Playin' Pick-up on Main:
Re-Focusing a Neighborhood's Identity

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Submitted to the Department of Architecture
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Architecture

at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology,
February 2002.

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Abstract

At first glance, the city of Worcester is not unique. Like so many other New England cities, the traces of its industrial past are visible at every turn: from the early high-rise buildings in the downtown area, to the canals which run through the city, to the seemingly endless supply of bulky brick factories and the worker housing which surrounds them. Upon further investigation, however, Worcester, as with all places, is revealed to be filled with very specific, and indeed unique, histories and memories. Regrettably, in Worcester and so many of these other industrial cities, while many physical remnants remain, the spirit and energy they once provided have disappeared, much like the industries themselves. This disappearance has created a void in the cultural fabric of the area, leveling our experiences within cities and flattening the distinctions between them.

Within Worcester, the neighborhood of MainSouth is indicative of this shift. Home to both universities and corset makers, for decades MainSouth held a singular position in Worcester's civic landscape – a place where higher education and the working classes mixed. After the loss of industry, however, the neighborhood disintegrated and any previous coherence disappeared. By utilizing forces already at work in the site, this thesis will attempt to promote a new understanding of MainSouth, one that re-establishes the neighborhood's identity as a place where different sectors of society can mix. Working with both existing building typologies and existing programmatic uses, a restructuring of portions of Main Street will be proposed as a new focal point for communal activity in the neighborhood.

Contents

"May we realize that the true greatness of Worcester is not evidenced now and never will be evidenced by the number and length of its streets, its magnificent buildings, its extensive factories, or its great population, but it is found now, and ever will be found, if found at all, in the hearts and minds of the people."

From the address of Burton W. Potter at the dedication of the new City Hall, April 28, 1898

Questions of Identity in Contemporary Culture

In his work analyzing French culture, historian Pierre Nora makes a distinction between history, where the past is taught through books, schools, and other formalized means, and "living memory," where there is no teaching. Rather, the past is "learned" through everyday contact with the people, objects, and practices that contributed to that past.[1] In other words, within the construct of living memory, time is seen as a continuum, where elements of the past continue to have their influence felt in the present through the persistence of tradition, storytelling, rituals, and the like. In contrast to this, history is fixed, the elements of the past institutionalized and stripped of their emotional power.

Essential to this view is that it is only through living memory that we maintain our ties to the past. In the institutionalization of the past, it is taken away from us as individuals, crystallized into a coherent package, and made acceptable to a larger, societal order. Living memory, while messy and individual, has a much stronger hold over our psyche for just this reason. By constructing this vision of the past for ourselves, we have stronger ties to it and are less likely to let it go. In a sense, we possess this self-made past, we own it. Through the institutionalizing of these memories, we release ownership and rely on the memories of others. As Adrian Forty says in *The Art of Forgetting*, "objects are the enemy of memory, they are what tie it down and lead to forgetfulness."[2]

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[1] Nora, Pierre, trans. Goldhammer, Arthur. Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past/ Vol. I: Conflicts and Divisions. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996): 3.
[2] Forty, Adrian and Küchler, Susanne, eds. The Art of Forgetting. Oxford, UK: Berg, 1992): 7.

In the United States, we are particularly notorious for this institutionalization. Perhaps because we have always self-consciously struggled to gain legitimacy in the eyes of older, culturally richer countries, and perhaps because of our never-ending fascination with "the new," Americans have always been quick to abandon the past. The National Mall in Washington D.C. is a product of this abandonment, making it a symbol of the nation on multiple levels. Not only are monuments so numerous that space for new ones is becoming increasingly difficult to find, but also the experience of visiting the Mall has become something akin to that of a museum. Essentially a walking gallery of historical figures, it is becoming increasingly difficult for each passing generation to establish meaningful connections with these places and figures. Trips to the Mall are inherently historical, for no one "lives" on the Mall (with the possible exception of the President and his family). As such the experience of the past that the Mall provides becomes encapsulated, kept mentally separate from our daily activities. Because of this compartmentalization, the people and events that the Mall commemorates never become an active part of our lives and are never fully internalized.

The issue of internalized memory is an important one because of the role it plays in identity formation. The development of a sense of self and the relationship between this self and the surrounding world takes place on many levels. Established not just in relation to other individuals, but also at the scale of communities and groups, identity forms the basis for dignity and pride within in an individual, and by extension, groups of individuals. The built environment plays a role in this by shaping our daily experiences. The distinction of one space from another

creates unique conditions, which in turn create unique identities for their inhabitants. For this reason, memories (both collective and individual) and their manifestation within culture play a crucial role in articulating what it means to be an individual within that larger culture.

Currently, we are at a pivotal point in the formation of our cultural memory. As we pass into the twenty-first century, we are increasingly losing our links to the important events of the twentieth. Whether this is Holocaust survivors and the soldiers who fought to liberate them in World War II, the tireless workers of the Civil Rights Movement, or simply figures that played an important role in twentieth century events, our ability to directly interact with them is quickly dwindling.

As a result, there has been a growing trend of monument construction. Most of these have been forgettable, if not downright bad. There have been bright spots, however. Most widely discussed among these is Maya Lin's Vietnam Veteran's Memorial, but there are others. Also notable for her work dealing with memory is artist Rachel Whiteread. Whiteread's work focuses on making that which is absent present. Her recent projects such as the Water Tower Project (1998) and the Austrian Holocaust Memorial (2000) quietly, yet strongly, force us to assess the importance of that which is missing. In their literal re-creation of the previously nonexistent interior spaces of the chosen subject matter, Whiteread's work encourages us to not only "see" what is absent, but also to generate emotion for it, to miss it.

Nevertheless, how does this ability to "miss" something have an effect within our typical day? Within the built environment, the usual period of mourning is usually very short lived, as any open land or space is quickly covered over or replaced with the next developer's vision. Indeed, while still important, the strength and clarity of the built environment has eroded over the course
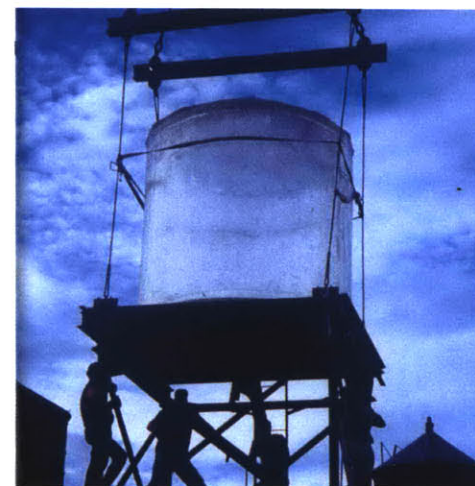

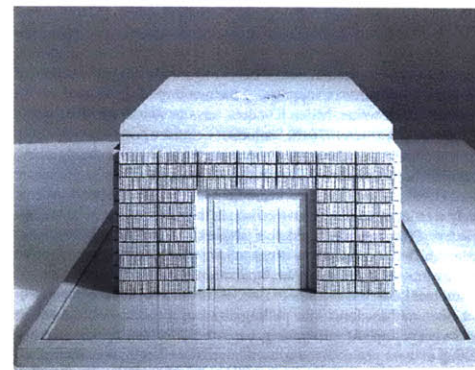Figure 1. Rachel Whiteread's Water Tower Project (1998).

Figure 2. Rachel Whiteread's Austrian Holocaust Memorial (2000).

of the past century. Where a visual language once spoke in the same way to people of different ethnicities, classes, religions, etc., there now exists a fragmented landscape which is unable to address even the immediate users it was intended to serve.

This is primarily due to the leveling and numbing that is occurring all around us. Amazingly, as the world continues to grow smaller and smaller, we are also experiencing a loss of exoticism. As we become increasingly exposed to other cultures and the traditions of one blend with the next, the specifics of each are being reinterpreted or lost. Worse is the problem of pastiche, where these traditions become not just reinterpreted, but flattened and sanitized for easier absorption into its new surroundings.

This is not to sound too regressive or backwards looking, and surely, it is not an attempt to generate nostalgia. Rather, I am trying to ask the question, how do we go forward from here? How do we pull together the influences that make up our surroundings and form a new understanding of ourselves from which to move forward? Given the rapid globalization of culture that has occurred over the past century, it is fair to assume that our society is not as tightly defined as in the past. Should our visual language be tighter then, in an attempt to reign in this looseness? Or should it be loose in an attempt to capture all experiences?

These are difficult questions to address clearly, and even more difficult to find suitable answers for. The main issue that needs to be addressed, in my opinion, is that of making an architecture that is of its time and place. This is no easier than answering the above questions, as it provides very little direction for finding answers. But it seems to reduce the problem to its very essence: Who is the built form meant to serve? Where does it find itself located? Where in time?

