

READING A COMMERCIAL URBAN PLACE  
A QUALITATIVE INTERPRETATION OF THE STATE STREET AREA,  
ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

by

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A THESIS

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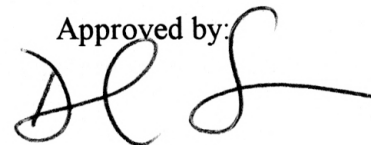
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## ABSTRACT

This thesis is a qualitative, descriptive study of a lively urban setting - the State Street Area, located in the Central Campus of the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. The study explores the sense of place of a commercial setting. State Street Area is examined using phenomenological notions of 'place', which is defined as a spatial and environmental focus for meaningful events of life. Procedurally, the research involves observing, interpreting and describing the environment as a whole.

This phenomenological reading of State Street Area includes the following stages: historical reading, formal reading, behavioral reading and phenomenological interpretation. The historical reading draws mainly from published literature sources and traces Ann Arbor's transformation from a small town to a growing research and industrial city. The formal reading explores the State Street Area in terms of unique qualities of urban environment. The behavioral reading examines, through the author's observations, the place ballet of State Street Area, represented by a typical week in October 1999. This reading describes how the various activities of users come together to create a place.

On the basis of these tangible aspects of place (historical, physical, behavioral), the State Street Area is then considered phenomenologically to reveal its 'sense of place', which is the intangible, less observable qualities of place that are best experienced directly and are difficult to articulate in secondhand fashion. The thesis concludes by considering the design and policy implications of a phenomenological reading of place like the one presented here.



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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The experience of place is a profound and complex phenomenon. It gives meaning to human existence through knowing a place and living in it. According to Norberg-Schulz, place "is a focus where we experience the meaningful events of our existence" (Norberg-Schulz, 1971, p.19). The creation and maintenance of such places is an important means through which they can be experienced. Settlements since time immemorial have possessed a unique sense of place. Recently, due to increased technological advancements and rapid social and economic changes, sensitivity to the environment has often been lost. This loss is significant in urban settings where there is no relationship between human beings and their environment. The urban settings of today are serving the needs of the automobile more than that of people. The city is designed as a formal conceptualization of the numbers of people, cars and other facilities. As Relph rightly points out, "the space of city planning, is not based on experiences of space, but is concerned primarily with function in two-dimensional map space" (Relph, 1976, p.22). There are very few places which have arisen as an unconscious re-creation of the experience of the world. These environments actively sustain considerable public life and activity.

Places that support active social life and interaction influence the everyday life and routine of the people using them, and the people on the other hand contribute by participation and also induce changes in the environment. Thus it becomes an exchange of mutual support. These places become centers of sociability by their ability to attract people and engender interaction among them.

### **Aims and significance of study**

This study is an effort to understand the experience of a lively urban area - a commercial stretch close to the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. The study area includes two blocks on the State Street area next to the main open space of the University's Central Campus - the 'Diag'. The commercial area has a variety of shops and caters to students, faculty and others related to the campus, apart from the people gravitating from nearby residential areas.

The purpose of the study is to develop a suitable method to study the everyday life of urban places through the study of the State Street Area. The research explores various qualitative and phenomenological methods to accurately read the particular urban setting in Ann Arbor and understand its sense of place. Apart from being an effective tool for research and study of places, the practical value of such research would be its application in designing places as intense cores of human experience. The formal, functional and aesthetic approaches to designing in architecture have rather failed to create meaningful places for use. The phenomenological approach, where the thing explored is allowed to explain itself, might be valuable in designing humane environments.

### Development of a method for study

Edward Relph did extensive research on the phenomenon of place. In his book *Place and Placelessness*, he argues that "the essence of place lies in the largely unselfconscious intentionality that defines places as profound centers of human existence" (Relph, 1976, p.43). Places are not just locations, physical environment, or people although these are definitely components of it, but rather a fusion of our immediate experiences of the world. A positive experience of the world, according to Relph, is the amount of 'insideness' you feel in a particular place. "To be 'inside' a place, is to belong to it and to identify with it, and the more profoundly inside you are the stronger is the identity with the place" (ibid., p.49).

Inquiry into experiential realm of places has close links to the study of phenomenology. Phenomenology is not concerned with quantitative results, but involves a qualitative, descriptive approach. It involves empathetic observation and a thorough description of the thing studied with equity. The process involves casting aside of previously held assumptions and presuppositions upon which we base our behavior and experience of life. Seamon explains that phenomenology "strives to categorize and structure its theme of study as little as possible. It seeks to understand and describe the phenomenon as it is in itself before any prejudices or a priori theories have identified, labeled or explained it" (Seamon, 1979, p.17). An important aspect of phenomenology is the holistic view of the phenomenon, revealing the larger context. It "seeks to understand the interrelatedness among the various portions of environmental experience and behavior" (ibid., p.17). In the study of phenomenology, not only are inter-relationships between various portions of environmental experience revealed but also the reciprocation of the parts to whole. To

borrow from Seamon, "Phenomenology is a descriptive science, the heart of which is concern, openness and clear seeing" (Seamon, 1987, p. 4).

An interesting book was published by the University of Nebraska in 1984 by Michael Hill called *Walking, Crossing Streets, and Choosing Pedestrian Routes* (Hill, 1984). It gives insights into behavioral and social studies done on pedestrians on city streets. The author emphasizes the need for qualitative and phenomenological research in observing pedestrian behavior. He points out the shortcomings of laboratory research in applied design work for every day settings. He also remarks that the cognitive mapping approach also fails to make connections to observed behavior of individuals in urban spaces. Although much can be learned from empirical work like mental mapping and information processing, Hill's review succeeds in showing the importance of experiential realms.

Phenomenology does not have a standard concoction for the method of study for all contexts. The method is evolved in relation to the qualities of phenomenon studied. At an urban scale observation is crucial to the study. The phenomenological method of exploration into an urban setting would involve observing, interpreting and describing the environment as a whole. It would reveal the essence or the intangible quality of the place which is referred to by many authors as 'sense of place' or 'genius loci'. Genius loci is concerned with the intangible, less observable qualities of a place, which can only be felt. Lewis stresses that "there is something intangible in certain places - a kind of quality that makes certain places special and worth defending" (Lewis, 1979, p.27). This character of a particular place is called the genius loci. The phenomenological method of reading a place includes aspects of awareness and environmental experience, generally ignored in positivist approaches to the

study of places. Seamon explains that the sense of place can be explored in terms of three underlying phenomenological structures - people, space and environment (Seamon, 1989, p.281).

People, as a phenomenological theme refers to the nature of human environmental experience and behavior. This structure includes the "various ways - bodily, emotionally cognitively, and so forth - in which people experience space, nature, landscape, and the built environment" (Seamon, 1987, p.9). This encountering with the physical environment is multi-sensory in nature, where the experience is partially grounded in the human body. Another level to this encountering is the way in which individual behaviors of the people come together in an environment. Emotional bonds with the place increase people's attachment to the environment. These bonds are the reason why people stay in places that seem unattractive to the outsider. Environmental elements can evoke through emotion in people a sense of beauty, history and personal attachment. Cognitive aspect of human experience can be explained through people's intellectual representations, or cognitive maps of the environment.

Space "refers to the way in which spatial pattern and spatial relations set horizons to the dynamics of place, particularly in regard to sound, sight and physical passage" (Seamon, 1989, p. 284). It is the ability of a particular space to induce interaction among the people, using the space. It is also the capacity of the space to provide different levels of sociability and privacy. At an urban level, the space can generate an atmosphere of casual togetherness and informal interaction. When the space promotes interaction at a regular pace, and is able

to sustain the routine coming together of people and behavior at a place, it is called 'place ballet'.

Environment according to Seamon is the natural and built qualities of the place that support a particular environmental and geographical identity. This reveals the uniqueness of the place, not only in terms of physical identity, but also the experiential qualities of the place. It is apparent from the above discussion that these themes are subjective in nature and amalgamate in the everyday life experience of a person.

Any place thus possesses various layers of content and meanings. Therefore to read such a place one should take a holistic approach of inquiring into the three structures. The research on the State Street Area includes the following stages: historical reading, physical (cognitive) reading, behavioral reading, and phenomenological interpretation of the place.

The historical reading traces the growth of Ann Arbor from its humble beginnings to a growing research and industrial center. It mainly draws from published literature. The physical reading of State Street area is not merely intellectual but also includes an instinctive description of the researcher's encounter with the physical environment. The State Street Area is considered a part of the whole urban network of Ann Arbor, and its relationship to the downtown area, neighboring districts and the whole town would be first understood. In turn, the behavioral reading reflects how the routine behaviors of the people come together in a physical environment. The method of behavior mapping is not to prove anything empirically, but to understand how the environment and people together foster a 'sense of place'.

There is a possibility of slipping into a methodological error, especially with reference to phenomenology in this process. The original phenomenological essence of place-as a psycho-social-environmental whole larger than the sum of its parts could be lost in trying to dissect the place and read its several components individually (Seamon, 1987, p.20). Therefore, the physical and behavioral reading would not be considered as independent from one another, but rather a continuum. Observations would be done intuitively, acknowledging the possible overlaps in this continuum. Phenomenological concepts of place like insiderness, at-homeness and dwelling are largely experiential and intuitive. Therefore phenomenological interpretation draws from the experience of the place as a whole, including the physical and the behavioral reading.

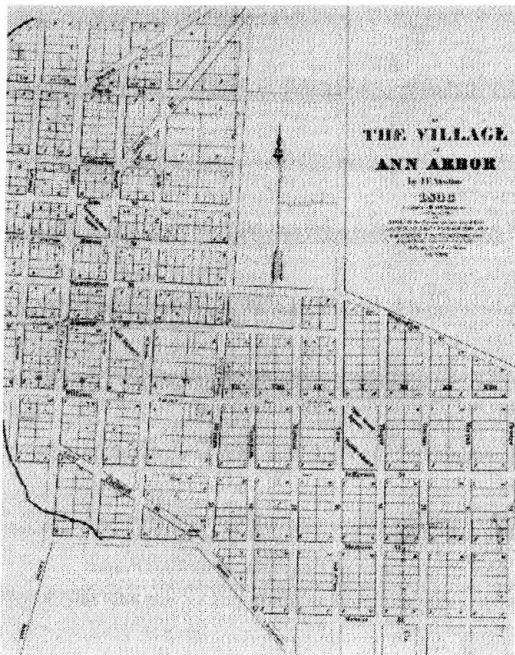


Fig. 1.1. Map of Ann Arbor, 1836, By J.F. Stratton  
Source: Marwil, Jonathan (1987) *History of Ann Arbor*. Michigan University Press, p.12.

### Background on Ann Arbor and State Street

The city of Ann Arbor is located along the banks of Huron River, forty miles west of Detroit, Michigan. The first available record of Ann Arbor is a plan registered in Detroit in the month of May 1824. The University of Michigan, established in 1837, had a strong influence in the shaping of the city, not only in its economy but also in the



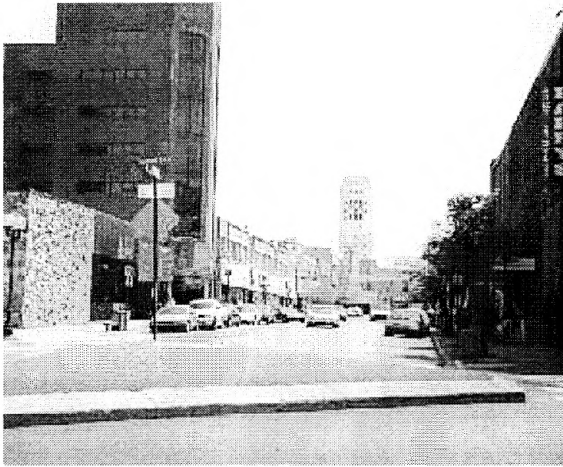


Fig. 1.2. Intersection between East Liberty and Maynard Streets, State Theater seen at the far end.  
Source: Photograph by Author.

growth of the society as a whole. The city has been through many phases of development but has still retained its individuality with a strong urban identity. Ann Arbor, considered by its citizens to be the 'city of knowledge and homes', is a growing industrial center with increasing emphasis on technological research.

### **Architecture and downtown**

Ann Arbor is a cluster of visually distinct districts possessing a strong urban quality. It has a central commercial core surrounded by neighborhoods each identified by its unique character of buildings. There are a number of residential neighborhoods, each possessing a high degree of visual consistency. This visual consistency results from a pattern of gradual growth outward from the center of town. The downtown in contrast to the surrounding neighborhoods is characterized by a diverse architecture, which is a result of years of evolution. There has been a continual renewal of the built environment through replacement and remodeling of old buildings, producing a varied mix of building styles.

### **The context**

The site chosen for the purpose of study is a commercial stretch on State Street, two blocks adjunct to the Diag - the open landscaped square in the University of Michigan

campus at Ann Arbor. The State Street on the north leads to residential areas, while on the south, houses the University buildings and further leads down to more recent developments of the city. The site has a significant historical background related to the downtown of the city and the University. This area includes many significant commercial buildings catering to the student, faculty and others from the University as well as people living in the residential areas close by. It was not until the turn of this century, after the completion of the Ann Arbor Street Railway line, that the State Street area began to develop as a separate commercial district from downtown. The two blocks chosen for the purpose of study possess the characteristic diversity of a commercial area supporting a student community, including quality clothing shops, eating areas, book stores, gift shops, records, offices and a theater. It is constantly occupied throughout the day by a variety of people - students, local residents, professors, people passing through, entertainers, beggars, repair work men and the like. The State Street area, with its remarkable physical setting and rich facades, combined with the diversity of activities and people, is an ideal setting to study the everyday life of an urban setting.



Fig. 1.3. State Street Area, Nickels Arcade seen on the left in the foreground  
Source: Photographed by Author

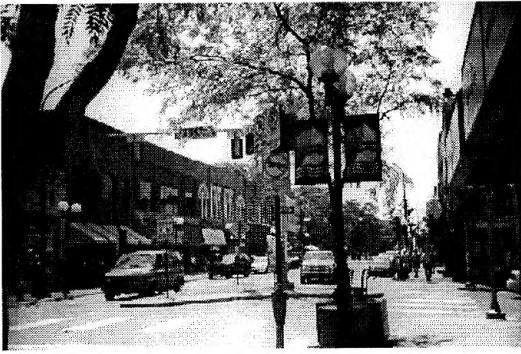


Fig. 1.4. Intersection between State and East Liberty Streets.  
Source: Photographed by Author

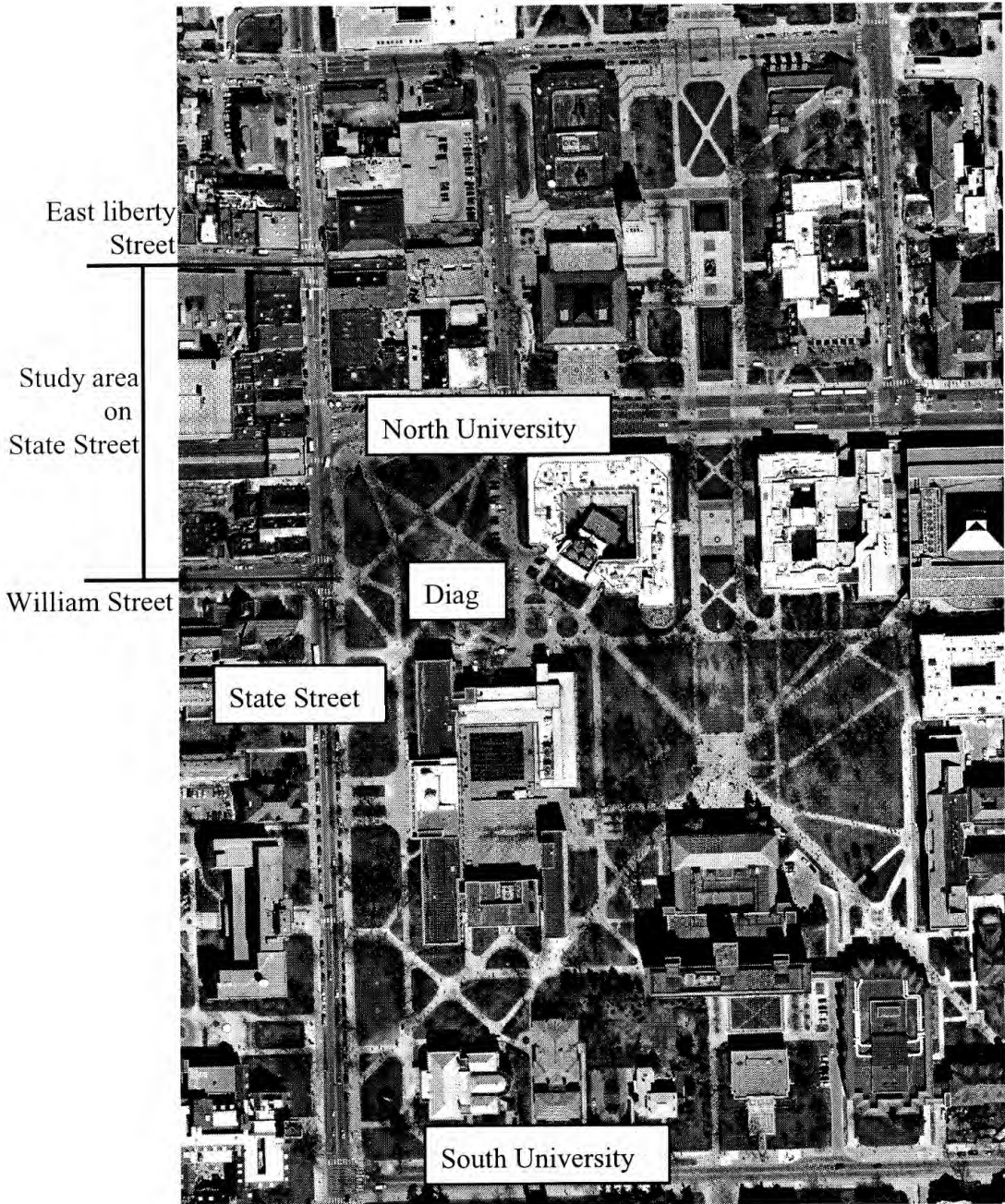


Fig. 1.5. View of the Study Area on State Street and the Central Campus of the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.  
Source: City Planning Department

## CHAPTER 2

### PLACE - A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The urban form of a town is a direct reflection of its history. To study a place in its totality, it is necessary to understand the various phases in the growth of the city of which it is a part. This chapter describes the historical development of Ann Arbor from the time of its founding. The reading was mainly derived from published sources available at the City Library of Ann Arbor. The historical study enhances the understanding of the influences that have shaped the present town form.

#### **The early years and growth**

In 1824, two land promoters, John Allen from Virginia, and Elisha Rumsey from Connecticut founded, named and registered the town tract of Ann Arbor with the U.S. Land Office in Detroit. They named the 640 acre site in honor of the common names of their wives, both Ann. The land was ceded to the United States in 1807, before Allen and Rumsey founded the town of Ann Arbor. They considered Ann Arbor to be the promised land. John Allen proudly described Ann Arbor a year after its founding as follows: "Our water is of the purest limestone, the face of the country moderately uneven, our river the most beautiful I have beheld, and abounding with the most valuable fish, climate is as pleasant as its possible

to be" (Marwil, 1987, p.3). The city became the county seat of Washtenaw County in 1827. The initial population of Ann Arbor in 1825 was 25, and by 1830 it had increased to 300 people (Central Area Plan, 1992, p. 9). The most important turning point in the history of the city was the relocation of the University of Michigan from Detroit to Ann Arbor. The Ann Arbor Land Company offered 40 acres of land to the trustees of the University of Michigan, in 1834. Before the actual relocation, Marwil remarks that the city in the mid 1830's was still a "collection of log and frame buildings interspersed with a few built of brick and crisscrossed by mud streets" (Marwil, 1987, p.15). By 1837, the University was located in Ann Arbor. The first railroad was completed by 1839 along the Huron River, and Ann Arbor was on its way to become one of the most favored towns in Michigan. In 1840, the population of Ann Arbor reached 3,507 people.



Fig. 2.1. View of Ann Arbor in 1880

Source: Marwil, Jonathan. (1987). *History of Ann Arbor*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press



The settlers in Ann Arbor were mainly from New England, Germany or Ireland (Central Area Plan, 1992, p.7). The Germans began arriving here towards 1829 and they occupied the town's west side. By 1880, nearly half the population was of German origin. The first settlement when the town was founded included the land between Allen Creek on the west to Division Street on the east, and from Jefferson Street on the south to an extension of Felch Street on the north. This was centered around Main Street. It was called the 'upper village'. In the 1830's the town developed to the north and west. Industries grew along the railroad and the river. The central business district slowly developed along Main Street and around the county courthouse square at Main and Huron Street. The downtown architecture was transformed from wood frame structures to masonry buildings during the pre-Civil War building boom. The University became a major influence in the neighborhoods of the city. The first University buildings were built in 1841, and the Diag area alone comprised the campus, including the professors' homes, student dormitories and classrooms (Reade, Wineberg, 1992, p. XVI). The students initially boarded in the dormitories, but by the 1850's and 60's these places became inadequate and students began to board with the people of the town. Until 1886, when home delivery was finally instituted, mail had to be picked at the post office on Main Street. Therefore, people wanted to stay closer to downtown.

Between 1843 and 1890, distinguished residences of diverse architectural styles were erected around the Division Street Area. Business people built prominent houses on Main Street, Fourth and Fifth Avenues south of William Street. In 1870's, women gained admission into the University and there was a further increase in the demand for living



Fig. 2.2. View of Old Main Street  
 Source: Reade and Wineberg, (1992). *Historic Buildings, Ann Arbor, Michigan*. Ann Arbor

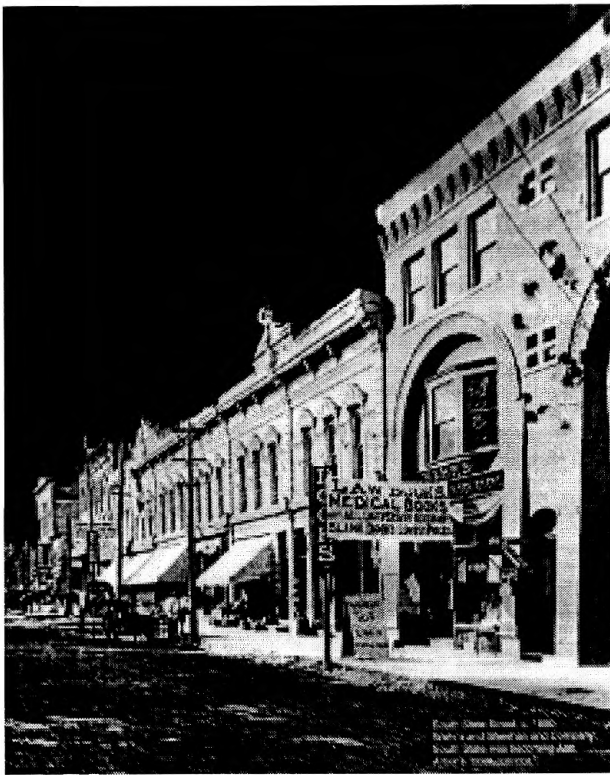


Fig. 2.3. A book lovers town, State Street, c. 1890.  
 Source: Cocks, Fraser. (1974). *Pictorial history of Ann Arbor, 1824 - 1974*. Ann Arbor: Bentley Historical Library. P.171.

places. The facilities in the city increased with the introduction of a fire department in 1850, a water company in 1855, a system of sewers in 1889 and the telephone and telegraph in 1890. After 1890 development shifted eastward, "stimulated by expanding University enrollment, home mail delivery, and the new Ann Arbor Street Railway which ran from Main Street up William, around the campus and out to Burns Park" (Reade and Wineberg, 1992, p. XVI). A picture of State Street area with its many bookstores, photographed around 1890 is shown in Fig.2.3.

By 1910, the population of the city had grown to 17,000. The University also encouraged the growth of businesses in the city. During the building boom of 1910 -

20, residential uses on the State Street area were converted to commercial buildings. The Nickels Arcade was built in 1915, and the State Street became a prestigious shopping area. Commercial buildings slowly replaced the residential uses between State Street and Main Street. In 1910, President Angell of the University of Michigan developed the building program of the University and this also aided the growth of the town. The population of the city increased by 12,000 people in the next two decades. The rich slowly moved out of the downtown, and the central area became tenant housing. The West Side, the new North Side and Northwest areas became densely settled. Reade and Wineberg point out in their study that Ann Arbor's architecture stands as a contrast to other Michigan towns: "Compared with the frankly ostentatious showplaces of the well to do in Michigan lumbering towns and industrial centers, Ann Arbor's architecture was marked by restraint - possibly as a result of academic influence" (Reade, Wineberg, 1992, p. XVI). Fig. 2.4 shows the Historic Architecture Survey of the Downtown, done by the Ann Arbor Historic District Commission in 1973.

Growth slowed considerably during the thirties, but after the end of World War II, the population grew rapidly. The University of Michigan expanded its North Campus. In the 1960's and 1970's the growth of the city did not reflect in the Downtown areas. The neighborhoods in the central area did not develop and the areas adjacent to the University grew but not at the same rate as the whole City. A nationwide building boom occurred in mid 1980's and Ann Arbor was swept in a flurry of new construction extending well out into the suburbs..



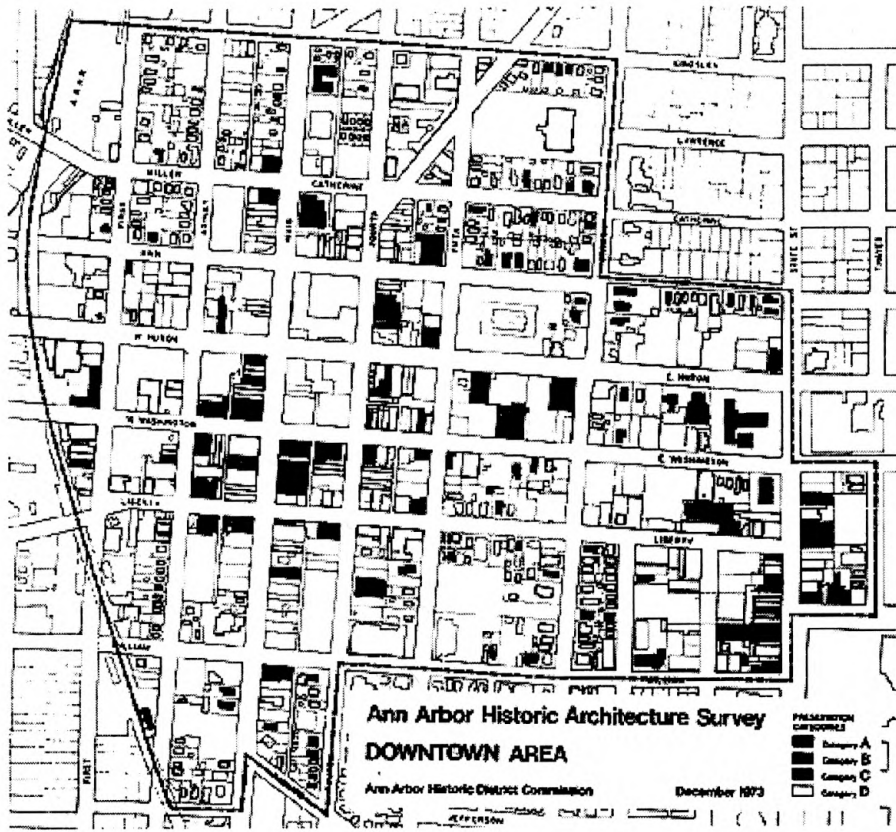


Fig. 2.4. Ann Arbor Historic Architecture Survey  
 Source: City Planning Department. (1975). *Downtown Ann Arbor, Development and Conservation Strategy*. Ann Arbor: City planning commission.

In spite of the rapid growth of the city, "Ann Arbor has a legacy of shaded avenues and handsome dwellings from earlier years. Because of the presence of the University, the city has a highly educated citizenry with above - average incomes and a high proportion of professionals" (General Development plan, Ann Arbor, 1973, p. 3).

### **The North, East and West Side of Ann Arbor**

Historically the development of the Urban form of Ann Arbor occurred in phases. These individual developments which branched out from the downtown possess unique

identities and are better described separately. The growth of North, East and West side of Ann Arbor is described in the following paragraphs.

In the urban city of Ann Arbor, remnants of village life can still be found on the North Side. In 1832, Anson Brown, a businessman established a commercial center on Broadway near the river, hoping for it to grow into a bigger settlement than the initial one on Main Street. After Brown, the commercial development stagnated, but residences continued to be built. These buildings did not face the development pressures of the downtown buildings. Most of these buildings still stand and range in size from tiny Greek Revival houses to impressive residences (Reade, Wineberg, 1992, p. XVII).

Until the extension of the street railway to the Fair Grounds in 1890's, the area south and east of campus was comprised of residences, orchards and farms. Wealthier individuals then moved out of the downtown to residences in this area and the "Washtenaw Avenue became a fashionable area of elegant homes with spacious gardens" (Reade, Wineberg, 1992, p. XVII). These large houses were later bought and remodelled or replaced by fraternities and sororities.

The West side neighborhood (Fig.2.5) was the center of a German settlement that began in 1830 and grew rapidly. When people harbored deep differences about academic and labor-oriented occupations, the West Side was considered the area of the craftsmen and tradesmen. The city society was referred to as 'town and gown' to denote the breadwinners

and the academic people of the University. The West side developed between 1890 and 1915 and the newer areas were added after World War I. The Old West side has a unique streetscape with a special visual rhythm. The Old West Side Association was formed in 1967 to oppose the planned development of mixed medium and high-density housing proposed for an entire block of First Street between Madison and Jefferson. The regular newsletter of the Association began to be published. This initiated an analysis of the neighborhood structures, which formed the basis of an



Fig. 2.5. View of Murray Street - West side  
Source: *Old West Side, Ann Arbor, Michigan.* (1971). Ann Arbor: Old west side association.



Fig. 2.6. A unique photograph of State Street Area, c. 1927.  
Source: Marwil, Jonathan. (1987). *History of Ann Arbor.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. P.117.

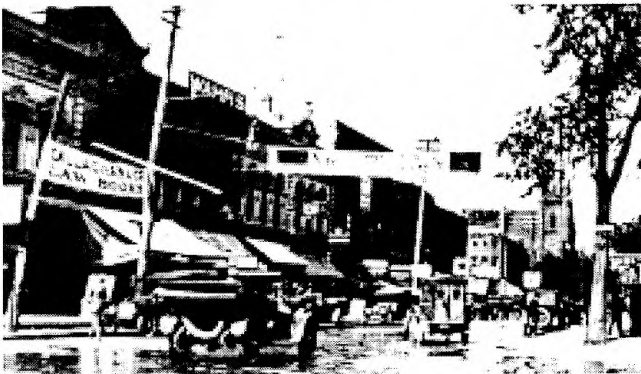


Fig. 2.7. Photograph of cars on State Street.  
Source: Marwil, Jonathan. (1987). *History of Ann Arbor, Michigan.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. p.109.

environmental survey published as *Old West Side, Ann Arbor, Michigan* in 1971. The survey successfully included the Old West Side in the National Register of Historic Places, which became the first neighborhood of architecturally modest houses to be entered in the register for its total environmental qualities (Reade, Wineberg, 1992, P. XVIII).

