



WRHC 2022

Place as Text Written Collection

University of New Mexico

April 8th – 10th, 2022

Place as Text

Meow Wolf Exhibition, Santa Fe, NM, Spring 2022

Essayist and Wordsmith: [Vineet Narayanan](#)

Sensory Descriptions: [Rika Fukuda](#)

Apparatus and Preparation -- Expedient Checklist

RSVP on the WRHC website and deposit the \$50 admission fee. This covers transportation and lunch for the excursion.

Check in for your excursion opens at 10:30 AM. A general advice to keep in mind is that you are prepared for departure/arrival at least 30 minutes before.

A chartered bus will arrive at the Hotel Andaluz in the morning at 11:00 AM sharp, so following our general advice, try to be ready with your necessary equipment in the lobby and ready to board by 10:30 AM.

One of the WRHC conference members will be adjacent to the lobby exit at 10:45 AM to provide you with your box lunches for the day. Please DO NOT FORGET to grab your meal!!!

Bring along either (a) a notebook and writing utensil, or (b) an electronic device which permits note-taking functionality.

Bring along a medium of transaction (money or credit card) should you desire to purchase any souvenirs, food, or any other externalities along the course of the trip.

There will be a return trip to the hotel at 3:30 PM following the excursion.

Akin to the departure, please be ready for boarding 30 minutes prior by 3:00 PM.

THE BUS WILL NOT WAIT, so you might either find yourself:

(a) Being the only one from your clan, clothed in pajamas, during the middle of the afternoon in a relatively empty hotel (with paranormal sightings¹), or...

(b) Forsaken in an unfamiliar town without any immediate resources for assistance.

¹ Top 3 most haunted hotels in Albuquerque: <https://www.onlyinyourstate.com/new-mexico/albuquerque/haunted-hotels-in-albuquerque-nm/>

Introduction

As you first exit your hotel quarters, take a quick second to appreciate the “urbanness” of the surrounding streets of Central Ave and Broadway Blvd. Do you by chance notice the surrounding clamor, the many varieties of pedestrians who rove the sidewalks, the small business adjoining the roads which epitomize the trove of New Mexican capitalism? Take a mental note of this, and keep this handy as you experience the cultural shift from Albuquerque to Santa Fe during your drive and excursion. As you continue your journey on I-25 Northbound, this shift should start to become more apparent.

Assignment: Bus Ride along I-25 Northbound Towards Santa Fe

While you are settling into your seat cushions on the bus, notice the environment to your sides. Are there any geographical or topographical differences from what your previous experiences entail from your hometown or college town? What landmarks stick out to you, natural or buildings? The drive consists of a unique blend of desert ambiance coupled with the partial jaggedness of a mountainous landscape. A reliable point of notice should be the rocks and minerals native to the landscape. As you drive further North, you will cross through distinct regions and *pueblos*, communities of New Mexico Native American reservation lands. Try to preserve a mental snapshot of the geographical trademarks of the following major regions along the route: Sandia Pueblo, Bernalillo, Santa Ana Pueblo, Algodones, San Felipe Pueblo, Kewa Pueblo, Cochiti Reservation, and La Cienega.

Background and History: Before Meow Wolf and Quirkiness of Surroundings

After your drive, you will probably be eager to get the ball rolling on this whole “Meow Wolf thing” you have heard about since registering for our conference. As you exit the parking lot and enter the registration booth, try to take a look at the surroundings. Have fun, mess around! Some of you might take a look at the giant robot which steeples itself above the vicinity. Perhaps you feel that the robot appears rather “out of place” within such a stretch of area. Good! Try to let the whole subtle awkwardness of the robot placement commensurate what you are about to experience.

For the history zealots (and we plainly anticipate a number of you!), perhaps your first impressions might be regulated by the story behind such a vicinity. Admittedly, you might wonder why such a well-renowned exhibit perches itself behind a relatively unseemly, elderly hill of land. It might even resonate of another business having been established much prior.

Behind one of the faces of New Mexican art belies a rather sordid past. And to underscore the irony, the darkness juxtaposes itself with one of the most benign and beloved activities on a Friday evening: bowling!

Before George RR Martin (Yes, you read that correctly! The OG from *Game of Thrones* who actually lives in Santa Fe) took a chance as a noteworthy Santa Fe real-estate investor on an abandoned, partially dilapidated bowling alley, where he would eventually rent out the property to artist collective Vince Kadulbek (Just wait for his keynote address!), Art Silva, entrepreneur and founder of Silva Lanes Bowling Alley (one of the most reputable bowling franchises in New Mexico), had just finished filing Chapter 11 bankruptcy, resulting from numerous legal implications and costs.

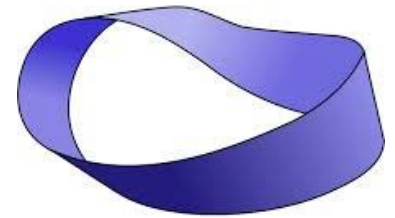
Preparation: Getting Ready to Enter!

As you queue behind the receptionist area, try to notice the neon, fluorescent tinge as you shuttle your way to the exhibit. What mind tricks do you experience from this fluorescence? Are there any other hues which come to mind? Perhaps there may be some exhibits back at home for which this reminds you of. Are the emotional connections the same? How are you going to use this nostalgia to guide you through the remainder of the exhibit?

Assignment: Orientation and Exploration

When you walk into the exhibit, we can promise you that the seemliness of the exhibit's name is rather striking: *The House of Eternal Return*.

Consider the Möbius band, pictured right. The theory behind the Möbius band is that it is a surface with only one real "boundary". In other words, picture taking a pencil and placing it on an arbitrary location on the band, and try tracing through the whole surface. The result is a singular, continuous line covering the entire surface. Hard to visualize? No worries, try recreating the band by yourself with a rectangular strip of paper whenever given the chance, and perform the procedure yourself.



The House of Eternal Return marks a Möbius-like structure, extending beyond the realms of continuity. The interconnectedness of the atmosphere provides for the haunting, yet fluid nature of the exhibit. We enter a parallel world with many entrances to get there. An entire house that used to be located in Mendocino, California disappeared and emerged at the current site in New Mexico.

The mailbox is a good place to start. It sets up the premise and gives ideas for places to search. Look around for the notes or journals left by the characters. What do you observe? What truly piques your curiosity in this scenario? A family that has been researching other dimensions have opened a portal and caused an event that combined their home with the mentioned alternate reality. Try to tackle the riddle about the missing family. Perhaps you can solve it. Begin by searching around for clues, scattered throughout the exhibit.

Assignment: Perception and Stimulation

Try to reflect on what you have cognitively and visually observed. What truly stimulated your perception of the alternative-reality like universe? Did you find anything appealing, or maybe even appalling? Did you feel your eyes play any tricks on you at any point in the exhibit?

Maybe you might feel that you would like a vestibular challenge. Try noticing the difference between your perception of 2D vs. 3D. Take, for instance, your feelings as you enter a black and white cartoon exhibit, versus entering the hallway of mirrors.

As you finish an initial iteration of the exhibit, this time, lean into your audial perceptions. Notice the different frequencies which enter your ear. What sounds do you find most pleasant, and what sounds do you find most grating? Try starting at the more musical exhibitions this time, such as the immortal laser harp, or maybe even take an excavation down to the skeletal xylophone.

You may find some exhibits more harmonious than others, and some maybe more dissonating. Which are those exhibits? Do they take you back to any place in time or any memory they bring up?

