matters for their designers is their "use through time." Duffy finds the whole notion of timelessness to be "sterile" because it ignores time as the building's fourth dimension—they exist in time, so they have to evolve to meet its changing demands.[12]

Also working from a "time-layered" perspective, Brand proposes a holistic approach to time-sensitive design.[13] He identifies six components of buildings: site, structure, skin, services, and space plan. While interior designers are focused on the last two, they have good reason to want to influence the rest: they all affect the building's use through time. To exercise this influence effectively, of course, interior designers have to understand the characteristics of these components, and the possibilities of the other elements of the built environment. Interior designers do not have to be engineers, or vice versa, but both need to know enough about the others' business so they can approach the building in a holistic or time-layered way. As Brand says:

Thinking about buildings in this time-laden way is very practical. As a designer you avoid such classic mistakes as solving a five-minute problem with a fifty-year solution. It legitimizes the existence of different design skills, all with their different agendas defined by this time scale.[14]

To be responsive to the user in the building design process, interior designers need to have this broader knowledge of the building and its components. In the end, their ability to sway others in the design and delivery process will rest primarily on issues of use over time—issues that are primarily functional and strategic, and that constantly require new skills.

LOOKING AHEAD

Interior designers face resistance in their quest to be recognized as a separate profession. In 1999, the American Institute of Architects (AIA) put together a task force to review the question of licensing interior designers. As *Architectural Record's* Robert Ivy reported:

They found that interior designers seek to distinguish themselves from less-qualified decorators, protect the right to practice, estab-

lish gender equity in a field dominated by men, and earn the respect of their fellow professionals.[15]

"The designers' viewpoint is consistent," Ivy added, citing his magazine's April 1998 roundtable discussion with interior designers. "Despite their gains in the industry, they feel slighted or disparaged by architects." Yet, he says, "there are unavoidable differences between architects and interior designers":

Architectural education is more rigorously focused on life safety, as well as structure, building science, and codes. By contrast, the AIA task force reported that in the 125 interior design programs currently available, education can vary from two to four years, and current testing for certification focused more on aesthetics than safety. The differences do not stop with pedagogy. Architects tend to engage the entire design problem, considering not only the contents of the interior, but the interior's relation to the exterior envelope, its construction and building systems, and the natural and human-made surroundings. A healthy building—light-filled, safe, and promoting human habitation—should be architects' professional norm. When we are operating at a high level of accomplishment, our work is holistic, integrating complex technical systems and social requirements into structures that engage the landscape, sustain their inhabitants inside and out, and enrich the community.[16]

Should interior designers be licensed? Here is Ivy's answer:

Our own professional status reflects a public trust we have earned at high cost, and it should not be diluted. . . . Practice legislation may not be the panacea that interior designers seek, if it is achieved without commensurate, fundamental changes in [their] education and experience.[17]

However, interior designers can make a strong case that they should be accorded the distinctions and protections that are part of other design professions such as architecture. No less than architects, interior designers are engaged in "the entire design problem." As advocates of the user, and as designers who are "fourth-dimension sensitive," they are often the first ones in the building design process to point out how one or another of the building's components makes it harder for its settings to evolve easily to meet new needs. As designers' interest in indoor air quality demonstrates, they are concerned with quality of life, too—with user performance, not just building performance.