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YOUNG GIRLS IN PUBLIC AND VIRTUAL SPACES

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> This case study examines adolescent girls, their public spaces and their transgressive practices, specifically in two public spaces in the Pointe-aux-Trembles neighbourhood.

Highlights

The research question is: what are adolescent girls' practices in public spaces, and how do they violate rules, norms and expectations? The limited research on the subject shows that adolescent girls particularly (but not exclusively) appreciate sociability activities, such as picnic table discussions. On the one hand, these sociability activities are considered passive or sedentary—pejorative adjectives in societies promoting physical activity. The problem is that such pejorative qualification of picnic table discussions are generally not attributed to young boys, who, in the same context, are said to “(re) produces democracy”. On the other hand, these practices are considered to potentially produce vulnerability and victimization, resulting in a set of resources to ensure that these practices are monitored or even not carried out at all. Hypothetically, the transgressive practices of adolescent girls would therefore be based on these social activities practiced in or outside public spaces.

In the Living Lab perspective promoted by TRYSPACES, and in partnership with high schools and community organizations in the neighbourhood, we promote a collaborative approach with adolescent girls aged 14 to 18 years old to collect, analyze and disseminate data about their uses of public spaces and what it means for them. Focus group interviews, in situ interviews, mental mapping are among the methodologies considered to date. We anticipate that this case study will reveal that many of adolescent girls' transgressive practices in public spaces are “banal”, but negatively perceived by society, and that for this reason, they are opportunities to learn gender norms in the urban landscape.

Preliminary results

By adopting a feminist posture that underline a co-constructed relationships between physical environment, its symbolic meaning and gender, we affirm that public space is thought for and used by males, which relegates females to the private sphere. Despite their desired democratization, public space stay stigmatized for women of all age, who are positioned in security and physical and moral integrity issues. In this context, girl teenagers, struggling with a socially exclusionary dual identity (of gender and age), find themselves on the margins of public space.



Photo credit: Nathalie Boucher, 2014

What was done this year (between April 2017 and September 2018)

- > Funding proposal writing
- > Literature review
- > Writing of the problematique



Photo credit: Sylvain Rioux, 2018

What is planned next year

Data collection and writing of a report in the form of an article, a preliminary version of which will be presented at a conference.

Type of products planned for next year



> Scientific publication



> Conference in a meeting



> Narrative mapping



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