Quality

in Canada's Built Environment:
Roadmaps to Equity, Social Value and Sustainablity

Research Report on the Online Convention

Session **#4** - November 16, 2023
Lived Experience as a Prerequisite

Edited by:
Jean-Pierre Chupin (Scientific Director of the SSHRC Partnership on Quality)
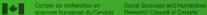
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2023 Online Convention, Session #4 – Lived Experience as a Prerequisite
Thursday, November 16, 2023 - from 12:00 to 1:30 PM

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Session agenda:
- *Introduction: 10 mins*
- *Breakout sessions: 30 mins*
- *Student's summary:5* 4 mins*
- *Plenary: 30 mins*

Keywords:
Accessibility, Apolitical Collection of Lived Experience, Barriers to Sharing and Collecting Lived Experiences, Building Common Ground, Collecting Lived Experiences, Common Ground, Community, Community Values, Economic Factors, Holistic Accessibility, Learning Experience, Lived Experience, Mental Mapping, Memory, People with Disabilities, Safety, Shared Values, Sustainability, Sustainability Beyond Norms.

Note:
This report explores the definition of lived experience as a prerequisite by examining community, accessibility, safety, sustainability, and memory in five breakout rooms and a subsequent plenary session. The discussions and comments have been collected. Additionally, the reporter synthesizes and summarizes the ideas, drawing conclusions and suggesting future discussions.

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Contents

1. Synthesis and Summary

The discussion began with critical questions addressing the interpretation and application of lived experiences, particularly in diverse cultural contexts. This led to explorations of the personal and social dimensions of lived experience, emphasizing the challenge of interpreting and integrating these experiences into the design process. Consequently, five prominent themes—Community, Accessibility, Safety, Sustainability, and Memory—and their correlation with lived experience were discussed. These themes originated from the 150 case studies on lived experience practices in the Calgary convention, covering diverse built environment cases. To comprehensively cover the main points discussed in this convention, this summary first delves into the participants' discussion about the essence of lived experience and the challenges associated with collecting it appropriately. Second, it explores the practical suggestions made by participants to collect lived experience and address its complexities. Finally, it examines the discussions surrounding the five themes and their relation to lived experience.

1.1. What Exactly is Lived Experience, and What are the Challenges of Collecting It?

The discussion started with a fundamental question: What is lived experience? Is it a purely personal phenomenon, or does it represent a shared common understanding? Also, the ease of collecting lived experiences has been discussed, considering that it was relatively straightforward for the previous convention due to shared project objectives. However, the challenge was raised regarding how to collect experiences from individuals outside the project, representing diverse social and cultural backgrounds? The discussion explored the complexity of when and how to collect these diverse lived experiences during the design process, acknowledging the need to ensure a comprehensive capture of their variability. The complexity and ambiguity of lived experience prompted a discussion on how to collect this vital information.
Initially, the conversation emphasized that lived experience is primarily derived from one's unique individual perspectives, gained through direct personal encounters, rendering it deeply personal. However, as the convention progressed, a nuanced perspective emerged, highlighting that lived experience is not solely personal. Collective forces, including political, cultural, and economic factors, play a substantial role in shaping lived experiences. These experiences are not random but are influenced by structures of power, colonial governance, and larger political and social systems, indicating a broader context beyond individual experiences. Additionally, the understanding of how someone's lived experience is situated and relates to others through their social identity was discussed. Despite its highly personal nature, lived experience is collected and shaped through relationships, context, and social environments. This diversity in lived experiences introduces contradictory notions of the built environment, posing challenges in both understanding and experiencing it. This, in turn, presents challenges for academics and professionals in effectively collecting and utilizing lived experiences in their projects.
Several challenges of collecting lived experience were discussed, such as the difficulty of collecting clear lived experiences on broad and complex subjects like sustainability. Questions arose about the appropriateness of asking participants to share their lived experiences on such topics.
 Another challenge in collecting lived experiences is that some people who are good at expressing their experiences might unintentionally support specific design choices, potentially using these interpretations against groups whose voices have not been heard. Furthermore, time

constraints in collecting lived experiences have been emphasized. Once gathered, these experiences require analysis, and budget allocation is dependent on that analysis. This underscores the significance of time limitations in the processes of collecting and utilizing lived experiences. Despite all of these challenges, there was a consensus that collecting and incorporating lived experiences early in the design process is beneficial.

1.2. Well, lived experience is challenging! how to unlock?

The exploration of what lived experience entails in the convention concludes that it is challenging to collect and use. One of the questions asked in all breakout rooms was how lived experience should be collected and utilized. Several ideas emerged suggesting practical ways to collect lived experience.

