



# LAWN STORIES

Ashley Bock  
Integrative Project  
2017-18

### Introduction

My childhood summers in suburban Michigan were spent sprinting through the sprinkler, squishing my toes in the thick carpet of waterlogged grass, and humming along to the far-away drone of my neighbor's lawn mower. The front lawn was a significant feature of my habitat. And this is true for other suburban dwellers, too. The lawn is the backdrop in front of which we choose to live our lives; it is an essential landscape in the collective memory of suburban life in America. And despite its seeming ubiquity across suburbia, the front lawn is also a uniquely personal landscape, perhaps most notably as the site of neighborly disputes.<sup>1</sup> We see Jeffersonian ideals manifest in lawns: conflicts of property and responsibility play out in the space between our homes and our streets. How one maintains their lawn becomes a statement on their character—a neglected lawn, in turn, reflects a poor citizen. In my research, only one thing became perfectly clear: lawns are strange places. But they also have profound contributions to the way we see each other and our environment—whether we are turning up our nose at our neighbor's 'dandelion problem' or spraying gallons of fertilizer in an attempt to out-green them.

It was this relationship between one's lawn and their personal identity that I sought to explore over the course of this year. To document and sort my findings, I created *Lawn Stories*, an interactive website that untangles the collective and personal histories of the American front lawn. *Lawn Stories* presents a series of fictionalized accounts from lawn-owners, arranged within a virtual neighborhood. These histories are sourced from written documentation of suburban dwellers' thoughts on lawns throughout the past two centuries, as well as contemporary accounts that I gathered through interviews and observation. Ultimately, *Lawn Stories* offers visitors a set of peculiar and sometimes baffling tales of struggle, triumph, battle, and camaraderie between both nature and neighbor.

<sup>1</sup> Some headlines from an internet search on lawn disputes: "5 Ways to Deal with the Eyesore Next Door," "How do I politely get my neighbor to stop mowing my yard?," "My neighbor called the police on me for not mowing my lawn."

## Contextual Discussion

### The Lawn as History

According to geographer D.W. Meinig, landscapes themselves offer a unique view of history; they are a “complex cumulative record of the work of nature and man.”<sup>2</sup> For lawns, this complex record follows the ways American lawn-owners maintained their immediate environments in manners shaped by aesthetic taste, social pressures, and in some cases, bureaucratic regulations.

The lawn’s beginnings took root during the colonization of America, when the English brought with them their own garden traditions, and perhaps unwittingly, the plant itself. *Poa pratensis*, or what would later be called “Kentucky Bluegrass” stowed away on ships, hidden in animals’ fodder and intestines. As the colonies developed independently from England, so did their landscape tradition, directed in part by Thomas Jefferson’s designs of Monticello and the University of Virginia, both of which feature large expanses of turf. These designs distinguished turf from its utilitarian past and instead elevated it to an object of beauty: the open lawn.<sup>3</sup> For common settlers, the open lawn remained largely out of reach due to the extensive labor required to maintain it; however, in 1830, Edwin Budding invented the grass shearing machine in England, setting a precedent for decades of technological advancement in landscape maintenance. It was not long until similar devices appeared across America, quickly followed by irrigation systems—“sprinklers.” Combined with the increasing popularity of smaller, detached homes, these devices put in motion the lawn’s continued proliferation in the coming century.<sup>4</sup>

At the same time, thought leaders in landscape design began to explore the social implications of lawns. Landscape architects Jackson Davis and Andrew J. Downing’s 1841 book *Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening* played a key role in defining domestic landscape ideals, including the lawn.

Downing explains:

The love of country is inseparably connected with the *love of home*.

Whatever, therefore, leads man to assemble the comforts and elegancies of life around his habitation, tends to increase local attachments [...] thus not only augmenting his own enjoyment, but strengthening his patriotism and making him a better citizen.<sup>5</sup>

Davis and Downing echo Jefferson’s affinity toward the common “yeoman farmer,” who considered the stewardship of his land as a performance of his own civic duty.<sup>6</sup> Davis and Downing’s book first circulated the association between a lawn’s physical

<sup>2</sup> D.W. Meinig, “The Beholding Eye: Ten Versions of the Same Scene,” In *The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes: Geographical Essays*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1979.

<sup>3</sup> Theodore Steinberg, *American Green: The Obsessive Quest for the Perfect Lawn*, New York: W.W. Norton, 2007, 13-15.

<sup>4</sup> Fred E. H. Schroeder, *Front Yard America: The Evolution and Meanings of a Vernacular Domestic Landscape*, Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1993, 43-73.

<sup>5</sup> Andrew Jackson Downing and Jackson Davis, *A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening*, New York: Wiley and Putnam, 1841, xi.

<sup>6</sup> St. John De Crèvecoeur, J. Hector, William P. Trent, and Ludwig Lewisohn, *Letters from an American Farmer*, New York: Fox, Duffield & Company, (1782) 1904.

