

fall the academy will apply to the Department of Education for federal recognition to offer accreditation to colleges and university programs. The AALE accreditation could be a mark of prestige, a stamp of approval to help parents judge schools.

Wilson says he will serve the academy primarily as an adviser on science education, a subject to which he has devoted many committee hours at Harvard, including five years as chair of the faculty committee overseeing the undergraduate science program. Harvard, in his estimation, would qualify immediately for AALE accreditation: "I think Harvard students get an excellent liberal arts education. The Core curriculum is famous, with a very strong science program, and facts show the senior faculty are more involved in the teaching of undergraduates than at most small liberal arts schools."

This spring's unveiling of the academy and its board of heavy hitters—others include Jacques Barzun, history professor and former provost at Columbia University; former Colorado governor Richard Lamm; and John Agresto, president of St. John's College in Santa Fe—produced a stack of press clips and a rash of appearances on television talk shows. But while talk of education reform seems to find a receptive audience, the AALE also has its critics. Some see the group, with conservatives like Finn on its board and funding from the historically conservative Olin Foundation, as a right-wing attack on the multicultural curriculum-reform movement. Wallin refutes such charges, saying that he worked to assemble a board of educators from a wide political spectrum, ranging from conservative to liberal, and even including a Marxist.

Wilson, who is known as a centrist, sees the group the same way. "So many people spring to the posture that you're either 'p.c.' or 'anti-p.c.' We believe multiculturalism should not be carried to excess," he says. "We emphasize the understanding but not necessarily the approval of West-

ern civilization. That could be called conservative, but I just call it common sense."

—Lisa Watts

## Peek Under the Covers

Accreditation of a college or university—which is required for any school to receive federal funding or student aid—is currently conducted by six regional agencies that check quantitative data like faculty-student ratios and numbers of library volumes. But these agencies don't look at the curriculum, says AALE director Jeffrey Wallin. "If you look at the literature from the more than three thousand liberal arts colleges in this country, each one will tell you you'll get a good liberal arts education at that school. But when you begin to peek under the covers, it just isn't there," he says.

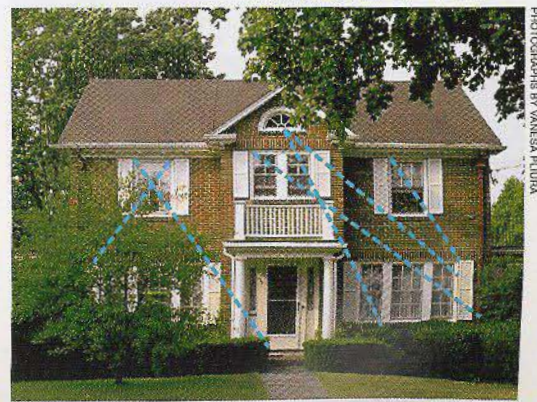
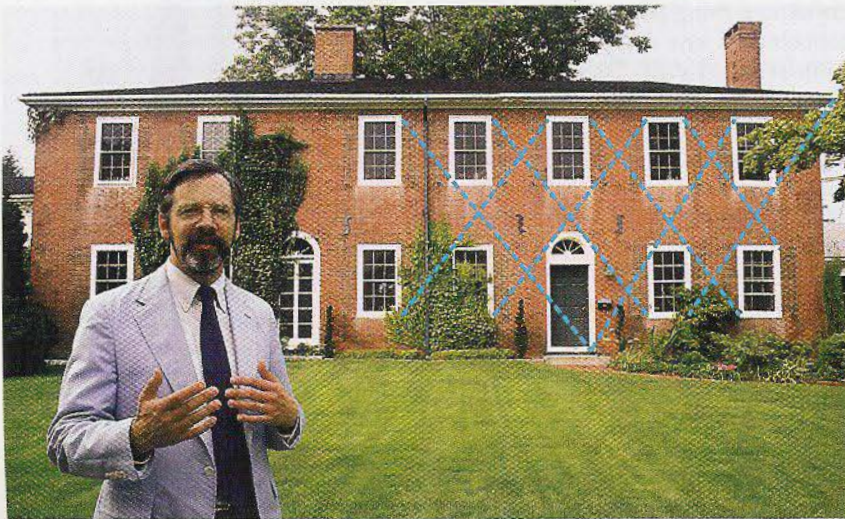
## Intuitive Architecture