Responding to this question, four critical aspects emerged:

- *Firstly, it is important to determine whose voices should be heard:* Prioritizing ways to hear from individuals facing challenges in engaging with the community, including those who may not be adept at articulating their lived experiences. Additionally, specific considerations for gathering experiences from people with disabilities were discussed.
- *Secondly, it is crucial to recognize the responsibility of those collecting information towards the people:* This involves building trust, establishing relationships, and providing necessary support for individuals to share their experiences. The emphasis is on trust-building, reciprocity, and reporting study results back to the community. The importance of trust in informal community meetings was highlighted, focusing on meaningful interactions, storytelling, conversations, and building connections for a rich tapestry of experiences.
- *Thirdly, lived experience, by its own nature, is a learning experience:* The emphasis shifted towards the significance of collecting lived experiences rather than solely focusing on utilization, with the idea emerging that making these experiences public contributes to building knowledge. Participants proposed using lived experiences in shaping training for future designers and architects, focusing on extracting information to create a body of knowledge.
- *Fourthly, the suggested structure and approaches to collect lived experience:* The discussion recommended an apolitical approach to gathering data. Also, participants expressed a preference for collecting lived experiences in a manner that goes beyond anecdotal formats, aiming to gain insights and foster meaningful discourse. In terms of how lived experience should be collected, there was a consensus that meaningful interactions with others, sharing stories, engaging in conversations, and building connections contribute to a rich and diverse discussion.

After evaluating the discussions on lived experience, this summary examines how the conversations about Community, Accessibility, Safety, Sustainability, and Memory contribute to the understanding of lived experience.

1.3. Community

The concept of community was explored, highlighting its multifaceted nature. It was described as a group of individuals coexisting in a shared space, fostering a sense of belonging and security for open sharing of thoughts. However, the emphasis on shared values raised concerns about overlooking diversity within communities. The need to move beyond shared values and embrace

diversity was emphasized. The dynamic, process-oriented nature of community was stressed, advocating for active listening to various stakeholders.

1.4. Accessibility

Accessibility extends beyond physical access, encompassing dimensions such as race, sexual preference, and gender. For people with disabilities, a welcoming design fosters safety, while an unwelcoming one creates stress. To achieve these welcoming and accessible built environments, early inclusive conversations in the design process, engaging with stakeholders like academics and organizations, are needed. Waiting until later in the process proves less effective and more challenging and costly for implementing changes. It has been discussed that sometimes designers tend to design spaces based on the specific needs of people, such as individuals with autism. However, a balanced design without othering individuals is a more inclusive approach, allowing each group to feel safe within their community in the built environment.

1.5. Safety

It has been discussed that safety is a multifaceted concept shaped by personal preferences, temporal considerations, and individual or collective perspectives. Participants underscored the importance of feeling safe in diverse situations and explored the tension between individual and collective safety. There was a recognition that safety is a personal experience, extending beyond one's well-being to include the protection of others. The interplay between safety and density was highlighted, acknowledging that while density can provide a sense of security, it may also compromise personal space and create unease. Participants discussed the temporal aspect of safety, recognizing its variations across different times and seasons. The challenge of reconciling diverse perspectives on safety, including its connection to personal memories, was acknowledged. Moreover, the importance of collecting lived experiences through relational and conversational contexts was emphasized, offering insights into the nuances of safety perceptions. The multifaceted nature of safety in the built environment requires a thoughtful and inclusive collecting lived experience approach that respects individual experiences and considers diverse perspectives.

1.6. Sustainability

As it discussed, sustainability is a complex and multifaceted concept, involves achieving balance and equity across ecological, social, and economic dimensions. However, this broad definition often becomes a vague and political concept for citizens and professionals. The challenges of articulating personal sustainability experiences are evident, as observed in the 150 collected lived experiences in Calgary convention practice, where sustainability is mentioned only few times. A participant expressed concern about the lack of clarity surrounding sustainability and how it could be captured in people's lived experiences. It has been highlighted that effective communication and information translation, prioritizing collective understanding over individual viewpoints, might help in capturing such broad concepts in collecting lived experiences.

1.7. Memory

Memory, a complex and subjective phenomenon, emerges as a crucial element in conveying and understanding lived experiences within the built environment. Although the memory of the built environment is intricate, participants highlighted its significant role in shaping our lived experience. Stressing the diversity and uniqueness of memories linked to places and cultures, participants underscore the importance of recognizing that collective memory is not universal,

showcasing the variety of experiences within the public. The discussion delves into the conceptual and ever-changing nature of memory, exploring the link between social memory and design. It concludes by emphasizing the importance of relationships, trust, and open communication in collecting lived experiences. Particularly, when a participant wishes to share their memories, citizens should feel comfortable sharing personal experiences, highlighting the need for a supportive and trusting environment.

2. Introduction of Session

The session began by emphasizing that we are here to share our expectations and suggestions regarding the collection of real-life experiences, as we did in the three previous brainstorming sessions. It was mentioned that it was relatively easy to collect almost 150 positive experiences in Winter 2023 because we were all members of the same project. Now, how can we convince users from different cultures to share their experiences of public buildings and spaces? If we are responsible for public commissioning, at what point in the process can we take these testimonials into account to improve quality and processes? If we are professional designers and builders, do we know how to take into account the variety of experiences in our projects.

The moderator started with the question of considering lived experience and what that means for our individual research sites as well as the partnership overall. In Calgary, back in May, there was a reflection on positive lived experiences, resulting in a set of nearly 150 buildings, parks, projects, and landscapes that people wrote about. However, it was emphasized that the team questioned where to go from this. From the experience in Calgary, a clear relationship between the built environment's quality and lived experience was observed. In organizing this session, the team became interested in how lived experience can be interpreted and put into practice. What are the implications of taking this experience into account? So, what is lived experience? There are differing ideas and uses, but generally, lived experience is based on knowledge from one's unique individual experiences and perspectives, often gained through direct experience, making it deeply personal. But at the same time, lived experience is also about how someone is located and relates to others through their social identity.

