

EXAMPLES OF ADAPTED ETHNOGRAPHIC APPROACHES FOR PARTICIPATORY DESIGN

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1 ABSTRACT

In landscape architecture practice, participatory design approaches emphasize community workshops and charrettes. But marginalized voices are often suppressed during group meetings, if those at the margins are invited at all. To expand inclusion in the design process, we propose adapting classic ethnographic methods such as one-on-one interviews and direct observation. The benefit of adapted ethnography is that it gives us first-person accounts of a place and of people's needs. Adapted ethnographic methods allow designers to observe how people really use and feel about places, and are well-suited to one-on-one interactions with stakeholders. Although ethnographic methods can be usefully adapted to landscape architecture processes, this adaptation differs from true ethnography. Developing an ethnographic narrative is a deep and long term endeavor, often occupying the majority of an ethnographer's career. To adapt ethnographic methods for use during a relatively short period of time, a spatial designer must limit the inquiry to a specific "lens" or particular question related to the community design at hand. Recently, we used an adapted ethnographic approach in the design process for a temporary park and associated streetscape in a Midwestern city with slightly less than a half million residents. We sought to understand downtown resident's lived experiences downtown, their perceptions of downtown place identity, and what they most valued in a temporary park.

1.1 Keywords

Participatory design, adapted ethnography, community engagement, temporary landscape, public space

2. RESEARCH RATIONALE, OBJECTIVES AND CONTEXT

2.1 Toward Insightful and Inclusive Participatory Design

Three authors of this paper are designers who routinely partner with urban communities to develop everyday landscapes, such as streetscapes. A fourth author is an ethnographer who studies public space in several cultures around world. The designers' goal is to help our community partners build landscapes that are imageable, poetic, and durable, while students learn inclusive participatory design practices. We seek to amplify place meaning—the type of pluralistic meaning described by Edward Relph (1999) through the qualities of “generosity and imperfection” (p. 26). “Whose meaning?” becomes an important question, though not easily answered. The ethnographer has served as a valuable advisor as we adapt, apply and interpret results of ethnographic methods.

Since the twentieth-century, landscape architects have been leaders in developing and critiquing participatory practices for design (Hester, 1989, 2006, 2012; Jaurez and Brown, 2008; Melcher, 2013). But as educator and designer Randolph T. Hester, Jr. has noted (2001), “There is an alarming overemphasis in participation today on consensus without vision” (p. 35). Then and more recently, Hester voiced criticism of processes that minimize differences and mask the needs of marginalized groups (2001, 2008). In order to be exemplary, Hester has said democratic and participatory landscape design practice must include four domains (2008): “1. Representing people. 2. Co-authoring design. 3. Provoking the familiar and the strange. 4. Nurturing stewardship. 5. Empowering people to represent themselves” (p. 97). Adapting ethnographic approaches to participatory design offers opportunities to achieve these domains.

2.2 Objectives

The purpose of this paper is to provide explicit examples of community participation in site planning and design that use methods adapted from ethnography. The authors' argue that worldviews and methods commonly used in the discipline of ethnography are valuable to landscape architects who wish to guide more inclusive participatory design. Two applied, methodological examples are included in the paper: adapted ethnographic methods used for participatory design of a temporary park and for streetscape redesign with bicycling infrastructure. Both methodological examples focus upon increasing participation by groups not originally included in the client/sponsor's vision for a participatory process. The definition of a marginalized community group is different for each example and is operationalized in the discussion of context, and at the start of each example.

Because the focus of this paper is to argue the benefits of adapted ethnographic methods for landscape architects, the focus within the examples is upon each study's methods. Within each example, methods and results are presented, the latter emphasizing how the outcome was more insightful or inclusive of community members and their needs. Discussion is combined in a single section that allows for comparison of both studies' methods and results.

2.3 Toward More Insight

William H. Whyte identified a frustrating and problematic issue when interviewing informants about spatial preference and needs. He discovered the spaces people claim to like best during questioning was frequently similar to descriptions of spaces informants avoided (Whyte 1980). This is not to say that researchers cannot trust informant's answers, but rather that we need to learn about people's daily lives and routines in a more thorough way than simply asking for a preference. The following is a hypothetical example: if interview patterns revealed a high preference for community gardening, yet no one in the neighborhood has time or interest in weekly maintenance responsibilities, who would tend the garden? Although a community garden could seem appealing for site programming, it may not match what the informants reveal as most applicable to their lives. In *Design for Ecological Democracy*, Hester encourages the use of participatory design, but acknowledges it is sometimes ineffective in determining user's values and everyday behavioral patterns (Hester 2006).

