

To: Dr. Daniel J. Monti, Jr.; professor, SOC 5060 Qualitative Research Methods

From: Malcolm Townes, student, SOC 5060 Qualitative Research Methods

Date: December 8, 2019

Re: Summary of interview field notes for study of the neighborhood encompassing the NCSBD

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Below is the summary of the three (3) interviews I conducted as part of the class project to study the neighborhood that encompasses North Central Special Business District (NCSBD). My actual field notes are also included (Table 1). The summary is organized according to the two journal articles upon which the study builds and the community-making framework put forward by Monti (1999), which the study uses to extend those works. For each key argument of each work, I list bullet points summarizing the related observations from the interviews I conducted.

Hoestrka, E. & Gerteis, J. (2019). The Civic Side of Diversity: Ambivalence and Belonging at the Neighborhood Level. *City & Community*, 18(1), 195-212.

- Key argument: Community members frame their discourse about who belongs in the community in terms of civic engagement (i.e., civic talk) to reconcile ambivalence between their philosophical beliefs about diversity and the practical implications of diversity within their communities. However, this civic talk often reinforces traditional social hierarchies and historical inequities.
  - All three interview participants framed their beliefs about what made a good community member in terms of civic talk.
  - The civic talk that the interview participants used generally focused on people being “community-oriented,” which included being friendly and helpful to neighbors, watching out for the safety of one another, and maintaining their properties and the aesthetic appeal of the neighborhood.
  - All three interview participants were homeowners and expressed the belief that homeowners were better members of the community than renters because homeowners are more invested in the community.
  - Given the impact of historical discrimination in the housing market based on race and ethnicity that depressed homeownership rates among various groups, the preference for homeowners over renters may reinforce historical inequities.

Lukasiewicz, K., Bahar, O. S., Ali, S., Gopalan, P., Parker, G., Hawkins, R., McKay, M., & Walker, R. (2019). Getting by in New York City: Bonding, Bridging and Linking Capital in Poverty-Impacted Neighborhoods. *City & Community*, 18(1), 280-301.

- Key argument: The structural characteristics of the geographic communities (i.e., neighborhoods) studied compromised the ability of community members to develop and use social capital more than the traits of the community members themselves. Lack of

safety, limited community involvement, and lack of community resources undermined the development and use of social capital.

- Comments by all three interview participants suggested the presence of bridging social capital or activities that facilitate the development of bridging social capital, which according to Lukasiewicz, et. al. is relatively weaker, loose ties among people that enables individuals to obtain resources they need for survival and success. Examples included periodic residential block gatherings, watching one another's pets, watching the neighbor's property when they are away, and helping newcomers to the neighborhood by loaning them a lawn mower or even mowing their lawn until they got settled.
- All three interview participants mentioned the issue of crime. They generally believed that their residential block was safe but was susceptible to crime from outside the area.
- Based on the descriptions provided by the interview participants, the threat of crime seemed to strengthen bonds between neighbors. This suggests a nuance to the findings of Lukasiewicz, et. al. which found that the presence of crime impeded the development and use of social capital.
- One interview participant mentioned his desire for people to move into the neighborhood to occupy the vacant houses, which he believed would reduce squatting and crime.
- Two of the interview participants indicated that they weren't very involved in community activities and organizations. But they have attended occasional residential block gatherings.
- Two of the interview participants indicated that their primary interactions with neighbors were only in passing (e.g., if they happened to cross paths walking their pets) and that there weren't many opportunities for extensive interactions with neighbors.

Monti, D. J. (1999). *The American city: A social and cultural history*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers.

- Key argument: Community-making can be characterized along three dimensions – membership, rules, and accountability. Each of these dimensions is liberal on one end of the spectrum and conservative on the other end.
  - Statements by interview participants that exhibited civic talk related to the membership and rules dimensions of the Monti framework.
  - Many of the observations about social capital related to the accountability dimension of the Monti framework.
- Key argument: The membership dimension relates to defining who belongs in the community and ranges from inclusive to exclusive.
  - Interview participants seemed to believe that their views towards community membership were inclusive but the civic talk they used revealed the ambivalence

between their philosophical beliefs and preferences that could reinforce traditional social hierarchies and historical inequities.