## Lawn Stories

condition and its owner's character. The work and writings of landscape architects in the nineteenth century continued to determine the development of lawns in America. Frederick Law Olmsted solidified the pairing of single-family homes with front lawns in his designs for Riverside Park. With its curved streets and large lawns, the design later became an archetype of the suburban neighborhood well into the twentieth century. And by the mid-twentieth century, a layer of thick, green sod seemed to coat the country from sea to sea. A complex combination of factors—the blooming post-war economy, the G.I. bill, the exodus of white middle-class from city centers, Eisenhower's interstate highways, the popularization of mass produced housing, to name a few—quickly turned the lawn into an American icon.<sup>7</sup>

### The Lawn as Aesthetic

The lawn's aesthetic qualities were first developed by landscape architects seeking to “beautify the American landscape,” and then fell into the hands of entrepreneurs seeking to monetize the continued maintenance of that beautification.<sup>8</sup> The work of Frederick Law Olmsted in the mid-nineteenth century largely determined the trajectory of suburban design. His plans for Riverside Park featured homes built thirty feet in from the street to allow ample space for large swaths of uninterrupted turf, ultimately “creating the impression that all lived together in the same park.” Similarly, landscape architect Frank Jesup Scott's 1870 book, *The Art of Beautifying Suburban Home Grounds*, advocated for “continuous, unfenced yards joining together modest-sized rectangular lots along straight streets.”<sup>10</sup> Scott was particularly interested in bringing landscape design to middle and working class residents. He believed the long, uninterrupted lawn would make the neighborhood itself a selling feature of each home. The grounds would be maintained on an individual level to the benefit of the entire neighborhood.

As designers codified the aesthetic of lawns, entrepreneurs began to develop products and tools for homeowners to achieve and maintain that aesthetic. Together with popular home magazines such as *House Beautiful* and *Better Homes and Gardens*, companies like Scotts and Lawn-Boy constructed the commercialized lawn aesthetic.<sup>11</sup> This was the halftone-printed, happy-couple-on-a-green-lawn (Fig. 1 and 2) that had suburbanites flipping through catalogs to order seed, sod, mowers, rakes, sprinklers, hoses, sprays, pellets—anything that might eliminate their crabgrass, dandelions, yellow spots, or otherwise “intolerable [hints] of trouble in paradise.”<sup>12</sup> The commercialization of lawns united suburbanite consumers in the subscription to

<sup>7</sup> Michael Pollan, “Why Mow? The Case Against Lawns,” *The New York Times*, May 28, 1989, accessed April 17, 2018.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Frank J. Scott and David Schuyler. *The Art of Beautifying Suburban Home Grounds*, Watkins Glen, NY: American Life Foundation, (1870) 1982.

<sup>11</sup> Theodore Steinberg, *American Green: The Obsessive Quest for the Perfect Lawn*, New York: W.W. Norton, 2007, 39-63.

<sup>12</sup> Michael Pollan, “Why Mow? The Case Against Lawns.”

## Lawn Stories

unachievable standards, requiring the continuous purchase of specialized products, especially in climates inhospitable for grasses. Suburbanites found that their compliance with this smooth, green standard was essential: an unruly lawn in the age of Weed and Feed™ unmistakably displayed social deviance and a disregard for one's community.

Left: Fig. 1, "Lawn Mowing Luxury," *Lawn-Boy*, 1957.

Right: Fig. 2, "Walk or Ride On The Smoothest Lawn In Town," *Lawn-Boy*, 1958.



## The Lawn as Place

When I look out my front window to the lawn, I might see some elements of Olmsted's designs and *House Beautiful's* advertisements, but first and foremost—I see a place. By zooming in to this level, I examine the lawn not as a collective idea, but as a place used and understood by its inhabitants.

Greg Stimac's photo series, *Mowing the Lawn* (Fig. 3), follows this oscillation between the personal and the collective understanding of the front lawn. The images themselves document individual performances of an American ritual. As a series, they form a portrait of suburban life. But what drew me to Stimac's work was the way it complicates the utopian aesthetics once imagined by Olmsted and *House Beautiful*; in this series, lawns are personal possessions, reflective of socioeconomic status and distinct regional tastes, attitudes, and climates. Even their titles reflect this specificity: *Barstow, California*; *Basin, Wyoming*; *Benton Harbor, Michigan*; *Burbank, Illinois*, et al.

## Lawn Stories



Carlsbad, New Mexico  
Des Moines, Iowa  
Mentor, Ohio

Goleta, California  
Concord, Vermont  
Waco, Texas

Hardinsburg, Indiana  
Chandler, Arizona  
Oak Lawn, Illinois

**Above:** Fig. 3, Greg Stimac, *Mowing the Lawn*, 2006, 22 x 30", archival ink-jet prints.

<sup>13</sup> D.W. Meinig, "The Beholding Eye: Ten Versions of the Same Scene."

Stimac's series marked a turning point in my research—from here, I became more interested in personal histories, in the way people understood the places they inhabited and maintained. And if I wanted to explore a place, then according to Meinig, I must enter the space of the geographer, whose main tool is the "symbolization of the spatial arrangement of the elements of a locality."<sup>13</sup> In short—I needed to use a map.

