupied by planters; the shrubs are meager, no doubt due to the dry, trampled soil. Bricks add texture to the otherwise dull surface of the concrete pavement of the courtyard, there is a drain in the center, and no litter. Three turquoise garden benches and round tables are used during lunch, for smoking or studying in the sun (see figure 4. 16 page 83).

People enter and exit through the closed doors of the many offices off the walkway and around the courtyard, carrying backpacks, and signing or chatting (see floor plans page 84 and 85). An easel placed by the information office announces the days' activities and broadcasts various formal and informal news. The information office is the first room to the left of the gate, then follows the interpreter, notetaker, and tutor training rooms; a tutoring laboratory; restrooms; an elevator; a counseling suite; a computer center; and the student lounge. Each door is clearly identified, carrying a number and name, including the student lounge which often stands open. Each room also carries an acknowledgment plaque in recognition of the individual, agency, or corporation who has made the contribution of the furniture. The furniture seems to date to the opening of Chisholm Hall, both in style and in wear. Many rooms have windows, which are shut and covered by narrow blinds. With few exceptions most rooms are of open access. A directory stands by the entry off Bertrand avenue and long carried outdated information. There is a drinking fountain, a coiled fire hose in a box affixed to one of the walls, and a staircase. The information lobby is wide and bright, with windows facing both the outside of the building and the courtyard. Several doors lead to other rooms, one of them behind the counter opens out to eight smaller offices for the clerical support staff, while those across the counter go to instructional and seminar rooms. The counter is narrow and of light colored wood. There

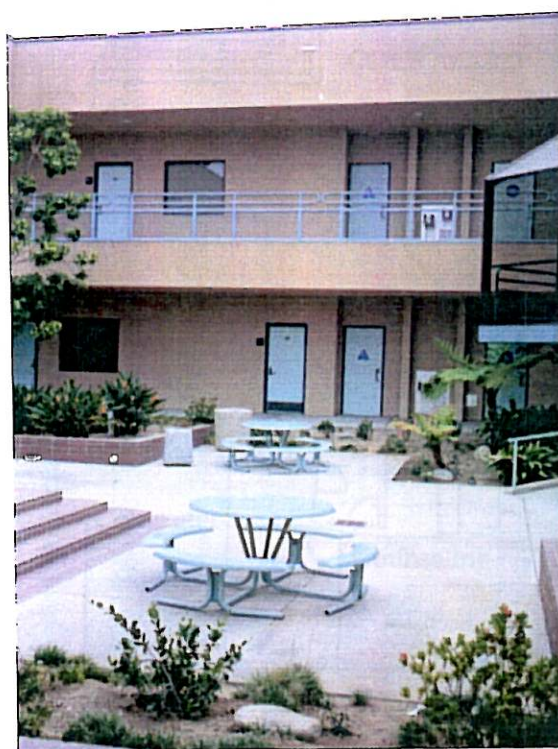
figure 4. 15

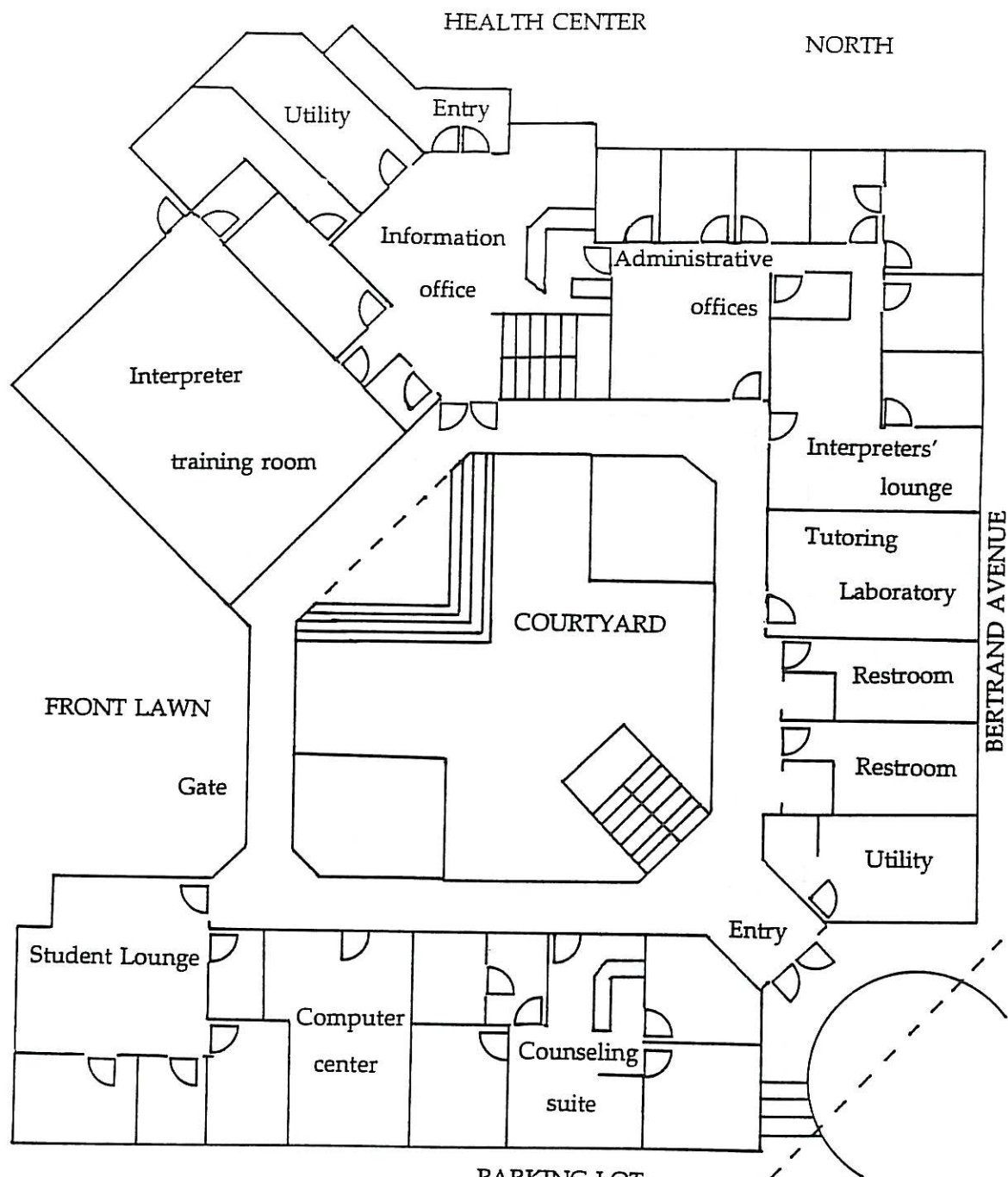
Open-air courtyard with planter.



figure 4. 16

Open-air courtyard with tables and benches.

