

# ‘SHITTY MENTOR’

On Wednesday April 11th, Dean Berke and Emily Abruzzo convened a town hall “in light of recent revelations about prominent architects and subsequent information about the general culture of architecture and architecture education” to discuss how to move forward as a community. Though some of the responses at the meeting were tempered or conciliatory, in its aftermath there has been an explosion of more direct, urgent conversations—both in personal exchanges and in organized meetings—calling for specific actions to be taken. We wanted to capture some of this tremendous energy for change by recording as many of these thoughts and calls for action as possible in this fold.

In an attempt to gather as many responses from as many members of the YSoA community as possible, we sent out a survey to students about the Shirty Architecture Men List and issues of sexual misconduct and bias at YSoA and in the field of architecture. We received 42 responses. We also reached out twice to the entire faculty and staff for their thoughts on the subject. We received one response. We pinned as many answers as possible, selected to capture the spectrum of opinions expressed. The answers included in the fold represent only a fraction of

*Below are the answers to a survey sent out to the entire YSoA student body. Students were given the option to answer anonymously or not.*

**What did you think of the town hall with Dean Berke and Emily Abruzzo about the Shirty Architecture Men List and systemic issues of sexual misconduct and bias in architecture?**

I appreciated their candor but was disappointed by their apparent failure to understand their own power and ability to wield it toward positive, institutional change. Instead of being the leader at the head of the lecture hall with ideas and energy to maintain the momentum of the conversation, our dean heard us out, disagreed with some people’s feelings, and then left us to do the work of change ourselves.

The most resonant moment for me was the suggestion that Emily and Dean Berke are always a resource to talk to. While that may be true for overt forms of sexual misconduct and bias, it is extremely unrealistic for the moments of implicit biases that undermine one’s capabilities, knowledge, experience, opinion, etc. I’m not even considering the availability component, as both are practicing architects, commute from NYC, and have a plethora of other duties here.

I respect that the Dean acknowledged it and wanted to address the students about these issues. I was happy they hosted it. I don’t think it replaces a student-run town hall, and I don’t think it was meant to, so students should have our own discussions also. But it means a lot that the administrators prioritize this enough to show up.

Bias and misconduct ultimately are still very personal issues and can be hard to express in a large lecture hall setting. [...] —

Though I appreciate the administration addressing student concerns, I believe allowing unsubstantiated accusations to drag our industry through the mud is a mistake. [...] The integrity of our school and our program is not up for question and allowing people to grandstand in the context of filling silence during a town hall is inappropriate.

Disappointing number of faculty present.

[...] I also appreciate that the male students stepped back (whether consciously or not) making it a place where predominantly female students were heard [...]

[...] Rather than a will to provide new solutions and raise higher standards of conduct it appeared as a tentative measure to settle and bury the growing discontent.

**How would you describe the school’s culture, particularly with regards to issues of sexual misconduct or bias?**

The school has become slightly less biased under Dean Berke.

There is a strong bro culture that is complicit in a lot of problematic situations. Reviews are often dominated by loud men, and student voices are effectively banished. [...]

[...] I think the Dean is willing to hear out what we want and need and is willing to help change things. I think from the people she has invited to speak and culture she is cultivating at the school, we are moving in the right direction.

Old school, conventional, not necessarily based on gender but rather a sense of “showmanship”

which promotes characteristics of machoism, egotism, experimentation and a performative, extroverted personality.

Good between students! I think? Speaking from personal experience.

Just like the wide scope of transgressions on the list, this school sexual misconduct from subtle microaggressions to overt sexual misconduct. We are not separate from the problem; we are mired in it. [...]

**How would you like to see the culture of YSoA change?**

I want an administration that actively seeks student input on decisions that affect students, and does so in a regular, formalized, and publicized manner. I want students to spend more time engaging with one another (inside and outside of studio courses) about the real issues we face as students, architects, residents of New Haven, people... I want students to have time to do this.

[...] We need more diversity and representation in the faculty—women but also women of color.

I think all faculty who offer unpaid “internships” for GRADUATE STUDENTS should be penalised! I’m looking at you Eisenman, MFG and Joel Sanders!! How dare you?! How on earth can you parade around telling us to value ourselves and our education and place in this profession when YOU are the ones advocating for that sort of devaluation! [...]