In order to fully address the question of identity within ourselves as we are today, and not solely through the eyes of history, we must ask these questions. For it is only through a rigorous process of self-discovery that we can begin to define a new language that does not claim to speak for all people, but rather one that enables people to speak for themselves. Our world is changing, and so too, are we. We must move forward together, as both individuals and a society.
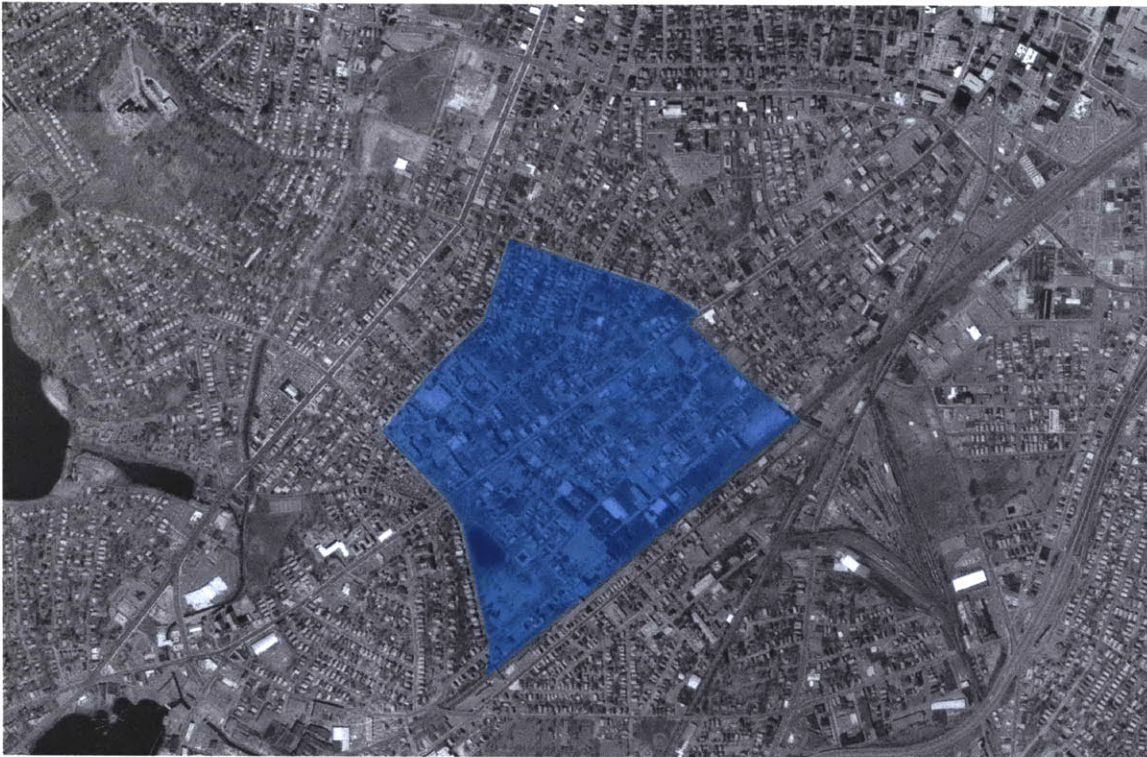
Figure 3. Orthophoto of MainSouth highlighting site.

Founded in 1674 with land purchased from the Nipmucks and Packachoags, local Native American tribes, the city of Worcester is located in the state of Massachusetts, roughly fifty miles west of Boston. Named after a British market town, Worcester seems almost to have been destined to slip into the role it has assumed for much of its existence, that of an industrial production center for New England.

Once settled, the city quickly established itself as a major trading outpost for goods flowing between Boston and cities to the west, namely New York and Albany. It was in this capacity that Worcester developed and grew during the eighteenth century. However, the rough terrain, which makes up and surrounds the city, hindered the expansion of an economy reliant on trade and farming. As a result, during this period, the city's population never expanded beyond that of a large town.

With the advent of new technology, however, the city's prospects changed. Whereas the trading industry had been limited by both its landlocked location and the difficult access over land, Worcester found itself perfectly situated to take advantage of the Industrial Revolution. The Blackstone River provided both power to run mills as well as means to get products to Providence and beyond. Later, rail lines cut a path through the landscape making access anywhere far easier.
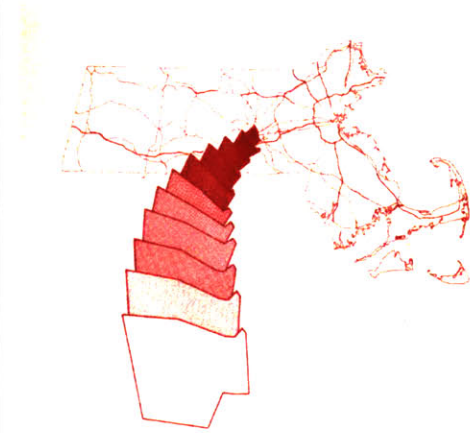

Figure 4. Map of Massachusetts locating Worcester.

In the era of the railroad and the river, Worcester prospered. In fact, for much of the late nineteenth century, the city at the heart of the Commonwealth was considered New England's cultural capital. At the same time that immigrants were drawn to the city to fill the mills and factories, the capitalists who benefited most from industrialization returned their successes to city by investing in new buildings, parks, and institutions. Schools of higher education opened, museums flourished, and Worcester became a destination for nationally and internationally known celebrities. By 1880, Worcester was the nation's twenty-eighth largest city with a population of 58,291; by 1930, 195,311.

At mid-century, changing production methods and modes of transportation led the local economy to falter, slowly bringing an end to Worcester's golden age. Nonetheless, people continued to reside within the city because of the strong sense of community that had developed through immigration patterns and the dense social networks of the worker housing. Even now, many parts of the city are identified by their traditional ethnic makeup.

Today, Worcester is again on the upswing. The arrival of new industries such as biotechnology has been successfully coupled with strategic adjustments to the existing urban fabric and reinvestment in the downtown area. In recent years, the population of Worcester is rising and the city government is determined to become "the most vibrant middle-sized city in the Northeast."

Topography

Map showing the relative topography of Worcester. Notice how MainSouth, within the bounding box, is located in one of the flatter regions of the city.
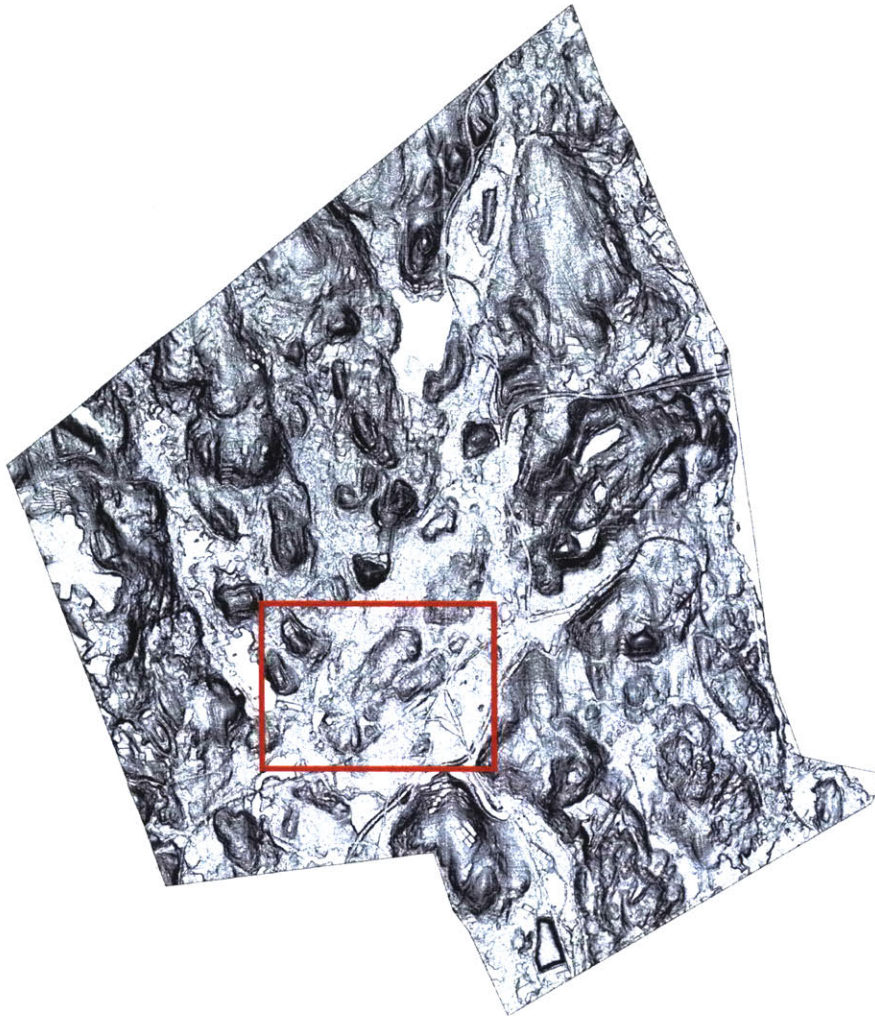
Figure 5. Topographic map of Worcester (current as of 2000).

