

Observation Research

MVPL

Maya, Valerie, Peter, Lia

Method:

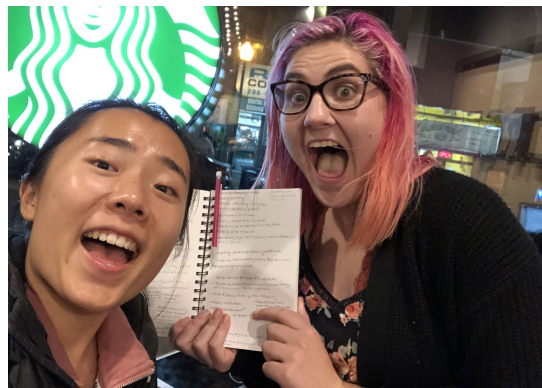
Our team chose to do a Fly on the Wall observation. The goal of this study was to observe and investigate the actions and behaviors of students walking in the U District at night. Since our user group is students walking in the U District at night, we observed students on the Ave around 7:00 pm on a Tuesday night (October 22). We chose this time because we knew that it would be dark outside and that students would be out walking home or meeting with friends on the Ave. We observed both females and males that we thought were students, other people that the students interacted with (ex. homeless), and the surrounding environment.

We split up into two groups in order to cover a larger area of the Ave (University Way Street). Group 1 (Lia and Valerie) sat inside the Starbucks on the Ave near 43rd from 7:00 - 7:30 pm. Group 2 (Peter) walked up and down the Ave from NE 45th to NE 42nd Street from 6:45 to 7:20 pm. Observations were recorded on either a laptop or notebook that was then typed up after the observation session. After observing, the whole team analyzed the data and came up with key takeaways that will help shape our future ideations.

Photos:



Peter walking and observing on the Ave



Lia and Valerie inside Starbucks

Environment:



Inside Starbucks where group 1 was observing



The intersection of 43rd and University Way (the Ave)

Key Takeaways:

- **Students walking around didn't seem scared**

Many people were walking in groups of 2+ and seemed happy to be hanging out with friends. A girl walking alone was just looking at her phone and didn't seem scared. We are assuming they were not scared because the area was busy and well-lit with lots of people around.

"Girls with boba were walking and talking with each other"

"(Assumed) couples walking together. Both seemed happy and not distressed being out at night"

- **People were more alert and/or walked faster when they passed homeless people**

A quiet homeless person didn't seem to bother people that were walking by, but a group of homeless people being loud and yelling caused people to stare and move away from them. A girl was approached by a homeless person and looked nervous after the interaction and went into the Starbucks.

"One girl sped past through the group of homeless people"

"A couple of people kept their distance from the homeless group"

- **There is a lack of police/security presence**

We didn't see a single police car or cop during the observation.

"Environment is very populated with driving cars and walkers. None of the cars or people were police"

- **People were interacting with their phone in some way**

Many people walking alone and/or in groups were using their phone while walking or had it in their pocket and checked it occasionally.

"Lots of girls who were walking alone tended to be looking at their phone"

"Girl walking with her phone in her hand and she occasionally looks at it"

- **Most people (students specifically) were wearing a backpack**

A majority of the people walking were wearing a backpack. Most of them had both straps on both shoulders, but a few just had their backpack casually hanging on one of their shoulders. And some were carrying other bags or items on their arms or in their hands.

“Two girls wearing backpacks walking together. One girl has a lululemon bag on her Arm”

“Girl walking with headphones in and holding a coffee mug/thermos”

- **People walking alone wore earbuds**

Many of the students walking alone had physically connected earbuds in their ears. Some had both in their ears and others had just one in their ear.

