

Mapping Sense of Place Workshop

Patrick Devine-Wright, Jos Smith and
Anna Jackman

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Welcome and introductions

- Who we are: Jos, Anna, myself
- Why we are here – the *Mapping Sense of Place* project
- What is in store today - agenda
- What will happen next

Agenda

- Understanding sense of place – talk and activities (Patrick)
- Short break
- Making maps – talk and activities (Jos)
- Move to Queens LT7.A – talk and walk (Anne-Marie Culhane)
- Lunch break
- Mapping workshop – two mapping activities
- Short break
- Two talks: Exeter Trails (Mattie) and Exeter Tree Tales (Jos)
- Discussion and next steps

Part 1: Exploring Sense of Place

- Back to the 1970s – Humanist Geography
- *What is it like to experience living in a place?*
- *What does it mean to feel rooted?*
- Concern about ‘placelessness’ and ‘non-places’
- *Is this becoming less common with increasingly similar towns and cities and with increasing levels of mobility?*

What is a Place?

- *'Place is one of the trickiest words in the English language, a suitcase so overfilled that one can never shut the lid'* (Hayden, 1997, p112)

What is a Place?

- *'A portion of land/town/cityscape seen from the inside, the resonance of a specific location that is known and familiar ...*
- *Place is latitudinal and longitudinal within the map of a person's life. It is temporal and spatial, personal and political. A layered location replete with human histories and memories, place has width as well as depth. It is about connections, what surrounds it, what formed it, what happened there, what will happen there' (Lippard, 1997, page 7)*

Place in academic thinking

- Keystone of geography, planning, architecture, environmental psychology.
- Place as combination of:
 - physical location,
 - locale or social relations,
 - **sense of place** (Agnew, 1987).
- Sense of place as combination of:
 - **symbolic meanings** and
 - **emotional bonds** (Williams, 2014).

Thinking with Place

- *'Place is not just a thing in the world ... place is also a way of seeing, knowing and understanding the world. When we look at the world as a world of places we see different things. We see attachments and connections between people and place. We see worlds of meaning and experience'* (Cresswell, 2003, 11-12)

Home

- Historically associated with the word 'haven', which dates back before the 12th century
- Related meanings:
- **Harbour:** place where ships may shelter from the weather or are stored
- **Sanctuary** - a consecrated area or a place of safety:
 - *The garden was a haven **from** the noise and bustle of the city.*
 - *They wanted to provide **safe** havens for the refugees.*

Do you know who these men are and where they are?!



Home as Dwelling Place

- Seamon (1979): home is *'an intimate place of rest where a person can withdraw from the hustle of the world outside and have some degree of control over what happens'* (24).
- Cuba and Hummon (1993): 87% of participants find themselves at home in some combination of house, community & region.
- Feminist geographers have questioned the idea of home - Rose (1993) argued that the 1970s humanist geographers were working from a 'masculinist' notion of home/place and that many women do not share a 'rosy' view of home, instead seeing communities as stifling and homes as locations of neglect, boredom and abuse.

Place and Community

- Sense of place partly about belonging to a community of place or locality.
- Stokowski (2002: 373) pointed out, *'The power of place is not only in its aesthetic or behavioural possibilities, or its iconic status, but in its ability to connect people in society, encourage development of personal and social identities, and reinforce socio-cultural meanings. These are fundamental qualities of community'*.

Types of relation with a place (Lewicka, 2011)

Traditional attachment	Taken-for-granted positive emotional bond, strong local networks, life-long residence and previous generations of family in the locality
Active attachment	Self-conscious positive emotional bond, recent residence, an interest in the goings-on of the place and active involvement in local activities
Place relativity	Ambivalent attitude towards the place, recent residence, content to live locally but also to move elsewhere if circumstances change
Place alienation	Dislike of the place or community where you live, desire to leave and live elsewhere
Placelessness	Indifference to the place where you live, stronger focus on social relations than place

Place and Identity

- *'There is no place without self; and no self without place'* (Casey, 2001, p406)
- Feldman (1990) proposed that people think of who they are – their identity - in relation to types of place, not just specific places in the world.
- These types of places included: *cities, suburbs, large towns, villages, rural areas.*
- She argued that '**settlement identities**' enable people to maintain consistency of experience and identity through the process of relocation.

Part 2: Activities

What kind of place is 'Exeter'?

- **Write down the first words or phrases that come into your mind when you think about Exeter.**
- *Write these down as quick as you can, without trying to think about it very much. Try to write down at least 3 separate things then share these with your neighbour in discussion.*
- Are they very similar or different views of Exeter?
- Have they changed over time (e.g. since before you arrived)?
- Are you aware of different ways of seeing Exeter?

What is your relationship with Exeter?

Traditional attachment	Taken-for-granted positive emotional bond, strong local networks, life-long residence and previous generations of family in Exeter area
Active attachment	Self-conscious positive emotional bond, recently moved to Exeter, interest in Exeter goings-on and active local involvement
Place relativity	Ambivalent attitude towards Exeter, recent residence, content to live in Exeter but also to move elsewhere if circumstances change
Place alienation	Dislike of Exeter, desire to leave and live elsewhere
Placelessness	Indifference to Exeter as a place to live, stronger focus on social relations than place

Do you have a settlement identity?

- Do you think of yourself as?
 - *A city person*
 - *A suburbanite*
 - *A small town person*
 - *A country or rural person*
 - *Other*
 - *I don't identify myself with any type of place*
- From where do you think these opinions have arisen from? Discuss your ideas in small groups.

Where do you feel at home?

Life-place trajectory (Bailey et al., 2016)

- *Think back to the places you've lived over your life so far, including other meaningful places (holiday homes or destinations, second homes, family visits).*
- How many places have you lived in the course of your life to date?
- How long did you live in each place?
- How do you feel about each of these places? Did you feel at home there?
- Do you feel at home where you live now?

Bringing it all together

- Attachment to place is a process that changes over time in response to life stage and personal circumstances.
- **Going to University** is an example of moving to a new place (i.e. Exeter) that can be disruptive to previous sense of identity and social bonds.
- It might involve feeling 'out of place' as well as a process of lessening attachments to 'old' dwelling places and creating new attachments.
- *What do you think?*

References/Further Reading

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