## Lawn Stories

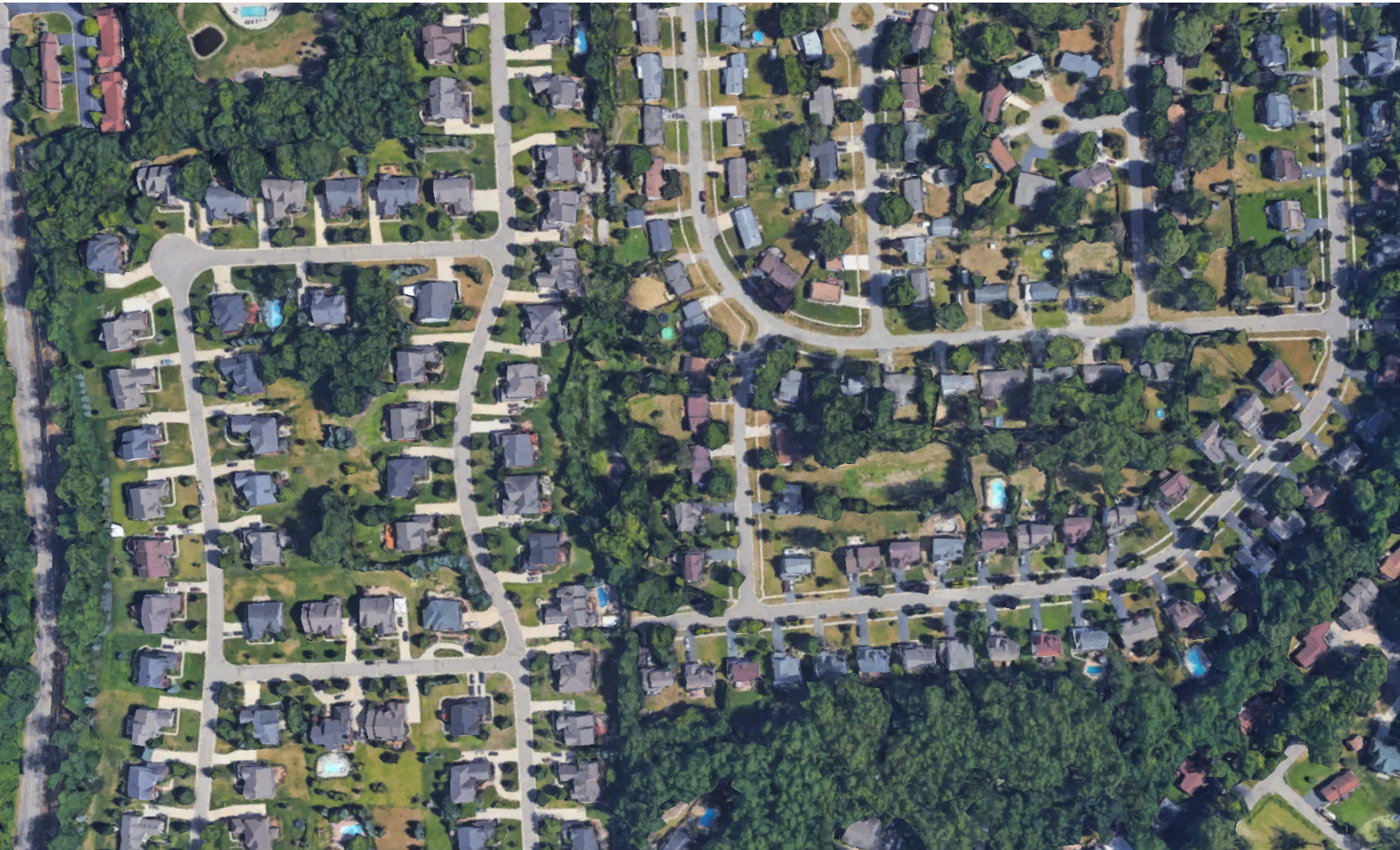
### An Exploration of Digital Places

I next turned to digital projects that examine places through their spatial arrangement. In order to inform my own work later in the process, I paid attention to both what information was shared and how it was shared within these projects.

I first looked at Google Earth (Fig. 4). This digitized space and time offered the unique ability to be everywhere at once. On Google Earth, I was zooming down my street, spotting my dad's car in our driveway, and a click later I was across town, hovering above a Red Robin parking lot. And while I initially tried to use it as a tool to view lawns, the realistic details proved distracting (and in the case of tree cover, inhibiting). With no directions or annotations, I found myself like Baudelaire's *flâneur*, serendipitously stumbling upon the visual oddities of my hometown, frozen in 2012, courtesy of a satellite's lens.<sup>14</sup>

**Below:** Fig. 4, Google Earth, V 7.1.8.3036, (April 13, 2016), Commerce Township, Michigan, accessed April 17, 2018.

<sup>14</sup> Charles-Pierre Baudelaire, *The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays*, Penguin Books, (1863) 2010.



## Lawn Stories

In contrast, *The Hart Island Project* (Fig. 5) contains that same satellite data in order to show me a particular place. It combines aerial images, burial databases, and user input to map an island in New York with the goal of identifying the unclaimed bodies buried there. Instead of control buttons, my cursor position allows me to pan across the map. Numbered points annotate the map and when clicked, access more detailed information about that specific plot. While it uses Google Earth's imagery, the additional layer of information embedded in the map shifts the focus onto a specific narrative—in this case, the anonymity of the island's deceased. The site also requires user interaction in order to access that information, which makes it feel as though I am part of the process of discovery, and thus I become more invested in the place itself.<sup>15</sup>