If you are in the mood for a third go, try experiencing the ornamentation again. Start with the souvenir exhibits, such as the CD room, the rooms with the more vintage equipment. Then move on into the more futuristic exhibits, such as the portal into the LED lighted exhibit. Do any of the exhibits tap into a particular cultural zeitgeist you might be familiar with? Which exhibit do you most resonate with in terms of its time period?

Return and Reflection

Though in the most theoretical sense, infinity is never bound, in the case of Meow Wolf, it unfortunately is. As we finish our exhibit, and begin to head back to Hotel Andaluz, what experiences do you feel that you can take away from this? Now try thinking of *one word* which

describes what you just saw. Jot it down in your notebook, or keep a note in your cell phone. Try to revisit this word while recreating your Meow Wolf experiences for the future.

Maps: Meow Wolf



City as Text

Nob Hill, Albuquerque, NM, Spring 2022

Essayist: Sarah Fryberger

Pretext: A Short Quote

*They progressed. That is to say, they advanced, in thoughtful silence, toward the jittery neon, the spastic anapestic rock, the apoplectic roll of Saturday night in Albuquerque, New Mexico. (To be an American for one Saturday night downtown you'd sell your immortal soul.) Down Glassy Gulch they drove toward the twenty-story towers of finance burning like blocks of radium under the illuminated smog. Past a lit-up funeral parlor in territorial burnt-adobe brick: Strong-Thorne Mortuary—"Oh Death Where Is Thy Sting?" Dive! Beneath the overpass of the Sante Fe (Holy Faith) Railroad—"Go Santa Fe All the Way." Beyond the prewar motels of stucco and Spanish tile at the city's western fringe, they drove out on a long low bridge. She stopped the car. Doc Sarvis gazed down at the river, the Rio Grande, great river of New Mexico, it's dark and complicated waters shining with cloud-reflected city light. - Abbey, Edward (1975). *Monkey Wrench Gang*. Harpercollins Publishers.*

How to Get to Nob Hill

Nob Hill is well served by public transit, and can be easily reached by taking either the 777 or the 766 ART line buses to the appropriately named Nob Hill and Nob Hill East stops, located at 3150 Central Ave SE and 3730 Central Ave SE respectively. The Nob Hill area is a vibrant, bonkers, diverse and arty center for nightlife, retail and restaurants. A visit here provides a unique opportunity to interact with and observe the interesting people who populate Albuquerque. Nob Hill is made up of six residential subdivisions developed beginning in the mid 1930's along either side of Route 66 (now Central Avenue) just east of The University of New Mexico. The bustling Nob Hill commercial district adheres tightly to Central Avenue; commercial activities giving way to residential uses and street after street of tidy mid-century adobe dwellings a block either side of Central.

Assignment: Buildings and Business of Nob Hill

The central business district is flanked by mostly low-rise adobe structures. One can see architectural hints of Route 66's heyday in the art-deco and mid-century modern touches, and occasional neon signage. There are several vintage Route 66 era motels; It is worth Googling these establishments and reading some of the reviews left by customers. What sort of generalizations can you make about these vintage motels, and their contemporary patrons? There

are various art galleries, a vinyl record store, a secondhand clothing shop, cafes, a grocery co-op while bars and restaurants abound.

Assignment: Culture Shock! Nob Hill's Population

Nob Hill changes its texture and flavor depending on the time of day, and the day of the week, from a quiet weekday brunch crowd to raucous weekend nightlife destination, to an afternoon and early evening mecca for the diverse kaleidoscope of individuals that collectively make up Albuquerque. What are the various groups or tribes of people you can observe and how do they differentiate themselves from one another? How do you imagine that these disparate groups of people manage to coexist in one space across the span of 24 hours?

Assignment: Architecture

Take a few moments on your journey to observe how store and shopfronts, dining establishments and patios interact with the street. Are street facing patios offset from the street, raised up above street level, or otherwise separated from pedestrian traffic or is there more of a Paris-Cafe culture vibe about the place? Somewhere in between? Is there ample public seating? Places to rest and observe the street scene? How are businesses fortified, or not? How does Nob Hill's architecture interact with the environment and the people in it? Does Nob Hill feel like a safe environment? Does it feel welcoming?

Assignment: Speaking to the Locals

It is not difficult to find people to talk to in Nob Hill, you will find the locals welcoming and enthusiastic conversationalists. City employees and landscapers, linemen, public transportation users, and the people sitting next to you in a restaurant are all easy targets for conversation, and can spin a hell of a yarn if you listen. Albuquerque people are uniquely unguarded, and will talk to anyone. Take a moment to speak to a local and ask them to name a good restaurant nearby, or share a story about their day, or to tell you how they came to find themselves in Nob Hill at this exact moment in time.

Assignment: Automobiles and Fancy Vehicles

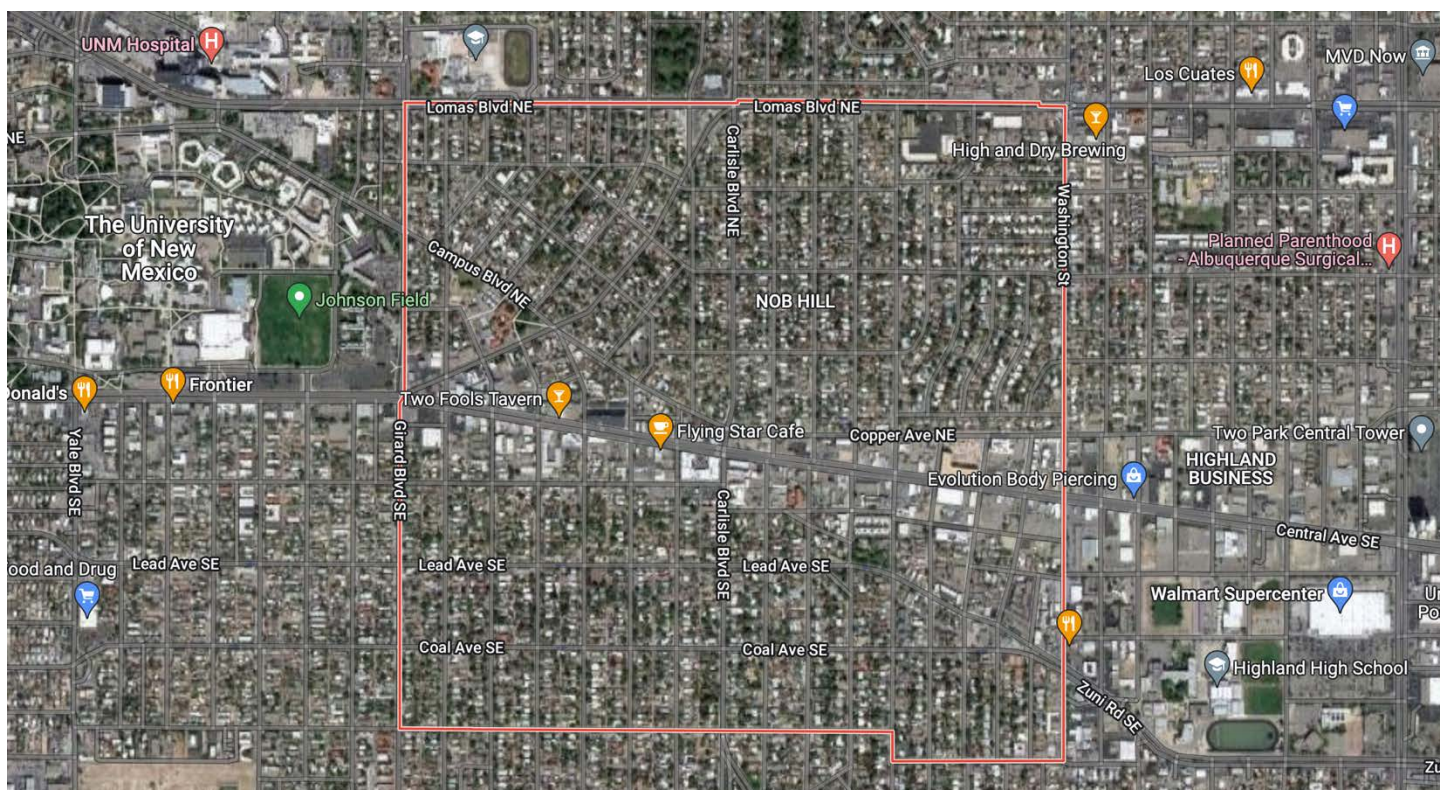
The American pastime of cruising is alive and well in Albuquerque. Watching the traffic, there is an interesting juxtaposition between large raised American pickup trucks, tuned 'boy racer' hatchbacks, and Lowriders. What can you extrapolate about an individual by looking at their car?