Parks and Recreation

Map showing natural features of Worcester. Notice the relative absenceof either waterways or green space, indicative of the urban context.
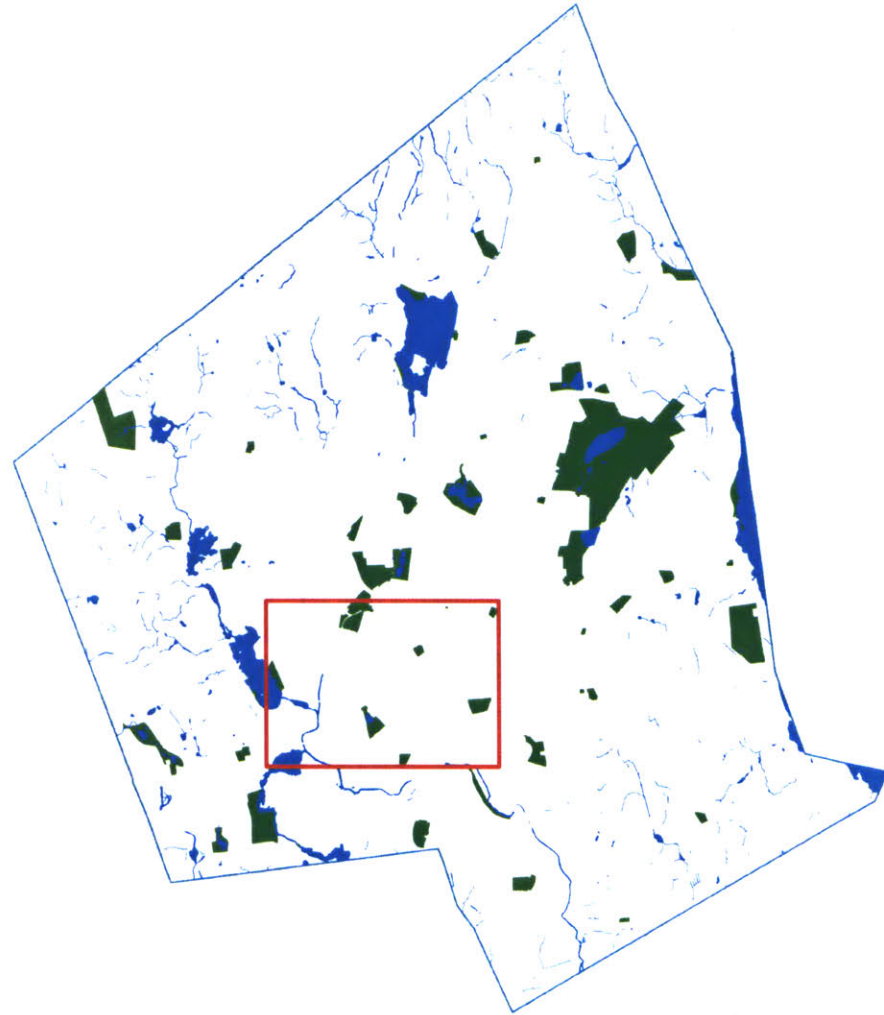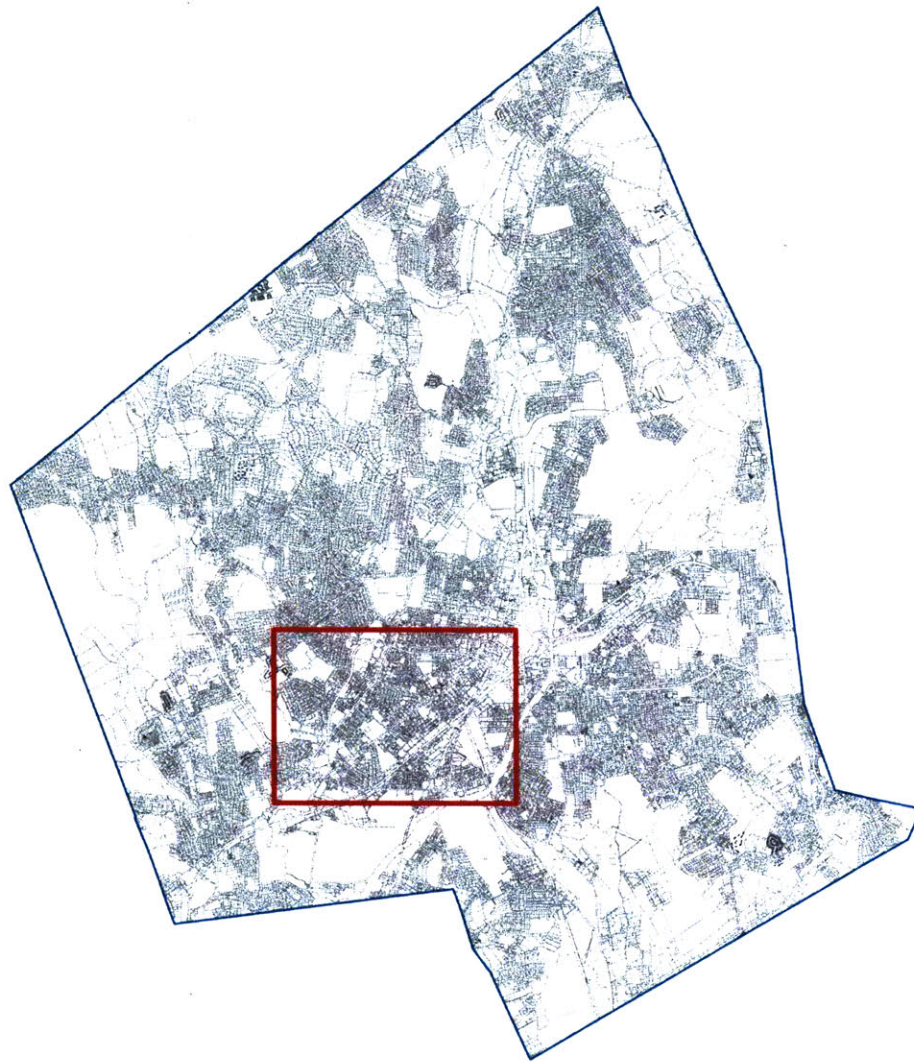

Figure 6. Map of Worcester showing geen spaces and waterways (current as of 2000).

Parcels

Map showing parcelization of Worcester, with accompanying indications of topography and intensity of development.

Figure 7. Map of Worcester showing parcelization (current as of 2000).

Railroads

Existing railways within the city of Worcester. Notice how MainSouth is located near the junction of five different lines.
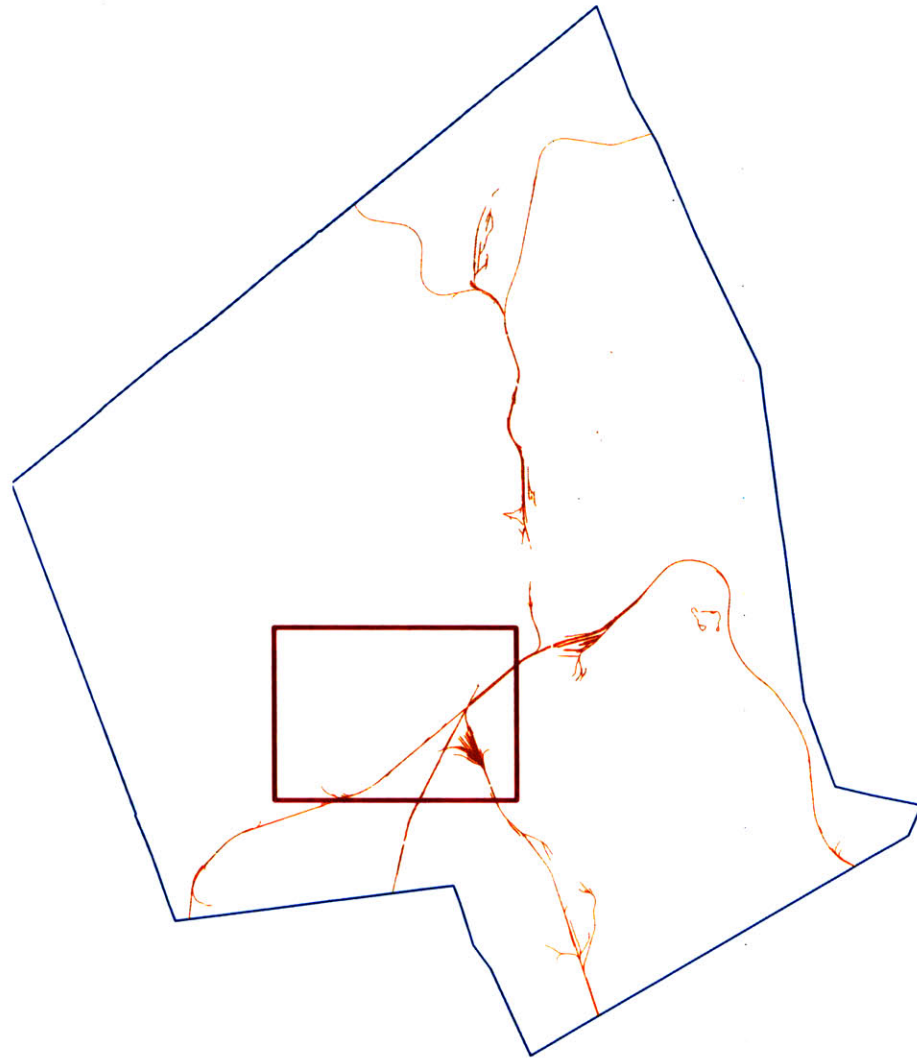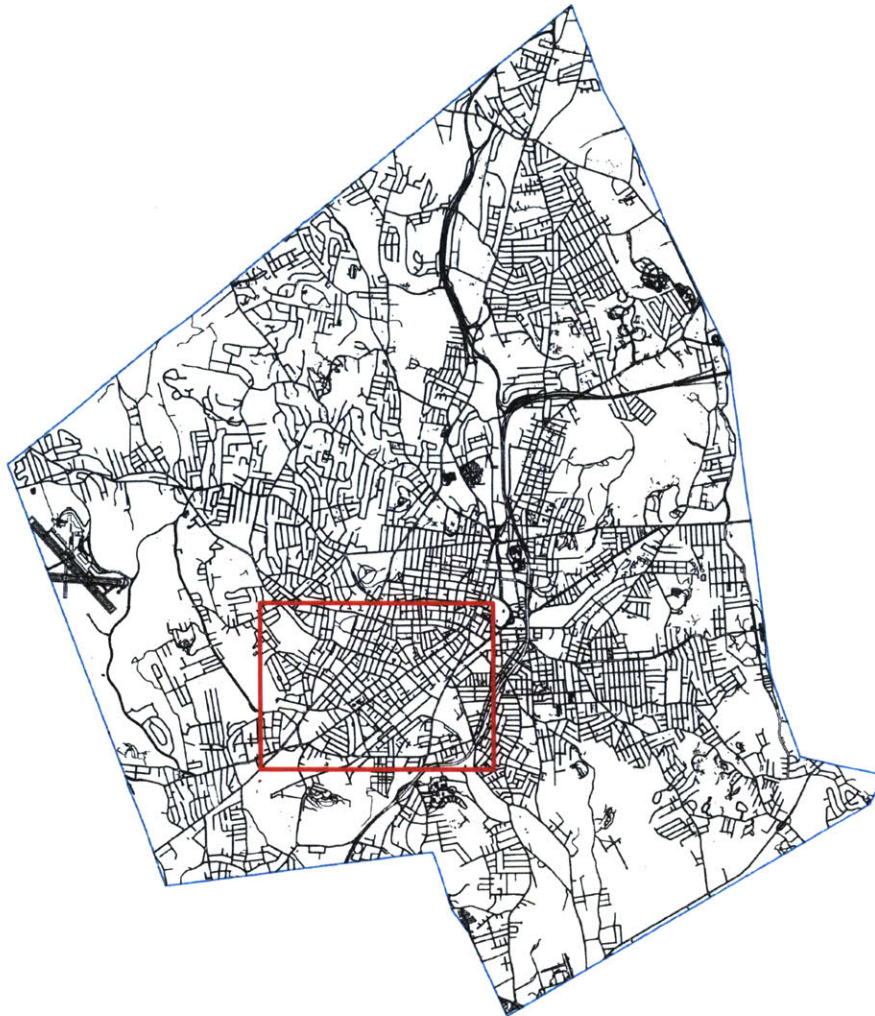
Figure 8. Map of Worcester showing rail lines (current as of 2000).

