

> Montreal-Nord is a former lower-middle-class suburb that is today inhabited by a heterogeneous population. In its northeastern part, it is mainly inhabited by immigrant populations, whose practices and presence in the public space are regularly challenged and stigmatized. The young people who live there, especially those from racialized communities, suffer the stigma of media coverage that systematically associates them with deviance and transgression (Vogler, 2020), and of public space regulation measures instituted by the municipal administration to limit their presence in local public spaces.

This case study focuses on young people (men and women) in Montreal Nord, on the spaces where they "stroll" inside and outside the neighborhood, and on the way in which their practices in public space are judged as transgressive by institutions or certain residents in relation to the violence that punctuates the daily context of the neighborhood. We study the tactics used by young people to circumvent this judgment on their use of public space, in an attempt to avoid being controlled by the police, but also by their families and their circle of acquaintances.

We thus do not propose to describe the transgressive practices of young people from the outset, but rather to understand how the district and its reputation influence the use of public space, particularly by questioning the omnipresent prohibition on "loitering", which demonstrates how the act of being «outside», in public space, is necessarily correlated with the idea of transgression.

The youth participating in the project are individuals who are neither criminalized nor super-integrated. The idea was to recruit a diversity of profiles so that we could analyze the processes of racialization and their impact on tactics and practices in public space.

Our goal was to produce a mapping of places with the youth reflecting on their spatial tactics and strategies, but without fully revealing them to avoid "giving away" their spaces. Open-ended methodologies were accomplished (Summer-Fall 2018) through the historical review on the emergence of « loitering » as a category in this neighborhood. Observations and testing of methods for mapping the frequented places (Phase 1) were also conducted.

Secondly (Winter-Fall 2019), the research was complemented by the recruitment of 5 young residents, with whom we conducted a series of digital mapping and discussion workshops. We also monitored public interventions (both redevelopment and organization of festive events) on certain sites in the neighborhood. Young people were invited to comment as these operations developed.



The practices and tactics of Montreal-Nord youth in the public space

MONTREAL

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Five residents de Montréal-Nord :

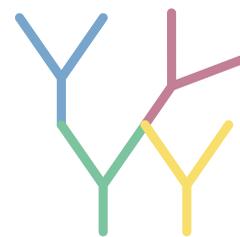
Leïka, Ylias, Killian, Christopher et Hash

THIS RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY TRYMONTRÉAL FOCUSES ON PUBLIC SPACE AND NEIGHBORHOOD PRACTICES BY YOUNG NORTH MONTREALERS IN A CONTEXT WHERE POLITICAL AND MEDIA NARRATIVES ABOUT THE BOROUGH OFTEN STIGMATIZE THE PLACE AND ITS INHABITANTS. THE OBJECTIVE IS TO QUESTION YOUNG PEOPLE ABOUT THEIR VISIONS OF THEIR NEIGHBORHOOD AND TO GIVE THEM A VOICE IN THEIR DAILY LIVES AND TERRITORIES THROUGH THE COLLABORATIVE ASPECT OF THE PROJECT, WHICH FOCUSES ON DIFFERENT FORMS OF CARTOGRAPHIC NARRATIVES.



Type of products planned for next year

- > Symposium presentation
- > Scientific publication



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What was accomplished this year

> In 2020, the webdocumentary produced in collaboration with the CRÉO and Affordances teams, and featuring the productions and experiences of young residents of Montreal-Nord, was launched and publicly presented at a virtual event held in January 2021. This event brought together people from the local administration, including the Montréal-Nord borough director and several political councilors, but also researchers, and other professionals working in, or on, the territory. The response was positive, as two meetings with the local administration were held to discuss the webdocumentary in more detail and to discuss the observations and recommendations resulting from our research. The young participants and co-directors of the project also appreciated being able to share their work and narratives about their neighborhood. The webdocumentary is available through the following link: <http://www.tryspacesmtlnrd.ca/>.

We have also finalized the platform “I will tell your about the North”. This platform is an interactive map that serves as a tool for presenting our research data. Collected during our two years of collaborative data collection. It links the data collected via Instagram and the testimonies collected during the workshops organized at the Racines bookstore as well as the mobile interviews carried out in the summer of 2019. The platform was presented during the TRYSPACES summer school - 4cities festival (online, June 2021). The interactive map is available through the following link: <https://maphouse.github.io/tryspaces-mtl-nord/index.html>.

Preliminary results

This year has been mainly about finalizing the maps and delimiting the writing tasks of the team members (Jolivet, Khelifi, Bensiali, Shaw). Data analysis is underway and will result in three articles. They will focus on the methodologies used in the case study (the mapping exercises as well as the collaborative methodology) and on the relational and spatial dimensions of power that are played out in the daily lives of young North Montrealers. More specifically, we will analyze the extent to which the autonomous use of space by young North Montrealers, and the use of their bodies, result in decolonized uses of space, wherein the place of the racialized body constitutes a central element (both as an object of public policy (the exceptional body) and as a stake in these (bio)policies).



What is scheduled for next year

1 “The other space, Alternative narratives” (cartographic method, commented journeys, etc). Lead Célia Bensiali

This article will focus on cartographies that distort the Euclidean space. We will consider the extent to which these mappings enable other perspectives on space to be seen and heard, including young and racialized voices that are absent from dominant discourses.

2 “The challenges and possibilities of collaborative research”. Lead Célia Bensiali

This article will look back at the definition of participatory and collaborative research to better understand their polysemy. A second part of the article will present the genealogy of our methodological approach and the mobilization of different media and mediums that allowed us to share knowledge within our working group (such as being anchored in a place like the Racines Bookstore and the use of digital tools like Instagram to document the practices of public space in everyday life). Finally, the article proposes a reflection on the permanent redefinition of our positions as researchers as well as on the challenges of appropriation of research by young people.

3 “How to consider the relationship to space of young North Montrealers?” Lead Célia Bensiali

The article questions several concepts and processes whose objective is to analyze, both the relational dimension of power relations and the spatial dimension constitutive of this power. This is why we wish to mobilize the concept of “exceptional bodies” (Fanon 1952, Barkat 2005) in order to rethink the intersection of race, class, and gender relations and the way they are

intertwined in the production and practice of space by young people in Montreal-Nord. The mobilization of such a concept makes it possible to go beyond the restrictive logic that encloses the stakes of spatial appropriation in regards to the production of (de)marginalized spaces and to broaden this questioning in regards to the body that has been largely given to colonized minorities.

4 Publicize/disseminate “I will tell you about the North”. Collaborative/participatory mapping and the use of digital technology in a project involving young people in Montreal-Nord. Text explaining the creation process/methodological choices/dissemination of the 3 cartographic results.

