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ARTICLE

Practising lively geographies in the city: encountering Melbourne through experimental field-based workshops

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ABSTRACT

This article explores diverse ways of experiencing the city through an experimental field-based workshop supported by the Institute of Australian Geographers and this journal. The two-day methods practice workshop attracted 40 participants and aimed to train doctoral students and early career researchers in practices of observing, feeling, listening, mapping and visualizing the city. This paper aims to demonstrate how learning new methods that include Embodied Observation, Qualitative GIS, Locative Media Ethnography and Sonic Methodologies enabled 16 participants to encounter and experience the City of Melbourne in novel ways. The group learning environment and co-authored pieces that assemble diverse reflections demonstrate that the workshop is a form of innovative teaching and learning that has implications for Higher Education in Geography, but is yet to be explored more fully in the pedagogic literature. The experimental workshop has ongoing pedagogical benefits given the leadership, participatory and collaborative skills that unfolded when leading scholars, doctoral students and early career researchers came together to produce lively geographies of the city.

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Introduction

Lively geographies of the urban that focus on the complex, entangled, hidden relations between the human and nonhuman world call for novel methods of exploration (Amin 2015; Ash, 2013; Gibson, Warren, Laurenson, & Brown, 2012; Hawkins, 2015; Lobo,

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2018; Massey, 2005; McCormack, 2008). This paper argues that learning how to explore these hidden but lively geographies of the city is challenging but possible through experimental field-based method workshops. The original contribution of this paper stems from in-depth insights into the collaborative teaching and learning process that unfolded through a two-day urban cultural methods workshop held in inner Melbourne, Australia. The workshop demonstrates openness within Geography to interdisciplinary theoretical concepts and methodological tools from the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. Such openness dissolves rigid disciplinary boundaries and contributes to creative practices that strengthen as well as transform Higher Education in Geography. Hawkins (2015) reminds us that creative experimentation is an important means for engaging non-specialist audiences in geographical causes through "interventionary possibilities . . . offering the chance to compose worldly relations [between humans and non-humans, and their environments] differently" (p. 248). Such experimentation is central to the "creative (re)turn" (Hawkins, 2015, p. 248) within Geography and responds to the discipline's interest in a pluriversal world where "many diverse worlds are valued and belong" (Eshun & Madge, 2016, p. 778).

Embodied, participatory and practice-based field work attentive to sensory experiences, emotions, affect, and atmospheres has highlighted the difficulties of capturing the world as it unfolds around us (Dwyer & Davies, 2010; Longhurst, Ho, & Johnston, 2008; McCormack, 2008; Sexton, Hayes-Conroy, Sweet, Miele, & Ash, 2017). As urban cultural geographers, however, we are well placed to consider, learn and practice new methods from a range of disciplines and perspectives that can help us rethink our world and the ways we might capture this embeddedness. The national pedagogic workshop, "Cultural/Social/Urban Methods' that is the focus of this paper offered academics and doctoral students the opportunity to learn and practice new methods. Starting from a consideration as to how we, as geographers, might reflect upon and engage with city spaces, the four different approaches provided an experimental space for participants to trial methodological ways to explore the city – through Embodied Observation, Qualitative GIS, Locative Media Ethnography and Sonic Methodologies.

The paper is situated within a wider literature that recognizes the pedagogical benefits of fieldwork that places students at the center of the educational process (Anđelković, Dedjanski, & Pejic, 2018; France & Haigh, 2018; Higgitt, 1996; Kent, Gilbertson, & Hunt, 1997; Trevor, Dummer, Cook, Parker, & Hull, 2008). We are guided by Anđelković et al.'s (2018) call for attention to didactic-methodical approaches to fieldwork in Geography that value development of skills, enhanced motivation, improved social relations, interdisciplinary study, the application of diverse teaching methods and immediate contact with objects of knowledge. France and Haigh (2018, p. 1) in their review of fieldwork in Geography in Higher Education argue that it is "the most powerful learning invitation." They trace the evolution of fieldwork from the 1960s when didactic modes were teacher-centered and the field was "adjunct to the classroom" (France & Haigh, 2018, p. 1), to the 1990s when active learning focused on encouraging students to be investigators, and more recently from 2010 when the focus has been on "blended learning technologies" and a concern for student engagement that is ethical. France and Haigh (2018) argue that fieldwork is at the core of contemporary Geography and is a transformative, learning experience that encourages students to learn from doing. This

paper demonstrates that such active, student-centered learning is possible through immersive experiences of doing Geography in the city.

The paper has three main sections – Doing Geography, Collaborative Field-based writing and a Discussion/Conclusion. The first section "Doing Geography" focuses on the collaborative teaching and learning program that was developed in consultation with "experts" who led the individual field-based workshops. The second section "Collaborative Field-based writing" assembles diverse reflections emphasizing how the workshop emerged as form of innovative teaching and learning that had ongoing pedagogical benefits. These pedagogical benefits have implications for Higher Education in Geography, but are yet to be explored more fully. The four sub-sections work individually and can be read in isolation depending on the interests of the reader. The conclusion summarizes how the aims of the paper have been addressed and reiterates the original contribution of the paper to Geography and more specifically to this journal.

Doing geography: the teaching and learning program

The primary aim of the two-day methods workshop focused on "doing" Geography so that doctoral students and early career researchers could encounter and experience the city in novel ways (Table 1). The workshop was led by scholars from disciplines such as Geography, Cultural Heritage and Museum Studies as well as Media and Communications. Along with 40 participants, the aim was not merely to capture the various ways the city is lived, but also how research can be shared and communicated more broadly by creatively experimenting with difficult ideas. Academic peers introduced participants to experimental methods of observing, feeling, listening, mapping and visualizing the city. The pedagogical process of "training" participants involved building knowledge, skills and confidence in using new methods as well as in the analysis and presentation of findings. Group fieldwork as well as lunch and dinner breaks encouraged informal discussions with the five Workshop Leaders, Cultural and Urban Geography Study Group Convenors as well as participating academics, and contributed to enhancing a convivial, supportive learning environment.