*Architecture once felt good on the eye, for reasons that are largely subconscious. Jonathan Hale explains why that is no longer so.*

To illustrate a point, architect Jonathan Hale '68 sketches an elaborate diagram of dotted lines, circles, and arcs over a photograph of his favorite nineteenth-century house; it looks like a massive, inky cobweb. "Look at the way these patterns fit," he explains. "Every part of this house bears a direct geometrical relationship to every other part." He's right; the doors, windows, shutters, and cornices all line up along perfect diagonals. "What's amazing about this," Hale says, "is that the builders probably had no inkling of these patterns. And yet somehow, perhaps subconsciously, they knew exactly what they were doing."

Hale believes that these patterns hold the answers to much-debated questions about what has gone wrong with American architecture. In his forthcoming book, *The Old Way of Seeing*, he argues that the oft-lamented shortcomings of modern design—impersonality, didactic symbolism, and a tendency toward stale historical gestures, to name a few—have less to do with changing architectural fashions than with a much more elusive problem: designers seem to have lost contact with their intuition.

Below, left: Jonathan Hale with an eighteenth-century house in Belmont, Massachusetts, behind him. "The geometry is so strong that the missing window above the door on the left only adds interest," he says. "The twentieth-century house at right is of the same materials, yet it hasn't the spirit of the original, which is much simpler and richer. Many key elements fail to relate. Diagonals through the upper windows tie in to nothing below. They undermine the pattern of other diagonals (through the triple windows) that do connect some parts. The result is not hideousness, just boredom."



PHOTOGRAPHS BY VANESSA FLUNA

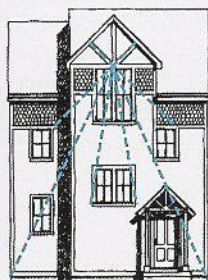
According to Hale, modern design has become overly rigid and theoretical, often striving toward lofty academic ideals at the expense of more basic notions of pattern. "We used to see buildings in terms of proportion and form," he says, "but now we tend to look at them for what they represent. Of course, there has always been an element of symbolism in architecture. But today too many buildings are not merely symbolic; they have become symbols themselves."

Hale thinks the buildings that used to line average American streets were a reflection of the physical patterns of their occupants. When designers let pattern guide them, they opened their ability to make forms that came alive. Now, he says, the belief is that only "high architecture" can bring a place to life. "We've come to expect ordinary buildings to be dull," he says, "to assume that a new building is going to be worse than the one it replaces." In a culture of symbols and utilitarian

objects, we've lost patience with the designing process, with the fact that "the true mark of mastery is the ability to manipulate patterns intuitively.

"Consider the process of recognizing a familiar face, whether that face is laughing, crying, standing sideways, or looking right at you," Hale continues. "Those are amazingly subtle visual calculations. We use those same cognitive processes to look at buildings. The regulating lines in a building can awaken that same innate sense of recognition. We need to recapture that human sense of scale."

Hale is not entirely curmudgeonly toward modern



Invisible "regulating lines" connect key points and determine the proportions of a house designed by Hale in 1988. Such highly ordered but intuitive geometry was typical of design before the machine age, he says.

architecture. He even admits to liking such frequently maligned modern structures as Boston City Hall and Harvard's Holyoke Center. Speaking of Harvard, Hale has opinions aplenty on the University's architectural smorgasbord, which he describes as "a collection of prima donnas, all struggling for attention." His favorite campus structure—Sever Hall—also happens to be one of Neil Rudenstine's favorites. High on Hale's list is University Hall, which for all its imperfections—asymmetrical windows, a railing that ends abruptly on one side—maintains a lively, playful quality. His least-favored list includes just about anything on Radcliffe Quad, which he dismisses as a "pastiche of old symbols. It's neo-nothing."

