

via

All of us have a favorite city, maybe a favorite street or park where we could sit all day with a cup of coffee. Designers and lay people alike are drawn to these spaces, but very rarely do we ask why. This semester we are being asked to design a community that people will be drawn to and cherish living in. So it is worth examining the places we know, both in our culture and out, and turn an analytical eye to what makes these spaces special.

SELECT

In your design team select two stretches of human thoroughfare, a road, street, path or other conduit of human activity and movement. Select one place that is familiar and you have current direct access. Select a second thoroughfare through well-published documentation that is outside your team's cultural familiarity. Published documentation must include two scholarly sources, (books or articles with in-depth information authored by an expert) but also may include information from google earth, websites, antidotal travel blogs, etc... Both thoroughfare selections should be based on what the team values as a strong, compelling human experience. Gertrude Stein once said of Oakland, Ca, there is "no there there". Determine what gives these places their "there there".

ANALYZE

Complete a detailed annotated analysis for each thoroughfare. Use the key below to provide a basis framework to the issues. Teams are encouraged to add analysis issues beyond the issues listed below as necessary.

ANALYSIS KEY

Formal Design – elements and principals of design (see Ching, Form, Space, and Order), rhythm of open to closure

Human Experience – first person sense based experiences (what you see, hear, taste, smell, touch), movement

Human Activities –social and personal events, behaviors, rituals, public to private, etc...

Cultural Implications – relationships to greater social and personal ideas (political, philosophic, religious, or aesthetic)

Regional Conditions – geography, climate, material resources, botanical conditions,

Historic Knowledge – key significant milestones, archeological evidence,

Metrics – population density, size, demographics, (measured, quantifiable, information)

For the thoroughfare you have access to you should rely primarily on direct experience to create an analysis. Go to the site take photographs, make sketches, drawings and maps, record sounds, take notes, etc... Be creative in how you record your experience by capturing a range of information to support your analysis.

For the thoroughfare you do not have access use existing knowledge. Search for drawings, maps, aerial photographs, written descriptions, photographs, videos, and metrics from census data, etc...

You are encouraged to analyze elements in a range of scales.

COMPARE

Compare the two thoroughfares in a manner that provides information on common and contrasting elements. As you discuss the analysis take notes on new and emerging issues related to the creation of thoroughfares.

During the analysis process note how the way you understand each thoroughfare (through experience and knowledge) may bias your overall ideas and thoughts in making design decisions.

PRESENT

Systematically present each thoroughfare with annotated visual information. Visual information should be presented in a range of formats including drawings, diagrams, charts, and photographs as necessary to illustrate and communicate key issues at each thoroughfare. Each piece of visual information should be annotated with detailed notes. Consider color coding or formatting the notes to provide structure to common key analysis themes. Organize information with structure and depth that results in a stand-alone document.

EPIPHANY (CONCLUSION)

Create and provide a conclusion that describes new insights that resulted from the exercise of the analysis and comparison.

FORMAT

Create a final presentation in print and web formatted PDF. The work is due at the beginning of class on Wednesday, January 18. Be prepared to present a brief presentation to the other members of the class.