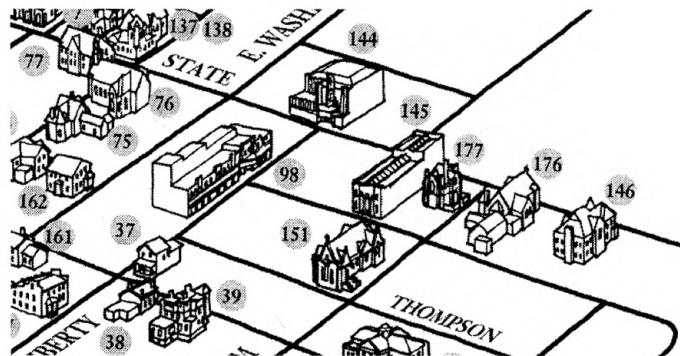


Fig. 2.8. Buildings on State Street.  
 Key:- State Theater - 144, Nickels Arcade - 145, First  
 Congregation Church - 176, Kelsey Museum - 146.  
 Source: Reade and Wineberg. (1992). *Historic Buildings, Ann  
 Arbor, Michigan*

### **Significant buildings on the State Street Area**

There are a number of historically significant buildings in and around the State Street Commercial Area. The Ann Arbor Historical foundation and Historic District Commission published a survey of buildings in 1992 written by Marjorie Reade and Susan Wineberg. This book is a remarkable reference for the study of historic buildings in Ann Arbor. The stretch of State Street between Liberty and South University has an interesting mix of commercial and institutional buildings including State theater, Nickels Arcade, Newberry Hall, Michigan Union, and Art Museum . The State Street Area chosen for the purpose of study (See Fig.2.8), and the surrounding area, several of the most significant historic

buildings in Ann Arbor. A few of these historically significant buildings are described in the following section.

### **State Theater**

The State Theater with its flashy Art Deco exterior has been a landmark since its opening in 1942. In the late 1970's the interior of the State Theater was divided into four smaller units, but by 1989 the theaters were closed. Later, the first floor was remodeled into retail space and the theaters were opened again on the second floor. The neon sign, restored with its original brilliant yellow and red colors and re-activated neon is a prominent symbol visible for blocks both in the Liberty and State Streets.



Fig. 2.9. Exterior view of State Theater.  
Source: Photograph by Author

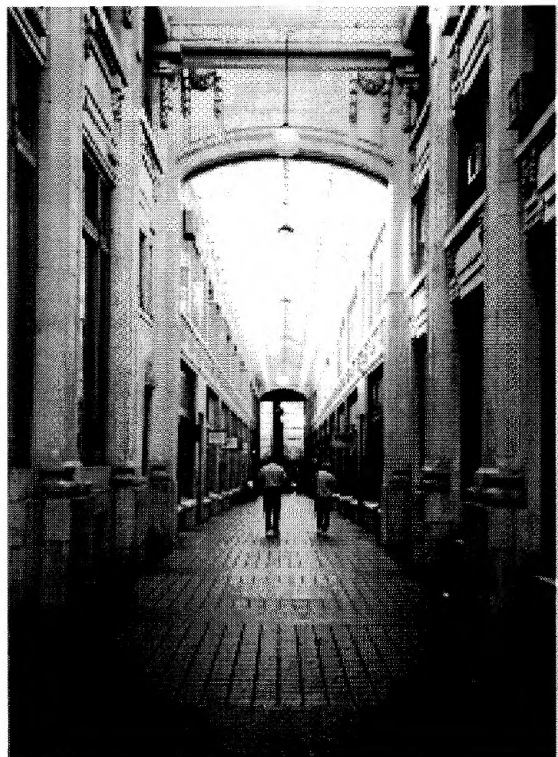


Fig. 2.10. Nickels Arcade  
Source: Photograph by Author.

### **Nickels Arcade**

Hermann Pipp, an Ann Arbor architect designed the Arcade and it was built around 1916. Lined with shops and

roofed by a glass skylight, the Arcade stretches between State Street and Maynard. The State Street façade is Beaux Arts Classic in design and faced with terra cotta. (Reade, Wineberg, 1992, p.145). The façade on Maynard is similar in design to State Street, but is faced with yellow brick with terra cotta trim. It is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and is one of most charming and impressive buildings in Ann Arbor.

### **Newberry Hall**

This building was built for the Students' Christian Association in 1888. The materiality of the building is rich with fieldstone, trimmed with Ohio blue stone and Forest City brown stone. It is Romanesque in design with heavy stone work, round arches and decorative detail. The University acquired the building in 1937 and the archeological collections are now housed in the name of Francis W. Kelsey Museum of Archeology in this building.

### **Conclusion**

Ann Arbor has evolved into a complex city from humble beginnings. But it still retains its college town atmosphere and attractiveness. The 'town' and 'gown' grew together in harmony and the University has been a constant contributor to the City of Ann Arbor. The present downtown bears imprints of all the growth phases of the town. The place shows a rich heritage and the built environment is interspersed with buildings of historic architectural value. The significances of the environment abound and the place is meaningful to the people and holds a certain amount of historic charm.

## CHAPTER 3

### **PLACE - THE PHYSICAL STRUCTURE**

The physical reality of place is one of its most powerful and convincing components. The spatial experience of built form plays a significant role in the 'place experience'. The phenomenological reading of place, supposes that the physical reality, although indispensable, is not the place as a whole. But, nevertheless, a formal reading is essential to understand a place. The aim of the physical reading of the State Street Area is to understand how the physical environment fosters a 'sense of place' among the users. Extensive analysis of the architectural style and features is avoided. The common user of area is not fully aware of the particular architectural excellence of style, except for the landmark buildings. But, it is apparent that the physical environment enhances the overall experience of the place. The day-to-day aspect of the physical setting as it presents itself to the user would be more helpful in understanding its significance to the users.

It is important that the study of the everyday aspect of physical setting, does not degenerate into a mere analysis of practical convenience - for example, number of parking lots, ease of traffic flow. Phenomenological reading does not ignore aesthetic, architectural excellence and orderly efficiency of the environment, but recognizes that the 'place' includes something more than these factors.



## **Literature on physical reading of place**

The crux of the study is to relate physical place reading to phenomenological methods. Francis Violich did one of the best urban place readings that relate to phenomenology on the village of Sutivan situated in the Dalmatian coast of Yugoslavia. He used the method of intuitive experience to read the town. Violich observes that the increased perceptual awareness and intuitive responses to the environment, gave a deepened feeling for 'sense of place' (Violich, 1983, p. 46). He is concerned with planning 'small urban places' and regards them as offering valuable clues to the future of urban planning. He defines a 'small urban place' to be accessible on foot in terms of distances; and fostering a high degree of interaction in terms of people. The small urban form provides opportunity for intimacy and diversity of community life, through human relationships and democratic participation in the shaping of environmental quality. It should also possess access to other places, at a regional level. The essence of the argument is not the 'smallness' of the area in size, but rather avoiding the metropolitan vastness. Therefore he concludes that direct personal experience with small, humanly scaled, diverse places can increase sensitivity to the environment.

Violich's method involved continued concentration on the town, even during times not devoted to 'reading'. Spontaneous responses and observations were noted. He made personal mental maps of the place during the first few days of research, and then thoroughly explored the individual parts of the overall structure. Patterns of human use were studied along with informal conversations with the locals. He regards photography and drawing to be valuable for recording information, but their use should be restricted to the end of the



fieldwork to record the most relevant subjects. The most interesting part of this study is the obvious overlap of physical and social observations of the place. The physical setting is described to create 'an image of A Theatre with Five Stages' (Violich, 1983, p. 50). The 'urban reading' of Sutivan, according to Violich, gave him a practical meaning to identity and sense of place, that could culminate in specific urban design guidelines unique to that particular place.

One remarkable reference for the study of physical settings is *Responsive Environments* (Bentley, et al., 1985). The authors of this book are concerned with the way built environment provides its users with a democratic setting that enhances their opportunities by maximizing the choice available to them. They call such environments “responsive” and to create such settings they suggest seven design qualities that designers should bear in mind while conceiving built forms. These qualities are permeability, variety, legibility, robustness, visual appropriateness, richness and personalization. Although, these qualities are put forth to aid the designing process, they are very useful for the physical reading of a place. The authors refer to the book as a practical guide to designing. Yet these qualities are good indicators of how the physical environment becomes a 'place'.

Permeability refers to the level of accessibility in an environment. The authors insist on a number of alternative routes to get from one point to another. Physical and visual permeability is required to enhance responsiveness of an environment. Places need to offer choice of experiences. The second quality - variety - addresses this issue. Bentley and his

co-authors assert that the variety of uses in an environment promotes variety as a whole. The need for old buildings and controlled redevelopment would promote variety. The site should have some activities, that are 'primary uses' which attract people, and these uses in turn support secondary uses.

Legibility, the third quality, is dependent on how easily people can understand the physical layout. The authors insist that the understanding of the environment should not pertain to just an aesthetic level of physical form, but also include the legibility of activity patterns. The modern city confuses the user by visually overwhelming them. There is monotony of appearances irrespective of the uses occupying the building. A layout is successfully legible if the people can form 'clear, accurate images of it' (Bentley et al., 1985, p.43). The authors refer to Kevin Lynch's imageability studies, where he grouped key features of the physical environment into paths, nodes, districts, edges and landmarks (Lynch, 1960). 'Paths' are channels of movement like streets, highways, railways and so on. 'Nodes' act as focal places. They could be prominent junctions of streets or the market place at a larger scale. 'Landmarks' are point references experienced from the outside in contrast to the nodes where they act as activity cores. 'Edges' are linear elements devoid of path characteristic. They could be unused roads, walls, rivers, and the like. The 'district' is defined as a part of city which has an identifiable unifying character. These elements distinguish the city and impart a certain image in the mind of the user.

'Robustness' is the quality of a responsive environment which allows for many different uses in the same place. Specialized spaces for activities are hardly used the way

they are meant to be in practical everyday settings. Buildings should also support long-term robustness, allowing different uses to occupy the building one after the other. In outdoor spaces the authors are interested in the treatment of edges and the handling of vehicular and pedestrian activity. 'Visual appropriateness' as a quality takes the appearance of the building in detail. The authors contend that people interpret places as having meanings through its appearance. A setting is visually appropriate when the people are aware of the choices offered by the environment. The sensory experience of the environment is explained through the quality - richness. 'Richness' concerns with both, visual and non - visual details. Many environments are not evolved through public participation. In such cases, where the environment is created by a designer care should be taken to offer maximum possibilities for the user to personalize the environment. This design quality is mentioned as personalization in *Responsive Environments*. These seven qualities are used directly or indirectly in the study of State Street Area. They are related to themes which extend into realms beyond the mere physical. Therefore, they are referred throughout the study.

### **Method for physical place reading**

The direct, involved experience of the researcher can be used to study the effect of the physical setting on the environment. The physical structure of the State Street Area is described as experienced. Firstly, the larger urban network of the downtown and the city is depicted, and then a detailed account of the experience of the physical setting is given. Mental maps of the area generated after the first few days of encountering the environment are very useful. These maps reveal the depth of involvement of the researcher in the

environment and the underlying taken-for-granted use patterns of the place better than official town planning maps. The researcher's personal experience would be relied upon, rather than published sources at this stage.

The next step in encountering the physical environment was to make a detailed study of the area, generating a base map through the use of drawing tools. This observation included information that the formal maps of the City planning department did not include like vending machines, street lamp posts, parking signs, mail boxes and even fire hydrants. Every feature irrespective of its architectural significance or aesthetics was noted. This map is presented in Fig. 3.1. Fig. 3.2 shows the elevation study sketch made by the researcher during site work. The behavioral observation supplemented information about the physical environment and the way the people used it. It helped recognize certain features ignored in the general study of the physical environment - ledges, shop windowsills and vending machines accommodating uses other than the conventional uses that they were designed for. These were the steps followed for a focussed study of the physical environment. But an intuitive, experiential reading was done through the entire period of the study. The observations with regard to physical study compiled in this chapter do not precede the behavioral study. It is a collation of all intuitions on the physical environment inferred during the entire duration of place reading. The conventional cognitive sources of information are also included in this chapter for a detailed understanding of the setting.

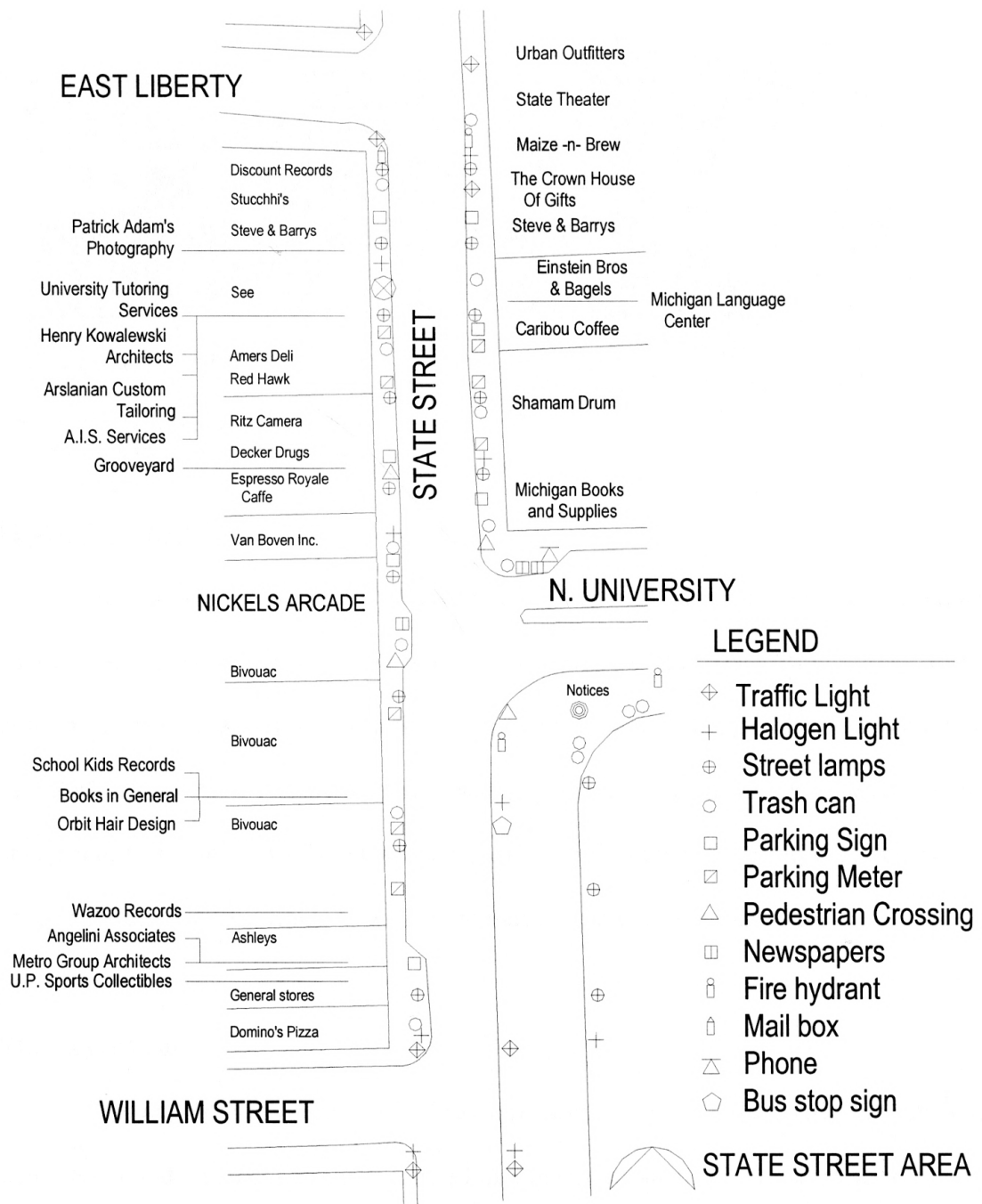


Fig. 3.1. Physical Study of the State Street  
 Source: Made by the Author, using the City Planning Department maps and on-site observation

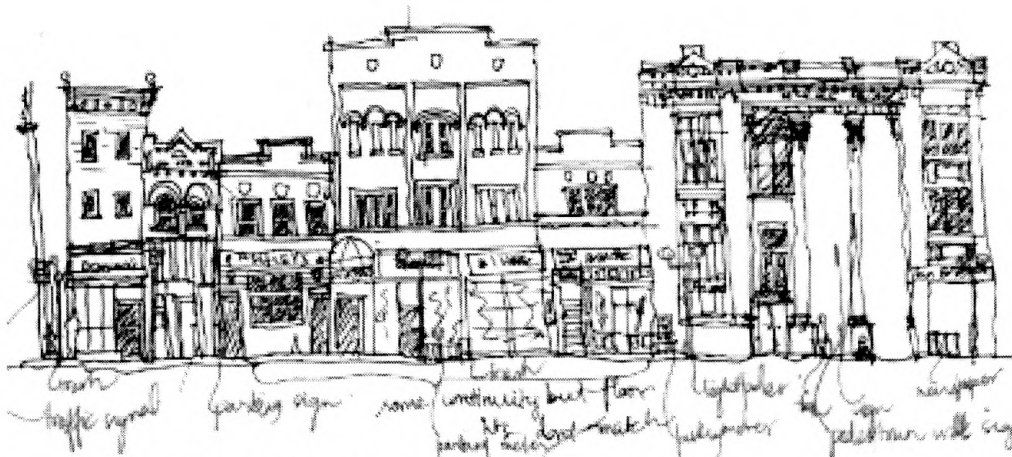


Fig. 3.2. Elevation Study of State Street  
 Source: Drawn on site by the author

### **Physical reading**

The physical reading of the State Street Area, begins with the description of the larger structure of the whole city moving into the microcosm of the State Street Area. For a thorough picture, it is necessary that the environment is studied along with its surroundings. The State Street Area is described as a stage set for the numerous activities of people engaged in their everyday life. This reading also describes the various physical qualities of the State Street that contribute to a 'sense of place' experienced by the users.

### **The larger context**

The geography of Ann Arbor is characterized by rolling topography interspersed with many lakes and streams since it is located in a glaciated area. The most striking natural features within the city limits are the Huron River and numerous hills and creeks. The city is composed of an older central section and relatively new additions. The older central section is made up of the University of Michigan Central campus, the downtown area, the

old industrial corridor and older residential areas (General Development plan, 1973, p.3). Newer residential areas, shopping centers, North Campus of the University of Michigan and other development activities radiated from this nucleus.

As one proceeds towards the downtown from the suburban development, the gradual increase in the density and compactness of the built environment is clearly evident. The commercial buildings and residences possess an aura of history, growth and change. The transformations through the course of time are obvious and each period has its stylistic imprint in the built environment. When the city was first settled, a strong Greek revival architecture existed and this was followed by Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, Italianate, Victorian Eclectic, Queen Anne, Richardsonian Romanesque, Shingle style, Beaux arts classic and Art Deco as a 'Modernistic' style during the postwar period (Reade and Wineberg, 1992, p.VI). Examples of all these building styles still exist in the urban network creating a physically and visually rich environment.

The downtown shows diverse development in the built environment. The Main Street (Fig. 3.3), Liberty Street (Fig. 3.4) and State Street areas are pedestrian scaled, the area between Main and State Street are intermediate scaled, and Huron Street is an automobile corridor. Since, these different scales exist in close proximity there are tremendous possibilities for all quarters to grow and stimulate others to grow. The most appreciable feature in Ann Arbor is the complete avoiding of 'museumization' of buildings in the name of historic preservation. There are museums, which exhibit collections and original pieces





Fig.3.3. Main Street -The Core of Downtown  
Source: Photograph by Author



Fig. 3.4. East Liberty Street - The spine between State and Main Streets  
Source: Photograph by Author

of art, but the buildings are not exhibited as museum pieces. Different uses have occupied the buildings and they are appreciated for the charm they add to everyday life. The buildings are preserved by being continuously occupied, used and cared for. Love for outdoors is prevalent among the people of Ann Arbor. On weekdays and weekends alike, good weather attracts a lot of people into the open spaces of the downtown, especially Main, Liberty, State Streets and the Diag.

### Shopping at Ann Arbor

The central shopping district forms a 'H' which includes the Main Street, Liberty Street and State Street. Other nearby shopping are South University Avenue and Kerrytown



market area. The Main Street has a distinct flavor with its Italianate buildings - the architectural style prevalent in the latter half of the nineteenth century (Ann Arbor Observer, City Guide, 1998, p. 167). During the first half of the 20th century department stores and specialty shops replaced previous farm supply stores. The city guide claims that by the 1950's, downtown Ann Arbor was filled with clothing stores, groceries, furriers and other specialty retailers. In the 1960's and 70's more shopping centers were opened on the edge of town and most of the retailers moved out of downtown. The most remarkable feature of downtown Ann Arbor is not degeneration due to relocation of stores, but rather growth and change with newer uses and offbeat shops replacing old conventional stores. The environment replenishes itself. Book stores, gift shops, dressmakers, a wide variety of eating places and other amusements give a wholesome experience to the user.

The Kerrytown Historic Market District is located a few blocks north of Main Street area. The Ann Arbor Farmers' market is open on Saturdays year round, and on Wednesdays from May to December. On Sundays from May to December, the Ann Arbor Artisans market occupies area. The Kerrytown Shopping center includes a medley of retail stores - from fish market to florists. The State Street Area caters to the student throngs with record shops, bookstores, gift shops and a good number of coffee shops. The South University Area (Fig. 3.5), relatively new, also caters to the student population apart from the State Street Area. Shoppers find textbooks, computer supplies, CDs, gifts, craft work, candies, food, flowers, fine wines, jewelry and even body piercing places in the South University shopping area.

The residential neighborhoods are interspersed with the commercial uses. As of 1992, commercial uses in the downtown occupied only 6.8 % of the land (Central Area Plan, 1992, p. 13). Single, two family and multi family residential buildings occupied 35.1 % and 10% of the total land use in the Central area respectively. Institutional uses occupied 29 % of the land use in the downtown area. The influence of the University is clearly evident. While Main Street is frequented by the office-goers, students increase in number in the State Street Area. The presence of the University has ensured the life of the town for years.



Fig. 3.5. South University Street  
Source: Photograph by Author

### **The Microcosm - State Street Area**

The State Street Area is a part of the Central Campus, and can be described along with the Diag as an experiential whole. The commercial area of State Street also includes shops on the North University and East Liberty Streets. The State Street Area, being the subject of study, is depicted through perceptual and experiential readings of the physical

setting. The perceptual reading relies on the cognitive image of the area experienced by the researcher during encounter with the physical environment. The physical setting is then described based on its experiential quality in terms of a stage set.

### Perceptual reading - A cognitive image of State Street

A perceptual reading identifies the prominent elements of the cityscape in the microcosm of the State Street area. The mental map of the area generated by the researcher is given in Fig. 3.6. The most striking features of the urban form surface in the mental map. In the initial mental map drawn by the researcher, the features marked were names of streets, the church by the corner of William and State Street, Nickels Arcade, the Diag, State and Michigan Theaters and the Michigan Book Store. Nickels arcade and State Theater are landmarks by the way of their appearances. The intersection between State Street and North University forms a node, a center stage for things to happen and to see it happen. The block

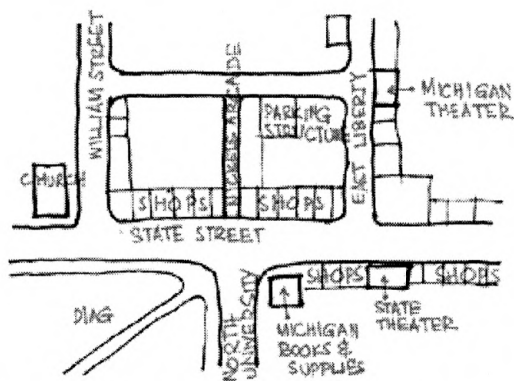


Fig. 3.6. Mental Map after initial encounter with the Setting.  
Source: Drawn by Author

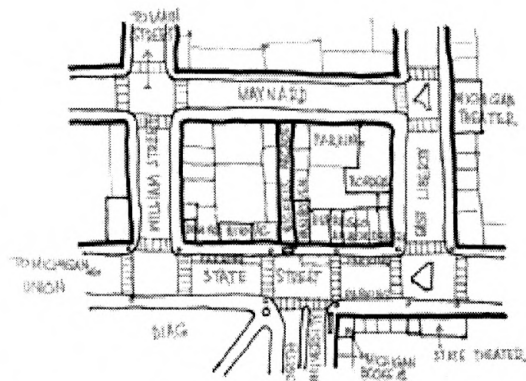


Fig. 3.7. Mental Map drawn after a few days of exposure to the place  
Source: Drawn by Author

layout governs the division of buildings into unified groups. The Diag becomes an entity in its own right. The elements of urban form used by Kevin Lynch are apparent in this map. Paths are especially indispensable while preparing a mental map and are among the first features that register with the user. Edges are abstracted and in such small confines as the State Street Area not identified. The landmarks are the prominent identifications in the mental maps. Nodes are identified if they are cores or places.

There is one important factor to be considered while reading this mental map - it is generated by an empathetic outsider. Empathetic, according to Relph, involves a state of "emotional as well as behavioral participation, while retaining an awareness of not being a full member of the culture" (Relph, 1976, p.50). The insideness felt by the researcher with the place manifests as a "willingness to be open to significances of a place to feel it, to know and respect its symbols" (ibid., p.54).

Yet, this map is only a cognitive representation because the place appears to the stranger to possess some identity, although yet difficult to grasp. As shown in Fig. 3.7, the process of making a mental map was repeated after a few days of site work and was found to incorporate more particular environmental including names of some shops and physical features like the location of vending machines, pedestrian crossing and so on. The degree of familiarity of the environment greatly affects the mental map. The insider's mental map will show his level of association and the particular significances he has with the environment. The researcher's preliminary mental map was very useful in determining the most impressive physical features of the setting as experienced by a stranger.

The commercial area is not confined to the two blocks on State Street chosen for the purpose of study. It extends one more block on State, North University and East Liberty Streets. As indicated in Fig. 3.7, the second mental map showed with great detail this whole area. When compared to the whole downtown, this area possesses a distinct character. The uses in the buildings, variety, architecture and some kind of intangible though unified quality - all fuse together to give State Street Area its characteristic identity.

#### An experiential reading - The stage set of State Street Area

Francis Violich in his study on the village of Sutivan called the place 'a stage with five phases' (Violich, 1983, p.51). This approach is remarkable in bringing out the experiential quality of the physical setting. This would be very appropriate for the study of State Street Area because of the movement-oriented experience. The scene changes sequentially from one to another as a person moves through the area. Although the State Street leads to other residential and commercial areas of the town on the North and South, the section next to Diag has its own flavor.

There is a certain urbanity about the University of Michigan campus - it sits cheek by jowl with the town. I love the northwest end of the Diag at State and North University. It's my favorite space on campus - two richly detailed street facades embracing a lawn with big trees. There's a comfortable relationship between the hard urban edge and the green outdoor room, between town and gown.

- Doug Kelbaugh (Hunt, May 1999, p. 36)

The State Street Area is a distinct stage set with different phases, and one can feel its presence while proceeding towards this part of the downtown. The Diag forms a stage on its own. The central intersection of the State Street, North University, Diag and Nickels Arcade is the core of this stage set. It is the confluence of all acts of this stage and its conspicuous location enhances its prominence. The streets that branch out and the East Liberty Section of the State Street area are secondary stages. The backdrops are varied for all the scenes and a tempo of change from one focus of the activity to the next.

### The Diag

The Diag (Fig. 3.8, Fig. 3.9) is a landscaped green area suitable for relaxed activities. It has a major diagonal artery for movement and a number of other pathways that crisscross the entire landscaped area. The lawn and the thick spread of trees above are a striking contrast to the hard urban landscape of the town. The filtering sunlight between the leaves in spring, summer and fall creates an ideal setting for a relaxed lunch, short nap, an hour of silent reading, a game of Frisbee with children on a weekend, or just do nothing at all. Although a heavy pedestrian flow cuts diagonally across the Diag, people can seclude themselves further into the lawns. There are no seating spaces provided and this forces the people to use the lawn. The central location of Diag as an urban open space makes it convenient for strollers and walkers to take a break. The captions and the notice boards on the pathways adding to the presence of a good number of students at all times of the day infuse a student atmosphere into the setting.



## The Intersection

In many ways, the intersection between State Street, North University and Diag acts as a focal point of the drama of State Street Area. The location of this intersection in the State Street Area is an instantly recognizable stage set. This part of the study area was also the place where at least a few people were present throughout the day for brief periods of time. Physically, the centrality of the location seemed to heighten the stage effect. The high Nickels arcade anchors the place and imparts significance visually and spatially. The vista is unobstructed and clear in all directions. The people who liked to watch and be watched preferred this location. As it is situated right on the pedestrian flow,



Fig. 3.8. Central Diag  
Source: Photograph by Author



Fig. 3.9. The landscape backdrop - Diag in Fall  
Source: Photograph by Author



Fig. 3.10. State Street North of Liberty - A secondary stage  
Source: Photograph by Author

probability for interaction is high. The traffic is frequently interrupted to allow pedestrians to cross the Street. The reduced speeds add to the drama. Subsidiary features like vending machines and public telephones are concentrated in this area. The street vendors frequent this place for good sales - being at the center of all activity.

### The Streets

The streets are like moving scenes - a motion picture. In the static physical environment, the continuous flow of life, movement of people imparts the feeling of transience to the setting. The nature of the street is path-oriented, and it is best experienced in movement. The State Street Area is pedestrian-scaled to a friendly degree, the sidewalks are neither too wide nor narrow. The backdrop of two storied masonry structures lend a comfortable pedestrian environment, where ground floor shop window displays offer a rich experience to the user. Located right on the sidewalk they enhance the perceptual richness of the setting. The people occupy the sidewalks to converse, smoke, exchange news, greet, meet and so on. Life on the streets is maintained constantly.

The stage sets follow one after the other and are experienced as a continuum on an everyday basis. The backdrops change back and forth depending on the intentionalities of the user. They are explained in terms of different sets not to segregate them, but to understand their individual character and at the same time, the quality of the whole drama of State Street.



## Qualities of the physical setting of State Street Area

Through the intuitive reading of State Street a few qualities of the physical setting were identified. These qualities actively contribute towards making the State Street Area a 'place'. The characteristics discussed in this section are diversity, formal uniqueness, pedestrianized environment, perceptual richness and environmental handiness.

### **Diversity**

The most striking character retained by the city of Ann Arbor is the diversity of uses - especially in the downtown area. Diversity was the key to the liveliness of many traditional environments. Many authors have referred to this factor, one way or the other. Jane Jacobs in her forerunning study on urban environments notes that diversity is natural to big cities (Jacobs, 1961, p.143). The existing land use map of the downtown and adjacent areas is given in Fig. 3.11. This map indicates the diversity of the environment with reference to its primary and secondary uses. The University of Michigan acts as a primary use, assuring secondary diversity in the area. The authors of *Responsive Environments* (Bentley, et al., 1985) assert that variety of uses in an environment promotes variety as a whole. Different levels of variety are unlocked by the variety of uses according to the authors. These levels of variety are: places with varied building types of varied forms; attracting varied people, at varied times for varied reasons; and varied personal interpretations of the place taking on varied meanings due to the rich perceptual mix (ibid., p.27).

Jane Jacobs also considers the variety of the whole environment to be an important notion. She remarks "wherever we find a city district with an exuberant variety and plenty in its commerce, we are apt to find that it contains a good many other kinds of diversity also, including variety of cultural opportunities, variety of scenes, and a great variety in its population and other users" (Jacobs, 1961, p.148).

