



# Environmental & Architectural Phenomenology Newsletter

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This issue begins *EAP's* 11th year. We thank the 75 readers who have renewed their subscription. We are grateful to all of you--listed on p. 2--who have made an extra contribution with your renewal. Many readers have forgotten to renew and, if so, you will find a second notice inside.

This issue begins with a review essay by anthropologist Norris Brock Johnson, who discusses Steven Feld and Keith H. Basso's 1996 *Senses of Place*. Next, we present a chapter from ethnographer Herb Childress's forthcoming book on the importance of place in the lifeworld of teenagers--*Landscapes of Betrayal, Landscapes of Joy*.

Last, to mark the significance of phenomenology at the start of the new millenium, we provide the first part of a bibliography of recent works in environmental and architectural phenomenology. More of this bibliography will be published in future *EAP's*.

Several readers have requested such a list, which is by no means inclusive. Please send any work you note ommited so that, in an upcoming issue, we may publish an addendum.

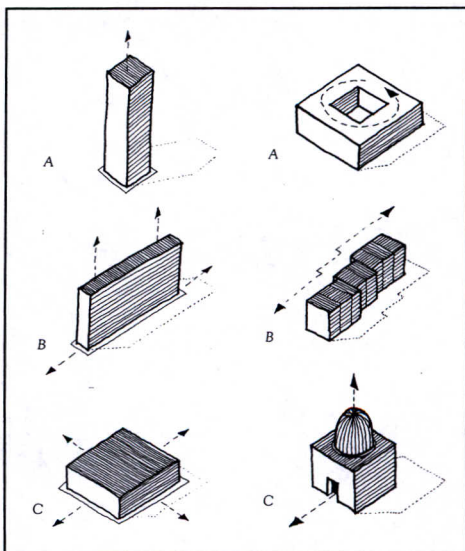
## PHENOMENOLOGY CONFERENCES

The annual **International Human Science Research Conference** will be held on June 12-15, 2000, at Southampton College of Long Island Univ. The conference theme is "celebrating openness." Contact: Armand LMacchia, LIU-Southampton, Social Sciences Div., 239 Moutauk Highway, Southampton, NY 11968 (bpeters@southampton.liunet.edu).

The annual meetings of the **Society for Phenomenology and the Human Sciences** and the **Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy** will be held October 5-7 at the Pennsylvania State Univ. in State College, PA. SPHS: G. Backhaus, Philosophy Dept., Morgan State Univ., Baltimore, MD 21251 (sparks.gbackhuas@prodigy.net; 410-764-2069). SPEP: J.Risser (spep@seattleu.edu; 206-296-5473).

The World Institute for Advanced Phenomenological Research and Learning will sponsor the conference, **Phenomenology, Fine Arts and Aesthetics**, in Cambridge, Ma., 28-30 April 2000. One central focus is gardens, including "gardens in East and West philosophers," "the microcosm reflecting the macrocosm in gardens," "the role of mythology in gardens." Contact: WIAPRL, 348 Payson Rd., Belton, MA 02478 ([www.phenomenology.org](http://www.phenomenology.org)).

*Below: Drawings from T. Thiis-Evensen's recently-published Archetypes of Urbanism: A Method for the Esthetic Design of Cities (Oslo: Scandinavian Univ. Press, 1999). We will publish a review of this book in a future EAP. Left: Basic types of the 'open' city: (a) point building; (b) vertical slab building; (c) horizontal block building. Right: Basic types of the 'dense' city: (a) square block; (b) row house; (c) monumental building.*



## DONORS, 2000

We would like to thank the following readers who have contributed more than the base subscription for 2000. As always, members have been generous. We editors are grateful.

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## ITEMS OF INTEREST

The **North American Interdisciplinary Conference on Environment and Community** will be held at the University of Nevada, Reno, February 10-12, 2000. Topics include ecological literacy, environmental ethics, sustainable community planning, sense of place, ecological restoration, and nature and the visual arts. Contact: Scott Slovic, Ctr. for Environmental Arts and Humanities/098, Univ. of Nevada, Reno, NV 89557 (slovic@unr.edu; 775-784-8015).

The 26th **Making Cities Livable Conference** will be held 13-17 February 2000, in Charleston, SC. Topics include "Building Community," "Reviving City Centers," "Reshaping Sprawl," and "New Urban Neighborhoods." In addition, the 27th conference will be held in Vienna, Austria, 4-8 July, 2000. Contact: IMCL, PO Box 7586, Carmel, CA 93921 (831-626-9080).

The **9th International Planning History Conference** will be held 20-23 August, 2000, at the Helsinki University of Technology in Helsinki, Finland. The

conference theme is "Center-Periphery-Globalization." The conference abstract reads: "The rise of modern urban and regional planning is a European phenomenon. Today's planning practices, by contrast, are world wide. The interplay between center and periphery varies in time and space. Centers of innovation change [and] peripheries are redefined. Local, regional, national and global interaction plays an important role in planning and urban history." Contact: L. Kolbe, PO Box 59, FIN-00014 Univ. of Helsinki, Finland (laura.kolbe@helsinki.fi; +358-9-135-5521).

**Qualitative Inquiry** is a journal providing an interdisciplinary forum for qualitative methodology and related issues in the human sciences. Authors may experiment with manuscript form and content and focus on methodological issues raised by qualitative research rather than on the contents or results of the research. Contact: Sage Publications, PO Box 5084, Thousand Oaks, CA 91359 (www.sagepub.com).

## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

**Anne Buttner**, Chair of the Geography Department at University College Dublin, has forwarded a copy of a paper on geographer Alexander von Humboldt (1769-1859) that she presented at an international conference on *Humboldt y la Ciencia Americana* held in Mexico City in August, 1999. As some *EAP* readers know, von Humboldt, in his multi-volume work, *Cosmos*, was one of the first scholars to speak, implicitly, of a phenomenology of landscape and environment.

In her paper, Buttner writes: "...appeals to aesthetic and ethical aspects of humanity's relationship to environment enable Humboldt's work to transcend the tensions between objectivity and subjectivity, macro-scale survey and micro-scale theatre, scientific explanation and artistic representation. This is achieved in large part through an ingenious rendering of landscapes which evoke understandings of nature as diorama, involving interactions among multiple living forms, including humans."

One of von Humboldt's clearest expressions of "this integrative and catalytic style," says Buttner, is his *Essai sur la géographie des plantes* [*Essay on Plant Geography*] (1805). One passage she quotes from this

work particularly illustrates von Humboldt's sensitivity to the ways in which the geographical world can contribute to human experience and evoke a particular sense of place and landscape:

...the person who is sensitive to the beauties of nature finds here [in the geography of plants] a reason for the influence which vegetation can have on the tastes and imaginations of people. He will enjoy examining what it is that one calls vegetation character, and the variety of sensations which stirs in the soul of the person who contemplates it.

These considerations are even more important to the extent that they touch very closely the means whereby the graphic arts and descriptive poetry impress us. The simple aspect of nature, the view of fields and woodland, yields a pleasure which is essentially different from the impression received from studying the particular structure of an organized being. Here, it is the detail which interests us and excites our curiosity; there, it is the whole, the overall mass, which stirs our imagination.

How different are the impressions of a vast prairie surrounded by few groups of trees from those of a dark thick forest with a mixture of oak and pine? What a striking contrast between the forests of the temperate zone and those of the equator, where the naked and slender palm tree trunks rise above the flowering acajous, and extend their majestic portals into the air?

What is the moral cause of these sensations? Are they produced by nature, by the grandeur of the masses, the contours of the forms, or the bearing [port] of the plants?

How does this general environmental appearance...influence the habits and sensitivities of people? What constitutes the character of tropical vegetation? What physiognomic differences are there between African plants and those of the new continent?...These questions have not stirred much attention to date, and undoubtedly merit the attention of the physical geographer [physician] (von Humboldt, 1805, pp. 30-31).

Geography, Dept., Univ. College Dublin, Belfield, Dublin 4, Ireland.

**Jeffrey Byers** is a graduate student in Architecture at the University of Utah Graduate School of Architecture. He has started research on his master's thesis, which must draw on a particular conceptual point of view that becomes the springboard for a specific architectural design.

Bryer's main conceptual interests are place making and sustainability: "I feel that one of architecture's sole purposes is to create a relationship between the built environment and the people who inhabit it. This takes responsibility of the architecture or designer to be sensitive to the needs of the human occupant and

to the earth that we place our dwellings upon."

He would be happy to hear from any *EAP* readers who have any ideas, resources, suggestions to help him narrow "such a broad topic as phenomenology for my thesis." He writes: "In all of my reading (which has been limited), it seems as if phenomenology is something that is non-empirically based, but is rather a stimulation to the sense of which every person in this world responds differently. But I have to actually transform these ideas into some physical form arising from phenomenological principles. It is a topic somewhat easy to write about but becomes a challenge to actually conceive as built form so that when the jury sees my project, they will say, 'oh, yes, this has been guided by phenomenological principles.'

"I love this topic, it has given so much meaning to me as a future architect. I am the type person who feels a sense of attachment and connectedness to the built environment." 801 East Village Way, Fruit Heights, Utah 84037 (Jeffrey.Byers@m.cc.utah.edu; 801-546-1003).

**Clare Cooper Marcus**, author of *House as Mirror of Self* [see *EAP*, spring '99] and formerly professor in the architecture and landscape architecture departments at Berkeley, writes that she is enjoying retirement but is still "at work." She recently co-edited and authored *Healing Gardens: Therapeutic Benefits and Design Recommendations* (NY: John Wiley, 1999). She is doing consulting with hospitals on bringing back nature and gardens into medical environments.

She writes: "In the spring and summer of 1999, I lived on a remote island in the Hebrides (Iona) and wrote about my experience of the environment. It was a bliss-full experience. I will spend this winter editing what I wrote and pulling it into shape as a memoir/book—very personal, *not* academic." 2721 Stuart St., Berkeley, CA 94705.

**Didem Kilickiran** is a doctoral candidate at the Bartlett School of Architecture, University College, London. He is studying with space-syntax theorists Bill Hillier and Julienne Hanson. He hopes to relate space-syntax theory and the methodologies for the analysis of spatial configuration to some phenomeno-

logical ideas, especially ideas about place.

His thesis will study "different residential environments in Ankara, Turkey" (his home country). He will select these different neighborhoods on the basis of design features and population characteristics to see if different physical qualities (especially varying pathway layouts) relate to public interaction and local sense of place. He writes that he sees in space syntax "more than architectural and urban morphology and some very scientific ways of analysis and models." Bartlett School of Architecture, University College, London, England (dklickiran@hotmail.com).

