

LANDMARK WEST!

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Baby Boomers "Taking Revenge" on 1960's Architecture

In last Sunday's *New York Times*, writer Fred Bernstein honed in on a central paradox of society's present love-hate relationship with buildings like Edward Durell Stone's **2 Columbus Circle**:

"In a society otherwise enamored of the styles of the 1960's, the architecture of that decade is rarely loved and frequently reviled. All over the country, 60's buildings are being torn down while much older buildings survive." For the full article, go to <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/10/31/arts/design/31bern.html>.

Buildings that may have value to future generations are falling victim to fleeting tastes, Bernstein suggests. "The charge to eliminate 60's buildings is, in many cases, being led by baby boomers who came of age in the 1960's [and want the opposite of what they knew]... **Yet while wealthy institutions are erasing 60's buildings, architecture professionals and 20-somethings consider them hip.**"

But, as the fact that the NY Landmarks Preservation Commission *still* has not held a public hearing to *even consider* the value of preserving 2 Columbus Circle so clearly demonstrates, architecture professionals and 20-somethings do not hold the keys to the city's halls of power. Apparently not even **Robert A.M. Stern**, author of *New York 1960*, who argues that 2 Columbus Circle is "a landmark in the history of architectural taste." Not even those like **former Landmarks Commissioners Gene A. Norman, Beverly Moss Spatt** and **Anthony M. Tung**, who acknowledge disparate opinions on the building's merits, but believe the LPC has been derelict by not holding a public hearing.

Will the powers that be succeed in obliterating the legacy of mid-century Modernism just as it stands on the cusp of re-evaluation and (heaven help us!) appreciation? The final chapter of this story remains to be written. **Stay tuned...**