Each group focused on the central aim of learning and practising experimental field-based methods that would provide innovative insights into lively as well as hidden geographies of the city. The group who engaged in Embodied Observation were asked to use auto-ethnographic styles of inquiry to explore the role of affect in structuring as well as animating the form and content of exhibitions at the Melbourne

Table 1. Workshop program.

DAY ONE	
11.30 am	Registration and Lunch
12 pm – 12.30 pm:	Group introduction to the workshop by study group convenors. Brief introduction by each expert and their method (5 mins each).
12.30 pm – 6pm	Work in method groups. Each expert provides an overview of the method and explains the field exercise. Commence fieldwork exercise.
	Group dinner and options of night fieldwork
DAY TWO	
9 am – 12.30pm	Groups complete fieldwork and analyse data collected.
12.30 pm – 1.15 pm	Lunch
1.15 pm – 3 pm	Groups continue data analysis and prepare short presentations of learning method
3-5pm	Each group delivers a 15-minute synopsis of their fieldwork experiences.

Museum. The group who engaged in Qualitative GIS were asked to use sketch maps and web-based GIS platforms to visualize the cultural vibrancy of Melbourne. The third group who focused on Locative Media Ethnography were asked to explore urban trajectories using digital platforms such as Instagram as they walked in public spaces. Participants who used Sonic Methodologies were asked to pay attention to the role the body plays in listening to lively geographies of the city as they sat on the grass outside the State Library of Victoria.

At the conclusion of the workshop participants were invited to contribute a collaborative piece of writing. Motivated by the Workshop leaders, the focus was on highlighting their experiences of experimental fieldwork. The goal was to encourage different styles of writing that would draw attention to experiences of the city in ways that include but also go beyond the norms and values of "mainstream western pedagogy" (Simpson, 2014, p. 7). This goal resonates with France and Haigh's (2018) call for fieldwork pedagogy that is less UK-centred and more international and inclusive.

Collaborative field-based writing

Embodied observation

Andrea Witcomb with David Leo Kelly, Mohd Fabian Hasna, Natalie Kon-yu, Fatemeh Shahani, Shanti Sumartojo and Ellen van Holstein

Participants used a step by step approach, outlined below, to articulate the links between experience, emotion and thought, and they reported on specific moments of encounter with the exhibitions at Melbourne Museum. This enabled a linking of the form and content of the exhibition to wider questions of individual and collective memory (to see the methodology in action see Witcomb, 2015a, 2015b). The approach is sensitive to the formal qualities of exhibitions in mediating between affective and rational forms of meaning making. Particular attention is paid to the following:

- the immersive, multimedia nature of exhibitions – objects, images, film, sounds, written words; multiple senses: sight, auditory, movement/physical engagement, touch;
- the use of different modalities of communication – written, visual/aesthetic, spatiality, sound as well as different modes of address – authoritative, personal, didactic as well as interactive;
- the emergence of feelings and emotions.

Given this framework, participants were asked to use their own body and subjectivity in a reflexive auto-ethnographic approach that blended more traditional form of textual analysis with an affective and rational engagement with the exhibition. These are the steps they were asked to follow (Table 2):

Participants spent the afternoon of Day One immersing themselves in the *Forest Gallery*, an installation which stimulates thought on large-scale climatic change and its impact on landscapes and humans; *Love and Sorrow* an exhibition commemorating WWI and *First Peoples*, an exhibition narrating the histories and culture of Indigenous

Table 2. Embodied observation: developed by Andrea Witcomb.

Step One Start with your own engagement with the exhibition	(i) Do a slow walk through the exhibition. Spend time amongst its various elements and let it draw you in. Engage with what you are drawn to. (ii) Sit down somewhere and reflect on your experience. Ask yourself: What was I drawn to? How did it make me feel? What did I think about in response? What was that about? How would I summarise its narrative? What turning points were there for me in that narrative/experience? (iii) Write your thoughts down. Be open to your feelings, document your reactions (physical, emotional, cognitive).
Step Two Return to the exhibition with your camera and recording devices. Use them to:	(i) Photograph the displays that you were drawn to, taking care to capture them as a whole. Then attend to the details so you can recapture individual components and their labels, sounds, moving images. (ii) Document their placement – what goes before, what goes after (iii) Observe how other people respond as well – what they do, how they move, what they say. Make a mental note and a written note later. It's an insight into how the same displays move other people. If you have conversations with them, make a note about those too. Be attentive to language, images, emotional registers, the aesthetic qualities and the design of space
Step Three Document and reflect on the exhibition's impact.	(i) Start thinking about what it is about you that led you to those feelings, emotions, thoughts. (ii) How did those characteristics engage with who you are - your identity(ies), life experiences, your knowledge, your political and ethical outlook, your belief systems? Write down your thoughts.
Step Four Take a bird's eye view	(i) Draw a sketch of the layout of the exhibition – the sequence of themes, their spatial arrangement. Consider any interesting alignments across the exhibition, juxtapositions, and their effect. You are looking for disjuncture as well as the links between things. (ii) Overlay onto the map things like the use of colour, geometric shapes and plans. Reflect and document your thoughts on the effect of this level of organisation of the exhibition. Think about how these things create an emotional landscape for the visitor to experience.
Step Five Going out, away from the exhibition	(i) Think about the wider context within which the exhibition sits. For example, what is the contemporary relevance of its themes? How does it play or engage with the wider issues and debates in the public sphere? Is there a position in these debates? (ii) Does it reinforce or challenge received narratives? (iii) How does it engage you, from where you sit in these debates? Does it reinforce your position or does it challenge it? How would you describe and argue for what it is doing and, importantly, how you are engaging with it? How do you think someone else, from a radically different perspective would engage with it? Would it be saying the same things to them, or different things? Who is it comforting, who is it making uncomfortable and to what end? (iv) How does it position you in relation to others? What kind of relational position do you, as a visitor, take up with this exhibition? (v) Finally, what theoretical tool kits are necessary to explain your engagement and further develop your analysis?

peoples in the context of ongoing colonization. Day Two was spent discussing thoughts and collating notes for a joint group presentation.

