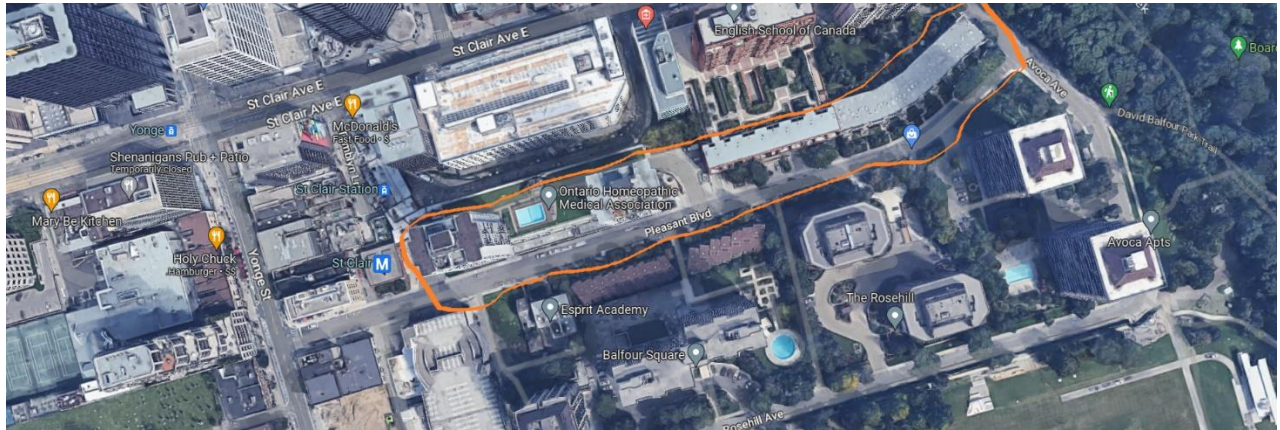


Live Experiment on March 18, 2023 between 3 and 4pm at Belfour Park Residential Neighbourhood, Toronto

Participant: Diane Silver. She is a land use planner by trade and works for the City of Toronto and lives on Pleasant Boulevard. It is a high density, medium mixed use residential neighbourhood according to City's official plan.



Score: Visual Engagement Experiment on a Residential Neighbourhood Street

A participant will execute all variations in order to visually engage with different physical aspects of the residential neighbourhood streets.

The following variations establish visual engagements with features of houses and their immediate surrounding environments such as front lawns, spatial relation between the houses, spatial relation between houses and sidewalks, boulevards and streets.

Variation 1: ()

Base movement:

Choose a short street segment ---- Stand at one end of the selected street segment(sidewalk) and walk back and forth between the end points of the selected segment. (X1) Cross the street and do the same on the other side. (X1)

Procedure:

- a) Stand in front of a house at one end of the selected street segment ---- Turn your head towards the house while your body is at a right angle to the house---- Maintain this posture and keep looking at the houses while walking forward---- Walk slower than your usual speed while looking continuously at the houses ---- Pay attention to the house frontage, spaces in-between the houses and other features etc. in their immediate surroundings ---- Pause and explore if something interests you about these houses or their surroundings - Walk back and forth between the two ends of the selected street segment (X2).
- b) Go back to your base movement.
- c) Cross the street ---- repeat a) – b)

Variation 2: ()

Preparation:

For this score, you will select at most 4 houses – 2 from either side of the street – that have interested you the most in Variation 1. In this score, for each of your selected houses, you will explore a total of 5 houses in a row– your selected house and four other houses adjacent to it.

Procedure:

- a) Face towards the house while your back faces the street ---- Walk sideways and back and forth between the near end of the 1st house and the far end of the 5th house ---- Walk slower than your usual speed (X2) ---- Pay attention to the house frontages, spaces in-between houses and other features in their immediate surroundings ---- Pause and explore if something interests you about these houses or their surroundings ---- Move to the next set of 5 houses on the same side of the street.
- b) Go back to your base movement.
- c) Cross the street ---- Repeat a) – b)

Variation 3: (For curious movers: Draw the house with your body)

Preparation:

In this score, we will use the same houses we used for variation 2. For small houses such as townhouses, semi-detached houses, bungalows, you can ignore step b) and c).

- a) Choose a spot in front of the house. This spot can be at one corner of the house or at the assumed center of the house. ---- Stand at the spot. ---- Look straight ahead at the shape of the house segment in front of you. Start moving your body as if you are drawing the shape with your body. For simplicity you can use only your hands for creating the shape of the house segment.
- b) Choose a second spot and repeat a)
- c) Choose a third spot and repeat a)
- d) Repeat a) – c) process for all houses.
- e) Cross the street ---- Repeat a) – e).

