2012

Mediated constructions and lived experiences of place: an analysis of news, sourcing, and mapping

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MEDIATED CONSTRUCTIONS AND LIVED EXPERIENCES OF PLACE: AN ANALYSIS OF NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS AND MENTAL MAPPING

by

Robert Edward Gutsche, Jr.

An Abstract

Of a thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the Doctor of
Philosophy degree in Mass Communications
in the Graduate College of
The University of Iowa

December 2012

Thesis Supervisors: Professor Judy Polumbaum
Associate Professor Frank Durham

ABSTRACT

This dissertation advances previous research on the journalistic interpretive community by placing news at the center of a community's construction of place. By focusing on the construction of Iowa City, Iowa's "Southeast Side" – neighborhoods home to predominantly newly arrived black residents from Chicago and other urban areas – this study identifies dominant news characterizations of the Southeast Side that mark the place as a "ghetto" or "inner city."

Beyond providing information about community issues and social conditions from southeastern neighborhoods, the term Southeast Side performed a singular ideological purpose: to identify and maintain dominant community values throughout the rest of Iowa City. Racialized and stereotyped news narratives of urban people, places, and problems in a place called the Southeast Side created an ideological boundary between those in and outside the Southeast Side.

Such a boundary subjugated the Southeast Side's cultural diversity and its people, presenting them as being counter to Midwestern values and a threat to notions of a safe, white and historically homogeneous community. Indeed, the creation of Southeast Side was just as much about creating an "inner city" as it was about constructing notions of Iowa City itself.

Through mental mapping, this project then compares dominant news characterizations to those made by Southeast Side residents, journalists, and public officials. In the end, this study explores cultural meanings that emerged from examining the similarities or differences between the place-making of

residents, journalists, and news sources.

This study reveals place-making as a fundamental role of the journalistic community and identifies another ideological function of the press in that they assign power and meanings by describing news by where it happens. Journalists and media scholars have long talked about the press as improving community journalism to meet the notion of the public sphere. Yet, this dissertation is not another such study that only encourages journalists to alter how they report on local news and communities. Instead, this study suggests that journalists and scholars recognize the cultural power of journalistic place-making and the challenge to their authority to do so by residents from a particular place.

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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

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PH.D. THESIS

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To Sam, my family, and those seeking spatial justice

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I shouldn't have graduated high school, having failed math multiple times. I loused-up my ACT, twice. In fact, I didn't even know that I should have – or could have – studied for it. I dropped out of college after my mother died, and there was a chance I wouldn't get my diploma. This dissertation was made possible because of those challenges and failures, but more importantly because of the second and third chances that friends, family, and my teachers gave me. Thank you.

Specifically, I thank my father for his encouragement that I "should read more" when I was about 16. Without that prodding, I would never have picked up Capote's *In Cold Blood* and started a career of writing. Countless numbers of editors, reporters, sources, and photographers guided me through newsrooms on stories about death and celebration – some that made me cry and many that made me smile. I would not have had an interest in journalism without that help.

More importantly, this dissertation would be meaningless without two important groups: My closest family (Bridget) and my students. Writing about Bridget's love and endless support is the hardest part to adequately acknowledge. Working 60-hour weeks and driving 45-minutes each way in rush-hour traffic to help us get-by just to come home and eat my chicken noodle soup each night for weeks on-end takes a lot of love. I only wish I could find a way to express how this process relied on her. Without Bridget, I would be lost in life.

Without my students' passion to answer difficult questions, I would not have the strength to ask questions of my own. This dissertation, in part, is for my past and future students. I hope it makes you think.

I owe much to my dissertation supervisors, Judy Polumbaum and Frank Durham. I will always respect their guidance and loyalty. I also appreciate the support of my dissertation committee members and other colleagues at Iowa and elsewhere who have read chapters or endured endless conversations with me about my research, including (but not limited to) Julie Andsager, Raquel Baker, Andre Brock, Jane Elliott, Mary Fisher, Sue Freeman, Kelly Giese, Henri Harper, Daniel Kinney, Ellen Lewin, Sean Lewis and the Working Group Theatre, Jack Lule, LaTasha Massey, David Schwartz, Jim Throgmorton, and Rachel Williams. Thank you to Tyler Johnson for his mapmaking skills and Erin O'Gara for her continued support.

This dissertation is influenced greatly by my involvement with the university's Obermann Center for Advanced Studies and the Project on the Rhetoric of Inquiry (POROI), two programs that stimulate both intellectual prowess and care for the community. POROI's 2009 Media Space and Race series contributed heavily to constructing my research agenda.

My in-laws, Bill and Carol Casey, (whose basement I intruded for my first year of doctoral studies) also deserve recognition. Not only have they supplied support for daily survival (ie housing), but they have acted as mentors, shaping my view of the world and (hopefully) making me a better person. The idea that "Life is not a race" has saved me from catastrophe.

Finally, I wish to thank those who participated in this study, especially the residents who bravely gave part of themselves to me – their maps and stories – with the hopes that their experiences might lead to an environment of equal treatment in Iowa City, Chicago, and everywhere else.

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This dissertation advances previous research on the journalistic interpretive community by placing news at the center of a community's construction of place. By focusing on the construction of Iowa City, Iowa's "Southeast Side" – neighborhoods home to predominantly newly arrived black residents from Chicago and other urban areas – this study identifies dominant news characterizations of the Southeast Side that mark the place as a "ghetto" or "inner city."

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residents, journalists, and news sources.

This study reveals place-making as a fundamental role of the journalistic community and identifies another ideological function of the press in that they assign power and meanings by describing news by where it happens. Journalists and media scholars have long talked about the press as improving community journalism to meet the notion of the public sphere. Yet, this dissertation is not another such study that only encourages journalists to alter how they report on local news and communities. Instead, this study suggests that journalists and scholars recognize the cultural power of journalistic place-making and the challenge to their authority to do so by residents from a particular place.

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CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

> The city is manifestly a complicated thing.
>
> David Harvey, *Social Justice and the City.*

On Mother's Day 2009, some 60 people – many of them black – took to the streets of Iowa City, Iowa, with fists and baseball bats. The violence, fueled by a conflict between two families, initially was reported as short news briefs in local newspapers. A few days later, *The Gazette* – a daily newspaper based about 20 miles north of Iowa City in Cedar Rapids – labeled the event, "The Mother's Day Brawl" (Keppler, 2009). Later accounts called it the Mother's Day Riot. Both terms stuck.

For weeks after the melee, jail booking photographs of those arrested for their "rioting" appeared in area newspapers. All photos show young black men. Additional violent events that made the news that summer included stabbings, robberies, and shootings in Iowa City's southeastern neighborhoods, where members of numerous ethnic and racial minorities have settled over recent years. In local parlance and media accounts, this area has become known as the "Southeast Side."

To curb crime on the Southeast Side, city officials instituted a citywide curfew intended to keep youth off of streets at night. The city also opened a police substation (its only such facility) on the Southeast Side. Lastly, the school district revived plans to alter school attendance boundaries that would disperse clusters of poor, minority students from the Southeast Side to other elementary schools in the city.

I watched news coverage of these events – and of the increasingly ominous-sounding Southeast Side – with much interest. This Southeast Side, local news said, was where poor blacks who moved to Iowa City from Chicago lived (for background, see Gutsche, 2011). These newcomers were described as straining local social services by relying heavily on affordable housing vouchers and registering their children in disproportionate numbers for free and reduced lunch programs at public schools; and also were thought to be generating mounting levels of crime in the area that distracted police from serving the broader community.

In 2009, when I started working with community groups on the Southeast Side, I got a somewhat different impression. I never came across the large crowds of black youth clogging streets, damaging property, and performing gang initiations that the news projected; and Southeast Side residents I met told me it was a safe neighborhood, relatively quiet and far from what they called the "city life" of Chicago and St. Louis that some said they had "escaped." This contrasted with the dominant news images of the Southeast Side as resembling an urban ghetto.

While one may not expect an elite institution, such as mainstream media, to share the perspectives of marginalized populations (Herman & Chomsky, 2008; McChesney, 1999; 2004), I wondered about these contrasting views of the Southeast Side – whether it was as a dangerous urban space, home to poor and deviant racial and ethnic minorities, or just another fairly mundane neighborhood that happened to have more newcomers.

As I began to follow news coverage of the area more systematically, I also became interested in what media discourses about community might reveal

about the power of place-making – the process of assigning cultural meanings to geography (Cloke, Cook, Crang, Goodwin, Painter, & Philo, 2004; Gould & White, 1993; Wood, 2010). Notions of place fuel ideologies upon which societies decide how to operate militarily, economically, and socially (Appadurai, 1988; Said, 1979). Imaginations about geography, rooted in imagery, language, and narrative help construct political borders, influence public decisions about sharing resources, and inform perceptions of people living in particular places (Monmonier, 1996; Wood, 2010). I decided to explore how place-making works in media, and how the same geography could come to be reported so differently among journalists who make their representations public and from the versions of community members who live in the same city.

In this dissertation, along with using textual analysis and interviewing, I make use of a technique not customary in our field – mental mapping, a method that allows participants to draw and describe their everyday interactions and perceptions of space (Cloke, et al., 2004; Wood, 2010). Scholars of literature, geography, and mass communications (for example, see de Certeau, 1984; Fry, 2003; Lule, 2001; Parisi, 1998; Said, 1979; Wood, 2010) have regarded maps as a measure of deeper cultural meanings of geography, reflecting human interactions with environment in specific historical contexts. Johnson (2007), for instance, writes about how American Indians have turned to mapping to show "life paths," storytelling that complicates what otherwise could be viewed as mere topography.

My objective in adopting this tool to a study of local media and community representation is to better explore place-making as a communicative process (Adams & Jansson, 2012). Thus, I added mental mapping to analysis of

media texts and interviews with journalists, official sources, and a subset of Southeast Side residents to explore how a community's social roles influence place-making in the news and how constructions of place reflect power differentials between institutional actors and grass-roots residents. I believe my project furthers the work of scholars of community journalism and human geography, in illuminating how and why constructions of place diverge and the news media's role in sustaining such divergence. I hope it also can prove useful to journalists who want to better understand their communities and their roles in local coverage, and to community members who want to better understand and perhaps influence how news media cover their home territory.

CHAPTER 2 – CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

> [O]f course readers learn from news. However, much of what they learn may have little to do with the 'facts,' 'names,' and 'figures' that journalists try to present so accurately… The facts, names, and details change almost daily, but the framework into which they fit – the symbolic system – is more enduring.
>
> S. Elizabeth Bird and Robert W. Dardenne, *Myth, Chronicle and Story.*

To examine how social roles influence place-making in the news and how constructions of place reflect power differentials between institutional actors and residents, this chapter draws on literature from several areas, namely media scholarship on the multiple levels of news inquiry, the cultural processes of news storytelling, and cultural studies of space and place. I have chosen this interdisciplinary approach as a route to understanding how newsworkers navigate complex and ideological influences to characterize the people and places they cover.