**Derek Shanahan** is Chair of the Geography Department at Millersville University in Millersville, Pennsylvania. One of his research interests is the philosophy of knowing, particularly the conflicts and possibilities between positivism and phenomenology.

#### REVIEW ESSAY

### SPACE, PLACE, AND SENSIBILITY

Norris Brock Johnson

Steven Feld and Keith H. Basso, eds. 1996. *Senses of Place*. Santa Fe: School of American Research Press. ISBN 0-93345-95-0.

*Senses of Place* is a volume of insightful essays, pleasant to read and reflect upon. The essays were assembled from papers initially presented in 1993 at an advanced seminar, "Place, Expression, and Experience," held at the School of American Research in Santa Fe. The book is indexed thoroughly and references are organized at the end of the volume rather than, less satisfactorily, at the end of individual chapters.

The book is bracketed by fine introductory essays by Steven Feld and Keith H. Basso, Edward S. Casey's "How to Get from Space to Place in a Fairly Short Stretch of Time: Phenomenological Prolegomena," and a concluding essay by Clifford Geertz.

*Senses of Place* is valuable reading for general as well as specialist readers interested in the cross-cultural study of nature as well as the human-created landscape. First, I want to consider the book's case studies, which are nicely framed by Willa Cather's

He recently presented a paper, "Value Research in Human Geography and the Image of the Ideal Science," at the meetings of the Society for Philosophy and Geography in University Park, Maryland. We extract a portion of his conclusion:

As examples of contemporary phenomenological research indicate, neither phenomenology nor positivism need reject the other's assumptions or methods. Both philosophies and methods are rigorous and open to criticism, and the results from either type of research are amenable to modification or outright rejection. Phenomenologists, beginning with Husserl himself, never intended to reject positivist science, denigrate the motives of positivists or advocate an undisciplined subjectivity...

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declaration, "We come and go, but the land is always here."

Cibecue is a Western Apache settlement on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation, in east-central Arizona. In "Wisdom Sits in Places: Notes on a Western Apache Landscape," Keith H. Basso focuses his presentation of place and sensibility by focusing on people. Dudley Patterson is known to be "wise," and from Mr. Patterson, Basso learns as much about wisdom, and horses, as he does about places.

Basso's well-crafted essay includes extended narratives of conversations with Mr. Patterson on which Basso comments as ethnographer. But like everything that is, everything that exists, according to the commentary by Archytas on Aristotle's *Categories* cited by Basso, place preexists wisdom and place is the ground of wisdom, so to speak, of which Basso is ultimately concerned. Basso writes:

The knowledge on which wisdom depends is gained from observing different places (thus to recall them quickly and clearly), learning their Apache names (thus to identify them in spoken discourse and in song), and reflecting on traditional narratives that underscore the virtues of wisdom by showing what can happen when its facilitating conditions are absent (p. 76).

As a mode of presentation, Basso's essay is a moral statement on how to research and talk about places. The writing itself is wise. Pay attention to particulars. Experience places yourself. When seeking the meaning of places, go to places through people.

A very respectful protocol. The essay reads as a medieval European morality play. The moral here, the instrumentality, is a tale of "how places work to make one wise" (p. 66). Wisdom sits in places, along with beauty, resonate spirituality, and life and death.

The relationship between Mr. Patterson as the Wise-Old-Man and Basso as the Young-Apprentice feels archetypal, akin to the teacher-student relationship still practiced in Zen Buddhist temples around the world. The fruiting of wisdom, nourished by experiencing and remembering the nuances of place, is known by specific patterns of behavior such as "poise and equanimity... an increasing correspondence between spoken words and subsequent deeds... rarely show signs of fear or alarm..." (p. 80). Altered consciousness. A "smoothing of the mind."

Interestingly, the process and transformation of which Mr. Patterson speaks corresponds to Zen Buddhist enlightenment (*satori*, *kensho*). Mr. Patterson speaks of one choosing to take up the often arduous "trail of wisdom" (p. 70) just as Zen Buddhist priests speak of Zen as a Way or Path (*Zendo*, literally, place of Zen; see Suzuki 1985). Basso's essay speaks the concern of a variety of cultures, undoubtedly, with the intersection between place, theology and morality, and human experience.

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In "Where Do You Stay At?: Homeplace and Community among the Lumbee," Karen I. Blu compares three communities co-residential in one place--Robeson County, in eastern North Carolina. No homogeneous community, here. So, how might a comparative study of African-Americans, Lumbee

Indians, and Anglo-Americans (Whites), she asks, inform an understanding of place?

Blau's essay is historical and political. I appreciate her sensitivity to racism, inequality in the political economy, and to the legacy of segregation in the experience of place in Robeson County. If wisdom sits in places, as Mr. Patterson and Keith Basso admonish, then Blau reminds us to investigate whether there is or has been equality of access to place:

In a situation of unequal power and wealth, of unequal ability to control or affect the landscape, the unseen, the unmarked became a source of potential strength and resistance, an empowering counterconstruction (p. 218).

As Steven Feld reminds us, place is much more than the visible aspects of nature or the human-created landscape.

In multicultural societies, significant places are often public spaces experienced in layered fashion by a variety of peoples. Robeson county is a nexus of overlapping universes flowing through an about each other, like so many gamma rays or neutrons.