Does someone's choice of automobile signal membership in a particular tribe or group? How does the selection of cars differ from the main-street in your hometown?

Return and Reflection

What, if any, recurring themes do you notice about the streetscape and denizens of Nob Hill? Reflecting on your visit to Nob Hill, what feelings does the place stir in you? Can you come to any conclusions about Greater Albuquerque, or America in 2022 from these observations? If you were an urban planner, what would you like to change about Nob Hill if you could, and what would you make an effort to keep or encourage?

Maps: Nob Hill



City as Text

UNM Campus and Surroundings, NM, Spring 2022

Essayist: Rika Fukuda

How to Get To UNM

To get to the UNM campus, from Hotel Andaluz take the 667 or 777 ART bus eastbound to the stop at the intersection of Central and Cornell. Once you get off the bus, the campus is directly North, beyond the large UNM arch. Keep going straight, and you will be immersed in the local architecture reflected by campus buildings, and some combination of xeriscape and greenery scenes. The University of New Mexico was founded on February 28, 1889—133 years ago!

Overview

When exploring campus, you note the several fountains and many statues. The wolves, or lobos, are this university's mascot and a symbol for inspiration through leadership, prowess, and cunning. What cultures do you note reflected in the other statues and fountains?

Relax under the trees around Duck Pond, and take time to people-watch. Who comes here during the week? On the weekends? Especially in summer, you may see roadrunners, New Mexico's state bird.

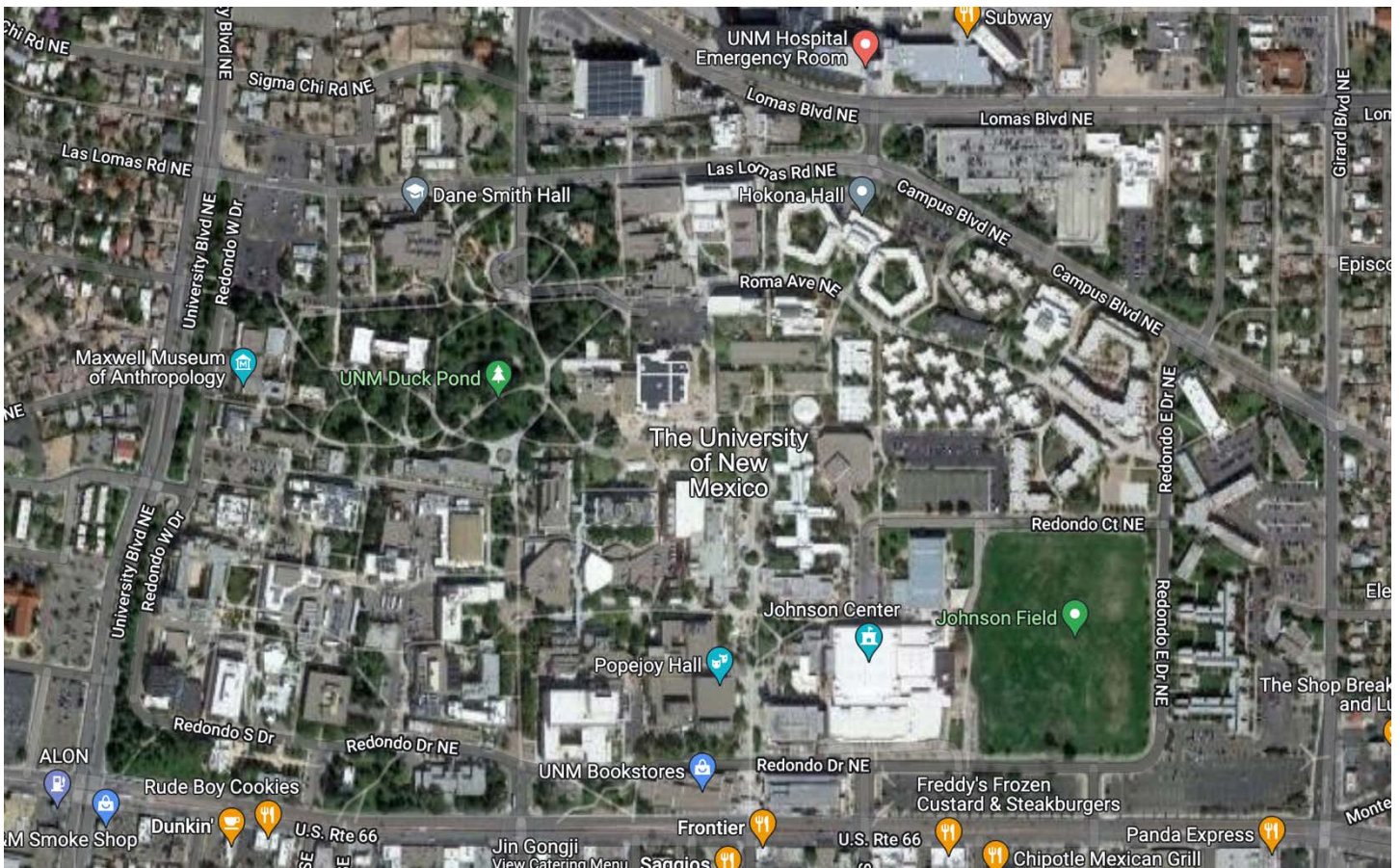
When you are in UNM afternoon, you can see the sunset and mountain views from Johnson field, on the far eastern side of campus. The color of sky changes depending on days and weather, and it is spectacular, especially on a sunny day. Around the sunset, students often gather and play sports like soccer, volleyball or basketball. You can join them or chill out there. Also, another favorite place is Fine Arts and Design Library, located across from the UNM Bookstore on the 4th floor of the Architecture and Planning Building. It has a huge window to see the Sandia mountains, and the view from it changes depending on the weather and the time of day.

Buildings on campus are built based on the Pueblo Revival style, which mimics traditional local Native American architecture. The style, characterized by simple practical lines, lots of windows and a gable-pitched or hip metal roof, is specific regional architecture local only to the Southwestern United States. This style of architecture on campus was introduced by President Tamm in the early 1900s and was officially adopted by the Regents at that time after stormy controversy. A few years later, it was readopted by Santa Fe architect John Gaw Meem. Meem was retained by the University as campus architect in 1933 and designed thirty-six structures in this distinctive style.

