The idea that the majority of all possible buildings do not have living structure had, perhaps, never even occurred to people before about 1980, when my colleagues and I first raised the issue. In traditional society, most traditional methods were structure-preserving. No one ever identified the huge class [of dead structures] because nearly all buildings actually made, or even imagined, up to about 1900, were part of [the class of living structures]. The discovery that human beings have the option to choose — and the capability to make — ugly, strange buildings which do not preserve the structure of the Earth, is new. It is really only recently, in the late 20th century, that we discovered that the class [of dead structures] exists, and that we can not merely conceive, but actually build such buildings. We discovered it during the manic gyrations of the 20th century when absurd and horrible buildings first became known. Such unnatural things had hardly ever been created before. But all of a sudden, during the 20th century, for the first time it became obvious that architects could build absurdities. This became all too obvious with the huge corpus of 20th-century building work.

By an odd quirk of social circumstance, in the 20th century there were violent taboos in the architectural community, social pressures created by architectural in-groups, which made it seem, in the late 20th century, justifiable to build almost anything EXCEPT the buildings in [the class of living structures]. You were justified as a professional architect as long as you demonstrated your membership in the club of proper modern architects (a quaint term used in the 20th century), by avoiding [the class of living structures] at all costs, and by, instead, selecting or creating something unexpected from the class [of dead structures]. Of course, no architect would ever have admitted this. Instead, the questionable dogmas of 20th-century architecture were supported and propagated by incomprehensible verbal mumbo-jumbo that passed as ‘art criticism’.