Therefore, lived experience is both individual, but it is shaped always through relationships with others, with the context, and the social environments that we come from. That starts to complicate and raises a set of questions about how we then interpret lived experience. As designers, academics, and citizen groups, how do we take into account our own lived experience, as well as the lived experiences of others? Whose lived experience matters? How are these decisions made? How do we manage different interpretations in lived experience? What are the barriers to sharing and collecting lived experiences? We focused on the positive in Calgary, but not all lived experience is positive and in the context of the larger partnership, that is essential to take into account. And perhaps, most importantly, how can lived experience be incorporated into the work we are doing, and how can lived experience challenge the way that the built environment is designed, is imagined, and is built?

From the 150 case studies in Calgary covering diverse places, five prominent themes emerged: Community, Accessibility, Safety, Sustainability, and Memory. Regardless of the specific built environment, individuals often highlighted one or more of these themes in their reflections. Considering the implications of these themes for both personal experiences and our collective work could be a fruitful approach. It allows us to recognize the individual shaping of lived experience and explore its potential impact on our broader initiatives.

The second moderator discussed the session's design process, posing essential questions. The Moderator mentioned that we initially considered the constraints of time and online discussions, focusing on what knowledge could be generated. We delved into the lived experience booklet, emphasizing positive experiences of quality in Canada. Reflecting on interpretation as a chance to combine personal and critical perspectives, we aimed to recognize past achievements in the partnership. Our goal was to revisit notions, particularly lived experience, seeking a collective

and shared understanding. Lastly, we pondered how gatherings like today's can be grounded in common ground or contribute to building common ground.

3. Breakout Room Discussions

3.1. Group 1_ Lived Experience as a Prerequisite_ community

> Moderator: Samantha Biglieri, Toronto Metropolitan University
> Student summarizer: Achraf Alaoui Mdaghri, UdeM
> Jamboard link: (accessed on December 12, 2023)
> https://jamboard.google.com/d/1a_uAMmVH67pevS8DvqZQq2i9d6sUnq6i3SqceSkcSZ0/viewer?f=0

3.1.1. Discussion questions

(A) What comes to mind when you think about community? What does community mean to you?

(B) What might community mean from the perspective of a) citizens b) academic c) design professional?

(C) How do you want your lived experience to be collected? What do you want your lived experience to be used for and by whom?

3.1.2. Discussion

- Regarding the question of what community might mean, it was noted that there were insufficient ideas on the jamboard from the perspective of professionals. A participant responded to the inquiry about what community means from a professional standpoint, suggesting considering terms like radiuses and administrative boundaries.

- Regarding the meaning of community for professionals, one participant highlighted it as an ideological category. The challenge lies in aligning this conceptualization with the practical aspects of professional work and objectives, particularly when aiming to improve the quality of architecture in Canada. The difficulty arises from the lack of education on how communities should be considered in design, coupled with limited resources in terms of both time and finances within architectural practice. This leads to the convenient but incomplete treatment of community as an ideological concept, as it proves challenging to integrate into real-world terms.

- Regarding the professional perspective on community definition, another challenge is interpreting and implementing community engagement experiences. Professionals often lack the knowledge or authorization to effectively summarize lived experiences and translate them into design strategies.

- Statements about seeking shared values to reach to community can be problematic as they may contradict the essence of diversity, which stems from differences in values. Viewing community solely as a shared value can be negative, as it might overlook the diverse thoughts and perspectives within a community. There is a concern that this diversity may not be adequately acknowledged or recognized by academics.

- Community could involve a process-oriented approach, emphasizing the importance of listening to various stakeholders. This approach might be messier than starting with a preconceived notion of community or shared values. There is room within these considerations to view community as a dynamic process rather than a predetermined idea.

- Concerning how lived experiences should be collected, it is crucial to address two key aspects. Firstly, determining whose voices need to be heard is vital. Secondly, recognizing the responsibility of those collecting the information toward the people

listening is essential. This responsibility involves building trust, establishing relationships, and providing the necessary support for individuals to share their experiences. Discussing the collection of these experiences requires a serious commitment to this responsibility.

- Society often operates with narrow agendas and a right-versus-wrong attitude. Despite that it might seems naïve, there is an aspirational need to be as apolitical as possible. Politics, power, and prestige heavily influence decision-making in design and development, making it essential to collect experiences in an apolitical manner.
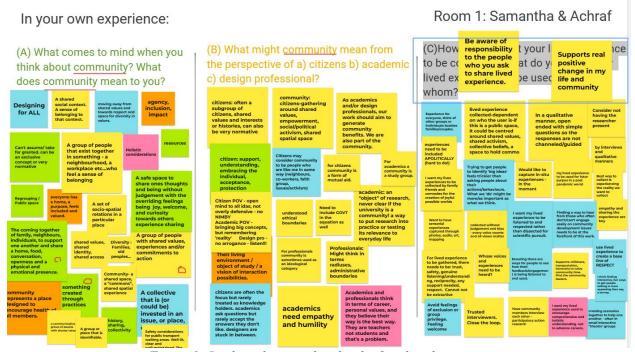

Figure 1. Jamboard screenshot for the first breakout room

3.1.3. Jamboard key points

- In response to the question about how individuals want their lived experiences to be collected, it was noted that encouraging people to identify 'big ideas' seems more challenging than inquiring about their actions/behaviors. Emphasizing the significance of what individuals 'do' might be just as important, if not more so, than what they think.
- To collect lived experiences effectively, certain elements are crucial: trust, safety, genuine listening/understanding, reciprocity, providing any necessary support, and maintaining respect. It should not be extractive in nature.
- To collect lived experiences, prioritizing ways to hear from individuals who may not easily or cannot readily engage in community development issues should be a primary focus of this effort.
- What community means is often centered around citizens, yet they are seldom regarded as knowledge holders. Academics pose questions but frequently resist accepting answers they disagree with. Designers find themselves in the middle.