Roadways

Roadways in the city of Worcester. Notice the shifts due to topography, and the ribbon of Interstate 290 cutting through the city.

Figure 9. Map of Worcester showing roadways (current as of 2000).

MainSouth lies immediately outside Worcester's downtown area. The neighborhood is defined by the presence of Main Street, which cuts it diagonally as it travels northwest towards the city center.

Because MainSouth lies within a moderately flat part of what is a particularly hilly city, it has always been on major trade routes to and through the city (hence Main Street). However, although it was part of the city's original settlement, this stretch remained undeveloped until the onset of the Industrial Revolution. It was then that what had previously been merely on the road to somewhere else became an ideal place to locate industry adjacent to the historic center. In the middle of the nineteenth century, both commercial and passenger tracks were laid running parallel to Main Street to the southeast, and with this, the area began to thrive and grow rapidly.
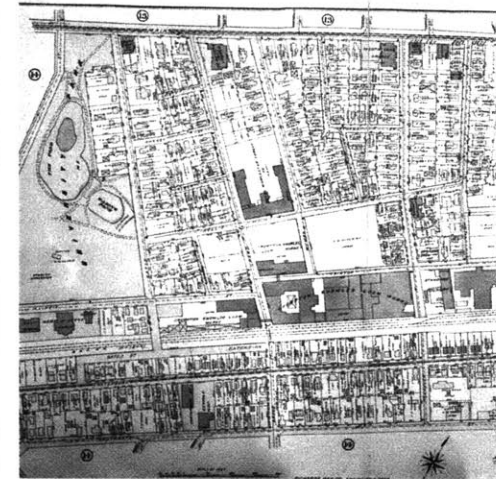

Figure 10. Map of area south of Main Street in 1911.

Figure 11. View of Main Street residences in 1894.

Industrial factories were built along the tracks to take full advantage of the proximity to shipping. Many of the industries in the area proved successful, which in turn led to the development of land adjacent to the factories, generally outbuildings for expanded production or various types of housing for workers. As was typical of the time, housing was often provided to people through their employment, thus guaranteeing proximity to work, and hopefully, attentive workers. The owners too wanted close access to their work, albeit without the industrial surroundings. It was at this point that Main Street became something of a divider.

Main Street is actually on slightly higher ground than where the tracks and factories are located, and the landscape continues to rise beyond it to the northwest. Thus, the street became a buffer between the industrial landscape to the south and the more traditionally residential land to the north. It was here, on the rising slope, that the owners settled into the beautiful Victorian homes that were popular at the time. Almost as a counterpoint to the factories below Main Street, Clark University opened above it in 1889, reinforcing the emerging class division. While corsets and looms were made below Main Street, above, luminaries such as Sigmund Freud lectured and Nobel Prize-winning research was conducted.

Although these two distinct cultures formed on opposite sides of the Main Street, the street itself continued to act as a spine connecting them. Owners would pass down the worker's streets on their way to work each morning and everyone would meet each other in the markets and shops along Main Street. It was only with the end of this system that the rift between the two sides was revealed. As the service economy began to flourish and industries began to fail or move to other locales, so too did the wealthier members of the neighborhood. All that was left were the university, the people who could not afford to move elsewhere, and the slowly deteriorating structures around them.

In the ensuing decades, these downward trends continued unchecked as MainSouth's past glory faded. By the nineteen-seventies, the area became known as the worst neighborhood in the city, a reputation it has yet to shake. Gangs are rampant, and much of the historic fabric has been razed in repeated arsons. The university has fought to maintain a beautiful setting on the land it controls, and in recent years has gone to great lengths to reach out and maintain the properties in the surrounding area. And yet, in a scenario strangely reminiscent of the end of the industrial era, MainSouth has once again become home to a large portion of the city's growing immigrant population, of workers toiling to make their way into a better life.
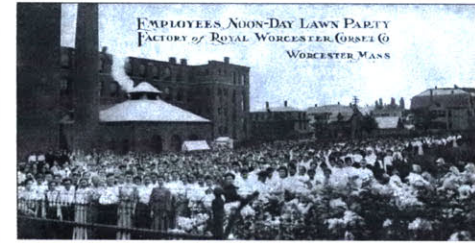

Figure 12. Employees at the Royal Worcester Corset Company enjoying a lunchtime lawn party.

Figure 13. Computer model showing built fabric and land use.

The area of my most detailed focus is a particularly good example of the conditions within MainSouth. Within a quarter-mile stretch of Main Street, there lie five churches or chapels, two Chinese markets, a Laundromat, a local bar, and a florist. This strange mix is the near perfect embodiment of the many influences and diversity which make the neighborhood such a striking study.

Figure 14. Panoramic of Main Street looking northwest.

Figure 15. Panoramic of Main Street looking southeast.

Topography

*Topography within MainSouth.
Main Street cuts diagonally
across the area from southwest
to northeast, running along the
plateau in the center.*

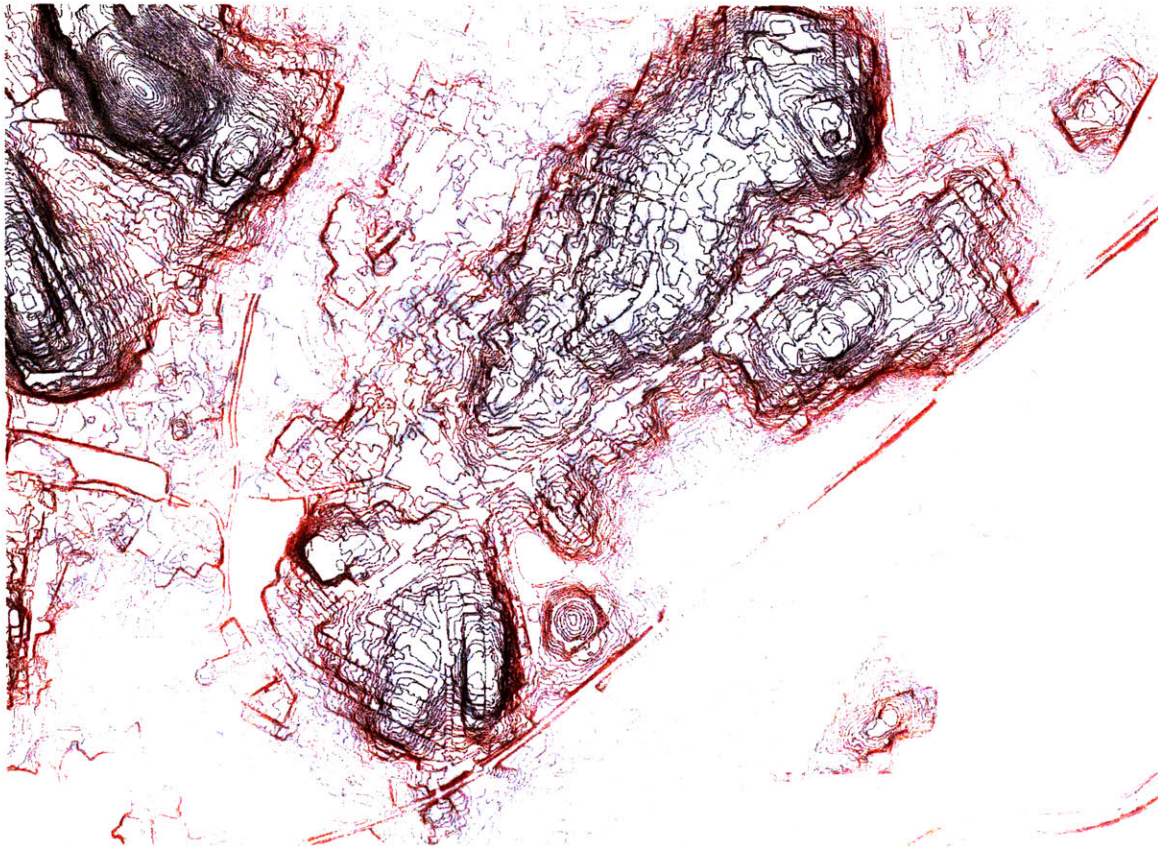Figure 16. Topographical map of
MainSouth.