2.4 Toward More Inclusion

In our experience, during participatory processes co-organized with a client or community partner, landscape architects typically defer to the partner to invite community members to meetings and workshops, or to decide how participants will be recruited. Our partners usually represent some

codification of power in the community, whether as an individual leader, organized community group, or incorporated non-profit organization. Others in landscape architecture have documented the power dynamics of client-consultant-public relationships within participatory practice and the inherent conflicts in this dynamic (Juarez and Brown 2008). Ethically, we must tread a fine line: respect our partner's authority while also gently questioning the partner's notion of "who belongs" in the decision-making and design process.

Marginalized groups can be described as "...those with the least power in society who historically have been disproportionately adversely affected by planning policies or left out of development activities" (Juarez and Brown 2008, 190). Landscape architecture literature has documented historic and on-going marginalization of racial minorities in open space planning (Lawson 2007). However, many identity characteristics may lead to marginalization. These include race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, age, disability, and gender, as well as other factors. What is meant by "marginalized" is defined at the start of each participatory example in this paper.

Ethnographic research is different than participatory design because it focuses more deeply on people's values, behavioral patterns, and culture. Landscape architecture, as a discipline, has borrowed and adapted many research approaches and methods from social sciences and humanities in order to study place, understand community, and design in response to human needs (Deming and Swaffield, 2011). The mixed methods approaches of ethnography are broadly recognized as applicable to landscape architectural inquiry (Deming and Swaffield, 2011), but still under-utilized in practice.

Ethnography is "writing about the culture of groups of people" (LeCompte and J. Schensul, 1999b, p. 21). In this sense, culture is the ritualistic patterns of individuals in a community determined by the attitudes, behaviors, beliefs, social arrangements, and norms expressed or observed. Ethnography assumes the researcher as the primary tool of investigation and documentation. Applied ethnography focuses on problems the researcher and stakeholders identify as important in the natural setting where research is being conducted. Therefore, ethnographic research is locally specific. It typically involves primary interaction with participants, uses multiple data sources, uses culture as a filter for interpretation, and offers researchers an accurate reflection of participant's perspectives and behaviors (LeCompte and J. Schensul, 1999b).

2.5 Context

Recently, we used an adapted ethnographic approach in the design process for a temporary park on private, downtown property in a Midwestern city of less than half million residents. Our primary partner was a not-for-profit development corporation working in cooperation with a private property owner. Through careful content analysis of a series of resident interviews, one student advanced the residents' desires, which initially seemed at odds with the property owner's desires (Glastetter, 2015), and the park was recently constructed.

Another student expanded the scope of the project to adjacent public streetscapes. She used digital tools in methods combining participant-observation and interviewing; first video-recording her own experiences and then the experiences of bicyclists on the city's downtown streets near the park site (DeOrsey 2015). The resulting streetscape recommendations are a value-added, rather than a requested or expected, deliverable to the community partner. Those interested in downtown development now have many, first person accounts leading to an interpretation of how cycling on the main thoroughfare could be improved from existing conditions.

In both examples, the students and faculty respectfully questioned who should be included in participatory processes. In the temporary park site design example, downtown residents were not originally included in park planning, as the park was at first imagined to serve professionals working downtown. In the cycling infrastructure example, cyclists were not originally included in discussion of the temporary park's audience and the city's bicycle plan does not address infrastructure along the main street where the temporary park was planned.

The chief value of adapting ethnographer's methods to landscape architecture practice is that ethnography's intent of providing a place-based understanding of culture or sub-culture reminds us to broaden the groups whose input is sampled (and provides a structure for doing so) and to rigorously analyze that input before interpreting its meaning for design. This paper offers a working definition of adapted ethnography for landscape architecture and presents the methods and used in two graduate student-led, participatory projects.

3. WORKING DEFINITION OF ADAPTED ETHNOGRAPHY

3.1 Drawing from Ethnographic Worldviews

In adapting ethnographic research, we employ an interpretivist worldview, acknowledging that cultural beliefs and meaning about a place or landscape are “socially constructed, situated...to a specific context, not fixed, negotiated, multiply-voiced, [and] participatory” (LeCompte and J. Schensul, 1999b, p. 50). Although we cannot claim to be ethnographers, we appreciate ethnographer’s questioning of the “...positivist orientation of the so called objective neutral investigator” and tendency toward “...accepting and analyzing our own human subjectivity in [the study] process (Whitehead, 2005, p. 7).

Depending upon context and situation, we may also employ a critical theory worldview. Critical theory in the field of ethnography calls for a focus upon community diversity and how power shapes inequalities (LeCompte and J. Schensul, 1999, p. 46). Hester’s call for “empowering people to represent themselves” (2008, p. 97) seems to call for an activist orientation. Both an interpretivist or critical theory worldview may lead to action, but according to ethnographers Margaret LeCompte and Jean Schensul (1999b), the critical theory worldview demands that the researcher aim “to bring about change in equitable distributions of power, cultural assets, and other resources” (p. 45).