Assignment

The campus is open to the public and serves as a busy throughfare for students and locals alike. What languages do you hear being spoken around campus, and what conclusions can you draw about the student population from the languages you hear? What cultures, races and geographical backgrounds are most common on campus? Are there and populations that are notably absent or underrepresented? How does this differ or align with your home town or the city where you attend University? Is UNM a diverse place? Why or why not? Does the campus seem to be a wealthy, middle class or poor place? How do people across the extremes of the socioeconomic spectrum interact with each other and the environment? Does the campus feel welcoming and integrated with the surrounding neighborhood? What do you think of the buildings themselves, and does the architecture speak a unified language, speak to a sense of place? Why or why not? What impressions do you get from the people you encounter and talk with? Are locals and students outgoing and energetic or do you think they are more reserved. Does the area come across as exciting, and is it full of people? What do you think draws each of the groups you think you see here to this area? What do you like the best about the campus and surrounds? Is there anything that you find unsettling or unpleasant about the campus?

Maps: UNM Campus and Surroundings



City as Text

Old Town, Albuquerque, NM, Spring 2022

Essayist: Shelby Smith

How to Get to Old Town

Old Town is easily accessible through public transit. There are three options available for bus routes. ABQ RIDE Route 66 goes along Central Avenue. To get to Old Town using bus Route 66, exit Hotel Andaluz at Second Street NW and walk towards Central Avenue SW. Upon reaching Central Avenue, turn left and head to the bus stop at Central and First Street. Board the bus, and after 6 stops, exit the bus at Central and Rio Grande. ART Red Line (766) and ART Green Line (777) also make stops to Old Town. For 766 and 777, exit Hotel Andaluz at Second Street NW and go right on Copper Avenue NW. Turn right at First Street NW to reach the ART Downtown Station. Ride the bus for three stops and exit at the ART Old Town Station.

Overview: History and Architecture

Founded in 1706, Historic Old Town is the heart of Albuquerque, New Mexico. Old Town consists of ten blocks of adobe buildings centered around a plaza. Spain's Laws of the Indies required setting a plaza at the center of villas at the time. On the north side of the plaza lies San Felipe de Neri Church. Built in 1793, this church is Albuquerque's oldest building. Around the church, the city's settlers built their homes, stores, and offices, now converted into shops, restaurants, and art galleries. The Old Town area is now home to more than 100 stores and galleries, displaying the history and culture of the Southwest.

The Pueblo-Spanish style architecture of Old Town retains the historic value from when it was first founded. The buildings are flat-roofed, and the soft contours of adobe were intended to reflect the Southwest landscape. The front of most buildings is lined with portals (porches), and *bancos* (benches) can be found built into the back walls of portals. Some buildings indicate the influence of new materials and styles imported from other parts of the United States, like adobe construction featuring sheet metal or scalloped shingles.

Assignment: Culture and Vendors

When arriving in Old Town, notice how the pace of life slows down a bit. Take a moment to observe the people in the area. There is a huge range of those visiting, varying from locals to tourists vacationing for a weekend. Maybe you might even notice teenagers stopping by the

plaza to get pictures taken for their quinceañera. What are the types of people you can observe? Why do you think they are there? Now, stop and talk to people in the area. Shop employees and jewelry vendors are open to conversation and may have some unique stories about their time in Old Town. A tourist will provide very a different perspective on the area compared to a local. What did you learn from speaking to those around you, and how does it influence your opinion of the area?

Take time to explore the many different shops and art galleries around Old Town. You will see shops ranging from the expected “tourist trap” style selling all sorts of New Mexico themed items to authentic handmade Native American jewelry. Admire the craftsmanship of these artists and note the use of turquoise, a popular gem in New Mexico due to its abundance in the surrounding geography, in many of their pieces. Stop by one of the many coffee shops to try some locally roasted coffee or check out the *Breaking Bad* merchandise if you are a fan. Do any shops from your home or campus come to mind that can reflect the culture of the town?

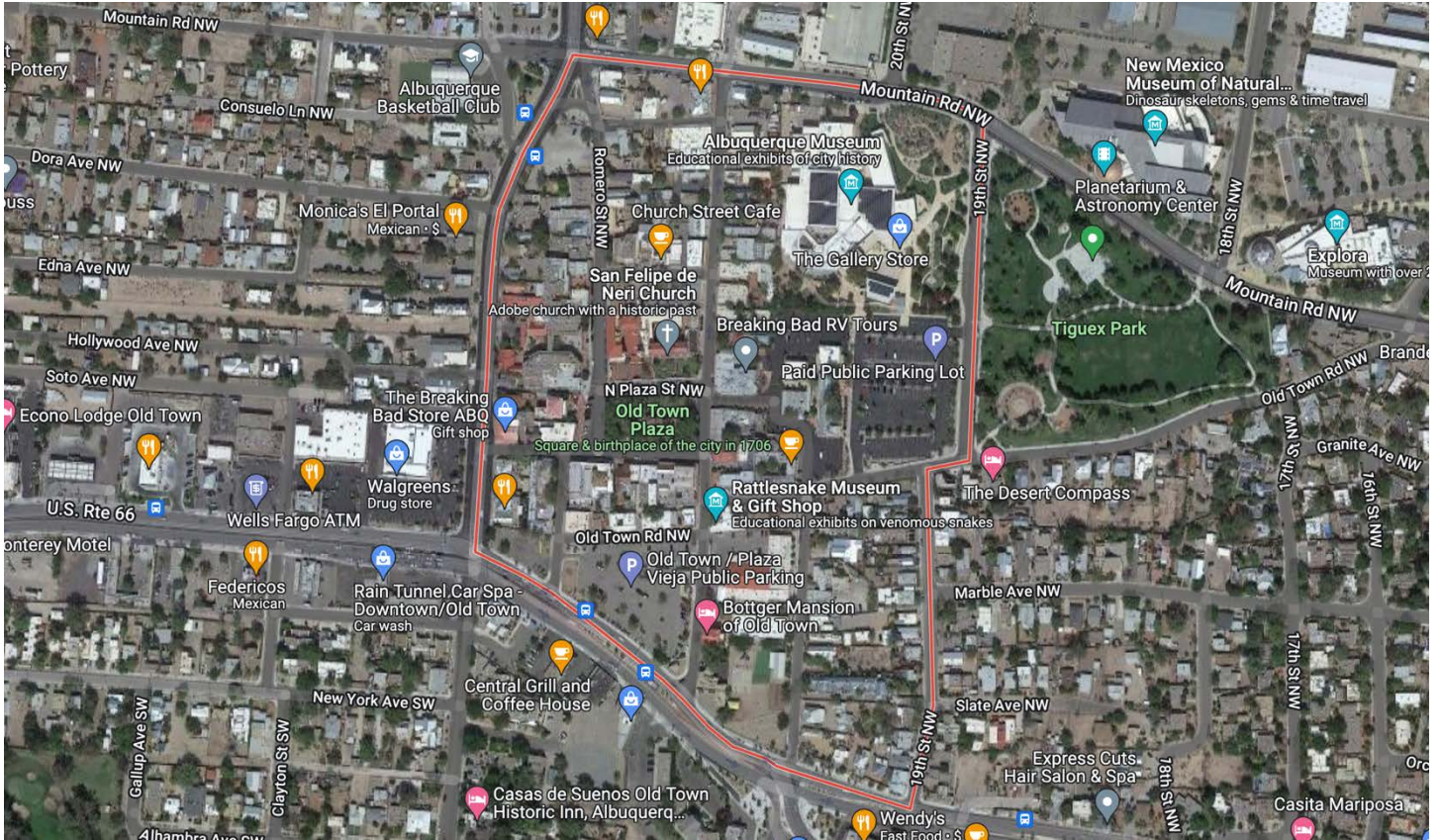
Assignment: A Plethora of Art

If you are looking to pick up some local art, be sure to visit one of the nine art galleries located in Old Town. Catch a glimpse of the unique landscapes New Mexico has to offer by stopping by one of the photography galleries showcasing prints captured from all over the state. If paintings and handmade crafts are more your style, then make sure to go and support the local artists. You will see paintings in every possible style from impressionism to modernism all with their own New Mexican flourish. When looking at the art in Old Town, does it make you feel a deeper connection to the area? To New Mexican culture? Also, make sure to check out the many sculptures of different mediums, such as copper wall hangings to intricate wood carvings. Just in the mood for viewing art? Take a walk around the Albuquerque Museum which sits on the edge of Old Town and showcases all kinds of art by New Mexicans from the past to the present.