- What community means from the perspective of academics and professionals is shaped by their career, personal values, and a belief in the superiority of their approach. They often see themselves as teachers rather than students, presenting a potential challenge.
- Regarding the question of what community is, it has been suggested to shift away from emphasizing shared values and move towards fostering respect and creating space for diversity in values.
- What community means: It has been suggested that it is a group of people coexisting in a shared space, such as a neighborhood or workplace, who experience a sense of belonging.
- What community means: A secure environment for sharing thoughts and experiences without judgment, characterized by predominant feelings of joy, welcome, and curiosity towards others' shared experiences.

3.1.4. *Student summary*
By Achraf Alaoui Mdaghri (Université de Montréal)
- To answer the question of what community means: it involves a shared context, a sense of belonging, a holistic view, and can also be exclusive or hermetic, characterized by shared values and identity.
- In response to the question of what community might mean for different groups, the student summarizer indicated that community is viewed very positively by citizens, less positively by academics, and somewhat negatively by professional groups.
- Regarding the question of how lived experience data should be collected, it was suggested that they should be gathered apolitically, acknowledging the challenges in achieving this. Additionally, building trust, ensuring reciprocity in the collection process, and reporting the study results back to the community were emphasized.

3.2. Group 2_ Lived Experience_ Accessibility
Moderator: Paloma Castonguay-Rufino, Université de Montréal
Student summarizer: Morteza Hazbei ConcordiaU
Jamboard link: (accessed on December 12, 2023)
https://jamboard.google.com/d/1a_uAMmVH67pevS8DvqZQq2i9d6sUnq6i3SqceSkcSZ0/viewer?f=1

3.2.1. Discussion questions
(A) What comes to mind when you think about accessibility? What does accessibility mean to you?
(B) What might accessibility mean from the perspective of a) citizens b) academic c) design professional?
(C) How do you want your lived experience to be collected? What do you want your lived experience to be used for and by whom?

3.2.2. Discussion
- It has been noted that the accessibility of subway stations varies significantly, with some being more accessible than others, and in fact, some are not accessible at all. For individuals with disabilities, this lack of accessibility can significantly impact their daily commute and integration into their work trajectory. Changing their commute might also require considerable time and effort.
- Accessibility encompasses more than just physical access; it may involve barriers related to race, sexual preference, or gender.
- Accessibility extends beyond physical barriers, yet designers predominantly focus on the physical built environment. People with disabilities often express that a welcoming and accessible design provides a sense of safety and belonging, while an unwelcoming design creates stress and prompts the need for constant workarounds. Incorporating lived experiences early in the design process proves beneficial.
- As mentioned, accessibility goes beyond the physical, with a participant emphasizing a broader approach. Ensuring a project is usable by everyone is key, not just for functional purposes but also to create a welcoming space. An example was given, highlighting the accessibility and inclusion aspect in addressing insecurity for women in public spaces. The challenge posed is to rethink public spaces to ensure that everyone, including minority groups, feels safe, welcomed, and can use them positively.
- To make our world more accessible, considering diverse intersections, it is crucial to begin with students. Schools training future professionals need representation from those with varied accessibility needs. This means having neurodivergent individuals and those not fully able-bodied taking a leading role in design education. The observation was made that the experience of architectural students is often not joyful; in fact, it can be a stressful environment.
- One participant highlighted the importance of early accessibility and inclusive conversations in the design process. Engaging with academics, professional architects, organizations, and building owners at the outset leads to better outcomes and improved design. Waiting until later in the process, when changes become more challenging and costly, is less effective. Advocating for the adoption of policies by governments and the corporate sector is crucial to address this issue.

