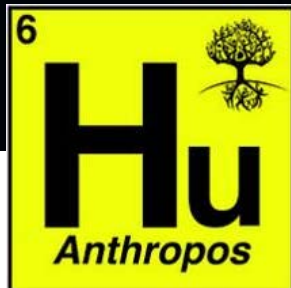


ANTHROZINE

— SEPT_16 —



Anthro NOW
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Anthro/Zine, a venue for undergraduate work of and inspired by anthropology, is a special publication of anthronow.com. Look for us in April, September, and December, in coordination with our print publication, Anthropology Now. This is our fifth issue, welcome to the fall semester!

We welcome submissions from current and recently graduated college students of any major on topics relevant to anthropology and culture. Our April and September issues will revolve around a specific theme. **December's theme will be open topic.** To learn more about how to submit, check our call for submissions on page 5 and visit our website <http://anthronow.com/anthrozone>.

Inside this issue: student ethnography

About **Anthropology Now**

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A/Z

Anthro/Zine

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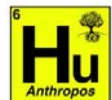
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Thanks to our authors!

2016 September



CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Interested in seeing your work published in Anthro/Zine? We want to see what you've been up to!

We are looking for authors who can communicate their personal connection to the object of their study. How does your identity or personal history interact with your experience of anthropology? What drew you to this line inquiry? To this end we are making an open call for the following:

- **Personal reflections** on academic topics, current events
- **Reviews** of books, movies, museum installations, etc.
- **Stories** that relate personal experiences or observations
- **Poetry** and **creative writing**
- **Artwork** and **Photography**

Written works should be creative and engaging and should abstain from jargon, artistic works should be relevant to the issue theme and anthropology broadly construed. Bibliographies are not necessary unless you are including a direct quote in your piece. If so then use APA style in footnotes.

Generally we are looking to publish shorter works, including some that are very brief. If you have a longer piece consider trimming it down before submitting it. Suggested lengths: "Letters" – about 200 to 600 words; "Articles" – about 800 to 1500 words; "Features" – about 2000 to 2500 words.

PUBLICATION SCHEDULE

We publish three issues a year: April, September, and December. We are currently collecting submissions for our December issue which is open topic with a deadline of November 15, 2015.

If you would like to submit work for the April issue plan on meeting a deadline of March 15, 2017.

SUBMISSION CHECKLIST

1. Feel free to direct questions to mthompson@marinersmuseum.org before you submit.
2. For written works use single spacing, no formatting, and save the piece as a .doc file. Embedded hyperlinks are okay, but we are not doing multimedia yet.
 - a. Name your file LastNameFirstname.doc.
 - b. Visual works should be in a .jpg file, or if already uploaded to a streaming service then sharing the URL link without an attachment is fine.
 - c. Do not submit a .doc with embedded images, send the image files separately. Do not submit .pdf files.
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4. In the body of the email include:
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Anthro/Zine

September 2016

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Library Transformations: Students as Participatory Design Ethnographers

Krista Harper, Sarah Hutton, Carol Will, and Sarah Welch

Anthropology students in the Library Transformations Project undertake ethnographic research with the goal of understanding how undergraduates and other members of the campus community experience the University of Massachusetts Amherst Library. In spring semester 2014, librarians Sarah Hutton and Carol Will asked anthropology professor Harper to engage her anthropology students in studying the library. Since then, over 40 undergraduate and graduate students in Harpers' classes have learned ethnographic research techniques through projects in the Library. This *AnthroZine* collection features the latest research findings of the undergraduate ethnography team.

Compared to studying far-away places featured in the ethnographies we read in anthropology classes, studying one's own university library seems pretty unadventurous. But as time goes on, we have started to talk about the "mysteries of the library" that we continually uncover in our project. The University library is open 24 hours a day on weekdays, plus weekend hours, and thousands and thousands of students and community members visit each day. What are they all doing? Who is there at 4 am? How do they experience the library? Our research touches upon practical design concerns such as how students perceive and use built space, technology, and library services including website services. We have also pursued questions related to students' motivations for using the Library and how emotions of anxiety, exclusion, comfort, and safety shape students' experiences. Finally, in light of broad discussion across the country about how to foster an inclusive campus climate, we have

investigated how students express a sense of identity and belonging in University and Library spaces, with a focus on students of color, international students, LGBTQ, returning, and first-generation students.

As we embarked on our ethnography of the University Library, we looked to the work of applied anthropologists and design scholars for guidance. Two works by anthropologist-librarian teams, Fried-Foster and Gibbons' *Studying students* (2007) and Duke and Asher's *College libraries and student culture: What we now know* (2012) offered us concrete guides for carrying out ethnographic research in a university library. We also drew upon the expertise of Donna Lanclos, who has been writing about library anthropology and user experience (UX) since 2010 on her blog, "The Anthropologist in the Stacks" (<http://www.donnalanclos.com>). Studying library spaces meant we needed to brush up on our design thinking. Fortunately, the work of design anthropologist Dori Tunstall was there for us (Tunstall). We also drew upon the ideas in design scholar Dan Lockton's *Design with Intent Toolkit* (2010) to develop our own insights about the intersection of design and social behavior in the University Library.

In the Spring 2016 course, Applied Anthropological Research, Harper led a group of ten undergraduates through the process of conducting a qualitative research project for the UMass Du Bois Library's Learning Commons, working in close consultation with librarians. In particular, we were tasked with studying how different members of the diverse undergraduate student body experience the library as a space: Is it welcoming and inclusive? Are there spaces

where some students feel uncomfortable or excluded? How do undergraduates find support and a place where they can feel productive? We expanded our scope to assess undergraduates' knowledge of and vision for the W.E.B. Du Bois Center, a new research center within the University Library that focuses on Du Bois' intellectual legacy as a sociologist, scholar of labor and African American studies, and activist.

Drawing on principles of participatory design and applied anthropology, students conducted interviews and participant observation, organized and carried out three Photovoice focus group sessions, documented their data and analyzed it using Dedoose qualitative data analysis software, and presented research findings to an audience of 20 librarians and Library staff. After collectively designing a set of research questions, students collected data through the following methods:

- Six participant observation sessions per researcher in the Learning Commons and elsewhere, documented in fieldnotes (over 55 observations total);
- PhotoVoice sessions with Library Transformations course members and Professor Amilcar Shabazz's Du Bois class, in which 14 participants took photos of the library according to themes such as "What frustrates me," "My study space," and "Why I come"
- Short surveys to attendees at Du Bois Center events (surveys from 130 respondents),
- Twelve walking interviews, in which participants answered questions about their use of the library while leading researchers around the library to their most frequently used spaces

Using these different methods allowed us to capture students' stories about and perceptions of the library, as well as

knowledge gaps, emplaced routines, and embodied practices that they might have found it difficult to articulate verbally.

We carried out data analysis using traditional techniques as well as qualitative data analysis software. Following principles of open coding outlined in the data analysis comic "They Coded With Their Boots On" (Galman 2016: 37-38), students read through transcripts and fieldnotes to develop "bottom-up" codes. They created a list of possible codes to apply to the data, ranging from themes about emotion ("Positive," "Uncomfortable") to broad labels ("Learning Commons," "DuBoisUnknown"). We first wrote these codes on sticky notes, and then rearranged them and grouped them into larger categories as a group. Once we had condensed and grouped the codes by theme, we entered our "codebook" into the qualitative analysis software Dedoose. Students then applied these codes to the data in Dedoose, and each student or group of students used the software to pull out data and co-occurring codes applicable to their individual research focus. At the end of the semester, they gave formal presentations of their findings to an audience of over twenty UMass librarians, and they wrote up research reports.

This special *AnthroZine* collection on "Library Transformations: Students as Participatory Design Ethnographers" features articles drawn from those reports. The first article, by Sarah Welch, draws heavily on participant observation and walking interviews to understand student traffic flows through library spaces. Brandon Sandoval's article investigates the experiences of international students and highlights where they feel a sense of comfort, belonging, and identity within the library. The library offers them a sense of safety, and these students' interactions in the library are a significant part of creating an international student identity at UMass. John McNamara's article looks at

social interactions in the library from a different angle: the relationship between technology use and social interactions. He finds that students' social experience is influenced by the kinds of technology they use in the library, often in surprising ways. Jennifer Nadeau continues our exploration of technology by touching on students' emotional experiences of frustration. Finally, Dan Burkowsky and Erica Wolenccheck hone in on a specific library space currently slated for renovation, the W.E.B. Du Bois Center, a research center dedicated to collections and resources related to the life and ongoing intellectual legacy of W.E.B. Du Bois. Many African American and international students are struck by the fact that the most prominent building on the UMass Amherst campus is named for Du Bois, many undergraduates are unfamiliar with his work. Burkowsky and Wolenccheck sought to learn about the gaps in students' knowledge about Du Bois, and also how the Du Bois Center could create programming and space that would invite greater student engagement.

University Librarians have already started to put student ethnographers' research into practice, integrating students' findings into the redesign of the Learning Commons and the W.E.B. Du Bois Center. Built in 2005, the Learning Commons (LC) at the University of Massachusetts W.E.B. Du Bois Library has long served as an exemplary model for other institutions seeking to develop a similar setup in their own libraries or learning centers. However, as it neared its tenth anniversary, it was clear to the Director of Libraries, Jay Schafer, that the LC was in dire need of transformative renovations in order for the Libraries to continue to meet the needs of incoming and future students. The Learning Commons Assessment Task Force (LCATF) was formed to provide recommendations on facilities, service and technology updates for a total transformation of the Learning Commons.

Anthropology students provided the University Library with the qualitative data that Librarians needed in order to make discoveries of how students use the space, services, and technology in the LC. While they had long been collecting ample quantitative data, the rich narratives provided by student ethnographers complemented the Library's ongoing assessment to help complete the full picture. Their research gave insights into student attitudes and perceptions in a way that would have been difficult for Librarians to do on their own. Findings from the student projects were almost immediately applicable in some cases. For example, on finding that students were confused about how to gain fair access to the group study rooms, Librarians deployed an online reservation system that now allows students the ability to book rooms on their own without infringing upon others.

The Co-located Service Desk Planning Task Force is another initiative that arose from themes discovered via qualitative data analysis completed by anthropology students in the Library Transformations Project. Librarians learned that their patron base, predominantly undergraduate students, were not only unable to identify librarians amongst other library staff, but also could not differentiate between the multiple services desks and services provided at each in the Learning Commons. It was long understood that referrals between desks were not always successful, with users becoming lost between service points or getting confused by misinformation provided, and not receiving a proper referral to the correct desk. The Librarians are examining how to meld many of these services into one co-located service area, intended to improve our offerings by reducing confusion, saving time, and increasing correct responses to our patrons.

Finally, following Burkowsky and Wolenccheck's presentation of their research on the Du Bois Center to the University Librarians, Center Director Whitney Battle Baptiste, Librarian Carol Connare, and other stakeholders were able to make the case for the resources needed to renovate the Center's space on the twenty-second floor and eventually to hire student workers to supervise open hours so that undergraduates will be able to enjoy the Center as an attractive space for events and study groups. They are planning to have displays that will engage students in learning about the life and work of Du Bois, as well as the Center's collections related to social justice activism and black feminist thinkers. Student ethnographers helped identify ways for undergraduates to connect with the work of the Center, and its leadership is using these findings to design a better user experience that will invite student participation.

Working together, we have learned firsthand how student ethnographers can contribute to more user-focused design that helps connect students with the resources they need to succeed. Student researchers in the Library Transformations Project have studied the most high-traffic, beating heart of campus--the largest part of the largest public university in Massachusetts. Their work shows how students can use applied anthropology in service of the public good (Fried Foster 2015).

Acknowledgments: We would like to acknowledge the many people who have made the Library Transformations Project a success. We thank Library Head emeritus Jay Schaefer for valuing the student-focused Jessica Adamick for her ongoing work in integrating the research project into the Library's overall planning process. We are grateful to all the Librarians who have regularly attended student presentations--not only in May 2016, but every semester that the ethnographic research course has been studying the Library. We thank Professor Amilcar Shabazz and the students of his seminar on Du Bois who discussed their experiences of the library and learning about Du Bois, helping us with an

important part of this research.

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Journeys through the Library: Identifying Traffic Patterns in Student Use of the W.E.B. Du Bois Library

Sarah Welch

Introduction

The tallest library in North America is sure to contain a wealth of resources—and students who use the W.E.B. Du Bois Library are sure to find them. Interviews with undergraduates at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst reveal what resources are the most important to them, how they access the resources and

spaces they need, and the centrality of ethnicity/nationality-specific spaces.

Areas of study included:

- How students were first introduced to the resources and spaces they use
- Pathways individuals take through the library

- Traffic patterns the library sees on an everyday basis
- What kind of resources tend to draw the most traffic

Several perspectives informed the research that followed from this question. While I did not focus on disability specifically as a category, the perspective from disability studies was key to the direction of my work. Nancy G. Hutchinson, former director of the Montclair Public Library, describes the process of renovating her library to be accessible to disabled people as one that encompassed both physical accessibility as well as access to the books, services, and information within the library. In “Beyond ADA Compliance: Redefining Accessibility” (Hutchinson 2001), she writes that prior to the renovation, research with disabled people in the area revealed a need not only for wheelchair accessibility, but for further improvements including assistive technologies, audiobooks, clear outlining of resources on their website, and outreach programs to homebound patrons.