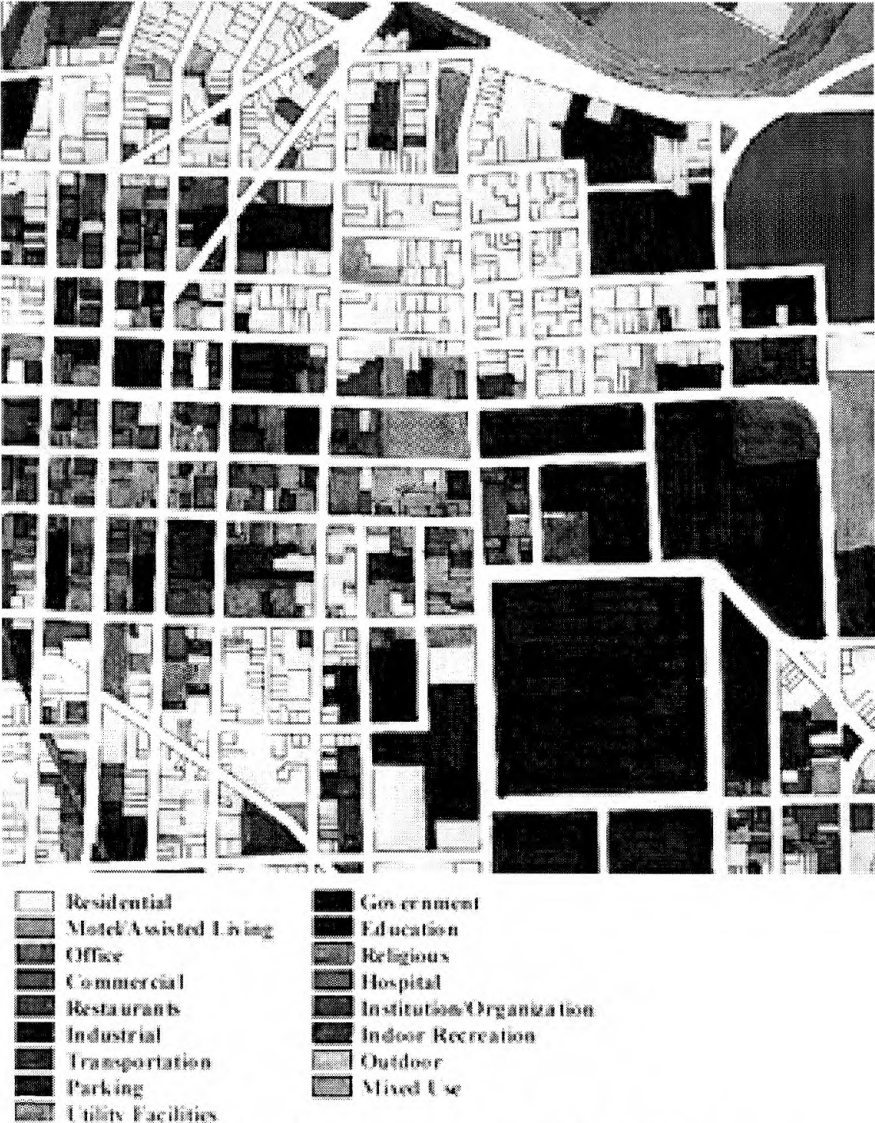


Fig. 3.11. Land Use Map of Downtown Area, Ann Arbor, 1999.  
 Source: Map generated by the Author using digital information from the City Planning Department, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

During informal interviews with shopkeepers more than half of them pointed out to the variety of shops and people to be the factor they liked the most about State Street Area. It is an area, where anything from pharmacy to stationery is close at hand. Although most users are students, a good number office-goers, elderly, shoppers, shop keepers, vendors and beggars also use this area. The University imparts a rich mix of international people in the locality. Given its huge resources, it is easier for a city of the size of Ann Arbor to support specialized enterprises and new ideas. The small manufacturers, retailers and new businesses should be located right where the market exists to attract customers and this is obvious in Ann Arbor. Thus the environment is inherently diverse, supporting a melange of activities.

### **Formal uniqueness**

The physical environment is unique in the whole of the downtown of Ann Arbor. There is a high degree of environmental clarity and this is strengthened by the presence of buildings over decades. Jane Jacobs insists on the presence of old buildings in an environment. These buildings, according to her, reduce the rent and other expenses. They also add significance to the environment for care and adaptive reuse. She notes that, "Changes are forever occurring where city districts have vitality and are responsive to human needs" (Jacobs, 1961, p.194).

The Ann Arbor Historic Architecture Survey of the Downtown by the Ann Arbor Historic District Commission prepared in 1973 is given in Fig. 3.12. This survey identified the buildings in terms of their historic significance.

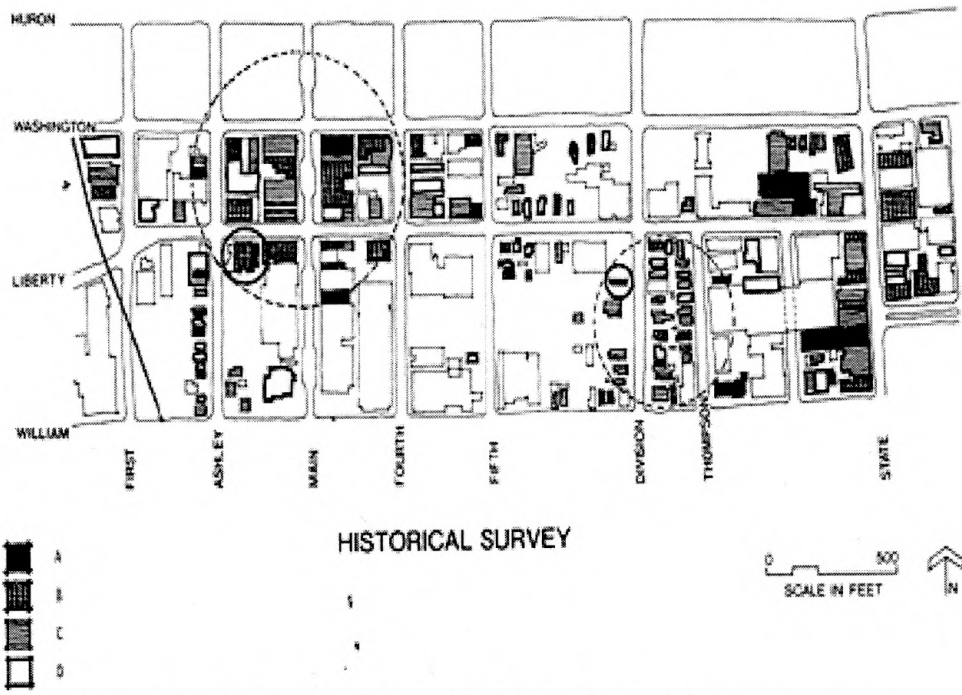


Fig. 3.12. Historical Survey of the State and East Liberty commercial areas  
 Source: Study done by U of M students, (1977). Liberty Street. Ann Arbor: Ann Arbor Tomorrow

Key

- A. Buildings of outstanding architectural value
- B. Buildings of highest local significance
- C. Somewhat common-place but noteworthy buildings
- D. Buildings lacking architectural significance

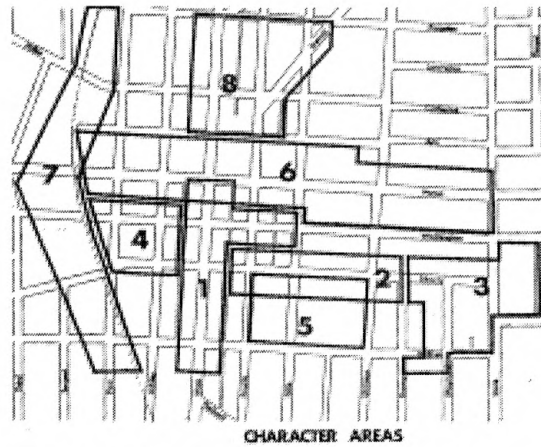


Fig. 3.13. Character Areas in Downtown Ann Arbor  
 Source: City Planning Department. (1975).  
 Downtown Ann Arbor, Development & Conservation Strategy. Ann Arbor: City Planning Commission.

In Ann Arbor, there is an apparent difference in appearances between the old and new constructions. This avoids visual monotony in the environment. Legibility of the environment is very high. The simple grid-iron layout combined with unique buildings and formal features make the environment easy to comprehend.

At a larger scale, the Downtown, the Campus, the West side and lower south residential areas form individual districts. In the downtown, the City planning department identified eight character areas during study (Fig. 3.13). An overview of this study would be helpful in understanding the variety and the easily identifiable nature of downtown Ann Arbor. This division of character areas was done to facilitate the formulation of different standards for each area depending on historic structures, land uses, scale, street-scapes and other characteristics (City Planning Department, 1975, p. 11). The character areas are as follows:

1. Main Street: The original downtown attracts shoppers and employees to various retail and businesses establishments. The buildings are densely packed and occupied by office spaces and shops. (Refer to Fig. 3.3)

2. Liberty Street: The Liberty Street houses a mixture of residential, commercial and mixed land uses. The stretch between Ashley and Main Street is the Liberty Street Historic District. There are a few two, three and four-storied buildings between Main and Division on Liberty street, which have been in continuous use since late nineteenth century. The stretch between Division and State is relatively new and includes a few multistory structures. (Refer to Fig.3.4)

3. State Street: The retail area next to the University Campus, which is described in detail in this study. (Refer to Fig. 3.10)
4. West Side Commercial Area: This area has a number of unique entertainment spots, shops, and renovated historic structures. There are many possibilities for further development.
5. Library Block: The library block includes a core of civic facilities - "the library, Kempf House, YM - YMCA and the future Federal building" (City Planning Department, 1975, p.11).
6. Huron Street: This is the major vehicular entry into the downtown, and the scale of the buildings is larger than the rest of the downtown. The area is also suitable for new large scale development.
7. West Edge: The west edge is the undeveloped area between West Side Commercial and Residential areas. This parcel if developed "could link the Old West Side with the downtown" (ibid., p. 12).
8. North Central Area (Farmer's Market, Post Office, North Main): This area contains a unique balance of residential and commercial uses.

The character areas (Fig. 3.13) are identified by their cohesive qualities - mainly physical. But they are not homogenous. A distinctive variety in the unified character is apparent. The study rightly points out the environmental uniqueness of the downtown area.

In the State Street Area apart from the architecturally prominent landmarks, there are other places which possess special significance to the people of the town, through which the environment becomes unique. Stores like Michigan Books, Supplies, Van Boven Inc. and buildings like Michigan Union, Newberry Hall (now, Kelsey Museum) - have been present for decades and are symbolically significant to the people. Apart from places that kindle memories, shops that are used by the people on an everyday basis also acquire importance. The eateries fall in this category. Stores like Van Boven, are specialized destination shops selling unique merchandise and they gain import. The places assume significance depending on the people and their intentions. The key is to provide at least something for everybody to create special associations - and this links back to diversity. Thus, it is apparent that the quality of the environment could be greatly influenced through design.

### **Pedestrianized environment**

According to *Responsive Environments* (Bentley, et al., 1985), current design trends that work against permeable public spaces are increasing scale of development, use of hierarchical layouts and pedestrian vehicle segregation. In contrast, shorter blocks they say increase the choice of routes available to the user (ibid., p.12). In normal conditions, on average, it takes less than two and half minutes to walk a block in the State Street Area. The end of the block is almost always visible. A perceivable target psychologically seems nearer. Jane Jacobs insists the need for small blocks as one of the four conditions generating diversity in a city (Jacobs,1961). The proximity of uses also makes places easily accessible.



One major consideration in an urban space is the proximity of parking facilities. Few temporary parking spaces are available on State Street and the closest parking structure is located on the next block on Maynard Street. Another parking facility is located on the intersection between Thayer and Washington streets. This structure allows public parking only in the evenings while during the day it is reserved for the University. But shopkeepers indicated during interviews that more parking spaces were needed closer to the area. The availability of parking spaces, they felt, greatly influenced their sales.

In State Street, the friendly scale of buildings, safety from vehicles (pedestrian crossing), presence of other pedestrians on the street, parking facilities and variety of stores enhance the walking experience, pedestrianizing the environment to a great deal.



Fig. 3.14. View of the East facade of State Street - Perceptual Richness.  
Source: Photograph by Author

### **Perceptual richness**

Richness of the environment comprises more than just visual complexity. The authors of *Responsive Environments* insist that design should target 'all senses' - the sense of motion, the sense of smell, the sense of hearing, and the sense of touch (Bentley, et al., 1985, p.89). The richness of kinetic experience is pivotal in street settings and this has a close and indispensable relationship to the speed of movement and scale of the environment. Jan Gehl's work on outdoor spaces



deals with both these factors (Gehl, 1987). He remarks that for intimate and personal spaces experience should be at a close range; and in addition to which, "there must be a reasonable amount of time in which to see and process visual impressions" (ibid., p.71). The two and three storied structures in the State Street Area support pedestrian scale and the speed of the traffic is also considerably reduced due to the presence of comparatively large number of pedestrians. According to Gehl, "It is important that all meaningful social activities, intense experiences, conversations, and caresses take place when people are standing, sitting, lying down or walking" (ibid., p.74).

After the movement speeds are reduced and the environment is scaled suitably to perceive the richness, other sense experiences should be considered. The State Street Area with years of growth and care possesses a beautiful richness in terms of building facade and physical features. Buildings on State Street come under preservation guidelines and therefore complete destruction of this area to build homogenized structures is not possible. The texture of the brick facades of the shop buildings, terra-cotta finish of Nickels Arcade, the sidewalks, the materiality of the ornate lamp posts, impart strong senses of touch. The touch of the eye enhances the tactile experience. The aural and olfactory environment is complex - a large number of people on the streets combined with the natural setting of Diag and numerous eating-places on State Street. The physical environment of State Street is complex and offers richness to the perceptual experience.



Fig. 3.16. Water Fountain Detail, and campus map of University of Michigan  
Source: Photograph by Author



Fig. 3.17. The vending machines - intersection between State and North University.  
Source: Photograph by Author.

### **Environmental handiness**

The State Street Area is successful as a lively environment because it includes a number of physical features that initiate user - environment interaction. One obvious drawback in this public space is the absence of seating spaces. The Diag lawns and the eating joints are places most often used for seating. When favorable weather conditions persist, the coffee shops spill their seating out onto the sidewalk. The vending machines, mail boxes, public telephones, niches, shop windows, and the like act handy and thereby induce human - environment exchange. Bentley and his co-authors insist on the necessity for allowing personalization in environments. They point out that users personalize environments for practical needs or to change the image of the place (Bentley, et al., 1985, p.99). In environments that have grown over time like the State Street area, personalization has also developed. The interiors of several buildings have changed depending on the owners' choices and necessities. For example, Dominos, a pizza place - and Espresso, a coffee shop - possess different ambience although both are eating-places. Dominos

possesses a more 'clean and clear' interior that recommends a 'grab and go' concept. On the other hand, Espresso offers a warm and cozy interior, which invites people to stay for a longer time if they prefer to do so. The shop window, on its own, gives succinct insight into the nature or behavior ethics of the environment inside.

The ability of the people to use the sidewalks in activities other than walking denotes personalization in a small way. For example - the vendor, the window shoppers, the people who eat lunch - personalize the environment for their use. Ownership induces personalization, and therefore conventionally, extensive traces of personalization cannot be found in a public environment. But in State Street, the actual handiness of the environment in a public place becomes personalization to a considerable degree.

## **Conclusion**

The physical reading of the State Street Area reflects the day-to-day manifestation of the environment devoid of detailed architectural explanation of the style and individual features of the building. The intention was to convey the experience and flavor of the setting contributed by the physical features. References to architectural features were made mainly to add information about the setting and describe it accurately. The description and observation were supplemented with the available historic and planning documentation. The intuitive reading confirms that the physical environment is a strong component of the place experience, although not all of it. It is apparent that certain remarkable qualities of the physical setting significantly contribute towards 'the sense of place'.

## CHAPTER 4

### **PLACE - A BEHAVIORAL READING**

One of the most important qualities of a lively urban place is its social nature. Although public, it offers a wide range of possibilities for people to socialize at various desired levels of privacy. It is often assumed that the physical setting or the built environment induces behavioral responses in the user. But, it is not the physical setting alone that initiates responses in the user, but the place as a whole, which comprises behavior as one of its inseparable entities. Relph considers Camus' division of identity of places into "physical setting, behavior and meaning" to be fundamental (Relph, 1976, p.47). Physical setting, behavior, activities and people are all components of a place. Nevertheless, there are some places that are more sociable than the rest, and some that fail miserably. The major aim of the behavioral reading of the State Street area is to understand how different activities of the people come together in an environment. This reading would reveal the essence of place ballet generated by the users and their activities.

#### **Literature on Behavioral Reading**

A very useful reference with regard to social science methods used in environment-behavior research is Zeisel's *Inquiry by design* (Zeisel, 1981). According to

him, observing behavior is empathetic and direct, deals with dynamic phenomena, and allows the observer to be variably intrusive (Zeisel, 1981, p.116). The author summarizes six factors in environmental observation that an observer must pay attention to - i.e., who: actor; doing what: act; with whom: significant others; in what relationship (aural, visual, tactile, olfactory, symbolic); in what context (socio-cultural context); and where (physical setting).

Behavioral studies in the past have used the process of behavior mapping to observe user activities on site. William Whyte published two books, *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces* (Whyte, 1980), and *City: Rediscovering the Center* (Whyte, 1988) based on the findings of the research on urban spaces called the 'Street Life Project'. The first came out as a pre-book, which included the study of just parks and plazas using largely filming and photographic techniques. The second book was more comprehensive including Whyte's research on streets, plazas, parks, other open spaces, downtowns and mini-downtowns. In his second work he extended his methods to behavior mapping and descriptive notation, which reveal the relationship of the behavior to space, other people involved, time and context, corresponding to the factors summarized by Zeisel. Apart from factors like food, trash, sun, wind, seating and design of spaces he also deals with the dynamic component of the street - the people. Direct observation was the core of his work, with occasional interviewing, experiments and extensive use of photographic techniques. Whyte asserts the primacy of street, calling it "the river of life of the city, the place where we come together, the pathway to the center" (Whyte, 1988, p.7). He established through his study that it is necessary to take immediate steps towards retaining the liveliness of streets. Whyte's work

is a convincing proof that behavior mapping is a successful method to arrive at physical factors that promote sociability in an urban setting.

A European parallel to Whyte's work, is Jan Gehl's remarkable study on out-door activities, published in a book called *Life Between Buildings* (Gehl, 1987). This research focuses on the range of human activities in cities, especially on ordinary days and the multitude of outdoor spaces. According to the author, the book is about "everyday activities and their specific demands on the man-made environment" (ibid., p.19). Gehl stresses that the interaction between social activities in public spaces and social process should be viewed on several levels, taking into account the prerequisites that exist in individual areas and the varied interests and needs of different kinds of residents within the areas. The correspondence between social and physical structures in an environment induces various degrees of privacy, security, establishment of territories and a sense of belonging to the place. His studies arise out of observation of behavior in pedestrian settings similar to that of Whyte. Although his study concentrates more on the findings rather than the process of research, his conclusions give an idea of what to look for during observation of urban settings.

Marie-Jose Dozio, Pierre Feddersen, and Kaj Noschis did an interesting study on the neighborhood of Sacca Fisola - a small, isolated island in Venice using behavioral reading (Dozio, et al. 1983). The study, 'Everyday life on an Insignificant Public Square: Venice', reveals how the working class inhabitants' daily activities endow a sense of place to an ordinary campo in Venice. In this observation, the authors pay attention to the generalization of the daily activity patterns in relationship with time period and activity pockets (specific

places that attract people), recorded by behavioral mappings and notations (Dozio et al., 1983, p.66). They use Christopher Alexander's pattern language (Alexander, 1977) to illustrate how body movements are related to the physical environment, and describe how different areas of the campo are used by different groups of people during different times of the day. Finally, they assert that the architectural development of the campo should not interrupt but, instead, encourage these taken-for-granted activity patterns of the users. Dozio and the other authors give a description of the sequence activities on the campo on a working day in April. This description leads to the study of activity pockets on site and how these pockets contribute to the sense of socio-spatial continuity. All of the above studies use behavior mapping to study the user activities on a particular place. This method is inferred to be the most suitable for research pursued on State Street area.

### **Observation Method**

A base map (Fig. 4.1) of the State Street area under study was first prepared for observation purposes. This base map included the names of the commercial establishments along the street and the outline of the buildings and sidewalks. Different notation patterns were developed for different activities - for example, group behavior, individual behavior, static behavior and movement. One of the important factors in this observation was to take note of the different types of users on the site. The intent of behavior mapping and observation was not to prove the numbers of people involved in certain activity, but rather to infer, firstly what activities come together in the environment; and secondly, what aspects of the physical environment enhance the possibilities of bringing these activities together.

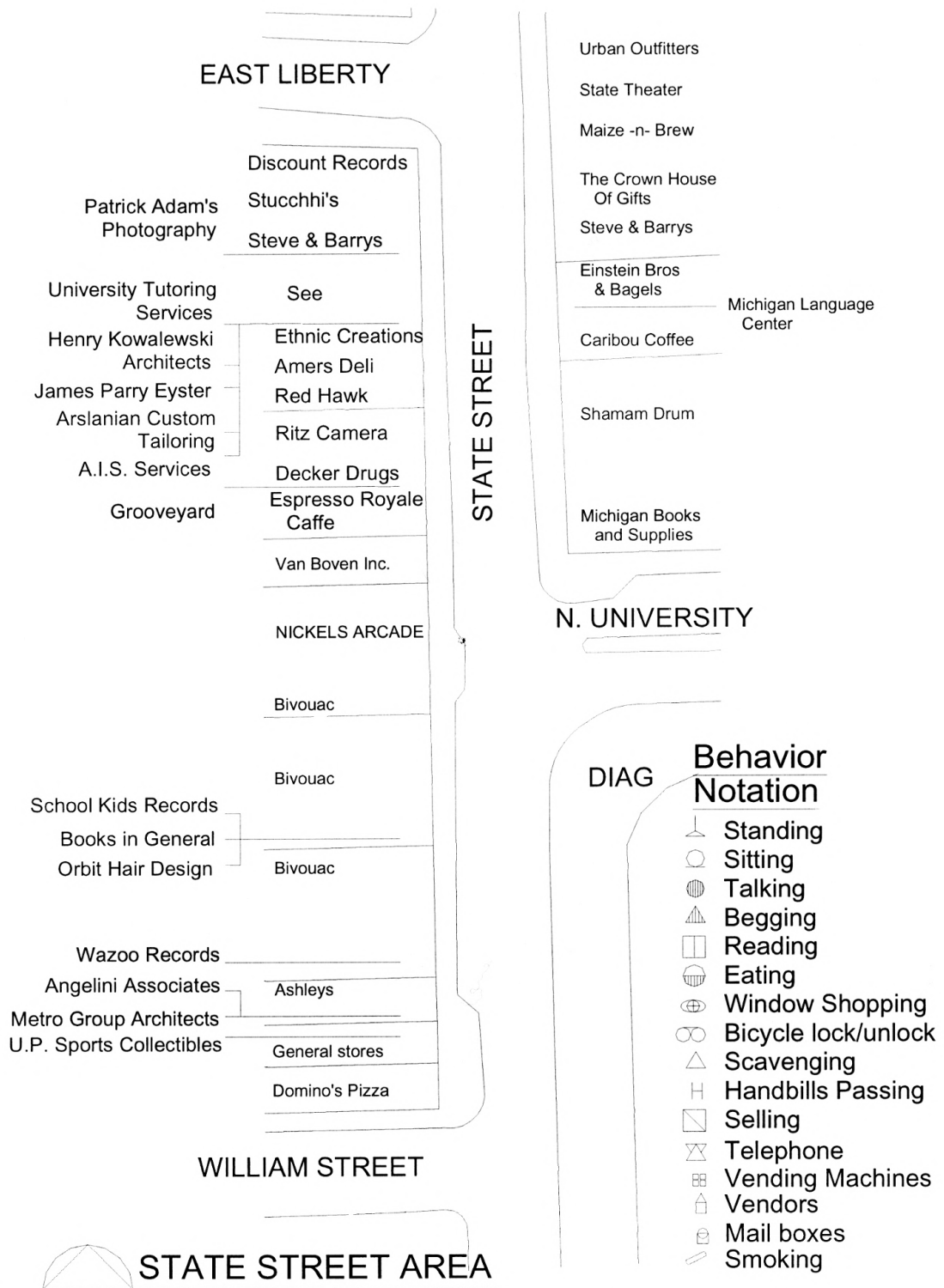


Fig. 4.1. Base map for observation of activities - behavior mapping and notation  
 Source: Made by the Author using the City Planning Department maps and initial observations on site.



The observations were conducted in a typical week in the month of October. Behavior mapping was done at various times of the day - morning, noon and evening, with special reference to the differences observed between weekdays and weekend. The observation was done in three sections. The first few days were spent in observing the setting and the activities to acquire a general understanding of the place. During this phase, initial velocity studies were made to ascertain the major flow of pedestrians, and the major points through which people pour into the site. These observations were done in 10-minute intervals from each of the major points determined on site. The actual observation was done in two phases, to deal with the large number of people on site. These two phases of observation were carried out simultaneously. The first phase of actual observation dealt with the people in movement and the second phase dealt with people at rest, entering the shops or engaged in any activity on site other than merely passing through it. Each of these observations was done in 15-minute intervals from each section of the site.

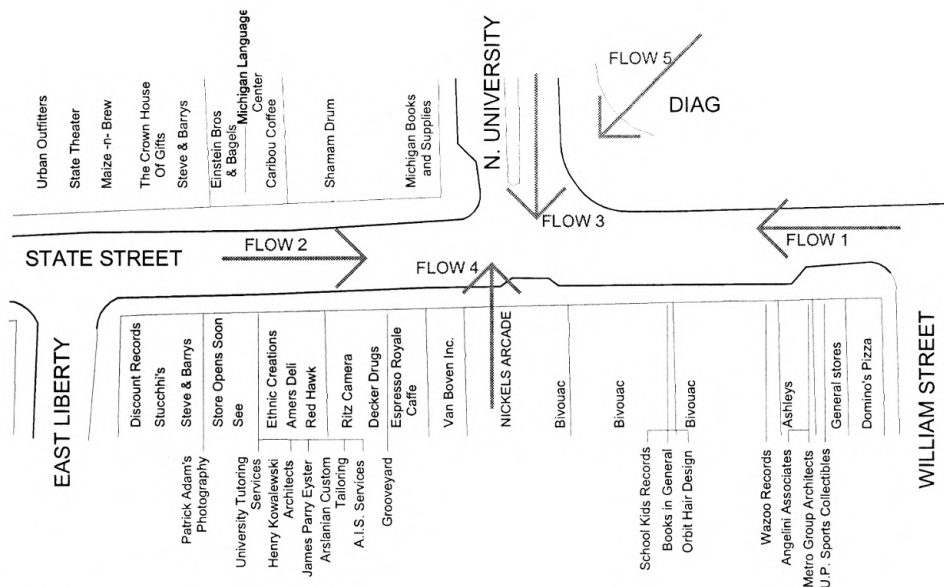


Fig. 4.2. Movement flows within the site.  
Source: Made by Author, using the City Planning Department maps, and on-site observations



The researcher spent time studying the site during various days in summer trying to understand the basic ways in which the State Street Area worked and to get an idea of the place. The actual observations were done between October 9 and 19. During this period, the first few days were spent in collecting the basic information from the shops, drawing and photographing the place, and spontaneously deriving the most suitable method for observation based on the conditions on site.

The observations recorded here were done from Wednesday, October 13 to Monday, October 18. Wednesday, Thursday and Monday were considered typical weekdays and Sunday a typical weekend, with Friday being a transition. The weather conditions on these days varied between mild and good. There were showers on Wednesday after-noon. The temperature conditions on these four days are given in the following table (Table. 4.1).

Table.4.1. Temperature Conditions in Ann Arbor during the five days of observation, October,1999 (Source: Ann Arbor Observer)

<b>DAY</b>	<b>HIGH</b>	<b>LOW</b>
Wednesday, October 13	67 F	43 F
Thursday, October 14	55 F	36 F
Friday, October 15	60 F	42 F
Sunday, October 17	57 F	45 F
Monday, October 18	54 F	36 F

### **Initial Observations - October 13**

The determination of the five major directions of movement was decided from observations done on Wednesday, October 13. The researcher initially identified the various points of entry into the site. The incoming and outgoing pedestrian flow was found out in

each of these points in 10-minute slots, morning, noon and late noon (Table. 4.2). The heaviest traffic flows into the site were from North end of State Street and Diag. The subsequent flows in descending order were from the south end of State street, East Liberty street, North University, Nickels arcade and William Street. These observations were done mainly to get an idea of which routes are primary in movement. It should be noted though that there are other factors at play if the site is considered with respect to its surroundings. For example, the number of people going into Diag from the South end of State Street on the site would be less than the actual number because there is a shorter route into Diag, just opposite William Street. Secondly, all the people going into Diag need not necessarily be related to the University, as Diag acts as an effective pedestrian path to the south end of campus and further down south.

When the pedestrian flows from William Street and South end of State Street are compared, it is found that the flow from William Street is lesser. Similarly the flow from North end of State Street is higher than East Liberty Street. This observation further points towards the most important pedestrian flow on site, which is between State Street and Diag. The high level of activity generated on the State Street Area is due to its close association with the University and this is supported by the observation of the primary movement routes on site.

Wednesday was most suitable for initial observations because of the weather conditions. There was heavy downpour with thunders for about an hour from 11:50 a.m.

Such an adverse weather condition would not have yielded the results of observation on a normal day. But, since this was just part of the initial observation, it indicated how well the State Street area worked as a place even during the rain. The Nickels Arcade became the haven of the street people - the beggars, vendors and scavengers along with the other people who wanted to avoid the rain and were passing through State Street. The awnings outside the shop became places where people waited for the rain to subside as they come out of the shops. It should be noted that the activities on site on the whole did not dissipate. Although the heavy rain reduced to light drizzle continued throughout the afternoon and evening, the activities on site were not hampered. Even the numbers during the observation indicated that the number of people on site was in the same range as the other working days (Table. 4.4).

Since, the State Street Area is closely associated with the University, it was expected to find more students than other people on site. This intuition was verified during observations. The number of students on Wednesday, were more than double of any other category observed, the other categories being adults, elderly, teens, children and others. Dressing codes, appearance and the things people carried distinguished them into these four categories. For example, students most often wore casual clothes and carried backpacks and adults were dressed for work. The observations on Wednesday are recorded in the Tables 4.2 and 4.3.

## WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 13 - PRELIMINARY OBSERVATION

Table. 4.2. Number of people entering the Study area from different directions

Direction	Time	Incoming	Outgoing
William Street	10:00 - 10:10 AM	5	1
	12:35 - 12:45 PM	17	5
	2:35 - 2:45 PM	17	24
Diag	10:15 - 10:25 AM	44	57
	12:55 - 1:10 PM	48	77
	2:45 - 2:55 PM	42	21
Nickels Arcade	10:30 - 10:45 AM	16	13
	1:10 - 1:15 PM	21	33
	2:55 - 3:05 PM	15	21
East liberty Street	10:40 - 10:50 AM	22	13
	1:35 - 1:45 PM	32	16
	3:05 - 3:15 PM	7	12
South End of State Street	10:00 - 10:10 AM	40	21
	12:35 - 12:45 PM	42	41
	2:35 - 2:45 PM	24	47
North University	10:15 - 10:25 AM	18	11
	12:55 - 1:10 PM	20	35
	2:45 - 2:55 PM	30	21
North end of State Street	10:40 - 10:50 AM	47	29
	1:35 - 1:45 PM	61	45
	3:05 - 3:15 PM	63	67

Table. 4.3. User groups in the study area during observation

<b>Section 1</b>	
From 10:25 TO 10:30 AM	
Students	36
Adults	10
Elderly	2
Teens/Children	-
Others	6
<b>Section 1,2</b>	
FROM 1:15 TO 1:20 PM	
Students	60
Adults	21
Elderly	2
Teens/Children	-
Others	3
<b>Section 3</b>	
FROM 1:50 TO 1:55 PM	
Students	59
Adults	22
Elderly	1
Teens/Children	-
Others	2

### Comparison between weekday and weekend of people on site

The method of distinguishing the users into students, adults, elderly and teens, was not applied to the comparison of users between weekday and weekend because students and general shoppers could not be distinguished into separate categories on a weekend. Therefore, the comparison used in this case was between single users and people in-groups on site. On Sunday, October 17, single users on site were 26% around noon and 39% in the evening in regard to the total number of people. On the other hand, the percentage of single

users was higher on Monday, being 78%, 65% and 69%, morning, noon and evening respectively. During this study, it was also found that the total number of users during a weekday was much higher than weekend. This again proved that the state street area had most of its people associated with the university.