- As an inclusive practice example, a participant cited their work on the Center for Accessible Communication in Vancouver. They were involved right from the start when building owners planned a new facility. Early conversations with designers, architects, and property investors not only allowed the participant's team to learn about the community's unique needs but also resulted in the highest rating for inclusivity and accessibility design.
- It has been highlighted that in a design studio, students initially sought projects to address specific conditions like autism, visual or hearing impairments. However, they later realized it was more effective to find solutions that benefit everyone, avoiding isolating certain groups. The key insight was that architecture should not merely solve problems but respond to them and go beyond, contributing positively to society as a whole.
- A participant raised concerns about adaptive reuse and sustainability in disability-inclusive design for existing buildings in Canada. Mentioning ongoing research on retrofit costs for accessibility, the participant emphasized that building codes, often outdated, may not ensure access for the entire population. The challenge arises when facilities are believed to be accessible but require retrofits later, contributing to landfill waste and increased expenses. The participant expressed excitement about incorporating elements related to neurodiversity in the next certification program, stressing the importance of designing inclusively for all populations.
- A participant responded to the idea that architecture should address all needs, not just those of specific disability groups. The participant initially felt a sense of internal conflict but appreciated the different perspective. They highlighted the complexity of balancing inclusivity without othering individuals, emphasizing the importance of creating safe spaces for equity-deserving groups.
- The participant highlighted that there is a fine line between avoiding segregation and acknowledging the importance of specific spaces for certain communities. They appreciate the need for conversations to understand what works best for different groups and emphasize the role of designers as allies. The reference to a quote by Rem Koolhaas highlights the role of architecture in defining what things are, contrasting it with urbanism that allows users to define systems. The participant advocates for designers to provide the necessary elements, allowing people to shape their environments.
- A participant suggested that policymakers and curriculum developers can utilize lived experiences to shape training for future designers and architects. They emphasized the value of extracting information to create a body of knowledge or identify trends and themes.
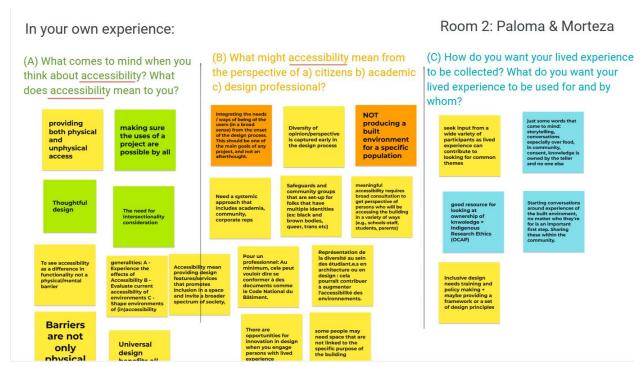
Figure 2. Jamboard screenshot for the second breakout room

3.2.3. Jamboard key points

- On the topic of defining accessibility, it was noted that it involves safeguards and community groups specifically created for individuals with multiple identities, such as black and brown bodies, queer, trans, etc.
- Discussing how lived experiences should be collected, it was suggested to seek input from a diverse range of participants, as their experiences can contribute to identifying common themes.
- Addressing how lived experiences should be collected, it was mentioned that initiating conversations about the built environment experiences, regardless of the audience, is a crucial initial step. The subsequent sharing of these experiences within the community was emphasized.

3.2.4. Student summary

By Morteza Hazbei (Concordia University)

- The discussion began by highlighting that accessibility extends beyond physical aspects, encompassing various types such as gender-related barriers. It emphasized the importance of buildings being safe, where the sense of hope and security is viewed as a form of accessibility.
- It has been discussed that designers and architects often focus on physical accessibility, but there are other dimensions to consider. A broader sense of accessibility, encompassing topics like exercise for everyone, needs to be embraced to create welcoming spaces.

- An example was mentioned, highlighting that a specific area may be unsafe for women in public spaces, implying that lack of safety also equates to inaccessibility. Therefore, safety and accessibility are interconnected.
- It has been discussed that accessibility should be considered in the early stages of the design process. Retrofitting a building after the design process can be costly, emphasizing the importance of incorporating accessibility ideas early to mitigate expenses.
- It has been mentioned that a place should be safe for every group and simultaneously safe for all. An example involving individuals with autism was provided.
- Regarding how lived experience should be collected, there was a discussion about translating ideas of accessibility into a body of knowledge and how policymakers can utilize this knowledge.
- Regarding the question of how you want your lived experience to be collected and what you want it to be used for and by whom, the discussion shifted towards emphasizing the importance of collecting lived experiences rather than focusing solely on how the information will be used. The idea emerged that making collected experiences public can contribute to building a body of knowledge that is accessible to both experts and non-experts.

3.3. *Group 3_ Lived Experience_ Safety*
Moderator: Sonia Blank, Architecture Sans Frontières Québec
Student summarizer: Coco Wang, UToronto
Jamboard link: (accessed on December 12, 2023)
https://jamboard.google.com/d/1a_uAMmVH67pevS8DvqZQq2i9d6sUnq6i3SqceSkcSZ0/viewer?f=2

3.3.1. Discussion questions
(A) What comes to mind when you think about safety? What does safety mean to you?
(B) What might safety mean from the perspective of a) citizens b) academic c) design professional?
(C) How do you want your lived experience to be collected? What do you want your lived experience to be used for and by whom?

3.3.2. Discussion
- A participant, when asked about the meaning of safety, highlighted personal preferences such as enjoying busy streets, action, and well-lit areas. They raised curiosity about translating feelings of safety, freedom, and empowerment into the built environment.
- It has been highlighted that safety should be considered within the 24-hour cycle—it varies with different times, seasons, and the people present in the space.
- A question has been raised about tension between individual and collective safety. How do we measure it—individual well-being or a broader collective sense, considering factors like identity and the balance between being part of a group and seeking individual experiences with anonymity?
- It has been discussed that safety, tied to specific situations, could also be linked to individual memories or past events. Exploring how design contradictions and temporal aspects affect our perception of space is intriguing. Considering diverse perspectives and experiences is crucial in addressing these complexities.
- Safety is described as a personal experience, involving your feelings towards others and a sense of protection for them. It is not just about your safety but also extends to the well-being of those around you.
- Implicit and explicit invitations about safety have been brought up. For instance, in bars, there are often notes in the bathroom on how to contact the bartender if someone is harassing you or information about safe spaces. Reflecting on how design can convey both implicit and explicit invitations to make people feel welcome or secure in various spaces is interesting. It is worth noting that sometimes being too visible may also pose safety concerns.
- The tension between safety and density have been discussed. Density can make one feel both secure with others around and uneasy due to the overwhelming number of individuals and compromised personal space. Creating diverse spaces in the city that accommodate various comfort levels might be a strategy, but is it feasible to have spaces universally welcoming?
- It has been observed how lived experiences are often instrumentalized to justify certain design choices. For instance, a participant mentioned that their feeling less safe in the city due to their gender might influence others. It is crucial to be conscious that one's experience can impact different groups if integrated into the design.