3.2. Adapted Ethnographic Approaches

Observational and interview approaches are “classic techniques” of ethnography (Whitehead, 2005, 9). Observational approaches, whether of human behavior or site conditions and artifacts, are not new to landscape architects. We commonly use observational mapping techniques pioneered by sociologists such as William H. Whyte (2001) and site analysis techniques codified by Kevin Lynch and Gary Hack (1984) and expanded by many others. However, rigorous interview approaches that explore meaning at individual and collective levels are less common in participatory design. More common practices include community workshops and charrettes emphasizing consensus, where individual, dissenting voices may not be recorded, if they speak up at all.

When interview techniques are used in participatory design, they usually include only shallow analysis of results. The recursive content analysis techniques of ethnography reveal contradictions, ambiguities, and allow for holistic reflection upon both verbal and non-verbal cues—ultimately painting a more complete picture of how the interviewee feels about the place and design program in question.

Ethnographers and other researchers engaged in narrative research (the recording and analysis of stories) will often use interview methods on the premise that, “the individual person is an important source of knowledge” (Kim, 2016, p.157). Anonymous, individual interviews (as opposed to focus groups or collective charrette processes) allow participants the protection to speak freely without fear of losing status within the group. Considering that a portion of any human group may consider themselves to be introverts, it is meaningful that individual interviews also foster participation from people who are less likely to contribute their ideas, thoughts, and stories in a group context. Specific methods we have used for interviewing and content analysis are discussed in the following section, containing two examples of adapted ethnography.

Examples discussed in this paper use sample sizes of five to six participants. Using adapted ethnography may superficially appear to be in conflict with sociological participatory approaches such as large-scale surveys. However, according to Jeong-Hee Kim (2016), an education researcher and expert in narrative research, decisions of approach and methods is not a numbers game, but a question of “appropriateness of data” (p.161). A narrative, interview based approach is needed if the goal is in-depth understanding of individuals’ lived experiences (Kim, 2016; Whitehead, 2005). Kim (2016) recommends that sample size should be a result of time and resources available, and the point at which redundancy of themes arises in the data sample may help determine a minimum sample size.

Unlike many other disciplines using survey methods, ethnographers have a history of using qualitative, narrative approaches as a critical step to generate formative theory before later developing focused tools for large scale, quantitative studies (S. Schensul et al., 1999). Landscape architects can learn from this process of first generating formative theory, grounded in careful (and local) narrative study and analysis, before developing structured, quantitative surveys. Both projects featured here include a combination of approaches and methods; neither include large-scale surveys.

Adapting ethnographic research methods to landscape architecture calls for a caveat: in projects lasting a year or less, we cannot produce a true ethnography. Developing such a narrative is a deep and long term endeavor, often occupying the majority of an ethnographer’s career. Thus to adapt

ethnographic methods for use during a relatively short period of time, the researcher must limit the inquiry to a specific “lens” or particular question (LeCompte and J. Schensul, 1999b, p. 4). For our purposes, the community design dilemma is the lens through which we use adapted ethnography to bring marginalized voices into the discourse. Therefore, our working definition of adapted ethnography for landscape architecture practice is the use of ethnographic methods within a time-limited project scope circumscribed by the planning and design needs of the community partner and stakeholders. Further, while true ethnography may have a goal of understanding people and place for their own sake, adapted ethnography for landscape architecture is an applied endeavor intended to yield the most insightful and inclusive participatory design process for a particular dilemma.

4 BACKGROUND ON THE POP-UP PARK

The urban site that would become the Pop-Up Park in downtown Wichita, Kansas was an eyesore: a fifteen foot pit left after a downtown building was demolished and the developer’s plans stalled during the economic downturn of 2008. Wichitans referred to the site, located prominently on downtown’s main street as “the Hole.” A group of five landscape architecture graduate students and their faculty advisor teamed with the Wichita Downtown Development Corporation (WDDC) and the private property owner to create a temporary park on the derelict site.

The purpose of this temporary landscape is to attract people to an under-utilized part of downtown and provide needed amenities to downtown residents and workers. The initial program from the WDDC and property owner was thoughtful: a flexible use space that could be used as a food truck park and event space. As the students developed a typology of temporary landscapes, they termed the Pop-Up Park an “interim” landscape (Fox, 2015). The site owner eventually plans to develop an office building on site. When this occurs, the WDDC plans to relocate the Pop-Up Park amenities to another downtown site (Holt, 2015).