The step-wise learning program encouraged reflection on individual peoples' biographies and collective memories, as one would expect from an auto-ethnographic

approach. This is reflected in the written accounts produced by participants and quotes below. Most however, found it hard to make the move from identifying feelings to analyzing the work that produced those feelings, showing that auto-ethnographic work is challenging, because it requires repeated engagement in detailed reflection with the site of analysis and an ability to move beyond personal accounts. As a result, few of the accounts read as scholarly engagement with the exhibition and are instead, evidence of the impact of the exhibition itself on the workshop participant. In other words, we produced an interesting set of transcripts that would be very useful in an analysis of audience engagement with the exhibitions in question.

In general, participants spent more time on steps 1 to 3 than on 4 and 5, limiting their ability to connect individual experiences in specific parts of the exhibition to the larger whole – whether at the level of the exhibition itself or the wider social world. However, they were all able to link specific moments in the exhibition to questions of form and content, and the ways in which these opened up a space for personal reflection. The results therefore, were a series of statements on their experience in the gallery, but for the most part, not a fully developed account of how the exhibition worked. That would require more time than we had as well as further work on being able to move into steps 4 and 5.

The *Forest Gallery* proved a hard space as most were seduced by its beauty and reveled in it – as visitors rather than critics. Nevertheless, the formal qualities of the space produced some really affective reflections, key amongst which were those of Fatemeh Shahani who gave an account of the ways in which these qualities of the gallery enabled her to reach back into the bitter sweet memories of her childhood in Iran. It indicated very powerfully the unexpected ways in which exhibitions can tap into individual memories, but also how a formal process of reflection can identify what it is that drives such experiences:

> When I arrived in the forest space after passing the dark and cold area of the water resources space, I couldn't follow the main steps of the observation rules . . . that we should walk slowly for the first time. Instead, I was running fast without any consideration that I had come here to observe the space, rather than to play. Suddenly I stopped, looked around and listened to the music of the waterfall and birds, saw the tall and green trees with the nice smell of moisture in the space. I didn't know what was happening at that time, I just knew that I felt comfortable, was familiar with this space, and seemed to have been there before. I felt that my body was part of the space and did not feel as if I was in a strange space, unlike other parts of the museum.

Fatemeh's attempt to explain her feelings led her to think about her own personal biography (Step 3) and her position as an international doctoral student in Melbourne from the northern part of Iran where she lived between the forest and Caspian Sea. Simply put, the *Forest Gallery* transported her back to the warmth of her childhood home – her family and memories of picnics and babbling brooks:

> When I was in the forest area of the Melbourne Museum, I remembered my childhood. Back at home, most of the time during the weekend we went to the forest with family and friends, played with sisters and cousins, enjoyed the pure nature, laughed and were happy. Moreover, it was like a collective memory for me, especially when I listened to the waterfall sound in the forest area, something that I had heard before.

In the forest, she became that child again creating, as she put it, "a conflicted feeling: I was happy to be reminded of my beautiful childhood days, but upset to be reminded of a sense of loss". The auditory and visual elements of the gallery gave rise to a powerful sensorial landscape in which Fatemeh gave testimony to the sense of loss migrants can experience, but also the ways in which a sense of belonging can be reactivated:

> My personal emotion in the Forest Gallery therefore had two sides; on one side I unexpectedly missed my home, family and childhood which are far from here. On the other side, for me it was like a sense of belonging in that space, because in any sort of space with characteristics of nature, I think that I am a part of that space and feel right in it.

Other participants focused on the formal qualities of the space, such as its scalar qualities from the miniscule (tiny insects) to the gigantic (mountain ash trees), differences in temperature – cold and humid to being able to feel the sun's warmth, differences in light and the movement up the slope, all encouraged a slowing down of pace and engagement with detail. Such a slowing down was both a pleasurable experience but also a subliminal one. Most participants found it hard to use this awareness to move towards the next level of analysis which involves recognizing the underlying narrative of the gallery. While many expressed their appreciation of the delicate balance between humans and nature, few could actually say what the nature of the relationship was – they were unable to elaborate on their subliminal experiences. For example, Mohd. Fabian Hasna recognized that "Through this close encounter journey with 'real' nature, I came to believe that the natural environment needs more attention and empathy from us in order for the next generation to experience and benefit from it."

Shanti Sumartojo gave an account which clearly indicated her awareness of the ways in which the exhibition design encouraged a slowing down, but also implicitly provided a critique in her indication that the pleasurable experiences made her unwilling to engage with the narrative aspects of the display. Thus Shanti wanted to respond to the "series of invitations – to slow my pace, to notice surroundings, to still the body and let birds and other animals become apparent". She said "The narrative about the Australian landscape was all around me, evident as I transitioned from a section about climate to one about fire, across a textual threshold as I moved up the hill into the light". Although the gallery is embedded in a bigger narrative about settler-colonial relationships, the experience of being in this gallery was powerful but less inviting of critical analysis of these realizations. The bigger picture required an engagement with all the steps and some galleries made it challenging to do so because of the richness of the sensory environment. Arguably the presentation of this gallery as "natural" made it appear less open to narrative analysis.