- While one might interpret the general attitudes expressed by the participants as inclusive, it's possible to make a case that they actually indicate a certain exclusivity of which the subjects themselves are not aware.
- Interview participants used two basic approaches to articulating community membership preferences, which I will refer to as positive framing and negative framing. In positive framing the individual stated whom they preferred join the community. In negative framing the individual stated whom they preferred did NOT join the community.
- Key argument: The rules dimension characterizes the degree to which community members expect others to abide by their conception of the community rules and ranges from tolerance to piety.
  - Overall, interview participants seemed to express a certain tolerance about adherence to the rules.
  - While everyone wanted community members to regularly mow their lawns, interview participants indicated that neither they nor other community members were overly concerned if someone let their lawn go uncut a little longer than usual on occasion.
  - One interview participant talked about his desire to address a problem of vehicles obeying a stop sign on his block but not wanting to cause people to get traffic tickets.
  - One interview participant noted less enforcement of housing codes and spoke admiringly about the city of University City having enacted one of the strictest housing code enforcement regimes in the region, which he credits with helping the city of University City, Missouri (a local municipality in St. Louis County) keep "slum lords and speculators" out of the jurisdiction thus stabilizing it and making it one of the more appealing municipalities in the region. This seems to suggest the interview participant himself favored piety to the rules but the community itself is more tolerant about the rules.
- Key argument: Accountability indicates the degree to which community members expect the behavior of others to serve the common interest and ranges from self-interested to public-regarding.
  - Comments from all three interview participants seemed to suggest a moderate to high level of accountability that tends towards public-regarding behavior.
  - Interview participants described the ideal community resident was one who is "community-oriented" or some variation of this theme.
  - One interview participant described how his neighbors would often "peek out of their windows" when friends from outside the neighborhood came to visit.
  - One interview participant gave the example of forgetting to close his garage door and a neighbor closing it for him. The neighbor apparently did this not only for the

benefit of the interview participant but also to make the neighborhood safer by removing a temptation and opportunity that might attract criminal elements to the neighborhood.

- Key argument: Where a community falls on the three dimensions defines its approach to community-making. There are four basic approaches to community making – commercial communalism, consumer communalism, government communalism, and ethnic communalism. Commercial communalism consists of inclusiveness, piety to rules, and public-regarding behavior. Consumer communalism consists of inclusiveness, piety to rules, and self-interested behavior. Government communalism consists of exclusiveness, tolerance about adherence to the rules, and public-regarding behavior. Ethnic communalism consists of exclusiveness, tolerance about adherence to the rules, and self-interested behavior.
  - Often the responses from the interview participants did not squarely fall on the liberal or conservative end of the spectrum for each dimension of community-making in the Monti framework.
  - At least two of the interview participants made statements that suggested an aversion of the government approach to community-making. One participant specifically stated that he did not believe the problem of the Delmar divide could or should be addressed by government instituted laws and programs.
  - On whole, the responses from the three interview participants seem to suggest that the community under study is more inclusive than exclusive, somewhat tolerant about adherence to the rules, with a preference for public-regarding behavior. This combination does not readily fall into one of the four general approaches to community-making described by Monti (1999).