Though the property is privately owned, the park was funded through a Knight Foundation Fund grant with the purpose of creating an amenity for public use. The not-for-profit WDDC served as project manager for the park’s development. City agencies such as parks and recreation are involved in maintaining the park. The park’s temporary and public-private nature made engagement with downtown residents and evaluation of downtown conditions vital. Dialogue with area residents allows the park to serve current needs while transparently disclosing that the park will be relocated to another temporary site when the site owner chooses to redevelop the property.

5 EXAMPLE ONE: CONTRIBUTING TO A SITE PLAN AND DESIGN-BUILD FEATURES FOR THE POP-UP PARK

As part of the temporary landscape’s planning process, the graduate students and faculty advisor helped the WDDC plan and facilitate a stakeholder charrette. Student and faculty input guided the charrette process and broadened the type of stakeholders invited to participate. In a city where less than one half of a percent of the population lives in the downtown core, these residents are often left out of planning processes, leading us to consider them a marginalized group. Building from an initial convenience sample of contacts provided by the faculty advisor, graduate student Abigail Glastetter developed a snowball sample of six residents who live and work downtown to interview in order to determine how the park might satisfy their needs. Glastetter conducted anonymous, in-depth interviews with these downtown residents, visually representing their needs, wishes, and perceptions of downtown through imaginative photo-montage. She and her peers eventually helped develop schematic plans and design details from the charrette and interview results, and contributed to several features of the park through a design-build process.

5.1 Site Inventory, Observation and Analysis

Site inventory was key to identifying adjacent building functions, infrastructure, and contextual and social relationships (fig.1). Site inventory and analysis occurred over a period of several days so observations covered a range of times and days of the week. Passive observation allowed documentation of situations or systems at work without disruption of their natural flow. It was crucial to take notes and

pictures of the existing site and its setting, events, sequences of transit movement, and human activity around the site.



Figure 1. "The Hole" location on Douglas Avenue. Reproduced by permission of Wichita Downtown Development Corporation.

Observing the existing site and its immediate context over several hours on different days led to an understanding of existing site uses, patterns, social behaviors, events, and contextual influence. Site observations identified types of activity on the street near the site and times of most use. These initial site observations were a form of recursive analysis: cyclical interaction between data and hypothesis, eventually revealing a pattern. Documenting site patterns, events, social behavior, and uses helped Glastetter build a list of potential types of stakeholders.

5.2 Stakeholder Design Charrette

In mid-January 2015, during most of a Friday afternoon, a design charrette was conducted at the WDDC storefront in downtown Wichita to discuss opportunities for a Pop-Up Park design on Douglas Avenue. The WDDC invited city agency, private foundation, and business owner stakeholders to the charrette. The university team also invited three area residents to attend. Participants first walked to the nearby site, then returned to the storefront for charrette.

Facilitators used a list of verbal prompts during small group discussion at the charrette. The prompts were intended to encourage reflection upon the value and impact the temporary park could have on the entire downtown district. These prompts were also used to remind group members the installation will only be at the Douglas Avenue location for a maximum of five years; therefore, they needed to consider how site programming and furnishing can remain adaptable and durable for relocation. Examples of these prompts are listed below:

Do you interact with downtown Wichita routinely?

What portions of downtown do you frequent most?

What brings you to downtown Wichita most often? How do you get there?

How far do you typically walk when exploring downtown?

Is there any one amenity or quality of downtown you feel is lacking?

Did you feel safe in/around the site?

Can you think of ways the site could be used now, which could also easily be translated to another site in the future?

Next, charrette groups developed schematic site plans and details. Groups were asked to propose materials, furnishings, conceptual artwork, and program elements in their site plans. Each small group contained a mix of design and construction professionals, students, and downtown stakeholders. Each group managed its own process, with students actively listening and testing ideas by drawing with team members. Once completed, each small group presented their schematic design concept to the

entire room for feedback. All three groups were given fifteen minutes to explain and take comments or questions from the audience.

5.3 Adapted Ethnographic Method: In-Depth Interviews

Because just a few downtown residents were present at the design charrette, Glastetter next conducted a series of one-on-one, in-depth interviews with nearby residents. In-depth interviewing allows “exploration of any and all facets of a topic in detail” (LeCompte and J. Schensul, 1999b, 121).

Potential participants were identified through a snowball sample based upon an initial convenience sample provided by the faculty advisor. Participants were then selected based on their residential proximity to the site, demographic diversity, and lifestyle diversity. The sample of six residents included two individuals with low socio-economic status, a single parent, and one individual living with disability.

