

## Evaluation of Existing Second Life Sites

### Sites Visited In Class

Of the three sites the class visited as a group, I found *Imagination Island* to be by far the best. It was the most educational and the most stimulating. The site gave access to various ethnic fairytales, as well as several traditional European ones. The library section of the site also had quite a bit of information on folklore and several examples of classical children's literature. There was audio throughout the entire site. The audio ranged from different wildlife sounds in the outdoor portions, to classical music in the library section. Beside the numerous books, the library had different thought-provoking pictures on the walls. The outdoor parts of *Imagination Island* also had several animated characters such as peasants, fairies and enchanted trees. Although they seemed to be relatively generic totems of classic children's literature, these things were nice touches which kept in theme with the basic feel of the site. *such as?*

The *Globe Theatre* site was the least impressive of the sites the class visited. More than anything, the site seemed like it was a good idea that was abandoned early in its creation. Little to nothing of it appeared to be related to Shakespeare. The buildings seemed to be somewhat in keeping with the time period. However, as if to completely contradict that, there was a modern school bus in the middle of the square. The bus served no purpose, unless it is supposed to be beating the viewer over the head with the concept that the *Globe Theatre* site is meant to be educational. To be honest, had it not been in the title, I never would have guessed that this site was meant to be related in any way to Shakespeare. *good point* *an - interesting interpretation*

### Sites Visited Individually

<http://maps.secondlife.com/TheCrossroads/94/210/59>.

The first site I chose to visit on my own was one supposedly dedicated to blues music. It is called The Crossroads. I have to say that I was fairly underwhelmed with this site. There is the possibility that some of it was malfunctioning at the time I visited it, but even so, I was expecting a bit more. The area covered was quite large, but there was hardly anything interesting there. When you are first teleported to the site, you are presented with a signpost leading to several different features. These range from a blues museum, to a concert venue, to a motorcycle show. Unfortunately, hardly any of these signs are accurate. Very few of the options on the signpost seem to actually exist. The signs do not accurately point to the few options that are available. Several of the buildings are designed in a style that is in keeping with a 1940's era blues inspired town. However, there is little of interest within the buildings. The concert venue was fairly spacious, and there were several people dancing. Despite this, there seemed to be no band or DJ. The message box claimed that there was blues being played, but there was no sound available. Overall, I felt this site shows some great potential. However, as of the time of my writing this, it has little to offer in education or entertainment.

*great choice!*

*ideas generated for your own SL space?*

<http://maps.secondlife.com/Dublin/95/106/26>

The next site I visited was called Blarney Stone Irish Bar, Dublin. I was quite a bit more impressed with this one. Not only did the site include the interior of the bar, but it had a decent amount of exterior things to see. Everything outside the bar was very Irish-inspired. I have never been to Dublin, but I would not be surprised if the exteriors of this site were copied directly from a street in that town. The interior of the bar seemed very authentic. There were several official Guinness posters decorating the

walls. There was a stage. There was even an upstairs lounge. The actual bar, itself was impressively designed. The place wasn't packed, but that is probably what one would expect for roughly noon, when I visited the place. Of the few patrons who were there, there were several conversations taking place. Overall, I felt this site gave off a very genuine atmosphere of an Irish pub.

<http://maps.secondlife.com/LondonEnglandUK/231/53/21>

The next place I chose to look at was called London Mayfair. This site was exactly as advertised. You start out in Hyde Park. From the pictures I have seen of the place, the Second Life representation seemed very accurate. The entrance to the park had a billboard of upcoming shows. Shortly after entering, a Metallica cover band began to play on the stage. There was no sound. Instead, someone was typing the lyrics to each song into the message box. After each song, the band would talk with each other, and with the audience. For having no sound, this seemed to be a very accurate representation of a live concert. The landscaping was decorated for Christmas. There were several people milling about within the park. Once outside of the park, you find yourself on a very populous street. Most of the buildings were shops. Nearly all of them could be entered. A few of the buildings seemed to be apartments. Those did not seem to be open to the public. The stores were extremely varied. They had clothes to records, and pretty much everything in between. It appeared that all of the stores were truly functional. Most had clerks. By the park, was that iconic tunnel. Unfortunately, you are not allowed to enter the tunnel. This was another site that I was quite impressed with. Someone obviously spent quite a lot of time making the London Mayfair site as accurate as possible.

*what did you make of this??*

<http://maps.secondlife.com/Sialimonus/189/230/69>

The next place I visited was said to be the Oval Office. While this site did include a representation of that room, it was a bit disappointing. You start out on a street which is nothing like Pennsylvania Ave. There are several buildings lining the street. Excluding the Oval Office, only one of the buildings on the street is government related. That one is the Canadian Embassy. Also excluding the Oval Office, the only building you are able to enter is a movie theater. There are a few posters from 1970's era action films. There is absolutely nothing inside the theatre. It is beyond me why there is an interior for that building. The Oval Office building is at the end of the street. It is a fairly non-detailed building which loosely resembles the front of the White House. The only room in this building is the Oval Office. It is a fairly accurate representation of the room. There are a few details missing, but overall, the designer did a good job on this room. There is nothing interactive about the room at all. That was a bit disappointing. The only non-generic book totem on the shelf was, *How to be a President for Dummies*. So that joke was sort of funny, but does not redeem the entire lackluster experience. Overall, despite the fact that the actual Oval Office portion of the site was relatively accurate, I was fairly unimpressed with this site.

<http://maps.secondlife.com/secondlife/ParisEiffel/20/193/248>

The last site I visited was the one dedicated to the Eiffel Tower. I very much enjoyed this one. Having spent time at the real Eiffel Tower, I felt that the creator of this site did a very good job accurately portraying it. You start out in the park in which the tower is built. There were several people milling about. There was audio of French dialogue. You could walk or fly completely around the tower. The construction of it

seemed to be quite accurate, and surprisingly detailed. To enter the tower the traditional way, you go through the ticket gate. From there you enter the elevator. The elevator was also very true to life. Once in the elevator, you can choose from three different observation decks. The first deck was full of posters that seemed to be a health class project. They were all in French, and seemed to be set up in a science fair fashion. The second observation deck had a similar array of posters. This time, however, the posters were different tutorials on Second Life. Again, they were written in French. The top deck had few posters. The ones it did have were advertisements. As usual, they were in French. The top was more about the view than anything else. I liked that because it is in keeping with the actual Eiffel Tower. Overall, this was probably my favorite of the Second Life sites I visited. It was accurate, and in that, was educational. I probably would have enjoyed it even more if I could read French. I would recommend this site to anyone who has an interest in Paris.