The View from the Landscape
Ecology and Culture in a Globalized Society
The Potential of Landscape Urbanism
Trading Change in the Delta
Perspectives on Landscape Ecology
The Fresno Archtop
What's Love Got To Do With It?
to children. It is no surprise that Paradise in all
religions is always described as a garden.

The most important concerns motivating
landscape architecture today are:
1. Nature deprivation in our culture, specifically
urban and suburban culture.
2. To educate developers on the importance of
landscape in our environments.
3. Our discipline’s role in sustainability and
contemporary environmentalism.
4. To influence the multi-disciplinary conver-
sations about green urbanism, green infra-
structure, and landscape urbanism.
5. To correct architects’ perceptions of our field
so that we can better influence our built
environments.

Architects by nature tend to be focused on
buildings. This may seem obvious and sim-
plistic, but I do not think it necessarily has
to be this way. I imagine a future system of
architecture education that views a building
as one of many possible responses to a design
challenge/problem. I like the idea of an archi-
tecture of removal, in which we become more
strategic about removing structures and con-
sidering how little building we actually need
to thrive as humans. In a system like this, land-
scape becomes the privileged form of human
development, not buildings.

How can we develop open urban spaces
that are more than just high maintenance,
ornamental, vanity landscapes? What functions
can we assign our open spaces that might also
have pleasurable aspects, such as food produc-
ing urban farms and dirt cleansing phytore-
mediation gardens?

Steve Hanson, ASLA
EDAW, www.edaw.com

Well, my flippant answer would be that the world isn’t flat—but
of course there are many architects with a great
sensitivity to site and grading—and even some
landscape architects without it. But, really,
from the perspective of buildings, I wish more
architects understood the power of landscape
to make buildings better. And often it comes
back to grading. A recent example is with an
urban project that is meant to define a central
open space, yet the building elevations have
already been set. That can be very limiting.

This will sound very old fashioned, but I
think it’s very important to have a big idea, and I
mean a design idea—an idea that conveys mean-
ing, sense of place, culture, whatever. This is
more important than ever in the current profes-
sional climate (pardon the pun) where so many
of the metrics for success are based on non-
design criteria. Sustainability is essential, but it
isn’t a design idea or a replacement for one.