- A participant emphasizes the importance of collecting lived experiences through relational and conversational contexts. They highlight the value of processing and challenging these experiences within a dialogue, citing a technique where repeating and listening provided distance, revealing assumptions and biases. This approach fosters a deeper understanding beyond ingrained narratives.

Figure 3. Jamboard screenshot for the third breakout room

3.3.3. *Jamboard key points*
- Responding to the question of what come to mind when you think about safety, it has been highlighted that safety implies reliability, in the sense of knowing your surrounding context and trusting appropriate boundaries.
- For professional safety means: Safety is related to regulations, fire safety, accessibility, durable construction and building codes.
- About how do you want your lived experience to be collected, it has been mentioned that a directed narrative that delves into both everyday and extreme conditions.

3.3.4. *Student summary*
By Coco Wang (University of Toronto)
- Regarding safety, it has been discussed as a sense of comfort without of fear or hesitation, emphasizing reliability and the crucial notion of freedom. This perspective influences considerations for the built environment, with examples such as busy streets and large gatherings prompting reflections on urban design.
- Safety involves considering the built environment throughout the 24-hour cycle, recognizing its temporal aspects and how perceptions shift between day and night. The

understanding of safety varies relationally among individuals, influenced by factors like gender, ethnicity, and location. This diversity in lived experiences can lead to contradictory notions of safety.

- Safety can be contradictory; for instance, density may feel secure for some but unsafe for others. Similarly, security measures and surveillance may enhance the safety of certain groups while making others feel less secure.
- Determining how we collect lived experiences can be challenging, especially when expressing them is closely tied to physical environments. Some individuals are good at articulating experiences may unintentionally justify certain design choices, potentially weaponizing these interpretations of safety against other groups. Therefore, it is important of who will collect the lived experience and who will use it.

3.4. Group 4_ Lived Experience_ Sustainability
Moderator: Jean-Pierre Chupin, Université de Montréal
Student summarizer: Dener Frrancois, ULaval
Jamboard link: (accessed on December 12, 2023)
https://jamboard.google.com/d/1a_uAMmVH67pevS8DvqZQq2i9d6sUnq6i3SqceSkcSZ0/viewer?f=3

3.4.1. Discussion questions
(A) What comes to mind when you think about sustainability? What does sustainability mean to you?
(B) What might sustainability mean from the perspective of a) citizens b) academic c) design professional?
(C) How do you want your lived experience to be collected? What do you want your lived experience to be used for and by whom?

3.4.2. Discussion
- A participant mentioned that the first thing that comes to their mind about sustainability is no impact.
- For collecting voices, a participant mentioned that it is important that all the voices of the people in the area under study or design be heard, and it is important to consider the needs of each person. Also, a question has brought up that how these lived experiences or voices should be collected.
- An important aspect of gathering lived experiences is the time limitation within which this data can be collected. Because if we want to act upon these collected lived experiences, we need to allocate a budget, and all of these processes take time.
- An educator has highlighted that, although lived experiences are important, they have observed that some design and architecture students sometimes believe they do not need them in the design processes.
- To gather lived experiences for people with disabilities, input can be collected from various disability organizations. Recognizing the diverse range of experiences, the approach goes beyond standards by incorporating specific criteria in meetings and surveys. The emphasis is on innovation and proactive consideration during pre-construction, as waiting for standards and laws to change is time-consuming.

Figure 4. Jamboard screenshot for the fourth breakout room

3.4.3. *Jamboard key points*

- Regarding the meaning of sustainability, it has been highlighted that Sustainability implies achieving balance and equity across ecological, social, and economic aspects, encompassing considerations of both operating and embodied carbon in the environmental.
- It has been pointed out that sustainability is a vague and often political concept for citizens, and for professionals, sometimes it serves as a barrier.
- Regarding ways to collect lived experiences, it has been mentioned that capturing holistic input as people navigate spaces can be very helpful to understand where improvements can be made; for example, one can enter the door but cannot access the washroom.

3.4.4. *Student summary*
By Dener Frrancois (Université Laval)

- It was a booklet about lived experiences before the Calgary Convention, asking people to write about their own. However, very few individuals mentioned sustainability in their reports.
- Sustainability is a paradoxical notion when discussing lived experiences; it appears challenging to articulate personal sustainability experiences. This observation is evident in the 150 collected lived experience by partnership, with only a few mentioning sustainability.
- Another question raised is the right time within the rigid procurement, construction, or design processes to seek input on sustainability beyond norms. When do we genuinely listen and learn from the learned experience?