Table. 4.4. Total number of people on site

<b>Day</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Noon</b>	<b>Evening</b>
Wednesday, October 13	303	491	369
Thursday, October 14	296	479	337
Friday, October 15	-	252	261
Monday, October 18	359	466	343

**Notes:**

- # The total number of people on site was not found out by actual count of heads, but was ascertained by aggregating all the observations although made in successive 15-minute slots.
- # This number involves only the people in movement on site.

During a weekday, between 10:00 am and 11:30 am, there are a lot of people rushing to school, and this is when the place ballet picks up. There are about 300 to 350 users on site. Until then, there are only a few early birds on site, apart from the people coming to the various coffee shops to get a quick breakfast or coffee. The tempo then rises steadily and there are maximum users on site towards noon. Around noon, there are about 500 users on site. There are people who come to take a quick lunch, or people who pick up something to eat and lounge on the Diag lawn. There are people who decide to meet others here and there are always a good number of unexpected encounters. Slowly, towards late noon the students leave school and the people come to the State street area to spend the evening most, of them

in-groups. There are about 350-400 people on site. (These numbers include only the people in movement).

During a weekend day, especially on a Sunday life does not pick up until noon, and there are about 250 - 300 people on site. Most of these people or are found in groups, or families and friends who come to shop or stroll through the site. Towards evening more people stay on site, shop and visit the various eating joints here. But, the number of people on a weekday far exceeds the number of people on weekends.

### **Commercial establishments on the State Street Area**

The commercial area on State Street extends into North University Street and East Liberty Street also. But for study purposes, the section between William and East Liberty was chosen and is considered representative of this area. The variety offered by the commercial establishments on State Street is the major attraction for the people coming there. There are office spaces, book shops, clothing stores, records shops, gift shops, drug stores, hair stylists, tailors, coffee shops and other eating places and a number of other establishments which offer a wide variety of choices for the casual shoppers and regulars. The Main street area is the most important area for shopping in the downtown. The state street area only developed at a later date. The shops located here do not form the core of the shopping district but caters more to the commercial needs of the University population.

The eating places generate the highest activity in the area. These places generate activities by attracting people and also induce subsequent activities on to the street - for example conversations and fortuitous encounters near entrances. There are three coffee



shops, two restaurants, a Deli bar, a pizza place and an ice cream parlor. The coffee shops and the Deli have the longest working hours compared to the other shops in the area. They are most concentrated with a continuous bustle of activity, where customers need to wait in a line almost all times of the day to be served. Most students come for coffee and spend hours studying in the coffee shops. Most of the other shops open around 9 a.m. and close by 7 p.m. Saturday working hours are more flexible and on Sundays most shops do not open until noon. Few shops remain closed on Sundays and except for the eating places other shops that are open close by 6 p.m. So, on Sundays, late evening activities are concentrated around the eating places. The different commercial establishments, hours they are open and the merchandise they offer are summarized in a Table in the Appendix. Informal interviews with shopkeepers were not possible in eating places due to the continuous flow of customers. But other shopkeepers indicated that most customers came towards late noon or evening. Most shopkeepers preferred the close location to the university because it brought more people. They also seemed to prefer first floor shops, which could attract more customers on impulse. In some cases these first floor shops were unaffordable in terms of rent. With the exception of one shop - Ethnic creations - among the 11 interviewed, the shopkeepers estimated at least 25% of the shoppers to be regulars. These interviews were not extensive but rather informal, where information was gathered in casual talk.

### **The Street Ballet**

The forerunning study on city streets and sidewalk use was done by Jane Jacobs (Jacobs, 1961). She asserts that a complex order is in play in a successful city and its essence

is the intricacy of sidewalk use. This order is composed of movement and change and can be likened to a ballet where individual dancers have distinct parts, which reinforce the whole. She says that "The ballet of the good city sidewalk never repeats itself from place to place, and in any one place is always replete with new improvisations" (Jacobs, 1961, p. 50). Seamon has done work on the phenomenological notions of behavior and place. He calls the regular meeting of individual routines in time and space as 'place ballet' (Seamon, 1979, p.57). The core of behavioral reading is the observation and description of this place ballet.

The behavioral reading of State Street area was done in two stages - observation of 'movement' and 'other activities'. In this case, the mere act of passing through the site has been referred to as 'movement'. All other activities on site - for example, eating, shopping, sleeping and so on - come under the category of the 'other activities'. It has to be understood that the environment under observation is a street, which as its nature indicates is movement-oriented. If such an environment has to support activities at rest, then it should be very successful as a social environment. This section would attempt to describe in detail the two phases of observation of behavior done on site, using the method of behavior mapping and descriptive notation.

## **Movement**

The activity generated by movement is generally not given much importance since the act of just passing through is most often considered unimportant. But in the case of State Street Area, it is this activity which generates the basic liveliness of the place especially on

weekdays. On the whole, the numbers of people in movement shows a high level of occupancy in the environment and the most primary routes, which have already been identified to be State Street and Diag, and the flow of people between North University and North State. Extensive



Fig. 4.4. Student entering Diag.  
Source: Photograph by Author

analysis of numbers observed is not the purpose of this reading. It is to understand the routine behaviors of the people on an everyday basis in the environment.

One important phenomenological notion with reference to people in movement is 'body subject' (Seamon, 1979, p. 46). Body subject can be described as the precognitive power of the body to be able to perform behaviors involuntarily, on its own, these behaviors being labeled as automatic or habitual. The people use the State Street Area use it on an everyday basis. The people moving through the site getting to various other places cross the site in a fast pace, almost without realizing the physical act of walking, preoccupied with thoughts more significant than the act of walking. The body subject takes over in this moment and the physical act of walking is accomplished without conscious attention. At certain moments during experience, the person encounters the environment suddenly and there is a return of conscious awareness. The following section is a description of a normal weekday and weekend movement patterns on site. The description derives from detailed

observation of behavior on site between 14<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> of October, 1999. These observations are summarized in Table 4.5

### Weekday observation

Weekday movement patterns were derived from Thursday, Friday and Monday's observations. In the morning, there are generally a few joggers on site and commercial establishments open around 9 a.m. Most people on site are students and they proceed with speed towards Diag. There is hardly any time for associated distractions and people go about their activities with singular purpose. There are a few who are late for classes, rushing to school beating the world's fastest sprint records and a few who move about as if they are not really there. Steadily the numbers of people on site and the numbers of people entering the site from individual points increase - especially the flows from South of State to North, Diag to North and North State to South in particular.

The number of people on site is highest around noon. Although at this time, the activities increase and the place ballet is at its peak, there are a lot more people on site who move about in a relaxed pace. Some go to the eateries for lunch, others pick their lunches from the eating joints and lounge in the Diag. At this time there are more people walking out of Diag on to the North of State Street where most of the commercial establishments are located. Slowly the shoppers appear too. There are cyclists and skaters on site, but no joggers around noon and after. On working days, people came to State Street area alone or in pairs. Groups were difficult to spot in the mornings and noon during weekdays.

Table. 4.5. Numbers of people in movement

		Week day									Weekend	
Days		Thursday			Friday			Monday			Sunday	
From	To	Mor	Non	Eve	Mor	Non	Eve	Mor	Non	Eve	Non	Eve
South State	North	42	99	62	48	58	72	37	64	45	48	43
	Nickels	2	6	3	5	1	11	2	3	9	4	5
	Diag	-	8	3		3	6	1	5	4	-	1
	Cross & North	-	10	4	6	6	2	2	-	7	9	2
	N. University	10	3	2	11	5	3	7	6	6	-	4
Diag	Nickels	3	7	3	6	10	4	5	5	3	2	3
	South	3	2	4	-	1	2	1	3	2	2	3
	Cross & North	18	6	12	5	10	9	7	14	13	1	16
	North	10	73	68	18	45	41	22	63	46	26	27
	N. University	1	7	1	-	2	1	1	-	1	1	-
Nickels	South	4	3	3	3	6	3	10	3	3	4	-
Arcade	North	10	6	13	9	31	16	4	18	7	4	14
	Diag	2	4	3	1	9	2	6	5	3	1	1
	Cross & North	-	2	1	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-
	N. University	1	1	1	4	2	1	1	4	-	-	-
North	Nickels	-	-	2	-	-	1	1	-	5	2	1
University	Diag	-	6	4	-	11	-	3	3	-	-	3
	South	3	10	15	11	30	20	24	27	20	8	15
	North	32	43	24	28	51	31	23	79	33	34	17
	Cross & North	15	31	17	4	11	7	2	14	11	18	29
North State	South	29	53	64	33	44	47	44	44	38	35	24
	Diag	75	66	24	64	69	33	101	51	52	26	23
	Nickels	4	3	4	4	2	3	8	2	5	8	4
	N. University	39	45	14	33	60	11	34	49	26	11	23
	Cross & South	/	4	15	3	8	11	13	4	4	8	3

**Notes:**

- The observation of people in movement in each of the five major flows identified, was done in 15 minute slots consecutively.
- The observation of movement and activities were done in three sessions in the following time periods.  
 Morning - between 9:00 am and 11:00 am.  
 Afternoon - between 11:30 am and 2:00 pm  
 Evening - between 4:30 pm and 7:00 pm

Towards evening the people returning from North of State towards South increased when compared to morning and noon observations. At this point there are very few people going into Diag. Joggers pass through the site, and the shoppers/strollers increase in number. The mood gets cheerful in the evenings with people coming to the site in groups. The rhythm of activities continues until the close of the eateries, which act as centers of life in the evenings. These observations were more or less similar for the working days on Thursday and Monday. Activities in the restaurants and bars, and on the sidewalk just outside them, continued well into the night, but the number of people observed was more during weekends in these places.



Fig. 4.5. East Facade sidewalk, State Street -People in movement  
Source: Photograph by Author

On Friday, the total number of people passing through the site was just about the same as Thursday. But towards noon, there was lesser a number of people coming towards North from South State and from Diag. Most people were not in a hurry to get back to school, but rather a cheerful atmosphere set in. This observation cannot be corroborated through numbers, because the numbers were very close to the other working days. But the people on site and their attire were

the clues. They were not dressed for school or work, but for the evening and shopping. Towards 6 o' clock people in groups and pairs came out for dinner and the atmosphere became lively - friends meeting one another, people with their families and so on. Most shops and eateries are open late on Fridays and the State Street area stays alive until the close of these commercial establishments.

### Sunday observations

Weekend observations were derived from two consecutive Sundays. The information recorded here was observed on October 17. The activities on site do not pick up until noon on a Sunday. Apart from a few students, the major user group on site are the strollers. The highest flow of people was between South State and North, followed by North University and North. Compared to the weekdays the number of people on site is much less. Since the predominant activities on the site are related to school there are not many people in the State Street area in the weekends. Moreover only a few shops remain open and they do not open until about noon. Exceptions of course are the eateries which act as the sole attractions for the customers in the weekends. Families arrive on site to spend the afternoon on the Diag lawn, and stroll through the shopping area. The number of people on State Street is lesser on Sunday than on Friday evenings. This is because there are fewer people moving through the site, and about the same number of people who stay on site and spend time. The sidewalks are filled with strollers and shoppers, rather than people getting from one place to another.



People walking through the site move about with a general awareness to the environment, taking their time to watch, noticing elements and talking among themselves. This was a contrast to weekdays, because during work hours most people seem to move about with the sole aim of getting from place to place.

From the observation of movement behavior it is apparent that the State Street lies in the main pedestrian flow in the downtown and that the University both generates and attracts this pedestrian flow. Thus, the State Street Area, being located in the 100 percent location assures the presence of people - who either actively use State Street, or merely pass through area. This engenders sociability at an urban scale.



Fig. 3.6. Window shopping and encounter in front of Discount Records -  
'Other Activities'  
Source: Photograph by Author

### **Other Activities**

In the State Street Area, the 'other activities' are considered to be those that include some sort of exchange between the person and the place for at least a brief period of time and do not involve the mere passing through the site. These are times when the person

encounters his environment in the real sense, and is aware of being there, at that time. Movement on the other hand, if it becomes a routine, might not involve awareness of the environment, which is explained through the notion of body-subject. The activities reveal the significance of the place because they exhibit at least a certain degree of intentionality on the part of the user. Through the observation of the activities on site, one can understand the most used places or activity pockets. This observation also gives insight into people's behavior on the street and the physical design factors that affect behavior on streets. To engender activities on site, the environment should be visually and physically rich. There should be elements which sustain the interest of the user apart from being a convenient place to hang out.

During observations it was noted that the number of people on the sidewalks did not vary depending on the time of the day. The sidewalks were fairly consistently occupied throughout the observations, on weekdays and weekends alike. This observation seemed to support the idea of 'effective capacity' put forward by William Whyte for the occupancy levels in plazas (Whyte, 1980, p. 66). He proposed from observations that people seemed to possess an innate sense of how many people was overcrowding, and that the optimum level or 'effective capacity' was maintained automatically even during peak hours.

The people entering the commercial establishments were also noted during the observation of activities. During each 15 minute slot for the observation of activities in one section of the site, the number of people entering individual commercial establishments was noted. This observation is summarized in the Table 4.6.

Table.4.6. Number of people entering each commercial establishment during observation of activities

Commercial Establishments	Thu			Fri			Sun		Mon		
	Mor	Non	Eve	Mor	Non	Eve	Non	Eve	Mor	Non	Eve
Domino's Pizza	2	4	3	-	2	2	1	1	-	2	-
General Stores	2	-	-	-	1	2	3	3	4	6	4
Ashleys	2	1	-	-	2	4	-	1	-	2	5
Wazoo Records	-	2	-	1	2	1	1	-	1	-	2
Bivouac	11	12	7	4	8	9	6	21	3	3	12
School Kids Records	2	4	2	-	-	-	1	2	2	1	1
Van Boven	1	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	3	-	3
Espresso	26	5	12	9	12	8	10	6	11	10	17
Decker Drugs	4	4	5	10	7	5	2	5	7	2	18
Ritz Camera	1	1	1	1	-	5	-	-	1	-	1
Michigan Books	34	14	14	14	12	26	13	5	16	20	15
Hot Dog Vendor	7	10	-	-	12	6	-	-	-	14	4
Red Hawk	-	2	9	-	4	21	6	29	-	8	4
Amers Deli	5	7	10	9	9	2	1	12	7	9	5
Ethnic Creations	-	-	5	-	-	2	-	2	1	3	-
See	-	2	-	-	2	1	-	-	-	1	1
Stucchi's	-	10	13	3	7	13	4	13	-	4	4
Discount Records	1	4	1	1	4	3	2	-	-	-	-
Shamam Drum	4	1	7	3	2	13	6	5	7	2	6
Caribou Coffee	4	4	28	14	9	7	5	26	19	11	10
MLC	1	1	-	8	5	1	-	-	7	2	1
Einstein Bros & Bagels	12	8	7	19	35	5	34	19	28	18	4
Steve and Barrys	4	13	12	18	9	9	12	7	7	1	6
Crown House of Gifts	2	14	5	4	12	4	5	-	4	13	3
Maize-n-Brew	2	7	2	9	5	2	1	-	6	14	7
Urban Outfitters	4	2	-	3	2	1	1	-	-	5	-

Notes:

- These numbers were noted during the observation of 'activities' on each of the 3 sections of the study site, in 15 minute time periods.
- These numbers are graphically represented as arrow marks leading into each commercial establishment in the behavior mapping studies. Refer. Fig. 4.7, Fig.4.8.

No consistent pattern could be deciphered from the limited observation of one week, but there were certain establishments that attracted most people. The eating places ranked the first, and subsequently, general merchandises books and clothing. The eating places were highly occupied throughout the day. But other shopkeepers indicated that most customers arrived late afternoon and evening. Since shoppers arrived in spurts, continued observations over a period of time were necessary to prove this point, which were beyond the scope of this research. The most important use of these observations was the identification of most visited commercial establishments and the parallel identification of activity pockets on the site.

The State Street Area also has its share of regulars or the 'street people' including vendors, beggars, scavengers and the like. The other activities on site include eating, standing, sitting, talking, reading, window-shopping, selling, passing handbills, and using telephones, mailboxes and vending machines. One important design feature that Whyte regards indispensable for urban sociability is sitting space. He notes that successful plazas and sidewalks are ones that have informal or formal seating spaces that give the user considerable comfort in using the space. Seating is nearly absent in the State Street Area. Although the Diag lawns offer huge open spaces, there are no benches or chairs for comfortable sitting. The sidewalks are not wide enough to incorporate seating in them. Even the bus stop next to Diag does not possess any seating benches. This is one obvious handicap of the area, which if satisfied could generate more possibilities for social interaction. A typical weekday and weekend behavior mapping using descriptive notations is given in Fig. 3.5. and Fig. 3.6. The appendix includes behavior mapping and movement notation for all observation days.

## **Observation of other activities**

The observation of activities was done in three sections of the site to facilitate detailed observations. Fig.4.3 shows the division of three sections of the site. It was observed that the section from Nickels Arcade to State Theater had more people on the sidewalks. The activities were found to spill over from the commercial establishments onto the sidewalk especially in the case of the eateries. Since more eateries are located in this section and the shops are closely concentrated, the number of people on the sidewalks are much greater.

### Weekday and Weekend observation of activities - Social life of street

The activities of people on site were fairly consistent throughout the day. Similar to the observations of people in movement, most people during weekdays came alone or in twos. There are considerable possibilities for the occurrence of fortuitous meetings and groups slowly forming outside coffee shops. But in most cases, people arrive alone at first. In the first section of the site, not much happened in the mornings. But in the second and third sections, especially outside the coffee shops, small groups of people congregate. These groups included mostly smokers and their friends. Sometimes these conversations continued after smoking. William Whyte refers to these idle conversations as 'schmoozing', which basically means "nothing talk" (Whyte, 1988, p.13). Whyte also noticed that the schmoozers were all men. This was corroborated during observations on State Street too.



**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14  
BEHAVIOR MAPPING  
NOTATION**

-  Standing
-  Sitting
-  Talking
-  Begging
-  Reading
-  Eating
-  Window Shopping
-  Bicycle lock/unlock
-  Scavenging
-  Handbills Passing
-  Selling
-  Telephone
-  Vending Machines
-  Vendors
-  Mail boxes
-  Smoking

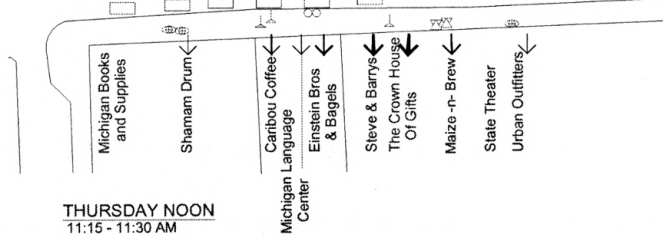
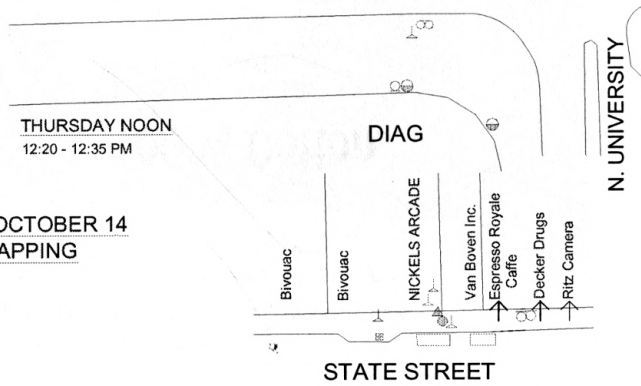
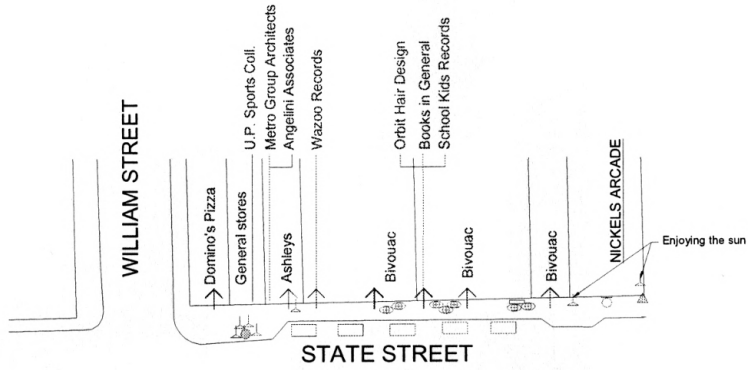


Fig. 4.8. Weekday observation, Thursday noon, Behavior Mapping  
Source: Made by Author on the basis of observation of behavior on Thursday





Fig. 4.9. 'Schmoozing' in front of Maize-n-brew  
Source: Photograph by Author

Among the groups of people on street, men dominated and in some cases there were one or two women in the group. There were no groups observed which comprised only women. Among the people who were waiting to be seated outside the restaurants, there was a fair mix of both sexes, but the activity here cannot be termed as schmoozing because these people had a purpose to stay on the sidewalks. As the day proceeds, life on the sidewalk in the first section picks up, but there are not frequent groups of people clustering to talk. Activities found in this section of the site were movement-oriented and not fixed in location even for a brief period of time. Exceptions were the window shoppers outside Bivouac and schmoozers by the corner of Dominos Pizza.

Informal interviews with the shop-keepers revealed that window-shopping was quite common, and from 30 - 50% of shoppers in some shops came to just window-shop.

Window-shopping is probably the only activity on State Street which exhibits some variation with reference to time. Comparable to the people in movement who are purpose-oriented in the morning, the window shoppers do not appear on site until after noon. Whyte observes that most window shoppers are women (Whyte, 1988, p.83). This turned out to be true even in the case of State Street. Clothing stores, like Bivouac - a shop that sells both men and women garments - also seemed to have predominantly women stop by the window display. Obvious exceptions were Shamam Drum, a bookstore and Discount Records, where mostly male students stopped to read the window displays. Most window shoppers were generally found in pairs or groups except for the ones found outside Shamam Drum. Ann Arbor is known as the 'book lovers town', the very first Borders being located just round the corner on East Liberty Street. The displays of all bookstores extend into the sidewalk to attract customers. People can be found browsing the books outside the bookstores for 5 to 10 minutes or longer. This browsing induces comments, conversations among strangers, comparable to Whyte's idea of 'triangulation'.

According to Whyte, triangulation is a method by which an exterior stimulus initiates interaction between strangers, for example a sculpture or a performing artist in a public place. Ethnic Creation is another shop which uses exterior displays on the sidewalk to attract customers. Merchandise, especially clothes hanging out in the sidewalk (where they can be felt) act as good attractions. Window shoppers themselves act as attractions to other people. It was observed that, when a person encountered another window shopper interested in the same merchandise that he or she was, the two of them invariably ended up in a short conversation about the quality or price of that particular object on display.

During evenings on weekdays, the corner intersection of Diag appeared to be the favorite hang out of most groups. A group of teenagers or a big gang of college friends and so on was observed to have occupied this area from 20 minutes to half an hour. People waiting at the bus stop also arrived in regular intervals depending on the schedule of buses. This gathering initiates interaction among the people on the sidewalks.

In the mornings there are few people in the first section of the State Street Area. People often visit the eateries, the bookstores or the pharmacists to buy what is required immediately. These people are on their way to work or school, and they probably do not have time for relaxed shopping. Some smokers stand outside coffee shops and converse in groups. Otherwise, all activities on site are movement oriented. The shopkeepers come to the sidewalk and clean the display windows and set up sidewalk displays if necessary. It is unlikely that these shopkeepers return inside without exchanging 'hello' or 'good morning' with at least one person on the sidewalk. The familiarity among people in the street creates special bonds with the place. But, this familiarity gives respect to privacy in a public environment. Jane Jacobs (Jacobs, 1961) considers sidewalk contacts important and stresses their public nature with no intrusion into the privacy of an individual.

Towards noon, people come to the State Street area for lunch and this is the time when greatest number of short conversations was observed. On a working day, people are in a hurry to get back to work after lunch and don't have time for a lengthy chat. Most of these conversations were observed to last no more than one and half to two minutes. People in groups tend to stay and talk longer for five minutes or more. After midday, the window shoppers appear and the atmosphere sets into a casual pace. People do not rush through the

site as in the mornings. In the evenings sidewalk life is very active. People belonging to all user groups take over the sidewalks and the environment becomes very lively. On Friday evenings, the number of people walking on the sidewalks is less, though there is still a lively pace. On Sundays, although the number of people moving through the site is less than weekdays, the number of people entering the shops and on sidewalks remains more or less the same.

### **Interpreting the Behavioral Reading**

Observation of behavior on State Street revealed element of place ballet. The constant activities of the people on State Street contribute significantly to the place as a whole. These activities engender sociability on an urban scale. Urban sociability does not call for deep friendships but demands a certain amount of willingness and pleasure in sharing a public space. The behavioral reading helped in understanding how people perceived and used their environment. It helped in interpreting certain perceptual themes with regard to the environment. People possessed certain common attitudes towards place which is directly reflected in their behavior in the place. The broad themes interpreted through behavioral reading summarized in this section are social cores, encounters, gestures, environment at hand, and street people.

### **Social Cores**

Cores are locations on the site that foster maximum activity and interaction. Dozio refers to them as activity pockets in his study (Dozio,1983, p.73). As explained before,

people concentrate in the coffee shops and other eateries. Coffee shops are open for the maximum number of hours and they attract a lot of the University population. There are students working on their assignments, teachers and students involved in discussions, students who leave school to take a break over coffee, and people having lunch. During observations of the number of people entering establishments, these “social cores” showed the highest count. The entrances to the coffee shops, restaurants and the eateries also become cores on the sidewalk. They might be smokers or people waiting to be seated, window shoppers or just friends meeting one another.

The other places where people tend to congregate are street corners. This is consistent with Whyte’s observations on city streets. When two people with different destinations come together, they stop in the intersection for a minute or so to exchange goodbyes before they proceed in their respective directions. According to Whyte, street corners are 100 % locations, and the Hot Dog Vendor in State Street appears to realize this fact. He has a fixed location for his stall on all weekdays at the intersection of State Street and North University, next to the vending machines just outside Michigan Books and Supplies. At certain times of the day, there are as many as 10 to 15 customers occupying the sidewalk. This corner is always buzzing with activity on all working days. But this does not seem to affect the people who pass through. Other shops that attract a lot of customers are Michigan books and Supplies, Steve and Barrys, Decker Drugs, Bivouac, Crown House of Gifts and Discount records.



Fig. 4.10. The social core - Hot dog vendor by the corner of State and North University  
Source: Photograph by the author

Nickels arcade possesses tremendous potential to become an activity core, but, presently is just used as a shortcut between State and Maynard Streets. The entrance to Nickels arcade is a major intersection and it already acts as a core of social interaction. Incense stick sellers, beggars loiter in this intersection, and a good number of people lean on the huge columns to enjoy the sun. Informal conversations among people begin and this place becomes a center of social interaction. Similarly the intersection at the corner of Diag, also acts as a 100% location for social interaction. People meeting one another, groups trying to gather, people exchanging good byes, students having lunch - all seem to choose the intersection at the end of Diag. Visually, corners seem to offer the best views, and the corner around Diag has the best view on all sides of the whole State Street area.

Display windows also act as activity pockets and small social cores. The most significant window display attractions are Bivouac, Shamam Drum, Steve and Barrys, Crown house of gifts, Discount records and the display outside Ethnic Creations. Crown House of Gifts attracted a lot of women customers in particular.

In the State Street Area, there are many social cores within the confines of just two blocks - street corners, entrances to the various eating-places and window display attractions. This results in distractions of some kind every few steps. The environment is visually rich and stimulating and provides a sensory experience for the user and at the same time, does not obstruct the user wishing to skip the details and just past through. Whyte remarks that "What attracts people most is other people" (Whyte, 1988, p. 9). These social cores of State Street Area are very successful in attracting people who themselves act as attractions for more people to come.

### **Encounters**

Whyte points out that the most interesting observations turn out to be the ones which involve people meeting one another and having conversations and unexpected encounters. These exchanges are not like the numerous contacts on the sidewalk. The familiarity level among people is higher, and the talk is personal among them. Most of these contacts lasted about 1 - 2 minutes, while schmoozers stayed longer. These conversations often occur right in the middle of pedestrian flow. The people talking are not in the least disturbed by the traffic, and neither are the people walking past.

The conversations belonged to different categories - planned meetings at State Street, people walking together to State Street and stopping to talk, and chance encounters. Planned meetings, could involve a large group of more than six people or even just two. Once outside Espresso coffee shop a planned meeting between lovers was observed. The encounter involved extensive hugging and kissing right in the middle of the sidewalk. The two people



conversed for about a minute and left together. Corners and intersections seem to be the favorite place for stopping when people walking together were observed. People headed in different directions stop in the intersection talk for a minute and then part. It was observed that people in groups or pairs, especially when they came to the intersection between North University and State Street, paused to talk briefly and then left. This was not because they were waiting to cross the street. Rather, in some cases, it appeared like a decision making process of which way they wanted to go.

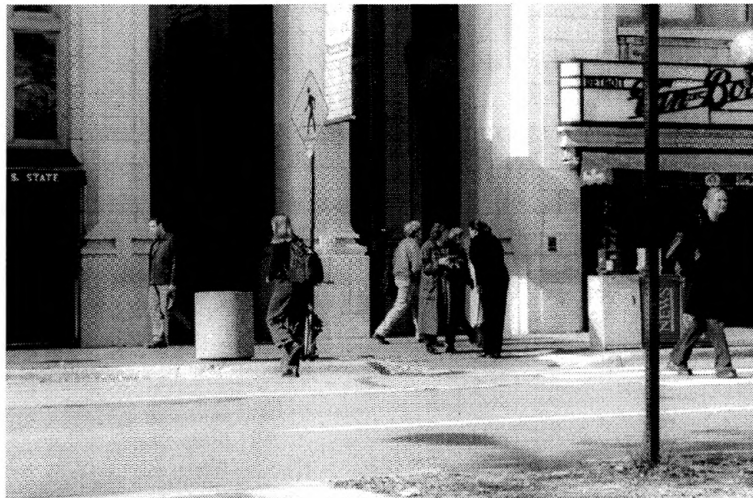


Fig. 4.11. Women in Conversation - Encounter  
Source: Photograph by Author

Chance encounters are fascinating. Once two women met just near the entrance to Nickels Arcade and they talked for about fifteen minutes (Fig. 4.11). Their talk included animated gestures, and a brief hug while parting. About 3 minutes before they left, their gestures indicated that they were getting ready to part. Although both of them were listening to one another with interest, they took hold of their bags, moved back a little and shook hands but did not leave, indicating they still had some more to say before they are done.