The six participants were interviewed to gain a deeper understanding of the needs and wishes related to landscape characteristics and amenities for people who live and work in the sub-district around the derelict site. This small sample size is a reflection of the time limitations of a graduate master’s project, as thorough textual analysis of interviews is time-consuming. However, at the sample size of six residents, Glastetter did find redundancy of themes, an indication of adequate sample size (Kim 2016).

Following standard human subjects research protocols, Glastetter informed interviewees of the research intent and purpose prior to beginning questioning, obtaining each person’s consent to be part of the study. All participants were asked to choose a pseudonym to encourage openness in their narrative. Bio-sketches of each participant reveal lifestyle diversity of the sample. Although demographic diversity was a factor in sample selection, bio-sketches published in project documentation do not associate demographic characteristics with a particular individual, so as to avoid deductive disclosure of identity.

The interviews were flexible and semi-structured with a clearly defined goal to determine participant’s values and behavioral patterns in relation to living and working downtown. Participants were encouraged to lead the interviews and direct conversation. This form of interviewing offered participants the discretion to decide how to respond to prompts, not bounded by suggestive alternatives or constrained by response length.

Interviews were intended to discover how the Douglas Avenue Pop-Up Park could be integrated into local stakeholder’s routines and daily needs. Glastetter analyzed informant’s narratives to identify patterns and themes, rather than specific answers. This approach means that she used a broad to narrow exploration technique during questioning. Therefore, informants were questioned about their relationship to downtown as a whole. It was critical to understand how and when informants would, or could, use the reinvented space. This was important to note before asking informants specific questions about site design.

A flexible question framework was used during the interviews as an outline tool to help elicit stakeholders’ daily routine and priorities. The main categories of this framework and an example question from each category is included below (full list of questions not shown for sake of brevity):

Spatial Preferences: Do you have fond memories that you feel could be credited to a specific place?

Routine Interaction with Downtown: What does a daily commute look like to you?

Identity and Place Attachment: Do you think Wichita has an identity...what about downtown?

Walkability: Are active modes of transit a possibility for you (safety, distance)?

Natural Space: What is the furthest distance you would travel to reach a green space?

Routine Interaction with the proposed Pop-Up Park site: During what hours and days do you routinely interact or have potential for interaction with the site?

Although no specific time length was specified, all interviews lasted between one and two hours. This was plenty of time to allow the participants to lead the interviews into the direction of their choosing and to focus upon portions they felt most relevant. All interviews were audio recorded and simultaneously noted by hand. Glastetter took notes during the interviews to document changes or variations in tone, physical posture, and noteworthy response lapses. These notes were useful in determining portions of the interview during which participants seemed to show the most non-verbal emotion and emphasis.

5.4 Adapted Ethnographic Method: Interview Coding and Analysis

Data from interviews were organized and analyzed using a system of coding. “Codes are names or symbols used to stand for a group of similar items, ideas, or phenomena that the researcher has

Glastetter revealed differences between what nine-to-five employees would like the site to be and what those who live downtown desire for the site. For example, although public transit and cycling were not addressed during the charrette, three interviewees focused upon these issues. Through careful content analysis of a series of resident interviews, Glastetter advanced the recurring residents' desires (green space, inspirational art and furnishings, creative night lighting) in harmony with the property developer's desires (low maintenance, clearly removable and temporary) and the needs of downtown employees (food trucks, a place to eat lunch).

Although not all elements of the revised site plan were implemented, concepts from the interviews that occur in the now built, temporary park are the need for green vegetation in the space, the need for unique and site furnishings, the need for nighttime uses, and the need to give the park an iconic identity that resonates with Wichitans (fig.3). Another student in the master's report group built upon a recurring theme in the interview's by following up on the residents' desire for iconic art (Mercado 2015; fig.3). Other students proposed how the site could interface with future pedestrian and cycling improvements downtown, and proposed future locations for the Pop-up Park (DeOrsey 2015, Holt 2015). Serendipitously, but not as a result of the design process, an improved bus stop has been added by the City, adjacent to the site.



Figure 3. Installation of student designed and fabricated art and site furnishings in the Pop-Up Park. Reproduced by permission of Chip Winslow.

5.6 Limitations

Time limited Glastetter's sample size for interviews. With additional time, she would have continued to expand the snowball sample of interviews to more diverse participants and lifestyles. A longer project timeline would have allowed for more iterative feedback on montages and site plans. Ideally, with more time, she would have continued the feedback loop: asking participants to provide feedback upon the imaginative photo-montages, further refining a schematic site plan based upon their feedback, and later obtaining post-occupancy feedback.

Site construction was dependent upon availability of fill dirt from another project. The Pop-Up Park implementation was postponed several weeks due to the slow progress on development excavation providing fill. The construction delay inhibited Glastetter from studying the park post-occupancy, which would have offered further information as to whether the park's design does or does not meet the needs of nearby residents.