Table 1

Fields notes prepared by Malcolm Townes

Date	Notes	Analysis
Oct. 18, 2019 1:30 PM CDT  Voice recorded	<p>Interview of Survey Respondent 30, a white male less than 40 years of age. Met respondent at Kaldi's Coffee on the corner of Laclede Avenue and Vandeventer Avenue. I voice recorded the interview with the permission of the respondent. The respondent was dressed casually in jeans and a T-shirt. I began the interview with casual, brief introductory remarks. The respondent indicated that he and his wife moved to St. Louis from California so that his wife could attend graduate school at an area university. The respondent works from home as a remote web developer for the same company that employed him in California. He and his wife chose their current residence primarily because of its geographic proximity to the university his wife attends. They chose to purchase a house rather than rent an apartment because they have pets. They will likely leave St. Louis once his wife completes her degree.</p> <p>After introductory conversation, I proceeded to conduct the interview by asking the respondent open-ended questions about his responses to each of the first 17 questions of the survey. The respondent indicated that he noticed new properties being developed in the neighborhood, but he had mixed feelings about it. He believed the construction was good for his family because it would likely boost the value of their residence. However, he was concerned that too much development would detract from the small town feel of his neighborhood, which he enjoyed. He was also concerned about the potential for some residence to be displaced because of gentrification and an inability to financially afford to live in the</p>	<p>The respondent seemed to be thoughtful and careful about his statements initially but seemed to open up a little as the interview progressed. However, his personality seemed to be a bit reserved so I'm not sure if recording the interview was causing the respondent to be cautious.</p> <p>I would expect this to coincide with low personal investment in the community and thus low concern about others following community rules and low accountability to the rules. Is there really much difference between a short-term homeowner and a long-term renter?</p> <p>The respondent seemed to think of his neighborhood as his block and perhaps including just a few blocks around the street on which he and his wife reside.</p> <p>Possible evidence of inclusive community membership.</p>

Date	Notes	Analysis
	<p>neighborhood. He also noted that there seemed to be less burglaries in the area. He mentioned that he had been trying to work with the city regarding vehicles obeying the stop sign on his block. A lot of people tend to come to a rolling stop or not stop at all. He wants the issue addressed but doesn't want to cause people to get traffic tickets.</p> <p>The respondent indicated that he skipped questions 3 and 4 on the survey because he didn't feel that he had enough information to make an informed decision. He said that he prefers to make decisions related to those topics based on data and within the context of what's best for the overall neighborhood, not just him personally or just his family. However, he did offer that he believed community-oriented people would make a positive difference in the neighborhood. His concept of community-oriented was being involved in neighborhood activities and doing things that benefited everyone in the neighborhood.</p>	Possible evidence of low accountability. It also is evidence that the government approach to community-making is not the preferred approach.
	<p>The respondent explained that he felt newcomers would find it easy to fit into the neighborhood based on his own experience as a relative newcomer to the neighborhood. He noted that his neighbors were very welcoming. They took the time to introduce themselves and invited him and his wife to a neighborhood gathering that occurred about 2 months after they moved to the neighborhood. He mentioned that his family and another family often watch each other's pets. He didn't know if long-time residents found it easy to fit into the neighborhood these days simply because he wasn't sure who was a long-time resident and who was a newcomer.</p>	Possible evidence of inclusive community membership. Potential example of civic talk.
	<p>The respondent felt that people generally behaved the way he'd want a good neighbor to behave, which for him meant</p>	Possible evidence of inclusive community membership.
		Possible evidence of flexibility regarding community rules.

Date	Notes	Analysis
	<p>being friendly and helpful. He indicated that he grew up in San Diego, California and his parents weren't very friendly to their neighbors. In fact, growing up people in his neighborhood were somewhat competitive and antagonistic with one another. He generally felt that his neighbors went out of their way to get to know the other neighborhood residents but he couldn't determine which neighbors were long-time residents and which were newcomers.</p> <p>Regarding whether long-time residents or newcomers did a better job of watching what goes on in the neighborhood, the respondent couldn't make a distinction between them. However, he believed that neighborhood residents in general tended to do a good job of watching what goes on in the neighborhood. He mentioned that on several occasions he and his wife have had friends from outside the neighborhood come to visit them. His friends often noted how the respondent's neighbors all seemed to peek out of their windows when his friends parked their cars when visiting. The respondent wasn't sure whether long-time residents or newcomers would be more likely to complain about what's going on in the neighborhood. He didn't feel that his neighbors complained about anything regarding activity internal to the neighborhood or among one another.</p>	Possible evidence of high accountability.
	<p>The respondent indicated that most of his neighbors seemed to make efforts to keep the neighborhood looking good but he couldn't make a distinction between long-time residents and newcomers simply because he didn't know which was which. He said there were a few neighbors who were more lax than most (such as not mowing their lawns for a couple of weeks) but even those neighbors eventually got around to maintaining their properties.</p>	Possible evidence of low accountability.
		Possible evidence of low accountability.