Similarly, the *Curious Critters Club* (Fig. 6) also uses an interactive map as a tool to link stories to a place. This map is whimsical and game-like, leading the user through a series of instructions before dropping them in a low-poly, digitized world. Bright colored illustrations and animations give the world an energetic and encouraging personality. I use my keyboard to control the character's movement across the globe to search for highlighted points. At these points, the map reveals the biography of a mythological "critter" who inhabits that location. The pairing of whimsical illustrations and fictional stories along with other subtle details—the pitter-patter of footsteps, the trickle of water, a floating cloud, a changing sky—successfully create the sense of place within this project, even if that place bares no resemblance to real life.<sup>16</sup>

From this point, I explored the role of fiction in creating digital places—specifically the worlds built in video games such as *Sims 2* (Fig. 7). I looked to *Sims* mainly as a visual reference; in the game, I found the visual construction of the 'neighborhood' more real than the actual satellite images from Google Earth. *Sims* successfully evokes the suburban imaginary—the idea of the suburban town we might find elsewhere, on playroom rugs and outside Mr. Rodgers' door. To accomplish this, *Sims* imports archetypal landmarks one might expect to find in a town—a river, a lake, a bridge, a Main Street, an archway, a water tower. Our imaginations then do the rest of the work: the landscape simply fades off into what we assume is another small Sim town, and another, and another.<sup>17</sup>

These projects provided examples of how digital places can be built through reality, fiction, and a blend of both. They helped me consider what was possible and how I could use the web as a medium through which to explore lawns as a place. Later in the process, these projects would also visually inform my own creative work.

<sup>15</sup> Melinda Hunt and Studio Airport, *The Hart Island Project*, 2014, accessed April 17, 2018.

<sup>16</sup> Yoozoobooks and Julian Stokoe, *Curious Critters Club*, accessed April 17, 2018.

<sup>17</sup> EA Games and Charles London, *Sims 2*, 2004.



## Lawn Stories



**Top:** Fig. 5, Melinda Hunt and Studio Airport, *The Hart Island Project*.

**Middle:** Fig. 6, Yoozoobooks and Julian Stokoe, *Curious Critters Club*.

**Bottom:** Fig. 7, EA Games and Charles London, *Sims 2*, 2004.

### Methodology

My methodology followed a broad, linear series of stages: planning and research, ideation and iteration, and building and finalizing. Within those stages, I went through narrower and sometimes non-linear cycles of constant feedback and edits. This required constant reflection on my position within the process and assessment of the direction I wanted to go.

#### Planning + Research

This stage began with my first proposal (Fig. 8), in which I outlined my initial goals for the project:

**Right:** Fig. 8, an excerpt from an early draft of my project proposal.

Lawn Stories will be an experimental website that connects an overview of the lawn's history to personal accounts of midwestern lawn-owners, ultimately addressing the negative effects lawns have on our social and natural environments.

It was important to have an broad idea of a final product in mind in order to assess where I should begin my research, even if the goals will likely shift later in the process. As I intended to use research and writing as the basis of the website's content, I created a list of keywords related to my project to help direct myself. These included: information, diagram, suburb, park, narrative, map, landscape, sustainability, tradition, unity.

This list lead me to a myriad of disciplines. I looked at landscape architecture, history, literature, urban planning, ecology, photography, among others. I looked at park plans, paintings, botanical drawings, maps, magazine ads, television commercials. I interviewed lawn-owners and read through countless blogs, forums, and discussions of lawns online. It was these personal stories that peaked my interest—from here, I became more interested in the unique relationships between individuals and their lawns, which seemed best told through small moments and stories. By the end of this stage, I had already changed my initial proposal to reflect the shift in my interest from a larger historical overview of lawns to a series of more narrow, personal perspectives of lawn-owners.

## Lawn Stories

### Ideation + Iteration

With a more focused direction of the website's content established, the next stage focused on the website itself—including what it looked like, how it functioned and subsequently, how I would build it. I gave myself one stipulation: to use only a single web page. This would force myself to deviate from traditional web formats and explore alternative ways of displaying information within a limited pixel dimension.

This stage of my methodology was meant to take my project from broad concepts to a narrow product. To accomplish this, I started with thumbnail sketches of possible layouts (Fig. 9). I knew that I wanted to create some form of interactive map, but what exactly that looked like was still undetermined. My thumbnails ranged from straightforward to abstract, each showing different visual perspectives of neighborhoods, homes, and lawns. After consulting with my advisors and my peers, a view of a neighborhood from above seemed the best to take because it put more focus on the lawns instead of on the houses. I played around with both aerial and bird's eye perspectives, but ultimately I decided that an aerial view better showcased the neighborhood's lawns.