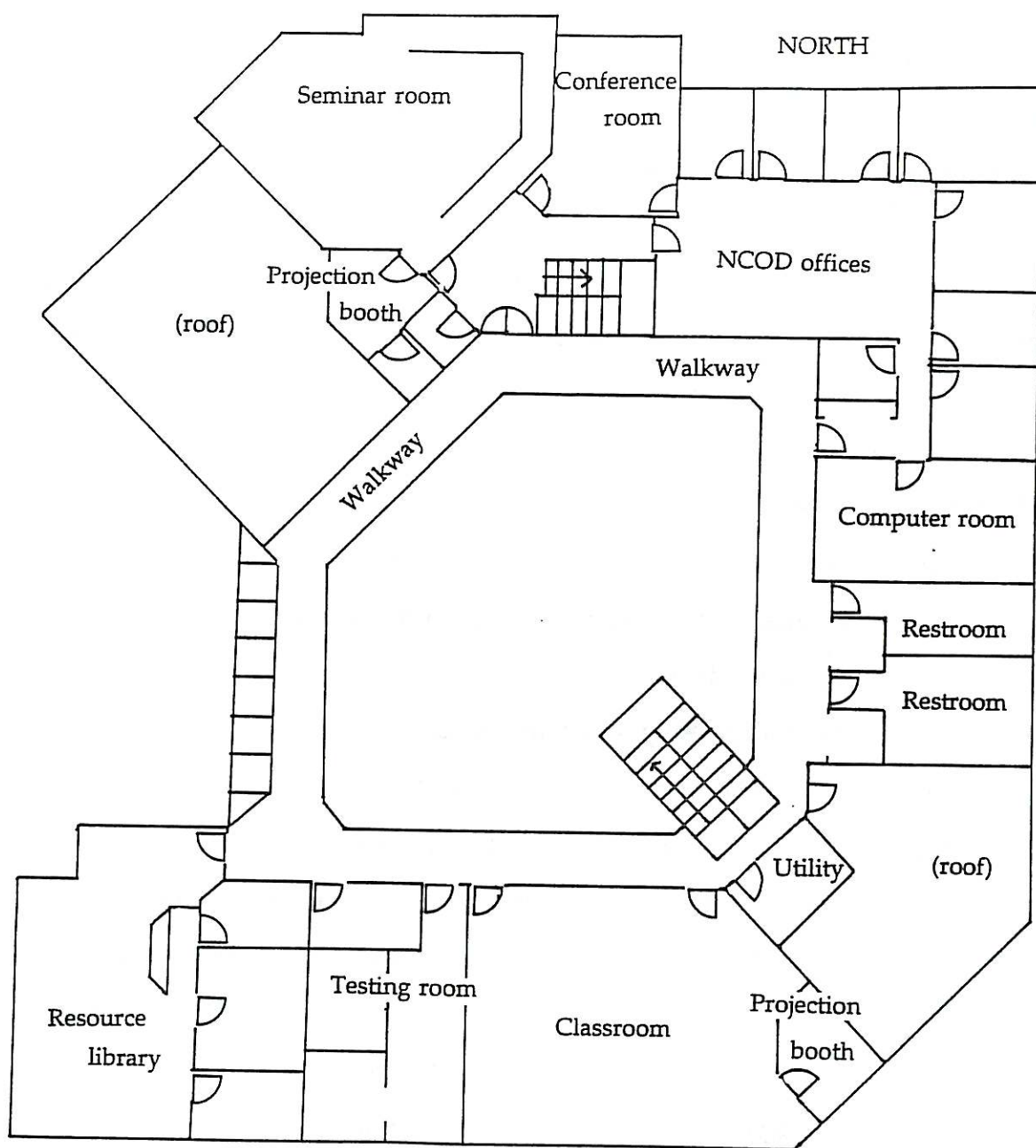




PARKING LOT
ORANGE GROVE

4. 17
CHISHOLM HALL:
FIRST FLOOR

map courtesy of NCOD (october 1989)
revised by U. Lassiter (august 1994)



4.18 CHISHOLM HALL:
SECOND FLOOR
map courtesy of NCOD (october 1989)
revised by U. Lassiter (august 1994)

are several public phones, including a TDD phone, and general clerical furnishings. There are two waiting areas, one facing the outside window is smaller, with an electronic announcement board, a framed print with southwestern motif, and green potted plants. A wooden rack on the wall serves as holder for colorful Xeroxed announcements, catalogs, and newsletters pertaining to deafness and services available. Four stuffed chairs, a thick pink and green carpet and a low square wooden table by the window allow for comfortable perusing of these publications. Between this area and the counter hangs a new frame with identified photographs of many staff members. The larger rest area is also furnished with a low table and two rows of the same padded gray chairs and a sofa, behind which stand a broad trophy and memorabilia case. Several plaques adorn the walls, one of which designates an adjacent room as "display room." Initially planned as a showcase for communication technology, this room instead serves for storage and photocopy amenities. A trophy case in the main lobby displays photographs of deaf CSUN beauty pageant queens, homecoming prizes, a black and white photograph of a model of Chisholm Hall, as well as a painting of Grace Petri, who made the construction of this building possible, it is dedicated to her as the "sole benefactor." Above the sofa, two framed collages of candid and posed photographs hang, taken during the construction of the facility.

The center of the information room is wide and empty, allowing for traffic of people who come to ask questions or make requests for interpreters, tutors, or notetakers. A large doormat protects the linoleum tiled floor by the outside door. Several types of pay telephone are available for use by students and visitors, and an emergency warning device is clearly visible. A broad staircase framed by wooden banisters conveniently leads to the NCOD offices.

The offices behind the information room are smaller and quarters are tight. Various clerical activities take place, such as payroll. Instructional and seminar rooms, such as the ones to the immediate proximity of the information room, vary in size, although most seat fifteen to forty people, and some can be divided. One of them adjoins an observation booth with a false mirror. Throughout Chisholm Hall the rooms are well lit, wide, and the furnishings are moveable. Multi-media devices, such as screens, microphones, and projectors, are permanently secured.

Following the information and clerical suites are training offices for interpreters, notetakers, and tutors. These three rooms are small but comfortable. They allow for a degree of privacy in that a senior interpreter is generally present and thus access is informally checked. A lounge allows for needed respite, and is furnished with tables, comfortable chairs, and with a device that massages strained hands. The training rooms are small. Next is the tutoring lab, with study carrels and cubicles for several students at a time. There are blackboards, gray padded chairs, and a few textbooks in a low bookshelf by the entrance. Returning to the outside walkway and continuing on are the restrooms, which are roomy and designed for wheelchair-bound people with large doors and stalls, low sinks, mirrors and faucets, and visual alarms. Next to the restrooms is an equipment room, an elevator, the double glass doors of the Bertrand avenue entrance, and a suite of offices that serve as the counseling center (see figures 4. 17 and 4. 18 page 88).

This suite's main door opens on to a long counter behind which a young woman sits. Across from her are labeled pictures of every deaf student currently enrolled at CSUN. Pamphlets and informative posters are hung on the wall opposite to this one behind the attendant, the information on display refers to various forms of assistance deaf students might need. The five small

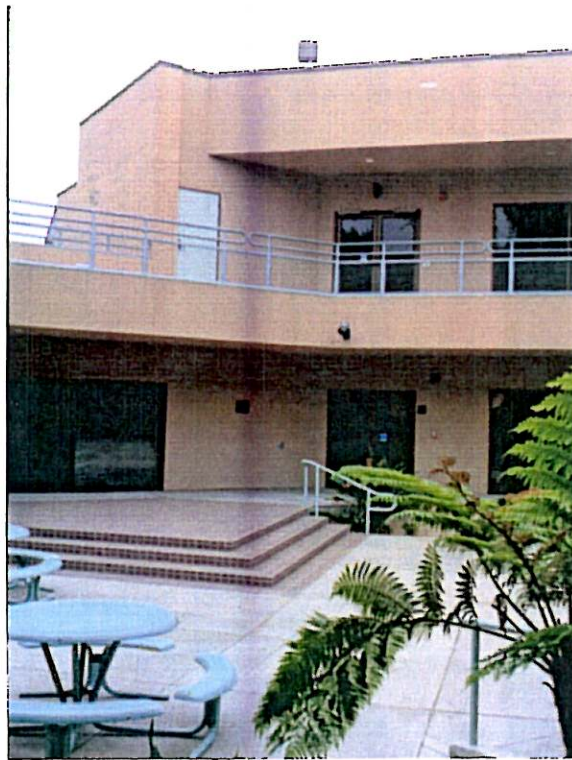


figure 4. 19

View of the general office from the courtyard.



figure 4. 20

Side view of the general office.

offices adjacent to this room are offices and counseling rooms. One of the offices belongs to Robert Sidansky, the Outreach Coordinator. Several people work in close proximity of each other, and personal items, such as family photographs, small plants, and items with congratulatory motives, minimally decorate each desk. Further, the computer center is equipped with a dozen basic word processing computers and a printer for use by students. There are two windows, gray carpet, metal cabinets, Formica dividers, swivel chairs, and height-adjustable computer desks.