Despite his avowed affection for pre-Victorian buildings like those that dot the Yard, Hale stresses that he is by no means advocating a nostalgic

return to old styles. In fact, he says, even the most faithful efforts at replication are doomed to academic sterility. Rather, he suggests that architects should rethink their fundamental creative impulses. "We shouldn't be afraid of words like *magic*," he says. "Not magic in a mumbo-jumbo sense, but magic in the true sense, of what we experience in the presence of Art." —A.G. Wright

## The Sidelined Mind

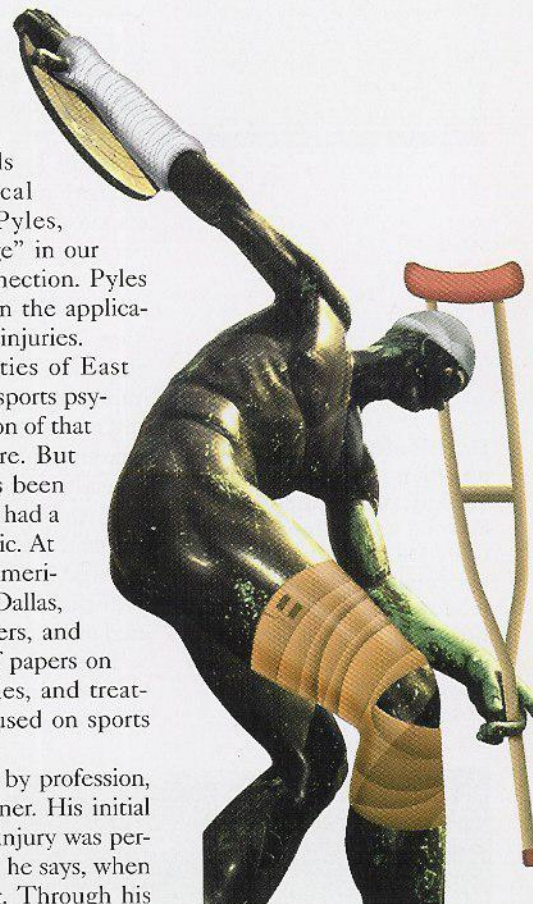
*The boom in sports medicine has been one-sided: almost all the therapy is for the physical side of athletic injuries.*

In our "Just Do It" society, sports psychology has emerged alongside a concern for drug-free performance enhancement. Just doing it may be sexy, but winning is the implicit bottom line. Thus sports psychology has focused on putting the mental habits of great athletes into words and programs. But, says clinical instructor in psychiatry Robert Pyles, "we're still at a very primitive stage" in our knowledge of the mind-body connection. Pyles asserts that this is especially true in the application of sports psychology to athletic injuries.

The phenomenal sports dynasties of East Germany and the Soviet bloc took sports psychology seriously, and the recognition of that fact has helped its acceptance here. But even though sports psychology has been ushered into the locker room, it has had a tougher time breaking into the clinic. At the 1992 annual meeting of the American College of Sports Medicine in Dallas, for example, clinicians, practitioners, and researchers presented thousands of papers on athletic performance, sports injuries, and treatment. Yet only three of them focused on sports psychology.

A psychiatrist and psychoanalyst by profession, Pyles is also a serious distance runner. His initial experience with the psychology of injury was personal; he "got clinically depressed," he says, when a knee injury stopped his running. Through his own and others' experiences, Pyles found a prevalent lack of psychological insight into the treatment of injured athletes. So far, he notes, "sports medicine departments have all been headed by orthopedic surgeons. And of course, if you have a hammer, everything looks like a nail."

As a result the injured athlete goes to a clinic and the injury is treated, not the athlete. Clinicians often overlook the central role that the athletic activity plays in the life and identity of the athlete-patient. This is particularly true for amateurs but occurs even when the patients are professional athletes. "When someone gets hurt,"



The discus thrower in front of Harvard's Hemenway Gymnasium has injured himself. His body has been treated, but what about his mind?