We read that people categorized as Black, White, and Indian dwelling in multicultural places such as Robeson County more often than not are akin to the three blind men variously experiencing the same elephant. Blau's provocative essay takes us firmly in hand as we examine, not a simple task, both the three blind men as well as the elephant.

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Steven Feld explores the sensing of place as more heard than seen in his poetic essay on "Waterfalls of Song: An Acoustemology of Place Resounding in Bosavi, Papua New Guinea."

Questioning the primacy of the visual in both conceptualizing and experiencing place, Feld presents a soundscape--an "acoustemology" of place flowing from compelling specifics. Feld is concerned with discerning and conveying "local conditions of acoustic sensation, knowledge, and imagination embodied in the culturally particular sense of place resounding in Bosavi" (p. 91).

I will long remember Ulahi of the Bolekini, dwelling near the mythic Wo:lu creek. The songs of Ulahi

are interrelated with the water and waterfalls of the area, such that "singing like water" and "composing a song is said to be like the way a waterfall flows into a waterpool" (p. 132). Feld focuses on this vibrant female voice, countering male emphasis on vision in the conception and experience of place while gendering, as female, the watery places around Bolekini.

Feld's discussion of water led me to notice the bias toward land in writings on space/place, nature, and environment. Feld wets my appetite not only for studies of water-and-meaning (cf. Cassuto 1994; Schwenk 1965; Thurman 1975) but for ethnographic studies focused on water-based cultures and societies—early studies such as *East is a Big Bird* (Gladwin 1970), on Melanesian navigation, and Malinowski's (1961) work with Trobriand sailors. Contemporary studies of houseboat dwelling in coastal China, say, or the Sausalito bay area of California would be of interest as would a critique of the sociocultural ecology of the film, dare I say it, *Waterworld*. Our theorizing on place does not yet accommodate the variety of aspects of nature on and in which humans dwell. Very shortly, many humans will begin to dwell under the sea and off the earth itself. Our theorizing is not anticipating the future places in which humans will dwell.

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In "Pleasant Places, Past Times, and Sheltered Identity in Rural East Anglia," Charles O. Frake takes us to England by way of arguing that ethnographers need to study the local places of their own native peoples (assumed to be Anglo/"White"). Ethnographers need to study horizontally (socioculturally) as well as study up, as Laura Nader (1974) termed it.

Frake is concerned with the ethnosemantics of place names, arguing that "places come into being out of spaces by being named" (p. 235). True, but this only illustrates that people tend to reiterate their power over places by naming them—an on-going colonizing act. Perhaps this is why Frake later says that "no place is where one finds the powerless" (p. 248).

Frake focuses on literature and visual art, here, not so much as modes of illustrating place but to reveal the manner in which literature and visual art are

invariably situated in place, as in his section on "A Nowhere Place." Frake shows us how literature and visual art are often referred to by people as a gauge to "improvement" of place, as when he discusses the battle over a specific place, Waxham Barn, in North Norfolk.

People contended over ideas of what it meant to "improve," using literature and visual art as historical reference. The work of Jane Austen is examined in detail for its nuanced sensitivities to evocation of place, recalling Keith H. Basso's admonition that "novelists and journalists are often more successful than academic writers in conveying a sense of place..." (p. 90).

Frake's sections on local knowledge of place include extended discussion of the sea and seafaring. I welcome this venturing forth from the land, as Frake points out what can be learned about seacoast places from pilot books and logs, nautical maps, and the manner in which place knowledge such as this invariably must remain local in reference.

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Miriam Kahn's "Your Place and Mine: Sharing Emotional Landscapes in Wamira, Papua New Guinea" is compelling in several regards. In large part, the writing here is exceptionally moving in that Kahn weaves the narrative of Wamira and Wamiran places with her own story, similar to Basso, such that "places blossom, along with my understanding of them, where Wamirans and I connect" (p. 168).

Kahn is invited to help villagers build a house of her own so as to "anchor" her in this place and to "construct magnets for my own stories" (p. 186). The participatory act of housebuilding helps her understand, literally, that places are sociocultural constructions and that for the Wamirans places, her place, "emerges from social interactions and relationships" (p. 194).

Kahn narrates, dramatically, the manner in which Wamiran land "is like a stone" (p. 173). Stones speak, and move. Stones mark spots of mythic significance. Stones charter moral action. Kahn illustrates the importance of stones and mountains among the Wamira by giving importance in her essay to clear, well-captioned illustrations of stones and

mountains. There are, inexcusably, only 15 photographic illustrations of places in this volume and six of them occur in Kahn's article .

The images in *Senses of Place* for the most part are poorly composed and exposed, and many images are grainy. Advances in cameras, films, and digital processing permit much better film imaging, scanning, and printing. There is no excuse for publishers of volumes such as this to not present high-resolution images of well-photographed ethnographic images of place. If our writings on nature and place and environment are to do justice to nature and place and environment, then our writings cannot depend on words alone, however evocative.

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In "An Occupied Place," Kathleen C. Stewart evokes senses of place in the town of Amigo, southern West Virginia. One lasting evocation is of "the impossible dream of a stable home place" (p. 137) as the town of Amigo is buffeted by seemingly uncontrollable outside forces. Thus, this article by Stewart, its evocation of place as impossible dream, is a nice counterpart to the stability of place found, say, by Kahn and Basso.