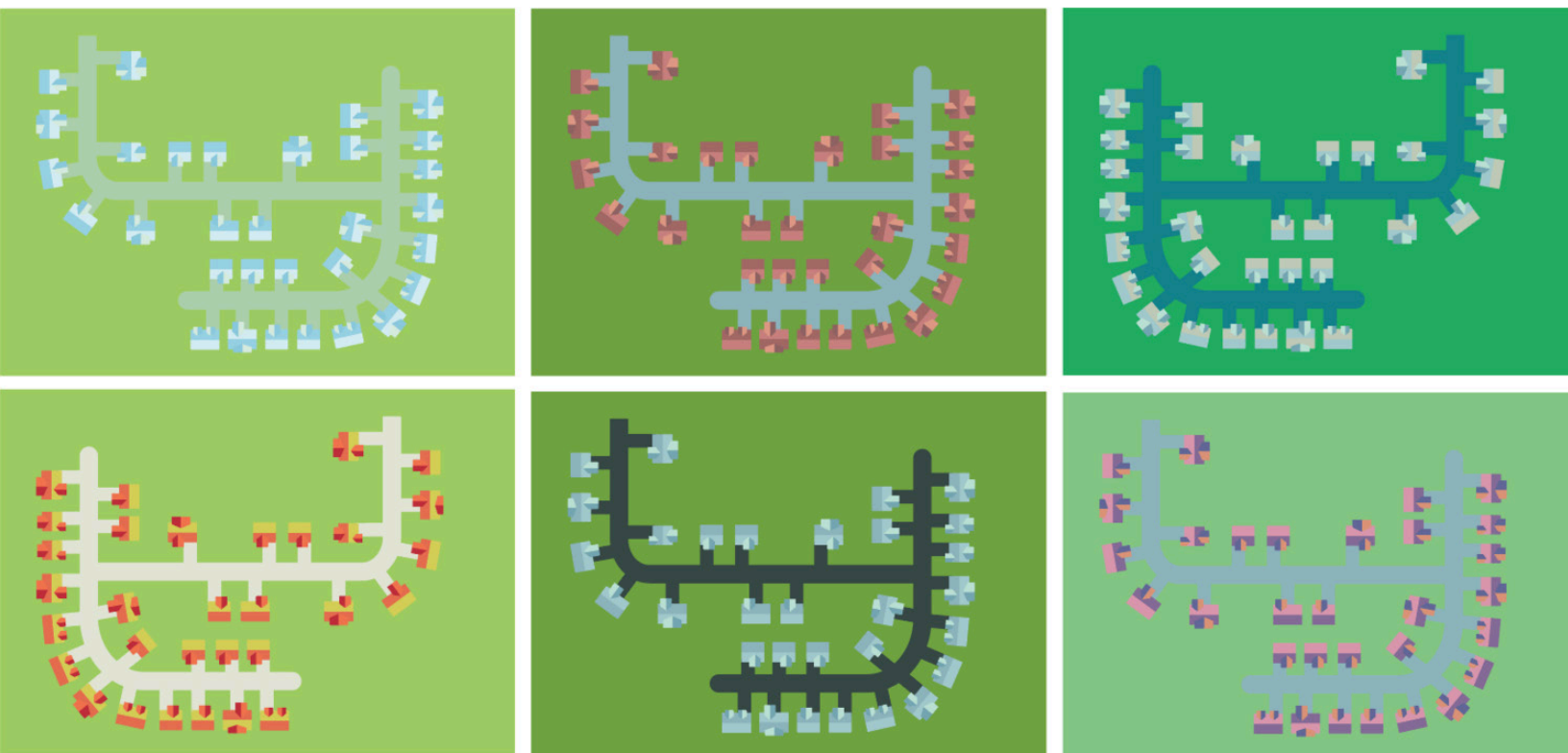
**Right:** Fig. 9, my initial thumbnail sketches for the website layout.



