The Jacobs’ Challenge: A critical essay on the social value of ‘street.’

“This is not the rebuilding of cities. This is the sacking of cities.” Jane Jacobs in *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, first published in 1961.

Although written in 1961, the opinions expressed by Jane Jacobs in *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* are as hotly debated today as they were when they were originally published. A search in the library or on the internet will reveal a myriad of articles written over the past 40 years. This project offers you the opportunity to address the same issues, to add to the collected works of those who have also given consideration to the social value of a neighbourhood block or street.

Your critical essay will be based on an analysis of the thesis presented by Jane Jacobs in the introduction and first three sections of *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*.

These sections are:
1. Introduction
2. The uses of sidewalks: safety
3. The uses of sidewalks: contact
4. The uses of sidewalks: assimilating children

The essay should address the issue of the relationship between house form and pattern structure and public social life. You are encouraged to draw freely from the criticisms levelled at this work both at the time of publication and more recently – as well as from your own experience of life in the neighbourhoods that you have lived in. You must take a personal position regarding issues she raises – either agreeing or disagreeing with her various points of view. You do not, however, need to address all the points she raises, but instead may concentrate on specific issues that are of particular interest to you.

The essay should be a maximum of 2,000 words and be structured in the traditional academic manner. All quotations and opinions of others should be properly footnoted and a bibliography included at the end of the paper.

**Deadline:**

November 5th, 2003. Penalties will be awarded for late submissions!

**Reference:**


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