

“Drawing Boundaries: Neighborhoods and Diversity”

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Questions of Interest

- 1. How does diversity affect the social boundaries of neighborhoods?
- 2. How does level of diversity shape residents' views of boundaries and diversity?
- 3. Does living in a diverse neighborhood vs. a less diverse neighborhood matter in terms of boundaries?

Data Description

American Mosaic Project

Orientating Questions

1. *What unites us?*
2. *What divides us?*
3. *What is the significance of diversity for our political and civil life?*

- PIs: Douglas Hartman, Penny Edgell, and Joseph Gerteis
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AMP Fieldwork

Interfaith Organizations <i>Liberal</i>	Neighborhoods <i>High Diversity</i>
Interfaith Organizations <i>Conservative</i>	Neighborhoods <i>Low Diversity</i>
Festivals <i>4th of July</i> <i>Multi-ethnic and Ethnic Celebrations</i>	

Twin Cities' Focus

- **Data**
 - Participant Observation
 - Neighborhood events, festivals, and meetings
 - Interviews with stakeholders
 - Residents, org staff, representatives
 - High Diversity
 - Mid-City Neighborhood: Ax and Grow
 - Low Diversity
 - South Neighborhood: South Neighborhood Organization

Interview Question Themes

- The diversity (or lack of) in neighborhood
- Diversity initiatives in the neighborhood
- Problems and positive things associated with diversity
- Participation (or lack of) in neighborhood
- Neighborhood identity
- *What brings people together in neighborhood?*

Mid-City

“Mid-City, ...just because of all of the different interests, and all of the different economic levels, and different races, and different languages, and different sexual orientations, and businesses, and non-profits, it’s just an incredible area: and I think Mid-City is a perfect name for it, because it’s sort of central to all of these issues” (Jon Bells, City Council representative)

Racial Breakdown Mid-City Neighborhood

African American	41%
White	26%
Latino	23%
Native American	2%
Asian	9%

Ax & Grow - Politics

- Ax & Grow
 - Not “real” neighborhood organization
 - Federal initiative with focus on crime
- Lost “real” neighborhood organization
 - *Political history of neighborhood*
 - “players”
 - Pitted people against each other
 - Race, Religion, and Sexuality

A unifying or divisive force?

- Live in neighborhood because want to
 - “mindset acceptance” (Nate long time res)
- Representation minority groups lacking
 - Ax & Grow white
 - “whites making decisions majority” (consultant and State Rep)
- Perceptions of Diversity
 - Most describe (proudly)
 - 1/3 White
 - 1/3 Latino
 - 1/3 African American
 - 675% ↑ Latino pop
 - Was predominately black
 - One resident noted that it was 90% white then shifted to 50-60 African American

Festivals: Unifying and Divisive

Most respondents pointed to the neighborhood events as places where diverse people are drawn together with few exceptions.

- National Night Out
- Neighborhood Clean Up
- Democracy Festival

South Neighborhood

“Well I think, I think one of the big problems is, again, you have two communities here, and there isn’t much interface between them. And so technically, if you looked at the numbers all over South Neighborhood, in fact, this neighborhood may be more diverse than you think, but the problem is, you’ve got all the middle class white homeowners in one part of the neighborhood, and you’ve got the renters of various nationalities in the other. And my guess is they don’t overlap very much at all. So in some ways, what you’ve really got here, are completely different communities, and I don’t think there’s been a way found yet how to bridge that.”

(Steve Clifford, neighborhood organizer working with SNO)

Racial Breakdown South Neighborhood

African American	7%
White	83%
Latino	5%
Native American	2%
Asian	3%

South Port Commons: A “pocket”

Perceptions of Diversity

Race & Crime

SPC: “breeding crime”

Safety: No door knocking
(Jane, SNO org)

Outreach?

90% minority
Sec 8, gangs, and problems
(Ken SNO org)

Minorities

Diversity & Racism covered up
Contradictory white middle
aged women
(Ken, SNO org)

Problems with Diversity Initiatives

Catch 22

Trying to deal with “pocket”, but
cannot get participation.

However, can't get people to talk
to them or get involved to know
what to do.

Festivals: Divisions

- South Port Commons

- *People*

- ↓ 100 people
- Black and Latino
- Mostly kids

- *Activities*

- SNO, jumping tent, & food

- *General*

- Kids playing
- Adults SNO survey
- Kids doing survey

- South Lake Park

- *People*

- 200; mostly white

- *Activities*

- Saturn Car, pony rides, jumping tent, live band, dancers, city and local orgs, food served by Boy Scout troop

- *General*

- kids with families
- SNO email sing up
- Music: dancing
- Outsiders attending

Conclusions

- Diversity Does Not Matter
 - Crime & Race
- Perceptions of Diversity
 - Racial tensions both neighborhoods
 - Spacing of minority groups
 - Pockets vs. intermixed
- Lack of minority representation both neighborhoods
 - *problems defined differently*
- Diversity Does Matter for Social Boundaries
- Festivals
- High Diversity
 - Get to Know neighbor
 - Diversity in attendees
- Low Diversity
 - Minority “pocket”; poorly planned and attended
 - Lake Festival: catered toward middle class whites
- Link with perceptions of diversity
- ***Logistically more mixing if diverse neighborhood?***

Overarching Conclusions

- Boundaries are apparent in the low diversity neighborhood between racial groups compared to the high diversity neighborhood
 - BUT questions remain related to themes of AMP as whole.
- Are people in the low diversity neighborhood more likely to state what they really feel than use politically correct language about diversity?
 - Is it that one neighborhood is more “mixed”?
 - Is it self-selection into the neighborhoods based on diversity?