- It has been highlighted that there is a frustration expressed by indigenous communities regarding attending numerous shared experience sessions, where their voices and stories are not heard and understood.

3.5. Group 5_ Lived Experience_ Memory
Moderator: Sara Jacobs, University of British Columbia
Student summarizer: Sydney Sheppard, AthabascaU
Jamboard link: (accessed on December 12, 2023)
https://jamboard.google.com/d/1a_uAMmVH67pevS8DvqZQq2i9d6sUnq6i3SqceSkcSZ0/viewer?f=4

3.5.1. Discussion questions
(A) What comes to mind when you think about memory? What does memory mean to you?
(B) What might memory mean from the perspective of a) citizens b) academic c) design professional?
(C) How do you want your lived experience to be collected? What do you want your lived experience to be used for and by whom?

3.5.2. Discussion

- A participant, as an immigrant, noted diverse memories linked to various places and cultures, making them distinct. Additionally, it was emphasized that memories can be forgotten and may require someone to remind us about forgotten memories.
- In discussing the collection of lived experiences, the individual emphasizes building upon memories as a communal effort, aiming for a better understanding of the diverse memories within large groups. It is not about ranking but about categorizing memories to provide insight into the collective interests and experiences.
- Regarding memory, the individual underscores the uniqueness of creating a mental map as a personal interpretation of spaces, relying on recollections of experiences, emotions, and thoughts associated with specific landmarks. Mental mapping serves as a means to communicate personal experiences and memories, offering a special and emotional connection with others.
- About collective memory and the mental map, an individual reflects on integrating diverse memories into the built environment. They emphasize the challenge of creating space for various forms of memory, fostering connections, and striking a balance between cohesion and celebrating diversity within society.
- Regarding the intersection of collective and diverse memory, collective is not universal and how this reflects the diversity of experiences and memories within the public.
- There was a clear consensus that memory varies among different groups and holds different meanings for each.
- In reflecting on memory, the individual asserts that it is a conceptual and ever-changing mental construction, both personal and powerful. They highlight the universal nature of memory experience, suggesting that academics, professionals, and citizens alike are interconnected in this shared human experience. This perspective should inform how memory is considered, especially in collective projects undertaken by academics.
- An individual discussed the concept of heritage, emphasizing the link between social memory and design. They highlighted the impact of design choices on reliving past experiences. Using the example of black bricks in a former industrial neighborhood, these bricks remind people of the past—individuals who smoked there, the dust, and the dirtiness

of the neighborhood. The speaker conveyed the importance of being mindful of how design can evoke positive or negative memories for individuals.

- A participant mentioned that in exploring Montreal's city center housing, expert refer to this housing as a mistake that happen during modern era, however, while the participant joined the group listening to the building inhabitant they were surprised because they received a lot of positive feedback regarding these homes. Now, they are preserving as heritage site because of the shift that happen by the user lived experience.

- A participant mentioned that, in exploring Montreal's city center housing, experts initially labeled it as a mistake from the modern era. However, upon joining the group and listening to the building inhabitants, they were surprised by the positive feedback received. Now, these homes are preserved as a heritage site due to the shift brought about by the users' lived experiences.

- A participant criticized the Jamboard style of data collection using sticky notes, emphasizing the need for more context when collecting lived experiences. Also, they do not want their lived experience to be collected like anecdotal format, they rather it collected in a way that can gain insights and create a discourse.

- A participant highlighted the importance of trust in informal community meetings, where they can delve into the heart of lived experiences. In their work in Heritage and Resource Management, they shared an example where a fence affecting First Nations' access was initially misunderstood but was resolved through building trust and open communication.

Figure 5. Jamboard screenshot for the fifth breakout room

3.5.3. *Jamboard key points*

- Memory is not real (or concrete). It is a mental construction, ever-changing, very personal, yet powerful. We are collecting data all the time, and memory is being created constantly. It is connected to time.
- Regarding memory from a citizen's perspective might be more individual where as an academic or design professional might consider memory from a collective point of view.
- It has been suggested that academics and design professionals should approach memory from a place of listening to citizens.
- Regarding how lived experience should be collected, it has been mentioned that through meaningful interactions with others, sharing stories, engaging in conversations, and building connections contribute to a rich and diverse tapestry of experiences.
- A participant mentioned being divided between the idea of collecting an experience directly on the spot—for example, being consulted in the library while present for easy reference to their utilization. However, collecting an experience sometime later may also result in a certain selection of memories related to spaces that could be more significant.