The lesson to be taken from library-centric disability studies when thinking about the pathways students take through the library is that pathways will differ for students based on ability, and are not always physically visible. Further research on how students “discover” library resources should be attuned to resources for disabled students such as the Assistive Technologies Center in the Learning Commons. More generally, Hutchinson’s work emphasizes the multiple kinds of “pathways” that all people take through the library: frequently, traffic through a library consists of literal bodies moving through the built space, but “pathways” can also refer to the less tangible ways that people discover resources, such as through the library website or via word of mouth.

Nancy Fried Foster also addresses the design component of library resources in “Participatory Design for the Common Good” (2015). In outlining her participatory research process for studying libraries, Fried Foster discusses the changing nature of libraries in a time of rapid technological progression, and emphasizes the necessity for careful planning for the future so that library resources may hold relevance for years to come. She describes a participatory research process that was crucial in informing the methodology of research on the Du Bois Library. Research projects at Purdue University and the University of Maryland used collaborative research methods to identify a need for placing certain resources like study spaces at the center of the library, and arranging resources like books and offices around the perimeter. This research project also sought to be attentive to the flow of students through and between resources of particular categories.

Methodological Approach and Data

I began my data analysis by returning to research questions and pulling out data excerpts based on codes that applied to the research questions. The code “Accessibility” and co-occurring codes such as “Entering,” “NegativeFrustration,” “Comfort,” “Learning Commons,” “Suggestion,” “SpaceDesign,” and “Habits” helped me think about pathways and barriers in the library, particularly as themes of “discovery,” specifically discovery of study spaces and library resources, were connected to social identity categories.

By pulling out specific quotes from participants, it became clear that narratives about how they discovered library spaces were threaded throughout their interviews, and difficult to encapsulate in a single code. Therefore, after seeking out code co-occurrences between “Accessibility” and

other related codes, I began reading each interview in full in order to pull out specific information about individual library use.

For each interviewee, I created a short summary that included demographic information, the spaces in the library they used the most, how they discovered those spaces, and the physical pathways they take in order to access library resources. I chose to obtain data from the Walking Interviews in particular for this purpose because the participants physically traced the pathways they use in the library during their interviews.

I then tabulated all of the different pathways that participants outlined, as well as observations made in Participant Observations, tabulated which areas and travel corridors of the library were receiving the most traffic, and overlaid them into “heat maps” of high- and low-traffic areas using Adobe Photoshop.

Presentation of Research Findings and Analysis

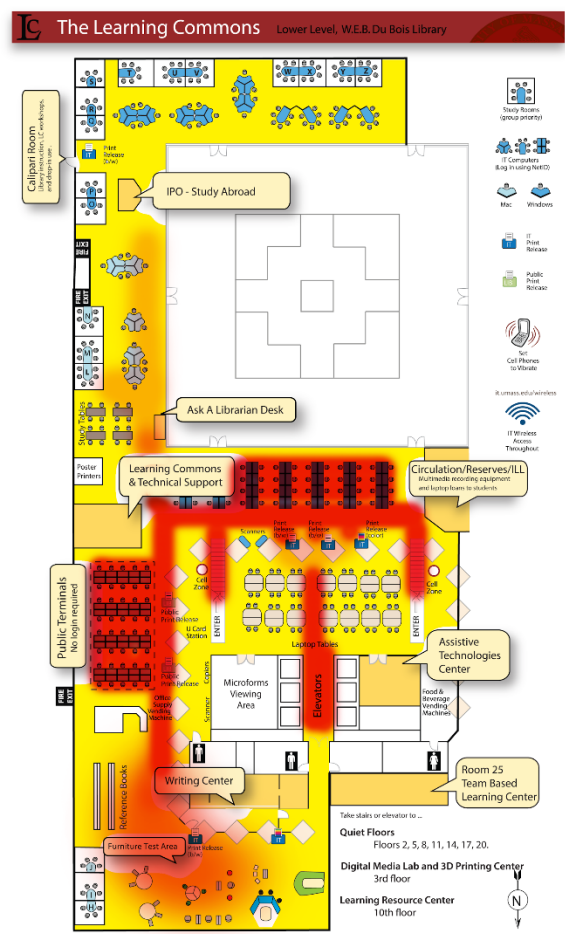
Traffic Patterns

Graphics identifying high (red), medium (yellow), and low (green) traffic areas of the library follow.

In the Learning Commons, high-traffic areas tended to be clustered around the following areas:

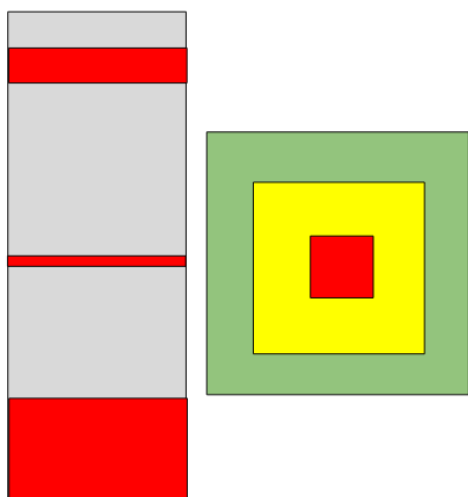
- Elevators
- Stairs
- Printers
- Public access computers
- Microclimates

Welch | Traffic Patterns in Student Use



High-traffic corridors tended to follow the following patterns:

- From the elevators through the laptop tables
- Up and down the staircase near the Ask a Librarian desk, much more so than up and down the staircase near the Circulation desk
- Between the public access computers (PCs), printers, and Microclimates on the east side of the Learning Commons (PCs)
- Past the public access computers (PCs and Macs) near the Circulation desk



In the Library generally, high-traffic areas tended to be clustered around the following areas and floors:

- Lower floors of the library
 - Learning Commons
 - Lobby, Procrastination Station
 - Floors 2 and 5: Quiet study
 - Floor 3: Digital Media Lab
 - Floor 6: Media and Music
- Middle floors of the library
 - Floor 9: Art and Photography
 - Floor 10: Learning Resource Center
- Higher floors of the library
 - Floor 21: East Asian Collection, Near East Collection
 - Floor 23: Views, stacks

In the Library generally, traffic corridors tended to follow the following patterns:

- From the lobby to the Learning Commons via stairs, particularly the east stairs
- From the lobby to lower floors via stairs or elevator
- From the lobby to higher floors via elevator
- On each floor, outward from the elevators towards the perimeter of the

floor and then circling around of the perimeter of the floor



The elevators, the central traffic corridor of the library.

Important resources such as printers, quiet study areas, book collections, and library services draw the greatest volume of traffic from students. Traffic corridors in the library tend to follow rough lines in between these resources, centered in the elevators and along the open pathways of the Learning Commons.

Barriers to Discovery

Students identified the following as major barriers to moving through the library: not being able to find a place to sit, construction surrounding the library, and the sense that certain floors are uninviting. These barriers sometimes deterred them from coming to the library entirely, but most frequently only contributed to negative feelings and frustration regarding the library's accessibility and sense of openness.

Types of Traffic

Two types of patterns of library usage emerged from this data: short-term traffic and long-term traffic.

Short-term traffic refers to the volume of people the library sees on an everyday basis, and where that volume tends to be concentrated.

An example of short-term traffic follows.

Barrabas

Barrabas, a white junior music and psychology student, uses the Learning Commons for its technology, specifically to print and scan the sheet music she needs. Instead of copying the sheet music, Barrabas scans the papers, sends them to a computer, and then prints from the computer because she actually finds the process much simpler, and it allows her to make the printouts double-sided for her accompanist. As Barrabas quipped, “I live for the scanners.”

Another interesting note is that Barrabas was one of the only people we interviewed who made use of a research librarian. She cites music librarian Pam Yungling as an important resource, who she was referred to by a music teacher. Barrabas plans on connecting more with the research librarians as she embarks on her honors thesis.

In summary, short-term traffic may be exemplified by the pathways taken by students on a daily basis, such as Barrabas’s unconventional avoidance of making copies by adding in the extra step of scanning to the computers.

Long-term traffic refers to students’ changing relationships with the library over a longer period of time, usually their time as undergraduates.

One particular long-term pattern of “discovery” is students developing a sense of home in the library based on finding resources that they feel cater to them, their identities, and/or their needs. Many students described the process of finding their space as a deeply social one, and their friends being the ones who introduced them to the spaces they now use the most. Examples of long-term traffic follow.

Dani

Dani, a white Jewish senior in Political Science and History, described her process of discovering the stacks on the upper floors as her favorite place to study as such:

|
I came with other people
sometimes, and then I got
used to it, and started
coming here, and it
became a place where I
really liked being
surrounded by the space
itself, all the books all
around, so that's really
nice. I guess it was kind of
organic

Dani’s relationship to the library is one of comfort and a sense of belonging. Throughout her interview, she describes the library as a place where she is productive and creative, and as a spot where she feels freed of distractions to focus on writing. This sense of belonging was facilitated by a highly social introduction to the library in which her friends referred her to study spots.

Two places Dani dislikes, however, are the Learning Commons and the Microclimates. When asked why, she explained that she found the Learning Commons to be too crowded for her preferences, although she did make use of the public terminals and printers because they had technology that she could

not afford to have at home. Dani avoids the Microclimates at all costs because “there’s too much here. I prefer the simpler space, the better.” She expressed confusion as to why the chairs and tables were so dissimilar to those in the rest of the library. In the case of Dani, high traffic in a space like the Learning Commons was a major deterrent to her ability to focus and get work done there, but she does utilize the space anyway because it contains necessary technology resources.



Dani also describes her changing relationship with UMass Amherst as an institution, recalling a rough start to her college experience that has improved drastically in her junior and senior years since meeting professors and deepening her friendships on campus. This shift seems to align with her relationship with the library, in which she intensifies her sense of connection with the library as she discovers spaces that work for her.

Elaine

Elaine is a first-generation Chinese-American Public Health student who also found the place she likes to study, the quiet study floors, via word of mouth from other students in her public health classes. Like Dani, she also describes a shift in her relationship to UMass Amherst from one of frustration and isolation, particularly financially (“coming back to college and not having that [extra]

income was kinda hard”) to one of feeling at home in a community of friends.

One place Elaine finds that sense of community is on the 21st floor in the East Asian Collection, noting its importance as a resource and study space for students to connect with relevant material and their peers.

Elaine also recognized that the library is open not only to UMass students, but to community members in the Amherst area as well, and mentioned that the library is an important resource for community members who want access to the Internet, books, and other library services. Elaine’s journey with the library as an undergraduate is one of recognizing its significance for communities at UMass and beyond.

Resources

Traffic, both short-term and long-term, is a product of students moving between and among the resources they need the most. Necessary resources, especially the ones that students need on a daily basis, are the ones that tend to draw the most traffic.

For example:

- The printers, despite their frequent crowdedness, draw students who print materials there for convenience and/or because they cannot afford the costs of a printer at home.
- The elevators, which are likely the most crowded traffic corridor in the library, draw students because they are necessary for travel to other floors of the library.
- The East Asian Collection provides an opportunity for community through shared identity, drawing students who seek out comfort, familiarity, and

peers of a similar racial, ethnic, or national background.

Students often desire a sense of community and the accompanying moral, social, and academic support they can gain from being surrounded by their peers and relevant resources. The fact that most of the students interviewed discovered the resources they use via word of mouth speaks to the vast interconnected web of student experiences, desires, and needs that push them towards the resources in the library they need the most.

Discussion and Conclusion

Main Findings

The ways that students move through the library, both over the short and long term, highlight key traffic issues as well as beloved resources available to students. The main findings of this research may be summarized as such:

1. Students discover resources in the Library overwhelmingly via word of mouth.
2. High-traffic zones tend to be clustered around important resources: the elevators, printers, and ethnicity/nationality- and major-specific floors.
3. Crowdedness or high traffic is a major deterrent to students using spaces, but many suffer through traffic at places like the Learning Commons printers anyway because they see no other option.

Recommendations

- Use of “captive audiences” in high-traffic corridors such as the elevators and printer stations for publicizing Library resources and events

- Revitalizing Mac and PC labs on higher floors of the library to disperse the need for public terminals over a greater total area of the library, reducing crowding in the Learning Commons
- Developing and increasing signage to help spread out traffic to lesser-used resources, such as printers and labs located on floors other than the Learning Commons
- Increasing visibility of traffic-reducing resources like the QuickPrint stations, in particular via signage
- Increasing and maintaining support for international students and students of color
 - Diversifying and increasing visibility of the range of book collections and themed floors available at the library, with particular attention to maintaining the integrity of the East Asian Collection
 - Increasing and maintaining support for and visibility of the Du Bois Center

Areas for Further Inquiry

Developing reasonably visible pathways to resources is a necessary project of further work in the Du Bois Library. This research indicates that students seek out well-funded resources that accommodate underserved minority populations, in particular students of color, international students, and students who inhabit both of those identities. Understanding the means by which students access high-traffic resources, which may indicate their successful placement in the library as much as their necessity, can help librarians build better and more accessible pathways to underused yet equally necessary resources like the Du Bois Center.

The consistency with which students identified preferences for ethnicity/nationality- and major-specific study spaces and resources also indicates the potential success of further thematic floors and collections. In particular, recent student demonstrations and protests on campus speak to a deeply felt need for resources on campus that support minoritized student populations, particularly Black students as well as students of color generally. One place to begin is the library. Continued research on student preferences, with a focus on these student groups, could help librarians establish areas for further expansion of identity-centric resources and collections, and well-designed pathways that lead there.