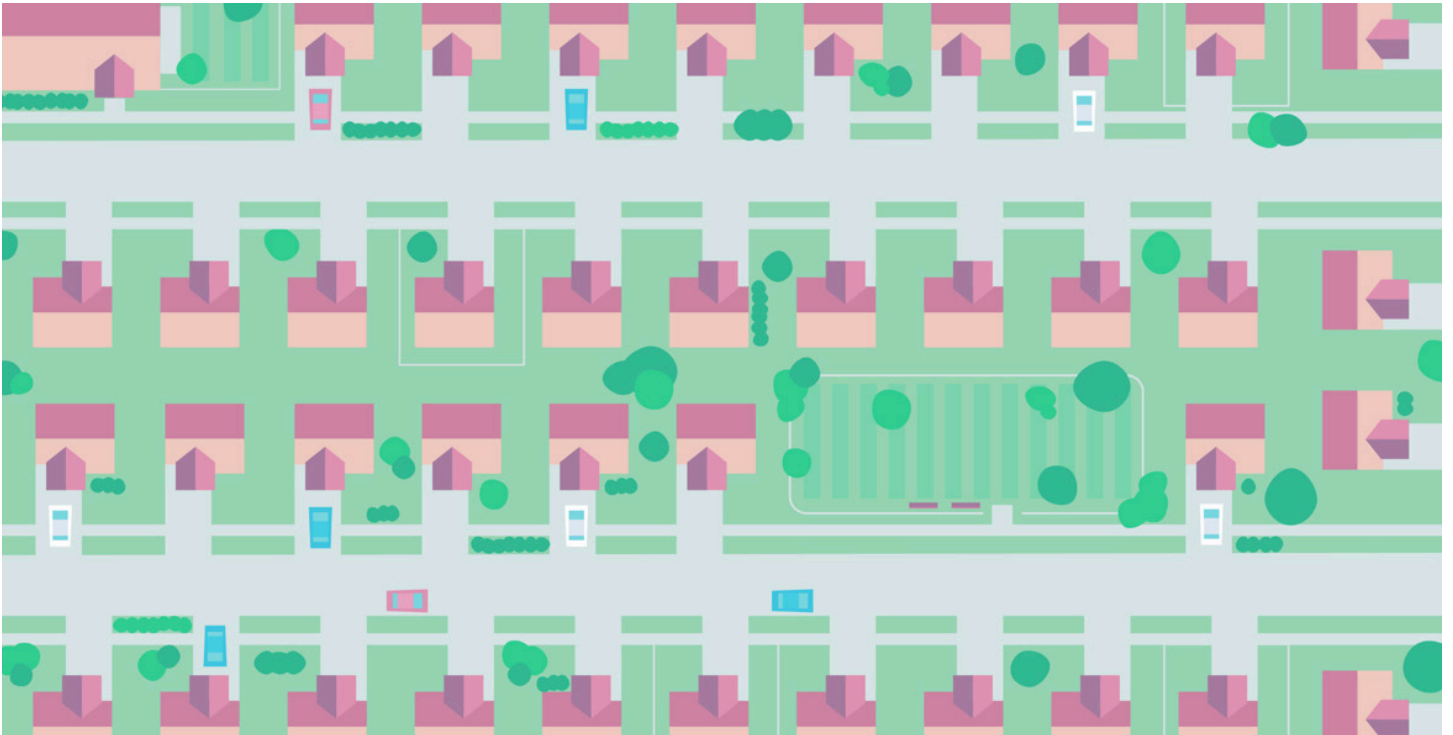
## Lawn Stories

With the basis of both the visuals and code construction of the map settled, I continued iterating on the illustrations. I decided to design my map with three neighborhoods, each representing a different century of lawn experiences. This allowed me to tell a wider range of stories. Color and layout played important roles in visually discerning between these time shifts; many of my iterations during this stage focused on color schemes and blending the three neighborhoods together cohesively (Fig. 10). For the 21st century neighborhood, I looked at my own street for inspiration. I noticed how it dead ends and has only few intersections in order to give the residents privacy (Fig. 11). After exploring many color options, I chose a high-contrast palette featuring a bright yellow-green. For the 19th-century, I looked at Olmsted's designs for Riverside Park, which featured long curved roads that created circular pockets of houses. I picked a darker, more muted color palette, mainly inspired by landscape paintings of the era. For the 20th century, I looked at a post-war neighborhood near Detroit. It had a distinct grid with straight rows and several intersections. As the houses were mostly brick, I brought reds and oranges into the color palette. I also added blue and yellow tints, which gave the colors a similar look to film photography of that time (Fig. 12). In the next few iterations, I began adding details like cars, trees, mailboxes, and sidewalks.

**Below:** Fig. 10, color studies for the neighborhood designs.



## Lawn Stories



**Top:** Fig. 11, draft of 20th-century illustration.

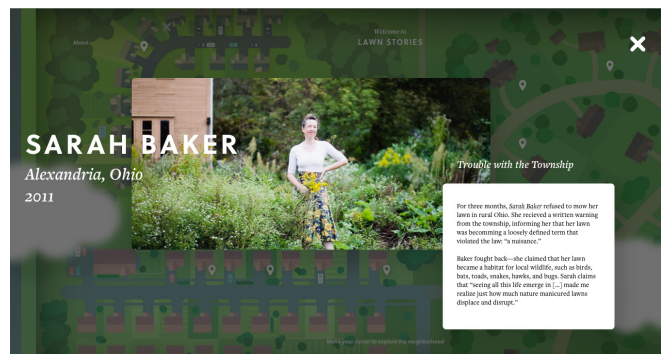
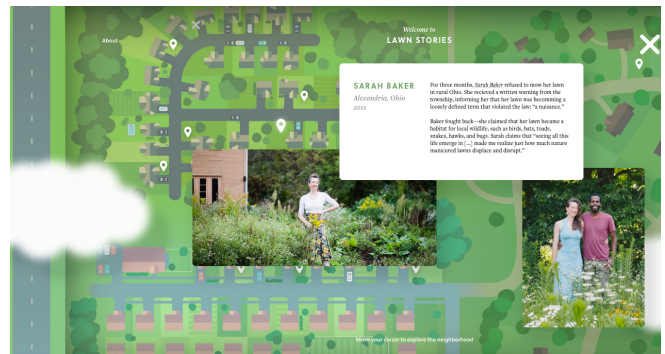
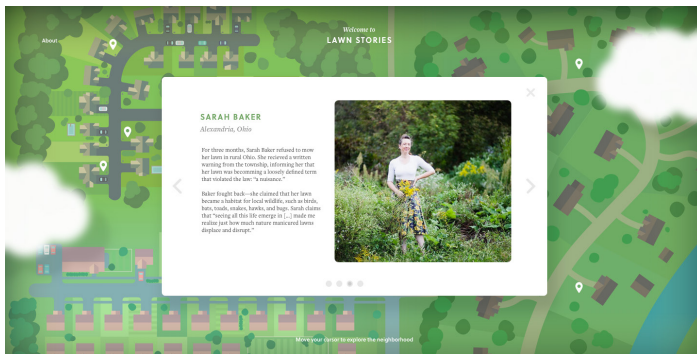
**Bottom** Fig. 12, a draft of 21st-century illustration

## Lawn Stories

I next considered how the user would access the personal accounts while exploring this map. I decided to use clickable buttons hidden in the lawns on the map to toggle the information layer's appearance. I drafted several concepts for the information's arrangement, including overlays and pop-up windows. However, most of my drafts looked busy and overwhelming. The information that I planned to include ranged from short quotes to longer narratives with photos; this inconsistency made the information appear cluttered and I struggled to find a solution that visually corresponded to the map's clean aesthetic (Fig. 13).

