

# Assignment #1: The Local and the Global

**Length:** 1200 words (maximum)  
**Value:** 20% of course grade  
**Due date:** **February 6, 10am** on Quercus and bring hardcopy to next tutorial

This assignment asks you to undertake field research in the neighbourhood where you currently live, and to situate that local place in the broader social and economic geography of the city. The assignment also asks you to consider the global context of contemporary urbanism and how this is lived through local places. This assignment involves critical reading, field observation, mapping, and analysis.

## STEP 1: Reading

Read the following 2 pieces (available on the course website). Take notes, and highlight ideas, passages and concepts that seem most interesting and important. Lectures 2 & 4 should also be helpful.

Massey, D. (1994) "A Global Sense of Place." In *Space, Place and Gender*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Hulchanski, D. (2007) "The Three Cities Within Toronto: Income Polarization Among Toronto's Neighbourhoods, 1970- 2005." University of Toronto Cities Centre.

## STEP 2: Field Work

### a) Site selection

Your first task is to define the borders of your site. You can bound your site as you like, but it should be large enough to include a diversity of land uses and built forms and small enough that you can observe and map the entire area. We will discuss this in class but if you are uncertain, check with your TA.

### b) Site observation

Visit your site, taking notes as you move about, and perhaps take pictures to help you remember things (or to include in your paper). You should especially take note of things like land use, building density and type, transit accessibility and options, housing type, retail form and signage, and community facilities.

### c) Site Map

Draw a map of the different land uses in your site (which you must submit with your assignment). You may wish to use categories such as 'industrial', 'residential', 'commercial', and 'park / open space' to highlight some of the issues noted in b) (above) on your map.

## STEP 3: Analysis and Writing

Using a maximum of 1200 words, address the questions below. You are encouraged to use these subheadings and to include references to your fieldwork throughout, and you **MUST** refer to both of the readings in your text. You should consider how your experience of the site challenges or confirms ideas from the readings. Be specific with the examples you use from your field work to support your claims. Be sure to include a short **INTRODUCTION** with a clearly stated argument, and a **CONCLUSION** that summarizes your main ideas.

### Local Scale:

Drawing on the two required readings, how would you characterize your neighbourhood? What are the defining features of your site?

### Urban Scale:

How / Does your neighbourhood fit in David Hulchanski's 'Three Cities' of Toronto? Is this a helpful framework for understanding your site in relation to the city more broadly?

### Global Scale:

In a 'Global Sense of Place', Doreen Massey describes the main commercial street in her neighbourhood and highlights a range of ways that global connections are visible in the landscape. What kinds of examples of global connections do you see in your site?

Tips:

- Please be mindful of the difference between opinion and argument (we are interested in arguments and not opinions). An argument may build on your opinion but requires support such as examples or data from the readings or lectures, or field observations from your site.
- You are not expected to have any specific skills at map making. Your map can be hand drawn. It must include your entire site, and must be submitted as part of your assignment.

Format:

- Put your name, student number, course number, TA name, tutorial number, and date on the first page of your paper. Please DO NOT include any kind of binding on your report.
- Double-space and double-side your text; use 1-inch margins, 12 pt font, and number all your pages.
- Be sure to proofread the paper and do not exceed the maximum length.
- Retain a copy of your paper that can be submitted in the event of the original being lost or misplaced.