Love and Sorrow was an exhibition that did illicit a more sustained engagement, perhaps because its themes, dealing with the ongoing legacy of war, encouraged participants to make connections between the material on display and the larger narratives of the exhibition. The exhibition relates the history of WWI to descendants of people who experienced the war first-hand; these descendants were involved in making the exhibition. It reflects the importance of personal connections for producing a link between affective encounters and deeper forms of critical reflection. Natalie Kon-yu focused on the relationship between human stories, objects and their unfolding through time. She noticed that this exhibition did not replay the usual "platitudes", heroizing those involved. Instead, as she says, the exhibition's "narratives focussed on the real, lasting

damage caused by war and the way in which it seeps through generations". Her account clearly shows how she got to that conclusion by analyzing the connections between her feelings and what generated them – human faces, objects that belonged to them and the emotions of those involved. Natalie observes that:

> the pictures of soldiers placed above or below larger pictures of their friends and families . . . immediately took the soldiers out of the lone hero narrative, and contextualized them within easily recognizable family relationships.

Later in the exhibition she notices "the use of personal affects, letters, playing cards, booties" and connects these to the personal stories told at the beginning. As she puts it:

> These quotidian items take on grave proportions in these kinds of exhibits. I recall the letter written by Eliza Avery to her son, and the phrase 'I would give all that I possess to clasp your hand this day', when I was acutely aware that she didn't get to clasp his hand ever again. To see the letter, with those words written on it, chilled me.

The most fully worked out account, using all the steps in the methodology was from the *First Peoples* exhibition, possibly because its environs do not provide a respite but are, on the contrary, explicit invitations to engage in critical reflection. Here, workshop participants David Leo Kelly and Ellen van Holstein took up the invitation to work with emotions to figure-out what work the display was doing. They provided detailed accounts of the connection between what they saw, how they engaged, and the feelings this provoked, as well as the reasoning this led them onto, thus being able to demonstrate, through their auto-ethnographic accounts, how the exhibition works. As they put it, "The method of embodied observation makes one attuned to the ways in which affect is instrumental in how these stories are told". Thus they could identify that "the entry points of the exhibition's three sections – pre-contact, early encounters and shared histories – are articulated by a messenger who sets the tone and provides the historical context of the section to come".

David and Ellen went on to recognize that "in-between these punctuations, curatorial techniques elicit affective experiences, which simulate potential experiences in the 'real world'". In doing this, they argued, the designers of the exhibition, "place emphasis on the need to not only hear and see people's stories, but to also feel them". In their account, they gave testimony to their feelings but also worked with the methodology to analyse how those feelings prompt critical engagement with and reflection on settler-colonial relations. While the methodology of embodied observation revealed the techniques used in the exhibition to produce emotions such as curiosity, response-ability and empathy, it also allowed "reflection on resonance of the exhibition within larger debates", allowing them to conclude that the purpose of the exhibition was to "encourage the rethinking of dominant opinions".

Qualitative geographic information systems

Chris Brennan-Horley with Caitlin Buckle and Raven Cretney

Rather than viewing GIS as rigidly quantitative, "Qualitative GIS" situates geospatial technologies within the wider field of qualitative techniques including interviewing, ethnography and visual interpretation (Cope & Elwood, 2009). Recognizing GIS as

flexible permits productive epistemic collisions at the intersection of qualitative inquiry, cartographic representation and spatial analysis (Brown & Knopp, 2008; Gibson, Brennan-Horley, & Warren, 2010). Despite continued interest in spatial methodologies from qualitative researchers, qualitative GIS remains underutilized in Australian scholarship. While Desktop GIS presents a steep learning curve, developments in web-based GI platforms offer an alternative (Marsh, Golledge, & Battersby, 2007; Songer, 2010). Rapid visualization strategies permit novices to quickly generate results without getting bogged down in the finer details of projections, georeferencing or symbology (to name a few).

As a qualitative researcher conversant in both desktop GIS and web-based approaches, the "innovative qualitative methods" workshop was an opportunity to impart my knowledge of qualitative GIS via sketch mapping and the affordances of webmaps. Sketch mapping involves introducing a base map of a study area into a traditional semi-structured interview for markup by participants (Boschmann & Cubbon, 2014). The act of drawing onto a paper map and thinking through spatial narratives then becomes an opportunity for qualitative researchers to (partially) represent the diversity and complexity of lived experience. These alternative cartographies can be quickly visualized via web GIS with the intention of generating reflections about underlying socio-spatial processes.

The sketch mapping exercise

The workshop was designed to suit a mix of users ranging from skilled GIS practitioners to curious novices. The common thread being that they were all interested in applying GIS to their various qualitative research projects. The research activity covered data generation through sketch mapping, and data conversion into webmaps for visualization and reflection. The research hypothetical was to map and discuss the "coolest" places in Melbourne. Previous qualitative GIS research has used similar questioning to generate maps and quotes about urban cultural vibrancy (Gibson et al., 2012). The task resonated with participants as Local and interstate visitors each held opinions about what they liked most about this particular city.

The sketch mapping process involved paired interviews, with each participant taking turns as interviewer and interviewee. Paper maps of Melbourne's street network were used to mark out "cool" places. The short time-frame negated audio recording and transcription but brief notes were made about each site mentioned. These served as rough codes for later analysis.

Following the face-to-face mapping activity, 128 markings of cool places were converted from paper to digital format. Everyone collaborated on a shared Google My Map, adding a single latitude/longitude point that best represented the centroid of each marking on their paper map. Each point held a site name and brief notes in its associated popup window. The collective data layer was exported from Google My Maps in KML format and imported directly into carto.com, a more fully featured web GIS with greater database, spatial analysis and visualization capabilities.