Variation 4: (View from the driveway)

Procedure:

- a) Stand at one end of the selected street segment ---- Start walking forward ---- Stop after every two houses -- -- Turn your body towards the street ---- Look across the street. Pay attention to the houses and their environment---- Pause for 10-15 sec ---- Start walking again ---- Continue until you reach the end point.
- b) Cross the street ---- Repeat a) on the other side of the street.

Imagination:

1. After experiencing the houses and their immediate surroundings, now let us imagine possibilities and how that would have affected not only your engagement with their physical features but also create possibilities for social interactions with residents. Think about the houses you chose for var 2 and 3.
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Variation 5: Meandering Sidewalk

Procedure:

- a) Stand at one end of the sidewalk ---- Start walking as if the sidewalk is shaped like the body of a snake ---- Walk slower than your regular pace ---- Walk until you reach the other end of the sidewalk ---- What do you see next to the sidewalk? Have you noticed them before?
 - b) Turn around and walk back to the starting point. This time pause when something interests you on or around the sidewalk. Go close to it, move around it if possible and observe. Make a shape with your body if it is a fixed object or observe its rhythm and move with it if it is a moving object.
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Variation 6: Street Intersection

Preparation: A residential street block usually has two street intersections – one at each end of the block– unless one end is a dead end.

Procedure:

- a) Stand at one corner of the intersection facing the street.
- b) Look at the intersection corner across the street. Observe what interests you there. Make a note of it. Is it a tree, a bench, a house, people or something else? Start walking. When you reach that corner, pause and walk close to the object that you made note of from across the street. If it is a fixed element, make a shape of it using your body; if it is a moving element, follow its rhythm and move with it.
- c) Repeat a)-b) until you come back to your starting point.
- d) Repeat a)-c). This time imagine an activity that you would like to do at the intersection corner. Name the activity. Where would that activity be and why? You may choose not to imagine an activity at each intersection corner. Would you do that activity alone or with someone else?
- e) Stand at the middle of the intersection. Try this only if the intersection has very low traffic.
- f) Look at all four sides of the intersection.
- g) Pick a side that visually appeals to you the most. Walk that way.
- h) Repeat a) – h) at the second intersection.

Feedback Questions: Immediately after the experiment

1. Introduction
2. How long have you been living in the neighbourhood?
3. Which public spaces in the neighbourhood do you visit often?
<https://youtu.be/-2YPyK4PNBg>
4. What was your combined visual experience of the neighbourhood houses and their surroundings today? How did it change from your everyday visual experience of the neighbourhood? What did you already know? What did you discover new? What engaged you?
<https://youtu.be/F83INy8ITe0>
5. How did your visual experience vary from var 1 to var 2 to var 3 to var 4? How does the visual perception of the houses and their surroundings influence your experience as a pedestrian on that street? These variations were meant to visually engage with the houses and their immediate surrounding environments.

<https://youtu.be/2TbWZey1QNs>

6. From the visual experience of the houses on your streets and their immediate physical environments (such as the distance between the houses, their proximity to the sidewalks/streets etc) what kind of information do you gather about the possible social environment that exists here?

<https://youtu.be/RZvsXRQm0HA>

7. For var 2 and 3, you selected a maximum of 4 houses to explore visually. What were the reasons for your selection? What else can you imagine about these houses or their surroundings that would have not only engaged you with their visual aesthetics but also create possibilities for social interactions – passive or active?

<https://youtu.be/NPz-mDDf3Cg>

8. In variation 5, what was your visual experience of the sidewalk and its surroundings like? How did it change from your everyday visual experience of the neighbourhood sidewalks? What did you discover new about them? How did you feel about making a shape of an object or moving with a moving object? How did it transform your experience? Do the immediate surroundings provide enough stimulation for a deeper visual engagement?

<https://youtu.be/daENA0KcWe4>

9. You paused at certain points during your walk back in variation 5. What triggered you to stop? Other than the visual engagement with these particular spots/objects, what else can you imagine in and around these spots on the sidewalk that would facilitate more engagement from residents/pedestrians?

<https://youtu.be/umkFvAdXBAo>

10. In variation 6, what was your visual experience of the street intersections and its surroundings? How did it change from your everyday visual experience of these intersections and their surroundings? What did you discover new about them?

11. You were asked to imagine an activity in round 2 of this activity. What kind of activity/activities did you imagine possible there and where? What triggered that imaginations – any physical cues from the environment? Which intersections evoked more imagination of those activities and why?

<https://youtu.be/rDVEIQJShpo>

12. Do you have any suggestions for me in terms of improving the scores? Or perhaps my scores have missed aspects of the streets and their surroundings that can play an important roles in re-imagining them?

<https://youtu.be/4MbNwdF9Bjc>