My focus is on the factors influencing the *production* of news – and in particular, the representation of place in the news, as well as possible alternative constructions of place that do *not* appear in the news. In other words, this is not an audience study, but rather a newsmaking study – although potential audience members do act as my informants in the mental mapping stage, presenting not their perspectives as news consumers but rather their perspectives as real-life participants in stories in the news.

Newsmaking and Levels of Analysis

Studies of journalism at multiple levels of analysis help identify and explain the negotiations involved in reporting and presenting the news (Carlson, 2006; Robinson, 2007; Zelizer, 1993). The large body of cumulative scholarship on

how journalists work (for review, see Berkowitz, 1997; 2011) includes many reminders of the importance of levels of analysis. Shoemaker and Reese (1996) and Shoemaker and Vos (2009) encourage media scholars to expand individual studies of newswork to examine audience effects and sociological and cultural influences to advance understanding of messages and meanings. Reese (2001) and Berkowitz (2011) have looked more closely at the various levels on which newsmaking operates.

At the individual level, scholars explore the journalists themselves — including their habits (Schultz, 2007), beliefs (Stocking & Gross, 1989; White, 1950) personality traits, and career goals. For example, Deuze (2005) shows how journalists enter the field of journalism with pre-set ideologies that become altered throughout their careers.

In addition to a particular newsroom's norms, values, codes, objectives, and methods (Breed, 1955; Gans, 2004; Kieran, 1997; Tuchman, 1978), journalists are socialized to a broader professional ideology (Ettema, Whitney & Wackman, 1987). Professional level studies examine how journalists are socialized into media organizations to operate according to group requisites (Donohue, Olien & Tichenor, 1989; Heider, 2000). Journalistic practices and norms become accepted and integrated as a dominant ideology, providing newsworkers with a sense of purpose and identity (Robinson, 2007).

Indeed, journalism is a "calling" for many newsworkers (Zelizer, 2004) in which reporters find and report the news by collecting facts, placing them in context, and distributing information to the public (Robinson & DeShano, 2011). Journalistic ideology promotes a "duty" through which journalists serve "the public good" (Gans, 2004; Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007). Their role as "watchdogs"

(Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007) is supported by objective, "just the facts" news, with newsworthiness ostensibly defined by clear standards of "timeliness, proximity, prominence, consequence, rarity, and human interest" (Hough, 1994). As members of a profession, journalists follow these standards and construct stories in similar ways across the industry.

One common element of news is the source. Sources not only provide journalist information, verification, and visuals, but they help journalists distance themselves from overtly interpreting events on their own, thereby maintaining the claim to objectivity (Manning, 2001; Tuchman, 1978).

At the organizational level, journalists follow traditional journalistic objectives and standards, including objectivity and accuracy as part of the "journalistic paradigm" (Hindman, 2003; Reese, 1990). Journalists who fail to adhere to the paradigm weaken the argument for news as an objective representation of reality (Handley, 2008). If the journalistic paradigm is violated or gets "broken," the media's credibility and authority are at stake (Frank, 2003). In hopes of repairing the paradigm, journalists speak out against "bad journalism" and attempt to bolster how others within the journalistic community maintain the agreed upon practices (Soloski, 1989).

Maintaining a public face as being objective and authoritative is vital for news organizations (Reese, 2001; Schudson, 1989; 2003), which brings us to the societal or extra-media level, where news operates as an institution. Media share social authority alongside governments, militaries, and business (Herman & Chomsky, 2008); indeed, journalists' close proximity to other institutions – both geographically and ideologically – influences how journalists select sources and

tell stories (Bantz, 1985; Berkowitz & TerKeurst, 1999; Coleman, 1995; Durham, 2008; Frank, 2003; Hindman, 2003).

Journalists furthermore embed moral and ideological meanings into news accounts, a process operating at the cultural or ideological level (Barnett, 2006; Carey, 2009; Filak & Pritchard, 2007). For instance, Tuchman (1978) suggests that journalists "make" the news and are led to "facts" by cultural and social pressures. News accounts convey the cultural meanings of events and issues even as they provide information (Edy & Dardanova, 2006; Ettema, 2005; Lule, 2001).

In the cultural sphere, journalists operate within an "interpretive community" (Berkowitz & TerKeurst, 1999; Robinson, 2007; Zelizer, 1993), a concept originally drawn from anthropology and since extended to communication and literary studies (Anderson, 1983; Coyle & Lindlof, 1988; Degh, 1972; Fish, 1980; Hymes, 1980).

An interpretive community at its most basic is a group of people with shared ideologies (Mitra, 2010). In media studies, an interpretive community is defined as a "cultural site where meanings are constructed, shared, and reconstructed by members of social groups in the course of everyday life" (Berkowitz & TerKeurst, 1999, p. 125). Journalists work closely with other institutions in their local geographies that tend to shape the purpose and meanings of news, often embedding dominant ideologies and values of the community (Berkowitz & TerKeurst, 1999), while marginalizing or ignoring alternative explanations for social conditions and daily events (Ettema & Peer, 1996).

News and Storytelling

Schudson (2003) writes that news is story, a telling of events that provides both information and cultural meaning through tales of people's experiences with everyday life. Journalists cover stories – and cover them in certain ways – to express dominant, contemporary beliefs of what is good and bad or right and wrong (Gans, 2004; Schudson, 2003; Tuchman, 1978). Within a given cultural context, audiences are able to identify the deeper meanings embedded in news (Bird & Dardenne, 1997; Rothenbuhler & Coman, 2005; Schudson, 2003). News also establishes a sense of interconnectedness among those to whom it is directed (Carey, 2009; Schudson, 2003; Lule, 2001). In this sense, news is a form of collective cultural storytelling by journalists.

Like other forms of story, such as in literature, news rarely is explicit about its deeper cultural meanings, but audiences inherently make cultural readings. Bird and Dardenne (1997) write that while "readers learn from news,"

> …much of what they learn may have little to do with the 'facts,' 'names,' and 'figures' that journalists try to present so accurately. These details – both significant and insignificant – all contribute to the larger symbolic system of news. The facts, names, and details change almost daily, but the framework into which they fit – the symbolic system – is more enduring. (p. 335)

The moral and cultural messages are embedded in larger, salient stories drawn from the stream of events in everyday life (Lule, 2001; Meyers, 2004). For example, Durham (2008) suggests that news coverage of dramatic scenes of disaster and inequalities in the response (or lack thereof) by the federal government to Katrina wreckage in 2005 served as political commentary on governmental failure.

Journalists use introductions (leads), quotes (dialogue), transitions,

drama, irony, and conflict to present information in narrative form (Schudson, 2005), and this format has become the vehicle for conveying symbolic meanings. News narratives present factual information in appealing ways, embedding cultural messages through the gamut of literary devices, including "actors (or agents), settings (or scenes), actions (or acts), chronology (or temporal relations), and causal relations (or motives)" (Lule, 2004, p. 182). Sources, for instance, serve as actors, provide dialogue, or struggle through conflict in news stories (Darnton, 1975; Lule, 2001; Schudson, 2005).

News narratives presenting events within larger cultural frameworks allow journalists to simplify complex social and cultural issues (Bird, 2003; Bird & Dardenne, 1997; Rothenbuhler & Coman, 2005; Schudson, 2003). Instances of infanticide in the U.S. that received heavy news coverage over the past 30 years (Barnett, 2006), for instance, become juxtaposed with the "Good Mother" motif (Lule, 2001). Barnett found that news stories demonized mothers who killed their children by comparing the women to a cultural expectation that women should want to be mothers – and to be a particular kind of mother; and, the stories also tapped into the mythical story of Euripides' *Medea*, who murdered her children. Alternative renderings – for instance, an emphasis on the social and psychological challenges of motherhood – are effectively erased by resort to these enduring tropes.

Journalistic storytelling also may employ "myth," particularly in times of crisis and fear (Eliade, 1998; Lule, 2001). Defined as an eternal story that reappears across cultures and continents (Lule, 2001), myth helps recall and reinforce common rules for individuals, family, and society (Carey, 2009; Hall, 1980). Myth employed in news helps audiences recognize that social problems

reported in the news today have happened before, and reassures them that such problems can be resolved (Eliade, 1998). Myth also may strengthen aspects of social and cultural power through consistent stereotyping that perpetuates dominant explanations for everyday life, thereby informing the definition of ideology as being "meaning in the service of power" (Thompson, 1990, p. 20).

For example, Parisi (1998) argues that *New York Times* reporters, in a series called, "One Block in Harlem," relied on myths about urban blacks and ghettos to explain neighborhood culture as a way to uphold dominant narratives and beliefs about urban America. Parisi writes that vignettes of poor blacks spoke more to national beliefs about urban life and black culture than more complex social explanations, and that "the mythic, aestheticizing, personalized techniques with which the series creates an air of compassion and dignity actually represent an extension into print journalism of 'modern racism'" (p. 238).

News stories that apply archetypes and myth to people and places are said to have created an "ideograph," a rhetorical symbol created through "political language [that is] preserved in rhetorical documents [and carries] the capacity to dictate decision and control public belief and behavior" (McGee, 1980, p. 5). These ideographs allow a single term or construction to perform deeper, ideological functions of embedding cultural meaning in discussions of geography, such as place-names and other geographic language (de Certeau, 1984; Wood, 2010).

Space, Place, and Journalistic Narrative

To complement the scholarship about how news helps people experience and explain everyday life, this dissertation also is concerned with how notions of space and place are embedded in news. Though "space" and "place" often are

used interchangeably across disciplines, there are substantial differences between the two which human geographers have explicated in terms of assigned purpose and attributed meaning.

Defining Space

The term "space" refers to a particular geography to which people assign purpose or meaning, such as a city, a building, or a park (Lefebvre, 1991; Soja, 2010). If an empty big-box store were to open as an elementary school, for instance, the meanings assigned to that building would likely change. Harvey (2003; 2009) identifies the process of identifying and altering perceptions of place as "spatial consciousness" or "geographical imagination," the ideological interpretation of environment's effect on social life. Space and its relationship with communication has been explored in varied ways in different fields. In criminology, for example, Herbert's (1997) work on "territoriality" reveals how the Los Angeles Police Department "make and mark space."

While space – particularly urban space – has been discussed as being experienced differently by those who live there and those who don't (for example, see Burgess, 1985), Skogan's (1990) "broken windows" or social disorganization theory – the belief that neighborhood disarray breeds social disorder – has been especially influential in sociology and criminology. Skogan distinguishes between two types of disorder. "Physical disorder" includes tangible characteristics such as vandalism and dilapidation, broken street lights, graffiti, and litter, elements that Skogan writes reveal a neighborhood's disinterest in their environment that contributes to a pathological culture of disrepair. Skogan's second category, "social disorder," includes visible signs of

individual and group behavior, such as prostitution, physical violence, and loitering that he blames for a break-down of traditional community and values.