Date	Notes	Analysis
	<p>The respondent indicated that most of his acquaintances and friends lived both inside and outside the neighborhood but tended to be associated in some manner with the University his wife attends. He said that he sometimes spends time with people in the neighborhood who are like him but that was just friendly interactions in passing. He and his wife would sometimes have dinner with the neighbors immediately to either side of their residence. However, of those neighbors recently moved to be in a better school district. The respondent indicated this was a trend he noticed. He was also making a concerted effort to be more involved in the neighborhood but didn't associate with formal groups or organizations very much.</p> <p>There weren't any specific people or businesses in the neighborhood that the respondent would rather not be there. However, he did indicate that having a coffee shop or an exercise facility closer by would be nice.</p>	<p>It's likely that most of the respondent's acquaintances and friends are the same race and similar age, socioeconomic status, and length of neighborhood residency as the respondent given the demographics of graduate students in general and the subject university, in particular.</p> <p>This might be indicative of low personal investment in the community, which would suggest low accountability.</p> <p>Possible evidence of inclusive membership.</p>
Oct. 19, 2019 11:00 AM CDT	Interview of Survey Respondent 16 was scheduled for 11:00 AM. The respondent never showed for the interview. I called the Respondent and left a voicemail. I also sent an email requesting to reschedule the interview. We rescheduled the interview for Monday, October 21, 2019 around 4:30 PM.	
Oct. 21, 2019 4:30 PM CDT  Not recorded	Interview of Survey Respondent 16, a White male less than 40 years of age. I met the respondent at the Arby's located on Lindell Blvd. between Sarah St. and Vandeventer Ave. The respondent was dressed in shirt and necktie. During the introductory small talk the respondent informed me that he had come to the interview from his job in Clayton, Missouri where he works as a project manager in finance systems. He grew up in St. Charles, Missouri. He went to	The respondent was very apologetic about missing our previous appointment. He seemed to be very good natured in personality and somewhat extroverted.

Date	Notes	Analysis
	<p>college at Missouri University of Science and Technology (Missouri S&amp;T in Rolla, Missouri) where he studied civil engineering.</p> <p>After our introductory small talk, I proceeded to conduct the interview by asking the respondent open-ended questions about his responses to each of the survey questions. I chose not to record the interview. The respondent indicated that people moving into the neighborhood was good because they occupied the vacant houses. He said that many of the houses were renovated by small independent operators and the work wasn't always the best quality. He said there was a quite a bit of new construction north of Delmar Blvd. He's noticed that Ranken Technical Institute was expanding and constructing new facilities. He believed this was good for the neighborhood because the students are commuters so it wouldn't bring the shenanigans associated with typical resident colleges. Moreover, Ranken would likely have security personnel and cameras that would help improve the overall security of the neighborhood. The respondent also noticed that more families with children were moving into the neighborhood. He felt that these changes are good signs for the neighborhood. In general, the respondent was pleased with the changes that he's seen in the neighborhood. He wants to see more people move into the neighborhood to occupy the vacant houses, which would reduce squatting and crime.</p> <p>The respondent believed that families moving into the neighborhood for the right reasons would make a positive difference. When I asked him what he meant by this, he paused for a while to think about his answer. It seemed that he was trying to choose his words carefully.</p>	Possible example of civic talk.

Date	Notes	Analysis
	<p>He then explained that he meant not purchasing homes just to flip and wanting to contribute to make the neighborhood better. He didn't want unstable people moving into the neighborhood, such as a boarding house which one residence was used as for a while. He didn't want people who were unlikely to stay very long because they probably wouldn't care about the neighborhood.</p> <p>The respondent moved into the neighborhood in 2017 and he doesn't consider himself a newcomer but also doesn't consider himself a long-time resident. He believed that newcomers find it easy to fit into the neighborhood because based on his personal experience. When he first moved into the neighborhood, the neighbors were very nice and even brought him food. No one harassed him if he didn't mow his lawn for an extra week or two. His neighbors also notified him when he left his garage open. He didn't know if long-time residents find it easy to fit into the neighborhood because he doesn't have a lot of interaction with the long-term residents.</p> <p>The respondent indicated he felt that people generally behaved as he would want good neighbors to behave. This included being friendly, watching the neighbor's property when they are away, and helping newcomers to the neighborhood such as loaning them a lawn mower or even mowing their lawn until they get settled.</p> <p>The respondent believed that it was a little difficult for newcomers to get to know people in the neighborhood because people aren't outside a lot and there weren't very many opportunities for spontaneous interactions. He believed long-time residents definitely did a better</p>	<p>Possible evidence of rigidity about the community rules.</p> <p>Possible evidence of exclusive membership.</p> <p>Potential example of civic talk.</p> <p>Possible evidence of low accountability.</p> <p>Potential example of civic talk.</p> <p>This seems consistent with firm ideas about community rules.</p> <p>Possible evidence of high accountability.</p>