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Figure/ Ground

Figure/ Ground showing the built fabric of MainSouth. Points of interest include Clark University to the southwest and several industrial factories to the southeast with the raillines below them.
Also notice the breakdown of the urban fabric between the factories and Main Street .

Figure 17. Figure/ground diagram of MainSouth.

Land Use

Map of MainSouth showing the dramatic mix of uses present in the area.

purples and pinks - institutions (Clark Univeristy, for example),
brown - industrial uses,
blues - commercial uses,
green - open space, and
yellows - residential.

Figure 18. Land-use map of MainSouth..

Activity

Diagram of MainSouth showing the areas of highest levels of activity
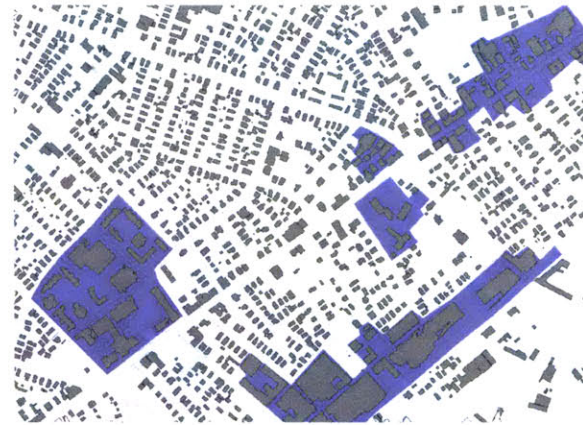
Figure 19. Diagram of major activity areas within MainSouth.

Open Space

Diagram of MainSouth showing the areas of open space. Unstructured spaces are shown as ovals, structured spaces as rectangles.

Figure 20. Open space diagram.

Interaction of Activity and Space

Diagram of MainSouth showing the overlap of activity levels and open space. Notice how most of the unstructured open space is to the south due to a broken block structure, while activity remains mostly along Main Street.

Figure 21. Diagram overlaying areas of activity with open spaces in MainSouth.

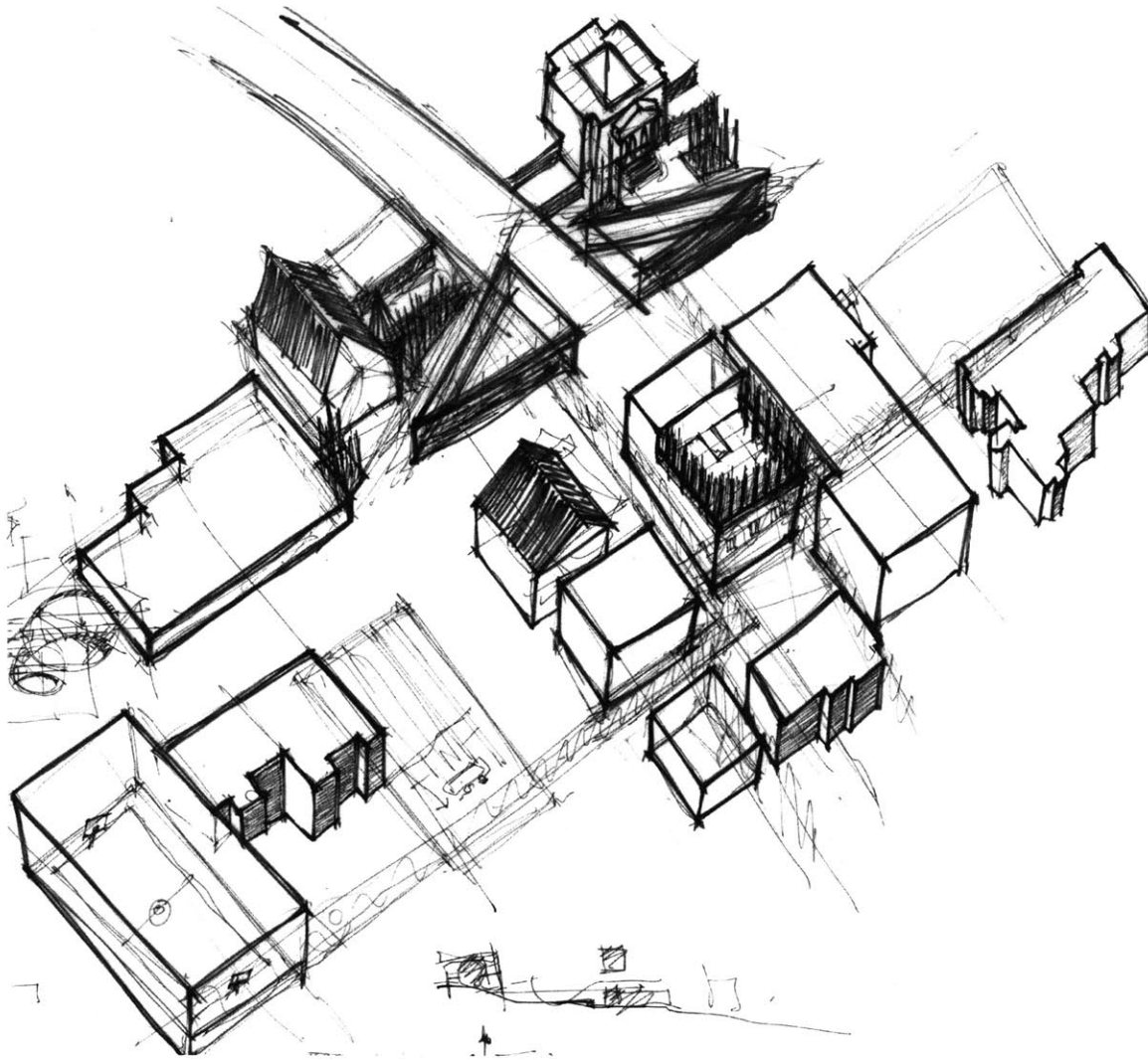*Figure 22. Axonometric sketch;*
November 13, 2001.

First Proposal

Early investigations into the site centered around an attempt to utilize historic events in such a way as to expose and mitigate inequalities that currently exist with in the neighborhood. The historic event of Sigmund Freud's visit to Clark University served as a starting point for such early design explorations. In 1909, Freud traveled to Worcester to give five lectures at Clark in celebration of the school's twentieth anniversary. There was suitable excitement about his presence at the school's events, which marked the formal introduction of his ideas to an American audience. More importantly, it was Freud's first (and, as it turned out, only) visit to the United States.

Combining this significant historic event, with Freud's still controversial psychoanalytic ideas, the first proposal attempted to expose hidden layers of the area's "psyche" in an effort to knit the two sides of Main Street together. As shown in the sketch below, a series of tower-mounted cameras around the neighborhood would be used to capture images of activities in the area. These collected images would then be projected on the surface of various vacant buildings, in such a way as to enable "screenings." Through the randomization of the image capture and the location of its projection, the two different realities of the community would be continuously revealed to one another in an ever-changing juxtaposition, the beauty of each will relying on the other.
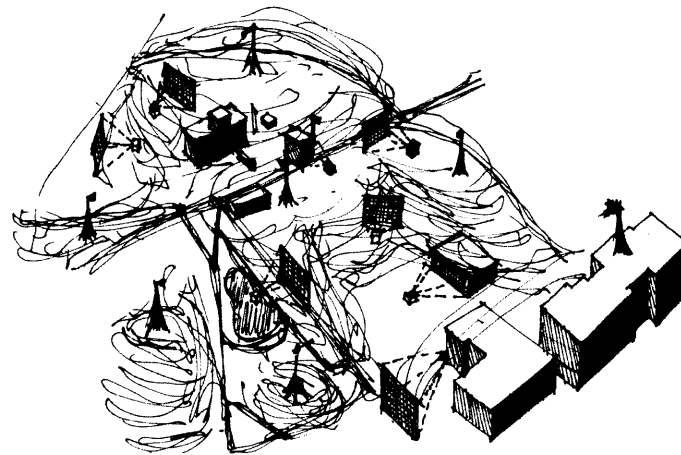

Figure 23. Sketch; October 10, 2001.