We made a map! outputs and realizations

An animated and searchable version is available here (https://brennley.carto.com/viz/2b5d0002-73f6-11e6-a91d-0e3ebc282e83/public_map). The inset image is an example of a paper sketch map generated through the interview process. One of the simple

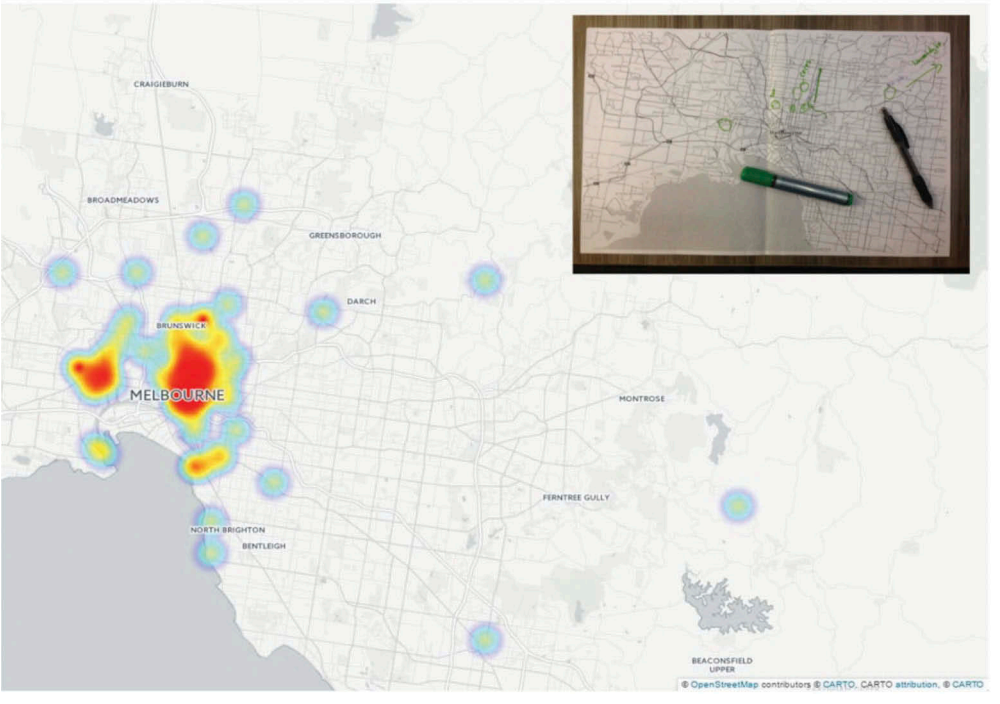

Figure 1. "Cool" Melbourne mapped by participants.

visualization strategies available in carto.com is an animated density surface, adding colour and movement to an otherwise static dataset (Figure 1). Concentrations and distinct sites of "cool" Melbourne were evident in the cartographic display and the accompanying qualitative coding embedded in the data table. Over the course of the 2 days much discussion materialized around the various affordances and shortcomings of sketch mapping, interviews and associated spatial analysis. Rather than detail these discussions, the remainder of this section draws on reflections from two doctoral researchers that are emblematic of the pedagogical benefits of the workshop.

Doctoral researcher Caitlin Buckle enjoyed learning about GIS in the supportive context of like-minded researchers:

> An effective aspect of Chris Brennan-Horley's short introduction to qualitative GIS was that he gave us the fundamentals of a handful of tools in order for us to independently investigate which tool, or tools, suited the research question best. The short yet broad outline of possibilities countered dominant ideas of GIS as content-heavy, not user friendly and time consuming.
>
> The group was a mix of various levels of research experience and fields which made for a very interactive learning experience. The diverse backgrounds prompted brainstorming into how web-mapping tools and our newfound GIS knowledge might aid or develop our own research.
>
> Enthusiasm was high by the end of the two days, which is uncharacteristic of new learners to GIS! The work of familiarizing yourself with the intricacies of more complex commercial

> GIS software is often dry and frustrating. The beauty of web-mapping software is the usability, and accessibility.

Doctoral researcher Raven Cretney also benefited, overcoming her fear of quantitative data and generating maps using GIS:

> To be frank, the thought of quantitative data was scary, and something I didn't think necessary for qualitative research. However, this workshop showed me not only that I could learn how to manage numeric data, but that its relevance goes beyond quantitative methods.
>
> Not only does GIS provide a way to communicate research outcomes with participants and others, but also caters to people with different learning styles. I found that the ability to use GIS has greatly improved the way I can communicate with members of the public about my research. I have already garnered interest from people by posting these on my research project Facebook page. I am looking forward to continuing the journey of learning.

Raven was able to quickly operationalize her new found knowledge toward understanding her own research data from a spatial standpoint. These two reflections illustrate a pathway for qualitative researchers looking to begin working with spatial technologies. First, as noted by Marsh et al. (2007), Songer (2010) and others, web-mapping tools like carto.com and Google Maps effectively countered an otherwise steep learning curve. This is not to argue for a dumbing down of geospatial education but rather to treat webmaps as an accessible and time saving introduction to spatial technologies. This workshop would not have proceeded if desktop GIS was the only option, but skills gained in visualizing vector data in carto.com could – with a little effort and direction – transfer to the desktop setting. Second, the learning environment aided conceptual understanding amongst participants. Working amongst like-minded qualitative scholars permitted open discussions about possibilities and limitations. Finally, the workshop-based intensive format permitted the requisite immersion and repetition required when learning new software. The overall aim in running this workshop was to kick-start an interest amongst participants that might foster future engagements with geospatial technologies. Many left with fresh ideas about incorporating a small aspect of qualitative GIS into their research toolkit.

Locative media ethnography

Peta Wolifson and Michele Lobo

We assemble in a bright airy room at the RMIT City campus, Melbourne. The convenors of our session, Heather Horst and Edgar Gómez Cruz introduce the group to the theoretical dimensions of engaging in digital ethnographic research that is encapsulated by five principles – multiplicity, non-digital-centric-ness, openness, reflexivity, and the unorthodox (Pink et al., 2016, p. 8–15). These principles and considerations frame our exploration of the theoretical and practical dimensions of the digital in ethnographic work – its opportunities and limitations, and the importance of a measured approach.

In groups we work with the common theme of "Planes and Trajectories", immersing in and attuning to experiences as we move through the Melbourne CBD. We ask: "How are trajectories made visible in the city?" "What are the kinds of trajectories that are

possible by the geographies of the city?" "Whose trajectories are, and are not, visible?" We venture out of RMIT University in separate groups but remain digitally connected throughout the day with #methods – the experimental feeling of the day is set in motion. As ethnographers, we set out to explore through practice how feelings, relationships, objects, events, practices, localities and social worlds come together in public contexts (Pink et al., 2016).