While criticized for ignoring economic and cultural influences that affect the neighborhood from the outside and for simplifying explanations for complicated social conditions and interactions within neighborhoods (for example, see Gau & Pratt, 2010), "broken windows" theory provides measurable categories of urban conditions that fuel efforts by police and media to demarcate and control urban space. However, such physical elements, alone, are not enough to explain how people interact with their environments.

Defining Place

Notions of space are connected to descriptions of environment, but fail to capture cultural elements that are better understood through the concept of "place." This term refers to meanings assigned to a geography that has been recognized as a particular space (Harvey, 2009; Round, 2008). The process of "place-making" is a complex interaction between decisions, actions, and perceptions regarding environment. Entrikin's (1991) "characterization of place" is a good explanation of place-making:

> We see place not only as the context for our actions, but also as an important component of our sense of identity, both as individuals and as members of groups. The meanings we give to the places around us are important elements in the narratives that we as individuals create to connect ourselves to the world and in the narratives that bind us together into groups and communities. (p. 14)

Traditionally, representations of place have appeared in maps drawn on cloth or paper, carved in metal and stone, or now molded through interactive computer simulations. These representations belong to the category of "material maps" (Wood, 2010). Yet, because individuals experience geography in unique

ways, incorporating their own memories and values, material maps cannot fully capture meanings of environments, and these meanings are often contested. To recall Skogan's work (1990), for instance, what may be signs of urban disorder to one person – garbage, graffiti, and disrepair – may to another person represent an oppressive economic system that breeds inequality.

"Vernacular" mapping explores the place-making of "counter-mapping" of subjugated people and cultures by focusing on participants' use of words and drawings as a response to dominant/Western ideologies (Caquard, 2011). In this way, maps are stories that can identify economies, personal stories, and colonization. In the United States, for instance, Johnson (2007) writes that native peoples represented "context and history... rather than representing the earth to a standard scale" by highlighting the "cultural significance" of place and topography in maps (p. 106). These maps, then, came to identify one's "life pathways" through "internal mapping" of where they have been, what they have experienced, or simply what they know (or think that they know) about a particular geography (Blaeser, 1997, p. 122).

Place-making has been examined locally, nationally, and globally – generating such notions as North and South, East and West, Orient and Occident. Said (1979), for example, writes that:

> the Orient is an idea that has a history and a tradition of thought, imagery, and vocabulary that have given it reality and presence in and for the West. The two geographical entities thus support and to an extent reflect each other (p. 5).

According to Bhabha (1990), storytelling about space, time, and ideology underpins nation-building; he writes that in a transnational, global world with mobile societies meshing places and spaces, the "ambivalent figure of the nation"

depends, to some degree, on the cultivation of common narratives that relate people to a space that they can call "home" through images that empower social order, governance and common language (p. 2). But even at the local level of the Southeast Side, ideologies of place are connected with social, economic and coercive power.

Space and Place in News

Several scholars have illuminated the importance of place in the news. Hallin (1986) and Zelizer (1993) write that journalists reinforce social and cultural power relations by reporting from a particular geography or by overtly describing geography as a way to tell a story about an event or issue. Zelizer (1993) suggests that journalists gain and share authority through two modes of interpretation – that of the local and the durational.

Journalists are seen as experts on a news item by "being there," which bolsters the local claim. Journalists may be attending events in meaningful spaces, such as in formal meetings or rallies, and journalists apply metaphors such as "watchdog" and "eyewitness" with authoritative presence on the scene. By contrast, with durational claims, journalists "recollect" moments of history that relate to current news events, relying on a form of "collective memory" (Cecil, 2002; Neiger, Meyers & Zandberg, 2011). Journalists, therefore, become authorities on both space and time by connecting today's events to places and people of the past.

To assign meaning to particular geographies in the news, journalists rely on the authority of several dominant narratives of place. For example, Burgess (1985) identifies how dominant ideologies of "The Inner City" appeared in British news coverage of street violence in the 1980s. Burgess argues that such a

setting is perceived as "an alien place, separate and isolated, located outside the white, middle-class values and environments" (p. 193). This perspective enables journalists to ignore what Burgess suggests may have been more important causes for the riots – economic and racial inequalities originating outside these urban neighborhoods.

Another example of how news narratives may group and stereotype people and places within particular geographies is Gans' (2004) concept of "small-town pastoralism." Journalists apply this trope in representing rural places and people as slow-paced and traditional. Such qualities are used to glorify America's homespun values, and also as a benchmark to measure technological advancement, Gans writes.

Fry's (2003) work on national television news coverage of Midwestern flooding during the 1990s borrows from Gans to show how journalists characterized small Midwestern towns through a lens of nostalgia. Fry found that national TV news constructed the Midwest as the mythical "Heartland" – agrarian, patriotic, hard-working, and humble – generalizations that ignore contrary definitions and explanations for social conditions and local culture. These constructions portrayed floodwaters as threatening Midwestern values of work ethic, community, and heritage as much as they could potentially destroy infrastructure and human lives. News of flooding, then, became more salient for a wider audience as news stories cast the disaster as threatening America's core, not just small towns along the Mississippi River.

Williams (1976) notes that dominant representations of "the country" portray the rural as sensitive, simple, and feminine, while "the city" tends to be viewed as aggressive, advanced, and masculine. Such broad constructions of

place propagated by popular culture ultimately inform literature, politics, and mass media, Williams says, detouring both the news media and their audiences from exploring or recognizing deeper meanings of nature and the news.

Research Questions

This dissertation inquires into the processes of place-making among journalists and those they cover, using the case of Iowa City's Southeast Side. This study is not interested in audience interpretations of news media characterizations of place, however. Rather, it is focused on how culture and social roles within a community influences news constructions of place.

Therefore, this study is guided by the following questions:

- RQ1: What are the standard institutional mediated constructions of Iowa City's Southeast Side?
- RQ2: What institutional, occupational and other factors help explain these mediated constructions of place?
- RQ3: How do journalists, public officials, and other "outsiders" characterize the Southeast Side as a place?
- RQ4: What alternative characterizations of place emerge from Southeast Side residents themselves?
- RQ5: How do these competing conceptions of neighborhoods help illuminate power differentials between different social groups involved in defining the community?

In the following chapters, I discuss the qualitative approaches used to explore these questions. To evaluate the multiple levels of newswork from the individual journalist to news production, distribution, and meaning in the characterization of the Southeast Side, I turn to textual analysis of news coverage and an analysis of mental maps and interviews with journalists, public officials, and Southeast Side residents.

CHAPTER 3 – STUDY DESIGN AND METHODS

> There are underlying causes of social and behavioral phenomena, but … they are not to be understood by observing the surface of human events. What we think we see happening in everyday experience is actually a result of unseen forces.
>
> Steven H. Chaffee, *Explication.*

If culture and the news are interwoven, as discussed in Chapter 2, then one needs a way to understand the cultural meanings of people, places, and ideas embedded in news. This chapter treats news as a text that can be analyzed and interpreted in systematic ways with the goal of understanding culture. This study has two aspects. First, it compares stories journalists have told about a particular geographic area with those told by residents of that area. Second, it compares representations of place made by journalists and public officials to the place-making by residents who are referenced in the news. This study employs three methods – textual analysis, interviews, and mental mapping, as outlined below.

Qualitative Textual Analysis

Qualitative textual analysis explains how story educates the audience about dominant social and cultural values that are embedded in news, political messages, and even fairytales (Bettelheim, 1976; Hall 1980; Meyers, 2004). While the specific approach and method one uses may vary, most textual analyses rely on a conceptual lens and rigorous and methodical reading to explore meaning (Carey, 2009; Lindlof & Taylor, 2010).

Narrative textual analysis – the reading of texts for stories that invoke dominant ideological constructions (Bird & Dardenne, 1997; Coman, 2005;

Darnton, 1975; Ettema, 2005) – has been widely used in mass communications research. The aim is to identify embedded messages and their social and cultural meanings and uses (Manoff, 1986).

The Daily Iowan, *The Iowa City Press-Citizen* and *The Gazette* of Cedar Rapids provided data for this study. These papers all covered the relevant news events of 2009 and 2010. Each newspaper was available through online archives or microfilm; and many of the journalists, editors, and photographers who covered the events of 2009 and 2010 continued to work within local media or were otherwise accessible for interviews.

Here are short descriptions of each newspaper:

- *The Daily Iowan*, a student-run newspaper at the University of Iowa, has a print circulation of 14,500 between August and May and 9,000 in June and July.[1] *The Daily Iowan* is led by a student staff of about 100 and a paid advertising, design, and management staff of about 10 professionals. Even though the college newspaper tends to focus its coverage on university news, *The Daily Iowan* does cover Iowa City government, police, and K-12 education.

- *The Iowa City Press-Citizen* is a Gannett-owned professional newspaper with a print circulation of about 15,000 and a staff of 50 – about 10 of whom are reporters and editors. Since the early 2000s, this newspaper has focused on providing space for citizens to comment on local and national issues. More recently, writings by a dozen regular unpaid community participants in what the paper has called "The Writer's Group" has expanded from the newspaper's printed page to its website where writers run their own blogs and interact with commenters.

- *The* (Cedar Rapids) *Gazette* is a privately owned, professional daily newspaper based in Cedar Rapids, Iowa – about 40 minutes north of Iowa City. The paper has a print circulation of about 167,000 during the week and 200,800 on Sundays. While a majority of *The Gazette*'s coverage focuses on Cedar Rapids, an Iowa City reporting staff of about five reporters cover Iowa City government, breaking news, the University of Iowa, and Iowa City K-12 schools.

[1] The newspaper takes a publication hiatus for several weeks in the summer and other breaks that align with the university's schedule.

This study examines three newspapers' coverage of six topics and events related to the Southeast Side during 2009 and 2010 (Figure 3.1).