“Girl had air pods in her ear wearing her backpack walking alone but walking behind a group of guys”

“Female walking alone had earphones on and had a fast pace with long strides”

Appendix - Observation Notes:

Name: Lia Johansen

Date: October 22

Time: 7:00 pm – 7:30 pm

Location: Inside Starbucks on 43th:

Observations

Environment:

- By a cross 4 way with stop lights
 - o 4 cross walks
- Starbucks on the Corner, Café on the Ave
- Some cars are lined up on the road
- Light comes from the stores on the street
- Dark outside in the sky
- Environment is very populated with driving cars and walkers. None of the cars or police were police
- Two, two-way streets all coming into one intersection

People and interactions:

- Girl walking with backpack on half shoulder, carrying her water bottle talking with another guy
- Girl walking with guy with purse on her shoulder and phone in her hand and she's looking at it
- Hand carrying bag, and puts other hand in pocket and pulls out her keys
- Girl holding guys hand talking backpacks on phone is in her coat pocket kind of visible
- Girl walking and looking and typing on her phone looks up every so often to look where she's going
- Girl with backpack has her headphones in and carrying her phone in her hand
- Girls with boba were walking and talking with each other
- Girl waking kind of quickly with backpack and holding her water bottle
- Two girls holding hands. One is carrying a grocery bag
- Guy walks by with earbuds in and carrying grocery bag
- Girl walking by herself with a scarf on (it's cold) and her hands are in her pocket
- Man walking with earbuds in and phone in hand and looking at it
- Girl has earbuds in and booties on carrying a shoulder bag and a Starbucks drink in her hand
- Two girls wearing backpacks walking together. One girl has a lululemon bag on her arm

- Guy has air pods in and backpack on
- Girl air pods in her ear wearing her backpack walking alone but walking behind a group of guys
- Girl walking talking on the phone. Her phone is up to her ear
- Girl walking with her phone in her hand and she occasionally looks at it. She also has her earbuds in
- Girl walking by herself with backpack on her one shoulder and she's looking at her phone she's carrying in one hand. Stays really focused on her phone
- Homeless person with bike digging through the trash.
 - o People walk by but don't make eye contact
 - o Guy standing by him at intersection has earbuds in and is just on his phone ignoring the homeless
 - o People are ignoring him and casually walking by him
 - o He isn't making eye contact with any of the people passing him
 - o Guy struts with head up quickly by the man
- Girl on the street talking with her phone and her hand is on her lanyard around her neck. She's walking alone
- Two girls are walking. One of the girl's purse is in her hand (looks like it's connected to her wrist) and the other girl is carrying a food box
- Group of 4 boys walking together. One is carrying a food box and one guy has his hands in both of his pockets
- Girl on her phone, texting waiting at the intersection but then starts walking. Met up with a boy on the other side of the street and went into café on the Ave
- Around 7:20: not as many people walking. A little let up of people walking
- Girl and boy walking both with backpacks and girl is holding her phone in her hand
 - o They're both wearing sneakers
 - o Group of 3 girls walking and one is on her phone
- Two groups of three girls walking fairly close together
- Girl walking alone carrying a Safeway paper bag and crosses street and walks fairly quickly and keeps her eyes ahead of her
- Girl talking on the phone and looking down at the ground while she walks. Walks fairly close to the buildings
- Girl and boy. Girl has arm linked with the boy and they're talking together and she's carrying a plastic bag. Stays close to him
- Girl walking with headphones in and holding a coffee mug/thermos
- Guy walking with his head down looking at his phone. Once he crosses the street he puts it in his pocket and stares ahead but looks around slightly from side to side
- Homeless person carrying a pillow asks a girl something; they're both stopped at the sidewalk. The girls shake her head and walks a looks slightly nervous and walks inside of Starbucks and then goes to wait for the bathroom

Name: Peter Yim

Location: Walked Up and Down the Ave from NE 45th to NE 42nd Street

Time: 6:45 - 7:20pm

Environment: Area was populated during this time with many college students walking alone/groups. Most parts of the Ave were very lit. A lot of homeless people on the streets sitting