Multiplicity

Michele Lobo and her partner Zainil explore food trajectories and the material infrastructure that supports them along Swanston Street, the central spine of Melbourne CBD. Differences in knowledges and approaches provide challenges but also fruitful discussion, both a reminder of the need for more regular interdisciplinary work and the potential of digital technologies to express multiplicity. Here multiplicity is the notion that there is more than one way to engage with the digital, and groups embrace this sentiment organically through diverse experiential knowledges, disciplines, and familiarity with digital tools. The groups are forged through shared interests across disciplines – Geography, Cultural Studies, Criminology, Education, Psychology and ICT. Peta Wolifson and her workshop partner have cross-disciplinary interests in night and day – it moves them to examine the temporal trajectories of a single place, Federation Square. They observe it as a site of moments of dis/engagement amid the mundane trajectories of the everyday.

Non-digital-centric-ness

The second principle, non-digital-centric-ness, (Pink et al., 2016, p. 8–15) allows the digital to emerge through the study of everyday life, rather than focusing on digital practices as a starting point. For Peta and her partner, research practice re-rooted in observation allows the digital to reveal its everywhereness throughout the day, evening, and night. Walking to, in, and around Federation Square, they approach their observational practice with a secondary mindfulness of the digital. While watching and listening, their field notes and photographs of the mundane goings-on slowly reveal the digital unfolding around them. En route to elsewhere, people pause in the square, and while this is a meeting point for some, it becomes apparent that many are there to make use of free Wi-Fi. There is music playing, and images are projected on a large screen. At times these digital interjections jar against the multitude of other smells, images, sounds and sensation of being in the square – people chatting, seagulls barking, a young couple in their school uniforms kissing, and a tired mother and grandmother sitting down to rest. In pages and pages of Peta's notes, specific mentions of the digital are rare, yet there is constant engagement and disengagement with and through the digital here; it is embedded in everyday life. Pairs of eyes are fixed on much smaller screens, yet a smile appears, and connections expand outwards from this place.

Using the sale and consumption of food as their opening, Michele and Zainil also embrace digital non-centric-ness as they aim to observe, feel and reflect on how spatial justice is grounded in the central city. Issues of visibility and invisibility come to the fore. In this case, the digital emerges as significant through engagement with new, unfamiliar tools of research. Favero and Theunissen (2018) argue that smartphones and apps are allies that enable us to engage in audio-visual ethnography in a multi-sensory world.

These allies inform an affective pedagogy that is radical in the way it brings forth new habits, new perceptions, and attunes us to new ways of listening and relating to the world (Rose-Antoinette, 2016; Stewart, 2011). Moving through the city with a smartphone enhances affective listening or what a sensing body does, and how it engages with the materiality of the world before perception, experience and understanding. This technical object enables affective listening that provides comfort as well as discomfort in thinking about public space and spatial justice. Fincher and Iveson (2012) in their discussion of urban spatial justice, argue that there are tensions between normative concepts of justice and empirical analyses of what happens on the ground. In responding to these insights, digital technologies bolster affective listening that move Michele and Zainil to see injustice in the city in the midst of conviviality.

Openness

Michele uses Instagram for the first time; the process is easy and the experience exciting. She shares photos with Zainil and uses the wider group's hashtag to share and view images of others. Learning how to do this is possible because Zainil is patient and supportive – technological affordances in terms of opportunities come to the fore, rather than limits and challenges. At Federation Square, they meet two young tourists from China who have just arrived in Australia. The tourists express curiosity, there is convivial conversation, and all pose together for photographs. Zainil then follows her research interest and encourages Michele to get the "feel" of a community garden in an underutilized carpark, transformed into a tranquil "green" space in the city centre near the Federation Square complex. Zainil posts a photo on Instagram and in a few days this photo had 41 likes (Figure 2).

Openness is crucial to embracing the research process as an ongoing dialogue. Digital technologies allow more opportunities for tangible sharing, through Twitter, blogs and in other ways. Peta and Jess observe the relationships between the images taken, notes made, and the other digital presences in and around the spaces they move through. Digital ethnography is an open event, and pathways for exploration continue to reveal themselves through the process. In this improvisatory setting they discuss possibilities for broadening and maximizing analysis of the digital data collected, and the myriad of digital and social worlds that exist in and through Federation Square. #methods, Instagram images and websites created by the groups allow for discussion later by the larger workshop group. It becomes evident that Locative Media Ethnography is not a technique with a beginning and end, but a conversation with branches that expand outwards in any number of possible directions. But outside Brunetti café at the City Square (now demolished as the underground rail links expand), strangers brush past each other with little interaction. Photos are uploaded without consent, but discomfort is felt photographing those with disabilities. As evening falls, office workers enjoy a cold beer, while homeless people squat outside fast food restaurants. Late at night, when the streets are deserted, several large black garbage bags are visible on the street, and the homeless sleep.

Reflexivity

For Michele, the use of digital technologies attunes her to the diversity of consumers, the variety of shops and the range of food available. The embodied practice of using a smartphone and walking through the city with a friend proves important in "feeling" the city in a different way – she is moved. The smartphone, a technical

Figure 2. Zainil's photograph of the community garden on Instagram.
Source: with permission from Zainil Zainuddin

object, plays an important role in creating a spatial-temporal atmosphere. Ash (2013) argues that technical objects are not "lifeless mechanisms" because they communicate with each other and provide the opportunity to listen to the materiality of the world.