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The second series of proposals marked the introduction of the "neighborhood center" and its associated uses as the focal point of the design. Whereas earlier investigations had attempted to create an "event" which would stir the community to action, working from *within* the existing structure of the neighborhood marked this next phase. In these designs, programming would become the key to creating a lively space in which a community dialogue could develop and grow. Specific aspects of the program would include a small police substation, a farmer's market to service community gardens elsewhere in the neighborhood, basketball courts (both outdoor and indoor) as part of a larger community center, and a lookout or viewing tower.

As presented below, the two proposals offer different strategies for the allocation of program throughout the site. What differentiates the two is their contrasting understanding of how to handle the Main Street divide. In the first, the two directions of traffic are split in order to create a small hardscaped plaza. The curving of each side of the street slows traffic, thereby allowing for easier access across it. The second is much the same as the first, but envisions a much larger split between directions of traffic flow, which would then enable a program to be allocated to this center space. With the addition of this third space, the "either/or" of the existing Main Street condition is broken down and links are established between the three.
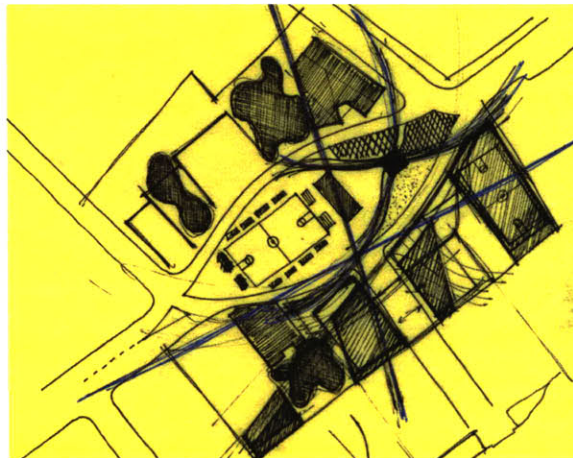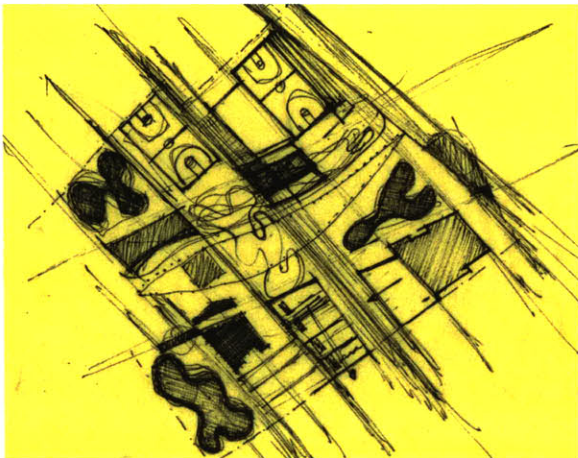

Second Proposal

Figure 24. Programmatic sketch, alternate 1.

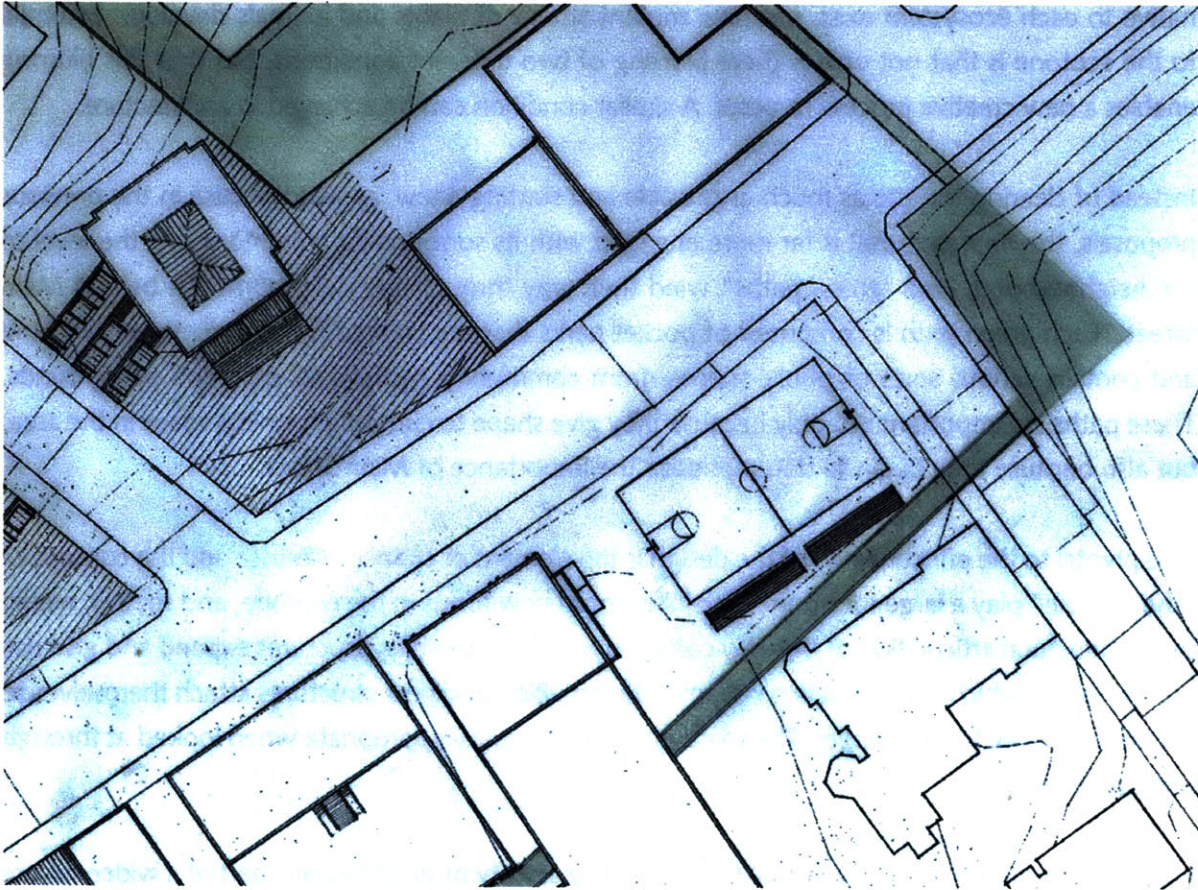*Figure 25. Programmatic sketch; alternate 2.*

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Figure 26. Block plan, detail

The final proposal develops out of the ideas introduced in the intermediary stage. By taking the idea of the community center and introducing an increased element of programmatic mixing, the design attempts to create what has been called an "ecotone." This term, originally used in ecological studies, is used to describe the overlap of two ecosystems, where not only the species native to each ecosystem exist, but new mutant strains of plants and animals develop. Essential to the ecotone is that not only is there blurring of two different conditions, but that this blurring enables a new creative process to occur. A similar condition can be achieved in architecture.

Instead of clearing the site as much as possible and starting anew, as was the case in the previous proposals, the final proposal is far more engaged with its surrounding conditions. At the level of the neighborhood, two "green paths" wind their way through the neighborhoods behind Main Street. Each green path is composed of pocket parks that are created from currently vacant land and contain various sorts of public spaces, from community gardens to children's playgrounds. These paths are important not only because they give shape to currently formless space in the area, but also because they begin to de-emphasize the importance of Main Street.

Also pivotal to the effectiveness of the design is the element of chance. Chance and the concept of "the gamble" play a large role in the development of new forms in the ecotone, and so, too, within the architectural articulation of the new community center. Existing structures expand and give rise to new forms, which contain new programmatic activities, and new structures attach themselves to old ones to allow for exchange. The word 'gamble' is equally appropriate when looked at through a societal lens.

According to Jackson Lears, we should approach the activity of gambling as "part of a wider culture of chance—a culture more at ease with randomness and irrationality."[1] This is the Main Street Pick-up: take a few local players, throw in a few outsiders with potential, and make a go of it.

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[1] Lears, Jackson. "Gambling for Grace: The other American faith." The New Republic. 2000 May 29.

Neighborhood Plan

Proposed plan for the MainSouth area. The blue line indicates public bus lines, and the red circle indicates a seven-minute walking radius.

