

Issues in Places

Assignment No. 2

Three image maps of your project's significant places and a first attempt to spell out the key issues associated with each of them. See below: Places, Issues and Image Maps.

Places:

Place, like the concept of project, is an especially useful idea for grounding your environmental design interests. As Dave the Janitor, formerly of Lawrence Hall, advised,

“If you would clean up the world, first find a place to sweep.”

Projects take place, and the where of any project is bound up with the who, what and expression of user interests, aspirations and concerns.



Diagram: Scales of Project-Places

Place is a cultural concept and a perceived wholeness in the landscape. A path for example is a place of passage. In experience, there are places within places - and “landscapes within landscapes.” The human geographer, Yi-fu Tuan says that “Place is a center of meaning created by experience.”

Place adds the culture of people - with their attitudes, beliefs, desires, perceptions and experience - to site situations and settings.

In place, the idea of site analysis widens usefully and becomes place evaluation - site knowledge to what ends, we then ask, site analysis to achieve what purposes, goals, needs...?

Every design project is situated somewhere. So, where and in what key scales does your project take place? Stories take place. Why not projects?

Issues:

Issues are matters of concern, desires, needs, or points-of-view that are perceived to be in conflict in places.

In design matters, they are the perceived differences that your place evaluation identifies as needing (or being ripe for) design resolution. If there were no issues to resolve at the various scales in which your

project takes place, you wouldn't have a project.

Try to say what your issues are. I'll discuss this further with examples in class.

Image Maps:

Image maps are map diagrams of the place structure of your project at each significant scale. I'm suggesting you start with three, picking the scale that is central to your work and bracketing it one scale up for important context and one scale down for more detailed resolution. Keep them graphically simple and useful. There's no official way to do this. See Colleen Wolf's beginning attempt to understand her 40 acre site below. Kevin Lynch's system from his book, *Image of the City*, is more strictly diagrammatic and still used by many.

The easiest way to begin is to create overlay diagrams on site maps or air photos. If these are digital, you can quickly generate the several scales of drawings that you need. Knowing the key perceptual parts of your project will help you to begin to evaluate your place. Drawing helps you think.

Putting this all together:

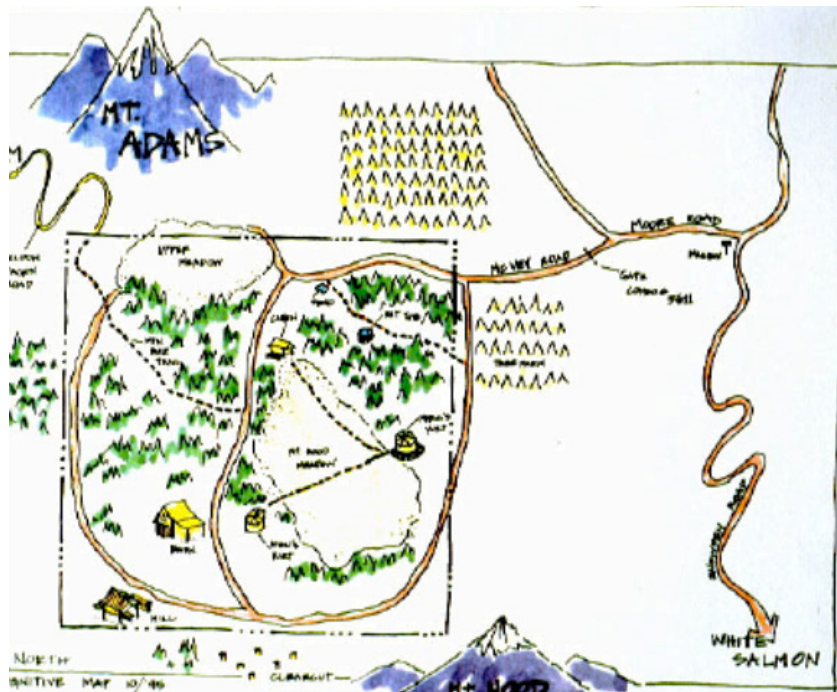


Image maps help you begin to understand places and generate key issues.