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International Student Identity, Comfort, and Space

Brandon Sandoval



Introduction

International students make up a significant percentage of the University of Massachusetts undergraduate population. In Fall of 2013, 345 full-time international students were accepted, while others use UMass as a study abroad destination. While this number is relatively low compared to the overall class of over 4,500 students, they represent part of the university's effort to diversify and become a

more credible university, making the school's commitment to their experience a significant one. International students are also a minority in the context of their national origin, and often their racial and ethnic background as well. The uniqueness of the international student experience.

With this in mind, as well a focus on the way one's identity affects one's use of the library, I asked several research questions that I wanted

answered through the research done by myself and the class:

- Where are international students most comfortable in the library?
- What do international students use the library for, and how can the library continue to cater to the needs of international students?

These questions were informed by previous studies of similar design, such as Sei-Ching (2012), who analyzed student's racial, ethnic, and social backgrounds and compared the data to the frequency of library visits. Another article on international students provided insights into the ways universities have integrated international students into the campus community and demonstrated the importance of the library to them for educational purposes (Langer and Kubo 2015). My research and analysis attempts to bring these studies together, asking what aspects of an international student's identity affects frequent and type of library use.

Methodology

I used two main methods in gathering data: participant observation and student interviews. Participant observation was a good tool for data collection as it allowed to me see the typical habits of students. However, discerning their national origin was difficult. Despite this setback, by I was able to discover at least some measure of cultural identity through careful listening when observing students in groups using languages other than English. Participant observation was then a good method as it gave me information regarding the typical location of students who spoke multiple languages and the types of activities those students were doing.

Interviews, of which I conducted three, allowed for me to directly ask international

students about their library habits, their identity, and how the library could serve their needs better. After completing my research, I cross referenced it with the wider dataset of interviews that had been completed by the class. Using the interviews and observations done by students who had interviewed other students of color (both U.S. and international) and comparing that to interviews and observations of white students allowed me to begin thinking of the ways identity affected library use.

Analysis through Dedoose provided additional insights. Looking at the top down codes, especially "Identity" and "Safety", I noticed a particularly interesting trend. The code "Comfort", which is usually thought of as a physical sense, was also being applied to students' overall experience in the library with regards to acceptance, belonging, and place. The code, "Comfort" co-occurred with the codes, "Identity" "Community" "Safety" and "Access" as well as codes made for specific library areas such as "Learning Commons" and "Micro-Climates". Using this program to analyze the data took my research into other areas, such as looking at which areas international students were most comfortable in, how comfort was created, and how the library spaces either supported or denied a student's experience of comfort. Through a combination of observation, interview, and cross data analysis, I was able to come to several conclusions regarding my researching questions, as well come up with more questions that continued research could potentially answer.

Research Findings and Analysis: Comfort, Community, and Invisibility

After sorting through the research data, several conclusions can be made about international student identity. However, in order to understand this data, a distinction

must be made in the way this article analyzes identity. It is easy to conflate importance of race, ethnicity, or national origin when talking about international students. While these aspects of identity certainly shape the ways students interact, international student identity is unique in several ways: It is created through international student interactions with the university, its faculty, and most importantly, American students. This identity, which is in some ways institutional and in other interpersonal, transcends race/ethnicity: while many international students form groups based on specific national origin, these groups are not exclusive and willingly interact with students who identify as “international,” i.e. the South East Asian Student Organization serves not only international students from South East Asia, but Europe as well, maintaining a population of German students within the group. Friend groups made by students at these events reflect this kind of multiculturalism. Similarly, these students report making a majority of their friends at university events that target international students, creating a top-down identity.

Perhaps the most important aspect of this identity is the way other students interact with it; one international student described it this way in an interview: “[American] Students are always like, ‘Where are you from?’ but they only want to know because I talk different. International students ask, ‘Where are you from?’, and then they say, ‘Oh! Yes! I’ve been there! Do you so and so?’ and the interaction is a lot more comfortable.” This identity, which also extends beyond the library and is part of a wider campus culture, affects international student library use broadly.

International students’ preferred spaces in the library was almost always intersected with the “Comfort” code. In either participant observation or in interview, their areas of choice were fixated around several factors.

The most important aspect was related to noise level and anonymity. International students typically were in groups of about four or more, making an environment that was noisy and busy a good fit, especially for talking. Areas that were either directly mentioned or where international students appeared to be frequent were the Learning Commons, the area between the stairs, the public computer access area, and the group work carrels in the back. Other areas include the first floor lounge and the cafe. A student remarked in an interview, “I like being in an environment where I see people moving around and listening to music [...] knowing people are there is calming”. The 21st/22nd floors, while mentioned, were also brought up as being areas that worked in conversation with the students’ existing identities, either due to international origin and the South Asian Collection located there, or the identity of being a student in general, the 21st floor being an area that was described as neutral as well.



A public computer access area in the Learning Commons.

Areas that were claimed to be uncomfortable provided the exact opposite of these students’ needs. Most often, these areas were the Microclimates area, which was described as being too individual or personal, and the Quiet Study Floors, which didn’t allow

students to socialize or talk in groups about homework. When asked why the Micro-Climates was undesirable to the student, one replied, “When we come we’ll put our stuff all over the tables there and camp out, it is a good spot to socialize because it is open and always busy. The Microclimates feel a lot more...individual.”

Quite consistently, international students claimed that the library was an area of socialization and group study. Due to their identity as “international”, these students found the library to be a comfortable and safe, as it allowed them to identify as “students” as opposed to “*international* students”. It also was a central location which provided a space in which students could openly interact with their friends, many of which were also international students. The busy atmosphere added a layer of comfort as the students didn’t feel watched. The library, and the Learning Commons in particular, is an area in which students feel free from the performance of international identity. One student remarked, “I work at the writing center, and I feel very [comfortable] there, not because of my ethnicity or race, but just because I fit well, and nobody treats me like you’re an international student or not.” The students liked areas where they could be together and either work, eat, or even talk. Thus, international students mostly use the library to neutralize their identity, speak openly with their peers, and complete group work or individual work while together. One student summarized this need by stating, “The ability to have a conversation with the space as well is very conducive to group work. I think you’ll see a lot of people with group work, at least in [the Learning Commons].”

In order to facilitate continued use of the Learning Commons and other library spaces by international students, the library has several potential avenues of approach. The

most obvious as well as the easiest is to maintain areas within the library that facilitate group work, socialization, and study. Since these areas already exist, the library simply has to preserve these areas and allow for diversity within them naturally. However, international students in the library also express the need for broader conversations around campus regarding race and ethnicity, as well as



A “desk farm,” for group or individual study, in the Learning Commons.

expression of identity without the hindering effects of being “foreign”. During an interview, one student, who practices Islam and identifies as Muslim, began to explain

how they don't feel comfortable praying in the library and are always forced to return to their dorm to do so, a considerable inconvenience. When I asked what the library could do to make them more comfortable, the student replied, "Well, I don't think the library could do anything about it. I think the campus as a whole needs to ask, 'why are some people seen as dangerous?'...people don't really talk to people who are actual Muslims to know what we're really about. So I don't think the library could make me comfortable praying here because I don't feel comfortable praying anywhere other than my dorm". The student expressed a desire for the library to take charge in leading conversations on campus about student identity and expression.

|
**I work at the writing
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 well**
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In this way, international students don't only view the library as being central geographically or academically; they view as being, or see it becoming, a cultural center as well, one that could facilitate conversations campus that could change the campus community and atmosphere. The library's introduction of the Du Bois Center is a step in this direction; however, due to the Du Bois Center's own lack of centrality both on campus on within the library itself, these conversations have become sidelined. While this issue did not come up as emergent in either the interviews or data, this is still an issue that is clearly on

international students' minds when they are interacting with and within the library.

While group work and socialization was emphasized in this data set, it would be incorrect to claim that international students do not use the library for individual work and study. In fact, one international student who was interviewed claimed they never socialized here exactly; while they did eat, sleep, and work here, the library was used as a meeting destination for friends, not as an actual space to socialize in. A more complete survey of international student use of the library could reveal these anomalies more clearly. However, through both interview and observation, it is clear that international students prefer group work areas, do so to socialize in a setting that is open and free of identity pressure, and desire a campus community that is more open and aware of existing identity inequalities.

Conclusion

Through the data, I was able to find that the library has extended its purpose as an academic setting to become space of socialization and shared experience, especially for students who want central, on-campus locations that allow for both work and conversation to be done simultaneously. International students prefer areas that allow them to work or socialize together in groups, typically around four or more, such as the Learning Commons, First Floor Lounge, and some of the upper floors of the Du Bois Library.

The Du Bois Library, through its commitment to serving students both academically and socially, has created a space that provides the needs of some international students, allowing for group study where they can feel at ease. A more complete survey of international students who use the library could reveal more about specific desires, such as floors

that reflect or connect with certain identities and language communities, like the East Asian and South Asian Collections. Having done this research, I now have several more questions that could be asked in future studies, such as, what other campus locations serve international students? How does the Du Bois compare to libraries in the student's' place of origin, what can the Du Bois do to make international students use the library resources, such as the librarians, more frequently? With continued work, the Library can not only expand its user base, and it can help facilitate the encouraging conversations on campus about race, identity, and national origin that many international students we interviewed believe are vital to their success as a student abroad and as a student in general.

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Image of public computer space made available by Brandon Sandoval

Image of desk farm made available by Brandon Sandoval



Connecting: Undergraduates Use of Technology in the Library

John McNamara

Introduction

The common story about technology is this: our screens have overtaken our day-to-day lives, a fact easily evidenced by college students walking around campus with their heads buried in their phones. Technology was crux of my research on undergraduates' use of the W.E.B. Du Bois Library, in which I sought to understand the complexities of

undergraduate's use of technology in the library. "Technology" here refers to how students use not only library resources and technology such as the printers, but also their own personal technology while in the library. I focus on how the use of these personal and public resources and technologies affect the social interactions that individuals experience whilst in the library.

In my research, I wanted to discover which kinds of technologies undergraduates are using in the library, and how these technologies and the use of them affect their social interactions there. An article I found particularly interesting regarding the pros and cons of library technology posited that technology severely reduces the amount of actual person-to-person interaction we experience (Maxwell 2004). This article informed my research quite a bit because it encouraged me to study whether increased technology and efficiency are coupled with reduced social interaction. Another article informing my research discusses with the recent historical transition from libraries being mainly an academic building housing vast quantities of physical books to centers of technology meant to expedite the process of research (Eckman and Quandt 1995). Though the Du Bois Library maintains a balance between providing a traditional library environment combined with increased technology and its many benefits, and I wanted to understand how students use technology in that space.

Methodology

Participant observation enabled me to collect data on a large group of people, but I needed another method of data collection in which I could have a more in depth conversation and really learn how undergraduates use technology and how it affects their social interactions. Conducting interviews while walking around the library with students was much more useful to me, and these interviews informed my research more than any other type of data collection used. By interviewing an individual, I gained the ability to ask follow up questions and other side inquiries about the use of technology in the library. One of these conversations with an interviewee regarding how technology affected his social



A charging station in the Du Bois lobby: a sign of technology's takeover, or something more subtle?

interactions in the library convinced me to pursue my line of investigation.

The interviews and participant observation data were also useful at the data analysis stage. The ability to code in Dedoose and to search for excerpts regarding my specific topic helped me understand the importance and relevancy of my research question. I noticed that technology was an interesting topic in my interviews, and when I looked into the broader dataset on Dedoose, I realized that technology came up quite a bit in my peers' interviews and fieldnotes. The stages of data

collection and analysis shaped the crux of my overall research project.

Research Findings and Analysis

What kinds of technologies do undergraduates use in the library and how do they affect their social interactions? Many of the conclusions I was able to draw came from the data from participant observation and walking interviews. A moment that was particularly enlightening came from my own interview when I asked a friend what kinds of library technology he used. He answered, “So I use desktop computers, both Windows and Mac. I use the printers, scanners. I guess I use some of the stuff in the Digital Media Lab. Like the laptops they have there. I’ve probably borrowed a regular laptop from time to time as well as like a Mac laptop. Um...I guess that’s pretty much it. I borrowed a microphone at one point”. When I inquired further about the specific technology he used in the Digital Media Lab, he became excited and described at length all the things he has used and how useful the area is to him for making music. I found this exchange quite interesting because up until my interview with him, everyone else I had talked to primarily stuck to using the forms of technology in the Learning Commons such as the printers and the desktop computers. I became curious as to why some students would use only a few of the libraries resources while others would take full advantage of everything it had to offer. It makes sense that students would be using the computers and printers frequently because they are needed for class, but many students seemed completely unaware of the Digital Media Lab and other forms of technology that are available for use on other floors of the library.



The Digital Media Lab, a space for students to record audio and video, 3D print, and use a wide range of other media technology.

So after becoming aware of this large discrepancy in technology use between students, I made it more of a focus in my next interviews and participant observations. I used Dedoose to examine how technology came up in my peer’s interviews. I learned that a vast majority of undergraduates primarily use the technology found in the Learning Commons and never explore the other resources of the Library. Regardless of class year or anything else, undergraduates across the board tended to stick to the Learning Commons for technology and only venture to other floors to do homework or group work. When they went to other floors they tended to use their own technology such as laptops and calculators instead of using the various forms of technology found on other floors.