This marked a turning point in my process as I paused to reassess what the main purpose of the information was. After receiving feedback from my advisors and peers, I concluded that it was the stories themselves that were most important—not the nitty-gritty details. I decided to use the interviews and documentation instead as inspiration to write my own fictional lawn stories. This way, I had control over the length and content of each story and could maintain consistency across the site. By omitting the photos, I also hoped these stories would become more relatable. I wrote each story in a journalistic tone, as I did not want my own voice to come through, but rather, the voice of each personality. The stories include an array of characters from peppy real estate agents, to snobby landscape architects, to playful children.

**Below:** Fig. 13, drafts for the information arrangement. I felt as though these were too cluttered, which led me to switch to fictional stories.

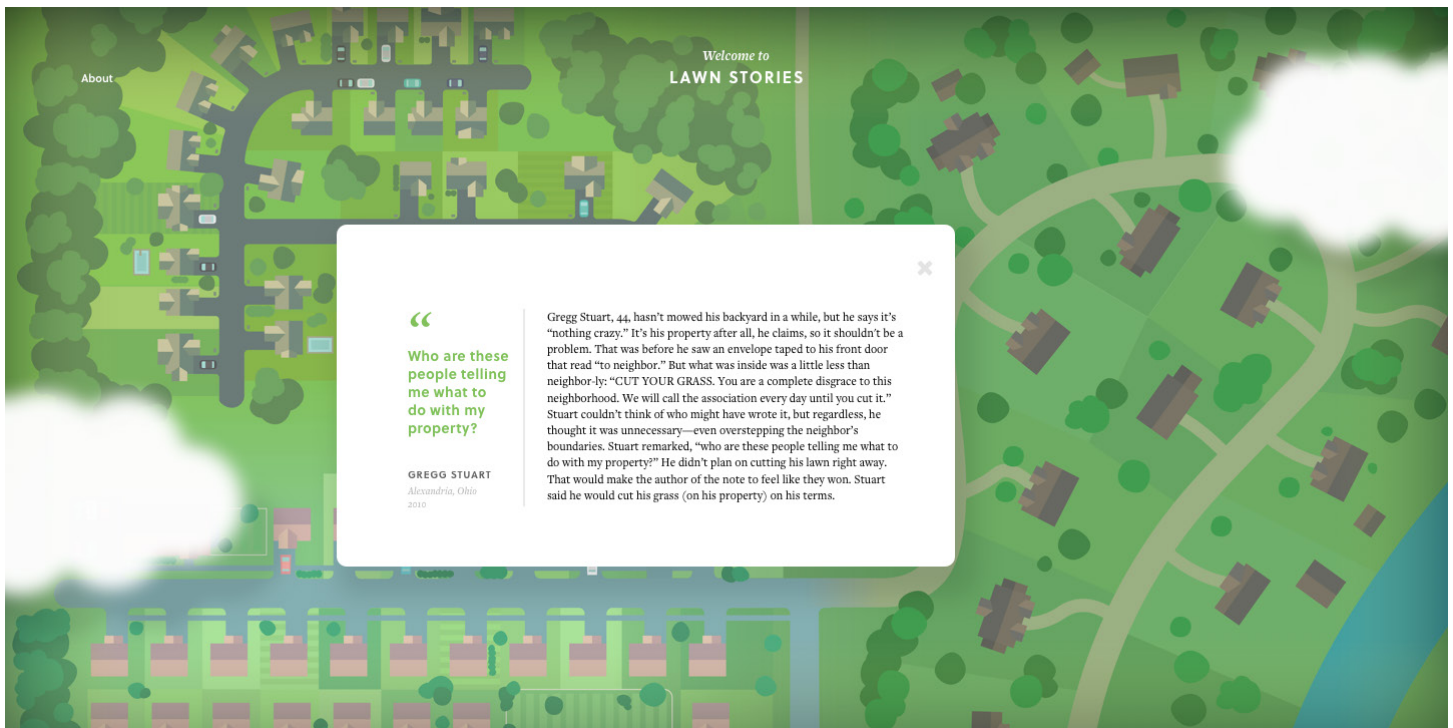


## Lawn Stories

### Building + Finalizing

The last stages of the process included putting the pieces together, testing the site, and tweaking it. For the final iteration of the illustration, I added animation to the scene with moving cars and clouds acting as counterbalances to the otherwise flat aerial perspective. I next worked on the code for the modal windows, which housed the stories. I linked them to the buttons previously embedded in the map and added subtle animations to their entrances and exits, which contributed to the overall playful aesthetic of the map (Fig. 14). Several people tested the website to see if the simple phrase at the bottom of the screen, “move your cursor to explore the neighborhood,” was enough instruction. In response to some initial confusion, I added a subtle pulse animation to the buttons, which invited users to click. The final steps involved importing the written stories into the code and cleaning up the file in preparation for installation at the gallery.

**Below:** Fig. 14, mock-up of the modal window.



### Creative Work

*Lawn Stories* is a web page comprised of an illustrated map. The map features three fictional neighborhoods inspired by suburbs from the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries: Lakeview Park, Sunnyville Acres, and Walnut Ridge respectively. The illustrations are bright and colorful, with subtle animations that give the map life: cars drive along the highway and neighborhood streets, clouds hover across the screen, a boat floats in the lake. The result is a ‘perfect,’ storybook neighborhood—not unlike those featured amongst the ads of *House Beautiful* and the ideas of Davis and Downing (Fig. 15).