3.5.4. *Student summary*
By Sydney Sheppard (Laurentian University)

- Regarding the question about what comes to mind when thinking about memory, the idea emerged that it varies greatly on an individual level but can also be very collective. Memory takes various forms, starting with personal experiences and extending to larger groups or communities. It can also be perceived through the lens of memory loss or something that has been taken away, accentuating its significance and power within a community. This concept is particularly special and holds significance when applied to the spaces people inhabit. Upon entering a new place, there can be recollections of previous experiences, bringing back memories through the interpretation of the new environment.
- In discussing the concept of mental mapping, it was emphasized that it associates different emotions and personal experiences with a specific space, often not strictly geographic but stemming from personal encounters. The conversation circled back to the notion that memory can be interrupted, impacting how people engage with the built environment. There was mention of the challenge posed by the colonial narrative in erasing indigenous memories, highlighting the need to navigate the complexities and diversity of memory. The focus is on finding ways to recollect and consider all past memories while remaining sensitive to their nuances.
- The discussion returned to the idea that memory varies greatly, serving as a guide from past lessons, emphasizing collective recollection over individual perspectives. The importance of recognizing that collective memory is not universal was highlighted, addressing the challenge in design to preserve memories without distortion. Acknowledging the ever-changing and powerful nature of memory, professionals, as citizens, must navigate the complexities of collective memory. In the context of design, the conversation delved into how professionals encourage users to relive past experiences, impacting their present. An example was shared about the use of black bricks, where design clashed with negative community idea, underscoring the need for community-driven conversations in the design process.

- For the question of how lived experience need to be collected: The focus centered on the importance of relationships, trust, and open communication, particularly in informal community meetings where citizens feel comfortable sharing personal memories. The consensus was that establishing trust is crucial for integrating this information into design decisions.
- Within the group, challenges arose in expressing and sharing lived experiences without an established relationship, highlighting the importance of trust, built over time through communication and understanding shared values or motivations in the process of collecting such experiences.

4. Plenary of Session 4_Lived Experience as a Prerequisite

- It has been mentioned that while we inquire about collecting lived experiences, a more fundamental question is how to include people's lived experiences in co-creation.
- An indigenous speaker shared a personal experience within a group called "One House Many Nations," involving a panic purchase of a tiny home. Facing challenges with sustainability, lacking knowledge about solar, composting toilets, and other aspects, they emphasized the difficulties of adapting to a sustainable lifestyle. Highlighting issues like stolen solar panels, safety concerns, and the impact of government policies on hunting lands, the speaker urged awareness about the pillaging of indigenous land and expressed the transformative impact of this experience on their perspective of sustainability and the skills required.
- Discomfort with the rush towards positive lived experiences has been expressed, they emphasize the need to address the underlying problems, urging an acceptance of discomfort in discussing challenging stories. Critiquing the use of blanket terms like inclusivity and diversity, they highlight the difficulty in finding shared values, especially when considering different cultural perspectives on material objects. The speaker is troubled by the lack of clarity around terms like sustainability and the challenge of translating lived experiences into broader discussions, emphasizing the need to focus on effective communication and information translation rather than individual viewpoints.
- While positive examples were shared, there is frustration that crucial voices and issues, such as fear of liability in housing development, are not reaching the current discussion forum. The need for a deeper exploration beyond surface-level discussions is highlighted.
- It has been noted that the discussion covered both positive and negative lived experiences. However, certain terms like sustainability, safety, and accessibility remain unclear. The suggestion is made to take the next step by attempting to define these qualities in more tangible ways.
- A question about the dynamics between the community and the individual within it has been raised. While within a community, individuals may be influenced to adopt shared values, the participant wonders why this does not extend to a broader global scale. They question whether the disparity is due to a matter of scale or perception.
  - A participant responded to the question, stating it is a significant philosophical question. They highlighted that community values often stem from culture but face challenges due to external systems imposing dominant values. The participant emphasized the impact of policies and the need for a deeper examination to understand and address the larger forces hindering natural cohesive change.
- It has been emphasized that there is a need to avoid a dualistic interpretation of lived experiences. There is an expressed interest in exploring the notion of the "shape of experience" in the built environment.
  - Lived experiences, though personal, are not accidental; in some cases, the experiences are shaped by structures of power, colonial governance, and larger political and social systems, reflecting a broader context beyond individual positivity or negativity.
  - A question has been raised: In this case, are they no longer personal?

- o It has been responded that it remains deeply personal, tied to the knowledge gained, often manifesting as skills, such as learning to live in a tiny house. These experiences connect to larger structures and forces that we are either part of, complicit in, or reflective of, indicating a dual nature of personal and broader influences.

5. Conclusion by Reporters

The session delved into the complexity of lived experiences, exploring how they shape, influence, and should be collected. To illuminate various aspects and intricacies of collecting lived experiences, several themes were discussed, encompassing community, accessibility, safety, sustainability, and memory. Participants initially defined these concepts, highlighting their differences from diverse perspectives, and then explored their impact on collecting lived experiences. While the rich discussion yielded valuable insights, there are areas that require further exploration.

One such area involves understanding the interplay between collective and personal lived experiences. Clarity on how these different facets work together is essential for enhancing the built environment lived experiences. Additionally, while some strategies were provided for collecting lived experiences related to broad topics like sustainability, a more in-depth discussion is needed to delve into how these concepts can be effectively addressed. Should participants be directly asked about their sustainability views, or are there alternative approaches?

The discussion also raised the notion that the concept of "shared values" may not be inclusive enough, as it sometimes lacks the incorporation of diversity. In other words, a question has been raised about how terms, such as "common ground," consider the diversity and uniqueness of each person or community. Therefore, a more thorough exploration of shared values, diversity, and inclusivity is required to unravel the complexity of these matters. Furthermore, although the five topics in the breakout rooms were discussed in a general and theoretical context, there has been no discussion on how these themes affect the collection of lived experience. For example, future discussions can delve into how lived experience related to sustainability can be collected or how people's memory can affect lived experience.