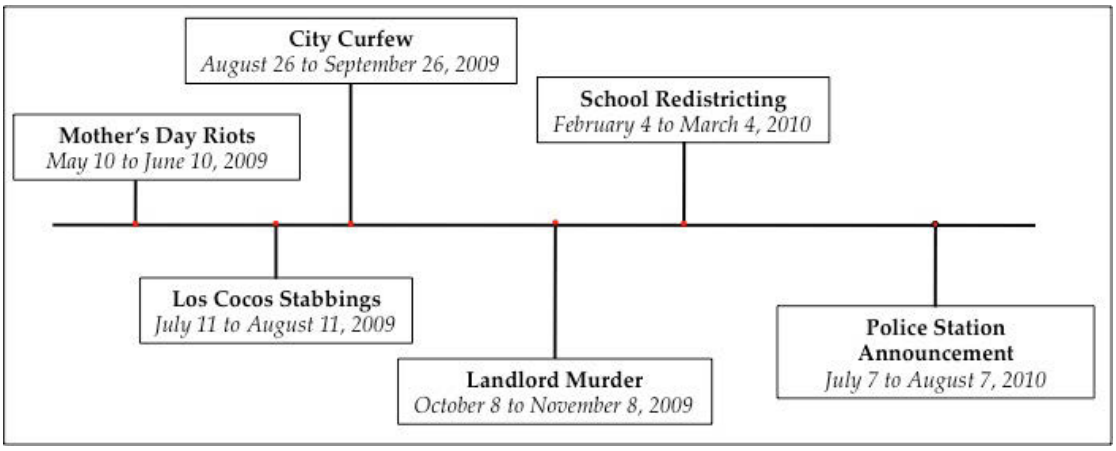

Figure 3.1. Timeline of News Events.

By selecting specific instances and news events rather than conducting a census of all news coverage for two years, I was able to focus on a manageable volume of texts to explore how newsworkers constructed and characterized the Southeast Side. Fewer but more relevant texts allow a researcher to deeply explore cultural themes and meanings (Geertz, 1973; Lindlof & Taylor, 2010).

- The first set of stories selected surround "The Mother's Day Riots," a series of at least two neighborhood melees on Broadway Street in Iowa City's Southeast Side that began on Mother's Day (May 10) 2009. At least eight teenagers were arrested for their alleged participation in violence that involved as many as 60 people.

- The second set of news stories surround the closing of the Los Cocos Mexican Restaurant on the city's Southeast Side. During the summer of 2009, the restaurant had been a site of violence, including stabbings, fights, and shootings. The restaurant was closed on August 11, 2009, after one woman was shot in the abdomen.

- The third set of news stories selected concern reports of violence on the Southeast Side of Iowa City in 2009 that led to a nightly citywide curfew for teens. The first discussion of the curfew appeared in late August of that year when the police chief asked the City Council to approve an ordinance ordering youth to stay inside at night.

- The fourth set of stories selected surround the murder of a white landlord at the Broadway Condominiums on the Southeast Side on October 8, 2009. Several months later, police arrested three black youths for the murder.

- The fifth set of stories concern the redistricting of Iowa City Community School District schools to lessen strain on schools that service the Southeast Side. Redrawing lines that determine which schools students attend was supposed to ease overcrowding and spread the number of students struggling with educational and socioeconomic disadvantages more equally among schools.

- The sixth and final set of news stories surround initial reports of the Iowa City Police Department's intention to open a substation at the Pepperwood Plaza strip mall next to the Broadway Neighborhood Center in the Southeast Side in 2010.

The Gazette and the *Press-Citizen* were read on microfilm, and *The Daily Iowan* accessed through its online archive, which provides free access to PDF files. I conducted an initial reading of every issue of the three papers for each identified time span, selecting accounts, commentaries, photographs, and letters about the relevant topic or event and also items in those periods related to the Southeast Side in general. The resulting sample consisted of 187 news stories, editorials, columns, and letters to the editor.[2]

Once all news items from the first reading were collected, I created an electronic database to record my interpretations. To organize the news stories, each text's file name was coded based upon the newspaper in which it appeared, the respective publication, author name, page number, and headline.

[2] Even though letters to the editor and reader columns are not produced by professional journalists, these texts are still relevant, because newsworkers select which submissions to publish, and because such contributions have the potential to influence news coverage (Nielsen, 2010).

I used this database during a second reading from which I selected 83 stories (Table 3.1) that best reflected storytelling about place.

News event or topic	Search start	Search end	n=
Mother's Day Riot	May 10, 2009	June 10, 2009	15
Restaurant closing	July 11, 2009	August 11, 2009	12
City curfew announcement	August 26, 2009	September 26, 2009	19
Landlord murder	October 8, 2009	November 8, 2009	15
School redistricting	February 4, 2010	March 4, 2010	13
Police Department opening	July 7, 2010	August 7, 2010	9
			83

Table 3.1 News Events, Topics, and Search Dates.

These stories serve as the bulk of the data for the textual analysis.

During this second reading, I selected stories that:

- used characters and sources from the Southeast Side or others who spoke about the Southeast Side;
- used language and literary devices, such as metaphor, to describe the Southeast Side and its problems;
- overtly discussed elements of the Southeast Side's geography and explained the problems of the Southeast Side through larger social and cultural meanings.

Once all data were selected, I conducted a third reading to look deeper into the categories of storytelling to recognize the use of symbols and storylines that reflect larger meanings (Hall, 1980; Sillars, 1991).[3]

[3] Whereas previous readings had been done in groups based upon news publication (for example, I read all *Daily Iowan* stories at once before reading another newspaper's

First, I was interested in the news stories' sources and characters. When reading news as story, sources become characters that inform the story's plot and interact with the settings to "humanize" events (Bird & Dardenne, 1997, p. 343). Interactions between characters, setting, and their experiences solving the story's problem reveal how the reader, too, can navigate through trials of life by turning to the social and cultural tools presented in the news story.

When evaluating who is – and who is not – used as sources and characters, researchers are able to determine to whom the news story is written and for whom the news is produced (Bal, 2009; Sillars, 1991). To explore the category of sources and characters, I read the texts with the following questions in mind:

- Who are the sources for the story?
- Who is mentioned, and who is not?
- Are the sources providing perspective from inside or outside a particular place?

Second, I examined language and dialogue (or vocabulary) used to describe the Southeast Side. The vocabulary that journalists use is important to examine what stories are "saying" about culture (Bal, 2009). For example, when the black boxer Mike Tyson was accused of rape in the 1990s, news stories referred to him as an "animal," a term that resembled a dominant stereotype of black men as primitive, savage, and sexually aggressive (Lule, 2001; Meyers, 2004).

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coverage) I read texts in groups based upon the event or topic. While previous readings gave me an understanding of how particular news organizations were covering the events and topics, I wanted an understanding of how journalists as a group (an interpretive community) characterized the same places, events, and topics. The third reading was done chronologically.

With vocabulary in mind, I read stories about the Southeast Side while asking the following questions:

- How may specific phrases and language used in news texts depict people and place?
- Does language appear in quotes from sources or in journalists' own words?
- How might language be embedded with larger cultural and historical meanings?

Third, I read news texts with specific interest in overt and explicit identifications and descriptions of setting and environment. In literature and story, place serves as a set upon which characters and themes can be performed (Bal, 2009). To identify overt descriptions of place in news stories, I asked the following questions:

- How is a particular geography described?
- What is the journalist's proximity to specific places mentioned?

Finally, because how storytellers talk about geography can influence audiences' connections to place and to the story's moral and social lessons (Hallin, 1986), I analyzed how journalists connected news stories of people and places to larger social and cultural meanings. To explore how descriptions of the Southeast Side connected to larger ideological and cultural messages, I read news stories, asking:

- How may news texts refer to larger social and cultural constructions of place?
- How may journalists connect issues of geography to larger community/social themes?

Answers to these questions provided a foundation for discussing the dominant media characterizations of the Southeast Side with which data from interviews with journalists, officials, and residents are compared.

Conducting Interviews

In December 2011, I conducted semi-structured interviews (Appendix B) with three sets of community members in Iowa City – journalists, public officials and community organizers, and residents of the Southeast Side. Semi-structured interviews allow researchers to alter the order and nature of questions posed as situations warrant (Lindlof & Taylor, 2010). Interviews with these groups provided a deeper understanding about how news was constructed and interpreted, revealing the complexities of place-making in the news. All interviews focused on participants' perceptions of news coverage, Iowa City environments, and activities of the various spaces and places throughout Iowa City.

I gathered names of journalists and photographers that appeared in bylines of news stories used in my textual analysis to build a list of 15 potential participants. In compliance with the University of Iowa's Institutional Review Board (IRB), I emailed the journalists to measure their interest in participating in the study and to inform them of the process (Appendix A). Eleven journalists (Table 3.2) agreed to participate in my study, and we arranged to meet within the week.

Participants selected the location for their interviews, often choosing to meet in coffee shops or at the Moeller Media Research Lab in the University of Iowa's Adler Journalism Building. Each interview was conducted within one

week of the initial email, and all interviews were completed within a one-month period.

Name	Age	Newspaper	Race	Gender
Annika	20	*Daily Iowan*	White	Female
Ashley	20	*Daily Iowan*	White	Female
Barb	36	*Gazette*	White	Female
David	33	*Press-Citizen*	White	Male
Duncan	21	*Daily Iowan*	White	Male
Gary	33	*Press-Citizen*	White	Male
Jeff	41	*Press-Citizen*	White	Male
Len	29	*Gazette*	White	Male
Max	28	*Press-Citizen*	White	Male
Roger	35	*Press-Citizen*	Hispanic	Male
Ulrich	37	*Press-Citizen*	White	Male

Table 3.2. Journalists.

Once we met, I again explained the study to each participant and answered questions about the project. With IRB approval, participants were not required to sign an informed consent form: My initial email to them indicated that their affirmative email response to participate would serve as acceptance of informed consent. After these introductions, journalists answered demographic information, including their age, race, and the length of time living in the Iowa City area. I also asked them to describe their jobs.

Participants ranged in age from 20 to 37. All had lived in the Iowa City area for at least three years. Eleven of the journalists identified as white; one identified as Hispanic. Three were female. Seven had been working at the same media outlet since 2009 or 2010. One journalist had moved into a new position at

another Iowa City news outlet, one had left the Iowa City area, but remained in media, and two had left the field entirely.

Interviews lasted between 45 and 60 minutes, and each participant agreed to have their interview audio-recorded. My initial email to journalists said that they would not be given confidentiality so that I could refer to specific news stories that they had published, thereby identifying them by name. However, several participants said that they would only participate if they were assigned a pseudonym to protect their confidentiality. Therefore, all journalists were given pseudonyms, and I promised not to connect their pseudonyms with specific news stories.

During my textual analysis, I also compiled a list of 13 names or positions of public officials and community leaders cited in the stories (Table 3.3). This list included those from particular public institutions, including schools, the police department, and city public service agencies, such as the housing authority. Community organizations, such as neighborhood associations, were also included.

Six public officials and community leaders (less than half of those I contacted) agreed to participate by responding to my initial email (Appendix A).[4] As with journalists, officials and community leaders were informed that their affirmative response to participate in the study waived the need for a signed informed consent document. Participants selected the location for the interview. Two met in coffee shops; the remainder met in their offices or in the Moeller Research Lab. I began the interviews by answering questions about the project

[4] Those who chose not to participate in this study said that they were concerned about confidentiality and the controversy about issues pertaining to the Southeast Side.

and asking for demographic information, including age, race, and their length of time living and working in Iowa City. I also asked participants to clarify their jobs and involvement in the community.