## **Gestures**

Most common among street gestures were subtle movements to avoid collision with pedestrians walking in the other direction. People showed their direction by a gentle movement of the head or body a slight turn in their gait. The person approaching in the opposite direction understood this and he or she responded by showing variations in his or her walk. This was done almost automatically and the act of avoiding the other person was not remembered. It is a part of out body-subject actions, and is done by habit. Whyte describes the way pedestrians communicate with one another and how they avoid collisions (Whyte, 1988). He also notes that hand gestures reinforce what the person says. These hand gestures are most often not seen by the other person because he concentrates on the face of the person talking. A slight lift of the hand to signal good bye, continuous wriggling of fingers while talking, and moving hands about mildly were commonly noted among pedestrian talkers on State Street.

## **Environment at hand**

It is true that most urban environments of today have been made as uninhabitable as possible - for example, unsittable ledges, barricaded parks, water that cannot be touched or felt, and extremely secluded open spaces. It is quite sad to note that many environments that have grown on their own, without the intervention of any designer or architect, fare better than the planned ones. In his 1980 and 1988 studies, Whyte does an excellent job of pointing out the physical factors that designers create in an arbitrary manner with no special thought towards the particular context. Some of the physical characteristics that have contributed to

the success of State Street Area are next described. These design factors have been noticed during observation to make the environment 'ready at hand' to the user.

Trash cans are found at least once every 10 feet, and there is more than enough use for them. The observations on State Street Area were not as remarkable as for Whyte; who found that trash cans were also used as tables to eat food or for street conferences (Whyte, 1988, p. 92). There were instances on State Street, when people used them as footrest, an object for leaning on, or for arranging things if they were carrying too many bags. Most people used trash cans and avoided littering. Trash cans also aid scavenging, because they become places for scavengers to check. On Friday, one scavenger was observed to come morning, noon and evening to check particular trash cans. She even seemed to have a particular route and order in which she checked the cans. Water hydrants also acted as foot rests to tie shoelaces.

The parking and pedestrian signposts have regular perforations and people use these to secure their bicycles. Ann Arbor is a university town, with a lot of students using bicycle. To be able to lock the bicycle somewhere close while shopping or eating is necessary, and the posts are often used for this purpose. In some cases, about 3 to 4 bicycles were observed secured to a single post. In a university town, lots of events take place. Secondhand sales are common. A notice board in a public area always helps. There is one near Diag, right in the middle of the pedestrian flow at the intersection of Diag and State Street. The notice board is unique in its design - a cylinder with a diameter of about 4 feet and 10 feet in height and is successful in attracting attention. Such notice boards are also found at other locations in Diag, all of them in the middle of the pedestrian flow where people can readily see them.

The intersection between State Street, North University, Diag and Nickels arcade is a prominent location. This intersection has a maximum view of the whole area and is central to people going in different directions. Most vending machines in the vicinity are concentrated at this intersection. The line of vending machines just outside Michigan Books and Supplies act as convenient tables for the hot dog vendor customers. It was observed more than once during lunchtime that some one picked up their lunch from the vendor, got a newspaper from the vending machine and used it as a table to read the paper and eat. A few teenagers used these vending machines as prominent seating locations to see and be seen.

Most shop fronts have huge window glasses for display. In some cases these windows are set on deep ledges, which act as informal seating. Beggars find small niches in between shops to accommodate themselves. They have specific places for themselves, and the code appears never to be violated. The awnings on the shop fronts give partial protection from sun and rain, and also impart a friendly atmosphere to the sidewalks for people to linger in front of the shops. Convenience is the key and people hardly pay any attention to the aesthetics of these features.

### **Street People**

Street people are the people who work on the street. According to Jane Jacobs, "The social structure of sidewalk life hangs partly on self appointed public characters. A public character is anyone who is in frequent contact with a wide circle of people and who is sufficiently interested to make himself a public character" (Jacobs, 1961, p.68). The regular

street people are the store owners and irregulars are the vendors, beggars, hand - bill passers, small item sellers, scavengers and the odd people. In the State Street Area, the beggars and the vendors were so consistent that they were almost regulars on the street. These people know the street the best. The hot dog vendor and the beggar were the people who were curious enough to check what the researcher was doing on the street.

The store owners were amazing sources of information. The store owner of 'Books in General' gave the researcher accounts of where Borders was initially located, when it shifted places, how it affected other book owners, the paucity of parking spaces, and if provided, the possible increase in shopping activities on State Street and so on. His shop has been in the current location for the past 10 years, and enjoyed the ground floor location before that. The store Bivouac has been on State Street for the past 28 years, and Van Boven Inc. since 1921. Most store owners confirmed that at least 25 % of their customers were regulars and developed a casual friendship with them. The hot dog vendor by North University and State Street was a regular feature on all working days. Two men run the stall, one young and the other middle aged. They arrive and set up shop at around 10:30 am and close by 5 p.m. They bring their paraphernalia in a truck and park in the first lot by the corner and set up shop in just five minutes. The hot dogs offer a quick and inexpensive option for lunch, and people of all categories, right from students, blue collared workers, professors and other white collared people eat here. Most of these people were men, and women came here only if they had some company. Hot dogs were sold at a dollar each and towards closing time, they were priced two for a dollar. Both men were amiable to the customers and worked with speed to keep up with the steady flow of customers. Some

customers appeared to be regulars, and the vendors recognized them. The corner intersection was busy during the lunch hour due to the presence of the hot dog vendor. Chance encounters also happened here and it was not unusual to see people talking over lunch standing close to the vending machines.



Fig. 4.12. The photographer and Hot Dog Vendor at North University and State Street  
Source: Photograph by Author.

An elderly photographer put up his display next to the hot dog vendor on two of the observation days. He had a cheerful manner to attract customers and his display was good. The display boards folded one over the other and could be wheeled off. His timings were rather erratic, but he was present during the 100% hour - lunch hour and a little after. Another irregular was the incense stick seller. He was present on two of the observation days. He gave a good-natured smile to everybody on the street with a friendly "How are you doing today? Care for some incense sticks?" He asked the researcher at least twice within



an hour. When there were not many people on the sidewalks, he talked to the beggar standing close by. He seemed to prefer the entrance to Nickels Arcade for a location.

The beggars have an understanding of their territories. A bearded beggar used to take up location near the entrance to Nickels arcade, and there was a woman stationed between Arbor Drugs and Ritz Camera. The bearded beggar used to change locations to a niche next to Amer's Deli but stationed himself near Nickels Arcade most of the time. His standard line to the people passing by was "Got a dollar?" He had a confident air about himself. The woman was rather frail and was quieter. She had particular times that she would start scavenging all the trash - cans. The bearded beggar was frequently involved in conversations with people passing by or the other odd people of the street. He approached the researcher and asked questions about her study, subject and the like, sat next to her and observed her work for a whole minute, declared that he had done his Bachelors and left after a minute. There was another beggar who was not a regular but visited the place during peak hours. Apart from the frail women, another lady scavenged the trash - cans regularly. These two women had specific times and arrived regularly, used the same routes and scavenged the cans in the same order. Whyte refers to such people as the 'shopping bag ladies' (Whyte, 1988, p. 47) and, true to his words, these women in Ann Arbor too, carried plastic shopping bags.

There were two people dressed in saffron robes distributing hand-bills advertising a discussion at the 'Bhakti Yoga Club' with a free vegetarian feast afterwards. These people were not professional hand - bill passers like the ones observed by Whyte, but they were very effective. Most people accepted the bills. State Street also has its share of odd people. One person with a vague costume - long colorful clothes, a turban, and a short beard - was



especially suspicious. He used to accost people and talk to them in hushed voices. Once he was spotted talking to four others near the entrance to the arcade.

The vendors, beggars, scavengers and the odd people sustain life on the street, although they are generally regarded as a nuisance by the authorities. Whyte is right in pointing out that an 'index of enjoyability' of a city depends on the number of street entertainers, food vendors and people in conversation (Whyte, 1988, p. 55). If these people are absent, then the level of richness and interest on city streets would be less than otherwise.

## **Conclusion**

The behavioral reading was an effort to understand the place ballet of State Street Area. The description concentrates on the people and their activities and not merely on numerical data with respect to behavior. Through the description, it is apparent that the concentration of people is the most important quality that sustains liveliness on State Street. The constant movement of people through the site contributes the necessary concentration. The physical features of the street are pedestrian-friendly and the commercial establishments include a lot of food places, which engender activity. The rhythm of activities is not broken and people accept the presence of one another with tacit understanding - in fact with a certain pleasure. People have the inclination to be in the center of activities - to watch and be watched. It is a known fact that people move through uninteresting places faster than ones with environmental richness. Other people are important factors in a rich environmental experience. The more sociable the place is, irrespective of its physical appearance the more successful it is as an 'urban place'.

## CHAPTER 5

### **PLACE AS A PHENOMENA**

The character of State Street Area is gradually unveiled through the historical, physical and behavioral reading of place. These readings elucidate the tangible, observable qualities that are clearly evident to the person experiencing the environment. Although intuitive, the historical, physical and behavioral readings reveal concrete components of the environment and how they contribute to place. But there is something beyond the concrete in a setting which is experientially grounded. Places possess a certain elusive quality that cannot be named. Even strangers to State Street perceive it to have meaningful identities and significances. To understand this imperceptible quality, empirical methods of observation and note taking are incomplete.

A phenomenological approach to place reading, which gives intuitive insights into experiential notions, is found to yield better results. The essence of experience, meaning of place and its significance can be brought out through describing the place phenomenologically. In the case of State Street, this approach would reveal why it is so different from not only other urban places, but also the rest of downtown Ann Arbor. To phenomenologically explore State Street Area, firstly, a thorough understanding of the notion of place and the approach of phenomenology towards place is necessary. This chapter

presents various phenomenological themes suggested by different authors for exploring places as meaningful settings and the next chapter applies these themes to the State Street Area.

### **Phenomenology**

Phenomenology is the exploration and description of phenomena - i.e. things or experiences as people experience those things or experiences. It is concerned with the "various underlying patterns which describe in general ways the essential nature of environment and environmental experience" (Seamon, 1987, p.4). It is an attempt to understand from the inside - and not to dismiss or criticize from the outside - the whole spectrum of experience, which we generally call 'reality' (Relph, 1985, p.22). Phenomenology involves empathetic observation and a thorough description of the thing. The impartial 'looking or trying to see the thing' is to allow the thing explored to present itself as if it could speak. The process demands the casting aside of previously held assumptions and presuppositions upon which we base our behavior and experience of life. Seamon explains that phenomenology "strives to categorize and structure its theme of study as little as possible. It seeks to understand and describe the phenomenon as it is in itself before any prejudices or priori theories have identified, labeled or explained it (Seamon, 1979, p.17).

Maurice Merleau-Ponty regards phenomenology as a study of essences and also as "a philosophy which puts essences back into existence" (Merleau-Ponty, 1969, p.27). He further denotes that it is a matter of describing the phenomena studied and not of explaining or analyzing. Therefore empirical data is considered to be incomplete in describing the

phenomena in its totality. Environmental study using phenomenological methods owes significantly to the works of Martin Heidegger, a German philosopher. Relph quotes Heidegger's description of phenomenology as "the process of letting things manifest themselves." Relph goes on to say that phenomenology is a way of thinking that enables us to see clearly something that is right before our eyes and yet taken for granted and is therefore ignored (Relph, 1985, p.15). The method of phenomenology depends a lot therefore on 'clear seeing'. This seeing without prior biases is based on 'intuitive insight' towards the phenomenon studied and a thoughtful description after the study.

Phenomenology attempts to acquire a holistic view of the thing studied. Therefore, the thing is explored in the context of its neighboring phenomena. Thus the interrelatedness among various parts of environmental experience and behavior is revealed to express the whole.

### **Phenomenology of Place**

According to Relph, who did an extensive study of the phenomenon of place and placelessness, places are "fusions of human and natural order and the significant centers of our immediate experiences of the world" (Relph, 1976, p. 69). Places are not experienced as independent, clearly defined entities, described through location or appearance. They are a confluence of setting, landscape, ritual, routine, other people, personal experiences, care and concern for home experienced in the context of surrounding places. In a similar way, Norberg-Schulz remarks that place is "a qualitative, total phenomenon", which cannot be reduced to any of its properties without losing out on its concrete nature (Norberg-Schulz,

1980, p. 8). In direct contrast, placelessness can be described as the "casual eradication of distinctive places and the making of standardized landscapes that results from an insensitivity to the significance of place" (Relph, 1976, Preface).

Places are deeply related to human intentions and experiences. Intentions are not understood in terms of orientation but rather relationships between human consciousness and places. Events and activities 'take place', and this 'taking place' has more significance than mere location. Norberg-Schulz considers place as a focus where meaningful events of our existence are experienced (Norberg-Schulz, 1971, p.19). According to Relph, "the essence of place lies in the largely unselfconscious intentionality that defines places as profound centres of human existence" (Relph, 1976, p.43). Places are qualitative wholes that are created and shaped on the basis of the needs and goals of the people inhabiting them. Therefore places, to a large degree, are representations of the people and their aspirations. To study places that are such representations, what is required is an approach to place which would describe the place 'as it is' without prior prejudice. Phenomenology as a philosophy has close links to the description of the everyday life world. The common day-to-day experience of a place can have a profound influence over a person, which cannot be explained through superficial reasoning. Phenomenological exploration can be valuable in describing this kind of intense experience. The following sections present several phenomenological concepts directly or indirectly related to place and environmental experience. These concepts include experiences of being-in-the-world, dwelling, presence, boundary, insiderness, identity, care, readiness to hand, spatial - temporal awareness, and sensory realms.

## **'Being' in the world**

For Martin Heidegger, 'being' is the basis of facticity that things in the world exist. Phenomenological exploration originates from the reality of things existing in the world. It studies the way in which man experiences his everyday environment by being in the world. Relph in his essay on the phenomenological origins of geography notes that, "Being-in-the-world is the basic state of human existence, and it indicates the fact that everything which exists has an environment" (Relph, 1985, p.17).

The unitary phenomenon of being-in-the-world, according to Relph who draws on Heidegger, constitutes three elements. The first is the state of 'being-in', which involves concern and bonds of work, affection, responsibility, interest and memory. The second state is the self, which has being-in-the-world as a feature of the way it is. The third state 'in-the-world' is not nature or the sum of things that surround us. Rather, it is the taken-for-granted sphere of activity into which we are implicated and immersed and are therefore unaware of it (ibid., 1985, p.17). This taken-for-granted pattern of experience with regard to day-to-day existence is called 'life-world'. The study of life-world is one of the most important considerations of a phenomenological method. It is concerned with the everyday environmental experience and first hand involvement with the world that a person lives in. Heidegger associates being in the world to the notion of 'dwelling'.

## **Dwelling**

According to Heidegger, 'to dwell' is to be human on earth. He insists that we build because we are dwellers, and not that we dwell because we have built. He considers

buildings to be things that allow dwelling on earth. Dwelling, according to Heidegger, gathers the fourfold - namely, earth, sky, divinities and mortals. The unified fourfold is experienced in dwelling. He recognizes the close link between building and dwelling in his essay, 'Building Dwelling Thinking' (Heidegger, 1971). He uses the example of a bridge to explain the 'gathering' of the fourfold. The bridge gathers earth as a landscape, holds up the sky and opens up to its weather, allows mortals to occupy it in many different ways, in the presence of divinities. The presence of divinities in the ordinary act of everyday living might be questionable. But Heidegger's idea of the 'thing' is helpful in understanding this uncertainty. Something is considered a thing when it does its 'thingness' - that is, when it works to its full potential. Heidegger illustrates this through the example of the bridge: "the bridge gathers, as a passage that crosses, before the divinities" (Heidegger, 1971, p.153). It works to its full potential by being a channel for movement from one place to another. Thus when the bridge becomes a successful passage, the divine manifests in the event of crossing. When a thing achieves its purpose, it gathers the fourfold, to manifest dwelling.

The gathering of the fourfold is not an intellectual occurrence that manifests only during extensive philosophical searching. It is rather the 'evident rightness' of a place that is felt by the people, although inexplicable. When there is an awareness of the gathering of the fourfold, the presence of building is felt. In the context of everyday environmental experience, things that are common and used daily are conventionally considered mundane. Therefore, the discussion of fourfold is relegated to a higher level of inquiry associated with the spirituality of the divine. But the manifestation of the sacred or the divine is actually related to the depth of experience. When there is a heightened state of awareness of the



environment and its qualities, context, situation and purpose, the involvement is complete. The environment gains meaning for the person experiencing it. Thus the notion of dwelling is experienced in the involved day-to-day encountering of the built environment.

## **Presence**

Norberg-Schulz in 'Heidegger's Thinking on Architecture' notes that Heidegger considers a building to be a work of art, which brings something to presence. He further observes that the primary purpose of architecture "is to make a world visible. It does this as a thing, and the world it brings into presence consists of what it gathers" (Norberg-Schulz, 1983, p.67). The building gathers the fourfold when it achieves its thingness as a dwelling, and brings it into presence. The constructed environment therefore gains presence by its involvement in the presencing of earth, sky, mortals and divinities within itself. The evident rightness of the 'whole' is thus brought closer to man.

The building as a work of art is not a representation of an idea, but it brings something into presence. This underlying understanding of the purpose of building and a work of art is lost in the case of many representational buildings of the recent past. A building becomes a work of art not through aesthetic excellence, but by achieving its 'thingness' and bringing into presence the fourfold. It then anchors the person in an involved relationship with the inhabited landscape or the lived space.

## **Boundary and Threshold**

A lived space rises above the mere physicality of space. It becomes a place that can

be determined by its boundary. According to Heidegger, a boundary is not that at which something stops, but it "is that from which something begins its presencing" (Heidegger, 1971, p.154). The boundary does not signify an end, but rather the beginning of something else. The line of a boundary is very thin and the inside-outside positions can be reversed, depending on the experience at a particular moment. Relph notes that experience of outside and inside is based on our intentions, depending on our focus of interest - home, district, city and so on. As our intention and focus varies, the inside and outside move in accordance (Relph, 1976, p.50).

The distinction between the inside and outside is made obvious through the boundary. The threshold in built environments should separate and unite simultaneously irrespective of its physical form - a barrier or a transition. As Eliade explains, "The threshold concentrates not only the boundary between inside and outside but also the possibility of passage from one to the other" (Eliade, 1959, p.18). It increases the awareness of the lived space through the contrast between what is inside and what is outside. Apart from the inside-outside distinction, a boundary is the place in-between where the gathering of the world and its appearance begins. So the boundary assumes significance as a place where the world begins to open up to us.

Norberg-Schulz relates the boundaries of the built space - floor, wall and ceiling; to that of the natural landscape - ground, horizon and sky. In the built environment, the walls, street facade, steps, floor, ceiling, level differences and other physical elements act as boundaries determined by the amount of their openness to admit the outside into them.

These openings act as places in-between where the inside, outside distinction becomes apparent. The boundary in the builtform is a powerful experience through which the life-world is revealed to us.

### **Inside and Insideness**

In built environments the inside-outside distinction is extended into the notion of enclosure. According to Norberg-Schulz, settlements are enclosed entities in the landscape. He remarks that, "In a wider context any enclosure becomes a centre, which may function as a 'focus' for its surroundings" (Norberg-Schulz, 1979, p.12). The focussed quality brings about centrality to the space. The quality of centrality of the space further heightens the experience. There is an enhanced level of awareness of the world and the gathered fourfold of earth, sky, mortals and divinities. The enclosure and openings offer the obvious relationship of the inside to the outside in the experience of the built form.

Norberg-Schulz suggests that the primary intention behind the place concept is to be inside, "that is to be somewhere away from the outside" (Norberg-Schulz, 1971, p.25). The experience of inside also induces the feeling of protection - from the undesired forces outside. Being inside instills the knowledge of the world and where one is at that moment in time. The inside and outside also relate to safety and danger, cosmos and chaos, enclosure and exposure and so on. According to Relph, the essence of place lies in the experience of an 'inside' and he also asserts that "to be inside a place is to belong to it and to identify with it, and the more profoundly inside you are the stronger is this identity with the place" (Relph, 1976, p.49).

This experience of not just enclosure but also identity with the environment is called insideness. The intensity of experience of insideness is related to the amount of unconscious association a person possesses with the place. It is an awareness of human existence and being through a place, "here is where we know and are known, or where the most significant experiences of our lives have occurred" (ibid., p.41).

Relph identifies seven different varied levels of the experience of insideness and outsideness with a place. They are: existential outsideness, objective outsideness, incidental outsideness, vicarious insideness, behavioral insideness, empathetic insideness and existential insideness.

'Existential outsideness' involves "a profound alienation from place," a self-conscious and reflective un-involvement and not belonging. In this state, all places are devoid of significance and possess the same meaningless identity. 'Objective outsideness' is "The deliberate adoption of dispassionate attitude towards places in order to consider them selectively in terms of their locations or as spaces where objects and activities are located." It comprises a deep separation of person and place (ibid., p.51). In the case of 'incidental outsideness' places are unselfconsciously experienced as a little more than background for activities and are therefore dependent on the activities. Secondhand experience of places, with a deep felt involvement is called 'vicarious insideness'. According to Relph, 'behavioral insideness' is the experiencing of place as a little more than just a background for events. It consists of "being in a place and seeing it as a set of objects, views, and activities arranged in certain ways and having certain observable qualities" (Relph, 1976, p.53). Behavioral

insiderness is concerned with the qualities of appearance. In contrast, 'empathetic insiderness' involves an empathetic involvement with the place. Relph points out that empathetic insiderness "demands a willingness to be open to significances of a place, to feel it, to know and respect its symbols" (ibid., p.54). Empathetic insiderness is a conscious involvement with the environment whereas 'existential insiderness' is experienced without deliberate and selfconscious reflection yet is full of significance. There is a deep and complete identity and sense of belonging with the place that arises unconsciously.

The varying states of insiderness and outsiderness felt with a place occur due to the different levels of intensity of encounter and associations with the place. A person who has grown up in the environment perceives it to be full of significances to him, irrespective of architectural excellence or environmental complexity. On the other hand, a stranger could find the same environment ordinary and devoid of any meaning or value.

### **Identity of Place and Identifying with Place**

Identity of a place depends on the images of the place created during personal encounter. Relph remarks that the image of a place "consists of all the elements associated with the experiences of individuals or groups and their intentions towards that place" (ibid., p.56). It could be called a mental image of attitudes, memories, experiences and immediate sensations of a particular place. Its reference to being a mental image has often degenerated its understanding to be a mere visual representation of the most prominent features in a map. These features on a mental map are cognitive and therefore do not explain the full identity of a place. The mental image of a person would actually include sensations of air, noise,

smell and feelings of involvement, which cannot be represented or communicated through maps. Identity of a particular place could be developed as individual, group or mass images. Relph regards the process of identity construction to be a complex and progressive ordering and balancing of observations with expectations - that is some sort of balancing between direct experiences and preset ideas (Relph, 1976, p.59). These observations and construction of the image would also depend upon the intensity of experience of insiderness. Experience of insiderness is the act of identifying with the environment - the feeling of knowing and being known. The increased involvement in the environment leads to appropriation, which involves possession and control. The place that a person identifies with is thus available to him for appropriation and use.

### **Sparing and Preserving**

The control over space and a sense of responsibility towards it results in 'care'. According to Heidegger the fundamental character of dwelling is 'sparing' and 'preserving'. It is the concern for the environment when we preserve and "return it specifically to its being" (Heidegger, 1971, p.149). Relph explains Heidegger's idea of sparing to be the "tolerance of something for itself without trying to change it or control it" (Relph, 1976, p.76). He notes that these places are full of meaning and are signs of care and concern for earth, environment and people. Sparing is letting things be the way they are. Sparing is the understanding of the thing and its essence, and a willingness not to change or exploit it. In the context of place, sparing and preserving manifests as a complete commitment to place which arises due to existential bonds. The continuous use of the environment, sensitivity

towards its built setting and contribution towards its maintenance are a few ways of care taking of a place and being in the world.

### **Presence at hand and Readiness to hand**

Being in the life-world has two forms of existence for Heidegger, presence-at-hand and readiness-to-hand. Kimberly Dovey considers Heidegger's notion of '*Vorhandenheit*' or presence-at-hand to be a condition of an object that stands in a theoretical visualized relationship to the subject, where the object is not used but is available for consideration (Dovey, 1985, p.37). Presence at hand is the state in which the world and the entities within it are regarded as objects of observation and are distanced from a person. At this state, there is a conscious disassociation from the world around and an element of self-awareness between the world and the person (Relph, 1985, p.17).

*'Zuhandenheit'* or readiness-to-hand is the mode of active use. The implement gains its meaning from what it is 'for' - its use. Beings are present in the world through activities - "by virtue of making, considering, participating, discussing, moving around, producing something, attending to something and looking after it" (ibid., p.18). In this state there is no conscious alienation or reflection of the object, but they are known because they are ready-to-hand and are used. There is an experiential relationship between the object and subject due to activity and use. The fundamental meaning of ready-to-hand lies in the 'using' of the implement - the action.

These two modes of existence arise due to a deeper understanding of person - environment interaction. In the context of everyday life, they reveal the existential



(ready-to-hand) and intellectual (presence-to-hand) value of things. These modes are also related to the experience of architecture. In the recent past, the visual, cognitive aspect of architecture has gained over interactive experience. The ready-to-hand notion of use has been pushed to the background. Since architecture is the primordial form of dwelling through which the world manifests itself to us on an everyday basis, readiness-to-hand should also be an inherent quality of the built environment.

### **Essence of experience**

The existential philosophy of Heidegger is grounded in the notion of 'being'. It has been observed in this discussion that the essence of experience lies in the heightened awareness of being-in-the-world. The fourfold of earth, sky, divinities and mortals manifests itself as the lived world. In the context of place, the essence of experience lies in the awareness of the lived world through space, time and body. This unified encounter of the environment gives rise to a transcending experience of the aesthetic.

### **Space**

The phenomenological approach to space is the study of space and environment in which a person typically lives and dwells - the 'lived space'. According to Heidegger, "spaces receive their being from location and not from "space" (Heidegger, 1971, p.154). Lived space or existential space is "the inner structure of space as it appears to us in our concrete experiences of the world as members of a cultural group" (Relph, 1976, p.12). This space is constantly being recreated through the human activities. Existential space begins with man

in the center and therefore is governed by his intentionalities. Although lived space is governed by human intentions, it goes beyond the mere functionality of abstract architectural space. Architectural space is made through formal conceptualization - a deliberate attempt to create spaces. This attempt should understand the importance of the experience of life-world. According to Norberg-Schulz, if the physical structure does not permit satisfactory existential space, then the environment should be modified. Since architects and planners are trained to take care of place making, their task is to "concretize" or "set into work a more or less common existential space" (Norberg-Schulz, 1988, p.32). The lived space also communicates the use of environment - change, modification, wearing, weathering and so on. It shows the signs of life in the place and that of the people inhabiting the place.

Physical spatiality of a lived space also possesses a crucial role in the experience of the place as a whole. The phenomenological notions of boundary, enclosure and inside-outside directly depend upon the spatial qualities of place. There are strong cues from the spatial environment to the wholesome experience of place. When there is a complete possession of space by man defining what is inside and what is outside, he dwells in the environment. Space is one of the basic components of the environment, which conveys the dwelling experience to man, by elevating abstract space to lived existential space.

### Time

In addition to space, temporality plays a significant role in the perception of place. The experience of 'being there, then' anchors the person in a place at that moment. Holl and

other authors of *Questions of Perception* (Holl, Pallasmaa, Perez-Gomez, 1994) consider the modern concept of time to be linear and disjunctive, the destructive effects of which can be countered by the distention of time in the perception of architectural space (ibid., p.74).

Juhani Pallasmaa notes that humans "have a mental need to experience the reality that we are rooted in the continuity of time, and in the man-made world it is the task of architecture to facilitate this experience" (Pallasmaa, 1996, p.22). It is apparent that the awareness of time is crucial in the experience of place. An important factor in developing the identity of place is time. The mental images that people construct arise due to repeated encounters with the place over a period of time. The images formed by other people, the associations the individual has with the place, and important social, political and cultural occurrences and their marks on the environment are few among the many events, which influence the identity formed by people. The imprints of time on the environment, add a sense of history to the setting. Any feeling of memory and attachment and the events that shaped the individual's relationship with the environment is experientially grounded in time.

There is one level of awareness of time in terms of different times of the day, weeks and seasons and their effects on the built environment. The activities of the people in the place at these various moments are understood as a function of time. At another level, the awareness of time occurs as a continuum between the past, present and the future. There is an identification with the past, a complete involvement with the present, and expectations for the future. When such continuity exists we can call the existence of time to be cyclic. The continuity between past, present and future is pivotal in the understanding of time, and that of time in a place.

## Body - the Sensations

The human body is the center of the experiential world. Pallasmaa, in his discussion of the human body and experience, quotes Merleau-Ponty as follows: "We choose our world through our bodies as living centres of intentionality, and that is how the world chooses us" (Pallasmaa, 1996, p.27). When we alienate our body from the environment that surrounds us, we automatically assume the position of an outsider in the setting. When the body is in the center, it encounters a multi-sensory experience with the environment. The visual, aural, olfactory, taste and tactile sensations unite with one another to give a wholesome experience to the person. The visual sensations depend on the co-operation of haptic memory for perception of materiality, distance and spatial depth (ibid, p.29). A visual picture of a place can generate sensations of touch and even odor from memory. Thus there is an interaction and interdependence among the various sense modalities during perception.

### Eye and visual space

The visual experience dominates all other sensations in forming a picture of the place. Due to the greater use of camera and printed image today, the experience of being-in-the-world is degenerated into an observation from outside. There is much less immersion in the environment. Due to extensive inclination towards secondhand experience, the visual experience of spatial dimensions has gained superiority over the other senses, especially in architecture. Therefore, environments are now created as objects to be seen rather than settings for living. The argument does not undermine the importance of the eye in the perception of space, but insists on understanding the importance of the unified experience all senses.

Lately, the nature of built form has become flat, nonmaterial, and unreal due to the loss of tactility in experience. Pallasmaa insists that "Good architecture offers shapes and surfaces moulded for the pleasurable touch of the eye" (Pallasmaa, 1996, p.30). There should not be a monotonous expression of surfaces but variety and change in texture, juxtaposition and character of the individual elements. The eye perceives all these details through memories from previous experiences. The role of light and shadow in perception is significant. Louis Kahn, Frank Lloyd Wright and Le Corbusier have extensively used the play of light and shadow in their buildings to enhance the experience of the aesthetic. The presence or absence of light induces feelings of warmth and coziness. Pallasmaa regards deep shadows and darkness essential because, "they dim the sharpness of vision, make depth and distance ambiguous and invite unconscious peripheral vision and tactile fantasy" (ibid, p.32). When vision loses its prominence due to lack of light the other senses come to the fore.

An opening in the built-form is a boundary, a merger between the inside and outside, shadow and light. Even the quality of light in the fixtures manufactured today is uniform and monotonous. But in actual experience, the subtle changes in light at different times of the day and varied seasons transform the perceived environment completely. The quality of light on a summer afternoon is harsher than a cold winter day. Thus brighter colors and light are associated with spring, summer and warmth, whereas dull flat colors signify cold sensations. Artists have long used the quality of light and colors to evoke such experiences of touch. Thus it is apparent that the eye works in harmony with the other senses in environmental experience.

## Aural space

The significance of sound in the experience of a place is often overlooked. The sound is received by the human body and therefore it centers the human body in the world. Pallasmaa also observes that sound provides the temporal continuum in which visual impressions are embedded (Pallasmaa, 1996, p.34). In spatial experience, visual events are remembered along with the sounds of the place. The sound in a room can determine the depth materiality and shape of the room even in the absence of light. Although the space is realized through its echo, the acoustic aspect of the environment remains in the background due to the supremacy of the visual image.