- Girl walking alone. Was on her phone most of the time. Didn't look too scared
- Couples walking together. Both seemed happy and not distressed at being at night
- Two girls avoided homeless person when he started shouting. Just moved to the side a little. Stared at homeless man
- Couples holding hands walking together having a good time
- Female walking alone had earphones on and had a fast pace with long strides
- Quite homeless person minding his own business. Didn't seem to bother walkers compared to the homeless man who was shouting
- Group of homeless people on NE 45th in a dimly lit area near bus station just camping out and smoking
- One girl sped passed through the group of homeless people
- Most walkers didn't mind the group of homeless people as they weren't bothering walkers.
- Two girls and a guy walking past the same homeless group kept the same pace and same stride. Did not veer into different path. Stayed straight; didn't try and avoid the group.
- There were some instances where a couple of people kept their distance from the homeless group. They seemed more alert.
- People walking in groups don't seem to be afraid at all. Most people on the ave who are with friends seemed to be happy
- There are people outside bar making a ruckus and shouting and yelling and cursing to themselves
- Girl grabbed boyfriend's arm right when they crossed the drinkers at the bar
- Two homeless people fighting. People are staring or looking at why they are screaming
- One guy is clipping his toenails
- Not a single cop car or policeman during observation
- Total of 23 different sketchy people during my observation
 - My definition of sketchy: Not well dressed, smells, looks scary, stares, shouts, dirty clothes, carries a lot of luggage

Insights:

- Lack of police
- Ave is very active (mainly b/c dinner time) and therefore is populated with many lit areas
- There are a lot of sketchy people. All throughout the Ave there is at least one in each block.
- People don't seem that bothered/afraid when homeless people are quiet and keep to themselves. Only when they start acting weird/yelling do people feel more alert and keep distance

Name: Valerie

Location: Starbucks on the ave looking at the intersection between 43rd and University Ave

Time: 10/22 7-7:30pm

Environment:

- Looking out onto the street. To the left there is an intersection with four crosswalks.
- The crosswalk area on the corner of 43rd was more populated than the street leading up to 43rd

Observations Female:

- Holding hands with boyfriend/ SO
- Large groups of travelers on the ave
- A lot of groups of 2 girls
- Lots of girls who were walking alone tended to be looking at their phone
- When parting with friends, girls tended to take their phone out
- Lots of people walking with their hands in their pockets
- Walking and texting -> questionable attention to one's surrounding
- Walking and eating
- Phone in hand for most walking girls
- Looking at reflection in mirror or window as they walked passed
- Tend to stay on the side of the sidewalk closest to the buildings (no matter which way traffic was flowing)
- Most walkers are in groups of 2+
- Hands in pockets
- Lesbian couple (im assuming) holding hands 1 big, 1 small
- Doesn't actually pay attention or look up from phone when crossing the street like half the time
- Girl air pods in her ear wearing her backpack walking alone but walking behind a group of guys
- People tended to either look up at the sky or down at the ground when walking behind someone they did not know. They never really looked at the backs of the people in front of them
- 2 girls were walking and looking at one phone
- Group of friends holding arms as they walk
- Checks time while walking
- Girls on phone are more common than men on phone
- Groups take up the whole sidewalk and stagger a little bit so there are 2 in front, one in back or some variation of that staggering.
- Running to catch up with friends
- Either consciously looking around or at phone only
- Someone standing in the middle of the sidewalk blocking traffic just a little

- Looking into store windows.

Observations Male:

- Walking and texting
- Onn phone texting while walking
- Walking fast
- Vaping as they walk
- Groups that were walking tended not to look at each other as they walked
- Headphones in and alone
- Looking around as they turned corners
- Eyes tended to be on the groups as they walk.
- Holding dinner in their hands (because it is the ave)
- When texting, eyes aren't looking around gaze is on the phone or on the ground
- Surprising amount of people following traffic rules at the big intersection
- Look up when passing someone they don't know
- Playing Pokemon go and walking
- Groups tend to stagger 2 in the front one in the back or some other variation
- I made awkward eye contact with someone who was checking themselves out in the window of the starbucks as they walked by (the action here is looking into the windows as they walk by)
- Looking at their phone, and then looking up the shift in gaze here was very quick
- Most of the bikers on the ave were male
- Looking at memes on twitter as they walked
- Will walk into street to pass people
- Homeless man found a dark ish corner to settle down in.
- Groups still mostly look forward as they walk.
- Most people have some form of music playing and were using headphones

Insights:

- Walking and texting has become an integral part of our walking culture. It's rare not to see someone multitasking like that
- Most people tune out the world around them by listening to something through their headphones as they walk at night