6 EXAMPLE TWO: CYCLIST PERCEPTIONS OF DOWNTOWN STREETS ADJACENT TO THE POP-UP PARK

The urban design of Wichita, Kansas, like many other mid-sized, American cities, currently prioritizes the car over the pedestrian or cyclist. At present, pedestrians and cyclists combined make up less than two percent of the transit mode share in the city (City of Wichita 2013). Although it may sound strange to consider cyclists a marginalized group, in this Midwestern, auto-dominated city, cyclists are routinely left out of downtown redevelopment project planning. As the interview process confirmed, cyclists feel extremely marginalized downtown and are even subject to harassment by motorists.

Although cyclists are seldom consulted on individual redevelopment projects, the City of Wichita recently completed a Bicycle Master Plan with broad input from citizens across the city. But unfortunately, the current plans for Douglas Avenue, the major downtown thoroughfare which fronts the Pop-Up park, includes only signage, rather than infrastructure, in the form of shared lane symbols (City of Wichita 2013). Douglas Avenue is a missed opportunity and needs a re-envisioned strategy based upon input from a marginalized group: those who bicycle Douglas Avenue on a regular basis.

Recognizing that an implicit need in the WDDC's goal of enlivening the area around the Pop-Up Park is enhanced walkability and bike connectivity to the park, graduate student Danielle DeOrsey chose to study cyclists' experiences. She hypothesized that better understanding the lived biking experience of Downtown Wichita would help her to develop design recommendations that address current streetscape issues as they occur in daily life. Her exploratory study documents the experiences of a small group of people who bicycle in or through downtown Wichita on a regular basis, with a focus upon experiences near the Pop-Up Park site.

6.1 Adapted Ethnographic Method: Documentation of participants' bike rides

DeOrsey recruited a participant sample of five cyclists based upon a combination of convenience contacts that snowballed to recruitment through a Wichita bicycle advocacy group. To be selected for the study, participants had to be regular cyclists downtown with a willingness to record their cycling experiences during the cold weather months of February and March, due to the project timeline. Although she is not a regular cyclist in downtown Wichita, DeOrsey recorded her own riding experience to help her better understand the conditions her participants experience. Thus DeOrsey's study included a first person (her own) account of cycling in the downtown, as well as five participants accounts.

For the safety of the five participants, DeOrsey asked that they follow their typical, familiar ride routes. Also for safety, participants were not asked to respond to any scripted questions or issues, but rather to simply vocalize their own stream-of-consciousness already occurring during the ride. In this first step of the research, participants recorded their experience visually and verbally by using GoPro cameras during a typical bike ride. DeOrsey followed accepted human subject research protocols of informed consent and protection of participants' identity. Each participant was asked to choose a pseudonym.

6.2 Adapted Ethnographic Method: follow-up interviews while viewing the ride video

Next, each participant reviewed their video in real time with DeOrsey, clarifying their comments and the overall experience. Partly for convenience (no further travel to Wichita was required by the researcher) and partly for documentation, DeOrsey used video-conferencing software to "share screen" a video of the participants ride, while audio and video-recording the participants on-going reflections during the interview (fig.4).

While the initial bike ride documented an unstructured experience (no prompts were given to participants), the follow-up interviews were semi-structured by a series of verbal prompts, as well as the shared viewing of the participant's video document. DeOrsey used the following prompts in the interviews: *What would you change about the biking experience in Downtown Wichita? What would have made your ride a better experience? What made you feel safe/unsafe? What do you enjoy the most about your route? What are your least favorite parts of your route?*