Stewart experiments, effectively, with both text and image (there are 5 well-presented images of Amigo) in "re-membering, retelling, and re-placing" (p. 140). Stewart uses italics to demarcate local terms; local narratives of place are inset within her commentary; Appalachian dialect is inserted to judiciously to localize place; she uses reiteration to affectively convey a sense of story told: "picture hills..." and "picture this..." and "imagine..." Amigo is re-presented, rather than presented in "the space of 'you are there' realism of flat ethnographic description" (p. 158).

Like other writers in this volume, Stewart conceptualizes place in relationship to people. Place is conceptualized as closer to environment and landscape than to nature.

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I now want to turn to the essays that deal with theorizing place. The introductory essay by Stephen

Feld and Keith Basso states the rationale for the volume "to describe and interpret some of the ways in which people encounter places, perceive them, and invest them with significance" and situates each contributing essay within an investigation of "specific ways in which places naturalize different worlds of sense" (p. 8).

The essay by Edward S. Casey reviews and critiques concepts of space and place, arguing that assumptions of the primacy of space are misplaced and that place "is the most fundamental form of embodied experience" (p. 9). The concluding essay by Clifford Geertz reiterates the (sociocultural/anthropological) lack of concern with place and calls for more theorizing on, as well as nuanced ethnographies of, the abstraction we term place. These commentaries are well-thought out statements on current thinking about space and place.

Yet, there is, of course, more on which to theorize about place. Consider the following.

There are theological aspects to theorizing on space and place. Within this volume the ontology of place, for instance, privileges the human. Casey claims that "a place or region is metaphysically neutral... there is not a preexisting ground..." (p.27). Places must be rendered meaningful; places are not inherently (ontologically) meaningful.

A variety of cultures and religious traditions, though, tell us that places are meaningful (ontologically) via creation by (Nasr 1971) and on-going participation with Deity/deities (cf. Coomaraswamy 1977; Eliade 1959; Lane 1988; Rockefeller and Elder 1992; Singh 1993; Swan 1991).

For most people on the planet, the meaning of place privileges deity, not humans. Denial of this pervasive conception of the ontology of place, embodied in our ethnographies of place, is denial of animism, animatism, and *genius loci* (spirit of place, see Walter 1988) as theory of place.

Several of the societies presented in this volume tell us of their belief in *genius loci*, and in what we term animism and animatism (of place). The Appalachian people of whom Stewart writes, for instance, speak directly to her of places that *remember and haunt...* (my italics, p. 148). Kahn says that "...today Wamirans point to the named places in the environment where various events in the myth took

place..."(my italics, p. 175), and "whence they came no one knows, *they were here in the time of our ancestors*, they remain forever" (p.180).

The ontology of place is within myth, places "take place" within myth, with which a variety of peoples from the Walbiri in northern Australia (Munn 1973) to the Diné of the American southwest (Newcomb and Reichard 1975) would agree. Feld, in conclusion, speaks of the belief that Bosavi "...creeks emerge as presences..." (my italics, p. 99) and the manner in which "a gone reverberation is *a spirit*..." (my italics, p. 99).

*Senses of Place* continues a more encompassing anthropological disjuncture between "theory" and "data." "Data" presents one explanation, say, of place; "theory" another. The disjuncture can be healed, in my view, simply by respecting the explanations of those we study enough to incorporate "spirit," "presence," and *genius loci*, for instance, as theory rather than as data. Let us consider the theological aspects of theory.

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*Johnson teaches in the Department of Anthropology at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. His research and writing include a focus on Zen Buddhist temple architecture and temple gardens. Address: Anthropology Dept., Univ. of NC at Chapel Hill, Alumni Bldg. 994A, Chapel Hill, NC 27514.*

## FREE PUBLIC ASSEMBLY

Herb Childress

*This essay is a chapter from Childress's forthcoming Landscapes of Betrayal, Landscapes of Joy: Curtisville in the Life of Its Teenagers, to be published in David Seamon's State University of New York Press series, "Environmental and Architectural Phenomenology." In his book, Childress examines how teenagers in one small northern Californian town renamed "Curtisville" use and find meaning in the routine places and situations of their everyday lives.*

*Childress's approach is ethnographic and narrative. He "lives" with the teenagers of his community for over a year, interviewing them, observing their behaviors, and "hanging out" with them. His book includes chapters on the importance of cars in teenagers' lives, the ways in which classroom teaching succeeds and fails, the places that give teenagers pleasure and the places they avoid, the situations that stimulate self-worth and what Childress calls joy--"that action that makes us feel as though we are, perhaps, finding ourselves in the world."*

*At the start of the following chapter, Childress is with Elizabeth, a student with whom he has arranged to spend much of the weekend. Address: 545 Brizzolara St., Apt. A, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401 (hjc3cat@ix.net).*

Before school on Friday, March 10th, Elizabeth and I met several of her friends just off the edge of the curb in the Quad, directly at the end of the walk that passed in front of the 300 building at Curtisville High. They talked about who was going to the Sadie Hawkins dance that night; Kate and Kara seemed a little uneasy that I'd be following Elizabeth even then. Nobody ever said as much, but there were times when they'd have preferred I wasn't around.

After French, we stood there again to talk about plans for going to Pizza Palace before the dance. Elizabeth put in her vote for a pineapple and ham pizza. After History, we were in the same spot, as Marshall told us how late he and Brad and Ben had stayed up last night. They'd been consoling Brad's older brother, whose girlfriend had "cheated on him." For some reason, Elizabeth enjoyed this conversation, listening intently and smiling.