The student lounge that follows has a large tinted bay window on the right, and connects with four small rooms on the left (see figures 4. 19 and 4. 20 page 90). The main room is lit by neon tubes and is crowded with two sofas, twenty chairs around three conference-like tables, three gray bulletin boards filled with notices and advertisements that are thematically organized, a captioned TV, decorative teal and rust wall panels, collecting bins for paper to be recycled, and an electronic announcement board. A phone room and a mailroom abut this center room. There are locked mailboxes for everyone, students, interpreters, notetakers, and tutors, and an attendant who operates a photocopy machine beyond public reach and distributes messages into the various boxes. To the side of the mailroom, and facing the main room, are several small offices reserved for the deaf student organization on campus. The furniture is like that of any other offices: metal file cabinets, large desks, hanging calendars, and gray padded chairs. The desks are large and bare.

During the school year, Deaf CSUNians organize weekly events, such as Deaf Day, which takes place every Wednesdays, and various other activities that include well-attended and heated debates, Deafestival (an arts fair), and national Deaf celebrations, although these are held at odd times. The first story of Chisholm Hall is busy with activities, there are frequent

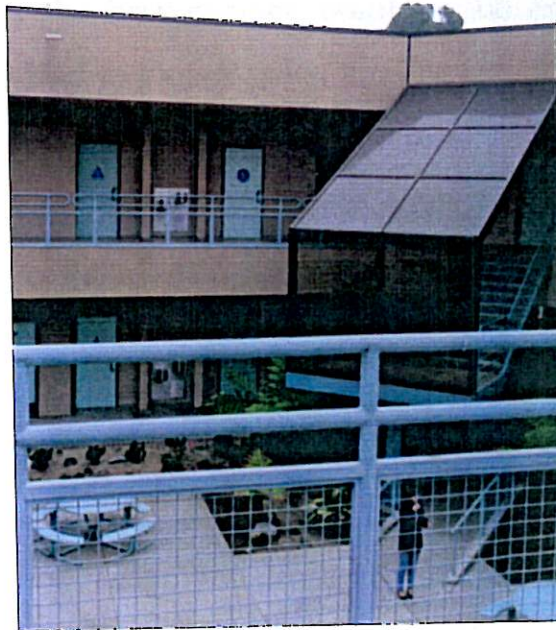


figure 4. 21

Second story view of the stairwell.

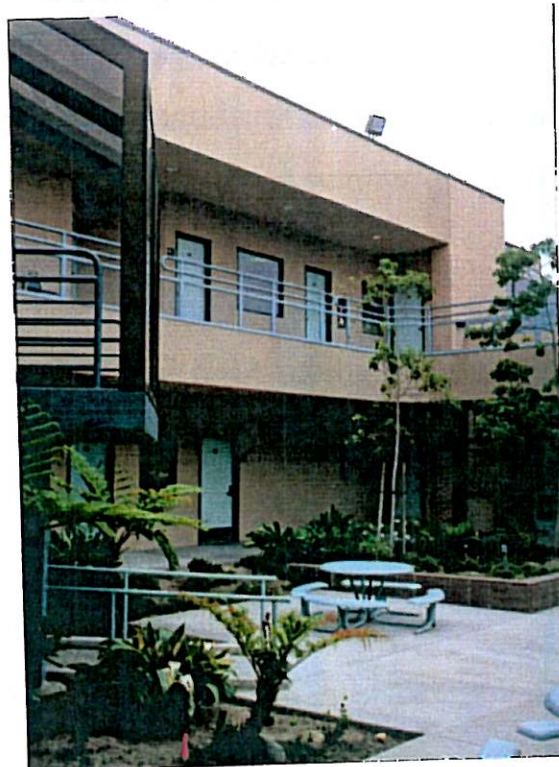


figure 4. 22

View of the student lounge entrance, with library above.

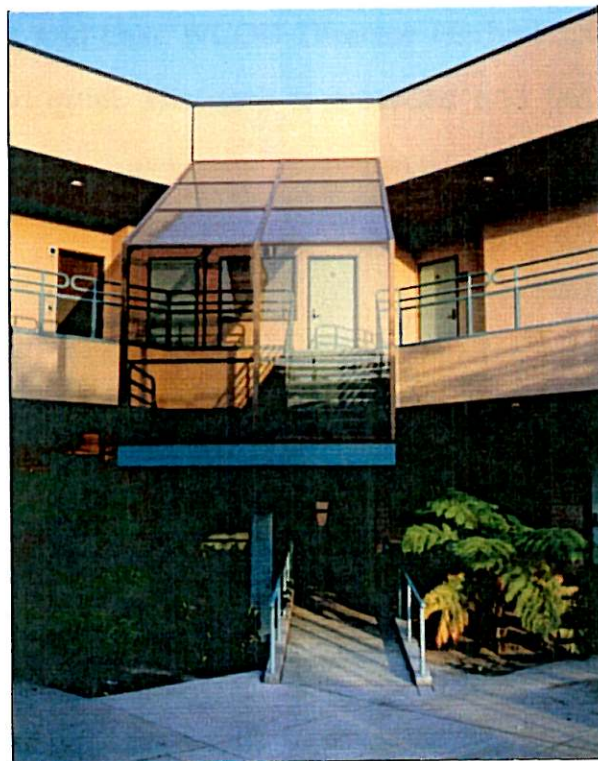
interruptions, and much socializing. The second story is more sunny and the mezzanine offers the best vantage point for observing the bustle below. Several staircases lead to the second story. The exterior stairs in the courtyard front the Bertrand avenue entrance, across from the gated entrance. Enclosed by tinted glass, the stairs are wide and allow for viewing to all sides (see figures 4. 21, 4. 22 page 92 and 4. 23 page 94). The second staircase proceeds inside from the information office to a hall above (the NCOD foyer), and is decorated by an indistinct wall hanging. Several chairs frame a narrow beige cabinet that stands against the dark teal wall. There are live green plants and silk arrangements of pale flowers. Commemorative plaques hang, some are shellacked letters of recognition from various government agencies, others are engraved, including one which dates from 1979 and reads: "For Outstanding Contribution in Furthering the Spirit of Cooperation Between College and Federal Agencies." One glass door leads out to a circular walkway above the courtyard. A second door is unidentified (initial plans were for a second elevator), a third door opens on to a large seminar room. This room is sloped, with a large window, circular seating, and new multi-media equipment in a triangular projection booth.

To the left of this room and the right of the staircase is a narrow corridor that leads to the NCOD offices. The first room entered is large with four open doors to the left and rear, and large windows to the right. The reception area is in the center. There are several crowded desks, chairs on plastic pads to protect the gray carpet, typewriters, computers, a fax machine, tall file cabinets, and bookshelves filled with stacks of pamphlets and loose-leaf binders. A secretary sits at a desk next to the door to answer the inquiries of visitors who have been referred to her at the information office downstairs. She also answers the telephones, voice, and TDD. This office is

figure 4. 23
Bertrand avenue entry.



figure 4. 24
Bertrand avenue entrance and courtyard stairwell.



busy, and the secretary stands up frequently. At the other side of the room, another secretary serves administrative functions that are quieter. Several shelves in front of her desk give her a measure of personal space, which she has filled with novelty objects, images, and plants. Both secretaries are hearing, while the second one is most fluent in sign language.

Next to the entry door to the left is a door that remains locked. This is the door to a comfortable conference room, and its access is negotiated from the administrative secretary. The room itself is well lit thanks to large windows. Seating is arranged around a wooden oval table. There are several landscape paintings of California painted by deaf artist Granville Redmond. Administrators have offices to the left of this room, each contains again standard office furniture with some room to spare, and various emblems of achievement on display. They are busy but relaxed and frequently come out of their offices to organize meetings and chat. NCOD Director Herbert Larson's office at the corner is roomy and quiet. His desk is crowded and the large bookshelves filled.