The reason why some students stuck to the Learning Commons technology and some

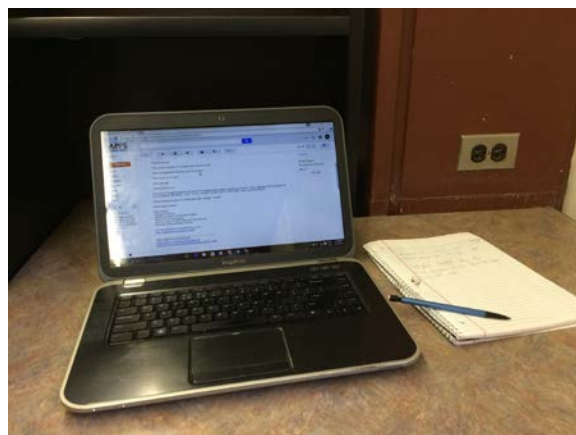
used forms on other floors correlated with two other findings. One factor was a person's major, which makes sense because if students' classes deal significantly with music, then the Digital Media Lab is a place they might frequent.

The other factor was frequency of trips to the library. In other words, the individual's familiarity and frequent use of the library correlated with the amount of technologies they used. In the case of my interviews, frequent visits to the library had an impact because students became more comfortable exploring various floors and talking to library staff, learning more and more about what resources the library had to offer.

This brings me to the second aspect of my research question, which is how undergraduates' use of technology affects their social interactions with fellow undergraduates as well as library staff. Social interactions are most likely not a subject most people think about regarding trips to the library; however, they are a major component of undergraduates' experiences at Du Bois. Due to this often unrecognized significance of the library as a social hub on campus, I decided to examine how technology use affected student's social interactions in the library with fellow undergraduates as well as library staff. Similar to the correlation between frequency of library visits and technology use, I observed a correlation between increased technology use and increased social interactions.

The students who spent the most time in the library and used the most diverse amount of technology not only had increased social interactions with fellow students, but more notably with library staff. In a walking interview, a participant who was not a regular user of the library described how technology affects their social interactions as follows:

“Yeah, like if I like didn't have a laptop or smartphone if this was like back in the day before all of that I would probably be a lot more high functioning honestly. But alas, Facebook is a distraction, like just text messaging people is a distraction.” According to this participant, technology is both a distraction from getting work done and the necessary conduit to accomplish the work. While some data suggests that technology might minimize in-person interactions in the Library precisely because students are focused on the screens in front of them, the reality is much more complex.



A personal technology setup.

In another walking interview, after discussing how many various types of library technology he used I asked the participant how they affect his social interactions. I was surprised when he described the relationships he had with the library staff: “They're pretty important because I see them every day. I know who they are, they know who I am. It's like a fun, hey how's it going? I like it. Especially the maintenance guy, dude's funny.” I thought this was interesting, and after the interview was over we talked for a while and I pressed him a bit further on his social interactions with the library staff. He told me that because he goes to the library every day he became much more comfortable exploring and began using different forms of

technology throughout the library. Due to his increased technology use, he met a lot of the library staff on different floors and he goes to the library so much, as he said in the excerpt, that he has become friendly with the janitor. This is perhaps the most extreme case that I found in data collection and analysis, but it helps prove a point nonetheless that increased technology use in the library can also lead to increased social interactions, as well as an increased sense of comfort in library spaces.

Areas for Further Investigation

My thoughts regarding this project changed dramatically during the research process. I began with significant interest in how people's identities affected their experiences in the library (something discussed in other students' projects in this issue), but through the stages of data collection and analysis my focus shifted to technology. I did not realize how much technology affects us and our social interactions. Often people think of technology limiting our actual in person social interactions and that can be true, such as the individual whose use of their laptop and cell phone prevented social interaction. However, I observed a different trend in which the use of technology within the library, public technology specifically, actually increased a person's social interactions with fellow undergraduates but also more noticeably with library staff. The people who visited the library the most often and used the most kinds of technology in Du Bois were exposed to more chances and opportunities of interactions with library staff. In general, it seems undergraduates do not interact with library staff regularly, but the ones who do the most are more comfortable exploring and utilizing everything the library has to offer. I think it would be beneficial to undergraduates and the library staff if more information was spread about the various forms of technology the library has to offer such as the Digital

Media Lab. Pamphlets, posters or other publicity could make undergraduates more willing to explore and utilize all aspects of the library. As they learn about these resources, students will also become more likely to interact with library staff, making it easier for students to seek advice and also to give librarians a better sense of what undergraduates need. After all, that is the reason the library staff are here, to both operate the library and aid undergraduates in their use of it.

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Technological Growth and the Changing Face of the Academic Library

Jennifer Nadeau

The W.E.B. Du Bois Library is home to over a hundred public computers, as well as printers, scanners, and technology available for temporary personal use. My research dealt with the role that technology plays in the library while exploring themes of access, frustration, and necessity. I investigated the role of technology in student's lives, and if the university is perceived as doing everything they can to provide important technological access to students. If the library is successful in providing technology access to students, our research in the library will reflect that, and whenever possible, the research will highlight areas that may need additional work.

In the Du Bois Learning Commons, there are 42 public PC and Mac workstations that anyone, not just UMass students, can access. There are additional IT classrooms that have computers: The Calipari Library Instruction room has 30 PCs on the lower level, Room 1667 on the 16th floor has 23 PCs, and Room 1685 on the 16th floor has 10 PCs. The University of Massachusetts has reported that in 2013 it had 22,000 undergraduate students. That means there are 105 computers for upwards of 20,000 students in 2016. Printers are even fewer, the library has not released statistics on how many printers they do have, but for the entire library there is only one public color printer.

According to Gardner and Eng in their study of students and library utilization from 2003, students no longer perceive

academic libraries in a physical sense. The physical construct of books and non-technical library services are not seen as instrumental to academic success. Instead, technology is becoming increasingly necessary both as a means to keep up, and as a means to accomplish simple tasks. Recent academic literature about libraries appears to echo this sentiment, as more and more articles approach the topic of technology. In 2007, Malone, Levrault, and Miller, surveyed higher education libraries and found that the student-computer ratios at other colleges are in line with what we see on the UMass campus. In our own interviews and PhotoVoice sessions, the data shows the problems and successes created by technology in the Dubois Library at UMass.

Methods

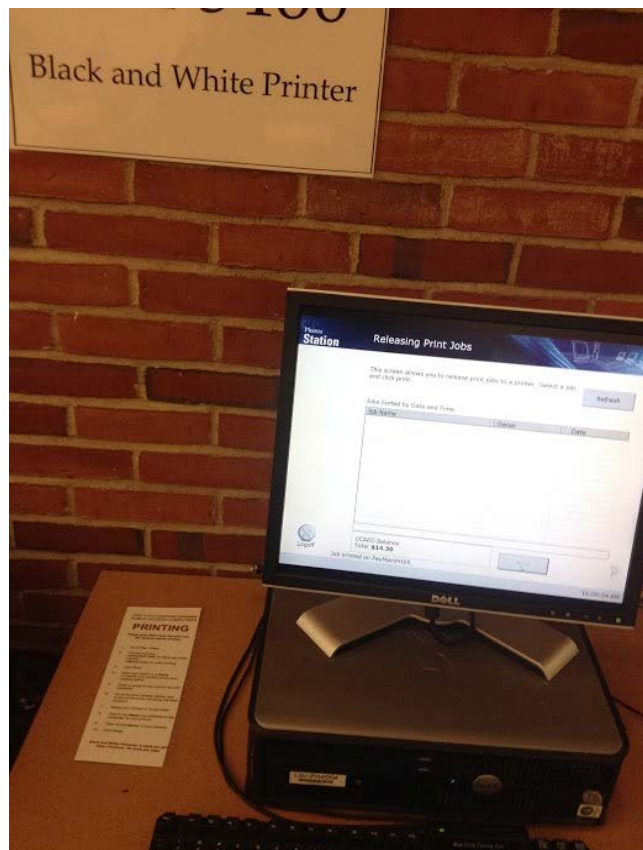
A common trend within the data was many students who rely on library-provided technology report negative or frustrating feelings when thinking about or using the libraries technology. This is a stark difference to students that use their own technology, whose frustrations may be limited to only using printers. In all of our transcripts, there were only two positive mentions of the library technology, and no positive mentions of the printers. I pulled direct quotes from participants' interviews to highlight their feelings, as well as photographs to provide visuals as to where they are having these experiences and how environment may exacerbate their experience.

Library Technology and Frustration

Two of the most talked about pieces of library owned technology are so intertwined that they must be addressed together. The desktop computers and the printers appear to be the most necessary components of collegiate life in the Du Bois Library. While there are some positive experiences with these, most interviewees report negative feelings and experiences surrounding them. One of the largest issues appears to be waiting for these technologies. Common experience between participants shows that they perceive there to be an unusually long wait time to acquire access to public desktops in the Learning Commons downstairs. The typical wait time for computers can be anywhere from two to fifteen minutes. The organization of the computers in this area means that students who are waiting are forced to line up to the side of the computers in the main hallway. This increases traffic to the other areas of the library and creates feelings of anxiety to some users of the computers, as they feel pressure to do their work quickly to open up computers for those waiting.

Reasons for Visiting the Du Bois Library

A large portion of computer users are students who run down to quickly print something before a class. The frustration of having to wait in order to print something before a class is often reported in the research data. In fact, the majority of research subjects report only using the computers downstairs for printing. For all of the computers downstairs, there are between 3 to 8 printers, all of which have a line of their own aside from the line people wait in to use computers. While many students bring their own laptops to campus, they do not bring their own printers. They typically have to print their



work in the same way: work on the project on their own laptop, email a copy of the project to themselves, stand in line to wait for a computer, pull up their email to print, then stand at the printer waiting for the line to clear before performing the print function. Within this string of actions, the user will have been prompted for a password of some type at least four times (email, computer, printer). This password prompting alone contributes to time being spent waiting, on top of waiting for the actual necessary components. For some students, formatting issues have created even more time wasting. While working on one project, in order to print to certain printers, students must only access one particular computer to print the type of document they need. The following excerpt from a focus group Photovoice session details one student's problem with the printers at the library: "I wanted to get a computer in to show how frustrating it is

waiting to use a computer to then use the printer just because you can get it set up on your Mac or whatever laptop you have, but the difference is the formatting is completely different...So that's what frustrates me."

To some users, going to the library to use technology is a necessity, albeit one they'd rather avoid. On campus, the primary wireless network, Eduroam, often gets glitchy and does not work in the dorm rooms. According to one student, she prefers doing her work in her dorm, but Eduroam sometimes prevents this. She states about working in her dorm, "It's like, I could just, like, curl up, put on an oversize t-shirt, curl up in a robe or something, just stay on my computer. [...] The library I tend to prefer because at times when Eduroam is not working. I can use one of the desktops that's connected by the ethernet, and so that solves that problem." Most of the research subjects appear to do the majority of their work in their rooms, only coming to the library for the final print, or to do group work.

Some of the feelings and thoughts about the technology areas in the library include frustration, aggravation, avoidance, time wasting, and distraction. One student gives the following reasons for why he doesn't use the technology in the Learning Commons: "Usually there's too many people, I can't concentrate, also a lot of the spaces down there are either designed for individual computer use, which I don't really need to do, and I have a laptop to do work, because it's like open spaces with large tables, or little cubicles that you can do group work in."

Privacy, Comfort, and Success

The open floor plan of the technology areas in the library often give additional feelings of "peerveillance," or the the

sensation of other people watching them work. The feeling of lacking privacy on the computers is coupled with the feeling of pressure from other students. Students have reported feeling guilty that they were using the computers, even if they were doing actual classwork, because their peers were lined up next to them or behind them waiting for a computer. This feeling of pressure acts as a distraction for these students: they are unable to remain task focused when they feel that there are eyes on them as they work. However, the issues associated with peerveillance may also be beneficial to the ebb and flow of traffic in the Learning Commons. Those who may be otherwise inclined to waste time on the social media may be more likely to do that sort of computing in their dorms, freeing up the computers for other students to do work on.

Positive aspects of the library's technology seem to center on the software and non-traditional technology available to students. More than one student in their interviews mentioned needing to use expensive software such as Photoshop or ArcGIS, the latter of which costs over \$3000 for one commercial license. Software accessibility appears to be one place that the Du Bois library is excelling. Software packages like ArchGIS, Photoshop Suite, Office Suite, iMovie, and audio and video editing software packages are very expensive but routinely needed for classes. By providing access to the software, the students can focus on their work instead of how to obtain the software.

Conclusion

The University of Massachusetts' Du Bois Library provides access to critical technology to approximately 22,000 undergraduate students. Students rely on computers and printers for their academic success. What we see through our

PhotoVoice interviews, walking and sit-down interviews, and survey data is that students appreciate the services, but tend to feel frustration and a lack of access to the technology that is available. Some suggestions to ease these frustrations are suggestions that Administration and Finance systems gives to their users on the administration IT side on campus. First, to address issues of peerveillance, it may be important to explore ways to minimize these feelings of pressure and surveillance. A way that is done in Administration and Finance systems is to order privacy screens that clip onto monitors so that only the person using the computer can see the screen. This may help people feel protected and like they have the privacy they need to do school critical projects.

To address issues of waiting for computers, aside from purchasing more computers and putting them on different floors as some students have suggested, it may be a good idea to create actual queue lines or a sign in system for the computers so that the walkways are not congested by students waiting for computers. This will also ease feelings of peerveillance that students feel when they think their counterparts are lined up in the aisles watching them work.