Return and Reflection

After visiting Old Town, what is your current impression of Albuquerque? How does it compare to other areas of Albuquerque you have passed by or visited? How will you apply what you learned from your time in Old Town to your hometown?

Maps: Old Town



City as Text

Downtown Albuquerque, NM, Spring 2022

Essayist: Raina Harper

How to Get to Downtown

This is the area in which Hotel Andaluz can be found, and thus you will be able to explore the Downtown neighborhoods beginning in the streets around. You may head south on 2nd Street to get to the Convention Center, from which many open spaces and landmarks will be visible, and you will be able to walk further to areas you find interesting.

Interesting Murals

- Signs of the Times: 1st St. SW between Central and Gold
- Conductor: 123 Central Ave. NE
- Color Sphere: 115 Gold Ave. SW
- We Exist Somewhere Between Limbo and Purgatory: 100 Central Avenue SW

Overview

The Downtown area of Albuquerque is a true center of cultural activity for the city, as it contains many clubs, restaurants, theatres, convention centers, and greater hubs for business. Some of these include the KiMo Theatre, and the Albuquerque Plaza, prominently visible from many angles and areas you may be standing.

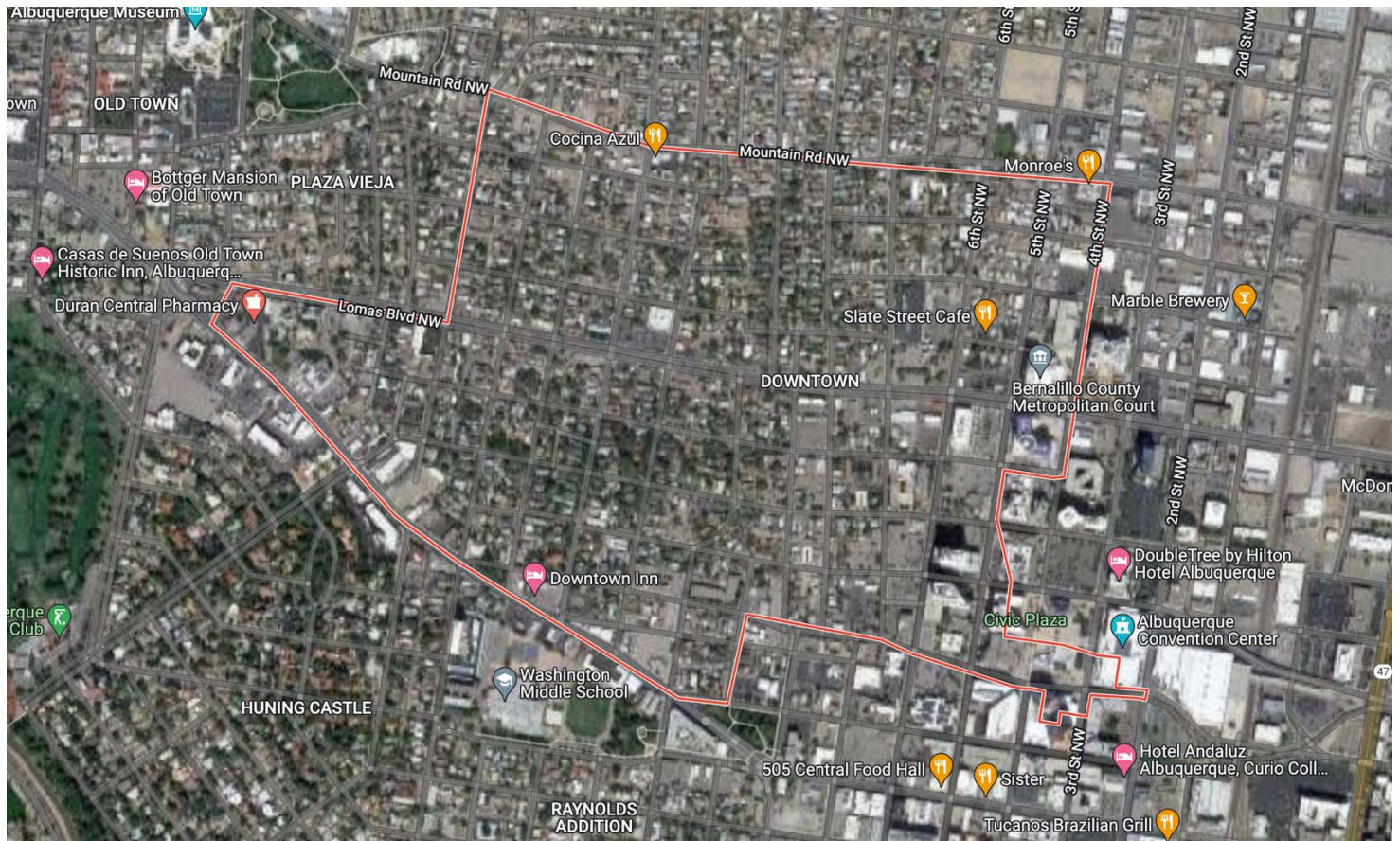
In your ventures out away from your hotel and from the UNM campus, you will be able to see the particulars of this city, and how it is set up, with businesses and other central locations within the Downtown area. You may be interested as well to see how the creative minds that have been given the opportunity to express themselves through murals and art installations have done so in this area. You will be able to take in several key murals painted by community members, representing its identity and perceptions of history. "Signs of the Times," for instance, painted in 2014 by local college students at 1st St. SW between Central and Gold, brings together many cultural touchstones that people associate with Albuquerque, including hot air balloons, churches, military, and the hotels of people coming to stay, set against the backdrop of a bright southwestern landscape. They are near playgrounds, parks, bus stops, and clubs which you will be able to see.

Assignment

In what ways does the city's intended vibrance and positive air for business come off? With mindfulness of the art installations and the moods evoked by the designs of building facades, do the murals which you see interact with the buildings and the aesthetic qualities of the streets themselves?

What do you make of the buildings themselves, and do they match your expectations of traffic and upkeep? Do the states of the buildings, sidewalk you see come across as being indicative of an energetic culture, and do they reflect positive or negative outlooks on the part of the overall attitudes toward the people with lesser economic capabilities? Does the area come across as exciting, and is it full of people? Is the space lived in and treated well? What do you think draws each of the groups you think you see here to this area, and does this fit their ideals of daily environments?

Maps: Downtown Albuquerque



City as Text

Neighborhoods Down to Lead and Coal Avenues (South of UNM Main Campus), NM, Spring 2022

Essayist: Raina Harper

How to Get to the Neighborhoods

Exit the hotel at 2nd Street and walk towards Central Ave. Turn left on Central Ave and walk towards 1st St. At Central and 1st (ART- Alvarado Transportation Center) catch the No. 766 bus and continue for 4 stops to the ART - UNM Popejoy Station. Head east along Central Ave NE toward Cornell Dr SE. Turn right onto Cornell Dr SE.

To see a particular mural, Honey in the Heart by artist Mark Horst, turn right onto Silver Ave SE and the mural will be on the right.