A maze of small offices follow. These are identified in the signage as the offices of the now defunct NLTP (see figure 4. 24 page 94). Some are vacant, some used for alternative functions such as Deaf CSUNian activities, or, as was the case after the earthquake, as office for the Deaf Studies Program, temporarily relocated during reconstruction of Monterey Hall. Other rooms are windowless and are occupied by photocopiers or used for paper storage.

Following the NCOD suite are two restrooms, a door for the elevator, and the Communicative Disorder room. This classroom measures about 20 by 25 feet, and is the largest of the facility. Comparatively dark, with three narrow windows facing trees, this room is painted blue and is furnished with two blackboards, a small projection booth, and a desk and chair to the front.

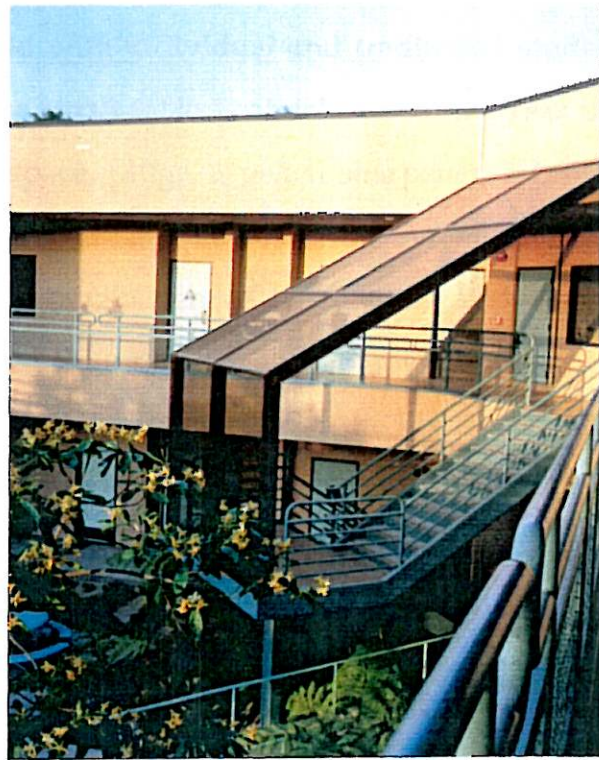


figure 4. 25

Stairwell viewed from second story walkway.



figure 4. 26

Defunct NLTP offices.

The room is filled with individual and traditional student chairs, of wood or plastic, to which a small table is attached. To the rear there is a long cabinet with countertop space, plugs, a pencil sharpener, a broken clock, a sink, and closets. The room is unadorned and bare; remedial courses and a course on communication are taught here. A bit further, at the end of the walkway and above the student lounge, is the Library on Deafness (newly renamed Resource Library), a storage room, and the librarians' offices (see figures 4. 25 and 4. 26 page 96). The room has windows on both sides, is furnished with a counter, several tables and chairs, a photcopy machine, a few crowded book shelves, and file cabinets for a disparate sampling of archives. Posters of leaders in deaf education and sign language adorn the walls. The library contains materials on the history, education, and rehabilitation of the deaf, including tapes of signed and captioned films and TV shows (videos on deafness and signed films on prominent people involved in the area of deafness). The two staff persons are deaf. The library was housed in the general CSUN library until a few years ago, and in fact does not figure in the architects' floorplans. Recent efforts to reorganize the limited but unique material on hand has received praise.

Although limited, the space of Chisholm Hall has been carefully apportioned. The courtyard is inviting; the outside is carried inside by the use of plants, particularly near entrances. Orientation through the building is facilitated by the clear view offered by the open staircase and courtyard on both stories. There are few casual visitors and they are easily identifiable. Language of access varies; most everyone is fluent in sign language and the facility is well suited for the use of manual communication: there is light and perhaps more so the space is open, especially across the walkways. The emphasis seems to be on accomplishing daily tasks. Indeed, people are busy,

figure 4. 27
Walkway and offices.

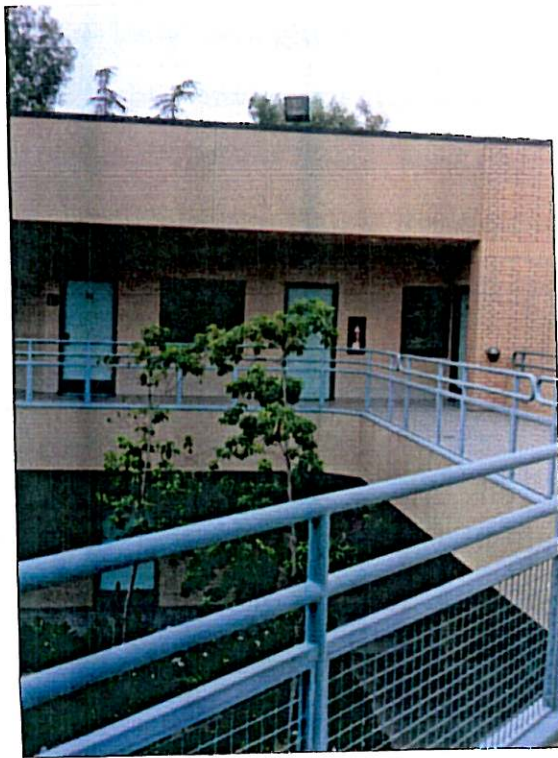
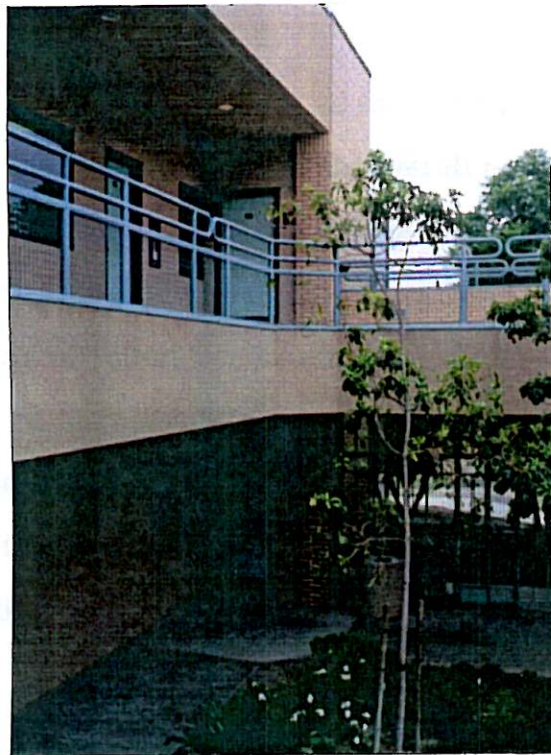


figure 4. 28
Resource Library above, student lounge below.



and information boards are only brought up to date infrequently. The furnishings are standard of public environments, such as banks or offices: while they are large and plush, they are also low, static, and unobtrusive. Colors are subdued. The gate of Chisholm Hall is the most unusual feature of this building; questions are raised as to the utility and selection of such a barrier.

The NCOD program has achieved thirty years of success in mainstreaming and has established itself as a landmark in deaf education. The circumstances that have brought about integration of the deaf students at CSUN is the presence of an extensive support network that is of exceptional quality in an effective setting. The size of the deaf population, at CSUN and in the region, is such that for many of the students who come here this is the first time that they indeed socialize with other deaf people and find deaf role models.

