

2. PROPOSITION

2.1 FUNDAMENTALS

Place is not good or bad simply because it is real vs surrogate authentic vs pastiche.... Successful place...engages us actively in an emotional experience orchestrated...to communicate purpose and story.
~ Sircus 2001:31

Accepting that the high chronic disease rate in Alaska is largely due to poor food and lifestyle choices and that these choices are not as poverty induced as previously thought—it is time to look at the role that the built environment can play in changing food choices.

The philosophies of Graham Harman and Peter Sloterdijk (in Nieuwenhuis 2014) argue that space is dynamic in its relational capacity, and not as objective as is commonly believed. Objects have innate qualities which, in their relation with the space, determine the quality of the space. This in turn impacts on how humans interact with the space and therefore also determine the humans' relational qualities with the space. This is fundamental to how people interact with their food environments. Sloterdijk on ontology and space is quoted as saying '[w]e need...to go beyond both the myth of *homo faber* and of *homo religiosus* and to understand the human being as a creature that results from repetition' (Ansell-Pearson 2013:para.8). He concludes that '[h]umans live in habits, not in territories' (Ansell-Pearson 2013:para.8). Space is what we habitually make it. We should focus on the built environment's power to influence our lives, as we are products of our environment which we perpetuate. This implicates built environment designers as partially responsible for our food habits and subsequently our diseases.

If the goal is to reduce the disease levels in Alaska through changing food choices we should look at the

influence our built environment has on our choices. If we want to alter our food environment we must look at how we interact with it.

2.2 HYPOTHESIS

A designed, eating oriented landscape can change people's dietary habits.

The statement asks whether or not the physical environment has the power to influence something as complex as eating patterns. This goes beyond simply denying one access to food as a wall or fence would do but rather asks whether the physical environment can alter long standing cultural norms and practices in an unobtrusive, sensitive and self-sustaining manner.

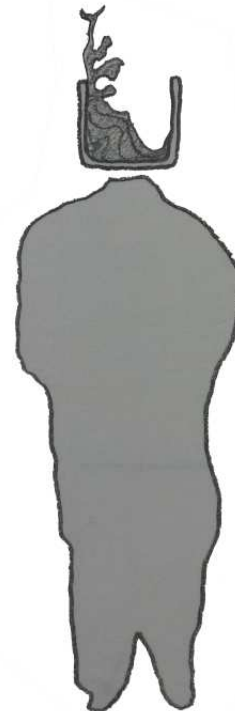


Figure 11 Man as defined by environmental factors (Author 2015)

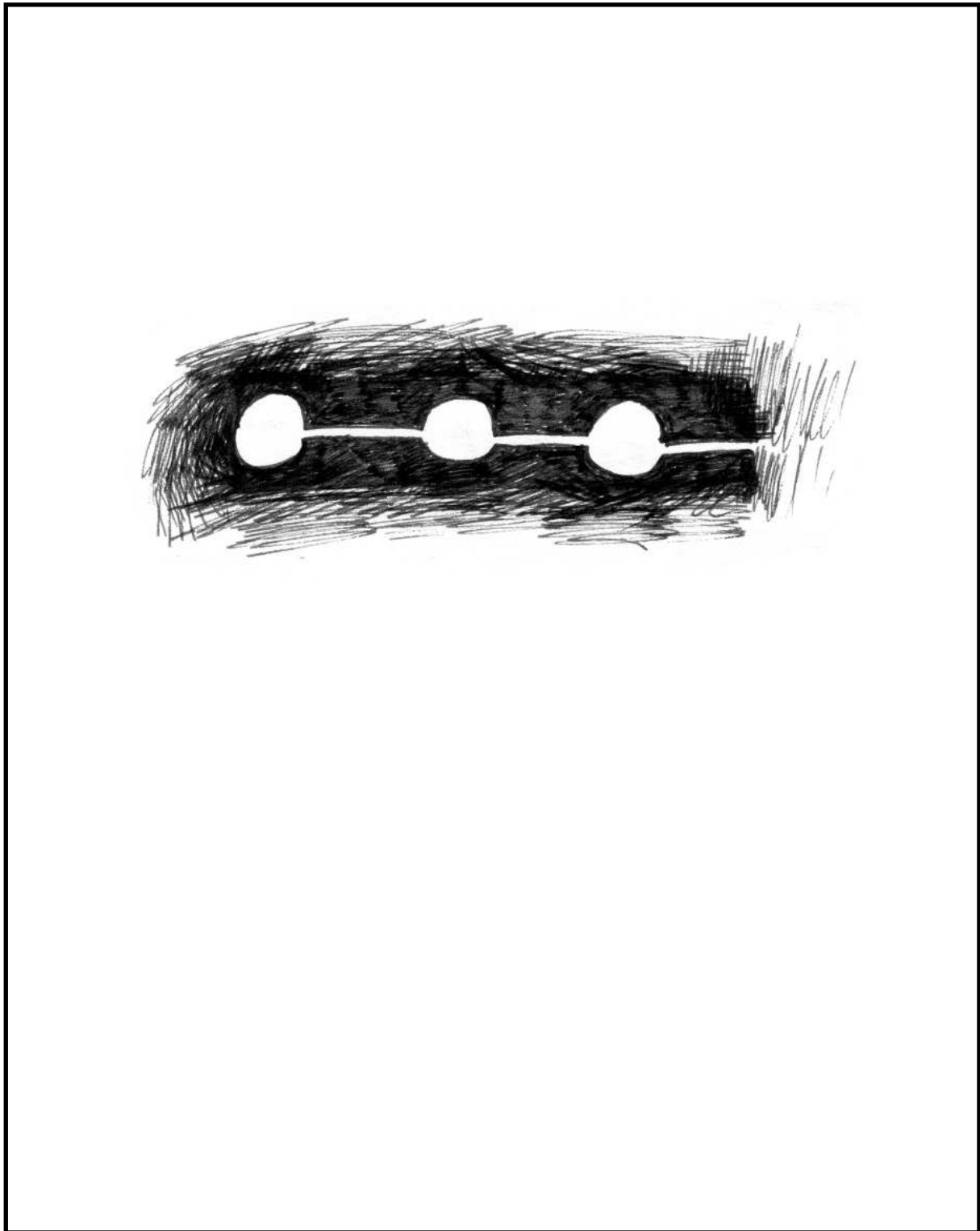


Figure 12 Environment [man] defining space [man] (Author 2015)

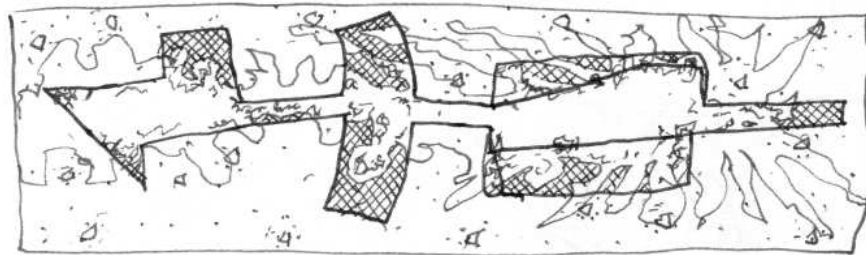


Figure 13 *Eating your environment anew*: Concrete cast around polystyrene then splashed with acid (Author 2015)