The sounds of home can be an overpowering experience - be it the sound of church bells or the siren of a local factory, it always reminds one of being at home. The sounds of a city are vital in the forming of their identity. It is not only the quality of the sound alone, but also the quality of space carved out by the echo that contributes to the character of the city. Pallasmaa comments that our ears have been blinded due to the open spaces of the contemporary city streets and the programmed music of the shopping malls (ibid, p.36). Even in silence, a place with character speaks to us through its spaces in liaison with nature - the trees rustling among themselves and on the walls, the wind moving through the spaces, the chirping of the birds, the echoes of distant activity and so on. Silence, like shadow, is also a significant aspect of experience of the world. Spaces of silence and solitude are human-centered and in these places there is an awareness of the world and of the self. They are not alienating sterile experiences. On the other hand, there is an immersion into the life-world that surrounds us.

## Scent of a place

"The most persistent memory of any space is often its odour" (Pallasmaa, 1996, p.37). Smells can rekindle memories of the place although the visual image has been completely forgotten. The smells of old city and the market with varied merchandise displayed on the sidewalks is an enriching experience to the senses. It should be noted that poets often refer to the smells of a place while creating an image - the smell of earth before rain, the smell of fresh leaves and flowers in spring, the smells of other human habitation and so on. Smells of a place are generated due to use and personalization of an environment. These spaces allow for the occupation and changing of the setting depending on the needs of the user. Therefore monotony is avoided and the different qualities of the environment are generated with their unique smells.

## Skin and Haptic space

The skin responds to the shapes and textures of the environment. The smooth and the rough surfaces of the pavement, the temperature of the wall and the breeze from trees caress the skin invoking deep senses of touch, which can connect us to the past. Pallasmaa notes that the pebble which is washed ashore is pleasurable to the touch of the hand, not only because of its shape, but because it also expresses the process of formation - "it is time turned into shape" (Pallasmaa, 1996, p.40).

In the built form, tactile experiences are generated by the materiality of the structure. The surfaces of the built form disclose the wearing due to years of use. There is always an inherent urge to touch something that is beautiful or moving. The beauty of the material is



in the ability to feel it through touch. Every moving or transcending experience is regarded to be 'touching'. Touch is a moment of personal experience and wonder. The eye too touches, often using the haptic memory from prior experiences. The feel of warmth and shade are understood through prior encounter of these states. Therefore, the experiential touching begins with the visual perception of these places. In the past, the textured surfaces of the building reflected the craft of the artisans involved in the creation. The craft is also revealed in the detailing of the building. The joints reflect the coming together of various parts of a building and manifest the forces that flow through the structure. The evident rightness and joining of the whole is a tactile experience felt through the eye.

Pallasmaa observes that the tactile experience subtly transfers to taste. Certain smells, touches and visual representations invoke sensations of taste. Pallasmaa asserts that the tongue can sense the materiality of a delicately colored polished stone surface (ibid., p.42). Thus the multi-sensory nature of environmental experience is again educed. Apart from the various sense modalities experienced, the body is also immersed in the environment through its own actions and bodily intentionalities. The people's being in the world is realized through their physical presence and behavior in the environment. The notion of human activities in the environment was discussed in chapter 4 on the behavioral reading of place through body and place choreographies. There is a constant exchange between the human body and the environment. The scale of the building and the environment is perceived in comparison to the scale of the body. Movement, scale and even sensations in the context of a place are experienced in contrast to the human body. Therefore, the essence of a body-centered experience is an awareness of world and thereby an awareness of the self.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has traced the experience of place from broader ontological notions to focussed experiential notions. There is an obvious interrelationship between these themes as they unite in the experience of place. The essence of place experience is knowledge of world, with complete immersion in the surroundings. This knowledge leads to a sense of place or '*genius loci*' which is the certain intangible quality in a place that makes it unique and denotes the meaningful relationship where man comes to term with his surroundings. The exploration into the general concepts of place is required before any attempt is made to understand the unique qualities of a particular place. The previous chapters gave an insight into the historical, physical and behavioral structure of State Street and its definite aspects of place. Based on the phenomenological notions of place explored in this chapter, the following chapter attempts to draw out the sense of place of the State Street Area.

## CHAPTER 6

### **GENIUS LOCI - STATE STREET AREA**

Sense of place is that intangible quality which imparts a characteristic uniqueness to the environment. The ancient Romans believed that every independent being had its 'genius' or guardian spirit. Norberg-Schulz observes that this "spirit gives life to people and places, accompanies them from birth to death, and determines their character or essence" (Norberg-Schulz, 1979, p.18). In settings of the past, man's existential well being depended on his favorable relationship with the genius of the place. Sense or spirit of place exists even today, although the qualities of places have largely changed from early times. Everyday life of the people is a factor that significantly influences the sense of place. To generate a positive sense of place during place making, it has to be understood that genius loci is the peoples' orienting and identifying with the place. It cannot be achieved through mere abstract qualities of space.

#### **An approach for exploring the 'Sense of Place' of State Street Area**

One way that sense of place is generated is through increasing peoples' involvement with their place. Although lately the concept of place has received some attention, past studies on people's involvement and attachment to the environment were most often related

to the notion of 'home' and 'at-homeness' (Bachelard, 1994; Seamon, 1979). If the attention is shifted from the personal space of home to the public realm of an urban space, the research on feelings of attachment and care with the environment are minimal. The home is a private, personal space with special meanings to the person who occupies it. But the basic characteristic of an urban space is social and communal. Although people associate special meanings to urban space, the intensity of attachment is difficult to describe. This is because there exists various levels of involvement depending on the individual's perception and experience of place. A unified communal feeling of attachment to place is rather impossible to find in reality although common attitudes can be identified. If environmental experience is described intuitively rather than observed from the outside, some meaningful common qualities of place can be discerned.

This research recognizes the potential problem that the description of State Street through the experience of the researcher could become subjective. There should be a conscious attempt to restrain from subjective describing. References to phenomenological notions explored by other authors should greatly aid in the disinterested describing of the experience. The intuitive description would also draw from the historical, physical and behavioral reading to help avoid subjective interpretation.

To describe the State Street Area, one must recognize at the start that it encompasses much more than just the shops located on State Street. To borrow from Heidegger, the boundary of State Street Area begins where it starts 'presencing' itself. One can feel its presence while approaching the area. It does not have a clear cut boundary but bleeds into

the neighboring streets. So the change in character is gradual, and the feeling of insideness becomes stronger. The 'sense of place' of State Street Area is phenomenologically described through themes experiential in nature. They are: dynamics of place, meaningful places, and feelings for place. These themes reveal the State Street Area as a whole in its totality. They convey the experience of 'being-in-the-world' as Martin Heidegger would refer to it, which involves a complete involvement in the environment and heightened awareness with its 'genius'. This heightened awareness does not mean a conscious attention at all times, but rather a knowledge of being there, in the place, at that moment.

### **Dynamics of place**

As much as a home is related to security and stability, an urban space is related to liveliness and change. The dynamics of place occur at various levels - the kinesthetic experience of place, place choreography generated by the constant activities of people, the changes that occur over time, and the events that mark the history of the particular place.

### **Place and Kinesthesia**

Kinesthetics refers to the bodily movement and sensations that occur in a particular space. The State Street Area involves a constant exchange with the people. The various stores and the Diag draw people for their unique qualities offering active interchange using all sense modes. The varied smells from the vendors, food and coffee shops, the play of sunlight on the facades, and the reflection of warmth and shade, the cooler space under the

trees in Diag, the noises due to the presence of other people on the sidewalk and so on, enrich bodily movement through the place. The kinesthetics of the place is dependent upon the spatial quality and physical reality. At the same time, it is also grounded in the experience of the environment by the body through all senses. Irrespective of the specific action mode - whether stationary or moving, there are subtle movements which come about as a response to environment, habit or an intentional behavior on the part of the individual. The dynamics of place is thus always maintained through the conscious or unconscious movements of an individual.



Fig. 6.1. The various shops and the vendor on State Street - a Kinesthetic experience.  
Source: Photograph by Author



Fig. 6.2. Mild spaces under the trees in Diag - a Kinesthetic experience  
Source: Photograph by Author

### **Body and Place Choreographies**

The bodily movements of individuals unite in space and time to engender place choreographies. This is the next level of bodily grounding in place due to behavior and

recognizes the social nature of an urban place like the State Street Area. Here, sociability does not extend to a level of complete identity and friendship as members of a group. Instead, there is an amiable sense of understanding among people as common users of space with respect for personal privacy. Many people use this area on an everyday basis. The individual routines and behaviors of people overlap and create the street ballet.

According to Seamon, the "ground stones of place ballet are continual human activity and temporal continuity" (Seamon, 1979, p.56). It is observed that the State Street Area is always peopled, at all times. As an observer, it is easy to notice the constant life and continuous street ballet. But even as a person immersed in the environment, at a basic level there is a consciousness of what is happening in the surroundings, despite what one is doing. The place ballet and other people add richness to the environmental experience. The



Fig. 6.3. People in Diag - students, and a family. Place ballet on a Sunday afternoon in summer.  
Source: Photograph by Author



presence of other people immersed in their own world gives a reassurance of being at the right place doing what one wants to do. At a deeper level, an urban space should offer freedom of use and personalization. The obvious ability of the environment to accommodate all kinds of people and their activities assures its continued occupancy and use. State Street, as a public place, is sociable because it incorporates the life world of people who do not belong to a homogenous group but differ in their intentions, capacities, economic standing and attitudes - students, professors, staff, shopkeepers, maintenance people, workers, beggars, teenagers, elderly, visitors, strollers and so on. All these people contribute significantly to the place choreography through their behavior and presence

### **Time, Change and Events**

Edward Casey argues for the primacy of place. He observes that if place was primary then, "Place itself would be the happening, and space and time what it occasions, what it specifies in determinate and measurable sites" (Casey, 1996, p.38). Places according to him are 'eventmental' in their ability to co-locate space and time within them as events.

The place becomes the focus, the constant. Time flows, changes occur, events leave their marks, but place exists. It is this quality that imparts a unique continuity exhibited in the State Street area. The individual body ballets fuse to become routine behaviors of people, which are grounded in place in association with time. Seamon refers to these behaviors as a time-space routine, which is "a set of habitual bodily behaviours which extend through a considerable portion of time" (Seamon, 1979, p.55). These behaviors impart temporality and change to the environment. In experiencing the State Street Area, each moment is unique,

and the perception of place in that moment cannot be repeated, but can be recreated as another experience of the place at a different time.

Places allow modifications to suit the people. Changes to the physical environment bear testimony to the constancy of place through time. They also denote the involvement of people with the environment. During observation on site, more than once, the booksellers referred to the previous location of Borders on State Street and that being a magnet so that people walking through also impulsively entered the other books stores. One bookseller attributed the moving of the store - Jacobson from State Street to the suburban shopping mall, to the lack of parking spaces. The changes in the environment affect the users on an everyday basis. If it is a part of one's routine to go to a coffee shop every morning for breakfast, then the closing of that shop would affect him. Such changes to places are remembered as events, and thus these changes also mark the course of time. At the same time, the persistent elements become imbued with memories. The Van Boven Inc Shop on Nickels Arcade is one such shop that has existed for more than 60 years in the same location. It has become a constant place through its extended presence over time.

Apart from the everyday activities and life world, certain less regular events in place also impart temporal continuity. One such event on State Street is the Ann Arbor Art Fair. Every summer, artists from Ann Arbor and other places participate in the Ann Arbor Street Art fair, which extends for about four days. The first art fair was held in 1960 with meager planning, but it succeeded. From then on, the Art fair has become an annual event, much looked forward to by people. The art lovers get to own and collect their favorites at

affordable prices. The artists get recognition, peer work exposure and most important of all, are able to reach a wider audience and customers. There are actually three concurrent Art Fairs: the Ann Arbor Street Art Fair on South University, which was the site of the first fair in 1960; the State Street Art Fair extending on State, North University, East Liberty, Maynard and Thompson Streets (started in 1968); and the Ann Arbor Street Art Fair on Main and East Liberty Streets (started in 1971).

During the 1999 Art Fairs, 500,000 art lovers were expected to visit the art fairs. Some pictures of the art fair held in the summer of 1999 (July 21 - 24) are shown in Figures 6.4, 6.5 and 6.6. The art fair has come to be a communal event, a festival of the city. The people consider it a symbol of their

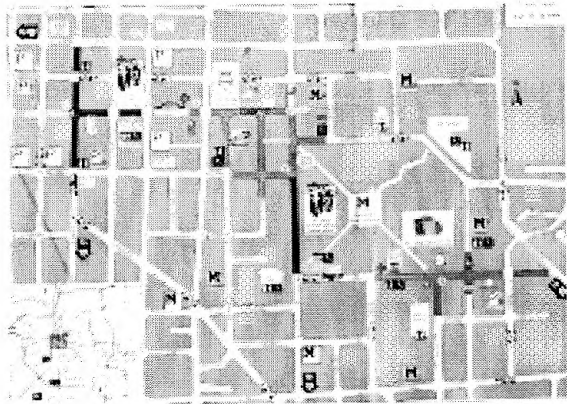


Fig.6.4. Fair Map of Ann Arbor Art Fair.  
 □ State Street Art Fair ■ Ann Arbor Art Fair  
 □ Summer Art Fair  
 Source: Art Fair Brochure - *Ann Arbor Art Fairs* (1999). Ann Arbor: Ann Arbor Observer



Fig. 6.5. A festival of Ann Arbor.  
 State Street Art Fair, State Street  
 Source: Photograph by Author

sophisticated literate leanings and appreciation towards art. The whole downtown becomes extremely crowded and the fair imparts a spectacular look to the streets. The rhythm of place ballet is at its highest. Preparations begin early and suitable arrangements in terms of traffic and other facilities are made in advance and advertised. At a basic level, this fair satisfies the need for the expression of the collective, a reason for the coming together of people to celebrate something - in this case art.



Fig.6.6. Artists' tents - State Street Art Fair, North University Street.  
Source: Photograph by Author

The Lennards consider festivals, celebrations and street entertainment important to city life - "...celebrations lend a sense of durability and continuity with the past... Incongruity and friction between people is balanced by the affirmation of recognizing shared human activities" (Lennard and Lennard, 1984, p.53). During the art fair, the street becomes a theater and links people together through their common interest toward art. It evokes deep feelings and focuses the whole community through shared experience. Apart from the people

of Ann Arbor, the visitors from other places also possess a significant role in the place choreography. It is a means through which they can know about another place, probably not its everyday life world, but nevertheless experience it genuinely as a whole. The annual art fair event adds special significance to Ann Arbor as an event, and the exclusive State Street Area Art Fair augments the sense of place of the State Street Area.

### **Meaningful Places**

Places are symbolic and carry special significances for their users. They are experienced and are responded to depending on the meanings that the people hold for them. In the built form of the house, the fireplace, attic and kitchen are meaningful places to the people. Although the genius loci of an urban place can be felt, identification of meaningful places is not common in the literature on study of places. The fireplace as a built form is constantly associated with the feeling of warmth and home. But identifying such a constant element in all urban places is impossible.

Therefore, the search for meaningful places needs to be more intuitive and unique to each setting, while exploring urban settings in general. The State Street Area has its own share of significant forms in the settings that possess special meanings. These forms can be inferred from the behavioral, physical and historical reading presented earlier in Chapters 2,3 and 4. The types of meaningful places in the State Street Area identified during study are discussed below. They are: centers, nooks, corners and domain of trees.

## Centers

'Center' has various existential meanings attached to it. Places on the whole are centers with meanings and associations. Secondly, centrality is the core of any wholesome experience of place. This also means that the body is experientially grounded in the center and there are decreasing zones of interest around the body, depending on the thing focused on at that moment in experience. Thirdly, on a day-to-day basis, certain centers of significance can be identified in the place. It is obvious that these three levels of experience of centers are related to one another. If meaningful centers in the State Street Area are identified, one can find symbolic centers and social centers of significance.

'Symbolic centers' are those urban forms that have existed for a considerable period of time and have become symbols to the people of the area. The Nickels Arcade is a symbolic center, built around 1916 by Tom Nickels, who owned the site and had "strong feelings about Ann Arbor's need to grow" (Reade and Wineberg, 1992, p. 122). The unique architecture of the building, the arcade - a European archetype - possesses a significant meaning to the people of Ann Arbor and projects a remarkable image to the visitor. Another of these symbolic icons on State Street Area is the State Theater. The façade is an obvious icon, with its bright yellow and red neon lights. The State Theater serves for orientation as a landmark and exists as an important element in the image of State Street.

'Social centers' are places that become significant due to the activities that take place in them and the involvement of people in those activities. The coffee shops, the Michigan book store, and the deli shop are part of the everyday routine of the people of State Street Area who do not consider these places as symbolic pieces from outside, but rather meaningful



environments in which they are immersed. Their perception of such centered places is in the context of things that are part of the place, including other people. It does not matter if one chooses to actively interact with other people, or seclude himself one visits social centers to satisfy the urge to be in a public place. Centers are sociable places where people's intentions are focused. Thus they become meaningful places to the people who inhabit them.



Fig. 6.7. Corner by the Diag - A social center  
Source: Photograph by Author



Fig. 6.8. Nickels Arcade in shade - the first bay of the arcade as a nook in the urban facade.  
Source: Photograph by Author.

## **Nooks**

Nooks are associated with secluded places and have a strong sense of enclosure, privacy, and ownership. The comfortable nooks of the home have distinct meanings and they persist in memory. To a great degree, nooks hint at solitude and at-homeness. In urban places nooks are not intentionally created with attentive detail but they come about as a result of building activities at various times. In the context of State Street Area the continuous



façade is modified time and again to suit the needs of the users, keeping the larger appearance of the architecture of the street intact (State Street comes under the Historic District Regulations of the City Planning Department). This results in varied shop fronts, and small nooks and ledges are created on the façade due to these modifications. These nooks and ledges allow impulsive use of the environment for adjusting bags, tying shoelaces, or to just rest. The nooks are not only functionally useful, but also allow the personalization of environment by the people - however temporary it may be.

Nooks always invite people to actively use the environment; the exchange between person and place is genuine. Besides, people watching others on the sidewalk prefer a solid back to rest - the ledges and the small nooks accommodate them. They are sought for comfort - a place to lean on. Nooks also induce a temporary sense of personal place - this is mine for now. This attitude can be particularly observed in the people who are just watching. The nooks in the façade of Amer's Deli (Fig.6.9) invite use as it is opaque with no glazing. This nook is the most favorite among beggars on State Street. It gives them a personal space from which to operate. The small recess gives them a space of their own, not exactly on the sidewalk obstructing the people, but noticeable enough. Another favorite nook was the first bay of Nickels Arcade. This recess is shaded at all times, and if the beggar or the temporary seller of goods needs some shade from the sun, this nook is convenient - at the same time, a prominent location to attract customers. A transitory feeling of enclosure and comfort makes nooks a much solicited urban feature.

## Corners

The nooks and corners of home bring strong memories of the past, but the corners of an urban place possess a different role in a public setting. They are prominent locations and therefore act as 'center stages'. The intersections offer views to the streets that meet, and act as cores of social interaction inducing many unplanned encounters. In many ways, these corners act as unacknowledged, informal centers. The corner of North University and State Street does not project an image of a center



Fig. 6.9. Recesses on the facade - Nooks  
Source: Photograph by Author



Fig. 6.9. The intersection between State and William Streets.  
Source: Photograph by Author

with significances, but it acts as a central stage to the place choreography of State Street. This corner is visually, behaviorally a place. Corners are also place revealers. Given the gridiron layout of Ann Arbor, as one turns round the corner, there is a sudden recognition of all the known features, and more so if there is anything missing. In the daily experience of State Street there is no surprise of turning the corner. William Whyte observes that street corners are the best places for observation, and that bunching patterns can be noticed here

(Whyte, 1988, p.10). In the State Street Area, corners were places where most conversations were spotted during observation of behavior. People who were on site just to watch were most often spotted in the corners - the intersection between North University and State Streets.

The corners are important not just because they offer a maximum view to users. There is a fundamental need to feel grounded in the place or, as Heidegger would call it, an awareness of being-in-the-world, where the underlying whole reveals itself to us. Many a time, it was observed in State Street that people walked to the intersections and paused for a few seconds and appeared as if to take note of what was around them and mentally decide what to do. Corners are places that we intuitively use as reference points, to orientate ourselves in the life-world that surrounds us.



Fig. 6.11. Diag - Domain of Trees  
Source: Photograph by Author

## **Domain of Trees**

Whyte and other authors have noted that trees are one of the most important factors that attract people to an urban open space. The Diag trees offer a place with filtered sunlight and cool shade, depending on the preference of the people. The contrast between the hard urban edge - the State Street facade, and the soft landscaped area - the Diag is obvious. The need for trees is often referred to as an urge to get back to nature, or nostalgia for pastoral fancies. This is a shallow explanation for a much more profound experience. The garden as an archetype is more than merely aesthetic. Besides, the trees and the lawn in Diag can hardly be suggested to be a garden. The experience of Diag on the whole possesses a higher significance than of just a garden. It has been a strong urban form and a source of identity to the University since its founding. As a place constant, it has faced many events through time. Even on an everyday basis, the pathways on Diag serve for student graffiti. It is the center of life of the Central Campus of the University of Michigan. Diag is also a place where people come to have lunch, laze in the sun, ponder, read, sleep, watch people, bring their kids, play and so on. The cover of trees creates a defined spatial experience. Any season of the year, irrespective of the presence of foliage, the spatiality of Diag is unmistakable. The inside and outside distinction in Diag is clear to the person experiencing the place.

Also, the tree as a form of nature has ontological meanings. The verticality of the tree and the horizontal covering of the branches and the foliage cover above, is a primordial form of gathering. This is one of the reasons why an image of a single tree in a clear landscape can have strong meanings. The tree gathers the landscape and the sky as a central element,

and show visible indications of seasons and time - therefore the setting becomes part of the cosmic whole. Thus being under a tree is an unrivaled gathering experience more than merely an aesthetic one. The Diag is not a planned landscaped garden but a domain of trees where the person can come closer to the experience of gathering.

### **Feelings for Place**

People associate with places and possess special identities in relation to them. Identities of a place are formed with respect to individual experiences, background, moods, expectations and intentions. For an outsider, prior experience and notions of place are important determinants in forming the identity. Therefore identities differ with individuals, but places generate on the whole a collective identity among people of the area. This collective identity is one of the important aspects of sense of place. The spirit of place and distinctiveness is retained through years despite changes to the environment. The sense of place and identity is formed through different kinds of feeling for a place, a few of which are explored here, namely: rootedness, territoriality, attachment, care, memories and wonder.

### **Rootedness and attachment**

Rootedness is a deep psychological bonding with the place. Relph observes that it is "a familiarity that is part of knowing and being known here, in this particular place" (Relph, 1976, p.37). To have roots is a profound psychological need. It gives a person a safe ground to stand and perceive the world and experience it. Roots in a place induce feelings of stability, confidence, order, responsibility, freedom, security and so on. It is related to the

experience of 'at-homeness', which Seamon, refers to be the "taken-for-granted situation of being comfortable and familiar with the world in which one lives his or her day-to-day life" (Seamon, 1979, p.78). Home is an intense experiential archetype with many layers of meanings attached to it. The feeling of being at home is one of the basic experiences of warmth, comfort, safety and content. Therefore it is directly related to the feeling of well being in an urban place too.

An urban place should impart the feeling of being at-ease, to be what one is, and do what he wishes. To an extent, the ability to personalize the space allows a person to be at ease and perform his activities. Secondly, in an urban setting, seeing other people use the space according to their wishes induces the person to appropriate the place for himself. In the State Street Area, the environment communicates to the people these two levels of being comfortable in a place. A few street people accosted the researcher, curious to know what she was doing. But it was a friendly enquiry. The environment communicated the feeling of acceptance even to the outsider. This was due to the inherent variety in the environment in terms of people and what they did. At-easeness is a vital factor in developing feelings of attachment. It is only natural that people of the area develop bonds with the place they are comfortable with.

Seamon explains that attachment maintains two levels of meanings - attraction and closeness. 'Attraction' to a place draws a person towards it, and in 'closeness' the person's identifying with the place is high. The State Street Area generates a high level of cues to the empathetic outsider attracting him to the place and getting him to wonder about its sense of place. At the same time, it is apparent that there is a deep level of identity and closeness that

people of the area possess with the place. The shopkeepers' obvious attachment to the place is seen in their hesitancy to move to a grander setting. State Street is a significant location and shopkeepers who have been here feel a deep involvement with the place. One bookseller, although he could not afford a first floor location, still stayed on at State Street and moved upstairs. Moreover, a permanent location adds to the identity of the shop. The attachment of people is also revealed in their repeated occupying of the place. They come here not only (because of necessity because other eating places abound just a few blocks away towards Main Street and also South State Street). There is also a deep feeling of attachment towards State Street, which is part of their everyday life. Thus State Street is a meaningful place to the people irreplaceable in their daily routine.

### **Territoriality and Privacy**

When there is a feeling of rootedness and attachment to a place, appropriation is unavoidable. A sense of ownership prevails and resists intrusion. Territoriality, Seamon observes, is a behavioral phenomenon related to "the organization of space into spheres of influence or clearly demarcated territories which are made distinctive and considered at least partially exclusive by their occupants or definers" (Seamon, 1979, p.70). Although obscure, territoriality certainly exists in an urban place.

There has been extensive study of distances in public places. Jan Gehl summarizes these distances to be intimate, personal, social and public distances (Gehl, 1987, p.71). He expresses these distances not only in terms of measurement but also feelings associated with them. 'Intimate distance' (0 to 1½ feet) is the distance where feelings of tenderness, comfort,



love and strong anger are expressed. 'Personal distance' (1½ to 4½ feet) is the conversational distance of closeness - a family or a group of friends. 'Social distance' (4½ to 12 feet) is the distance of friendliness - ordinary conversation among friends, acquaintances, co-workers and so on. 'Public distance' (greater than 12 ft) is the distance of complete avoidance of any kind of intimacy, generally found in very formal situations. Although State Street is an urban public place, it can be observed that people use all these four distances in their communication with people, depending on their relationship with them - meeting of lovers (intimate), a conversation among a group of friends smoking on the sidewalk (personal), a larger gang of kids biking or skating in the evening (social), an artist performing on the street (public). The use of all four levels of distances is a good indication of the at-easeness quality of the place.

One interesting aspect of territoriality was observed among the beggars of the State Street Area. They seemed to have a tacit understanding of their zones among themselves and never infringed upon another's territory. Although there were not many vendors, the hot dog seller always occupied the 100% location on the North University, State Street intersection, while other vendors took up places next to him. Territoriality was also observed as a function of privacy and intrusion. If a person was comfortably ensconced on the Diag lawns, his reverie was almost never intruded upon. On the other hand, the people who were on the sidewalks and were just watching people and not engrossed within themselves, were involved in more conversations. Thus we can see that even in a public place like the State Street Area, there are various levels of privacy and territoriality that can be achieved irrespective of physical enclosures.

Fig. 6.12. Few varied but well kept storefronts on the West Facade.  
Source: Photograph by the Author.



## Care

Experiences of rootedness, attachment and appropriation in a place lead to feelings of care. Heidegger refers to the kindly concern for things to be sparing and preserving. This feeling is described as the tolerance for something without trying to change or control it. Through the care of things, man comes closer to the experience of dwelling, which also means to 'cherish and protect, to preserve and care for' (Seamon, 1979, p.92).

The State Street Area was recognized for its significance and brought under the Historic District Regulations of the City Planning Department. This assured a sensitive treatment towards its facades. It should be noted that this might lead to inauthentic reproductions and attitudes towards the environment. Nevertheless there is some recognition and effort by the authorities to retain State Street's present character.

The shop owners on State Street have undertaken a remarkable effort towards care of the area. They have formed a State Street Area Association, which is involved in care

taking and revitalizing the State Street Area. There is an ongoing project in association with the students of the University of Michigan Architecture Department, to study and give proposals to improve the area. It is a confirmation of all these peoples' attachment, ownership and responsibility over the place. Part of a collective effort, they are able to enrich the urban place as a whole and not just limit it to their particular shop alone. Since their efforts are focused, they are able to reach a wider audience and also achieve larger objectives. United endeavors like these strengthen the sense of place and identity towards the environment. Apart from such group efforts, the care for environment is also expressed through personal attention to the physical setting. The clean and attractive upkeep of store fronts and interiors reflect a high degree of concern to the environment apart from just an incentive for higher sale. This attitude of care also shows concern towards the maintenance of historic identity of the environment through physical features. Thus attachment of the people towards the place manifests as care towards the setting.

### **Memories and wonder**

Memories of spatial experiences and places can be powerfully moving. According to Steele, memories refer to the "whole class of images, thoughts, and feelings, which, when we experience them, have the quality of coming back to us from the past" (Steele, 1981, p.126). A place can kick off memories from prior experiences. A particular smell has the ability to bring back to memory the whole range of experiences of the setting encountered in the past. Childhood memories are especially overpowering. Steele observes that memories can be classified into two broad classes with reference to cues in the setting. The

first are the memories of events or feelings that occurred previously in that same setting. The second class of memories are triggered by qualities of a setting that recall moments in other settings (Steele, 1981, p.130). The State Street Area has been a place constant that has been through many changes. The people remember the significant events and place experiences of the setting in the past. In addition, events like Art Fair generate images in the minds of people, which is unique to Ann Arbor. Memories abound in meaningful places, where people have special associations to particular features in the setting. Thus Ann Arbor with its sense of history, variety, growth and change creates unique memories in the minds of people.

Fig. 6.13. The Ann Arbor Art Fair - an experience of wonder and memories  
Source: Photograph by Author.



Unique place experiences almost always involve a sense of wonder. In wonder, the place can be entirely new or a familiar setting can be experienced from a different perspective. A stranger's experience of an environment involves conscious attention to its

identity and is therefore a context for a sense of wonder. Thus, descriptions of the cities in Europe by non-Europeans, possess an inherent sense of wonder of the place. A moment of wonder is an instant of heightened awareness. The State Street Area with its environmental richness and unique setting attracts the stranger, exhibiting its intangible sense of place.

In the author's personal experiences of State Street, the Art Fair was an experience of wonder. Although the strong identity of the place was obvious even during ordinary days, the Art Fair communicated the full potential of place experience. The whole downtown wore a cheerful look, and it was apparent that the people were there for a wholesome experience—Ann Arbor in its festivities and the joy of being together, in a place.

Another experience of wonder was the observation of State Street in rain. On one of the observation days in October, there were heavy showers towards afternoon. The activities on State Street were not interrupted due to rain. But the environment had a completely different look. The people who were involved in conversations on the sidewalks moved into the shops or into the Nickels Arcade. They also waited under the awnings for the rain to stop. The arcade became the hub of action. One could see people walking through the Diag, the rain falling among the trees onto the spread of autumn leaves on the ground. The deepened color of the facades due to moisture and the cool winds carrying the water droplets along with them into the covered areas under the awnings and into Nickels Arcade was an exhilarating experience. Such an intense awareness of the environment is an authentic experience of place and dwelling. Moments like these also occur on an everyday basis, when people are brought out of their everyday routine to experience the place in a more meaningful way. A sunny day attracts people to impulsively enjoy the sun on the sidewalks and in Diag.

Sunlight suddenly falling at an angle on a façade, a few birds trying to gather food fallen onto the sidewalks, an artist performing at the end of Diag are few moments that convey wonder - a wholesome experience of the everyday aesthetic of an urban place.