Overview

Once you get a feel for the lay of the land for UNM's Main Campus during your time at this conference, you will be able to get a fascinating view of what impact UNM has on the local economy and the desires and capabilities of people in the area by exploring the businesses and neighborhoods just south of the main campus, along the side of Central Avenue with Frontier Restaurant, Saggios, and Satellite Coffee being among the most distinct and popular markers from the vantage point of the Bookstore.

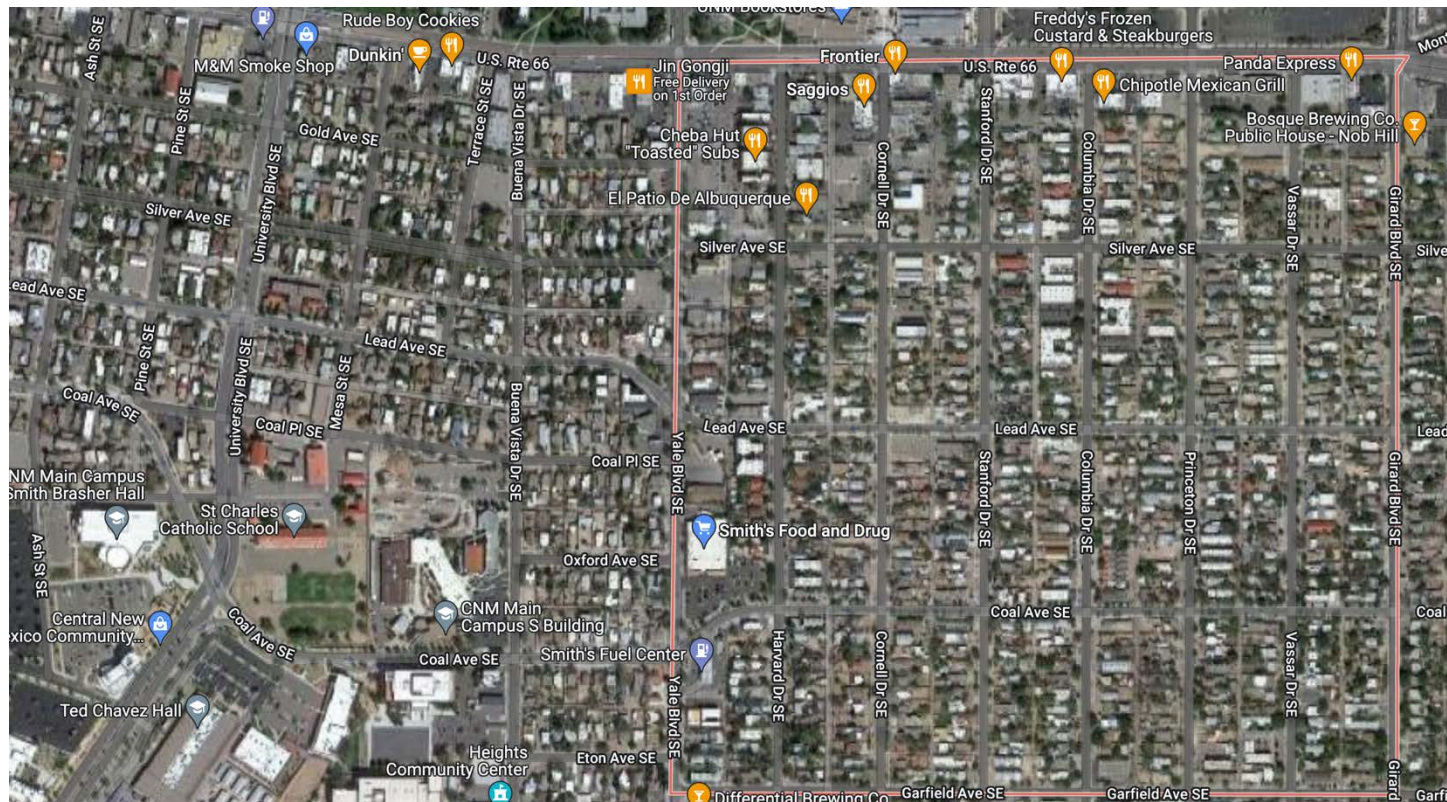
Here, you should be able to analyze the flavor of the community, of the people partaking in the businesses, walking near campus, and overall looking for what they need changes based on the time of day, and head down along the streets to see more of the restaurants, stores and other services typical of being used in this area.

There is often very little traffic in front of the Honey in the Heart mural itself once you turn the corner. Honey in the Heart mural is evocative of the artist's goals. Think about what tone the yellow palette of this piece is trying to get across. You will be able to see several interesting buildings, including small residential houses and several other murals.

Assignment

What aspects are most prominent of the murals in this area? What do you think they convey to the people who live and work here? What do the images evoke? How do the murals work together and present thematic connections with what you perceive may be tribulations in this community?

Maps: Lead and Coal Avenue Neighborhoods/University Heights



City as Text

Raynolds Neighborhood Tour, NM, Spring 2022

Essayist: Raina Harper

How to Get to Raynolds Neighborhood

Exit Hotel Andaluz at 2nd Street walking towards Central Ave. Turn right onto Central Ave SW. Keep walking towards 8th St. Turn left onto 8th St. Once on 8th St., walk towards Silver Ave, where you will see the beginning of the sites along the street. Follow along Gold Avenue SW to be fully within the Addition's bounds, and a thorough walking tour with key landmarks, created by several sponsoring organizations of the neighborhood's upkeep, can be found by scanning the QR code to the right of this page.

Overview

The Raynolds Addition is a historic neighborhood first established in 1912 and located just off the western area of Downtown Albuquerque in which many historic changes are reflected, ranging from early bungalows to recently added murals and sculpted gardens. It has been expanded and spruced up by organizations such as the Albuquerque Alliance for Active Living and the Albuquerque Urban Enhancement Trust Fund and is widely regarded as a pristine and picturesque neighborhood near the Downtown activities.