I think there really needs to be a system in place to field concerns and deal with the rampant mental health problems that

the total responses we received. We strongly encourage you to read the entirety of the responses at [yalepaprika.com](http://yalepaprika.com). In addition to the survey and one faculty response, we are printing a preliminary set of proposals from a group of first year students about specific steps students are taking to combat sexual misconduct and bias.

In editing this fold, we felt that it was important to not shy away from the difficult specificities of bias and sexual misconduct. Although we recognize that an anonymous survey can elicit strong language, we believe that a platform that allows for honesty and directness is needed at this moment. Also, in contrast to more traditional forums within the school, an anonymous platform provides a space for people to relate their emotions and personal experiences.

This bulletin is only a snapshot of the many conversations and actions that are moving forward in the school. So far the lack of faculty response has been discouraging. We hope you’ll join the conversation. Our work here is far from done.

**Orli Hakanoglu**  
**Jacqueline Hall**  
**Matthew Wagstaffe**

this school CAUSES. This is not Marilyn’s job and it’s ridiculous to force it on her.

[...] The people who handle complaints or feedback should have no interest in covering up alleged misconduct, they should be an independent body or a body that equally represents the administration, the faculty and the students. [...]

[...] The administration needs to take a firm public verbal stance on what behaviors they will not stand for, reiterating this stance to students and professors alike so it becomes ingrained. This statement needs to be verbalized and woven into the school’s culture; it needs to be excavated from wherever it lies cryptically embedded in the school Bulletin [...]

I’d like faculty to undergo training about how to prevent, discuss, and talk about implicit and explicit bias, as it relates to gender, race, class, identity, and beyond.

**What do you think of the Shirty Architecture Men list?**

Seems like a combination of legitimate grievances and some petty complaints, but generally is an outgrowth of an outmoded culture that silences and buries complaints to avoid change and protect those in power. I think if we had a better response and system in place to deal with these issues we wouldn’t need to make such a list.

Label. I absolutely believe that some of the men on the list behaved inappropriately, maybe in the ways described. However, as it stands, an online sheet circulated through dozens of offices and school with free editing can not be taken as truth.

It is rather Yale-centric and the fact that the administration took so long to address the matter is concerning. [...]

[...] On the one hand it’s incredible that people have the opportunity to voice experiences that are pretty much impossible to bring to light without the protection of anonymity. On the other hand, an anonymous, crowd-sourced list just can’t be treated as fact. I also think it’s really complicated, and potentially unfair, to put serial sexual harassers on the same list as people who have “condoned sexism”—the whole architectural community has condoned sexism! [...]

[...] I found it pretty difficult to see YSoA names on there, and am still struggling to accept that these people are at our school. [...]

[...] Personally I was quite shocked to see that someone that had harassed me was on the list and was reported to have harassed several other women. In a way I felt validated, I felt entitled to have felt fear and disgust when the incident happened. I am mad that no sanction has been taken against that man and that he is still free to harass other women after me and certainly will. I think this list is useful to identify recidivist predator behaviour. [...]

**How would you like the administration and faculty to respond to the SAM list and systemic issues of sexual misconduct and bias in architecture?**

The administration MUST hire a third party person to deal with diversity and inclusion measures; NOT just a title IX coordinator. Many of the issues under this broad umbrella term

of “sexual misconduct and bias” fall outside of the scope of Title IX and, as such, go unreported and unresolved.

I would really like to see the administration and faculty look at the SAM list with the nuance it deserves. Dean Berke and Emily’s “disappointment” in the list was frustrating. [...] The list’s imperfections are a mirror reflection of the imperfections of “official channels.” The need for anonymity must be taken seriously. We live in a world where people who come forward with allegations of sexual misconduct are shamed, scrutinized, and driven from their fields. Only very recently has this started to change, but even when people are taken seriously, the emotional labor required to report publicly is enormous and people’s very intimate personal lives are made public.

I would rather they didn’t. Please don’t write it off. Voices are trying to be heard.

A public statement (to the world) acknowledging the existence of many allegations, that Yale is implicated in this (both through allegations made with Yale-affiliated persons and because it is a prominent institution within the discipline), and what it is going to do in response would be a start.

I think that by bringing this discussion to the forefront of our school’s many ongoing conversations, part of the list’s job has already been done.

I think the faculty and students mentioned on that list that are at the school should be investigated and sanctions should be taken if the allegations are verified. A discussion between students and the faculty—all the