After Health, Elizabeth met her friends again, left them for a moment to go to her locker, and returned quickly with nine dollars for tickets to the dance. After Spanish, we all met there to divide riders and cars for our trip to lunch at Edie's Hamburgers on Main Street, and then we reconvened in that same spot for another five minutes upon our return to campus. Stephanie told us about the traffic accident out on 420 that she'd seen still scattered across the northbound lanes.

After Drama, we found the Quad again, same place, talking with Stephanie and Anne. "Are you going to Ben's party tonight after the dance?"

"Maybe. Ben's trying to keep it quiet, he doesn't

want a whole bunch of people there that he doesn't know." Ben's parents were out of town for five days.

After Gym, at the end of the school day as people scooted off for cars and busses and the weekend's freedom, we rejoined a huge puddle of people out on the Quad. Stephanie was taking photos for the yearbook, so about twenty friends crowded around on the middle planter. And at 4:30, after track practice, we claimed Elizabeth's spot one last time and watched the softball team run a few laps of the school as we talked with Coach Fitzpatrick.

Elizabeth and her friends returned nine times that day to the same unmarked piece of asphalt, gathering each time within a foot or two of the previous meeting. Over the 180 days of school, she would be there well over 1000 times....

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During class periods, the hallways were theoretically free of students. Not empirically, of course, but theoretically. There were always five or six people wandering around, heading in pairs toward a bathroom or a locker, moving in the slowest possible manner.

In order to be in the halls during class time, it was necessary to ask a teacher for a hall pass. Some teachers were liberal in the use of the hall pass--one student would return, and the next would simply take the pass from his or her predecessor and leave without asking permission. (If this sounds irresponsible, consider for moment what we would think of the

kind of job in which an adult would have to ask permission to use the bathroom.) Other teachers almost never issued a hall pass, and students simply learned not to ask them.

"Hall pass" conjures up an image of paper--a ticket, perhaps a laminated card allowing the bearer to move from one specified location to another specified location at a specified time. Best to remove that image early on; hall passes at Curtisville were great lumbering objects.

Joe Lyon in Geology used a chunk of granite the size of a bowling ball. Aaron Weimer in Biology used an elk's shoulderblade, though he would have preferred that his students called it a scapula. Al Quintana in Social Science used a canoe paddle. But whatever the object, possessing it made one a free agent, able to move through the halls at will. They were get-out-of-jail-free cards, carried with panache and defiance.

The buildings of Curtisville High School represented the common-sense campus, the "educational program spaces," the ones we could inventory. For fifty minutes at a time, Curtisville High existed as a set of 30-some divided discrete spaces; 30 cells in a honeycomb, each inhabited by its allotted drones and queen.

But for the five-minute periods between classes, both the schedule and the campus reversed form, turned inside out. The leftover spaces became a seamless, connected arcade filled with almost 800 active individuals; the sealed boxes had disappeared, at least for a moment, replaced with the playing field of free will.

The unallotted time--the negative spaces between the positive blocks of class time--also became visible. A lot of living went on in the five minutes between classes: secrets shared, makeup refreshed, snacks consumed, books exchanged, loves renewed, pent-up energy and aggravation released.

Just as the point of the shopping mall for teenagers is not contained in the stores but rather in the promenade, the point of school for most students is not the classrooms but the halls. The entire human agenda of most of the kids at school found expression in this indeterminate place and time: owned by the school but occupied exclusively by students, half hallway and half sidewalk, places that were open and connec-

tive but still held away behind closed doors for most of the day.

At the last teachers' meeting of the year, on the morning after school finally ended, the administration put forward a few alternative plans to get kids to class on time more reliably the following year. The old standby, timed bells between every period, was trotted out and debated, as were more esoteric solutions such as issuing every student a large backpack instead of a locker to minimize the need for exchanging books.

Teacher Lily Chase was adamant about getting kids to class on time. "What they don't realize is that the five minutes between classes is educational time. It's not social time, it's not eating time, it's time allotted in the school day to go from one classroom to another."

Not in this universe, Lily. Not in the inside-out world of the hallways, not in the five minutes of old jokes and fresh news and human contact that provides so many kids with their reason to come to school every day.

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The Quad lay at the heart of the circulation patterns of the school--the O'Hare International of campus travel and public space. There were no traffic controllers and no labelled terminals, but specific groups claimed specific spots and met there almost unvaryingly.

The Preps and the Jocks claimed the visible core intersection, while the hacky-sack circles of Surfers and Hippies formed every fifty minutes at the edge of paving and grass. Groups of Cowboys peppered the western perimeter near the lockers and steel I-beam columns against which they leaned. The Drama Geeks and Band Nerds favored the grassy eastern side, closer as it was to their refuge classrooms within the school.

The freshmen boys who would later become Jocks and Preps gathered at the far southwest corner next to the gym and the soda machine. The good campus citizens, studious and frugal, ate their paper-bag lunches close to the office. The Stoners, not surprisingly, had left the campus altogether.

All of these people used the Quad to divide them-

selves into the groups through which they filtered the larger world, and could identify other groups and their territories easily. Although there were relatively few fights here--no Crips and Latin Kings prepared to kill one another over group identity--it's a misconception that all of these white kids were homogenous.