Michele and Zainil communicate with each other throughout the day with photo sharing, comments and "likes" as together they listen to the materiality of the world that affects them – open squares, green community gardens, crowded footpaths, coffee cups, cold beer, bright lights, "ethnic" shops and fast-food restaurants. These atmospheres attune them to those excluded from these spaces of consumption: homeless people who inhabit the street lined with restaurants and disabled people navigating the crowded footpath with difficulty. Upon reflection, photos of public spaces populated with what were assumed to be neurotypicals

had been uploaded without consent – but wasn't this just a playful, experimental exercise about exploring food trajectories in the multi-sensory city with a new field ally in the smartphone?

For this experimenting group, reflexivity emerges as the most important of the five guiding principles, as encounters with the public and with one another provide key talking points. Peta and Jess reflect on the significance of the minutiae observed and encountered throughout the day, sometimes confirming and sometimes interrupting previous understandings and familiarity with place. Digital images and the words selected to accompany them produce windows to reality. They focus attention on a man playing the cello or the friends relaxing in banana chairs. In considering trajectories and temporalities, Peta and Jess are drawn to experimenting with meeting places. But Federation Square is many things, and the many (more) decisions made possible through digital techniques add weight to the responsibility of using them.

Unorthodox

The presentations of observations using a range of digital technologies raises more questions about the production of knowledge. This is embraced by the group at large, who present their findings using a variety of digital tools, reflecting the fifth of Pink et al. (2016) principles – Unorthodox. Participants had familiarized themselves with new digital tools and so were able to consider the digital anew. In the group, we recognized that familiar questions asked by ethnographers need readdressing in a digital context. The digital in everyday life allows new approaches and ways of knowing the world. Indeed, the digital is now largely inextricable from new ethnographic knowledge, and the five principles allowed us to approach this reality with less trepidation.

Sonic methodologies

Kaya Barry, Michelle Duffy, David Bissell and Theresa Harada

Geography's interest in embodiment, non-representational and more-than-representational theories, affect and emotion each raise important questions about geographical method. How do we capture, make sense of, and express what are often ephemeral and "unsayable" ways of living in the world? Such interests prompt us to consider the event of geographical research itself. Paying greater attention to the differential and transforming capacities of our sensing bodies provides a fertile avenue of enquiry that takes us beyond the conventional parameters of analysis (Pink, 2004). Such attending might set-out to consider our bodily interactions with our world and with others to reconsider the promises of "data collection", its hesitant and stuttering nature, and its curious durations.

In this section, we reflect on these concerns through an experiment with sonic methodology. We acknowledge that such an approach begins with the body and asks us to attend to how we listen to the world, or how we are mindful of our bodies during the research process. However, to listen is much more than simply a sense gained through the ears. Listening occurs around and through our entire bodies, and draws our attention to ourselves not as separate entities situated within a place, but as complex relational beings that are enmeshed in all kinds of elements of that space. Our central concern reflects on questions of method to consider how we might teach and learn about this

specific practice of "making sonic experience" central (Anderson, Morton, & Revill, 2005, p. 643) to our research processes.

Merleau-Ponty, (2002, p. 275) argued in the *Phenomenology of Perception* that: "[M]y body is not only an object among all objects, but an object which is sensitive to all the rest, which reverberates to all sounds, vibrates to all colours, and provides words with their primordial significance through the way in which it receives them." He highlights that it is through perception that we respond to, make sense of and find ways to talk about the world. With this in mind, and in order to explore the potential of our experimental research approach, we begin from a position of mindfulness. Mindfulness suggests a thoughtful, attentive awareness of how we approach, conduct and immerse ourselves in research environments. Following Varela, Rosch, and Thompson (1991), we use the notion of mindfulness to draw attention to the sonic realm that encapsulates us, as researchers, and the embodied processes that emerge in-situ. It entails an observation of the tangible elements of place and space alongside a sympathetic openness to the phenomenological appeal of the material world and our own sensate bodies.

It is through an acknowledgement of the ephemeral qualities of environments that we can observe and reflect on our own bodily reactions to how we sense, and make sense of, the world. Sound or its lack, tempo and timbre, subtle rhythms or beats, as well as the ebb and flow of voice, music or ambient noises offer alternative ways to understand a range of environments which we as researchers wish to explore. We may feel the stillness in urban green spaces and open areas where bodies pause and waterfalls gently gurgle. But equally, we make sense of the way that the staccato click of high heels punctures the calm as someone picks their way briskly between stone buildings, moving with a sense of urgency from one position to another, leaving behind an echoing trail which marks their fleeting presence. We suggest that there is much to explore in this interweaving of places, where bodies and behaviours become a part of the sonic fabric of everyday life and where more traditional research methods may leave us wanting. When we as researchers can refine this methodology we have the potential to develop deeper understandings of the way that people, social norms, material conditions and cultural contexts are shot through with multiple layers of sound that situate and emplace bodies in a variety of ways.

Armed with audio recorders, headphones, and a sunny summer day, as a group we sat and listened on the grass outside the State Library of Victoria. The headphones amplified people chatting and walking, trams rumbling past, birds chirping, leaves rustling, and so on. The sonic clarity was overwhelming and proved challenging to disentangle from our other bodily sensations. For instance, we could hear the trams, and see them moving on the street, but also feel their rumbling through the tracks, concrete, and up through the soil and grass where we sat. Even with eyes closed, trying to focus on *listening*, the haptic and visual saturated our listening process. It was more than a "feeling-of" the sonic environment, it was a bodily "feeling-with" (Manning, 2013, p. 7–8). Later, in a quiet room re-listening to the recordings, the sonic was still entangled with our other sensations.

To be alert and mindful to sonic practices might be "a redistribution of processes in the making" (Manning, 2013, p. 8), where our processes of listening encompass waiting, watching, feeling, and moving, as a body in-situ. Mindfulness might be the capacity to register the affective tonalities and processes in a specific place. Importantly, an ethnographic practice of listening requires a situated body that is alert to the unheard: sensations in other modes, the background buzz, or a barely noticeable rumbling through

the earth. Being mindful of the listening process necessitates being responsive to sounds that move beyond the usual audible frequencies and habitual registers. In research, these "sounds that lie outside the 'normal' range [...] tend to be marginalized" (Gallagher & Prior, 2014, p. 269). We do not always recognize or identify what we are listening to, or how it envelops us. In this way, we see sonic methodologies as a generative process that necessitates considerable perceptual energy. With enough perseverance, patience, and mindfulness, it offers "conditions for emergence" (Massumi, 2008, p. 28) for unexpected and alternative sonic encounters.