Name	Age	Affiliation	Race	Gender
Allen	49	Police officer	White	Male
Bill	54	City official	White	Male
Fred	45	School official	White	Male
James	31	Neighborhood association	White	Male
Paul	32	Police officer	White	Male
Susie	40	Neighborhood center	White	Female

Table 3.3. Public Officials.

All of the officials and community members identified as white; one was female. Participants ranged in age from 31 to 54. Five participants considered themselves long-term Iowa City area residents. One (the school official) had lived in Southeastern Iowa for about two years. Each interview lasted between 45 and 60 minutes and was audio recorded with the participants' permission. Participants were assigned a pseudonym to protect their confidentiality, although none requested such protection.

Another purpose of interviews was to have participants explain what they thought of the Southeast Side and where they thought the Southeast Side was located. Pinpointing Iowa City's Southeast Side is not a straightforward matter: its precise geographic location and boundaries are ambiguous and contested. No

official city or county map defines a space as the Southeast Side,[5] nor were news stories clear about the Southeast Side's geographic boundaries. Thus, near the end of their interviews, I gave journalists and public officials an aerial photograph of a Southeastern portion of Iowa City (Appendix C) and asked them to locate the city's Southeast Side.

By using a highlighter, journalists and officials drew borders for the Southeast Side on the photograph. The majority of these participants located three versions of the Southeast Side (Figure 3.2). This assisted me in the subsequent step of selecting Southeast Side residents by identifying where spatial definitions intersected.

Each version of the three Southeast Sides carried its own meanings. The first included Court Street at the north, South Gilbert Street at the west, and the city borders on the south and east ends. Shown with a black line on the map above, participants said that this Southeast Side contained more businesses and economically and racially pluralistic residential neighborhoods.

A second Southeast Side focused on neighborhoods bordered at the north by Highway 6, at the west by South Gilbert Street, and by cornfields and city parks at the south. The eastern edge for this version of the Southeast Side seemed to appear near a trailer park and elderly care facility. This version of the Southeast Side (marked on the map by a red boundary) was considered to include more low-income housing and more pockets of racial and ethnic minorities.

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[5] The City of Iowa City does recognize a Southeast Neighborhood Association; however, this space is north of Highway 6 and further east of the locations participants identified as the "Southeast Side."

The third Southeast Side was comprised of three separate locations within the red boundary, which are marked on the map by orange circles. Locations within this third Southeast Side included the Dolphin Lake Point Enclave apartments (formerly the Lakeside Apartments) near Lakeside Drive at the eastern edge of Highway 6; a stretch of Hollywood Boulevard between the Dolphin Lake Point Enclave apartments and the Broadway Condominiums on Broadway Street; and, the Broadway Street Neighborhood Center (BSNC) near Cross Park Avenue, which provides residents with preschool, parenting classes, tutoring, clothes, and food. Participants said that this version of the Southeast Side is "what the public means by the Southeast Side."

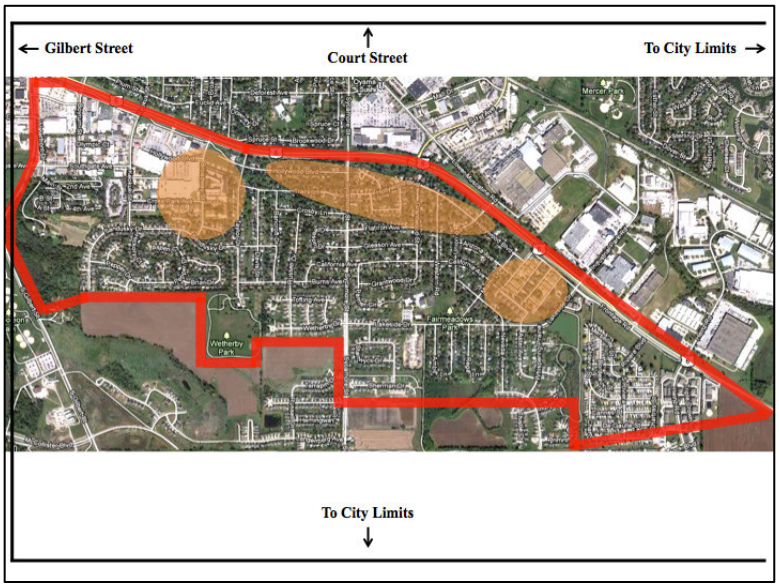


Figure 3.2. The Three Southeast Sides.

I selected the BSNC as a site to conduct interviews with residents from Iowa City's Southeast Side, because the center appeared as a common location used to describe and explain the Southeast Side and who lived there. Also, for

practical research reasons, the BSNC provided shelter from the weather, had space to meet and talk without interruption, and had tables that participants could use to comfortably draw their mental maps of the city. The neighborhood center was a place where I could meet residents without intruding into their homes or personal spaces. The BSNC is also a place where people choose to enter, where they have built relationships with other residents and in many cases with center staff.

Admittedly, making the center my base restricted the sample of those living on the Southeast Side in that those who use the BSNC are a subset of neighborhood residents in terms of race and socio-economic status. Furthermore, limiting this study to this convenient sample restricts the perspectives of this study's findings to that particular group and may lead to an oversimplification of insider/outsider perspectives of the Southeast Side. However, this selected group of participants does help me address this project's larger focus – that of understanding the power (or lack thereof) of residents to shape media characterizations of their neighborhood. Indeed, journalists and public officials identified BSNC clients as representing the "Southeast Side," describing that they carry negative stigmas associated with Southeast Side neighborhoods and the BSNC, itself: according to the center's director, roughly 69 percent of the 1,800 BSNC clients are under the age of 18; 47 percent are male; and 49 percent are black. These residents, then, provide perspectives from within the neighborhoods, among those who themselves carry a stigma.

I spent at least four hours a day for five business days over two weeks in December 2011 at the BSNC to meet with clients. BSNC staff allowed me to use a large table near the back of the main lobby and an office space, as available.

During my visits, I approached clients in the center to measure their interest in participating in my study. Once I met those who wished to participate in the study, a BSNC director served as a facilitator to guide us to a table or room that was available where I spoke with participants.

As I introduced myself, and again as we began the interview, I told clients that they were free to decline to participate in the study. I read an informed consent form with each client before they agreed to participate (Appendix A). If they wished to participate, I informed them of their choice to consent during our initial meeting or at a later date. Five people declined to participate; 17 others agreed to participate at our first meeting.[6]

All 17 participants from the BSNC (Table 3.4) identified as black and ranged in age from 20 to 57. Ten of the participants were women. At the time of the interview, 16 residents either lived in the Southeast Side at one time or had recently moved to another part of the city. One resident (Tony) lived in nearby Coralville and used the neighborhood center to perform community service.

Originally, I planned to record my sessions with residents, with their permission, but after several residents said they did not want their interviews recorded, I set aside that plan and relied on notes taken during the interviews

[6] Per IRB permissions, participants were not required to sign a consent form in order to participate. I was concerned that asking participants who are often marginalized in this community to sign a form would undercut trust between us. Instead, reading the informed consent forms to them, answering their questions about the project, allowing them to select pseudonyms, and allowing participants to end their involvement with the project at any time provided more than protections provided by a traditional informed consent process. Participants were also asked to take an informed consent form with them after the interview.

supplemented by field notes completed immediately following each interview.[7] Interviews lasted between 45 and 60 minutes (Appendix B).

Name	Age	Race	Gender
Alicia	27	Black	Female
Amanda	23	Black	Female
Angel	23	Black	Female
Beth	35	Black	Female
Cordell	53	Black	Male
Jacque	29	Black	Male
Johnny	20	Black	Male
Lisa	23	Black	Female
Maria	33	Black	Female
Michelle	34	Black	Female
Nene	44	Black	Female
Nevaeh	57	Black	Female
Sandra	51	Black	Female
Slimmy	47	Black	Male
Ted	49	Black	Male
Tom	22	Black	Male
Tony	21	Black	Male

Table 3.4. Residents.

Participants were asked how long they had lived in Iowa City, their employment status, and about other social connections in Iowa City. The

[7] Field notes are essential for researchers to document and reflect upon experiences when they enter into a culture or community rather than their own (Creswell, 2007; Lindlof & Taylor, 2010.) My field notes from interviews with residents, which totaled about five pages each, allowed me to clarify comments that residents made and to include information from side notes I took during the interviews (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 1995). Quotes from BSNC participants for this study were constructed from my notes, in which I attempted to take note of their answers verbatim and to the best of my ability.

remainder of the session was devoted to the creation and discussion of mental maps.

Each group of participants likely held differing stakes in their community storytelling and should be understood while discussing their involvement in this study. The following discussion, therefore, is not to present concrete findings about these participants, but to deepen an understanding of the participants themselves and their roles in the community and in this study.

First, public officials and journalists tended to be long-term residents who had – or were planning to – raise a family and spend much of their careers in the Iowa City area. Having spent significant amount of time in their respective social roles in the community, these participants have the ability to create a lasting story about the city and are particularly invested in forming and maintaining dominant stories of the city. These two groups also served functions in the city that influence their perspectives on the purpose and value of storytelling about the community. Officials, for example, have become involved in city governance and planning; their interest in city storytelling is likely related to building positive perceptions of what they consider their home territory. Journalists also likely have an investment in sustaining a positive perception of the community in conjunction with local political and social institutions, a process called "boosterism" (for example, see Burd, 1977).

Second, student journalists, a subset of the group mentioned above, operate as journalists in the community, but as college students are transient. In most cases, student journalists live and work in the community while school is in session. They can come and go during the academic year and can vacate the community during summer months. And while previous research suggests

student journalists prefer to identify with their journalistic selves before their student selves (Gutsche, 2011; Gutsche & Salkin, 2011) students tend to maintain a close proximity to the university campus and operate within highly structured experiences related to coursework and social interactions determined through their role as a college student. Their stake in storytelling about the city beyond the university campus may be slightly different than professional journalists and public officials in that students are more likely to leave Iowa City after graduation and, therefore, may not share the same sense of community as journalists and officials who plan to stay in the city for the foreseeable future. Student journalists lack the same risks of professional journalists and officials in their storytelling; if they see the community as a temporary home, they may have less at stake in how it is portrayed in their work.

Finally, the subset of Southeast Side residents I spoke with are a mixture of long-time residents and transits who have been in Iowa City for a short time and may return to their homes in Chicago. But even those who lived in Iowa for 10 years and consider Iowa their home travel back and forth between Iowa City and Chicago to visit friends and family members. These residents share a sense of being outsiders in Iowa City. And, like those residents who moved to Iowa City to find work and escape what they considered dangerous neighborhoods in Chicago, they continue to balance the possibility of returning to their homes and families in Chicago. Constructing a sense of community, then, is a complex assignment of meaning between two cities, rather than a single, favored, and permanent home.