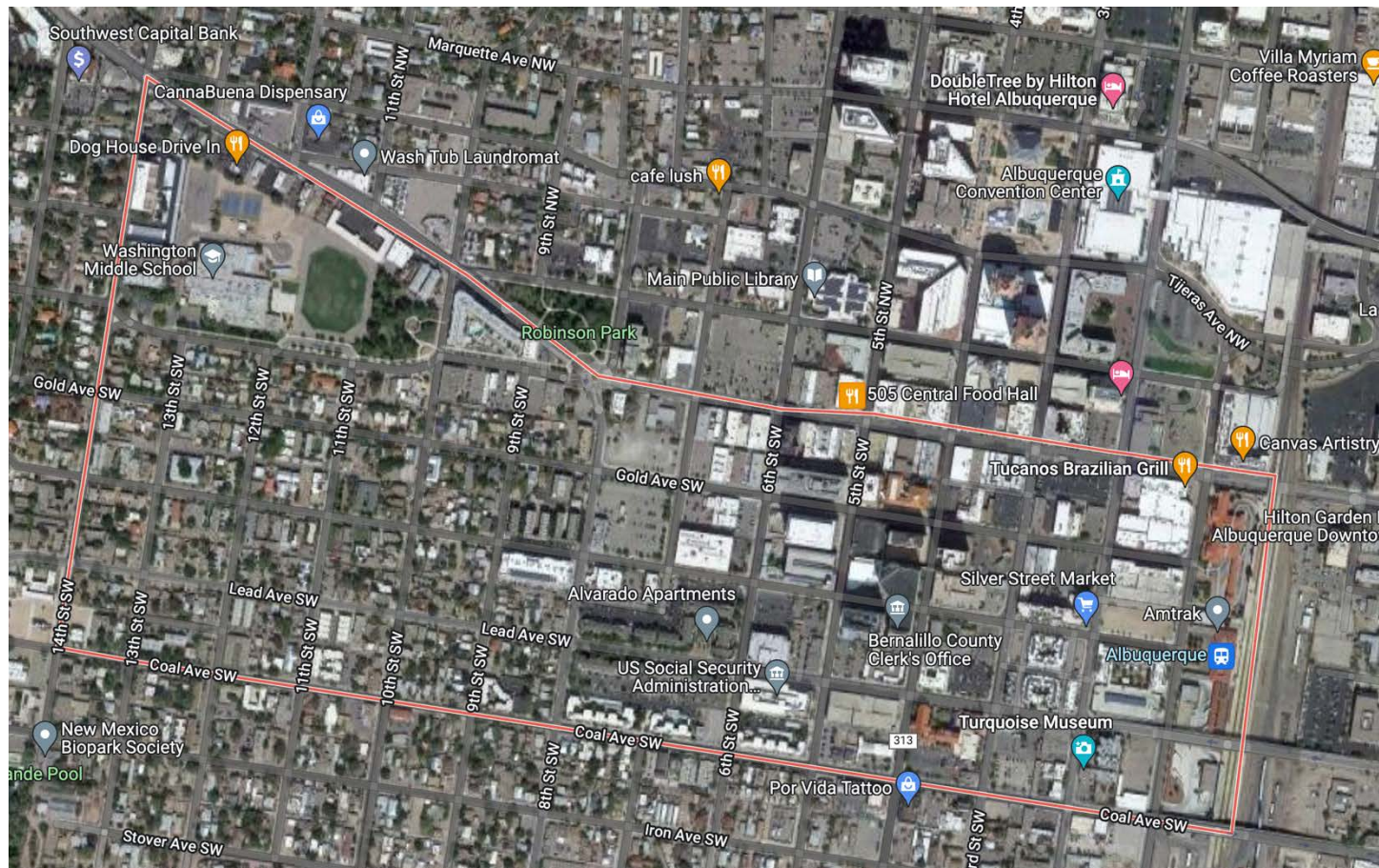
Assignment

Feel free to follow the neighborhood walk directions as listed here and see just how the atmosphere seems to you. Do you feel at ease, and find yourself admiring the aesthetic nature of it?

Talk to people in this area. What brings them here? How long have they been here? What aspects do they bring up about this neighborhood, and what do you perceive as the most prominent landmarks when walking along the streets? Do any houses stand out? Similarly, what do you observe about the public transportation present here? Who uses it? Is it busy? Is it easy to use? Is it a matter of convenience for residents, or are they in need of such services on a regular basis? Talk to someone and ask about where they are going and if they typically use public transportation.

Is the historic nature of this neighborhood, drawing more attention to its architectural styles and their respective histories, a beneficial one for your experience of it? How do you feel it relates to the overall structure of the area, and people’s relationships with the city itself?

Maps: Reynolds Addition Neighborhood



City as Text

Tingley Beach/El Paseo del Bosque/YCC Trail

Albuquerque, NM, Spring 2022

Essayist: Vineet Narayanan

Overview and Introduction

Picture an environment with sandy, wavy shores as a faint breeze sweeps your ears. Seagulls and hermit crabs are some of the primary inhabitants, and strips of seaweed wash along the coastline. Chances are pretty favorable that you must be imagining a beach right now. For those of you having studied geography at any particular epoch of your lives, it would be most logical to infer the trivial relationship: Beach = Coast. For many of you from the coastal states, the beach may be more than a wooden landmark: it may even constitute a way of living. It may even be perhaps evocative of a particular time period, drawing upon the sentimentality one truly hopes to revisit. Take a mental note of some of these feelings. Is there any particular emotion that truly resonates with yourself? Is there any fondness or attachment, possibly even aversion?

Assignment: ART Bus Ride and Central Avenue

Let's begin our journey as we take a nice trip down Central Ave., a street which you might be well acquainted with upon your arrival. There is an Albuquerque Rapid Transport (ART) bus which crosses this route, panoramically sweeping all the distinguishable features of this historic street. As you are boarding the bus, try to imagine a scenario where you are describing Albuquerque in concise descriptions to your best friend. What features would you look out for? Are there any connections you could make back to your hometown? What would appear striking should it catch your eye? As we fly through one of the busiest streets in Albuquerque, notice the transitions between the different patches of the urban area. Keep track of how the area surrounding Hotel Andaluz gracefully merges itself with the Main Library/Downtown area, finally accumulating itself near Old Town? Notice how Central Ave. and its close partner-in-crime Lomas Blvd. meet each other like how a riverbed merges at a delta? What roads at home do these remind you of? Pick three words to describe this bus experience, and either mentally keep a note, or maybe even scrawl them into a notepad, if you are keeping one nearby.

Assignment: The Rio Grande River and ABQ Bio Park Divisions

As we arrive shortly afterwards to the bus stop departing on a median across our street's namesake, Tingley Dr., what are some of the stark contrasts you notice as we leave the bus? Take a look at the surrounding area. Perhaps you might even be encapsulated by the uniquely colored adobe which livens your proximity. You might even be surprised to learn that the Rio Grande River lies shortly ahead, New Mexico's premier source of water. Maybe some of you may be visiting from our east-side neighbor Texas. The Rio Grande River is responsible for one of the primary borders between Texas and Mexico. Concurrently, it also happens to be the 5th largest river by length in America, snaking through dry land for a formidable 1,900 miles.¹ To lay that into a more envisaging standpoint, the distance between New York City and San Francisco is roughly 2900 miles! How does it feel situating yourself proximal to a landmark of geographical significance for Albuquerque, the US, and even the entire continent of North America?!

As you will find out soon enough through your journey, the city of Albuquerque has simultaneously brought environmental conservation awareness while industrializing the land by constructing the domain-complex of ABQ BioPark. The BioPark is consistent with 4 major attractions within its zone: Tingley Beach, ABQ BioPark Botanical Gardens, ABQ BioPark Aquarium, and ABQ BioPark Zoo. Given you are standing in the heart of Albuquerque, New Mexico, for which people have been constantly reciting, "New Mexico is in the middle of a desert", which of these names particularly pops out to you? By virtue of Occam's Razor, I would anticipate the majority of you selecting Tingley Beach. Afterall, what is a *beach* doing in the middle of a *desert*?

Assignment: El Paseo del Bosque and Geese

By now, your "beach" curiosity is probably piqued enough to begin walking through the crowded clamor of Central Ave., past a sublime bike trail onto Tingley Drive. This bike trail is expansive and extends a significant chunk of Albuquerque. The bike trail has been appropriately titled El Paseo del Bosque Trail, which literally translates to "the forest walk". Walk along El Paseo del Bosque for half a mile, and take a mental snapshot of the trail you are walking, and the experiences which you are feeling. At this point, you probably feel as if you are going to actually experience a beach in a desert, except that is solely half true. Notice the environment around the road. What are some of the first impressions which come to your mind? Take note of the condition of the surrounding vegetation. Are there any familiarities which strike you as similar to your home? As you continue along El Paseo del Bosque, you might begin to hear a faint squawking

noise. The noise starts to become more apparent through each passing second. You scan the environment, and the culprit presents itself as quite obvious. Flocks of geese! If you have never experienced it before, perhaps the accepted truth of geese flying south for warmer weather starts to ring a bell. Pay attention to the behavior of the geese. Are they on the more reserved end of the spectrum, or do they act in a more bellicose manner towards one another? In which areas do the geese tend to amass in flocks? Take notice about the composition of the flock. Is it more adult geese, or baby geese?