Finally, students would benefit from more information regarding the services the library offers that are not widely publicized. Surveys and interviews revealed that many students feel they did not get good tours or incoming student information as freshmen or transfers. If possible, creating mandatory tours for those students at risk of not knowing about services may combat instances of unenlightenment. Services like rental equipment, cameras, audio equipment, are helpful during a college career, but most students are unaware they can borrow these items from the library. The audio recording studios, and 3D

printing floor are two other services that are largely unknown. When the resources allow for it, it would be wise to make sure that all incoming students are aware of these services. Knowledge of these services would surely increase the satisfaction of students in relation to the W.E.B Du Bois library.

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The Du Bois Center: Recognizing Student Views on a New Research Hub

Dan Burkowsky & Erica Wolenccheck



Introduction

The W.E.B. Du Bois Center is located on the 22nd floor of the library sharing the same name. The way to the Du Bois Center involves an elevator ride up with many turns through the winding hallways of the W.E.B. Du Bois Library until reaching what will most likely be a locked door, or, if open, a small space. During a class period, our class spent

time visiting the Center and meeting with its new Director, Dr. Whitney Battle-Baptiste. This was our first exposure to the Center and this impression has guided our proceedings in conjunction with feedback from other undergraduate students.

The sociologist W.E.B. Du Bois was a native son of western Massachusetts, where our university is located, and a founding figure in

the social sciences and African American Studies. His insights on the "the color line" in American culture and history remain relevant today. The Du Bois Center was created in 2009 as a research center of the UMass Libraries, comprised of the W.E.B. Du Bois Papers; the W.E.B. Du Bois Homesite, of which UMass Amherst is the steward; and other research and education initiatives. The Du Bois Center was a core focus of our class research, as we spent many classes formatting research questions designated to addressing the issues we observed with our visit to the Center. Considering these class discussions, we formed our own tailored research questions to address the future of the Center. We approached our research with two directives; student needs and the desires of the Center as represented by its director, Dr. Whitney Battle-Baptiste.

Our research questions are as follows:

- How can the Du Bois Center be a conduit for engaging students with W.E.B. Du Bois the man?
- How can the Du Bois Center be a living testament to Du Bois' work?
- In what ways can library space be a part of this process?
- What activities would garner student interest in this pursuit?
- How can we increase the visibility of the Center?

Our research questions focus on observations we have made while visiting and researching the Center. When creating a literature review, an article that was useful in understanding the unique qualities of library space was "Libraries as the Spaces Between Us: Recognizing and Valuing the Third Space." This article describes the library as a "third space," which accounts for the experiences held by two distinctly different groups of people in the same space, and how power comes into play in these interactions (Elmborg 2011). This

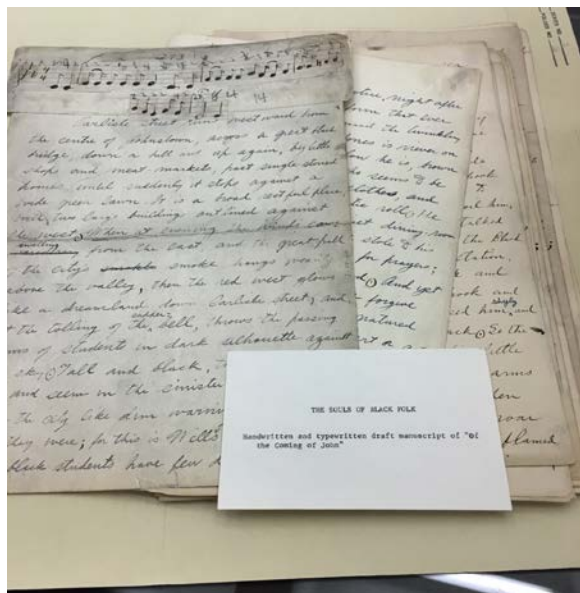
understanding of identity, space and experience aligns with the research that other classmates produced about the library more generally and our research on the Du Bois Center specifically.

| I know it exists, but I never go there |

Methodological Approach

For this project, a methodological trend we noticed is that our research questions emerged from the data we collected, rather than vice versa. In addition to the participant observation, interview, and Photovoice data collected by the whole class team, we also used survey data collected from participants at library events to learn more about users' knowledge about the new Du Bois Center. In Dedoose, we identified the most relevant codes to be *DuboisMatters*, *DuboisCtrUnknown*, *DuboisCtrKnowledgable*, and *DuboisCtrActivities* to help us systematically comb through the qualitative data. Specific quotes from students helped us understand why Du Bois was important (or unknown) to them and what they know about the Center. This helped support our research questions because it pointed out serious flaws that existed within the structure of the Du Bois Center. Our two main goals were to discover how students could benefit from the Center and how we can make the Center more accessible. After we began to formulate a direction for our research, we decided to supplement data collected from students and library users with interviews with the Center's director, Dr. Whitney Battle-Baptiste. We used her input and ideas to clearly identify the issues that the

Center is facing, as well as its strong potential as a campus resource.



A handwritten draft of W.E.B. Du Bois' 'The Souls of Black Folk', housed in the Du Bois Center.

Research Findings

We focused on the survey data from the W.E.B. Du Bois birthday cake event along with selected excerpts from interviews that were coded using the Du Bois -associated codes in Dedoose to better gauge student interest and needs concerning the Center. As we were pouring through all our collected data and research, a few findings became immediately evident. The first sets of data we used were the codes. The codes mainly pertained to students here at UMass and they yielded pertinent data about student knowledge of Du Bois, student desire for engaging in research, and some very apparent issues with the organization and intentions of the Du Bois Center.



Hosted by the Du Bois Center, an event commemorating Du Bois' birthday in February was a useful opportunity for eating cake and collecting data.

The first code we used was *DuboisMatters*. This was a critical code to our mission because it showed us that students do have a desire to engage with Du Bois and to produce research that is relevant to his life's work. Three quotes we found particularly useful were:

- "The people he influenced are influencing me today through black lives matter."
- "Du Bois was not only an influential scholar but bridged the gap between scholarship/academia and political activism. Being a student, I find it extraordinarily important to address these routes and the importance and balance of both."
- "His ideas and work matter to me because he showed that in a time of oppression one person can stand up and represent the oppressed and make a change."

The reason why these quotes are important is because it demonstrates the importance of Du Bois and his relevance to modern student interests. Students relate to Du Bois because he was both a man of the people and a man of scholarship. In a politically active university such as UMass, engaging with Du Bois and using the Center as a conduit would enhance student desire to bridge academia and

activism. Based on the surveys we conducted, there is assuredly student interest in a space where the pursuit of these endeavors can be sustained.

The second code we looked at examined the more negative aspects of the Du Bois Center. Through the code *DuboisCtrUnknown*, we found that the vast majority of students (and even some library faculty) are unaware of the Center's existence. Even students who do know about the Center find it confusing and uninviting. One quote that we came across really encapsulates the issues that face the Du Bois Center with regards to its inaccessibility:

"I don't think if it was supposed to be used by students, it would be closed... I wouldn't want to sit in there. It seems dark and dirty. Look at all of those boxes. I wouldn't personally be in there and feel productive or anything... Just looking in this place- it looks like everything is just thrown into a corner."

This student represents many of the problems that we feel impact the use and awareness of the Du Bois Center. To start off, the Center is in an isolated, hard-to-find location. If a student is able to locate it, it is rarely even open. Finally, if a student is fortunate enough to locate it and go there during the hours that it is open, the space inside is disorganized and uninviting. All three of these factors lead to a Center that is both unknown to the student body as well as being inaccessible to those who do know about it. This code proved essential to discovering what are the main problems with the accessibility of the Du Bois Center.

The third code we used for our research questions was *DuboisCtrKnowledgable*. Now this may seem like it would have led us to more encouraging results, but in actuality it reinforced the notions we had about the Center being inaccessible. There were very few students in our data set that were aware

of the Du Bois Center. Much like the previous code, we found students who knew about the Center but were not inclined or able to go there. Most of the quotes we found went along the lines of "I know it exists, but I never go there." We also found in our data that students feel like they have no purpose to visit the Center. One student said, "I would have no reason to go. I understand obviously why we have it and it's great, but I personally just don't go to it. I know it's there." This accentuates another challenge that the Du Bois Center faces. Even though a student may be aware of it, it is likely that they feel like the Center provides them with no benefit. They do not see an academic purpose to go there. Much of this is due to the fact that students do not know anything about the hours of the Center and what the resources the Center contains.

To synthesize all the data we gathered about the inaccessibility of the Du Bois Center, we used a fourth code called *DuboisCtrActivities*. This code proved useful as it highlighted what sort of activities and events that the Center could organize to raise awareness and garner student interest. From our data we gathered that students are interested in lectures and discussions that focus on multicultural intersectionality and social change. Students wrote:

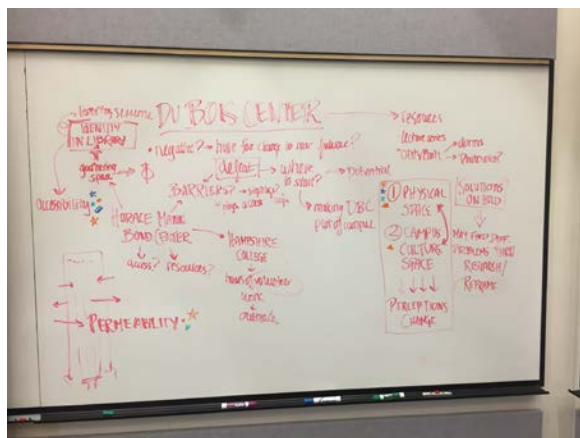
- *"It seems like the Center focuses on diversity. So, maybe some sort of like cross cultural event where I could come and learn about other cultures meet people of other student groups on campus that are interested in social justice and activism in those realms"*
- *"Guest lecturer w/ people who are influenced by Du Bois 's work and having community events with open discussion"*

Lectures and discussions seem to be a great conduit for engaging students with the Du Bois Center and raising awareness to the multitude of resources that can be found

within the Horace Mann Bond room. Another student pointed out the obvious difficulties of spreading knowledge on a campus as large as UMass:

“I think with anything trying to get it out to 22,000 students is going to be an issue when people have their own stuff going on but you know I don’t think it would be a bad idea to sort of incorporate into the NSO tours.”

Incorporating the Du Bois Center and the library into the NSO could be a great way to get students involved and active with Du Bois. It would be a mutually beneficial to both students and the Center. This code provided us with data to move forward and start creating ideas for improving the Center’s accessibility.



Thinking about the Du Bois Center in whiteboard format.

Moving on with our data from the codes, we knew that we had to speak with the director of the Du Bois Center, Dr. Battle-Baptiste. In order to better understand the goals and future aspirations of the W.E.B. Du Bois Center, it was essential to learn about what exactly is going on at the Center. In preparation for the interview, we organized ourselves based on goals. We knew that in order to fully represent the goals of the Center and make it so we also represented

student desires, Dr. Battle-Baptiste’s input was critical. Her unique perspective of understanding the administrative underpinnings of directing the Center proved to be a great tool for directing our research.

Our interview goals were as follows:

1. Understanding the process of creating space for the Du Bois Center in the library,
2. Learn about the history of W.E.B. Du Bois, and
3. Understand the goals for the Center

During the interview, the administrative details were outlined, but they were not the focus of our conversation. The conversation shifted to a reflection on the physical space of the Du Bois Center, describing the detriments of the space. She said:

“If we could actually have half of the 22nd floor operating, then we could actually have a presence, just like the East Asian Studies Center across the hall...It’s sad to work everyday and see darkness at the Horace Mann Bond Center, it’s never open. Even though the East Asian Collection doors are closed, they still have the two little windows, there’s always light on, there’s always people coming in and out of there. That side of the hallway, other than carrels...there’s life.”

The comparative darkness and lack of student activity of the Horace Mann Bond Center and the physical features that bring light and life into the East Asian Wing were interesting to consider in our research. Even a simple architectural feature such as a door with windows as opposed to the current door of the Du Bois Center, which is solid with a complex lock on it, can open up the space to visitors and be inviting. Another inviting feature that could be added to the exterior of the Du Bois Center is mural art, guiding students from the elevators through the

hallway to the Center. This was suggested in student interviews and was brainstormed at the meeting we had with the librarians. She also made clear that there was a need for staffing in the Center (potentially an undergraduate assistant). This would allow the Center to be operating for more hours every week. All of the information Dr. Battle-Baptiste provided seemed to reinforce concerns that students had for the Center. The main issues were disorganization, an uninviting space, and a lack of staff.

Our analysis of the relevant Dedoose codes has led us to formulate some initiatives for the Du Bois Center. We propose a series of actions that are representative of the wants and needs of both the undergraduate students we have engaged with and the Du Bois Center.

Center visibility plays a large role in effecting any change. This can be enforced through virtual and physical means. Dr. Battle-Baptiste touches upon this dichotomy when addressing the transcendent nature of a Du Bois Center website, lifting the Center above the limitations of its physical space. She also addresses the lack of visibility of the physical Center and how art could be a means of increasing it. This lack of visibility was reflected in the lack of student knowledge of the Center and the walking interviews to the Center that give voice to the concerns and frustrations of students. It is a popularly-held opinion that the Center is hidden within the library. This is connected to the larger issue of space politics within the library that our class focused on in other research projects. Dr. Battle-Baptiste talked upon the Center and its place within the larger physical form of the W.E.B. Du Bois Library and its tallness. The height of the library divides designated library space into 26 parts, denying any sense of cohesion and flow within the library. The Du

Bois Center is largely affected by this lack of coordination, hidden upward within the library.