Chisholm Hall is a new facility on the border of the campus. While the simple geometric shapes of this building are simple, the overall appearance is intriguing. There are entrances on three sides, one of which consists of a large gate. Inside, the rooms support administrative and educative functions in their layout, size, and lighting. Socialization is encouraged as displayed by the allocation of prime space, such as the courtyard and the student lounge, for group activities. In general, the environment of Chisholm Hall is carefully planned in terms of users and functions, and is simultaneously distinctive for its emphasis on access as symbolized by the 27 foot gate.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS OF CHISHOLM HALL

5. 1 Introduction

The analysis of Chisholm Hall through observation, description, and interpretation is achieved in light of the concept of space to ascertain whether a separate community is indeed reflected in this built environment. Deciphering the layers that together constitute the site is essential to understand the multiple visions held by the people and agencies who have made possible the construction of the building.

In this chapter, an analysis of the built environment of Chisholm Hall is conducted. Two kinds of space emerge, each both defining and bearing of a separate ideology. These two ideologies are held by proponents of the Deaf community on the one hand, and by national consensus (in the form of funding, credential, and building codes) on the other. These rationales result in differentiated spaces that coexist, mesh, or are at odds with one another. Some of the functions of this facility run smoothly and are mutually compatible, while the performance of others is distorted and incomplete. The last part of the chapter examines where and how these conflicts issued of such cohabitation are mediated. Indeed, mediation has brought about the status quo at Chisholm Hall.

5. 2 Concepts of Space

Concepts of space are understood to encompass not only the physical structures of a building, but more so the configuration that is worked out socially through daily activities, for example, in terms of usage and access, along with the memories and perceptions associated with a particular place. The outstanding functions of Chisholm Hall are identified through observation of these particulars. The objectives are then examined in more detail to identify the ideologies that are served. Contradictory discourses often are the outcome of simultaneous but divergent ideologies.

Assuming for a moment that nothing is known about this structure, what are the characteristics that make it different from a home, a shopping center, or a museum? First, Chisholm Hall is clearly a public building. There is an adjacent parking lot, three entrances with stairs and ramps, and inside, separate restrooms and rooms that can all accommodate groups of people. An established procedure for dispensing information exists, as displayed in the profusion of directional signage, information counters, and lecture rooms.

As a public building, what specific functions are visibly performed throughout? The tasks fulfilled on these premises are in large measure clerical. The layout of the facility is consistent in having public areas with, behind these, smaller rooms used for administrative functions. Nearly all the furnishings can be described as typical of corporate environments: they are designed for daily and heavy usage, and are of muted colors. There are many desks laminated in simulated wood, computers on precisely fitting tables, padded or swivel chairs, clear plastic overlays to protect the carpet from constant chair friction, no care silk flower arrangements, and decorative but near empty shelves.

What furniture does not fit this description is in keeping with standard classroom stock and configuration: at the head of the larger rooms are erasable boards; and a lone and empty teacher's desk of manufactured steel fronts long rows of low individual chairs to which small tables have been secured. To the rear a large round clock, trash bins, and a pencil sharpener complete these bare surroundings. Singular features consist of intricate, built-in projectors, screens, and other multi-media equipment in several rooms. There is a classroom on the second story that showcases a highly specialized sound system; the room is also sloped, and tables are connected and shaped in a curve, while the podium at the front is wide and framed by several screens on a wall. Behind the wall is a small room where the operation and storing of video equipment can take place. From these features one can easily surmise that Chisholm Hall not only functions as a public facility and is highly accessible, but also that communication is a critical determinant of its existence.

Second, this facility is geared for a public that includes people with disabilities (for example, doors and handles are designed to accommodate people in wheelchairs), and, in particular, hearing impaired people. Specifically this latter function is made apparent by sign language posters, TDD phones and visual alarm system, emphasis on lighting and on wide frontal spaces, but more so by the very presence of many people who sign and, of course, by the conspicuous designation of the rooms, for example, the National Center on Deafness.

Prominently noticeable is Chisholm Hall's long gate on the west side of campus that closes off the building. This feature can be considered a landmark for its remarkable presence due to its dimension and seemingly anomalous placement. From the exterior the gate is an obstacle and has a daunting aspect

that is not easily reconciled with concerns displayed otherwise, namely access and communication. From the inside, one is presented with a panoramic vantage point. The ability to see through the gate without hardly being seen further allows for the sensation of privilege and safety. The empowerment thus generated reinforces the status of landmark. Practice supports that indeed Chisholm Hall functions as a refuge: while access is open to all, NCOD staff and deaf students are the typical occupants of this facility with rare intrusion by casual visitors. Interpreters have their own lounge, and so do the deaf students. The students socialize freely with one another, and do so unself-consciously in sign language. The library is specialized in materials strictly dealing with deafness. Furthermore, the accomplishments of NCOD, namely the extensive and unrivaled use of interpreters, the invention of telecommunicative devices, and the number of deaf alumni, are all tremendous achievements, and everyone on the premises is made aware of them. Signs of formal recognition are proudly displayed, and promotional brochures are frequently updated.

Chisholm Hall operates as a physical, social, academic, and professional site of access for hearing impaired students. Indeed, effective provisions are incorporated in the design and organization of this facility to substantially support their integration on this mainstream campus. While the facility itself displays equitable sharing of space, a long gate indicates differentiation and, within the safety of the courtyard, communion. However, a hierarchy is publicly established between outsiders and insiders as symbolized by this gate. This facility has put itself on the map for enhancing the possibility of intense socialization among deaf people.

5. 3 Deaf Community

Chisholm Hall displays some vital signs of the formation of a Deaf community. The first of these visible characteristics is that the building provides an optimum environment in terms of communication, especially by facilitating the use of sign language. Plenty of light enters through the open courtyard and the numerous windows, unobstructed visibility is afforded across walkways, and classrooms are wide enough to allow for all to see interpreters up close. In fact many deaf students at CSUN use sign language and ASL in particular, as do proponents of the Deaf community. This choice makes them readily identifiable by outsiders, and also among themselves. They can distinguish whether the signs used are ASL or SE, and can thus ensure that only "real" members, that is those who have made a political choice, partake in the community. This is not to say that hearing people who sign are not accepted as members of the Deaf community at Chisholm Hall, but rather that they are so solely as a courtesy extended to them. When budgets are threatened, deaf students are quick to side with Chisholm Hall staff, and interpreters in particular, against university administration even if blame lies among their midst. The inclusionary hierarchy is perceptible in the most incidental encounters that take place there. Hearing people who do not sign are disdained, while hearing people who sign are still not trusted as much as deaf people are, and the accuracy of their interpreted messages is repeatedly tested in simple conversation (Sigman, 1994 and Johannsen, 1994). Chisholm Hall is a vital link in transmission of Deaf culture through the broad endorsement of ASL, which is itself rewarded as a key skill.

A second characteristic of the Deaf community visibly present at Chisholm Hall is the fact that deafness does not carry the stigma of a

disability. This factor allows for unselfconscious socialization and stronger development of self-esteem. Set in Los Angeles (a highly diverse city itself), the facility is in the midst of the largest concentration of deaf people in the world, which provides them with mutual aid and with a greater measure of independence from able-bodied people without being reminded of their disability. Most significantly, the needs of hearing-impaired students are specifically addressed at Chisholm Hall to such a degree that deaf students are not only considered apart from the rest of disabled students by having a building of their own (one that has been tailored for their needs), but are so within an environment that truly gives them access to mainstream education. Academically deaf students participate in regular classwork and receive a mainstream degree. Graduation rites are themselves interpreted. Deaf students live in the community either in dorms that are reserved for them with a deaf attendant, or in the community nearby. The social activities they organize, such as beauty pageants, are similar to those of hearing students and are very popular. Located on a quiet plot of land next to the last (and endangered) orange grove, Chisholm Hall is admittedly on the margin of campus. Sheer circumstances are at the origin of the deaf program at CSUN: not deaf leadership, but rather administrators (including many hearing) have been most sympathetic of deaf needs, and this at a time when the university itself was imbued with the optimism and spirit necessary for experimentation.