Assignment: Tingley Reservoir

Your next impressions might be met with mixed feelings. As you arrive into a small cement platform leading to a youth fishing reserve, believe it or not, you have arrived at Tingley Beach.³ Only it is not inherently an actual “beach”, per se. This history of Tingley Beach actually dates back to the 1930’s in order to take control of the flooding problem which would occur as a result of the Rio Grande River during rainy seasons. Water was diverted to a lagoon-like reserve, and in honor of the mayor of Albuquerque at that time, Clyde Tingley, the beach hence garnered its name as it is known to this day.⁴ Tingley beach used to be a notable attraction for swimming when it was first opened in the 1930’s, but during the Polio epidemic of 1950’s (an disease that most of us are probably too young to picture), the beach was siphoned off for fishing solely.⁴

Keeping in mind the history of this area, what observations do you make of its current state? Using your current knowledge of domestic policies, what do you notice in terms of the treatment of the beach, and how usage is controlled presently compared to the past? Take some time to explore the area, and find which view suits your artsy eye. You might even wander ahead to the strip of littoral land with many birdhouses. How much of the beach can you see from there? Are you able to get close to any geese? Be sure NOT to feed them, however!

Assignment: YCC Trail and El Mirador del Rio

As you are finishing your experience with Tingley Beach, there is a little gate behind the littoral land which crosses El Paseo del Bosque. Recollecting the experiences from El Paseo del Bosque, take a small detour off the trail, and head into an adjacent dirt trail within a forest-like atmosphere. As you descend further down into the trail, you notice yourself immersed within a completely different atmosphere. If you could describe this atmosphere in three words, what would those three words be? How do the sounds contrast in this area from the sounds at Tingley Beach? Which do you prefer? As you descend further into this dirt trail, you are walking one of

Albuquerque's project trails, the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) Trail, as a courtesy of the New Mexico YMCA. The Youth Conservation Corps of NM aim to create more sustainable trails across the area by funding specific projects across undeveloped lands of significance.⁵ Try to notice any minor landmarks or markings as you amble down this trail. What are some of the landmarks common to this part of the forest? Did you notice any specific landmarks set up by the YCC for the public? Also, perhaps take note of how many other people are within the surroundings besides yourselves. If you happen to see other people, did you joyfully and excitedly wave to them, letting them know that Albuquerque is the best city on the face of the Earth?

Try to keep an awareness of the state of your mind as you continue your walk. How does your current mindset now compare to that before you partook this excursion? Perhaps this walk was even therapeutic, and served as a form of meditation. Were there any worries or doubts you had before coming to this trip that have disappeared since? If you had to pick two prominent features from this forest, which would you maintain as most memorable and why? These features could be the sights, sounds, smells, or even the feeling of anything from your walk.

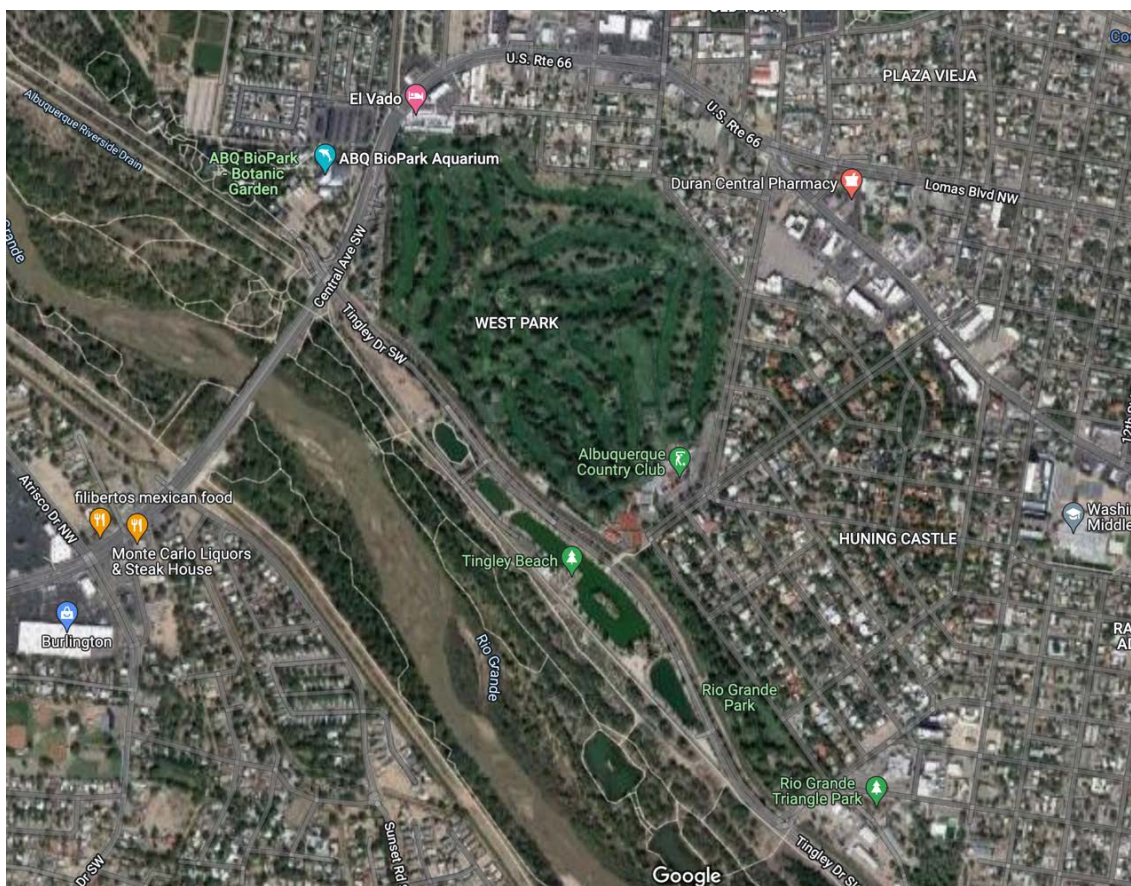
As we head northbound to finish our walk on the YCC trail, you'll notice a small circuitous route to one of the most illustrious views of the trail. As you continue slightly perpendicular to the YCC trail, you will notice a jetty overlooking the Rio Grande River. You might even notice some families with their children enjoying a nice picnic, soaking in the nice afternoon breeze. This jetty has been astutely captioned El Mirador del Rio, which directly translates to "The Viewpoint of the River". Notice the bridge up ahead which promotes the flow of traffic along Central, and wave to the cars! Perhaps you should take a moment at this dock to reflect upon your journey thus far. Try to flashback to all of the visions you have had in this excursion up until this point, and silently process them while overlooking this gorgeous view. Feel free to take as many photos as you would like, but understand that even with a mosaic of a million photos, the moment you are sharing with this part of the trail can't be truly recreated unless you really reflect and apply mindfulness to this part of the journey. Take a moment to explore the area, and have some fun while you're at it!

Return and Reflection

As we head away from this trail, several other opportunities of endeavors arise. Maybe you are intrigued by the prospect of exploring the remainder of ABQ BioPark, such as the Botanical Gardens, the Aquarium, or even the Zoo. In that case, as you exit the Tingley Drive area by traversing towards the opposite direction of El Paseo del Bosque, head into the entrance of ABQ

Botanical gardens straight ahead, purchase tickets, and continue with your journey of exploration. Try to keep the same mindful approaches as you explore these other fascinating destinations. For those who have concluded their journey, feel free to reboard the bus on the same median you docked from. As from before, take note once again of the journey back, and the intra-urban transitions. Once you reach our campus, surely share your acquired groundings with those around you!

Maps: ABQ Bio Park Complex/Tingley Beach/El Paseo del Bosque/YCC Site/Mirador del Rio



Works Cited

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