Making Mental Maps

I asked each of my interviewees to draw a mental map of Iowa City. Mental mapping allows participants to draw maps that identify and explain natural or manmade boundaries in geography from their own vantage points (Wood, 2010). Lynch (1980) writes that such maps are "speaking landscapes" of words, images, colors, and one's personal experiences with geography. By asking participants to draw their neighborhoods and the city as a mental map – and by asking them to describe their maps as they drew them – together, we were able to identify evidence of different concepts of place and with it of "story," which extended to authority, power, and social and cultural barriers in Iowa City.

I encouraged participants to see these maps as drawings that told people where they went in the community and what they knew about different parts of the city. I told them to feel free to think of these more like drawings than absolute representations of space with scale and proportion (Johnson, 2007). While I asked participants to identify where they lived, I did not encourage them to place any other specific items or locations on their maps.

For up to 10 minutes, I would read or check e-mail while people drew, so as to not distract or intimidate them by watching. I then asked them to describe their maps, to tell me what types of people they thought lived in different neighborhoods, who enters and exits the space, and what they think happens in that space (Entrikin, 1991; Soja, 2010). My questions included:

- What do you know about this part of town?
- What do you think of people who live in that part of town?
- Who lives in this neighborhood?
- What kind of news comes from this part of town?

Wood (2010) writes that a person's map as story can be understood by turning to Barthean semiotics. All maps begin as empty, blank spaces that are either filled or left void, the reasons for which explain how one interacts with a specific environment. It is these decisions that can be revealed through a critical analysis (King, 1996). Barthes has been credited for providing a means by which to recognize and "read" signs embedded in messages through multiple and deep readings.

Cloke, et al. (2004) employ a Geertzean (1973) approach of "thick description" to reading maps that "emphasizes the complex layers of meaning that can attach to what are often apparently simple social behaviors" (p. 308). More specifically, Cloke, et al. (2004) suggest cartographers and geographers become "insiders" (p. 309) to study culture. Therefore, to interpret mental maps and the process of place-making, I turned to information and perspectives gathered from exploring the Southeast Side phenomenon for three years and interviews with residents, journalists, and officials to identify categories or aspects of maps related to how participants constructed place.

First, I was interested in the selection and promotion of items on mental maps. Monmonier (1996) writes that mapmakers select, suppress, and emphasize elements of maps to tell stories. A traveler's roadmap, for example, likely shows the most accessible means of travel, emphasizing interstates in lieu of back roads. However, an atlas or plat map – used for detailed representations of terrain, property lines, and natural resources – would likely include back roads and alternate paths. Both types of maps tell different stories for different purposes. Therefore, evaluating the map's purpose – or multiple purposes – is an essential first step to understanding what is shown, what is not, and how.

Second, I was interested in how geographic boundaries demarcate real and perceived social and cultural territory (de Certeau, 1984; Johnson, 2007). More specifically, I was interested in the boundaries that mapmakers drew, which buildings and streets were shown, and which routes were described (Cloke, et al., 2004). Ladd (1967), for instance, used mental mapping to show the experience of youth in Boston's Mission Hill area. By allowing children to draw their neighborhoods, Ladd was able to identify mental, emotional, and physical barriers and boundaries that these youth experienced every day. In my study, Ladd's work is especially helpful by showing how participants can connect physical locations with emotions and memories.

How people describe their interactions with space leads to my third category – the use of symbols and words to express story (Blaeser, 1997; Johnson, 2007). Whereas the previous categories dealt with what participants chose to include in their maps, this category is interested in how those items were included. In this discussion, symbols, lines, streets, and words come to represent not only geography, but also stories that are shaped and coded by the mapmaker's ideology (Cloke, et al., 2004; Monmonier, 1996).

Conclusion

This chapter addressed the multiple methodologies applied in this study. The following chapters apply these approaches to analyze multiple levels of newswork, including news practices and cultural meanings of news texts and visuals. By comparing the place-making of journalists and public officials that influence the news to the place-making of residents who are referenced in the news through interviews and mental mapping, this study identifies the influence of social roles and power in perceiving and characterizing geography.

CHAPTER 4 – THE NEIGHBORHOOD IN THE NEWS

> No one can deny the persisting continuities of long traditions, sustained habitations, national languages, and cultural geographies, but there seems no reason except fear and prejudice to keep insisting on their separation and distinctiveness, as if that was all human life was about.
>
> Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism*.

This chapter begins with information on Iowa City's geography and demographics to be used as background for an analysis of news coverage of Southeast Side neighborhoods and of mental maps that appear in Chapters 5 and 6. The following textual analysis addresses my first research question, which explores how local news media characterized Iowa City's Southeast Side in 2009 and 2010.

Background

A four-hour drive from Chicago and bordered by cornfields on all sides, Iowa City is a college town, surrounded by smaller, rural towns. By 2010, Iowa City's population was close to 68,000. It is also home to the University of Iowa, a Big Ten university with nearly 31,000 students. The Iowa River, which is about 200-feet-wide when it reaches Iowa City, carves the city into two major geographies – the East and West Sides (Figure 4.1).

Space that is east of the Iowa River is home to neighborhoods of university professors, college students, long-time residents (also called "townies"), and businesses. Iowa City's downtown is also on the east side and includes the business and bar district (clustered at the center of map), and government buildings, such as the police department and county courthouse.

Iowa City is bordered to the north by Interstate 80 and to cornfields at the south. Iowa City's West Side has seen strong residential and business developments in recent years and stretches to Highway 27.

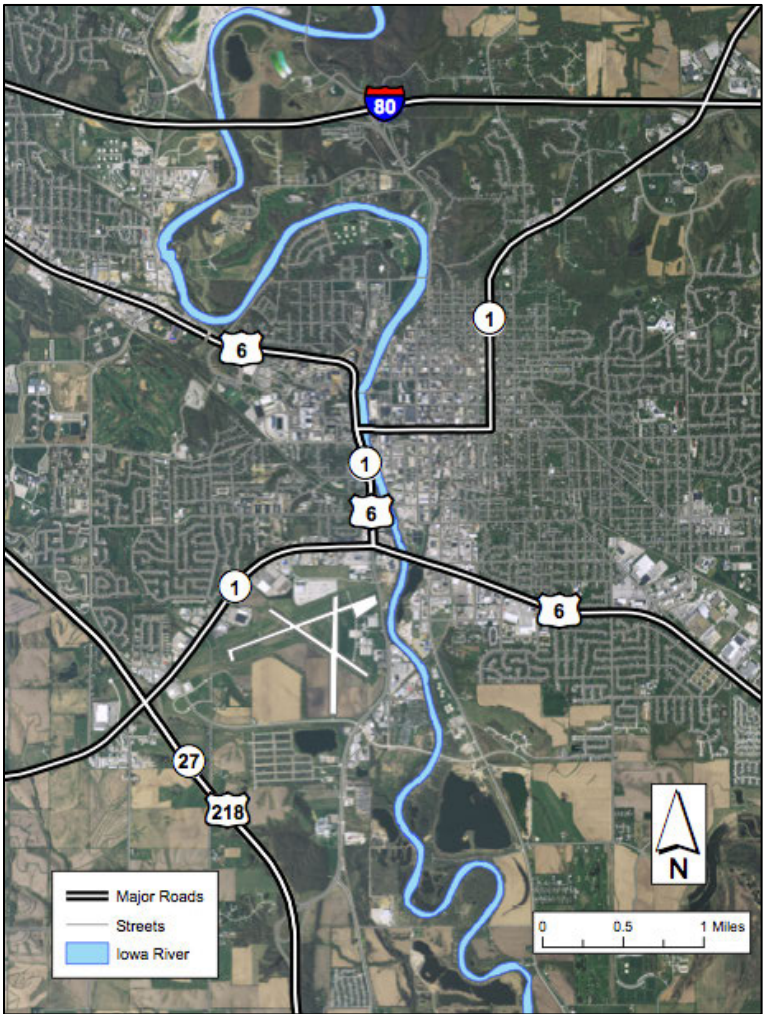


Figure 4.1. Map of Iowa City, 2012.

The Iowa City area has seen significant growth since the 1990s thanks to increasing enrollments at the University of Iowa and private development, creating a region of several cities. In 1998, the Coral Ridge Mall opened in the city of Coralville (top left of map) near Iowa City's West Side. Coralville has seen its

population grow 25 percent between 2000 and 2010 to almost 19,000 people (U.S. Census) from diverse backgrounds (Table 4.1).

	White	Black	Asian	Hispanic/Latino
Iowa City	82.5 %	5.8 %	6.9 %	5.3 %
Coralville	79.4 %	7.9 %	7.8 %	5.1 %

Table 4.1. Racial/Ethnic Demographics

Source: U.S. Census. (2010). U.S. Census QuickFacts. Retrieved on August 3, 2012 at http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/19/1938595.html.

Iowa City's southeastern neighborhoods (Figure 4.2) – space below Highway 6 that is at the center of this study – has also seen significant growth since the 1990s, especially among black and Latino communities.

Built in the late 1950s, these neighborhoods of duplexes and single-family, ranch-style houses were home to predominantly low-income white families. By 2000, however, Southeast Side neighborhoods were growing as much as six times faster than other areas of Iowa City and housed the highest concentration of racial minorities in the city. As of 2009, blacks and Latinos in these southeastern neighborhoods were double that of the city's average (Bailey, Law, Mason & Phillips, 2011).

At the same time, perceptions of increasing crime became a concern for some Iowa Citians in 2008 and 2009. Between 2007 and 2009, for example, violent crime increased 24 percent and property crime in the city increased 27 percent (Hennigan, 2009). In 2009, 23 percent of police calls were from Iowa City's southeastern neighborhoods (Hennigan, 2010). This made the Southeast Side stand out as a deviant place.

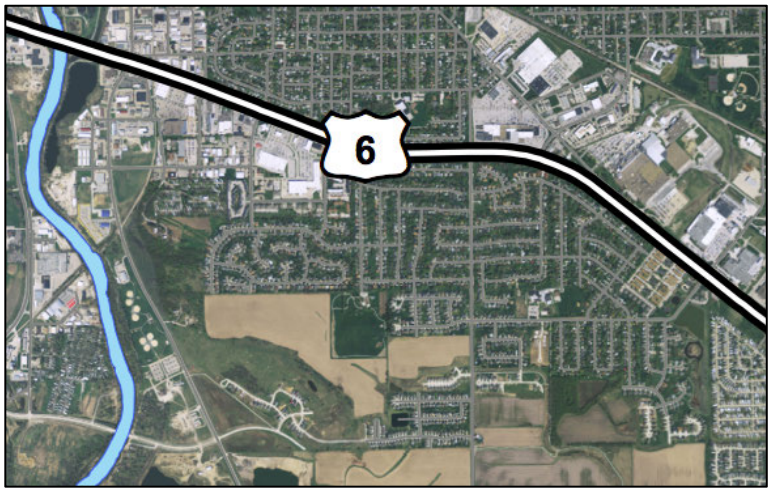


Figure 4.2. Map of Southeastern Iowa City, 2012.