There were (by most students' sociology) several recognizable groups at Curtisville. Perhaps the largest faction in this school were the Cowboys, also known as the Hicks by those who weren't Cowboys. The Cowboys, boys and girls alike, favored big trucks and big belts. Their boots and Wrangler jeans and western shirts were new--there's no romantic chic among farmers and ranchers for old worn-out clothes. Hair was short on the boys, long and curled high on the girls.

"Prep" was the outsiders' term for those kids who seemed to be wearing the idealized teen lifestyle, especially athletes and cheerleaders and student governors. That may sound like a small subculture, but when you consider the number of sports the school offered and the fact that there were Frosh and JV and Varsity cheerleaders (wearing different versions of the same \$250 uniforms so as to be distinguishable from one another), the Preps amounted to about a quarter of the school.

If the Cowboy was distinctive to Curtisville High, the Prep was distinctive to nowhere--a Prep at Curtisville would look equally at home in a high school in New Jersey or Alabama. They're the ones you'd see in the teen magazines like *Sassy* and *YM* and *Seventeen*, trim and clean-cut with casually expensive hairstyles, wearing nationally recognizable brands of t-shirts, baseball caps and sneakers. An Esprit sweatshirt might look just like any other sweatshirt, but it isn't--it's a symbol of taste and of resources, of being tuned into consumer culture.

The Surfers were more like the Cowboys, locally relevant but still influenced by national trends. They were the devotees of vertigo, the boys (almost always boys) who loved nothing more than to dive headlong into some physical act. If they played a school sport it was invariably soccer, but their real passion was for surfing.

During school hours, they'd be found playing hacky-sack in circles of two to six or seven, the closest dry-land approximation of the unpredictability

of the wave. Their hair was longer than the Preps would wear theirs, and some grunge influences could be seen in the early stages of goatees. Footwear among the Surfers wasn't Nikes or Reeboks but rather Teva sandals or Vans skateboard shoes; the brand names on their t-shirts were Boolabong and O'Neill and RonJon.

There were a significant number of Nerds at Curtisville--smart misfit kids who voluntarily lived on the fringes of pop culture. Often they were loners, but there were two large and identifiable subgroups: the Drama Geeks and the Band Nerds.

They were the most unpredictable in dress and hair, the most openly searching; Lauren could look like a Prep one day and come to school wearing a yellow maxi-dress and a bright turquoise streak in her hair the next. Alton changed hair colors eleven times in a four-week span during the spring, and wound up shaving his head by the end. They often favored a sort of thrift-store chic, affecting things like Bing Crosby hats and satin vests simply because they knew no one else would wear anything like it.

There were a smattering of Hippies, wearing several layers of shirts and sweaters, old floppy pants, long and asymmetrical hair, displaying a conscious rejection of the outward symbols of consumer fashion.

There were a very few Gangster-Wannabe's, almost all girls, wearing their sharp-creased pants or baggy jeans with the waistband almost off their hips and their t-shirts above their navels, accessorized with chunky suede tennis shoes and dark lipstick, their hair tall and teased and sprayed up. The Stoners were a harder group to recognize visually, often taking cues from the Hippies but putting a darker heavy metal edge on it.

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If most kids could recognize and name these groups, then I think they existed, and probably mattered. Each group attributed different degrees of intelligence and ill motives to one another, not recognizing that they were distinct subcultures with different values and rules.

Each group had physical artifacts that identified and differentiated them, from the others; not only clothing and hairstyles, but also types of vehicles; the

slogans and drawings and notes they wrote on their binder covers (Stoners had not mastered the smiley-face in the ways that the Prep girls had, nor could the Cowboys draw pot leaves with the facility of the Surfers); their choices of drug paraphernalia, from Diet Coke to Skoal cans to cigarettes to ingenious pipes and places to hide pot; and their reading material (a Stoner reading *Seventeen* is an outlandish thought, as would be a Drama Geek with a well-worn copy of *Four Wheelin'*).

The groups also had auditory cues by virtue of the music they favored. But all of these things were only the outward signs of identity, as much as they often made the administration nervous as physical objects. These things were really manifesting differences in the ideal futures of their owners--the local and working-class goals of the Cowboys included a steady job, sharp western clothes and a status truck, while the more media-driven middle-class goals of the Preps included broad popularity, a belief that college was an inevitable duty like thirteenth grade, a romantic relationship between equals, and mass-consumer notions of attractiveness.

The Drama Geeks stood outside that dichotomy to some extent, looking for fulfillment in independence and ideas and involvement in creative life; some were eager to try college, while others had abandoned the notion that school could be a source of ideas. The Surfers were always in search of the next rush of adrenaline and vertigo, while the Stoners had surrendered any hope of real power over their lives and simply pursued a rush of a different type.

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The groups at Curtisville High were defined around different hopes and expectations for their lives to come, different fundamental measurements of success. Here at the end of the 20th century, we have come to believe that inclusiveness and broad diversity is a global good, and distrust those who have chosen some degree of social or physical isolation.

One concern about cliques and their associated hangouts is that these kids could just reinforce their own narrow beliefs. The correct response to that is, "So?" We do the same thing with churches and political parties: we gather together to reassure

ourselves and each another that we have a community that thinks somewhat like we do, that other people believe that our life goals are both sensible and attainable.

Both teenagers and adults choose a lot of our freely selected life spaces because those spaces are filled with people who are a lot like them. That's what places are about--enhancing a self-image, enriching a self-narrative--and belonging and group identity are a strong part of any social place.