## **Conclusion**

The State Street Area is a confluence of various micro-worlds of experiences. Its sense of place is grounded in its character, architecture, spatiality, people, their experiences, expectations, symbolic references, feelings of attachment, memories and attitudes. The people experience its totality in complex ways, at a particular instant. The notions explored in this chapter help communicate the unique character of State Street Area. These notions were developed intuitively, drawing on the experience of State Street. They are not standard principles that can be applied to the exploration of all places. One should also bear in mind that this was a reading of a commercial area. The reading of residential streets would generate a very different experience. But, it is true that the State Street Area acts like a hub for the residential areas close by, accessible within a walking range of 10 minutes. Therefore on the whole, the sense of place generated by State Street pertains probably to nearby residents as well as users of State Street itself.

The main aim of this chapter has been an understanding of people's complete involvement and immersion in place - the experience of being-in-the-world with an awareness of its distinctiveness and identity. Thus it is observed that an intuitive phenomenological reading begins to reveal the sense of place of the State Street Area.

## CHAPTER 7

### **FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR RESEARCH AND DESIGN**

The State Street Area is an ordinary everyday setting used by people on a day to day basis. The phenomenological exploration of this place reveals the particular significances it generates among the people using this place. The notions explored to elucidate the sense of place of State Street in the previous chapter are not exhaustive. They describe in a summary the author's experience of the State Street Area. The historical, physical and behavioral readings explored in the second, third and fourth chapters are important in providing links with the phenomenological notions describing the State Street Area. These experiential themes uncover the life of State Street as a place and reveal that people are central in generating a meaningful place experience. The place ballet of State Street is constantly created by the people who hold meaningful significances with the environment depending on their experiences, attitudes, interests and associations. This reading provides one way through which environments can be studied for meaningful place-making decisions.

#### **Directions for further place reading research**

The reading of State Street Area was not extensive due to the presence of only a single researcher and limited resources. Given better resources, the method of time-lapse



photography used by William Whyte would probably prove effective for behavioral observation in urban settings. Photographs are also helpful as a record for future reference. The behavioral reading of State Street, was done in various sections in consecutive time slots of 15 minutes each. The combined observations of all days were interpreted in conjunction with one another for a general representation of the behavior on State Street. If more than one camera were set up in various locations in the study area, observations could be made simultaneously. The physical and behavioral reading could be done with more detail, covering a much larger physical area if more researchers were involved. The question of subjectivity in experiential reading of place could also be partly eliminated through the generalized interpretation of the experiences of several researchers of the same place. This method of intersubjective corroboration could yield a more common interpretation of sense of place.

For a more generalized qualitative reading of the place, questionnaires and interviews with the various users of the area would be supportive. But, the sample group for such questionnaires should be chosen with care. The answers of a particular group of users, for example students, would not match with that of the shopkeepers. Extensive interviews to incorporate the experiences of all groups of users in the study should be undertaken. This might add useful information for issues during design of a that place.

The significance of understanding the place experience and genius loci of a place is in the ability to intuitively generate a sense of place during design. Place making involves not just the creation of an exhilarating spatial experience but a meaningful place experience.

Through the study of urban places like State Street Area, useful clues on the people's experience of the environment can be inferred. In addition, the more deep the knowledge of places, the better might be the response to a particular place making situation.

### **Place Making**

If the experience of being-in-the-world is to be strengthened, there is a need to make places which do not distance people from that place or from each other. The approach to place making should first realize the importance of dwelling in the everyday life-world. The importance should be returned to the 'being in the center' from the 'building in the center'. Although many environments today alienate people, there are places where there is an authentic experience of being. Relph draws on the phenomenological notions of authenticity and inauthenticity to understand the various levels of place and placelessness. The philosophy of existentialism refers to authenticity as a mode of being "which recognizes a man's freedom and responsibility for his own existence." Therefore, "An authentic attitude to place is thus understood to be a direct and genuine experience of the entire complex of the identity of places" (Relph, 1976, p.64). Relph also notes that the authentic and inauthentic levels of existence could easily reverse positions depending on the individual and the experience concerned.

### Authentic attitudes

An authentic attitude to place can be unselfconscious or self-conscious. In an unselfconscious sense of place or 'I - thou' relationship, the person and place exist in a

strongly developed complete relationship to one another. In primitive peoples, this attitude was largely spiritual rather than physical. The complexity and intensity of meanings attached to places has largely decreased now when compared to the cultures of the past. But still people possess deep psychological links with a place, which is sometimes expressed during times of stress - for example, when a tornado destroys a community. An unselfconscious attitude of belonging to a place is important because it induces a source of identity for individuals and communities.

A self-conscious attitude to place, or an 'I - You' relationship, is that of an empathetic outsider seeking to experience place with an open mind and respond intuitively to its identity. The intensity of experience is not the same among people because it depends on the openness achieved by each individual. Although the outsider cannot achieve the insideness felt by the native insiders of that place, his 'sense of place' can be strengthened through a living mutual relationship 'between observer and environment, person and place'. The built environment would benefit immensely if architects and designers would adopt the I-you stance with certain degree of openness and empathetic involvement in the creation of a building.

#### Authentic approaches to place making

Built environments gain meaning because of human occupation and activities with a total integration of physical, social, cultural, spiritual and aesthetic attitudes of people. Meaningful environments can be created unselfconsciously or self-consciously. In an unselfconscious approach, there is a direct translation of the needs, values, culture into built

form in accord with the context, site and climate. These buildings reflect the intentions of those who created them and yet possess a unique identity. The aesthetic and theoretical notions of architecture and building are absent in the act of creation. Although there is a lack of involvement of trained individuals or architects in the majority of building activity in the recent past, the approach to making places unselfconsciously does not consider the context, site and climate. So, in cities of today, people using the built environments on an everyday basis imparts partial authenticity to the experience but never a complete sense of place.

Therefore, the unselfconscious approach is largely connected with cities of the past. These environments, when brought under the protection of historic preservation, lose their sense of originality and are observed as mostly museum pieces. In this process, people are again alienated from the dwelling experience, and there is no personal identity with the place. While authentic, unselfconsciously created places are devoid of theoretical presumptions, authentic and self-consciously made places reflect a clear intellectual approach to creating place, with sensitivity to context and the relationship between man and his environment. Architects like Alvar Aalto, Louis Kahn and Frank Lloyd Wright, have self-consciously created buildings to fit in their context, using significant elements from the landscape which deepen the feeling for place without imitating indigenous architecture. As places themselves are experienced with differing levels of authenticity, their creation also occurs at varying degrees of authenticity. For an authentic sense of 'being-in-the-world' humans require places that are not just bought but are shaped by the intentions and behavior of the people over a long period of time, nurtured by the meanings, associations and significances they have for that particular place. There is a necessity to overcome the inherent contradictions in attitudes

towards place making and strive to create meaningful environments, which aid in the experience of being in the world.

### **Some real-world applications of ‘place making’**

Although architects have self-consciously created meaningful buildings, at an urban scale little has been done to strengthen the place experience. This is largely due to the inability of the large-scale application of design ideas to real-world situations. In many cases, urban and regional planning limits itself to the two-dimensional aspects of space, with no concern towards three dimensional multi-sensory experience. But, such strong experience-oriented urban design has been emphasized by various authors (like Jane Jacobs and the authors of Responsive Environments) for decades.

It is important that liveliness of city streets be strengthened so that more people are able to use those streets. What is required is a design - enhancing environmental clarity and richness of experience to increase the users’ associations and meanings with the built environment. Permeable spaces are important since they increase the user’s choices in the environment and make the environment more accessible. Many authors have insisted on this aspect of the urban environment which is typically absent in most suburban developments of today. This deals with the basic two-dimensional structure of the neighborhood, what has already been called ‘permeability’ (Bentley, et al. 1984, p.12), which can be defined as the availability of a number of alternative routes to reach a place.

An interesting study was done on permeability by Bill Hillier in his *Theory of Space Syntax* (Hillier, 1983, p.48). He is concerned with spatial order and the principles of

intelligibility of space, continuity of occupation and predictability of space. He uses the notion of a 'deformed grid', which refers to the axiality and convexity of spaces. Axiality of space is the length of sightliness, or one dimensional extension being slightly restricted or sometimes extended, leading to shorter or longer perspectives. Convexity is the width of spaces that generates nodes in the spatial network. This generates variety in environmental experience. Hillier and his colleagues performed extensive studies on European cities and evolved a mathematical method to identify the level of spatial order in urban settings.

The increase in the 'richness of experience' pertains to a whole gamut of concerns with reference to place making, and these concerns extend beyond the two-dimensional structure of space as expressed through permeability. Environments need to be designed for diversity. Diverse environments possess varied kinds of uses and allow for growth, change and personalization providing a multi-sensory experience. All these factors require an intensive exchange between people and place. People use their environment, develop attachments and change it to suit their needs. Such environments are not created at the end of the building process, but through its occupation by its users. A pedestrian-oriented design enhances the close association and first-hand experience of the environment. This does not demand the segregation of vehicular and pedestrian flows. One way-traffic observed on State Street is not the best solution, but traffic flows should be analyzed and incorporated in the design of new settings. Richness also involves the inherent materiality and range of experience that an urban place provides. An urban open space like Diag is most often incorporated in the design as a relief, but very rarely taps on the proximity of the main pedestrian flow.

## **Policy implications**

Implementation of design solutions in an urban space involves policy implications. The process of arriving at the best design solution for a particular setting is complex. The user participatory approach is useful, but not always entirely successful. Christopher Alexander used his theory of 'Pattern Language' to guide the users to design their own home settings (Alexander, 1977). He also involved them in the building process to generate a sense of commitment to the place. The process though was not entirely successful as a post-evaluation study indicated (Fromm, Bosselman, 1983-84, p.76-91). There were several problems, like privacy, security, changing needs of the families and the deterioration of the social relationships among the people. Any place-making process should allow for growth and change over time. In projects of this kind, it is also necessary to have approval from the authorities and continued economic support from the governmental agencies.

The concerns in an urban setting are more complex. The design solutions cannot be targeted towards certain individuals but rather the whole community. The political, social and economic issues in implementing these designs are significant. Apart from strengthening the place experience, the place-making process should also consider the decision and policy making authorities. Associations like State Street Area Association can exert influence as a group in the policy making decisions and implementation of solutions. The involvement of the people towards the maintenance and improvement of the place is necessary to bring about conducive changes to the environment. Any policy or design solution thus implemented cannot be applied as a standard to all environments. For example, greenery is desirable in an urban space. But the Diag as an environment, or even the number of trees cannot be



replicated as a standard design solution to the Main Street which is another commercial area located just five blocks west of State Street. Therefore, to maintain the identity of a place the experience and design as place making should be unique to that place.

## **Conclusion**

This thesis is the first step towards creating meaningful environments, by reading them thoroughly. This reading brings out the practical everyday knowledge of the place that is required “to organize our experiences of the world” (Relph, 1976, p.1), as well as the deeper significance of place in human experience. Such a holistic understanding of a particular place would help in the design and place-making process of that place, and also contribute to the awareness of other places in experience.

When the people in an environment are given more importance, the space is better used and becomes more meaningful. Significant places are thus created in a self-conscious approach to design through an authentic attitude to ‘sense of place’. On the other hand, if there is an intentional ignorance towards notions of place, a barren experience of placelessness occurs. According to Relph, "It reaches back into the deepest levels of place, cutting roots, eroding symbols, replacing diversity with uniformity and experiential order with conceptual order" (ibid., p.143). It is a profound alienation from place and therefore existence as a whole. But human existence demands the association to places as a primordial experience. Therefore, a response to that need would involve the creation of significant places, with man in the center, enhancing human experience.

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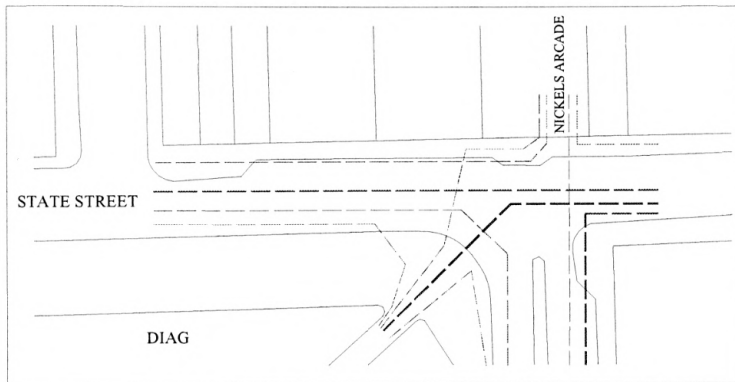
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**APPENDIX A**

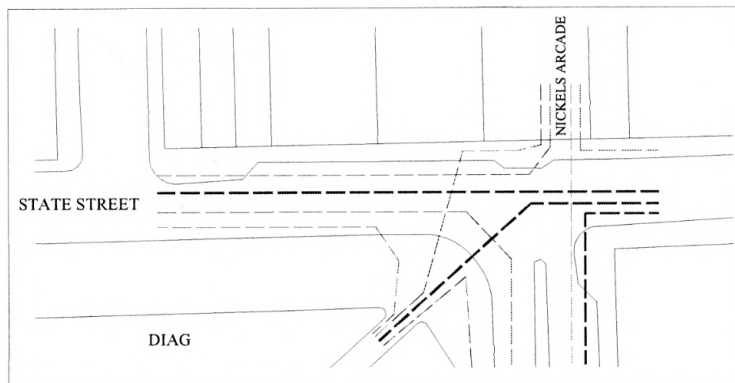
**BEHAVIORAL READING OF STATE STREET AREA**

**MAPPING OF MOVEMENT AND ACTIVITIES**

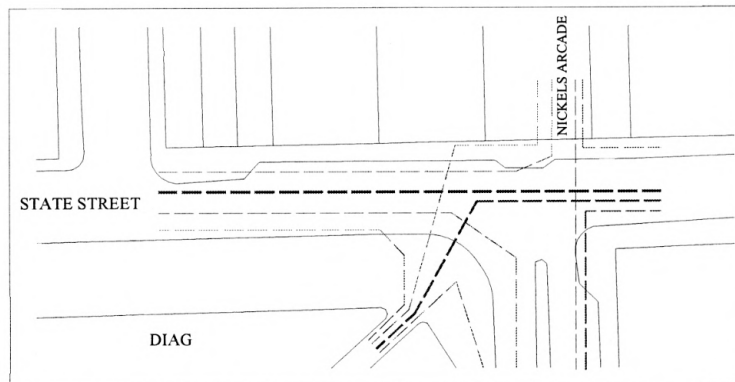
Days	From	To	Thursday		
			Mo	No	Ev
S. State	North		42	99	62
	Nickels		2	6	3
	Diag		-	8	3
	Crs North		-	10	4
	N. Univ		10	3	2
Diag	Nickels		3	7	3
	South		3	2	4
	Crs North		18	6	12
	North		10	73	68
	N. Univ		1	7	1
Nickels	South		4	3	3
Arcade	North		10	6	13
	Diag		2	4	3
	Crs North		-	2	1
	N. Univ		1	1	1
North Univ.	Nickels		-	-	2
	Diag		-	6	4
	South		3	10	15
	North		32	43	24
	Crs North		15	31	17
N.State	South		29	53	64
	Diag		75	66	24
	Nickels		4	3	4
	N. Univ		39	45	14
	rs South	/	4	15	



THURSDAY MORNING OBSERVATION



THURSDAY NOON OBSERVATION



THURSDAY EVENING OBSERVATION

### WEEKDAY OBSERVATION OF MOVEMENT

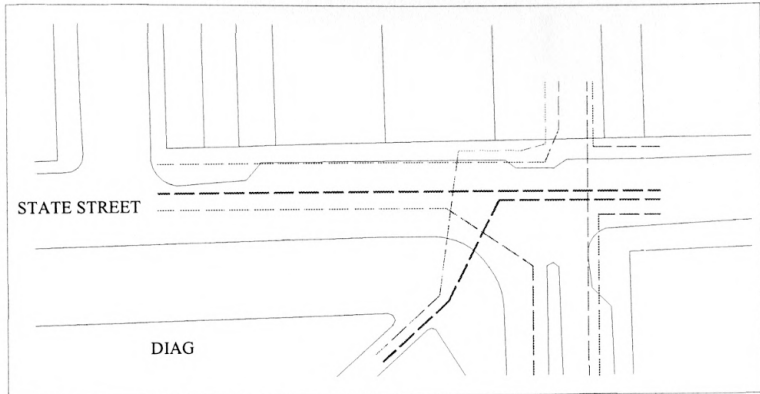
Pedestrian flow on Thursday, October 14, 1999

Observation was done in 15 minute time periods

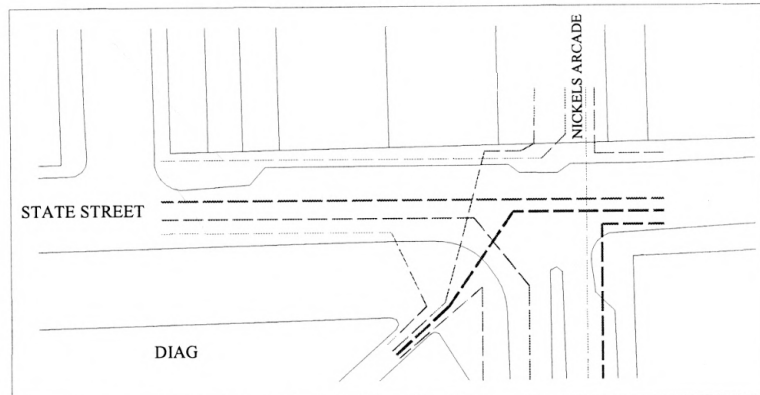
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Evening observation - between 4 :30 pm and 7 pm

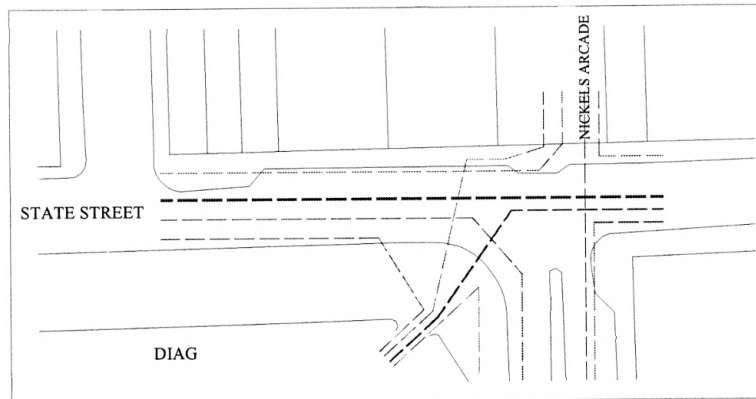
Days	From	To	Friday		
			Mo	No	Ev
S. State	North		48	58	72
	Nickels		5	1	11
	Diag			3	6
	Crs North		6	6	2
	N. Univ		11	5	3
Diag	Nickels		6	10	4
	South		-	1	2
	Crs North		5	10	9
	North		18	45	41
	N. Univ		-	2	1
Nickels	South		3	6	3
Arcade	North		9	31	16
	Diag		1	9	2
	Crs North		-	4	-
	N. Univ		4	2	1
	North	Nickels		-	-
Univ.	Diag		-	11	-
	South		11	30	20
	North		28	51	31
	Crs North		4	11	7
	N.State	South		33	44
Diag			64	69	33
Nickels			4	2	3
N. Univ			33	60	11
rs South			3	8	11



FRIDAY MORNING OBSERVATION



FRIDAY NOON OBSERVATION



FRIDAY EVENING OBSERVATION

**WEEKDAY OBSERVATION OF MOVEMENT**

Pedestrian flow on Friday, October 15, 1999

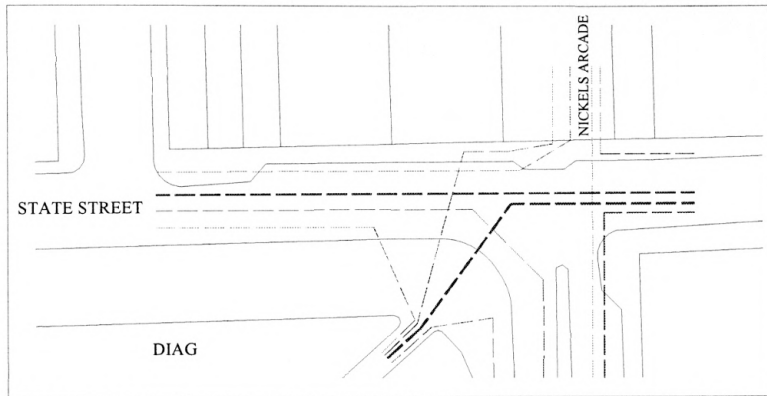
Observation was done in 15 minute time periods

Morning - between 9 am and 11 am Noon - between 11:30 am and 2:30 pm

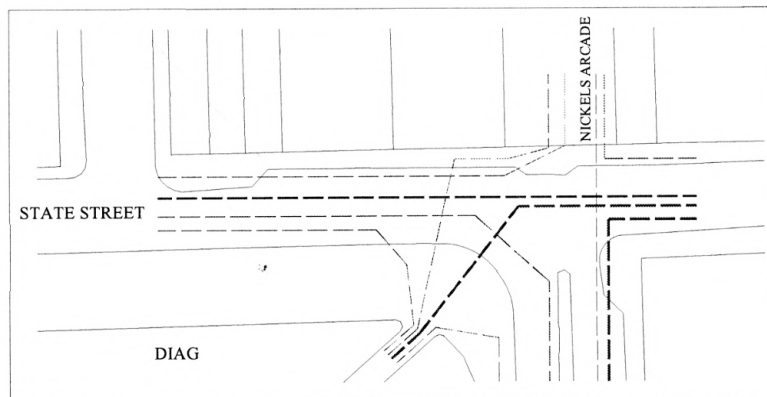
Evening observation - between 4 :30 pm and 7 pm



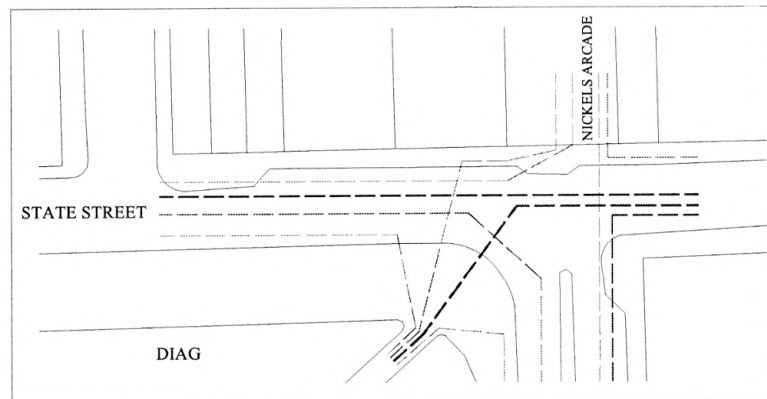
To	Monday		
	Mo	No	Ev
North	37	64	45
Nickels	2	3	9
Diag	1	5	4
Crs North	2	-	7
N. Univ	7	6	6
Nickels	5	5	3
South	1	3	2
Crs North	7	14	13
North	22	63	46
N. Univ	1	-	1
South	10	3	3
North	4	18	7
Diag	6	5	3
Crs North	-	-	-
N. Univ	1	4	-
Nickels	1	-	5
Diag	3	3	-
South	24	27	20
North	23	79	33
Crs North	2	14	11
South	44	44	38
Diag	101	51	52
Nickels	8	2	5
N. Univ	34	49	26
rs South	13	4	4



MONDAY MORNING OBSERVATION



MONDAY NOON OBSERVATION



MONDAY EVENING OBSERVATION

**WEEKDAY OBSERVATION OF MOVEMENT**

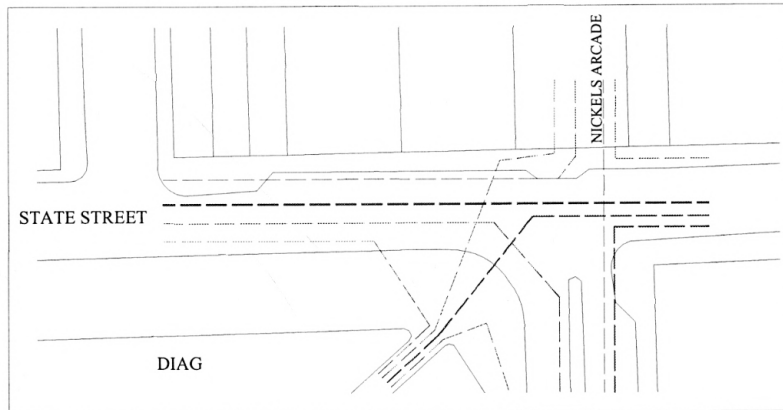
Pedestrian flow on Monday, October 18, 1999

Observation was done in 15 minute time periods

Morning - between 9 am and 11 am Noon - between 11:30 am and 2:30 pm

Evening observation - between 4 :30 pm and 7 pm

Sunday		
To	No	Ev
North	48	43
Nickels	4	5
Diag	-	1
Crs North	9	2
N. Univ	-	4
Nickels	2	3
South	2	3
Crs North	1	16
North	26	27
N. Univ	1	-
South	4	-
North	4	14
Diag	1	1
Crs North	-	-
N. Univ	-	-
Nickels	2	1
Diag	-	3
South	8	15
North	34	17
Crs North	18	29
South	35	24
Diag	26	23
Nickels	8	4
N. Univ	11	23
Crs South	8	3



SUNDAY NOON OBSERVATION



SUNDAY EVENING OBSERVATION

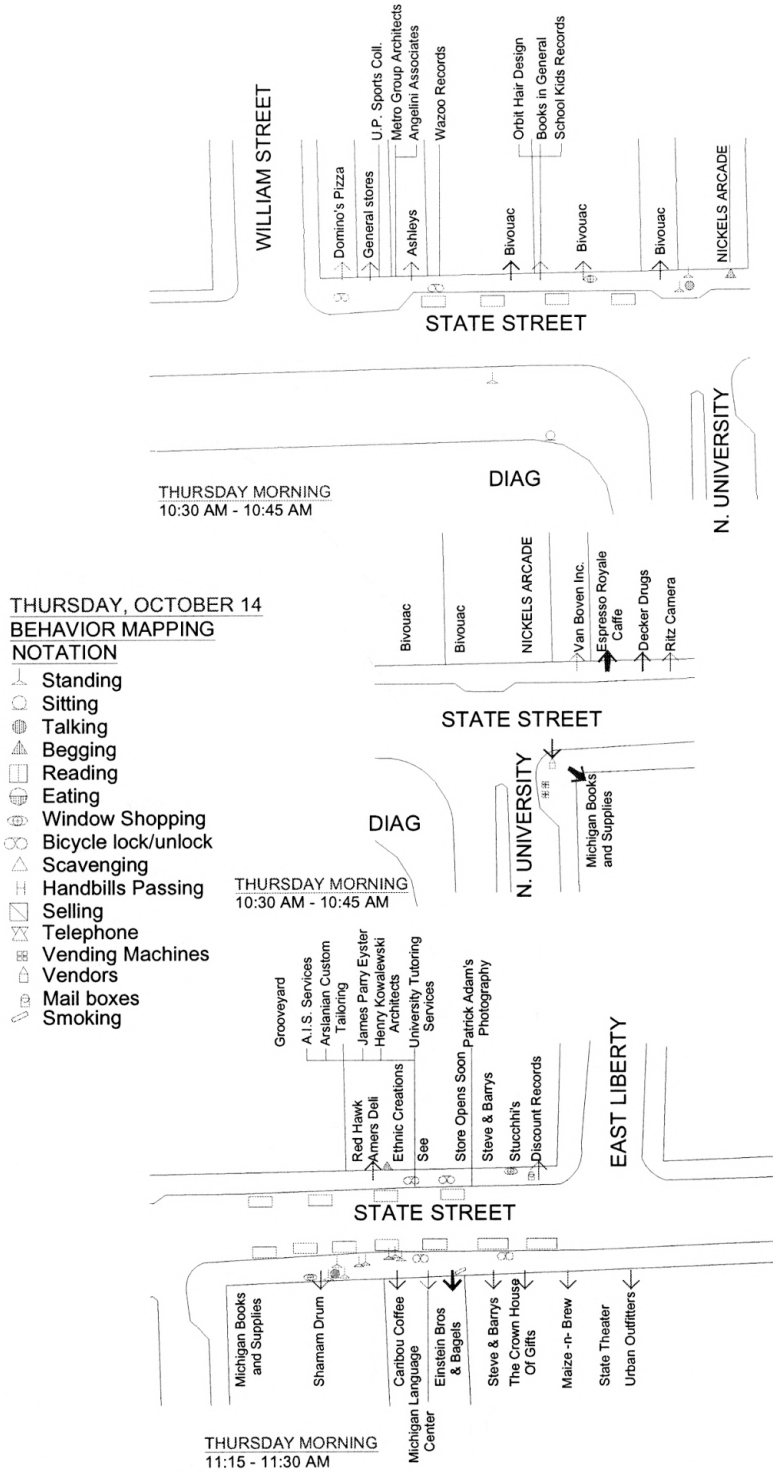
**WEEKEND OBSERVATION OF MOVEMENT**

Pedestrian flow on Sunday, October 17, 1999

Observation was done in 15 minute time periods

Noon - between 11:30 am and 2:30 pm

Evening observation - between 4 :30 pm and 7 pm



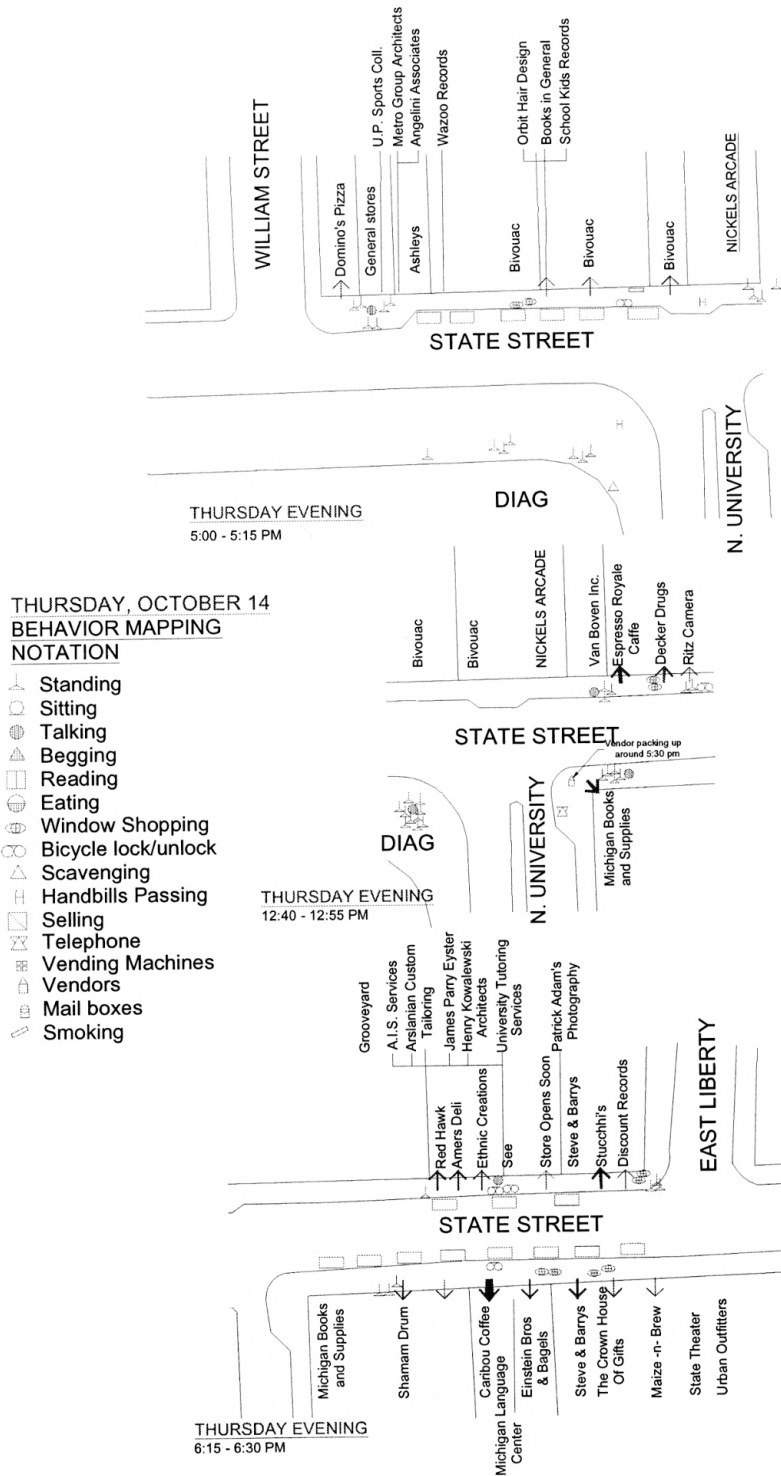
**WEEKDAY OBSERVATION OF ACTIVITIES**  
 Thursday, October 14, 1999 - Morning Observations  
 Observation done in 3 sections of site in 15 minute time periods