Users can pan across the map with their cursor and explore the neighborhoods. As they hover, labels fade in to give more detail about the locations. When their cursor reaches a lawn, a small dot appears, inviting them to click. With this interaction, users uncover the fictionalized stories of lawn-owners embedded in the map. The stories are short blurbs, written in a journalistic style as to maintain a neutral perspective (Fig. 16) While *Lawn Stories* itself holds no value judgment on lawns, the individual stories do. They function as personal histories, each adding slight nuances to the chronological development of the front lawn. I purposefully selected a cast of characters with diverse experiences of lawn-ownership. The user encounters the lawn-obsessed, the anti-lawn, and many caught somewhere in between. In its entirety, *Lawn Stories* presents a macro view of the lawn told through small stories that add together to form a collective history and to better understand a place, as well as the people within it.

The installation of *Lawn Stories* includes a wall-mounted digital screen displaying the website with a bright green floating shelf underneath that holds the mouse. (Fig. 19) Artificial turf covers the backdrop from ceiling to floor, extending out on the ground approximately 3 feet from the wall. This requires users to stand on the turf in order to view and interact with the website (Fig. 17 and 18).



## Lawn Stories



**Top:** Fig. 15, the landing page.  
**Bottom:** Fig. 16, modal window.

## Lawn Stories



**Top:** Fig. 17, user interacting with *Lawn Stories*.

**Left:** Fig. 18, detail of artificial grass texture on wall.

**Right:** Fig. 19, full installation, featuring a plastic pink flamingo lawn ornament.

### Conclusion

*Lawn Stories* was the biggest project I have ever tackled—and that might be why I am reluctant to call it complete. There are certainly more stories to write and more lawns to explore, but for now, (after fixing a few bugs) I plan to publish the website publicly in search of a larger audience. And while my initial proposal aimed to form some sort of moral conclusion on the ethics of lawns, I am more satisfied that my final product did not. At the exhibition I overheard a man exclaim to his friend, upon reading one of my stories, “Hey, this sounds just like you!” which seemed to me a near-perfect response. *Lawn Stories* began with the hope to bring lawns out from the background and up from under our feet, but as it progressed, it seemed that *Lawn Stories* became less about lawns and less about any place itself. Ultimately, *Lawn Stories* is an exploration of those who populate a place: the lawn people. And so, as I send my project out into the web, I hope that maybe those people will recognize their friend, their neighbor, or even themselves in these stories—and with that recognition, perhaps they will consider their environments, both plants and people, a little more closely.

## Bibliography

- Baker, Sarah. "My Township Calls My Lawn 'A Nuisance.' But I Still Refuse To Mow It." *The Washington Post*, August 3 2015. Accessed 20 November, 2017.
- Baudelaire, Charles-Pierre. *The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays*. Penguin Books, (1863) 2010.
- Bormann, F. Herbert, Diana Balmori, and Gordon T. Geballe. *Redesigning the American Lawn*. 2nd ed. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001.
- de Crèvecoeur, St. John, J. Hector, William P. Trent, and Ludwig Lewisohn. *Letters from an American Farmer*. New York: Fox, Duffield & Company, (1782) 1904.
- Downing, Andrew Jackson and Jackson Davis. *A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening*. New York: Wiley and Putnam, 1841.
- EA Games and Charles London, *Sims 2*, 2004.
- Garber, Megan. "The Life and Death of the American Lawn." *The Atlantic*, August 28, 2015.
- Google Earth, V 7.1.8.3036, (April 13, 2016), Commerce Township, Michigan. Accessed April 17, 2018.
- Harmon, Katharine. *You Are Here: Personal Geographies and Other Maps of the Imagination*. New York, NY: Princeton Architectural Press, 2004.
- Hunt, Melinda and Studio Airport. *The Hart Island Project*, 2014. Accessed April 17, 2018.
- Jenkins, Virginia. *The Lawn: A History of an American Obsession*. Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1994.
- Kolbert, Elizabeth. "Turf War." *The New Yorker*, July 12, 2008. Accessed November 20, 2017.
- "Lawn Mowing Luxury," *Lawn-Boy*, 1957.
- Meinig, D.W. "The Beholding Eye: Ten Versions of the Same Scene." In *The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes: Geographical Essays*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979.
- Pollan, Michael. "Why Mow? The Case Against Lawns." *The New York Times*, May 28, 1989. Accessed April 17, 2018.
- Robbins, Paul. *Lawn People How Grasses, Weeds, and Chemicals Make Us Who We Are*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2012.
- Schroeder, Fred E. H. *Front Yard America: The Evolution and Meanings of a Vernacular Domestic Landscape*. Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1993.
- Scott, Frank J. and David Schuyler. *The Art of Beautifying Suburban Home Grounds*. Watkins Glen, NY: American Life Foundation, (1870) 1982
- Steinberg, Theodore. *American Green: The Obsessive Quest for the Perfect Lawn*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2007.
- Stimac, Greg. *Mowing the Lawn*, 2006, 22 x 30", archival ink-jet prints.
- "Walk or Ride On The Smoothest Lawn In Town," *Lawn-Boy*, 1958.
- Yoozobooks and Julian Stokoe, *Curious Critters Club*.