In *The Embodied Mind*, neuroscientist and philosopher Varela et al. (1991) writes of the thoroughly embodied, place-based nature of cognition. Whilst his thinking is influenced by Merleau-Ponty's theoretical writings on the phenomenology of lived experience that we illuminated earlier, for Varela it is mindfulness that provides a practical method for exploring embodied experience. So what are we actually producing through this practical method of sonic mindfulness? There has been a tendency by some qualitative researchers to use devices such as sound and video recorders with the aim of producing "fuller", or more "accurate" depictions of the social phenomena in question. Yet, as the non-representational turn in geography has made crystal clear to us, both the practice of fieldwork and products of that fieldwork are not about holding a mirror up to the world, in an attempt to represent it with greater precision. Non-representational theories in geography have challenged us to reflect on how every fieldwork encounter is an experiment where bodies are affected and are being affecting differently. In this light, sonic mindfulness for us presented an opportunity to attune us to the specificity of the sites that we encountered. Through experimenting with sonic mindfulness we were listening to the "background hum" (Lorimer, 2008) that entwines our bodies and drifts in and out of our attention. It made us present with the sites, opening up a space to reflect on the nature of our embodied experience; as bodies seared by the sun, agitated by the melee, humoured by the off-beat. As Varela et al. (1991, p. 23) notes, the purpose of mindfulness "is to become mindful, to experience what one's mind is doing as it does it, to be present with one's mind".

Exploring how we sense sounds as individuals and within communities is significant to making sense of the emotional, affective and bodily responses that can constitute feelings of wellbeing, inclusion, connection and exclusion that we, as human geographers, seek to understand. Combining our attention to mindfulness with sonic methodologies provided us with opportunities to reflect on how we engage in and interpret everyday spaces through bodily registers. These nuanced encounters have revealed ways that we might approach the imperceptible, the intangible and the affective dimensions of place and also invites us to reflect on how such methodological practices can be learnt, refined, taught, extended or experimented with in ways that can enrich geographical thought.

Conclusions

This paper shows that the workshop is a transformative teaching and learning experience that has pedagogical benefits for doctoral students, early career researchers and academic peers. Faced with the challenge of exploring the lively but hidden geographies of the city, participants engaged in deeper thinking and reflections that contribute to refining the pedagogy and teaching framework within Higher Education in Geography. The four methods-based groups were guided by interdisciplinary scholars who used diverse,

innovative styles to encourage learning. These styles of building knowledge and skills are evident in the collaborative writing section where excerpts from individual reflections are foregrounded to provide a voice for participants. Sometimes, however, the participants lead the writing of the collaborative piece and the academic "expert" seems almost invisible.

In addition to building knowledge and skills, these pieces of writing show that the immersive practices of observing, listening, mapping and visualizing the city encourage curiosity, sensitivity, care, openness, enthusiasm, joy response-ability – qualities that are central to new spatial imaginations of place in Geography (Massey, 2001; Murphy, 2018). Intensities of feeling such as curiosity, enthusiasm and joy surface through collaborative writing and contribute to pedagogical benefits that are often much harder to measure. In this paper, these affects produce lively geographies of the city through experimental ethnographic styles that blend diverse voices. We show that the imagery of Geography within the mainstream as "intellectually dull" or "boring" at the millennium has been unsettled – Geography is back on the agenda and matters! (Massey, 2001, p. 12; Haigh, 2013; Murphy, 2018). But the blending of these voices that demonstrate why and how Geography matters also alerts us to the challenges that arise and the unexpected outcomes that take us by surprise during a field-based methods workshop.

Embodied Observation at the Melbourne Museum with exhibits that entangled the past and present encouraged an autoethnographic approach that called for slowing down the body. Personal biographies and collective memories immersed participants in this space – the exhibitions moved them. However, the desired aim of the workshop to critically reflect on underlying narratives proved challenging in a gallery that was a socio-natural accomplishment between curators and plants, rather than the product of curators only. Qualitative GIS encouraged participants to overcome their fear of using geospatial technologies by placing this method within the wider field of qualitative techniques that was often more familiar. Through confidence and the hands-on process of mapping "cool places", varied intensites of lived experience animated inner Melbourne. As in the Embodied Observation Workshop, the leader was inclusive by drawing in reflections from doctoral students that expressed enthusiasm as well as an awareness of their enhanced ability to communicate their research to a wider audience.

Locative Media Ethnography focused on exploring the multiple trajectories that make up the city. The reflection presented by two participants focuses on how they feel the city as they use their smartphones to capture, share and comment on photographs. These feelings that emerge through the process of affective listening is theoretically contextualized and grounded using five principles of digital ethnographic research – multiplicity, non-digital-centric-ness, openness, reflexivity, and the unorthodox. Sonic Methodologies also used technology to enhance the listening process, but it called for the body to slow down in its tracks within the buzz of a busy city. Time was spent reflecting on sounds and later writing a piece that theorized collective findings.

This paper shows that field-based workshops create lively geographies of the city by illuminating diverse spatial imaginaries that move beyond dominant western pedagogies. This was possible, however, through leadership and collaborative experimentation by participants who demonstrated generosity, humility and care inspite of diverse interests, time constraints, pressures and demands that are part of life in neoliberal universities which call for speeding up through a quick turnaround of theses/publishable outcomes. Rather than speeding up, we slowed down

through talks, discussion, fieldwork, emails and collaborative writing that has wider implications for how we do Geography within Higher Education as well as beyond. Thanks everyone!

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