Green shapes mark the open spaces created on formerly vacant lots, and the darker green lines establish the the paths connecting them. Notice the points of connection towards and away from Main Street.
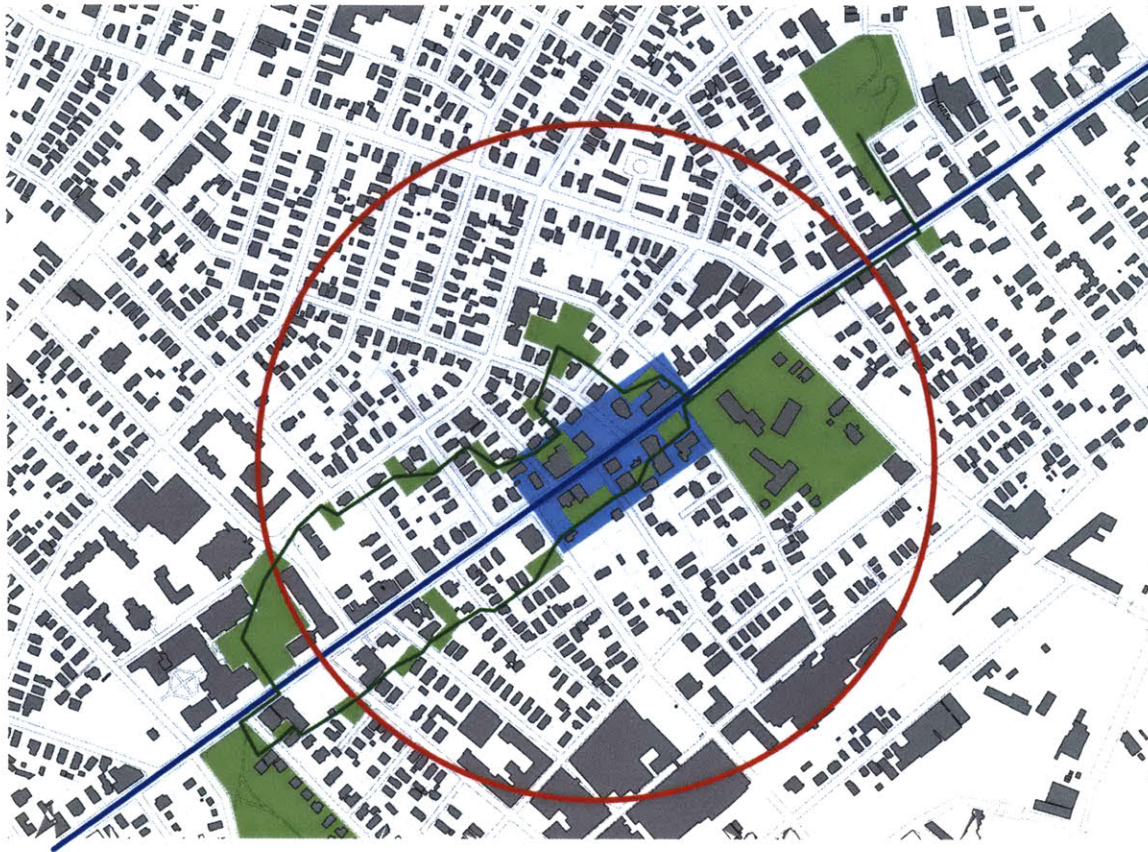
Figure 27. Neighborhood Plan. Original Drawing 18"x24", 1" = 200'.

Site Plan

*Plan detailing the proposed
block structure for the new
neighborhood center.
Proposals include renovations
of several existing buildings,
construction of several new
infill structures, and new paving
materials.*
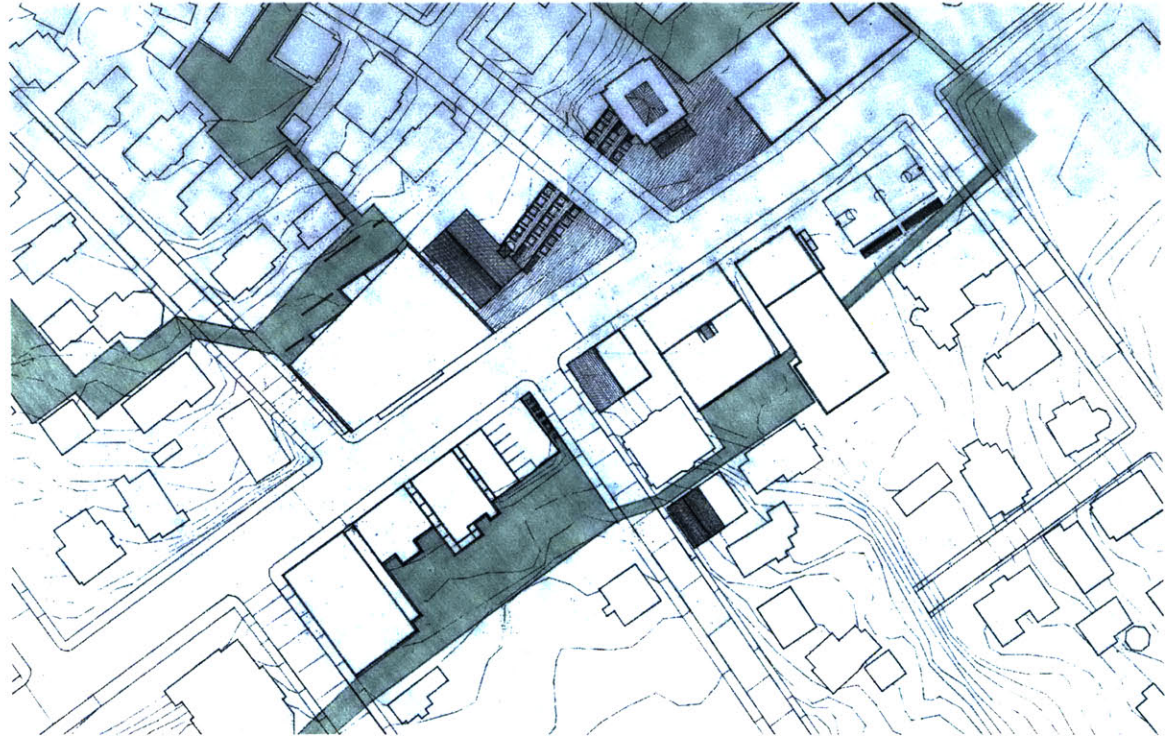
*Figure 28. Site Plan. Original Drawing
24"x36", 1" = 32'.*

Building Scale:
Examples of Balance

Building Plan

First and Second Floor plans of two featured buildings. Both work with an existing structure, and expand from that to intesify it the relationship between the two across Main Street.
Included in the buildings are: an existing Chinese market, a bowling alley, and Chinese takeaway to the north of Main Street, and a community center and police precinct to the south.

Figure 29. First and second level plans. Original Drawing 24"x36", 1" = 16'.

Transverse and longitudinal sections through the buildings. Notice the shifting programmatic spaces both between floors and across the site.

Figure 30. Transverse Section A. Original Drawing 24"x36", 1" = 16'.

Figure 31. Longitudinal Section D and Elevation looking South. Original Drawing 24"x36", 1" = 16'.

Transverse and longitudinal sections through the buildings. Notice the shifting programmatic spaces both between floors and across the site.

Here, notice particularly how the green path moves from the uphill side of Main Street to a second level terrace, and then to ground level once it crosses the street.
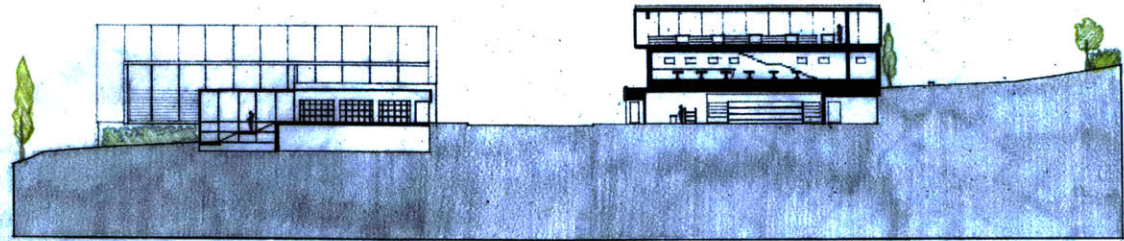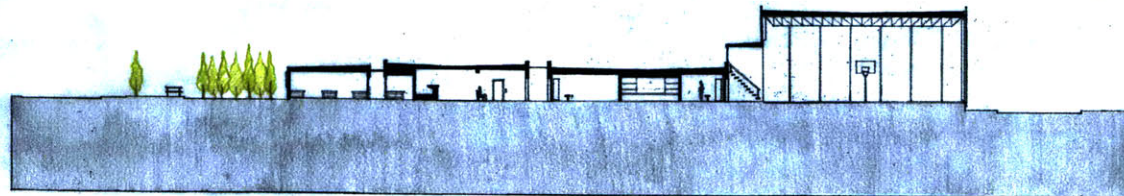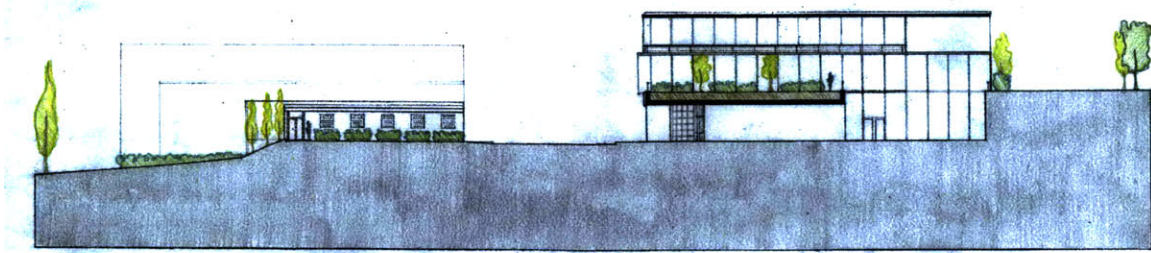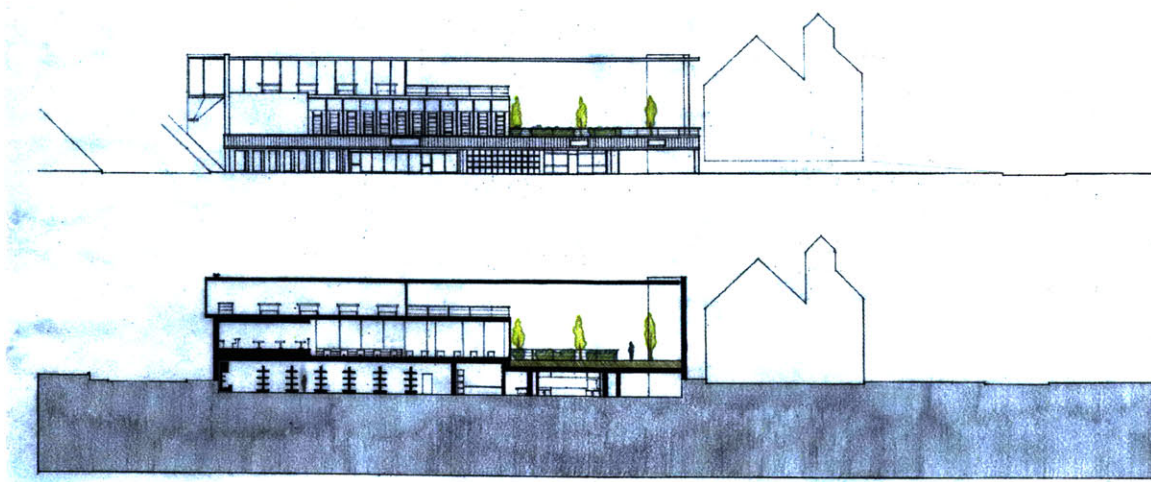

