Scott Stadium was constructed on its present site in 1931. At that time the site was nothing but forest on the outlying boundaries of the University of Virginia. In order to accommodate the growing football team and its popularity, the stadium that once was just Lambeth Field with temporary bleachers became a symbol of Cavalier pride. The stadium has gone under several renovations for expansion since its initial construction. The 1950s, 1980s, and 1990s all brought more seats and more parking spaces to the site. On game days it functions as a public space like no other site on grounds. Herds of Cavalier fans flock to the stadium to cheer on their team every home game during the fall season. It is this fall season that allows us to consider Scott Stadium as a genuine public space.

Entry Fee? Scott Stadium as a public space
When considering Scott Stadium as a public space, the first concern is that there is a fee of admission. This inherently limits the stadium as a genuine public space. Only certain classes of people with cars and enough money are able to spend their Saturdays watching their favorite football team. While this is homogenous, there is a slight discrepancy. The difference between card-swiping students and fee-paying fans is definitely noticeable. The juxtaposition of age and class somewhat makes up for the $30 entrance fee. Scott Stadium can also be considered a public space because it hosts a jubilant atmosphere that is made up of tens of thousands of people. Scott Stadium is a genuine public space that functions seasonally. During the off-season, the stadium is merely a landmark and also a large parking lot. The automobile continues to function as a main antagonist in the construction of Charlottesville's public places.

Attempts to make the site more public might include reinstating a dining hall of old inside Bryant Hall (located at the north end of the stadium). Along these lines of multifunctionality, more stores or shops pertaining to the University of Virginia could be opened in an attempt to create more pedestrian commerce amongst students and visitors.

Interview:
Joe Matthews, student
How often do you visit Scott Stadium?
Every home game during football season.
What is Scott Stadium like during a football game?
-It’s a very vibrant atmosphere. I normally run into many of my friends and have two or three conversations with strangers around me.
-Is it a homogenous crowd?
-Well, you’ve got your students and your regular fans. Everyone’s there to watch the game and enjoy themselves.

Do you ever use the stadium in the off-season?
-Not really. I walk by it three or four times a week to go to the gym and occasionally park my car there on weekends.

Aerial view of Scott Stadium, 1981
Source: www.virginia.edu
After renovations, the stadium now seats 41,000 more people and must accommodate for their vehicles.

Aerial view of Scott Stadium, early 1950s
Source: www.virginia.edu
Note the abundant presence of vehicles adjacent to the stadium and the encroaching wilderness that no longer exists.
Scott Stadium is different from most public places in Charlottesville because of its specifically seasonal uses. During the fall, every home game it is packed with alumni and students fostering a very positive public atmosphere. As in the photos on the previous page, one can see how the automobile plays a pivotal role in the usage of Scott Stadium as a public place. In this diagram, it is easy to see that the parking lots adjacent to the stadium take up more surface area than the stadium itself. And as transportation to the games is certainly a limiting factor to its usage, one can see how those who cannot afford transport or a ticket are excluded from this public space.

As the University expanded it needed a large amount of space to support its football facility. In the topography map to the left, one can see that the site is not even incorporated within the city limits in 1953 nearly two decades after its completion. It is obvious that the stadium is carved out of the surrounding wilderness, providing the site with a distinct sense of place.

During the rest of the year, the stadium functions as a landmark rather than a public place. Students walk to and from class, the gym, the dining halls, and their cars past the enormous stadium. This diagram illustrates very positive public atmosphere, the intensity level of automobile/pedestrian traffic around the stadium.

In the off-season, movement around Scott Stadium is significant. Above: pedestrians move up and down Alderman Rd., a main road at the University; Top right: most of the parking lots remain as empty space while football season is dormant; Bottom right: this section of the parking lot is used by hospital workers as holding places for their cars.

Scott Stadium
Source: www.virginia.edu
Photo taken during the fall, peak usage time. Football games are the main social activity carried out in this building.

Diagram:
Student/Non-student Occupation

Diagram:
Intensity of Automobile/Pedestrian Traffic