Equally expressed by undergraduate students and Dr. Battle-Baptiste was the want for more popular events. Again and again, students seemed to know about the Du Bois birthday cake event, and thought of that when asked and surveyed about the Du Bois Center. More events that emphasize “Du Bois the man,” fleshing out the person more so than the historical figure, can make the Center more well known within the student body. A factor that contributed to the popularity of this event was its location in the library atrium. This event was physically unavoidable and largely inhibited traffic flow between the revolving doors, elevators, and stairs leading to the Learning Commons. This is telling of the the importance of space and location when considering the visibility and future of the Center. It is important for the Center to host events that are both representative of student interest as well as aptly located.

The intersectionality of Du Bois’ academic work is another factor expressed by the student body as well as Dr. Battle-Baptiste. For students that knew about Du Bois , this was a key reason for why Du Bois continues to be relevant in modern discourse. There was also a student desire to have lecturers sponsored by the Center that were influenced by Du Bois’ work. This relates to the ways in which Du Bois’ academic work can be applied to many fields of study, like anthropology, sociology, women and gender studies, African-American studies, environmental studies, to name a few. The versatility and continued relevance of Du Bois’ work, communicated through modern-day scholars, imagines Du Bois as a relatable academic that is accessible to undergraduate students.

Discussion and Conclusion

Our major research findings can be categorized into a few themes that emerged in the process of analyzing the student interview and survey data, and the interview we conducted with Dr. Whitney Battle-Baptiste. These themes reflect students' desires for the Center along with the administrative needs of the Center; two perspectives that overlap in key ways. The themes are:

1. Scholars who have used Du Bois' work
2. The need for a clean, organized space
3. Web presence/popular events (the cake event) and increased visibility
4. Intersectionality

These themes directed our conclusions on what actions to take concerning the future of the Du Bois Center. Still, we are left with many questions and loose ends within our research, especially considering the larger themes we have observed through our research. The Du Bois Center is largely affected by trends of space scarcity that we have observed in our more generalized library research. The location of the Du Bois Center was contingent of this sense of "what was available." Dr. Battle-Baptiste speaks to this during the beginning of our interview, talking about the Center was in this space for years because it always has been. This narrative of space scarcity is false, contradicting the many locked rooms that exist within the library. Why the Du Bois Center is where it is remains a mystery to us. Why the Center does not exist in a more accessible location, on a lower floor is not readily known and is related to larger, structural issues concerning library space.

Overall, our research has highlighted some achievable paths of action that could bring more visibility and student engagement to the Du Bois Center. We feel that our presentation

to the librarians and connection with Dr. Battle-Baptiste has created a potential for enacting change. Indeed, a few months after the research presentations and recommendations, the Library pushed to organize the Horace Mann Bond Center Collection, to begin cleaning and remodeling Room 2201, and to explore possibilities for funding a student worker to supervise open study hours for 10 hours a week at the Center. It will be rewarding to see our suggestions for the Du Bois Center taken into consideration going into the future.

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Image of The Du Bois Center at night made available through Wikimedia Commons ([link](#)).

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Exploring the Christopher Newport Library: Intellectual Space Filled with Resources or Social Breed Grounds?

Alexandria Robinson



The Paul and Rosemary Tribble Library at Christopher Newport offers numerous resources including a reference desk, IT services, and a media center where students and faculty are able to check out electronic resources. There are plans to eliminate one of the current parking lots on campus in order to expand the library and its resources. The expansion will include more seating and library space, a new technology center, an “information commons area”, seven-hundred seven additional seats, an addition to Einstein’s, a second floor, and a one-hundred seat lecture hall to accommodate larger classes and campus activities. The expansion will run into the parking lot behind the Freeman Center, which is currently used as faculty and staff parking. The project as a whole is

expected to cost around \$46,747,590 and increase the total square footage of the library to 164,582 sq. ft. However, in order to do the required expansion, CNU would need to shut down half of the already available library space. Through my research, I originally attempted to answer the following question: Do CNU students fully utilize the services given to them at the campus library and do these resources improve study habits? However, once the study began, the focus changed into something much greater than resources and the following question emerged: How does the CNU community perceive the library and what social implications come with these personal views and actions? The nature of this question allowed for the emergence of three main

themes: social grounds, resources, and self-organization. These themes point to the big picture: The library is understood as a study space, yet has highly accepted social undertones.

As of spring 2016, the library is the home of many services offered to students and faculty. These services include: The IT Help Desk, Circulation and Reference Desks, a Media Center, and the Mariner's Museum Library . Additionally, the Tribble Library is home to the Honor's Program office, Einstein's café, a 24 hour room for the weekends, numerous printers, study rooms, designated quiet rooms, and of course, seating areas.

Until doing this study, I had not spent extensive time in the Library Resource Center. The most exposure I had to the facility was studying during finals and buying coffee in Einstein's. Additionally, I have not used the provided resources, apart from one visit to the IT desk. Hopefully, by having multiple perspectives of the functionality of the library, I will gain an understanding of those who do take full advantage of the building. This research will hopefully allow me to understand the rationale of planned library expansion and why the funding for such an expansion is not going towards other programs.

The site of this field study was the Paul and Rosemary Tribble Library. Focus was placed on the large "collections" area near the back of the building, Einstein's Café, and the 24-hour room near the IT service desk. However, some observations were made while walking around the building on a daily basis between classes, cutting through the building, visiting the Honor's Office, etc. I conducted my work with the general student body, including both students who used the library, as well as those who avoided using the library.

A large portion of my research was done through participant observation. Each session, I brought my backpack, laptop, and other normal school supplies to the library and attempted to blend in as I observed. I feel that this approach helped me become a wallflower, allowing me to obtain unbiased information since there was not a distinct separation between researcher and those observed.

An anonymous survey regarding the frequency of library visits and usage of resources was posted on the Class Facebook pages of CNU, and on the pages of certain student organizations here on campus. I chose these locations for the posing the survey, as opposed to only asking questions of those in the library at any given moment, to ensure that I received a wide variety of answers from the CNU community as a whole. Unfortunately, the data collected from this survey did not yield much new information than what was found through the other methods, therefore, it is only referenced in small detail. Semi-structured interviews were used to elicit a thorough conversation while allowing leeway for discussion of additional topics. Those interviewed included people who were frequent visitors to the library, a student employee of one library resource (who did not mention their job, but rather the sociality and personal usage of the facility), and people who preferred to work in other locations around campus. This variety of respondents was important to the success of this study because while the expansion will directly affect the size and resources offered in the library, noise and other factors based on construction will affect the broader CNU community. Interviews took place in various places, including in the 24 hour room, the stairs of Christopher Newport Hall, and in the study rooms of a couple of resident halls. The location of the interview depended on where the respondent felt the most comfortable.

In total, nine interviews were completed, the survey had a total of thirty respondents, and I spent four sessions of varying length in the library itself purely doing participant observation. After the first observation of the study was made, I began interviews. Based on the information gathered through each interview, I focused my later observations more closely on the events/attitudes my informants had discussed. Survey questions were formulated after the first two interviews were conducted using the responses as a referential point.



Perhaps the most startling and over-arching theme found throughout the study was that of the library as a social ground. Contrary to common beliefs and stereotypes permeated through popular culture, which mark libraries as quiet areas where the ultra-studious go to engross themselves in coursework, the library here at Christopher Newport is a highly trafficked and social area. Subtopics discussed in this section include crowding, talking, and noise in general. I will also discuss the behaviors deemed by informants as “acceptable” or “unacceptable”.

One of the first instances in which the social aspects of the library came under my radar was during an interview when the interviewee stated, “I tend to stay in a quiet room or study room because the lib is a social place.” This idea was new to me at the time. I had originally assumed the quiet rooms were meant solely for those individuals who

worked better in solitude. Instead, it was revealed through personal interviews and surveys that people using the library think noise is an integral part of the experience. This noise carries over to Einstein’s as well, with an interviewee stating: “Einstein’s is a great place to meet: Student-professor stuff, group projects, just meeting people in general.” The library is one of the easiest places to meet people on campus, no matter status – faculty, staff, or student. Even more so, I found that I personally am guilty of using the library as a

place to just meet up with people, yet I did not realize the common nature of this act or how much this differs from other libraries.

Another interviewee pointed out a mysterious pattern with the noise: “If you’re sitting there for long enough there’s like, you could probably calculate the waves of noise that come.” After hearing this statement, I began to pay more attention to the level of the noise. I also noticed this pattern after a while. The room would be almost completely silent and someone would start talking quietly. After the first voice started to increase in volume, others would begin to have their own conversations. These conversations would also increase in volume until it the entire room buzzed with noise. After a while, the noise would start to die down and the cycle would start over again. This pattern demonstrates the acceptance of noise, but a general hesitation to talk in the library. The cycle always starts with one ongoing

conversation. The ones that I overheard generally were about schoolwork or borrowing supplies, then they would branch off into other topics. Once the first one stemmed off, others would join in.

When discussing “unacceptable library behaviors, responses ranged from those involving throwing objects, eating smelly foods, talking loudly, and using the library as a place to catch up with friends and watch non-educational videos. Responses regarding noise varied from person to person. Additionally, through my participant observations, I found that noise level depended on where in the library I was sitting and also the time of day in which the visit occurred. Based on my findings, it is generally an accepted fact that the library here at CNU has a noise issue. Interestingly, the noise generally doesn’t bother students or they have predetermined methods of blocking out the noise such as quiet rooms and earbuds.

To sum it up, “They come to work, to do group projects, and especially to socialize.” As was the original intended purpose of the study, I found a theme of resource use, which was expected. The three subtopics covered under this section include reference, IT services, and, interestingly, other students. The common rule of thumb with resources is that students did not use them unless prompted to do so by professors or if they were faced with a problem in which they had no other option but to do so. According to the survey, resources are quite underused. Interviewees had similar responses; interviews yielded the concept of resources being underutilized due to students being afraid to ask for help or even under education about what the library has to offer.

This portion of the study was not what I had expected at all. Personally, I do not fully utilize the resources in the library. However, part of the planned expansion is due to the

resources, so I assumed they were commonly used. Unfortunately, a senior student at CNU told me during an interview, “Half the people don’t even know about the resources offered in the library,” as she was particularly focusing on her graduating class. The most underutilized resource, based on surveys and interviews, is the media center. Although the room in which it is housed is always full, most of the students in there are working on individual assignments that do not involve the resource itself. The only individual I interviewed who had used the media center gave a very detailed and insightful account:

“I would say a lot of people don’t know the library as laptop chargers if you forget them, phone chargers, they have like, video cameras and Gopros. We went to the Bahamas for a week and we rented a Gopro for a week, free, here and we got some awesome pictures and a lot of people don’t even know about that. Or like, maybe they do come in that time between twelve and three in that busy time. But like, early in the morning there’s not a lot of people there and also in the evenings a lot of people really do clean out around nine or ten because then people are like settling in for the long haul for an all-nighter or something. So I think people will just write it off because it usually is busy- it might just be the times that they are going.”

Another overarching theme under the topic of resources was the general reluctance of students to ask for help or acknowledge the resources offered. Some respondents told me they would try to fix problems for themselves prior to visiting a resource for help, even if they had no idea what they were doing. One of the people whom I interviewed had this advice for students: “Don’t be afraid to go to the reference desk, they’re really nice. I know some people are afraid.” Personally, I can attest to this statement as a student; I found it hard to approach the library staff to ask for their input, not due to anything negative that they did, but rather due to my own anxiety. It could be the power dynamic of the resources

that turn students away, or, this aspect of library use may speak something to the independent nature the students at CNU value. The students who decide not to use the resources, however, should follow the advice of another interviewee: “The old ladies who work at the reference desk are adorable and always want to talk to you.”

Finally, an unexpected aspect of resources presented itself through my research – Peer resources. As mentioned before, conversation cycles start off with a general question about schoolwork. This means that students are using each other as a means of getting information. An interviewee summed it up pretty well: “I guarantee there’s at least one other person there who’s working on the same thing so it’s kind of like a resource also. You could just get up and look around and be like, oh! He’s in my class and go hey, what’d you get for this question.”

The following excerpt from my field notes is useful to illustrate the third theme:

“People seem to be arranging themselves into groups as they come in. Every table in sight has at least two individuals, some are talking to each other and sitting side by side/ or across from each other; some people have a few chairs between themselves and their neighbor. I start to notice a sort of spacing system.

Table One: Four girls at left end of the table, two chairs beside the girls on inner sides, One lone male sitting on the other side of the spacing.

Table Two: Two males at left end of the table, chair beside each, 2 more males after chairs

Table three: full of females, talking to each other

Table four: Four males, no talking, books and papers spread everywhere.

This social behavior is different than the behaviors at the other tables, everyone else sitting in groups is

talking or at least acknowledging each other in some way (showing things on screens, passing papers back and forth, making faces at each other, and throwing scraps of paper). These guys are sitting together, but have not looked at each other/ interacted.”