Figure 32. Transverse Section B Original Drawing 24"x36", 1" = 16'.

Figure 33. Longitudinal Section C and Elevation looking North. Original Drawing 24"x36", 1" = 16'.

At the final review, the major issue discussed was architecture's ability to 'speak' for the people it intends to serve, a large part of the question of identity through architecture.

While all reviewers seemed to appreciate the challenge in creating architecture that can 'speak' for the people and the greater issues surrounding it, there remained a division among them as to which was the best way to move forward from there. The responses fell into two general categories, those that proscribed to a more radical approach to intervention and those that promoted a more incremental approach. Some of the reviewers, like John deMonchaux, appreciated the subtlety and 'delicacy' of the design interventions, as well as the respect that was given to the existing structure, both physical and social, of the neighborhood. Marlon Blackwell, while not disagreeing, felt that the MainSouth community would perhaps be better served by the creation of an architecture that projects an image of improvement and sophistication through innovation and detailing.

This ideological split, and the conversation in which it was discussed, excited me. I was happy not only that my project had, in the eyes of the jurors, touched upon the questions I had hoped to address, but because it was through the design that these issues were made manifest. The topic of meaning and identity in, and through, architecture is large and laden; representing a community or group of people, with so many voices and experiences in common (and not), is a difficult, if not downright impossible, task.

During the review, Stan Anderson spoke about the architectural language of the nineteenth century and its ability to speak for the aspirations of the people who inhabited it. The architects at that time designed with higher goals in mind and aimed for the 'timeless,' beyond the petty problems of the everyday. Stan's questions were, "Can we still design with those goals in mind? And if we can, what architectural form does it take?" These questions address the problem precisely, and while I believe that the discussion will continue long beyond this thesis, I am content with the knowledge that my project contributed to it.

Final Review Comments and Criticism

Attending Reviewers:

Paul Lukez
Julian Beinart
Arindam Dutta

Stanford Anderson
Marlon Blackwell
John deMonchaux

As with so many theses, it was only a matter of days into the semester before I realized just how over my head I was. I had planned ahead, defining an interest for myself and taking classes that would target issues of memory, identity, and community planning for two full years before even beginning to work on the design during my thesis semester. All the theoretical issues were covered, the bibliography complete, and I had cleared a path for myself that would permit me to focus solely on design during the thesis semester. Or so I thought.

The moment I sat and looked at my collected maps and site photographs to determine where I would locate my design within the larger neighborhood, I was lost—where was the best place to locate a new memorial in this neighborhood? Looking at the maps, there were a number of locations that would have been appropriate. Some of these spaces were obvious and seemingly waiting for a focal point. Other sites were more challenging, but could potentially yield a more rewarding result if done well. Looking at the photos, however, a more pressing question came to mind: Did it really matter?

While the maps told one story about the neighborhood, the photos told another. There were few people visible in the photos, and I did not remember seeing many more when I was actually there. Worse, the people that I did see seemed as if they needed much more than a memorial to improve their day-to-day lives. My mind reeled. It did not get any better when I mentioned my concerns to my advisor and he recounted a story about driving through the area and being told—seriously—to lock the doors, roll up the windows, and slide as low in the seat as possible to avoid being seen. This was not the thesis I had prepared for myself.

It was then that I realized my preparations had been incomplete. Not because I had forgotten or missed any theories, concepts, or ideas, but because I had allowed myself to keep these ideas and the neighborhood I had chosen to look at separate from one another. Visions of dramatic forms, reanimated histories, and new gathering spaces had blinded me to the fact that a memorial and public space was not what this community needed. I had forgotten about context.

Very quickly, I found my thesis changing from the insertion of an object into a neighborhood in order to reactivate space and a forgotten historical memory, into one where architecture acted as an armature to provide a new beginning for that neighborhood. This new focus was not all that dissimilar to the original intent, in that defining the new beginning the past/present was not abandoned or ignored; rather, the current understanding of the area was acknowledged and shaped to provide a basis for what was to come.

Thus the question of identity became more complex, shifting from a culture and a locality to one that also included a sense of time. Identity would not be something necessarily derived from one's past, but rather the past could be used to explain how a community had developed into its current state. It is only once this understanding is achieved that it is possible to 'pick-up' the pieces of the current condition and carry them forward.

Specificity in relation to context also proved to be an important issue for me, and one, incidentally, that I had not seen in many of the readings during my research. Time as a cultural shaper was generally treated as a matter of cultural studies, whereas architectural investigations involved the resurrection of history. This bridging of past and present began to motivate my work, and through it, I believe I have arrived at a place far more valuable to me in my ongoing development, as well as to the discussion of identity through architecture in general.

The question of identity, while continuously important as we define and redefine who we are, only begins to matter when we actively utilize our understanding of self and interact with those around us. It is a matter of intensity, of activity. It is only in relation to others that we can truly begin to understand who we are as individuals. In the case of MainSouth, this means creating an environment where the richness and diversity already existing in the neighborhood can comfortably coexist, meet, and benefit from itself. A century ago, it was the meeting of two worlds, academic and industrial, which created the rich fabric of the area, and it is the renewed meeting of various cultures that will carry it forward once again.

Unless otherwise noted below, all illustrations are by the author.

Figure 1. Neri, Louise, ed. <u>Looking Up: Rachel Whiteread's Water Tower.</u> New York City: Public Art Fund, 1999. p.149.

Figure 2. Forty, Adrian and Küchler, Susanne, eds. <u>The Art of Forgetting.</u> Oxford, GB: Berg. 1992. p.12.

Figure 4. <u>Comprehensive Plan, Worcester Massachusetts</u>. Planning Department, City of Worcester, 1964. cover.

Figure 9.   Richards, L. J. & Co. <u>Atlas of the City of Worcester, Massachusetts.</u> Springfield: L. J. Richards & Co., 1911. Plate 13.

Figure 10. Yeulenski, Lois R. <u>Worcester.</u> Bath, ME: Alan Sutton, 1994. p.31.

Figure 11. Yeulenski, Lois R. <u>Worcester.</u> Bath, ME: Alan Sutton, 1994. p.124.

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Paul, Julian, Arindam and Mark. The insight and attention you have all given me has benefited me immensely, and I will be forever in your debt. Thanks for your energy and for sticking it out!

John deMonchaux. A very special thanks to you for the interest you took in my work and personal development during my time here at MIT. Your obvious love for your work and students will serve as a model for me in the years to come.

Helene Lipstadt. Thank you for getting me started with my investigations into memory and identity, and for the continued interest once the wheels were in motion.

Scott and Kazuyo. Thanks so much for the help with the model! It never would have gotten off the ground without your gracious help!

Junko Nakagawa and Dan Steger. I don't know what I would have done without the two of you. My time in the "Thesis Annex" certainly wouldn't have been the same. I consistently found myself energized after our conversations, architecture or otherwise. Thanks so much!!

Stephie Nussbaum. I don't know where to begin. We shared it all-the highs, the lows, the Tosci's. I don't know how I would have made it without you, seriously. Thanks for everything.

Lorin Brehaut and Todd Boyd. Thanks for the help, thanks for the humor, thanks for the levity. You've both kept me entertained, if not motivated, and sometimes that's more important

Todd Smith. You are indeed the alpha Todd. Thanks so much for the tunes, the relentlessly funny stories, and the unflagging support.

Lp. The jokes have been said, but they're all true-you're the best distraction I could have hoped for this semester. I owe so much to you, the help, the meals, the sanity. I know there's more I've forgotten, but don't worry, I'm sure it'll come up again later…

Family. Somehow you've manage to stick with me through this whole thing, and I haven't made it easy! Your care and support have meant the world to me, but you already know that. You've made this possible, and I can never repay that.