During the 40 minutes of lunch, the Quad was continuously occupied by perhaps 150 students, but several hundred others flowed through it at least for a few minutes on their way to and from other destinations. Even between classes, in the five-minute breaks during which they are allowed some humanity, kids flooded the Quad, gathering like swallows at their invisibly marked spots.

Any chance for human contact with friends was welcomed. Of course, it's terrifically uncool to admit that, to say, "I need human contact." And that's why the school and especially the Quad worked so wonderfully to meet their social needs--it brought them together in a way that was seemingly beyond their control, and allowed them to gather without having to make an admission of emotional need.

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The effectiveness of the Quad was dependent on the presence of several important attributes that will be seen wherever people gather together voluntarily.

First, hangouts are created from negative space--what adults think of as unplanned or underutilized or "vacant" areas. Teenagers have no resources to build anything for themselves, so they claim the leftovers in the planned landscape.

This act of claiming is socially important--a group choice that reinforces membership and autonomy. Places that are planned for teenagers, such as "teen centers," are often shunned, implying as they do someone else's schedule, someone else's limited palette of planned activities, someone else's power of creation.

Kids simply want places to be with friends, away from adult-defined roles; the more that they can create these places themselves, the more they appre-

ciate them.

Teenagers' places are usually small and strongly bounded. They are often enclosed on two or even three sides, and offer a real sense of being "inside" or "outside." This allows the users to know their territory, and makes entering the space a definite social act to be welcomed or repelled rather than ambiguous or possibly mistaken.

Hangouts allow for both the stable and mobile aspects of gathering, as well as easy exchange between the two. They're located near paths or roads that facilitate frequent arrivals and departures, and will typically have broad and active gateways full of impromptu conversations between those arriving and those leaving. The Quad, of course, was right at the school's pathway center, and the intersections were jammed with stationary kids holding brief meetings.

Hangouts have anchoring objects. The stable conversations in gathering spots take place around some physical element like a bench, a planter, a wall, a parked car. This does not mean that these objects will be used for long-term sitting; teenagers typically use benches and planters as location references, perching briefly on them or leaning against them. Kids who talked on the Quad were in constant contact with the pillars, wall corners, signposts and curbs that bordered their group.

Hangouts offer both high visibility and privacy control; they tend to be in highly public locations, but allow individual users to move into the limelight or to fade back into the periphery. They thrive in noise-tolerant areas, away from potential complaints.

Finally, a good hangout has to bring people together in a way that allows the gathering to seem accidental, and it has to allow for easy escape.

By being part of the path system and ringed with lockers, the Quad was a natural habitat that let kids search for friends without having to make verbal agreements on where and when they should meet--they simply knew that friends would be there automatically between classes.

The fact that Elizabeth and her friends met hundreds

of times at exactly the same nondescript chunk of pavement was clearly no accident, but it maintained the necessary illusion of accident; they were just moving between classes. And if conversations grew strained, if the talk ran dry, there was no admission of failure. It was time to go on to class, after all. "Gotta go" is a more graceful closure, implying a desire to stay if only circumstances would permit, than some variant of, "Well, I guess that's all we had to say."

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These are the basic requirements of a good hangout, and the Quad met them all. It lay at the center of the campus' broad walkway system, and the intersections were filled with brief conversations. Individual visibility could be had by claiming central locations or standing up on the planters, or could be avoided by sitting or moving toward the perimeter.

There were planters, curbs, gutters, pillars, gates and walls to lean against, and several natural spatial subdivisions that different groups could claim. Those gatherings that weren't physically bounded were always in the shape of a tight inward circle, their own backs forming the no-trespassing sign.

Teachers never went onto the Quad except to pass through at full speed on their way to the teachers' lounge, and nobody managed it directly; supervision was at a minimum. Very few classrooms opened onto it, so that noise was rarely an issue even when a group inhabited the Quad during class times.

The Quad was a luxury in programming terms: it had no manifest function of its own, no educational mission to perform. It wasn't supervised by anyone and wasn't planned for much of anything. Unprotected and unenclosed, it cost almost nothing. It could have been left out of the plans with no harm to the agenda of the Board of Education.

It was the single most important spot on campus, the town square that Curtisville itself didn't have.

# A BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AND ARCHITECTURAL PHENOMENOLOGY

The following bibliography, to be completed in future issues of *EAP*, presents work (mostly of the last ten years) relevant to the phenomenological study of such topics as place, home, dwelling, architecture, landscape, nature, and so forth. The list was compiled by David Seamon as a foundation for writing a review article, "A Way of Seeing People and Place: Phenomenology in Environment-Behavior Research," published in *Theoretical Perspectives in Environment-Behavior Research*, edited by S. Wapner, J. Demick, H. Minami, & T. Yamamoto (NY: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers, 2000, pp. 157-178).

A number of the references speak to the broader issues of phenomenology as a research practice and to its place in the larger methodological rubric of "qualitative research." In regard to the "empirical" work listed, many of the studies are not explicitly phenomenological but are included because they develop themes and patterns that arise directly from the world of human life and experience—e.g., qualities of the built environment that contribute to a sense of place, order, and beauty.

This bibliography is by no means inclusive, and the *EAP* editors would be grateful to readers who forward additional references that they feel should be included. We will publish this list as an addendum in a future *EAP* issue. For overviews of similar work earlier than the 1990s, see Barbey 1989; Dovey 1985; Mugerauer 1993; Seamon 1982, 1987; Stefanovic, 1992.

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To be continued in next issue...