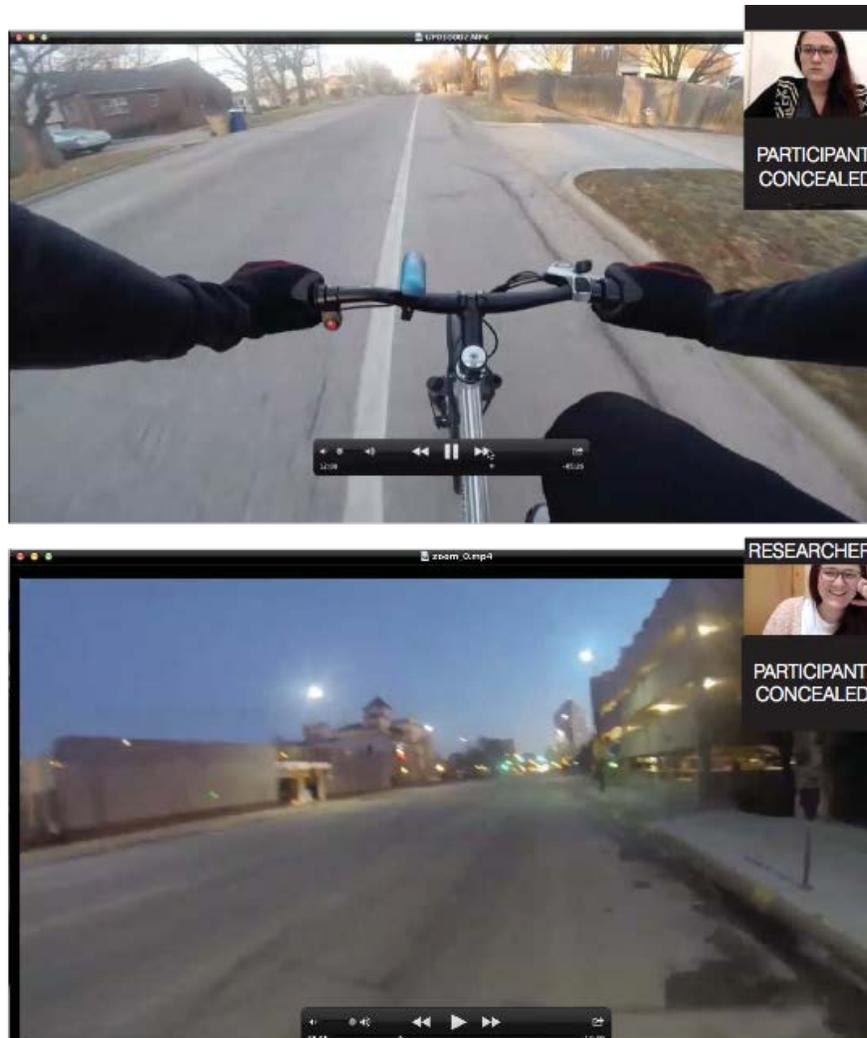


Figure 4. Examples of follow-up interviews while viewing ride footage with video-conferencing software. Image by authors.

6.3 Adapted Ethnographic Method: Content Coding and Analysis

Thematic coding techniques were used for content analysis of the video and sound data. Data collected from experiential bike rides and follow-up interviews was transcribed and coded based upon themes that appeared. Themes were identified based on the number of times the concept was mentioned and the emphasis placed on certain comments during the bike ride studies and follow-up interview reflections.

6.4 Adapted Ethnographic Method: spatial mapping of data points and classification of bicyclist comments

The initial coding analysis was then spatially mapped to determine where comments were elicited during participants' rides. Data points were geo-referenced. Next, these mapped data points were classified by value and theme. Experiential data from participants was divided into three value categories of negative, neutral, and positive comments. The categorization of comments was based on each individual's language pattern, assigned a value interpretation. Areas with the highest density of negative experience data points dictated potential focus areas where the streetscape should be improved for cyclists. An in-depth look at what was being said occurred for the densest areas of negative comments.

Negative comment clusters were initially identified based upon their overall density of comments. Once identified, the points were then cross-referenced with the actual comments from the participants.

The mapped data was also coded by subject matter. This process was used to determine focus areas with the most useful comments and issues presented by the participants.

DeOrsey also used a comic book-like montage graphic process to visually correlate the verbal comments made by the participants to their actual physical experience recorded via GoPro. The comic strips (fig.5) use a series of image frames that were extracted directly from each participant's bike ride data to develop a montage in order to understand this data. This process helped to highlight the most important physical aspects of each participant's route in a sequential format and was paired with direct quotes from both the bike rides and follow-up interviews. Comments made during the participant's bike ride are illustrated with a quote bubble and comments made during the follow-up interviews are illustrated with text boxes.



Figure 5. Excerpt from a comic-inspired visual interpretation of individual participant's ride and interview themes. Image by authors.

6.5 Findings and Design Implications

Five major negative comment themes emerged during the initial coding process: problems with the urban environment, biking experience/ infrastructure, road/traffic, safety, and motorist behavior. These themes emerged during initial analysis of the video-recordings and analysis of follow up interview results. Mapping of comments revealed negative comment clusters were focused around intersections, showing the need for further design development of intersection layout and overall strategies to increase safety in those critical areas. DeOrsey developed recommendations based upon the comments within these themes. Final design strategies for two selected areas near the Pop-Up Park were grounded in analysis of participant experiences and streetscape design best practices.

Bicyclists of Wichita are faced with many stressful situations during their daily routes. DeOrsey learned that while each participant was unique, they wanted the same things: safety, a pleasurable ride, and to be respected by motorists. Not all bicyclists' needs can be answered through design; some require a cultural change of attitudes toward bicycling. Although this finding is not specific to the streetscape design near the Pop-Up Park, it is nonetheless valuable information for the WDDC as they continue to influence and promote downtown redevelopment.