Date	Notes	Analysis
	<p>job watching what goes on in the neighborhood because they know what to look for.</p> <p>The respondent stated that he hasn't heard people in the neighborhood complaining very much. He's attended a few neighborhood gatherings and hasn't heard any complaints.</p> <p>The respondent felt that both long-time residents and newcomers work hard to keep the neighborhood looking good. "Everyone's trying," according to the respondent. As an example, the respondent told me about how he mows the grass at a vacant lot where kids catch the school bus because the city only mows the grass there about twice a year.</p> <p>The respondent indicated that he doesn't spend time in the neighborhood who are like him. Most of his neighbors are a little older than him, probably in their late 30s or 40s. There are no other single individuals living in his neighborhood. All the neighbors in his block are from the same racial or ethnic group. Most of his friends are scattered around the city.</p> <p>The respondent indicated that he is involved with groups and organizations that are mostly outside the neighborhood. He's involved with organizations related to his profession and serves as an advisor to his fraternity in Rolla.</p> <p>The respondent said that there weren't any people or businesses in the neighborhood that he would rather not be there. He just wants the vacant houses filled with positive, friendly people. The respondent indicated that the primary negative about the neighborhood is crime. Someone broke into his garage once and someone recently kicked in a neighbor's door. He also hears gunshots from the surrounding area about once a</p>	Possible evidence of low accountability.
		Potential evidence AGAINST government approach to community.
		Possible evidence of race-based social ( <i>de facto</i> ) segregation.
		Possible evidence of inclusive membership.

Date	Notes	Analysis
Oct. 23, 2019 1:30 PM CDT	<p>month.</p> <p>Interview of survey respondent 10, a White male greater than 60 years of age. I met the respondent at his law office on Lindell Blvd. During our introductions, the respondent told me that he initially moved to St. Louis in the early 1970s. He returned in 1981 after completing law school. During the conversation the respondent disclosed that he once worked in the St. Louis city prosecutor's office. He's lived in various neighborhoods including the Central West End, south city, and Brentwood. He and his wife decided to move back to the city after their children had grown up and moved out of the house. He likes living in the city. He and his wife primarily chose their current neighborhood based on availability of decent housing. They lived in a rental in the neighborhood before purchasing their house.</p> <p>After our introductory conversation, I conducted the interview by asking open-ended questions about the respondent's answers to the survey. I chose not to record the conversation. The respondent indicated that he has observed more meaningful integration along Delmar Blvd. He estimates that the street he lives on is probably 30 to 40 percent African-American with a mix of families and retirees. He felt the Hodiamont Trails project was off to a great start and represented a good example of various groups working together towards a common goal. He's also noticed less enforcement of city housing codes, which he believes is a bad thing. He spoke admirably of University City saying that it was a good example of a community that embraced racial integration with positive results. He noted that University City enacted some of the strictest housing code enforcement and he attributes part of University City's success to this fact. The respondent believes that enforcement</p>	<p>The respondent was very cordial. He had forgotten the appointment because he didn't put it on his official calendar. He remembered our appointment once reminded and made accommodations to speak with me.</p> <p>What is particularly appealing about living in the city versus the suburbs?</p> <p>Potential evidence of inclusive community membership.</p> <p>Possible evidence of a preference for government approach to community.</p> <p>Possible evidence of exclusive</p>
Not recorded		