**WEEKDAY OBSERVATION OF ACTIVITIES**

Thursday, October 14, 1999 - Noon Observations

Observation done in 3 sections of site in 15 minute time periods



**WEEKDAY OBSERVATION OF ACTIVITIES**

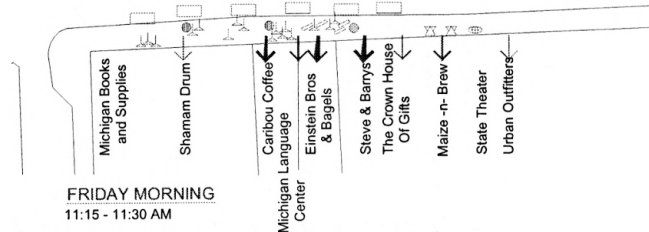
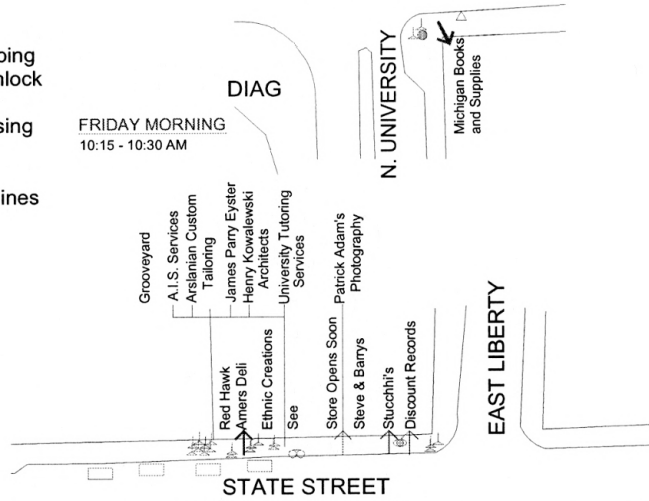
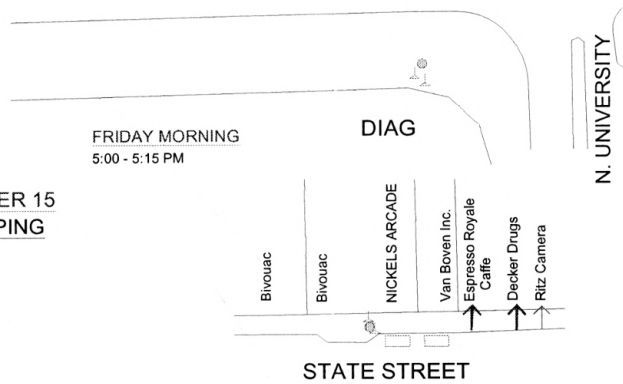
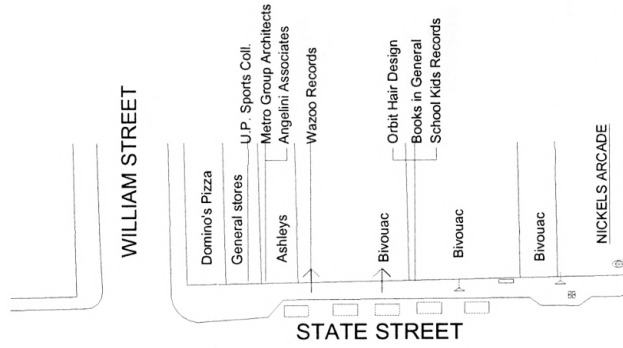
Thursday, October 14, 1999 - Evening Observations

Observation done in 3 sections of site in 15 minute time periods

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 15

**BEHAVIOR MAPPING NOTATION**

- Smoking
- Standing
- Sitting
- Talking
- Begging
- Reading
- Eating
- Window Shopping
- Bicycle lock/unlock
- Scavenging
- Handbills Passing
- Selling
- Telephone
- Vending Machines
- Vendors
- Mail boxes



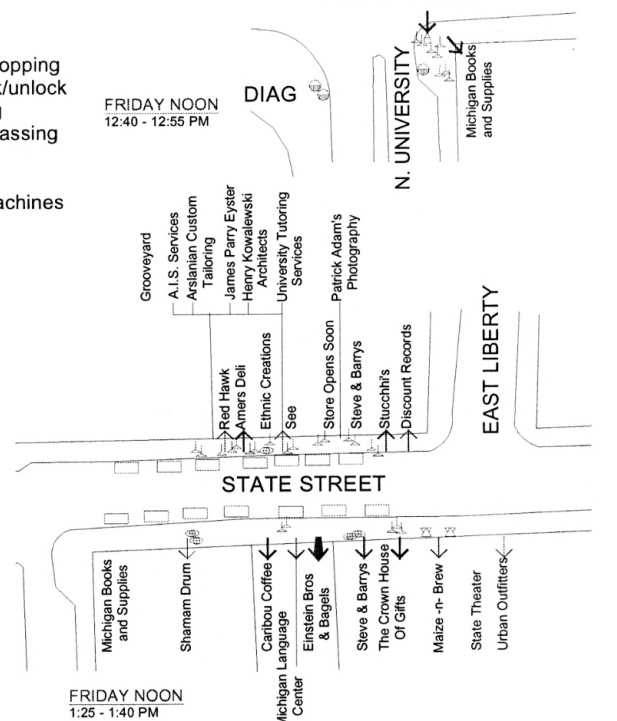
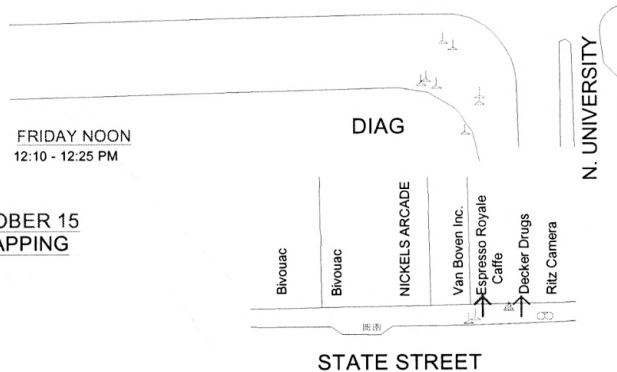
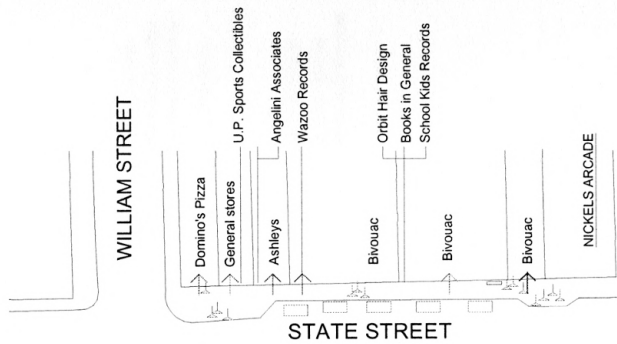
**WEEKDAY OBSERVATION OF ACTIVITIES**

Friday, October 15, 1999 - Morning Observations

Observation done in 3 sections of site in 15 minute time periods

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 15  
BEHAVIOR MAPPING  
NOTATION**

- Standing
- Sitting
- Talking
- Begging
- Reading
- Eating
- Window Shopping
- Bicycle lock/unlock
- Scavenging
- Handbills Passing
- Selling
- Telephone
- Vending Machines
- Vendors
- Mail boxes
- Smoking

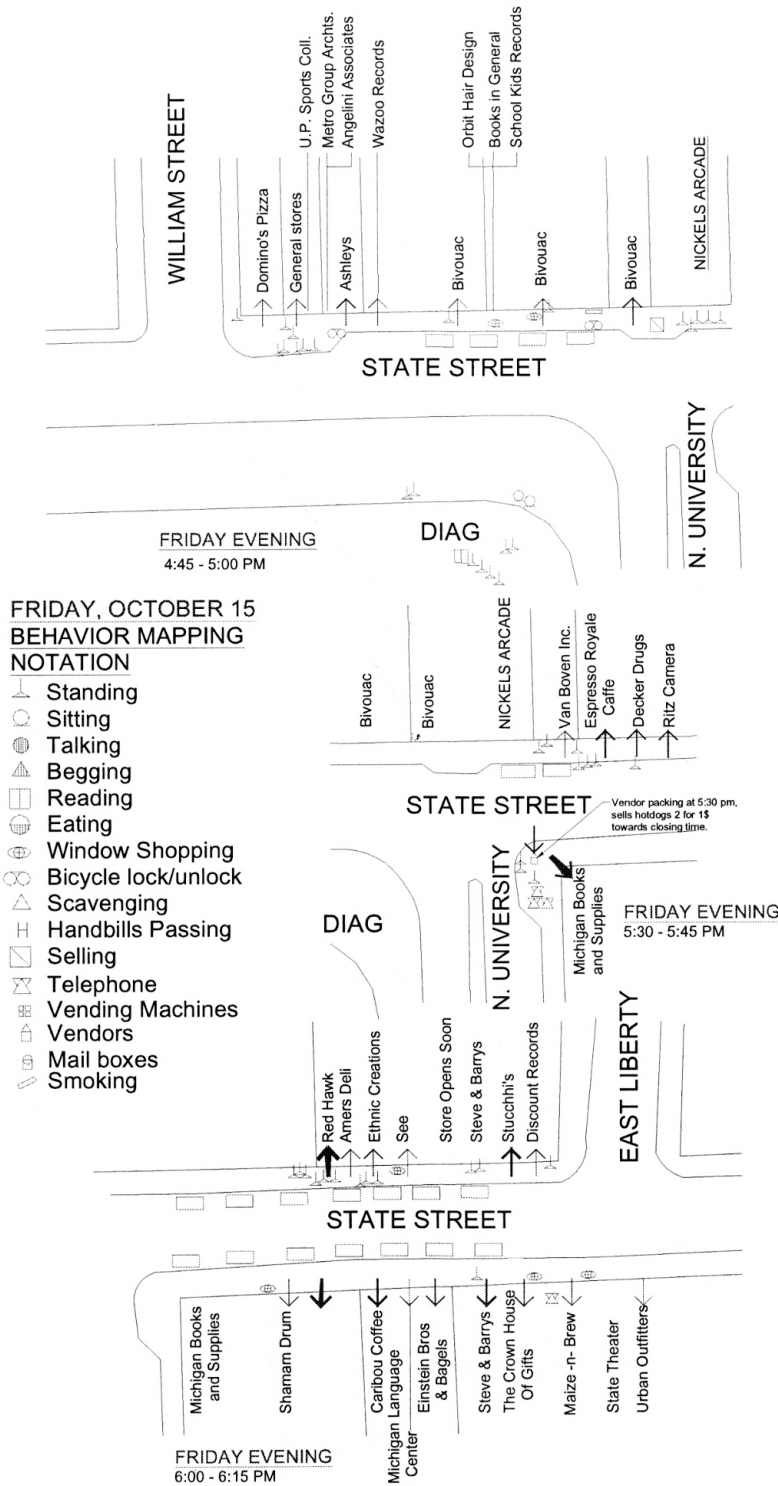


**WEEKDAY OBSERVATION OF ACTIVITIES**

Friday, October 15, 1999 - Noon Observations

Observation done in 3 sections of site in 15 minute time periods





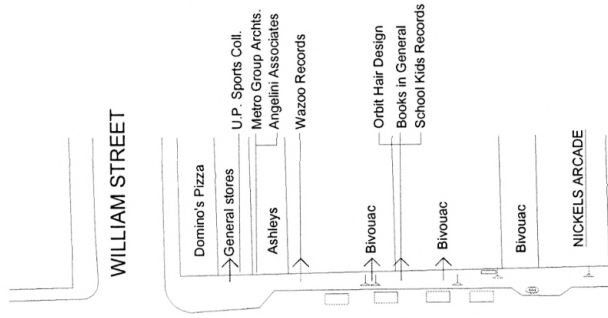
**WEEKDAY OBSERVATION OF ACTIVITIES**

Friday, October 15, 1999 - Evening Observations

Observation done in 3 sections of site in 15 minute time periods

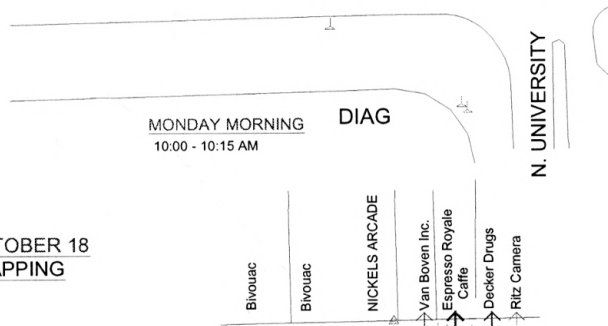
**MONDAY, OCTOBER 18  
BEHAVIOR MAPPING  
NOTATION**

-  Standing
-  Sitting
-  Talking
-  Begging
-  Reading
-  Eating
-  Window Shopping
-  Bicycle lock/unlock
-  Scavenging
-  Handbills Passing
-  Selling
-  Telephone
-  Vending Machines
-  Vendors
-  Mail boxes
-  Smoking



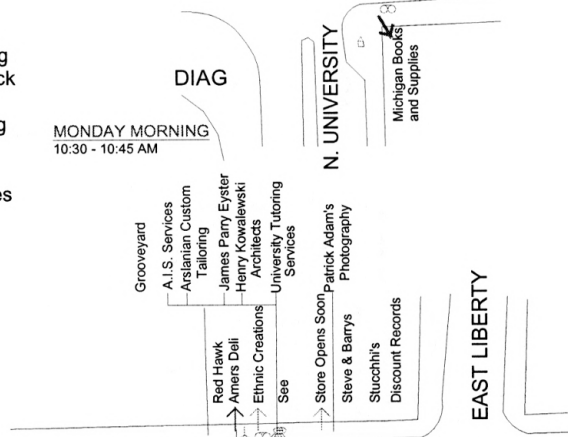
STATE STREET

MONDAY MORNING  
10:00 - 10:15 AM



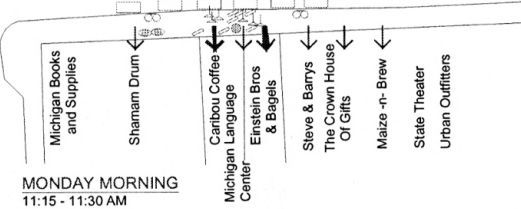
STATE STREET

MONDAY MORNING  
10:30 - 10:45 AM



STATE STREET

MONDAY MORNING  
11:15 - 11:30 AM



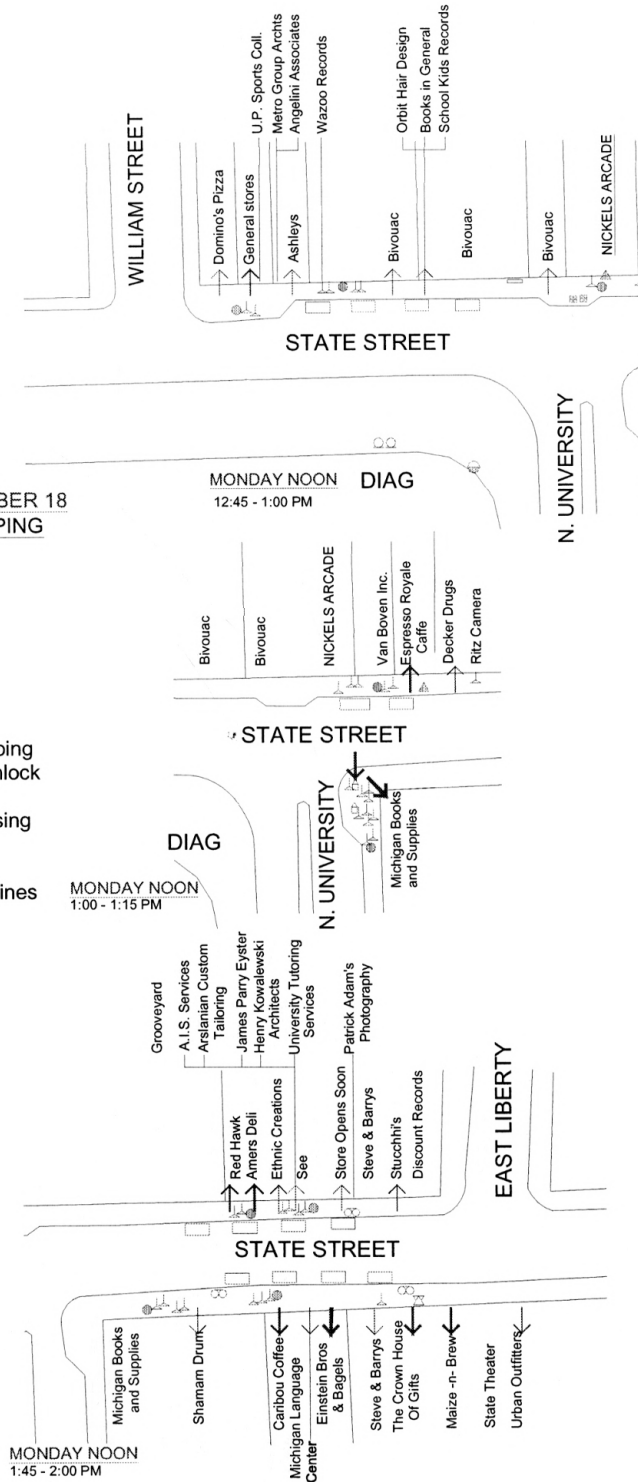
**WEEKDAY OBSERVATION OF ACTIVITIES**

Monday, October 18, 1999 - Morning Observations

Observation done in 3 sections of site in 15 minute time periods

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 18**  
**BEHAVIOR MAPPING**  
**NOTATION**

- Smoking
- Standing
- Sitting
- Talking
- Begging
- Reading
- Eating
- Window Shopping
- Bicycle lock/unlock
- Scavenging
- Handbills Passing
- Selling
- Telephone
- Vending Machines
- Vendors
- Mail boxes



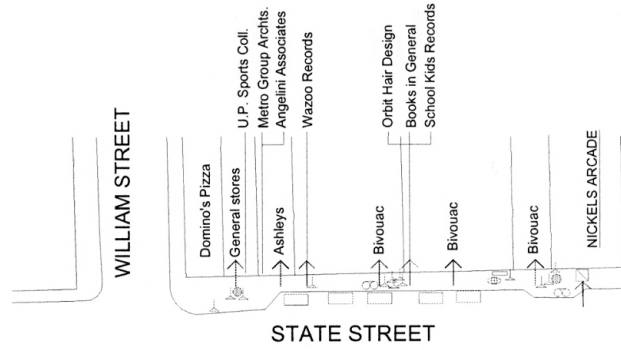
**WEEKDAY OBSERVATION OF ACTIVITIES**

Monday, October 18, 1999 - Noon Observations

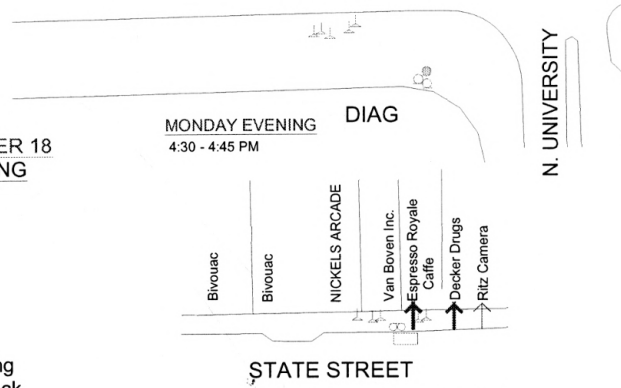
Observation done in 3 sections of site in 15 minute time periods

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 18  
BEHAVIOR MAPPING  
NOTATION**

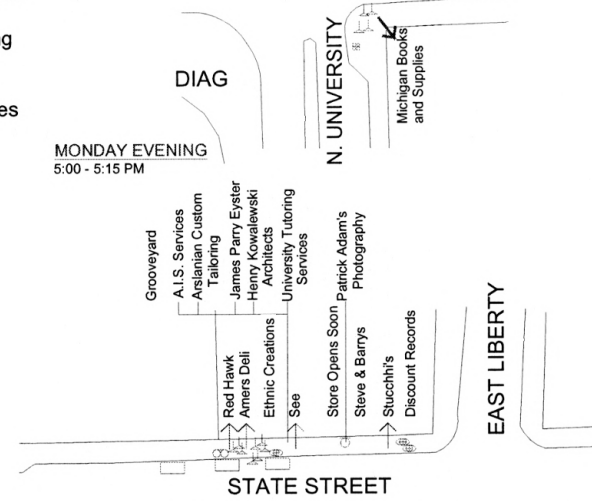
-  Standing
-  Sitting
-  Talking
-  Begging
-  Reading
-  Eating
-  Window Shopping
-  Bicycle lock/unlock
-  Scavenging
-  Handbills Passing
-  Selling
-  Telephone
-  Vending Machines
-  Vendors
-  Mail boxes
-  Smoking



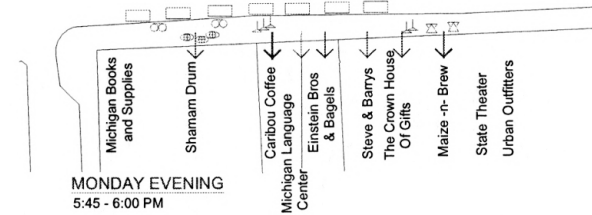
MONDAY EVENING  
4:30 - 4:45 PM



MONDAY EVENING  
5:00 - 5:15 PM



MONDAY EVENING  
5:45 - 6:00 PM



**WEEKDAY OBSERVATION OF ACTIVITIES**

Monday, October 18, 1999 - Evening Observations

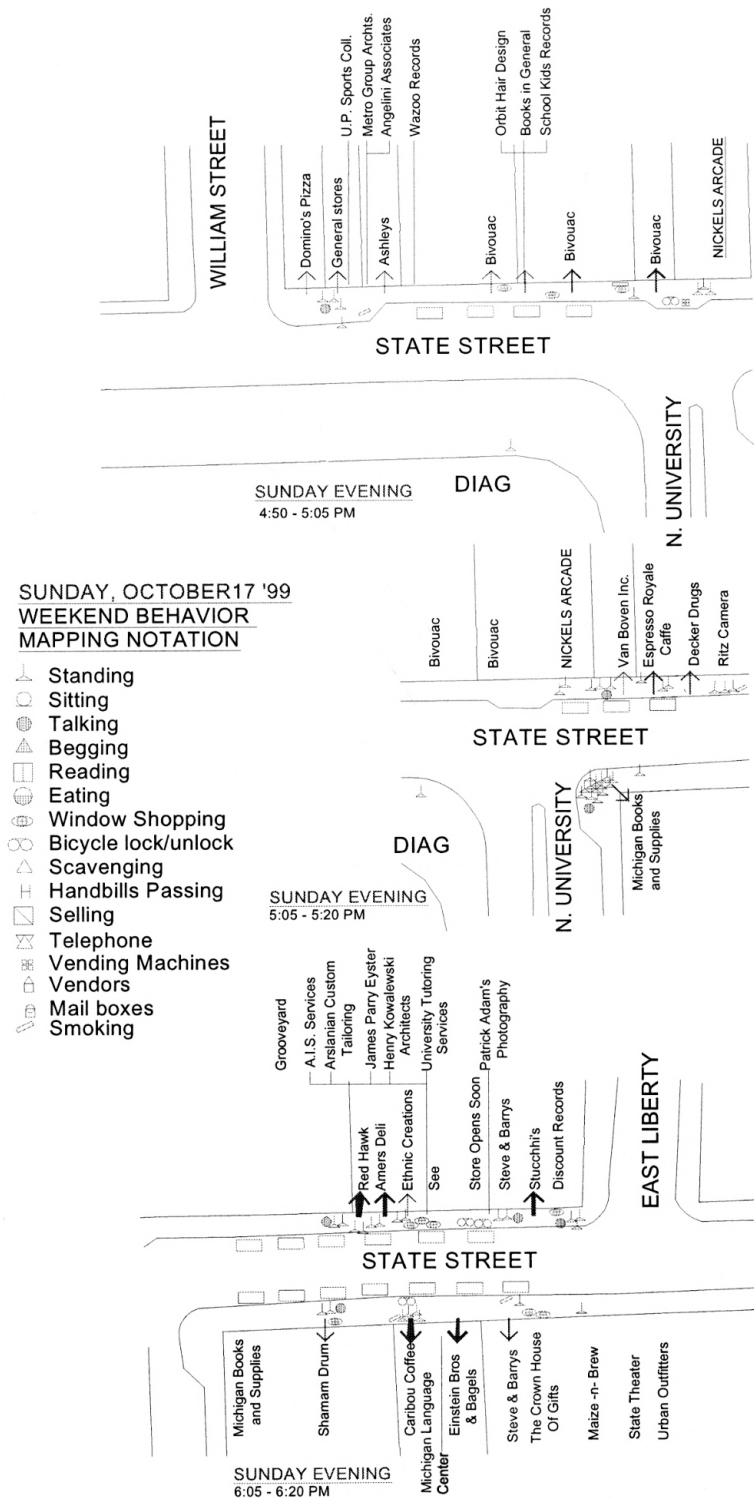
Observation done in 3 sections of site in 15 minute time periods



**WEEKEND OBSERVATION OF ACTIVITIES**

Sunday, October 17, 1999 - Noon Observations

Observation done in 3 sections of site in 15 minute time periods



**WEEKEND OBSERVATION OF ACTIVITIES**

Sunday, October 17, 1999 - Evening Observations

Observation done in 3 sections of site in 15 minute time periods

**APPENDIX B**

**COMMERCIAL ESTABLISHMENTS ON**

**STATE STREET AREA**



**COMMERCIAL ESTABLISHMENTS ON THE STUDY AREA**

1. Domino's Pizza	(342)	Variable timings
2. Mojo Tailors	(621 East William)	-
3. General Stores		Sun: 11:00am – 12:00am M-Th: 9:00am - 1:00 am Fri: 9:00am - 2:00 am Sat: 11:00am - 2:00 am
4. UP Sports Collectibles	(340 ½)	M-F: 11:30 am – 7:00 pm Sat: 12:00 pm – 6:00 pm
5. Stairway to Heaven		M-S: 11:00 am – 8:00 pm Sun: 11:00 am – 8:00 pm
6. Angelini and Associates Architects	(338 ½)	-
7. Metro Group Architects	(338 ½)	-
8. Ashleys		-
9. Wazoo records	(336 ½)	M-F: 10:00 am – 8:00 pm Sat: 10:00 am – 6:00 pm Sun: 12:00 pm – 6:00 pm
10. Bivoac	(334, 332, 320)	M-W: 10:00 am – 6:00 pm Th-F: 10:00 am – 9:00 pm Sat: 10:00 am – 6:00 pm Sun: 12:00 pm – 5:00 pm
11. School Kids Records	(334 ½)	-
12. Orbit Hair Design	(334 ½)	-
13. Books in General	(334 ½)	-
14. Van Boven Inc.	(325)	-
15. Espresso	(324)	M-F: 7:00 am – 11:00 pm S-Sun: 8:00 am – 11:00 pm

16. Grooveyard Used Records	(322)	-
17. Decker Drugs	(320)	M-F: 10:00 am – 6:00 pm Sat: 10:00 am – 2:00 pm Sun: 12:00 pm – 5:00 pm
18. Ritz Camera	(318)	M-F: 9:00 am – 7:00 pm Sat: 10:00 am – 6:00 pm Sun: Closed
19. Red Hawk	(316)	M-Th: 11:30 am – 11:00 pm F-Sat: 11:30 am – 11:30 pm Sun: 11:30 am – 10:00 pm
20. Amers Deli	(314)	M-Fr: 7:00 am – 12:00 am S-Sun: 8:00 am – 12:00 am
21. Ethnic Creations	(310)	M-Sat: 10:00 am - 9:00 pm Sun: 11:00 am – 6:00 pm
22. See	(308)	M-Wed: 9:30 am - 6:00 pm
23. University Tutorial Services	(308 ½ - 37)	-
24. James Parry Eyster Immigration and Nationality law	(308 ½ - 34)	-
25. Henry Kowalewski Archts	(308 ½ - 35)	-
26. Arslanian Custom Tailoring	(308 ½ - 22)	-
27. A.I.S Services	(308 ½ - 21)	-
28. Elmo Shirts	(306)	Opening Soon
29. Gelatt Info. Machines	(304 ½)	-
30. Eating Disorder Recovery Center	(304 ½)	-
31. George Wahr Publishers	(304 ½)	-

32. Copi Properties	(304 ½)	-
33. Patrick Adams Photography	(302 B)	-
34. Stucchi	(300)	M-Th: 11:00 am – 11:30 pm F-Sat: 11:00 am – 12:00 am Sun: 12:00 pm – 11:30 pm
35. Discount Records	(300)	Mon: 9:30 am – 12:30 pm T-Th; 9:30 am - 9:00 pm Fr-Sat: 9:30 am – 10:00 pm Sun: 12:00 pm – 11:30 pm
<hr/>		
36. Michigan Books and Supplies	(317)	M-Fri: 9:00 am - 6:00 pm Sat,Su:11:00 am – 5:00 pm
37. S.W. Trick Building		/
38. Shamam Drum	(315, 315 upstairs)	M-Sat: 10:00 am - 10:00 pm Sun: 12:00 pm - 6:00 pm
39. Caribou Coffee	(309)	M-Th: 6:30 am – 11:00 pm Fri: 6:30 am – 12:00 am Sat: 8:00 am – 12:00 am Sun: 8:00 am – 10:00 pm
40. MLC	(300)	M-F: 9:00 am – 5:00 pm
41. Einstein Bros & Bagels	(307)	-
42. Steve Barrys	(303)	M-Sat: 9:00 am – 10:00 pm Sun: 10:00 am - 7:00 pm
43. The Crown House Of Gifts		M-Th: 9:00 am – 7:00 pm Fri: 9:00 am – 8:30 pm Sat: 9:00 am – 6:00 pm
44. Maize -n- Brew	(235)	-
45. Urban Outfitters	(231)	M-S: 10:00 am – 9:00 pm Sun: 12:00 am – 6:00 pm