The building is striking in its design: shaped as an enclosure, it is a refuge from which the world can be seen without revealing the viewer. A protected territory within the campus's rim, Chisholm Hall is enclosed by a large gate, away from the scrutiny of people watching you sign. Border, in fact, is critical to Chisholm Hall and its space is striking in its sensibility to

boundaries. The gate, the doors, the heightened process of entering, as well as the view afforded over the campus on the second story walkway are features that clearly underline access, but simultaneously also the limits of Chisholm Hall. Furthermore, these characteristics are interpreted according to whether one is in the building or standing outside. The gate, with its great size, locks and reinforced fencing, connotes an unpleasant reminder of institutions, that can also be considered distinctive for all its unusual aspects. The significance of boundary is important in terms of design for the occupants of Chisholm Hall, especially for those seeking empowerment through membership.

A third characteristic of the Deaf community reflected at Chisholm Hall is that common deaf ways of doing things exist and are visible. These are part of the systematic and programmed routines of day-to-day life that occur at Chisholm Hall, and they mostly reflect the extent possible of relationships. Minute processes of inclusion and exclusion are displayed that have to do with choice of mode of communication, as mentioned previously. Other behavioral rituals are also subtle and powerful. Rituals, from greeting and nicknaming rituals to key occasions such as Spring Banquet, are instances that give evidence of the impact of values on behavior and performance. Deaf CSUNians is viewed as an important part of Chisholm Hall, one of the nicest rooms in the building was set aside from the beginning for the student organization. The smaller offices that open onto the general student lounge belong to Deaf CSUNian officers, thus situating a hierarchy within the group, one inviting leaders to take on specific roles. Some student leaders have attended Gallaudet University, center of the Deaf community. Social occasions are numerous and are encouraged not only by Deaf CSUNians, but also by year to year practice and by staff members. In a discrete hierarchy, staff and students have taken on the various tasks of committing to memory past

deaf leaders, and are asserting their (Deaf) influence over matters dealing with deafness elsewhere, thus deepening or broadening the influence of Chisholm Hall. Heroes within the program are known to virtually everyone; they are the ones who imbued the program with vision and ceremony, while their failures, no matter the consequences, are long forgotten. The story of NCOD at CSUN is one told by many in the same manner. In particular, staff and students fondly recall the process by which Chisholm Hall, their building, came to reality. Meanwhile, moments of vulnerability are dismissed, such as the circumstances that led to the decline of the NLTP (which are only vaguely recollected, for example) and NLTP signage is passed over as nonexistent while in fact still being on display.

The history of deaf education is one that embodies most of the Deaf struggle, and there is a strong feeling among deaf CSUN students that they are part of that history. This is a strong unifying factor that is further reinforced by the direct access they have to the shared histories of deafness collected by the Resource Library. Posters throughout the facility further underline the value and common heritage, especially of sign language. The students' pride is evident when they speak of extra-mural competitions they have won over prominent deaf schools. The trophy case exhibits these deaf accomplishments in the information lobby, and their success is closely associated with that of the facility.

Nearly all doors are open during operating hours at Chisholm Hall, and students and most staff are identified on photo bulletin boards. The deaf students are attached to the site and educative practices supported through this facility; for many, this is their chosen place of encounter, where they leave messages in mail boxes, or meet in the student lounge or the courtyard. Art by a deaf artist is proudly on display on the second story of the building.

Deaf students and NCOD staff are eager to put their best foot forward in all public dealings, they belong to a strong culture that cares about all of their people, and they take pains to see they are all treated appropriately.

As such, Chisholm Hall is indeed a bright, clean, and stylish statement about this self-respecting culture. The building is heavily used for functions that include important socialization, and is perceived as a center of safety and security, a field of care and concern. The gate that fronts the courtyard distinctly represents the separate but preferred status of the Deaf community in the midst of this mainstreaming environment. The gate, however, also reveals vulnerabilities and difficulties. While Chisholm Hall is a fixed center of meaning that enables deaf students to socialize and understand the world, this site is also one where Deaf values and interpretations preempt some mainstreaming values.

5. 4 National Ideology

National ideology, in the form of mainstreaming, has mostly affected the built environment of Chisholm Hall. The existence and subsistence of such a program is indeed determined by federal and state funding. While Mrs. Petri furnished the money for the construction of the facility, building codes and laws guarantying access for the disabled have guided the design of this facility. These factors, along with accreditation, stem from national ideology, namely the inclusion of all into a homogenous population. Successful mainstreaming is seen as equalizing opportunities, therefore characteristics of a mainstreaming space are foremost ones that promote access and safety, especially for people with physical difficulties.

Mainstreaming at Chisholm Hall first means physical access. As integral parts of the architecture, physical provisions afford convenient access on a permanent basis in terms of location on campus. Entering and exiting both stories of this medium-sized building has been carefully thought out and is clearly demarcated. There are ramps leading in and out of the facility and courtyard, wide hallways allowing for wheelchair clearance, and signs indicating automatic doors. Many counters are lowered, including some by the telephones in the information lobby and in the student computer lab. The configuration of the building itself is made evident, elemental shapes, such as squares and triangles, indeed direct initial apprehension. The courtyard, mezzanine, hallways, and windows are ideally situated for a view either across campus or inward.

All NCOD administrative offices are conveniently situated on the premises. Students are invited to enjoy a wide range of activities through the use of easels, bulletin boards, and announcements posted in the mailboxes. They can receive answers to their queries in the information lobby, newsletter stands, telephones, meeting rooms, classrooms, or library. They may read, rest or wait on benches in the courtyard, on chairs in the reception room, or on the lawn directly in front of the building. And these activities all take place on a site that is theirs. Little is deliberately kept out of viewing range, save for bicycle racks behind a wall and air conditioning ducts behind a false bay window. No doubt these few exceptions are made in an effort to cover what is considered clutter.

The emphasis on physical access at Chisholm Hall supports the importance of functionality in a visible manner. The facility follows a simple variation of an elementary pattern. The materials, such as brick, concrete, and gray carpeting, are easily maintained, many doormats prevent stains and

damage due to heavy use, and windows are permanently shut. Efficiency is also represented by attention to another kind of detail, namely protocol. This by the way is also typical of corporate environments, such as executive offices and clerical stations, with which Chisholm Hall has much in common. Etiquette indeed guides how much emotion or public controversy is permitted in environments such as this one, with special conventions that assign meaning to mundane activities, regulate paper flow and the importance of scheduling, and provide a sense of security. At Chisholm Hall, protocol is viewed as important. Regular and planned meetings are held in designated rooms, in order to discuss issues affecting groups, and there is little opportunity for ad hoc or impulse practice.

The elites of Chisholm Hall are identifiable in that they occupy particularly desirable rooms. As such, the director's office is on the second floor, on the southeast corner. The student lounge and the library above also occupy appealing rooms because they feature large bay windows, but they are located within greater public sight. The hierarchy of who is in public, and of who may enjoy greater privacy (by closing their door for example), or whether they are behind doorless partitions or behind walls serve as standard visual codes of power. Tasks at Chisholm Hall have been carefully defined in order to respond most effectively to need. Each step fits within the bureaucratic hierarchy, and occurs at a fixed station. These sites are then organized entirely in relation to this narrow range of assignments, within fixed hours. Planning is the evidence of mainstreaming ideology.