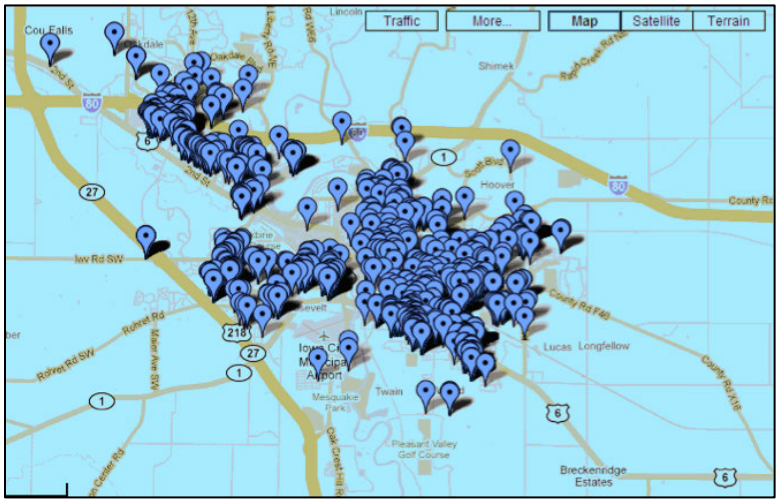


Figure 4.3. Map of Affordable Housing, 2010.
Source: Spence, Lawson, and Visser, 2010.

Another spatial divide appeared in 2009 and 2010. Differences between the city's East and West Sides appeared in news during debate about school redistricting, which was discussed in Chapter 3. An east/west distinction seems to be based largely on perceptions of class, with the west attracting newer

developments and the east as a geography with established neighborhoods and business districts. Discourse about an east/west divide may also be related to a historic rivalry between the city's two public high schools. City High School, the older of the two, is east of the river. West High School, surrounded by new and sprawling housing developments, is on the city's West Side.

	City High School 2011-12	West High School 2011-12
Total Enrollment	1,410	1,914
European American	70 %	71.11 %
African American	15.32 %	15.73 %
Asian American	3.48 %	8.41 %
Hispanic American	10.92 %	4.49 %
Free/Reduced Lunch Enrollment	31.49 %	22.04 %

Table 4.2. Enrollment Statistics.

Source: Iowa City School District. (2010). 2009-2010 Annual Report. Accessed on October 27, 2011 at http://www.iowa-city.k12.ia.us/district/nclb.html. Iowa City, IA.

News stories of school redistricting discussed overcrowding at West High School and several disparities in student demographics between the schools, such as a high number of Asian American students at West High School and a larger Hispanic American population and more students on enrolled in free and reduced lunch programs at City High School (Table. 4.2).[8]

[8] Poverty within Iowa City schools has been identified as the number of students who received free and reduced lunches during the 2003-2004 academic year (Spence, Lawson

Iowa City's distinct neighborhoods and changing demographics are prominent factors in public discourse about Iowa City, including news discourses that supplied the material for this study's textual analysis.

Mediated Representations of Urban Chaos

On Mother's Day 2009, a private family feud expanded to crowds of black youth – and some of their parents – storming the streets of Iowa City's Southeast Side. News coverage of the melee soon turned into a named event, coined by *The* (Cedar Rapids) *Gazette* as "The Mother's Day Brawl" (Keppler, 2009), which later appeared in most local news as "The Mother's Day Riot." The holiday street violence was the beginning of a summer of news accounts about social problems on the Southeast Side.

Soon after stabbings and shootings forced owners to close the nearby Los Cocos Mexican Restaurant and hip-hop club, the city discussed – and later implemented – a nightly curfew for teens. In October, a white landlord at the Broadway Condominiums on the Southeast Side was shot and killed. The Southeast Side then was at the center of debate about redistricting plans that would send elementary school students from southeastern neighborhoods to other schools throughout the city. In response to the summer's violence, the police department opened a substation on the Southeast Side.

& Visser, 2010). Free and reduced lunch numbers has come to replace more specific racial data. Percentages of poverty ranged from 1 percent at Shimek Elementary on the city's far north side and those schools which had more than 40 percent of children in poverty, including Roosevelt Elementary in the city's southwestern side (40 percent), and Mann Elementary, just north of the downtown (44 percent). Two of the schools, Twain Elementary (57 percent) and Wood Elementary (43 percent), which are in the Southeast Side, had the most numbers of students receiving free or reduced lunches.

The textual analysis below shows how news coverage of these events and issues deployed storytelling devices identified in Chapter 3 to characterize the Southeast Side as a local ghetto. More specifically, this analysis describe two dominant narratives that classified the Southeast Side as place: first, racialized language, sources from outside the Southeast Side, and scene-setting cast the Southeast Side as a dangerous, black neighborhood that is influenced by urban culture; second, overt descriptions of urban geographies and the application of news narratives about urban settings explained the Southeast Side through a larger cultural discussion about welfare and ghetto life. Both these themes bring to mind the "broken windows" perspective (Skogan, 1990) associated with policing strategies in the neighborhoods seen as ridden with disorder. Neighborhood characteristics related to race and poverty also have been linked with aggressive policing that focuses on disproportionately on minorities (Fagen & Davies, 2000).

Racializing the Southeast Side

News stories about Iowa City's Southeast Side tended to racialize and urbanize descriptions of social disorder there through storytelling by sources outside of the Southeast Side and language that reinforced urban tales of deviance (Lule, 2001; Parisi, 1998; Stabile, 2006). When the Iowa City officials announced the opening of a police substation to address crime at Los Cocos and other places in the Southeast Side in 2010, newspaper coverage avoided a complicated cultural or social explanation for violence in lieu of stories about urban violence and illicit drug-use. Storytelling about gangs and compared the Southeast Side to the urban cores of Chicago, Detroit, and Los Angles, thereby

connecting racial and cultural characteristics to local stories. One *Press-Citizen* story in particular set Iowa City on par with gang-invested urban centers.

> The news article began:
>
> Picture a place where gang members outnumber police four to one.
>
> A place where those gangs have carved out a piece of turf they use to brazenly peddle drugs on street corners and enforce their territory and rules with assaults, stabbings and drive-by shootings.
>
> You might be envisioning the streets of Chicago, Detroit or Los Angeles, but this was the scene in Iowa City in 1998. (Hermiston, 2010)

While the article did not specifically mention the Southeast Side as a place of recent urban trouble, it did identify Broadway Street (a recognizable street in the Southeast Side) as a place of historic violence, thereby connecting to current-day news coverage of violence. Furthermore, the story was published when the police department opened a Southeast Side police station, and at a point in news coverage that the article fit with an overarching narrative about the Southeast Side as a troubled place.

The article continued, saying that gangs still existed in Iowa City in 2010, were rooted in the Southeast Side, and continued to influence quality of life throughout the city:

> What was meant to be a temporary unit has become a fixture in the department.
>
> Gonzalez and the five-man SCAT (gang-prevention) team was out-numbered, so it had had *[sic]* to use strategy to pick off members one or two at a time, they said. The result, (police officer) Batcheller said, was like taking a "sledgehammer to a pile of mashed potatoes."

By connecting the efforts of a police from the past with a perceived gang problem of today through official sources and tales of danger, journalists relied on nostalgia and news narratives about ghetto life to frame the gang problems of

today as being just as threatening. In this case, journalists also suggested the same solutions to similar problems – increased policing.

Journalists also turned to police sources to tell stories of how hip-hop music attracted deviants and a dangerous element to the Southeast Side. One *Press-Citizen* story suggested that violence is akin to hip-hop clubbing and that, even with police intervention to reduce violence, the club's closure was not surprising: "hip-hop clubs have not been successful in the past in Iowa City … [even though] police have worked hard to try to make Los Cocos the exception" (O'Leary, 2009).

Since its early days when urban radio stations shared "shout outs" about urban neighborhoods, housing projects, and street names, hip-hop has been portrayed in popular culture as a black or "ghetto thing" (Forman, 2002). Hip-hop has also been confused with rap music and images of black men wearing chains ("bling") and brandishing handguns (Forman & Neal, 2004). By tapping into notions of hip-hop and urban disorder (Skogan, 1990), news articles racialized the explanations for Iowa City's Southeast Side violence.

Racialized explanations were joined with racialized language and descriptions of Southeast Siders, including alleged offenders, and told tales resembling the violence and dangerous activity described in public discourse about inner-cities (Skogan, 1990). Other news articles about violence at Los Cocos and throughout the Southeast Side commonly included racial identifiers of suspects believed to be involved in neighborhood violence. A *Daily Iowan* story about a reported shooting on Broadway Street around the time of the Los Cocos trouble said the shooting happened either by a person who "fired the handgun

'just for fun,' while others reported that an argument among several people sparked the incident."

The story described:

> three suspects as young black males, one wearing dark-colored clothes, one wearing a gray shirt, 'saggy' white- and blue-stripped shorts and possibly armed with a handgun, and the third wearing a oversized *[sic]* white shirt and armed with a handgun. (Hogan, 2009)

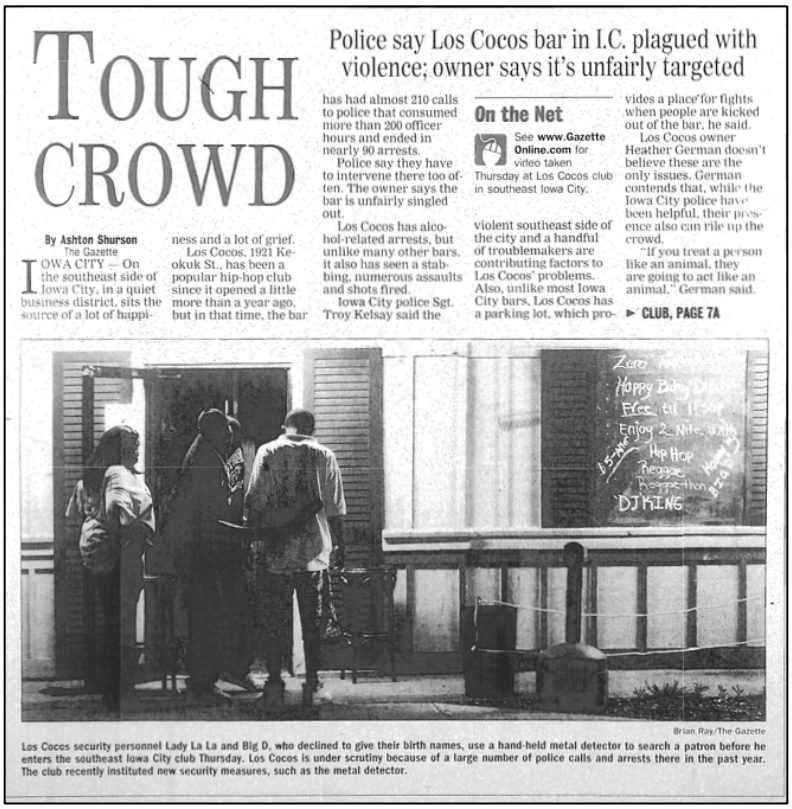
Another *Press-Citizen* story around the time of Los Cocos violence described the suspects as – "a dark-skinned black man with a goatee and a black man wearing a black shirt and shorts" (Hermiston, 2009), while yet another described a scene on the Southeast Side as where young black men continually threatened people in their cars by "taking off their shirts, jumping up and down and yelling obscenities" (Hermiston, 2009a).