Date	Notes	Analysis
	<p>of housing codes keeps out slum lords and speculators, which helps to stabilize a neighborhood. The respondent indicated that he's generally pleased with the changes he see's taking place in the neighborhood. Although the development in the neighborhood is "pocketed", he thinks the progress is generally good and moving in the right direction.</p> <p>The respondent indicated a desire for more people to move into the neighborhood because he believes that there is less crime and more stability when the neighborhood has more people and a certain population density.</p> <p>He believes families and young people are especially desirable because they tend to contribute to neighborhood stability. Having a mix of young people also contributes to the longer-term viability of the neighborhood.</p> <p>The respondent felt that both long-time residents and newcomers would find it easy to fit into the neighborhood primarily because of the mix of the population. Most neighborhood residents are homeowners that communicate well with each other and want to protect their investment. The respondent defined long-time residents as those individuals that have lived in the neighborhood for at least 12 years. By default, newcomers were those that lived in the neighborhood for less than 12 years but especially those that have lived in the neighborhood less than 3 years.</p> <p>He felt that people generally behave as he would want a good neighbor to behave, which consisted of keeping up their property, not making too much noise, and being respectful of everyone. The neighborhood residents try to get to know each other. They have a neighborhood</p>	<p>community membership.</p> <p>This could be interpreted as evidence of inclusive or exclusive community membership.</p> <p>Possible evidence of high accountability.</p> <p>Possible evidence of rigidity about the community rules.</p> <p>Possible evidence of high accountability.</p>

Date	Notes	Analysis
	<p>party or get together about every 6 months, which gives newcomers an opportunity to meet everyone.</p> <p>The respondent believed that long-time residents tended to do a better job of watching what goes on in the neighborhood because they're "more knowledgeable" about the neighborhood and its habits. He believed that both long-time residents and newcomers complain about what is going on in the neighborhood about the same amount but felt that 90 percent was constructive in nature. This primarily took the form of reporting issues to the city. He believes this is good because it indicates that people care about the neighborhood. Likewise, he believes that both long-time residents and newcomers both work hard at keeping the neighborhood looking good. Everyone mows their lawn regularly. There are no broken windows in the occupied properties and no derelict vehicles in the driveway or on the street.</p>	Possible evidence of high accountability.
	<p>The respondent answered "sometimes" to survey question 13 but he wasn't quite sure how to interpret it. The neighborhood is mixed and he spends time with a variety of people in the neighborhood. He indicated that most of his acquaintances and friends lived both inside and outside of the neighborhood. Most of his acquaintances and friends are through their church, which is racially diverse with about half the congregation being African-American. He indicated that integrated church services are a very big change that he's noticed over the years.</p>	Possible evidence of a government approach to community.
	<p>The respondent indicated that there are so few people living in the neighborhood that he'd rather not live there than it's essentially a non-factor. He told of his experience living in a mostly Black neighborhood in north St. Louis city</p>	Possible evidence of rigidity about the rules of the community.
		Possible evidence of inclusive community membership
		Possible evidence of inclusive community membership.
		Respondent seemed to be trying to make a point of demonstrating his open-mindedness about diversity and racial

Date	Notes	Analysis
	<p>where he felt comfortable and never had any issues and a time he lived in a predominantly White neighborhood in South St. Louis city where, less than a few weeks after moving into the neighborhood, a "White Hoosier" tried to steal groceries from his car while he was taking them into his house. He doesn't particularly want renters living in the neighborhood because they tend not to take care of their property and are sometimes noisy. There currently aren't any businesses in the neighborhood that he would prefer not to be there. He doesn't want certain types of businesses in the neighborhood such as liquor stores because he believes they will attract the wrong element. He thinks a gym would be good for the neighborhood. But generally everything that one needs can be located within a few blocks of his residence.</p> <p>In closing the respondent indicated that addressing the Delmar Divide is an ongoing issue but it won't happen through government programs like school desegregation. He believes that people who share the same values will have to make a deliberate choice to pursue diversity.</p>	<p>tolerance. I believe what he was telling me was true but I question if the respondent was making a special effort because I am African-American.</p> <p>Possible evidence of exclusive community membership.</p> <p>Possible evidence of exclusive community membership.</p> <p>Possible evidence of an aversion to a government approach to community.</p> <p>Suggests a community of belief.</p>