Mainstreaming at Chisholm Hall also means access through enhanced communication. Every effort has been made in avoiding physical barriers in deaf communication. The design of Chisholm Hall incorporates features that support a wide variety of communication methods, including real time

captioning, lip reading (the projection screens), and acoustic enhancements of oral methods. A seminar room is named for Alexander Graham Bell. All visual aid and electronic equipment necessary are available without their having to be brought from a central location. Inside, light or dark single tone walls bounce light into the space and are less fatiguing to the eyes; this is provided at Chisholm Hall where the walls are mostly beige or gray with contrasting teal and rust panels. Rotating lighting fixtures are most appropriately found in the classroom areas. Sound-proof rooms are in order as the distraction of outside noises is thus diminished. There are powerful strobe-like sound and light emitting alarms that are most effective in deaf environments if needed in an emergency. In most instances, Chisholm Hall also fits very well as an environment conducive to manual modes of communication (Sigman, 1994; Womack, 1994). The building admits a lot of natural light and has wide empty spaces to permit cross space sign-shouting. Square shaped and wide frontal areas, such as the courtyard and the classrooms, provide the kind of maximum space that appeals to people who sign. Selected small walled off areas are fancied as they facilitate private talks free of "eyedroppers." Inside, the building has several floor levels, elevated standing, and seating areas. Balconies and walkways that overlook open lobby and courtyard areas below are best, as deaf people are then able to exchange messages up and down stairs as well as across rooms. Only the deaf predilection for stomping to gain attention is discouraged at Chisholm Halls, where the floors are carpeted. All these preferences are those of deaf people who use sign language, thus ultimately they are also Deaf preferences.

Mainstreaming also means integrating into the general population. The building is stylistically similar to its newest neighbors, and houses the network of support that makes possible the integration of deaf students

within a hearing community. Chisholm Hall is indeed a public space and safety is an important concern. Order and safeguard infuse the students' activities. The grid pattern of equally spaced trees, planters, and arrangements of benches evokes a feeling of discrete efficiency. No physical or visual detractors are present. The area surrounding the building bids no apparent disorder, nor any invitation to it. Orientation presents no problem, options are clear, expectations are met, and anxiety is minimized. The simple geometry of the building presupposes a desire for order and equanimity. With its angles barely concealed and walls that line up with one another simply because this facilitates construction, the layout of Chisholm Hall is uncomplicated; windows and passageways are nearly square and so are many of the interior spaces. Such conscious reminders of unsullied alignments leave little room for ambiguity and come close to what Lefebvre calls "fetishization of cohesiveness" (1992, p. 411). Undoubtedly, this concern reveals a "concerted desire" to use aesthetics as a solution for the anguish presumed in unconformity (disability is an unconformity). If deafness is indeed considered a disability, as it at least officially is at Chisholm Hall, then the proximity of this building to a medical facility is of interest, as it may reflect, or at least remind one, of the premise that deafness is a pathologizing state that must be gotten rid of.

Chisholm Hall is a public facility and there is almost no private space. This is partially compensated by the various other types of spaces presented; for example, the entryways are in penumbra and as one passes on into the courtyard, the sunlight is abrupt and white. But, the gated passage is one of the few architectural features that plays with our senses. The space of this facility is mostly planned for generating ease of access and does little to challenge, surprise, or amaze people. There are no obvious traces of self-

expression, desks are unadorned for the most part. The absence of individual character may be due to the recent construction of this facility, but is also rather typical of Postmodern style. Pipe railings border the interior and ramps of Chisholm Hall, making casual reference to industrial plants. The gate is painted in turquoise, its color denoting the distinctive optimism typical of the 1950's, especially in California. Added emphasis is made to the construction of the separate parts, as is the use of geometric shapes. Postmodern buildings are deceiving in that they appear highly individualistic, but are actually quite discouraging of informal use. Instead the emphatic use of surveillance configuration (such as gangways and balconies) and devices (such as fence, blind windows, and electronic monitors) in many postmodern buildings attempts to convey and symbolize the safety and stability otherwise provided through social controls.

Chisholm Hall is a specialized environment that is reflective of the national ideology, which is to mainstream disabled people. Access is the uppermost concern expressed throughout the facility. Chisholm Hall is open to all communicative methods and exhibits respect and goodwill. Designed as a space of assistance, safety and efficiency are carefully orchestrated, and user expectations are monitored. Careful planning permeates the premises, displaying an environment that is efficient but dull.

5. 5 Conflicts

While Deaf identification and mainstreaming share common ground, in that they both aim to create a community for example, these ideologies are also at odds from one another, and this is displayed in the environment of Chisholm Hall to a certain extent. The struggles that occur on this site are

hidden, however, for several important reasons. For one thing, the facility does provide an invaluable service, namely access not only to the hearing, but also the deaf world. Second, the functions of Chisholm Hall have been carried out by administrators who have consistently been sympathetic of deaf circumstances or who are deaf themselves. Dissension is discreet because of the distrust many deaf people experience towards hearing people, yet hearing people are viewed as holding the key to all things worth achieving (Johannsen, 1994). In addition to this, protocol and an overriding concern for efficiency, which are issued of the overwhelming impression mainstreaming has on this building, discourage self-expression. Mainstreaming supports the unwritten rules to be compliant, with which many deaf people are only too familiar. Features characteristic of university halls, such as overflows of chairs, litter, or sleeping people, are not found here. There are few visible marks of individual initiative; rather, group concerns are foremost on everyone's mind. Last, because deaf people share unusually tight social bonds, they are very conscious to present a united front to hearing people.

Contention has thus taken on various forms, some suppressed, and other erupt ambiguously. Sider, in a similar context, has called these clashes "peculiar mixtures of fantasy and reality" (Sider, 1987, 3). An example of this are building features that are invested with unusual meaning. Take the dramatic gated entrance for instance, its intensity is intimidating and might suggest danger, or worse, incarceration. However, many deaf students feel that the gate makes the building look distinctive, and that it does not obstruct or repel (Hunter, 1994). Meaningful sense of place is achieved, with the gate symbolizing a segregation that is interpreted as the deaf peoples' right to have borders, no matter if the gate is disproportionate both in size and emphasis.

The deaf students' relationship to the built environment of Chisholm Hall can be likened to one recounted in Genet's *The Thief's Journal* (1967, pp. 71-72):

"Prison offers the same sense of security to the convict as does a Royal Palace to a King's guest. They are the two buildings constructed with the most faith, those which give the greatest certainty of being what they are -- which are what they meant to be, and which remain...

The prison surrounds me -- along with the Law Court, its annex, its monumental vestibule. Everything therein was designed for me in a spirit of the utmost seriousness. The rigor of the rules, their strictness, their precision, are in essence the same as the etiquette of a royal court, as the exquisite and tyrannical politeness of which a guest at that court is the object."

Chisholm Hall reflects processes of inclusions and exclusions. Factioning and radicalism exist on the premises, but this secret is well guarded and only reaches the exterior anonymously. Intense controversy and even conflict are, to an extent, part of the landscape of Chisholm Hall. Regular forums awake consciousness and generate debate, but most of all students are aware that their very selection of communication is a political one. While the decision can be difficult, the choice they make is one that can empower them. It is little wonder then that they regard the building with the pride that makes it their landmark.

The facility has suffered from some ill-conceived dreams, especially in terms of funding. These have had unfortunate repercussions and required the university to intervene. But the aspirations that motivated errors of judgment were based on over-extensions, in terms of the number of students

the program could accommodate, and in terms of providing them a full range of services. To be sure, devoted leadership has inspired the NCOD program with rare and precious vision; however, the guidance has also displayed the narrowing views of a community's self-interest, one where group concerns become greater than those of individuals.

While important, only a few conflicts have come to the fore at Chisholm Hall. The reasons given above are strong deterrents for grave discontent to occur. In addition to these reasons, there is always the danger that funding would be threatened if indeed the deaf were considered a linguistic minority instead of a disabled population. Support money that is already in short supply might then be cut.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS

6. 1 Overview

As social objects built environments significantly reveal ideologies. Indeed, a new understanding of human structures has been elicited by theoretical advances in spatial theory. Space is no longer seen as a neutral context or background for human activities. Instead, space is now understood not only as a product of societal beliefs, but also as an agent that reproduces this ethos. In fact, multiple ideologies are likely to be present in built environments. These are "read" by exposing their spatial layers, an important research agenda of postmodern geography.

Ideology is a notion that too has been better understood through postmodern inquiry. In particular, the relationship between processes that establish dominance and marginalization has been clarified. This clarification has affected many small groups of people who in turn have asserted a separate identity and demanded greater autonomy. One of these groups is the Deaf community.

