

Assignment

For your third “essay,” you’ll report on some project or group that is engaged in improving, protecting, or understanding a place, community, or region. If Projects 1 and 2 were largely about *remembering* and/or *describing* place, this one is more about *acting on* or *intervening in* place – whether that intervention is your own or others’, ongoing or something you or others propose.

To write the paper, you’ll need to first identify a project of some kind, then do some research about it: through observation, interviews, reading websites, scholarly articles, reports, etc. Try to use more than one source and more than one *kind* of source. Remember, though: this is still an essay, not a research paper, and will be inflected therefore with your voice: your narrative, your interests, your style.

The project you examine can be local: e.g., UMass’ permaculture initiative (<http://www.umassdining.com/sustainability/permaculture>); in the surrounding area: e.g., the effort to improve Northampton’s King Street corridor: <http://www.northamptonma.gov/opd/uploads/listWidget/2552/KingStreetFinalReport.pdf>; or far away, e.g., Mark Vanhoenacker’s recent proposal to build a pedestrian and bike bridge connecting Brooklyn, Governor’s Island, and Lower Manhattan: <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/06/opinion/sunday/lets-build-a-new-bridge-no-cars-allowed.html> or efforts to improve “food deserts” in Madison, Wisconsin: http://host.madison.com/news/local/grassroots/soglin-calls-for-citywide-food-policy-to-curb-problem-of/article_0b2ebb90-cacc-11e1-9f43-001a4bcf887a.html. A common source for all of us will be Colin Beavan’s *No Impact Man*.

Your final paper should be around 1,000-2,000 words long (about 4-8 pages, typed, not including visuals, with double line spacing, 12-point font, and one-inch margins) and will need to be revised through multiple drafts. Generative writing will be assigned over the next week to help spur your ideas, and peer response will be used to help you hone your composition. Remember to take care of the sources you use: summarize, paraphrase, quote, cite, and/or use the words, ideas, facts, statistics, artifacts, photographs, and maps of others honestly and responsibly.

The key due dates for this assignment are:

W	10/09	reading response due
T	10/15	idea & research notes due
W	10/16	initial draft due
M	10/21	revised draft due
W	10/23	final, copyedited draft due.

See the syllabus for policies regarding attendance and due dates.