6.6 Limitations

Time and seasonality were major limitations for the cyclist study. The timing of the studies fell during a fairly cold winter, which reduced the potential participants who were biking on a regular basis and who were willing to participate. With more time, DeOrsey would have asked more cyclists to record their experiences by expanding the snowball sample. She also would have sought a more diverse sample of cyclists. All of the participants are bike commuters or rely on biking as primary mode of transportation. The five participants are a part of very small sub-culture in downtown Wichita—those that are most comfortable cycling in Wichita. DeOrsey's study did not include recreational cyclists, children, or older adults.

With a longer project timeline, DeOrsey would have engaged in a group process including the City of Wichita bicycle coordinator, the WDDC, and the study participants to evaluate the streetscape design proposals and to generate interest in considering further enhancement of Douglas Avenue for cyclists.

Lack of participant familiarity with the GoPro technology was a minor problem. While DeOrsey supplied each participant with a full battery and an explanation on how to use the camera, user error caused a loss of two potential participants' data.

7 DISCUSSION

Group meetings for community projects, like workshops and charrettes, can yield important results, especially in allowing people to learn “who [their] neighbors are” (Hester 1989, 74). Some even assert “...group sharing may be essential in an empowering process” since in group settings people learn to negotiate the design process (Juarez and Brown 2008, 193). However, marginalized voices are often suppressed during group meetings, if those at the margins are invited at all. One-on-one interactions, especially when the participant knows their identity will be protected, can lead to candid responses, without compromising the participant's status within the group. As demonstrated in both example studies, adapted ethnographic methods allow designers to observe how people really use and feel about places, and are well-suited for one-on-one interactions with stakeholders.

Both examples presented here included a combination of group and individual processes, beginning with a group charrette for the Pop-Up Park site and then focusing on specific, marginalized populations: in one case a diverse sample of nearby downtown residents, and in the other case, people who use bicycling as their primary mode of transportation. Moving toward individual interviews allowed the researchers to prioritize input that might have been disregarded in a group setting.

When contrasted to group processes commonly used in participatory design, the interview process and rigorous content analysis of adapted ethnography may be criticized as too time-consuming. Landscape architects and other participatory design consultants may not wish to invest the time needed to conduct such thorough analysis of stakeholder input. We contend there is little point in collecting community input without rigorous analysis, as shallow analysis leaves the professional vulnerable to her own misperceptions and biases regarding what actually occurred, was said, or is desired. If landscape architects and their clients desire transformative participatory processes, it is necessary to invest time in analyzing community input and dialogue. Rigorous content analysis of input provided by those in the Pop-Up Park design study revealed the significance of nighttime activities and green vegetation to those living (not just working) downtown. Spatially mapping the content analysis of cyclist experiences in the streetscape design study revealed specific intersections near the Pop-Up Park that need redesign in order to safely include cyclists in the roadway.

The time constraints of student work are similar to constraints on participatory design projects in practice; thus understanding the value and limitations of a small sample is key. The value of open-ended, in-depth interviews lies in the possibility of interpreting a deep narrative about people and place. The limitation of using a small sample size to meet time constraint is that the resulting interpretation has only

local relevance for design application. However, local relevance is most needed in site specific design decisions.

Adopting the ethnographer's worldview encourages the landscape architect to follow the ethnographer's frank advice for decision-making when power conflicts arise: rather than assuming that the dominant voice (e.g. client) is always right, "...attempt to promote a dialogue by means of the research project or during review of research results; strategize ways to do the most good—or the least harm—for all..." (LeCompte and Schensul, 1999, p. 48). Ethnographic worldviews require that the landscape architect return again and again to the question 'Whose meaning?' is codified through site design.

7.1 Limitations of the Adapted Ethnography Examples and Directions for Future Research

The benefit of adapted ethnography is that it gives us first-person accounts of a place and of people's needs. However, short term use of ethnographic approaches also has limitations. In order to respect the disciplinary differences between landscape architecture and ethnography, we must return to an operationalized definition of adapted ethnography: in the two examples presented, we have focused upon a physical settings and a certain scope of needs (seeing culture through the 'lens' of site design), rather than investigating the entire cultural system of a place.

In both example studies, time limitations precluded recursive feedback from participants on research interpretation and design proposals in progress. Especially because both student researchers used imaginative means of visualizing the interpreted data, participant review of interview interpretation and its translation to design would have been a valuable addition to both studies. Further use of and reflection upon adapted ethnography in participatory design is needed in order to develop strategies for optimizing the amount of time spent in gathering and interpreting data, portraying findings for iterative feedback, and applying findings to design.

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