My observation of social seating patterns prompted me to ask in the survey, “Do you tend to come alone? Or in a group?” Over half of the survey respondents (19 out of 30 respondents) reported that they visit the library alone. The rest came in group between two and six persons and depending on what types of work needed to be completed. Interviews supported the claim that where one sits, and who one comes to the library with is dependent on the amount and type of work that needs to be done. Two different interviews supported this claim:

“Ooooh, um, I think it depends on what I have to work on. If it’s something that isn’t really a big deal or it’s not time critical, I usually like to sit either in Einstein’s or like, somewhere in the front because I like to see people and talk to people and it’s more of a social thing?! But, if it’s one of those days where I like, feel the need to be a hermit and block everything out to get stuff done I usually try to sit in the back, if it’s free, like way back behind the stacks so I don’t see anybody I know. Or, I’ll sit in one of those cubbies they have and put in my headphones and just ignore everybody”

“It depends on what I’m doing. If I need to get a lot of work done I’ll try to find one of the cubbies by myself. Like, I really like the cubbies because I have to have an outlet right there because my laptop will die. Or if I try to mix and mingle I’ll sit at one of the tables with some sisters. But, I don’t usually sit in Einstein’s because it’s usually busy.”

A go-to spot for students who wanted to work alone was the cubicles, located throughout the back half of the library. Those who particularly enjoyed sitting here valued privacy, although they were in a public space.

This may be due to the general idea that college is a bridge between the dependency of childhood and the independent nature of adulthood. Just like children, college students crave company, but as adults, their privacy and ability to choose their distractions reinforces independence.

During surveys, interviews, and even observations, student organization affiliation played a strange role in where people decided to sit. The library at CNU is like the cafeteria in the film “Mean Girls” with numerous, and obvious, cliques areas. Students associated with Greek organizations tended to congregate in the same corner of the library, while those wearing Marching Captains attire stayed close together, and so on. Compared to other areas of campus, such as the classroom, this self-organization pattern is more of a norm of the University in general. This can be attributed to the school’s emphasis on diversity, involvement, and finding oneself as a person. Additionally, students within an organization identify with each other in that they have common goals and interests. So, the students who already see themselves as being cohesive group stick together, even while studying.

Students of Christopher Newport use the library in a unique, diverse manner. As opposed to the stated mission statement of the facility, the library is seen more as a social zone. Students would rather meet together in the library, as opposed to other areas, to work on assignments, possibly due to the societal idea that libraries are a place of learning. Additionally, many modern jobs pursued by students require innovative group work. Other jobs require individuals to work in distracting environments. In a way, the library has molded itself into a practice grounds for these two skill sets. Group projects are completed while surrounded by other people, so both workplace skills are addressed.

Students are pushed to be independent, and look for solutions on their own. Because of this, many students may be hesitant to ask for help and visiting resources, leading to underutilization. A way to combat this issue could be as simple as classroom education and encouragement to step outside of comfort zones if needed. Personally, I have found that the idea of visiting resources is much less frightening after completing this study and hearing so many testimonials about how the library has influenced coursework for the best. That being said, the underutilization of resources will not be solved by making them bigger, as that could increase intimidation some students feel. So, for the expansion, administration should focus on ensuring a nice meeting environment for students to work in as opposed to making the resources larger.

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Image of students in library made available through Flickr ([link](#)).

The Making of Culture in Youth Ministry

Cavan Bonner

In a small Unitarian Universalist church on an early Saturday morning, two-dozen youth are engaging in a process that could best be described as the construction of culture. They occupy the room most commonly used for coffee hour, and while adult sponsors and youth alike are enjoying lots of coffee, the space has been repurposed to fit a circle of chairs. The topic of this discussion might seem overly specific: whether or not the popular party game *Cards Against Humanity* fits into the culture they are trying to develop. The content of the game troubles those who believe it might hinder the creation of a safe space. Those in favor of the game (surprisingly, the majority of the adults) believe that the game allows youth to explore sensitive topics such as race and gender through humor.

The card game debate is one of many conversations focused on defining a culture that is “Safe and Supportive,” as well as “Radically Inclusive,” two oft-quoted snippets from a revised Bylaws. This constantly refined culture is designed to be practiced at weekend-long youth retreats known by participants as Cons. Following a series of incidents involving substances and consent, the Con-goers have been working at re-evaluating whether or not their culture fits the narrative of a uniquely safe community that Cons are built upon.

These Con-Culture discourses are fascinating because they show a public attempt at negotiating and re-defining core cultural values. The discussions intended to broadly define the community’s culture produced polarization and muddled understandings of change. Of course, to the interlocutors who participated in small but lively conversations about Con-Culture, new revelations about

where the community needed to be made clear sense: it needed to be safe, supportive and spiritual. In the context of dialogue, it wouldn't make sense *not* to define their culture as radically inclusive. But when the next Con happened, how would they make sure that the community’s conduct fit this wording?

The tension produced from enforcing new cultural ideals came in written, quotable form one evening before the start of a meeting. Through an email, the author stated that they would be going by the pseudonym “Gareth of Meadville” “for the purpose of anonymity.” Well-written, though somewhat dramatic, the email communicated that from the perspective of seasoned attendees, the new culture neglected their “freedom and security.” Gareth believes that “The extent to which we were told to alter our behavior was unacceptable.” Indeed, many long-time Con-goers encountered frustration when they were told that their conversation habits and use of language were un-inclusive and harmful to the creation of a safe space. Gareth also noted that “Each sentence was crafted around information gathered from direct contributions originating from different people. Please do not consider my letter to be a singular action... the ideas and concerns I addressed were put together by many.”

In Gareth’s 1,600 word appeal, the core issue seemed to be with the decision to redefine the cultural values of the community in a way so distant from common experience. Gareth’s conception of common experience must have been rather firm by the time he wrote the letter, having already been to about 14 Cons. The youth responsible for molding the community’s actions to this new culture of

inclusivity, consent and supportiveness had their own ideas for how the community would act out this new culture, but what would this process do to Cons? An experienced Con-goer like Gareth felt that the demands of such inclusivity stymied the experience they had come to love. Gareth argued that the implications of the “radical inclusivity”

me: the constant hugging, unusually high per-capita colored hair and tie-dyes, the guarantee that someone will always playing the ukulele, freedoms not found in the everyday life of a teenager. It is a point of pride to youth that significant effort is required on their part to create this communal experience. Gareth and countless others identified Cons as vital to their



A scene from a Unitarian Universalist bridging ceremony

wording are conservative and restrictive, rather than progressive.

To Gareth and their supporters, the fact that the Con experience is so removed from mundanity lent appeal; a rarely occurring, intense weekend. Was policing their speech and actions making it more like everyday life? While clearly a chance to explore one’s faith, Cons are just as importantly a place to try on new identities, showcase talents and develop unique friendships. There is a certain charming bizarrry to Cons that never has gone away for

development- without such a energetic, noisy social microcosm to navigate, would the youth of today ever come to the same understanding that they did?

The endearing yet problematic intensity (and exclusiveness) of Cons is best understood by the community at a Spring ceremony known as Bridging. Youth preparing to leave the Con community and enter a new stage of life gather to the left of the stage, while a contingent of young adults awaits to dispense hugs on the other side. One by one, youth are given the

chance to articulate what impact Cons had on them, then cross the bridge. Commencing the average Bridging speech is an account of one's first Con that could be described as archetypical or cliché, depending on one's perspective. Bridgers recall their first Con as "terrifying," "an awful experience," or "something that took a while to get used to," and regale the audience with stories of how they spent most of the weekend in the corner. Each of the Bridgers came out of their time participating in Cons self-assured and well accepted by the community, and so for each one of them to admit how terrified they were at first gives a certain hope.

Alex, a youth heavily involved in the *Cards Against Humanity* debate, as well as similar discussions, delivered the "My First Con" account in a manner that masterfully balanced satire and authenticity. He exudes energy at Cons and has held countless leadership roles, but six years ago it is easy to imagine how different his experience might have been. But his point is not that he found himself, or found friends, and now it is bittersweet to leave Cons, as the Bridging speech often narrates. His point is that it might very well be time that youth start to alter their behavior, take seriously what their culture *is*. Having a terrible first Con in no way proves a community to be safe, supportive and radically inclusive. The room is unusually tense for a moment after he says this, and later on in the ceremony another bridging youth defends their My First Con experience as proof that Cons are something special. You have to work a little (or a great deal) to understand them, to find their value.

All of this is to say that maybe the "overly specific" discussions are the ones that are needed the most. Beliefs and values are the core of any culture, but at Cons this culture is enacted in words and in ritual. When some youth interpreted the newly defined concept of radical inclusivity to mean no swearing while participating, Gareth of Meadville made a good point about language. Not only did it invalidate

the long-present ideal of free speech as an essential aspect of the community, but it dramatically changed many crucial rituals. Important community gatherings such as the dance and talent show contained plenty of "raunchy" language on the part of the youth, and had for the 40+ years Cons had been running. Bringing the cultural discussion to bear on these specific events was certainly more challenging than deciding the words "radically inclusive" should be new cultural values. The role of specific youth in the community was examined, and youth had to decide how things would be changed. Certainly the thought of drawn-out discussions concerning the merits and problems *Cards Against Humanity* posed seemed like overkill. The youth who had made a role in the community by bringing the game did not like the discussion. But by starting with what goes into creating a culture, I hope that Con-goers are on the right track to creating a community that makes sense to all of them.



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Cavan Bonner is a soon-to-be college student who intends to study anthropology and psychology. Besides organizing youth programming and reading ethnographies, you can find him glued to his smartphone or running a tabletop role playing game.

Image also by Cavan Bonner



Observing the Equation of Motivation

Cody Byers

I want to understand the world from your point of view. I want to know what you know in the way you know it. I want to understand the meaning of your experience, to walk in your shoes, to feel things as you feel them, to explain things as you explain them. Will you become my teacher and help me understand?

— James P. Spradley

Professor Spradley's quote perfectly communicates the desires of ethnographers to interact with their participants, even as a first time ethnographer beginning fieldwork I knew it would not be enough to simply

observe the participants of my study, but that I needed to seek out and use the information that I gathered to create an understanding of their experiences. I spent sixteen weeks observing adults at a gym and conducting interviews with them so that I could recognize reasons that motivate adults to work out in the hopes that I could get a better understanding the human experience.

I am a health enthusiast, and as a result I chose to inquire and elicit information about the motivational influences that encourage adults to work out. I struggled to find the

motivation to work out for most of my life and as a consequence my health and personal happiness suffered. Childhood obesity turned to obesity which I feared would turn to diabetes or some other health related problem. I was part of a larger health epidemic, a health epidemic that has only become more alarming during my lifetime and will continue to do so unless people become more conscious and attentive to their bodily needs. I know the reasons that motivated me to work out, but I was curious to know what motivates others to perform the same course of action. All people are different, and as a result so are the reasons and motivations for why they do things. I wanted to get a better understanding of why that is.

As an avid gym user, I believe that I was able to identify with the people who participated in my study. I would also like to think that because I knew the physical and mental struggle of the people I interviewed, no matter what their level of fitness was at, I was able to gain rapport with the community I worked with. Throughout the process of interviewing people and taking observational notes, I was able to become a more observant, detailed, and self-aware person because this field work was challenging. Having conversations with people is an everyday occurrence, but having these intentional conversations that include listening, writing, and a conscious and active level of observation proved to be a stimulating experience for me. Additionally, my time in the field helped me gain some clarity about the human experience which was greatly appreciated because learning about how others live fascinates me. Every person I interviewed was different and unique. Each one had something special to contribute and had something I could take away from the conversations we shared, and because I was able to get six other perspectives about something I personally value so highly it was a great experience.

My field site was a gym that housed cardio and muscle strengthening equipment for members who pay a monthly membership for admittance. I have previous experience interacting with the community because I have used its facilities three to four times a week for the past few years; I realized I had been observing participants for quite a while subconsciously. During the course of this ethnographic study I conducted six interviews. I attended my field site four times a week during my field study. While there I spent three to four hours conducting participant observation and interviews.

I took my field notes in a journal which I hoped seemed typical and discrete because it is not uncommon for gym members to log their workouts in a journal for their own record and to track progress. The transition to actively observing other members was more of an adjustment than I thought it would be. I thought that because I was in there so much that I could just sit back and take notes in my notebook seamlessly without feeling “weird”, but that was far from the case. I would get a little anxious sitting there and trying to be sly about observing people work out and taking notes. I felt sometimes like they knew they were being watched and because I could not physically walk up to every other member of the gym who was present and tell them what I was doing I felt awkward in that environment for the first time. I was worried I would be perceived as the kind of person that some people worry about when they consider a gym membership, and even prevents them from getting one.

* * *

Through my research, I found that some of the reasons that motivated my informants to work out came from influences outside of themselves such as social expectations and media pressure. As a workout enthusiast I

work out every day for the desire to improve, but I forgot how influential forces outside of my own self could be, especially when beginning to work out regularly. Some of my informants enjoyed working out with someone who could provide them with motivation or feedback. I witnessed on numerous occasions people working out in pairs, and even groups of three and four. They seemed to joke and smile with one another, and actually enjoyed the time spent working out together. Beyond just what I observed, I had participants tell me that not only did they like having someone with them when they worked out, but it also helped make a workout successful. Having someone there going through the same struggle is a great support system that can motivate individuals to try working out because they know they are not alone. A participant told me, “I struggle to find the motivation to work out because I don’t want to go to the gym alone.” Coincidentally, he also said the biggest motivation for him to workout is a partner, and every participant I asked said that having a workout partner with them motivates them to do better.