This thesis has examined the built environment of Chisholm Hall on the California State University, Northridge (CSUN) campus to determine whether its role as a deaf student support center facilitates the definition of a Deaf community on campus, and if so, whether this community exhibits spatial attributes. Initially two ideologies were assumed to be present at Chisholm Hall: mainstreaming; and the elaboration of group identity.

Mainstreaming, on the one hand, is issued of national ideology. Particularly present in the mid 1960s when the National Center on Deafness (NCOD) originated on this state campus, mainstreaming represents a society's effort at preserving itself as a whole. This effort requires that individuals who are different must adjust to fit the norm. This is accomplished through public education, for example.

The elaboration of a separate group identity by the Deaf represents efforts to unite on the basis of difference, on the other hand. Deaf people share a common response against national ideology as it has been practiced in public education, against linguistic ethnocentrism, and against stigmatization.

Mainstreaming and separate identity formation are contradictory currents that shape the NCOD program on the CSUN campus within a simultaneous timeframe. Spatially, this coexistence of ideologies is reflected in the built environment of Chisholm Hall as well. The building, and the activities that take place therein, are defined according to objective purpose and formal hierarchy, and to a dynamic process of resistance. Chisholm Hall offers a rich layering of interpretations that are apparent through conflicting use and appropriation of space.

6. 2 Findings and Interpretation

The examination issued of this thesis supports that mainstreaming and identity formation are two principal ideologies affecting the spatial landscape of Chisholm Hall. These two ideologies are contradictory to each other, yet they are each present to varying degrees in the built environment.

Of the two ideologies, mainstreaming is most readily visible on the premises of Chisholm Hall. With its numerous and varied entrances, the

building is efficient and attractive in its ease of access. More specifically, the architecture of the building is up to date, and perceptive of the communicative needs of deaf people. Its courtyard and upper-level walkways offer a protective panoramic view of the hearing world, and the means to overcome, as the graduating students display, the low expectations generally ascribed of the hard of hearing. The presence of an extensive support network that is of exceptional quality in an effective setting makes for the successful completion of mainstream studies by deaf students, a feat previously unheard of. Emphasis is on access throughout the facility in a way that goes beyond the multiple points of entry: every effort has been made to facilitate communication, including manual communication. Significant circumstances deriving from mainstreaming at Chisholm Hall have indeed facilitated the formation of Deaf identification.

That an ideology supporting a separate Deaf community exists on campus also is the case. This presence is visible at Chisholm Hall in terms of linguistic practice, of homogeneity within group, and of exclusionary and inclusionary process. Since 1989, the deaf students have enjoyed a building that is separate from that of disabled students and exists strictly for their needs. Shaped as an enclave, they identify Chisholm Hall as a refuge and a place where deafness matters in a very important manner. All functions taking place there are related to deafness, whether through the counseling center on the first floor or the library above the student lounge.

How these ideologies coexist within a simultaneous time and space is clarified by looking at the contradictions that emerge. While national ideology is tempered by a greater acceptance and definition of difference, deaf identification at CSUN is manifested mostly in terms of individual empowerment rather than group elaboration. Significant circumstances

deriving from mainstreaming at Chisholm Hall have indeed facilitated the formation of Deaf identification.

Deaf students come to CSUN with diverse educational and linguistic backgrounds, but they are readily given the means to quickly form a heterogeneous group, that is, one quite distinct from that of the hearing students. Because of the size of the deaf population, and because of the commitment on the part of its well-trained staff, who in large part is deaf or at least signs, mainstreaming has been positive academically and socially. All in all, mainstreaming at CSUN has remained informed of the special needs of the deaf, and this is reflected in the openness towards all communicative methods, its dedication, and recognition of deaf pride.

Elsewhere, cultural and behavioral differentiation of the Deaf community has emerged in part because of the struggles and stigma deaf people endured. These struggles and stigma are simply not present at CSUN. Deaf people have always been able to use their preferred mode of communication, and their program has been separate from that of disabled students. Moreover, deaf students arrive at CSUN with the intent of obtaining a mainstream education. They are given the means and freedom to use their language of choice for education and socialization and their choices are fully supported by the design of the facility. A political entity, as is present at Gallaudet University, is unlikely to develop at CSUN, unless funding is drastically threatened. As such, the circumstances that could have triggered community formation are not present.

A large part of community formation has to do with difference, and while some conflicts do not exist at CSUN, others are clearly visible. They are so in the artifacts that symbolize Deaf presence, such as American Sign Language (ASL) posters, the intense celebration of a variety of Deaf events in

this mainstream institution, and practices such as the use of ASL. Deaf students are aware that the communicative choice they make links them, or not, to the Deaf community. They are reminded of this fact on a daily basis, either through group influence or by inclusionary and exclusionary social practices. Chisholm Hall is the site on campus where these practices are the most meaningful. But Deaf presence exists even more noticeably in the inconsistencies and conflicting interpretations that are part of the landscape of Chisholm Hall. An example of this is the interpretation of the large gate by deaf students who see it as a protective barrier.

However, the building is both accommodating and confining. Inside the design remains basic, functional, and heeds the principle of minimal expenditure necessary to satisfy needs. Privacy and a sense of spontaneity have been taken away by planners; the atmosphere is informal but stark in meaning. There is little effusion of waste or excess, or acknowledgment of human pain or joy, except for the memorable gate, which serves as a potent exclusionary and inclusionary symbol. Mostly, the style of the facility is corporate in origin rather than collegiate, or than defined by a distinct community. The formal objectives of this building dominate subjective appropriations. Temptations to wander are atrophied by essentialist functionality. Diversion, in terms of function, is not possible; behavior is established by the rigidity of use, alignment, and dimensions of all the rooms. Social norms are obeyed without the acknowledgment of these standards. A disassociation with any conflict is evident, thus ignoring the role of conflict in shaping democratic societies.

While a population of deaf students exhibits characteristics of a separate community through use of language and social practices, many other signs of an active Deaf community are lacking at Chisholm Hall. The spaces

work well, but strictly so for the tasks they are intended to officially serve, and that within a range that is narrowly defined. Administrative offices can be characterized as corporate in style. A hierarchy is spatially established, efficiency is represented, and furnishings are planned within aesthetic considerations. The exchange of information is simplified by the facility, and bears out the comprehensive endeavor of Chisholm Hall to satisfy the communicative needs of hearing impaired students.

The contradicting ideologies of mainstreaming and separate group formation are apparent in the landscape of Chisholm Hall. Mainstreaming and identity formation are essentially two similar ideologies on two different scales. Because they they are similar yet operate on two different scales, they end up working both in conjunction and in opposition of one another. Spatial study allows for the identification of these ideologies, and for the clarification of these ambiguities.

6. 3 Future Research

The significance of the findings of this study contributes to the growing literature on geographies of space, on how place displays ideologies, and how social processes of inclusion and exclusion emerge. Together with a broadening of concept of identity, such trends are bound to significantly change notions of citizenship, for example. Geography can provide important leads in this innovative endeavor.

How communities develop and, especially, respond to changing conditions, as is the Deaf community at CSUN, is one of many questions that the field of geography is best positioned to address. Attachment to place performs an important, if not crucial, part in the elaboration of ethnicities. As

such, many interesting issues are elicited about landmarks, rituals, and protocols in community building. The postmodern framework supports considerations outside of issues of homogeneity and consent. The lack of understanding of struggle, and of its visible components, had weakened earlier efforts to recognize marginalized voices.

Today questions can be posed as to how conflict is mediated, particularly through the built environment, by successive structures, agents, occupants, or administrators. On a broad scale, this opportunity is especially relevant of nations where power is diffuse, such as bureaucratic nations and of non-governmental organizations, for the same reason. On a small scale, activism and community formation can be more effective by the recognition of individual action on everyday landscape. As the nature of discord is better apprehended, academic research will generate a clearer picture of human resistance to oppression.

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