



Thirdspacing the University

Performing Spatial and Visual Literacies

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12.08.08

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Or visit:

<http://www.u.arizona.edu/~kimmehea/svr/event.htm>



Presentation in Focus: Key Concepts

The original "Thirdspacing the University" presentation exists in an electronic, hypertext format that does not translate well to paper and ink technology. Thus, the purpose of this handout is to focus on key concepts and resources that are central to the installation experience.

The Flaneur

The *flaneur* is a person who tries to understand and make sense of the world by walking around in it. For the *flaneur*, the world is made up of visual and spatial experiences that can be interpreted to produce stories; in other words, the *flaneur* writes the world into existence as she interprets what she sees and experiences. We can complicate the *flaneur*, however, by critiquing the ideologies that inform our ways of seeing: how can our observations become sites for analysis and community action/participation? This practice of walking and interpreting is explored further in:

Reynolds, Nedra. Geographies of Writing: Inhabiting Places and Encountering Difference. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 2004.

Thirdspace

"Thirdspace" became an important term for me when I considered Michel De Certeau's theory about the relationship between "space" and "place." To summarize, he suggests that "space is a practiced place. Thus the street geometrically defined by urban planning is transformed into a space by walkers" (117). Here, space becomes an opportunity to think critically about the ways in which we are (un)able to participate in the places we experience every day. One way to think differently about our ability to participate in certain spaces is to engage in a discussion of "thirdspace." Here, thirdspace asks us to imagine ways of seeing the world that confront binary thinking in order to invent new ways of practicing place. For more information about place, space, and thirdspace, please browse the following:

De Certeau, Michel. The Practice of Everyday Life. 1980. Trans. Steven Rendall. Los Angeles: U of California P, (1984).

Soja, Edward W. Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-And-Imagined Places. Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1996.

Thirdspace: Mapping SVR at the University of Arizona

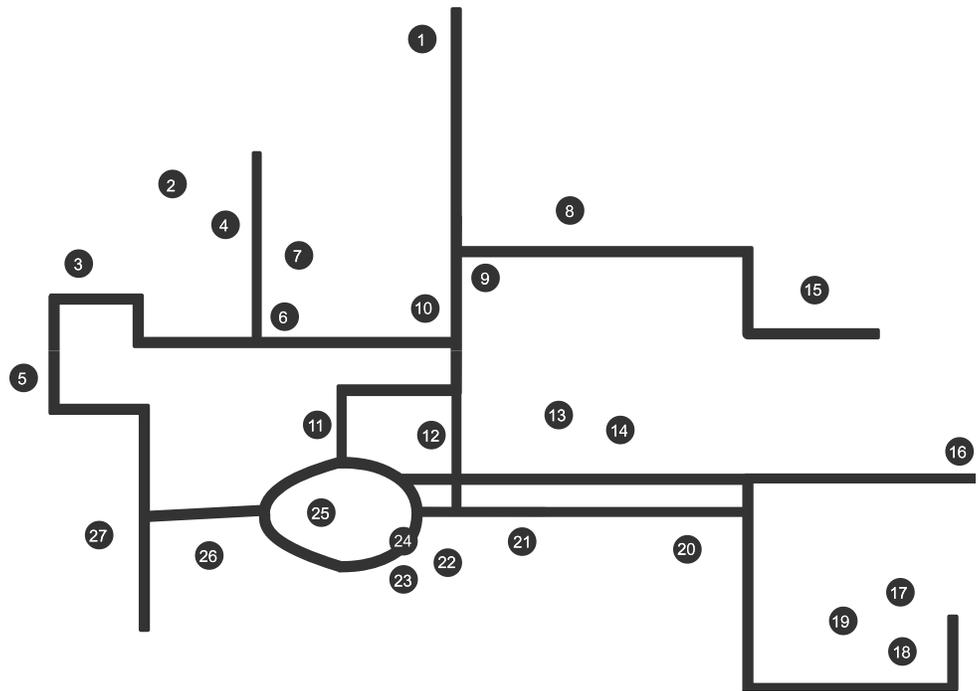
The map that I present on the next page is a catalogue/narrative of my experience walking around the university. As I walked, I used a camera to record images and spaces that caught my attention. I then attempted to "order" my experience by creating spatial/visual categories. The fun of all this categorizing, however, comes when we try to complicate the categories. How do the borders between categories begin to shift and change when they bump up against one another? What does all of this shifting say about the nature of the university as a space, a visual performance?

I invite you to explore the map and the possibilities that these categories hold for teaching composition. How might these categories help students analyze their visual and spatial experiences at the university? Might these categories be expanded, contracted, or otherwise transgressed to generate critical thinking about the way we experience the world?

Virtual University

The electronic, hypertext version of this Thirdspace map featured a sampling of websites associated with different colleges, departments, and organizations at the University of Arizona. Rather than list all of them here, I offer a more general invitation to explore the “virtual” University of Arizona for yourself. Your journey *might* begin here: <http://www.arizona.edu>.

But where else could it go? Perhaps an exploration of electronic environments such as D2L, chat spaces, and file sharing programs? How might we categorize these electronic spaces? How and to what extent do these spaces encourage participation?



Art

2. University of Arizona Museum of Art (at intersection of Park and Speedway)
4. *Front Row Center* by Barbara Grygutis (in front of Maroney Theater)
6. *Border Dynamics* sculpture (in front of Harvill)
7. Center for Creative Photography (south of the College of Architecture)
16. Stevie Eller Dance Theater (1737 E. University Boulevard)
21. *25 Scientists* by George Greenamyre (in front of the Koffler building)

Cultural Centers

9. African American Student Affairs (MLK building, 1322 E. 1st Street)
11. Chicano/Hispano Student Affairs (Chávez building, room 217)
24. Asian Pacific American Student Affairs (Nugent building, room 104)
25. Native American Student Affairs (Nugent building, room 203)

Memorials

12. U.S.S. Arizona Memorial Bell Tower (located in the Memorial Union)
17. McKale Memorial Center (1721 E. Enke Drive)
18. John “Button” Salmon bust (in front of the McKale Memorial Center)
19. WWII memorial for fallen University of Arizona Athletes (west of the Richard Jefferson Gym)
25. University of Arizona Memorial Fountain (in front of the Main building)
26. Women’s Plaza of Honor (located just west of Centennial Hall)

Religious Space

1. Islamic Center of Tucson (901 E. 1st Street)
5. Baptist Student Union: Christian Challenge Ministries (901 N. Tyndall)
8. The Little Chapel of All Nations (1052 N. Highland Avenue)
10. Hillel at the University of Arizona (1245 E. 2nd Street)
15. Catholic Newman Center (1615 E. 2nd Street)
27. Campus Christian Center (715 N. Park Avenue)

Text & Graffiti (to see these, you’ll have to be quick)

1. Barack Obama graffiti (for more info: <http://obeygiant.com/headlines/obama>)
13. “All hail! All hail!” (engraved steps in Alumni Plaza)
14. Mary Poppins (located in the Modern Languages stairwell)
20. Revolution sticker (located on the newsstand in front of the Main Library)
22. Elephant (located on the east side of the Nugent building)