There are other outside forces besides a tangible workout partner that influence people to work out. These intangible forces include the opinions of peers, the media, or societal expectations. When asked, “does media or society pressure you to come and work out?” all but one participant said yes for some reason or another. One of my female participants told me “I struggle greatly with self-image, so anything from the media to someone's comment can be taken the wrong way any given day and can push me in a workout”. A male participant agreed in principle saying, “certain societal circles view men as being fit and strong and what being a man is all about. I would obviously like to be viewed that way if that is the expectation.”

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**I have self-image issues
and have never been very
confident in how I look
and working out gives me
a way to have a better
body and feel better about
myself.**

|

Outside influences were not the only motivational factor that encouraged people to work out; health also proved to be important to the participants in this study. Many of the participants of this study seemed to be aware of the correlation between the effects of working out and a person’s health and physical state of being. Many of the participants in my study stated health and a better body image as reasons as to why they work out. The physical state of my participant’s bodies also seemed to be a key point of interest within their motivational reasons to work out. Whether it was to maintain their physical fitness and stay in shape or to change the physical state of their bodies it was a mode of motivation for those I interviewed. A participant said, “I work out to maintain my health as well as deal with my own body image. I don’t have any health conditions and I would like to keep it that way, and I wanna look good—I mean who doesn’t?” Another participant replied, “I have self-image issues and have never been very confident in how I look and working out gives me a way to have a better body and feel better about myself. I want to look good for my relationship, and it also gives me a way to have an overall feeling of health, which is

great.” The majority of the population should be aware that working out leads to positive health and physical benefits as well, and based on the responses of those I interviewed the small sample size seems to indicate that many of them do. This study has also found that many of the people I interviewed workout and strive for things because they are aware of what they are doing and what their bodies need.



Every gym user’s experience and workouts are subjective based upon their own standards and ideals. All of my participants had their own goals, ideas of what working out are, and what fitness is. The question with the least varying response among my participants was to the question, is working out a more mental or physical process? All agreed that it is more mental than physical, with one possible outlier, who responded, “if you don’t say both you’re a liar.” This still indicates how important cognition is to motivating an individual to work out. This is not a breakthrough by any means; the mind controls the body and does as it commands. A person will not get up and work out if they don’t have the desire or feel that they need to do. The brain needs to make a logical

argument to compel the body to action. The quotes and the responses to my questions in the interviews show that these individuals have had moments of motivation thrust upon them because they perceived the need too. Every individual addresses what they think, they feel, they need, they want, and it’s all based on their own subjective thoughts and feelings about themselves. The participants in this study talk about how they feel about their

body image, their level of fitness, their levels of health or how they think or feel they stack up compared to other individuals in society and in the media and because of that they have become motivated to work out. All the participants used qualifiers and made judgments about themselves and evaluated themselves. They perceived themselves as being x so therefore they worked out so as to achieve y. They are their own biggest motivators, but I don’t think many of them are aware of that because of a lack of introspection and lack of holistic thought as to why they are working out. Moving forward this would be an interesting place to continue studying the topic of motivation in relation to working out.

As long as obesity and health conditions continue to worsen in this country there will be a need to understand what influences people to work out and improve their health. By examining the cognitive developments that influenced the motivational factors of working out I was able to see commonalities between various individuals, and although the sample size is small it does bring to light a few themes that are important to understand the experience of people who work out in our society today. Outside influences, health, and personal perception are all valuable factors that contribute to motivating gym users at the site of this study. These themes are not the only possibilities that motivate people to work out, but recognizing them is valuable to begin understanding.

As much as I value what I learned in my first entry into the field, I value the experience even more. Ethnographic field work is more than just qualitative observation about a particular group of people. My work allowed me to probe with passion into the minds of those around with me about something I genuinely cared about, so that I could gather more understanding, and now share it with you. My discoveries may not be groundbreaking, but the experience allowed me to gain understanding about others, as well as myself which will only help me to better appreciate the world around me.

Cody Byers is a senior at Christopher Newport University. He will be graduating in December of 2016 with a Bachelor's of Arts degree in Communication Studies. His interests include rhetoric, mass communication, and cultural studies, and plans to further his education by attending Graduate School next fall.



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Identity and Struggles in the Mapuche Nation

Sasha Hodes

The Mapuche are an indigenous group living in Chile and Argentina, who experienced cultural genocide and discrimination through forced assimilation. I studied the Mapuche in detail for my sociology degree and wanted to write more about this group, and describe the struggles of these people. In this article I describe the discrimination and oppression that the Mapuche have endured and also how their cultural survival and well-being could be promoted. I have a personal interest in the subject as my relatives, being members of the communist party fled Chile after the coup in 1973 and obtained political asylum Europe.

Salvador Allende, Chilean President 1970-1973, accepted 'indigenous' as an important concept and began developing the Indigenous Act which intended to return to the Mapuche lands which were taken by the colonizers. This was a difficult thing for the party at the time because it was split between left wing progressives and Marxist Leninists, who refused to distinguish the Mapuche's experience of exploitation from that of the working class. The Marxist Leninists simply saw the struggles of the Mapuche as a working class struggle and without anything to do with ethnic differences. The Marxist Leninists tried to homogenize the indigenous people into the general category of proletariat. They proclaimed anything to do with ethnicity and culture was only of interest to the bourgeoisie. But of course, the main reason for the end to the progress was the fascist military coup carried out by General Pinochet in 1973 and the subsequent economic structural adjustment programme. Pinochet consciously disregarded the special situation of the Mapuche and their sovereignty, proclaiming "the only thing that

exists in Chile is the Chilean man and the Chilean nation."

The Mapuche are an ethnic group whose population size ranges from 500,000 to 800,000. Historically they had little recognition from the Spanish conquistadors and then the Chilean population. Since the Spanish colonized the land in 1641, the Mapuche had been displaced from their lands and pushed into reservations, or as they are called in Chile, *reducciones*. Even though the situation has changed for the Mapuche and many have since moved from these reservations to the cities in order to find work and escape rural poverty, their cultural destruction has continued. The Mapuche's migration from rural reservations to cities has in some way sped up the weakening of their sovereignty, a theme that I'll return to.

It is crucial to understand the Mapuche world view and identity. In essence, the indigenous group have historically seen their culture directly connected to the land of their ancestors, the water, crops, and soil. The Mapuche ancestors saw themselves as people of the land, which is, after all, what "Mapuche" means in Mapudungun, their language. The Mapuche were once living on the land from which their identity derived. They held important rituals on the land, rituals that would assure them of stability and wellbeing for the future. These rituals could only be carried out on fertile soil. The lands of the reservations were entirely inappropriate. If such rituals are carried out



on inappropriate land, the Machi (ritual priest) starts with a fatalistic attitude and it is doomed to fail creating only a sense of bad things to come for the rural communities and foreshadowing instability in their social structures. The practice of the Nguillatun, a festival of fertility and agriculture is one such ritual which, unsurprisingly, has to be performed on fertile soil.

Rural Mapuche communities are organized through kinship. They group together in accordance to lineage, connected by blood or marriage, and identified through ancestral names. They come together to maintain their cultural and religious practices in pockets of rural areas. However, ongoing migration of Mapuche people to the cities has meant that these kinships ties have been severed. Mapuche families in the cities rarely meet up with relatives in the countryside to take part in rituals and they don't tend to maintain any personal beliefs connected to their identity.

Furthermore, the assimilation of urban Mapuche has meant fewer of them speak Mapudungun. A study has shown that only around 15,000-20,000 people still speak their traditional language for daily communication, and certain dialects of the language have altogether disappeared. Part of the problem is that the education system does not recognize Mapudungun as a native language and schools do not offer any classes on it. Most of the Mapuche who speak

Mapudungun also speak Spanish so they rarely interact using their mother tongue. Less than 5% use the language at all in the cities and only 12% use it in rural reservations. The language is in danger of extinction. The language *should* be recognized by the government and become an option in schools because language will enforce the empowerment of Mapuche sovereignty and independence. Therefore it is necessary to reproduce it as a form of communication for the culturally oppressed, indigenous population.

Unfortunately, the education system reinforces intolerant behaviours towards Mapuche by creating an atmosphere in which Mapuche students feel embarrassed of their identity. To be a Mapuche at school is associated with being lazy, stupid, and disruptive. These opinions are regularly reported by Chilean teachers who have Mapuche students in their class. Schools should not only teach all Chilean citizens as a main point of knowledge the history of the Mapuche people, about the centuries of colonization, cultural suppression and marginalization they have faced and still face, but also on the significance of Mapuche people to the lands they all walk upon. I think this would help decrease intolerant policies and destructive attitudes towards Mapuche communities because as with all societies schools play an important part in how the

future of the society will play out to be. There is an ingrained problem that lies at the root of Chilean society and it will only continue to reproduce a majority set on wiping out different identities until the teaching changes.

Of course, as an anthropologist, one is faced with the problem of comparing rural Mapuche with urban Mapuche. It is common knowledge that many see the urban Mapuche as dirty, “impure” because they haven’t followed the traditional living of the “true” Mapuche in the rural reservations. This attitude only allows for racism and discrimination to continue with the justification that the urban Mapuche haven’t followed their old customs or speak the language so they deserve maltreatment as they are “bad” Mapuche. The idea of purity must be at all costs be challenged. It is inevitable that culture adapts with changing times. This of course is not to say that the urban Mapuche don’t follow some of the old customs, because they do, they are a subject different from the rural Mapuche because they flow between interests and influences inside and outside of Mapuche society.

So the identities of Mapuche who have moved from the reservation to the city, have faced a major transformations. Some would say that Mapuche identity in the cities has essentially disappeared, sacrificed in the face of continuous demand for efficiency and profits by a global economy. But it would be naïve to think that by restoring the lands to the Mapuche people alone will return them to the ways of their ancestors. It assumes that there is the existence of a “pure” culture which when faced by an external influence changes for the worse and is tainted. Furthermore, even restoration of land would

not stop hostile and stigmatizing attitudes being expressed towards their identity. The future survival of the Mapuche will require adaptation and learning to be able to promote their culture and claim a social space within the bureaucratic state. This will require organizational, legal and cultural awareness and sophistication, so that they be inclusive of the range of contemporary Mapuche lifestyles. In the cities, the Mapuche culture is maintained in very different way than traditional forms in rural communities. For example, in the city of Pucó, the Mapuche culture is adapted to fit the life of the city with



events like the Kui-Kui that shows Mapuche dance, food and art, an event at which everyone can participate whether they are Mapuche or not. This allows urban Mapuche to embrace the customs, creations and cuisines of their people while also accepting their Chilean identity, ultimately becoming hybrids because both aspects co-exist, with both constantly evolving.

More needs to happen to recognize the existence of the “invisible” urban Mapuche and their contemporary identity. Future generations have to be taught about their roots, where they come from and to be proud to be Mapuche. Also, they must be shown that they can express this without facing discrimination, and that their Chilean identity can still exist alongside it. This will, in time, solidify the Chilean-Mapuche identity in the cities. The solution is not that the Mapuche identity from the 17th century has to be recreated, but there should be appropriate recognition by Chilean people of an existing ethnic/cultural difference, and a right to sovereignty for the Mapuche. The overriding attitude towards the Mapuche in Chile is that they are a savage, simple people with tendencies of laziness, thievery and

alcoholism. Essentially, this means that anything connected with Mapuche culture, like music, art and literature, is damaged by these prejudiced stereotypes. But there is a dualism here; while the Chilean population see Mapuche people as lazy and criminal, they also hold up their ancestors as “fierce and fearless” warriors. What one must take from this is that the only thing the Chilean people respect about the Mapuche are the heroic tales of their ancestors romanticized for the benefit of storytelling. It maintains the idea that the Mapuche are primitive people who haven’t changed their “savage” ways of tribal social action. Therefore, it is still rather difficult for a hybrid identity to formulate for urban Mapuche when these attitudes still exist.

The destruction of Mapuche identity is damaging at the level of the individual by means of longstanding coercive practices, displacement from the land, and denigration of their identity. A shared form of identity is important because it creates a sense of social cohesion, of joy and security. The destructive experiences of the Mapuche, including police oppression and racism, has led to a lack of social integration and increased divisions in communities and lack of confidence amongst individuals in the city. These oppressive processes have led to attack on their sense of self and ultimately, damaged to their mental states. This is why many Mapuche have turned to drugs and alcohol as well as showing high levels of suicide and depression.

To summarise, the Mapuche had a proud cultural tradition and have survived by standing against oppression by Spanish colonizers. In recent decades, with the exception of progressive reforms initiated by Allende later aborted by Pinochet, there has been ongoing destruction of their identity

and rural communities. Not enough has been done to help strengthen their identity and recognize a struggling Mapuche nation. For example, the Indigenous law of 1990 does not give the Mapuche a right to own land and does little to tackle the structural intolerance and racism they face every day. Significant reform is necessary, like the introduction of multiculturalism as a national policy as well as more legal bodies created to protect the rights of Mapuche people. I hope to be able to contribute in a small way to this struggle by travelling to Chile when I complete my sociology degree at the end of next year, promoting learning in schools with many Mapuche pupils. I will try and create a rapport in Mapuche communities and meet individuals in the cities to begin ethnographic research of my own, with a view to promoting their rights and contribute to the promotion Mapuche identity. I believe this is important because not enough research has been done on urban Mapuche, their hybrid identity, and their contemporary way of life.



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