Vocabulary used in describing Southeast Side scenes that tapped into racial stereotypes appears throughout news coverage of all events identified in this study. For instance, a 2009 *Press-Citizen* editorial (*Press-Citizen,* 2009) argued that a youth curfew would stop youth on the Southeast Side from "congregating, loafing and loitering," a nod to notions of ghetto behavior and scenes (Wilson, 1997; 2009). A nightly curfew, the editorial said, would be a fair response to community concerns about "youth roaming at all hours, small children out alone without supervision, loitering in large groups, throwing rocks, blocking traffic on streets and chronic truancy." Another story, this one from *The Gazette* in 2009, detailed the Southeast Side as a place full of "youth roaming the sidewalks late into the night, causing trouble, making noise and being disrespectful" (Heldt, 2009).

Perhaps the most explicit racialization of Southeast Side violence appeared in a page-one *Gazette* story about violence at Los Cocos in 2009 (Shurson, 2009). The story, headlined "Tough Crowd," reports that police had been called to the bar "almost 210" times and had made about 90 arrests, which "consumed more than 200 officer hours." However, the story quickly turned into a complicated discussion about the role race may have played in the violence and in the police response.

The bar's owner is quoted as blaming violence at Los Cocos on a constant police presence at the bar and unfair police treatment of the bar's black patrons. "If you treat a person like an animal," the owner said about the police department's intervention at her bar, "they are going to act like an animal." Her comment is followed by one police officer who repudiates the accusation of racial profiling: "The bar's clientele is predominantly black," the officer said, "[but] race isn't the issue; it's people who want to be thugs." The message of this statement is complex, but the salience of race is evident here, and race is tied, however ambiguously, to deviance.

The news article's photograph (Figure 4.4) further solidified archetypes of devious blacks as they are searched for weapons outside the known trouble spot in the Southeast Side.



TOUGH CROWD

Police say Los Cocos bar in I.C. plagued with violence; owner says it's unfairly targeted

By Ashton Shurson
The Gazette

IOWA CITY — On the southeast side of Iowa City, in a quiet business district, sits the source of a lot of happiness and a lot of grief.

Los Cocos, 1921 Keokuk St., has been a popular hip-hop club since it opened a little more than a year ago, but in that time, the bar has had almost 210 calls to police that consumed more than 200 officer hours and ended in nearly 90 arrests.

Police say they have to intervene there too often. The owner says the bar is unfairly singled out.

Los Cocos has alcohol-related arrests, but unlike many other bars, it also has seen a stabbing, numerous assaults and shots fired.

Iowa City police Sgt. Troy Kelsay said the violent southeast side of the city and a handful of troublemakers are contributing factors to Los Cocos' problems. Also, unlike most Iowa City bars, Los Cocos has a parking lot, which provides a place for fights when people are kicked out of the bar, he said.

Los Cocos owner Heather German doesn't believe these are the only issues. German contends that, while the Iowa City police have been helpful, their presence also can rile up the crowd.

"If you treat a person like an animal, they are going to act like an animal," German said.

► CLUB, PAGE 7A

On the Net

See www.GazetteOnline.com for video taken Thursday at Los Cocos club in southeast Iowa City.

Brian Ray/The Gazette

Los Cocos security personnel Lady La La and Big D, who declined to give their birth names, use a hand-held metal detector to search a patron before he enters the southeast Iowa City club Thursday. Los Cocos is under scrutiny because of a large number of police calls and arrests there in the past year. The club recently instituted new security measures, such as the metal detector.

Figure 4.4. ***The Gazette*** **Coverage of Los Cocos.**

Under the headline "Tough Crowd," the photograph shows dark-skinned patrons outside Los Cocos at night being "checked" by security guards. The image, with its harsh, bright lights from the building and surrounding streetlights casts the customers in darkness, awarding the scene a deviant and dangerous feel. Such an image mirrors other news descriptions of the Southeast Side as being an urban place overrun with rowdy youth and gang members who had moved to Iowa City from Chicago. Other news photographs during this time period also cast Southeast Side spaces – such as apartment buildings and crime scenes – in shadows, suggesting that Iowa City blacks live in desolate, devious, and dangerous places (Gutsche, 2011).

Stories about the Southeast Side not only mentioned a suspect's race – a common practice in crime reporting – but also included descriptions of suspects' clothes and other identifiable features, which ultimately gave the audience characters and imagery to be applied to the Southeast Side and furthered a narrative of blacks-as-gangbangers. Such visuals, combined with particular language such as "thugs," "animal" and descriptions of young black men "jumping" and "yelling," as described above, act as rhetorical tools used to connect behavior in the Southeast Side to narratives of primitive and dangerous blacks (Stabile, 2006) and urban environments (English, 2011; Massey & Denton, 1993; Wilson, 1997).

Such language and description is rooted in a history of racialized discourse in the press. For example, "thug" has a strong past of being used to reference violent, urban blacks in mass media (Chiricos & Eschholz, 2002), and the term's inclusion in Iowa City news coverage seems more than coincidental. Other language that appeared in local news also carried racial codes that compare blacks to animals and a primitive archetype (Meyer, 2004). The use of "roaming" to describe social behavior on the Southeast Side, for example, resembles actions of zombies or animals – attributes that have also been assigned to urban blacks (Ewen & Ewen, 2008). Parisi (1998) refers to this subtle use of language as an "ambiguous melding of mythico-aesthetic grandeur with contemporary phrasing and personified framing" as a way of racism in the press (p. 247).

Racialized ideology about the Southeast Side was further developed by local news coverage of fights and disorder among mainly white college students in Iowa City's downtown, the space that police reported the most violence in

2009 and 2010 (Bailey, Law, Mason & Phillips, 2010). Whereas Southeast Side violence was cast as extraordinary through the use of racialized verbs, suspect descriptions, and comparisons to urban and black culture, downtown violence was presented as common and somehow safer. An April 2009 *Daily Iowan* article, one of three stories published in a series on downtown violence, said that "in the chaos of downtown, passersby *[sic]* tend to see an assault as a normal occurrence, at times even considering it "'entertainment'" (Zilbermints, 2009).

While the *Daily Iowan* series did not mention the race of victims or suspected assailants – as coverage of the Southeast Side did – a page-one photograph shows a white male with blood on his face (Figure 4.5), providing a visual signal to the race, gender, and age of those involved in downtown violence.

Figure 4.5. ***Daily Iowan*** **Coverage of Downtown Violence.**

Under the headline "IC's Mean Streets," the photograph's caption labeled groups of drunken and violent men in Iowa City's downtown as "roving packs" out to hurt each other. From around the same time period, a *Gazette* story described the downtown college violence as an "exuberance of youth" (Belz, 2009) and explained the group violence this way:

> They are in college. They will never again be this free. And they are drinking $2 beer at sweaty nightclubs, smoking cigarettes under streetlamps, falling down, getting arrested, getting angry, getting to know each other, fighting, kissing, hugging, yelling and laughing.

Just as news coverage explained downtown violence as a natural college experience, news coverage normalized Southeast Side violence as being the effect of urban black culture. News stories indicated that drunken "packs" of college

students were isolated to the downtown, whereas Southeast Side violence was described as infiltrating the city's schools, social services, and public safety.

With the news articles' characters identified as violent, young men – many of them black – through language and scenes news articles create a vivid description of those who went to Los Cocos or who participated in activities throughout the Southeast Side. These descriptions worked together to construct the Southeast Side ideograph, applying specific behaviors, identities, and imagery that could be enveloped in a larger narrative of place.

Welfare Queens and Chicago Gangstas

Through descriptions of the Southeast Side's geography and environment, news stories built upon perceptions of a black neighborhood to be avoided, with journalists often writing about the Southeast Side from outside that space and characterizing the place as a miniature Chicago ghetto. Indeed, rather than explaining the complicated social and cultural dynamics of life in Iowa City and its Southeast Side, news stories connected the local place to people and problems from outside Iowa – particularly of urban black Chicagoans.

The narrative of black Chicagoans moving to Iowa City for social welfare has been a local myth for nearly 30 years.[9] Yet, it is not clear how many people – particularly black people – have moved to Iowa City from Chicago or other places specifically for social welfare. However, an ethnography of those who moved from Chicago to Iowa City following the collapse of Chicago's public housing program provides some perspective:

The Iowa City Housing Authority (ICHA), which serves all of Johnson

[9] Residents continue to tell stories of Iowa City City Council members who traveled to Chicago or posted advertisements on billboards in the 1990s to recruit applicants for Iowa City's affordable housing program.

> County, reported in 2007 that 14 percent (184) of the families that it assists through vouchers and public housing were from Illinois, and according to housing authority staff, virtually all of these families are from the Chicago area … Additionally, the ICHA estimates that about one-third of the approximately 1,500 families on its rental-assistance waiting list are Chicago area families. (Keene, Padilla & Geronimus, 2010, p. 276)

Keene, Padilla, and Geronimus (2010) focus on newcomers' sense of "rootlessness" in exploring this "migration" to Iowa City. After feeling forced out of Chicago by gentrification and then trying to live in Iowa City, participants said that they felt as though they did not have a "home." The study's authors write that while in Iowa City, participants have met:

> systems of racial exclusion that have produced the profoundly unequal geographic distribution of resources and opportunity that they seek to escape. Many participants describe how this geography itself serves as a marker of difference and how 'Chicago' has become a code word for deeply rooted stereotypes of an urban 'underclass' used by white neighbors to marginalize them. (p. 282)

However, news stories about Iowa City's Southeast Side and the Chicago migration built a narrative around archetypes of deviance from "The Inner City" (Burgess, 1985) and created an ideological divide between the Southeast Side and the rest of Iowa City. More specifically, news stories described the environment by turning to sources from outside the space and replicated narratives of the "Welfare Queen," an archetype often used to portray low-income, inner city black women as cheating the welfare system (Blank-Libra, 2004; Gilliam, 1999) to describe reasons and realities of why someone would move to Iowa City's southeastern neighborhoods.

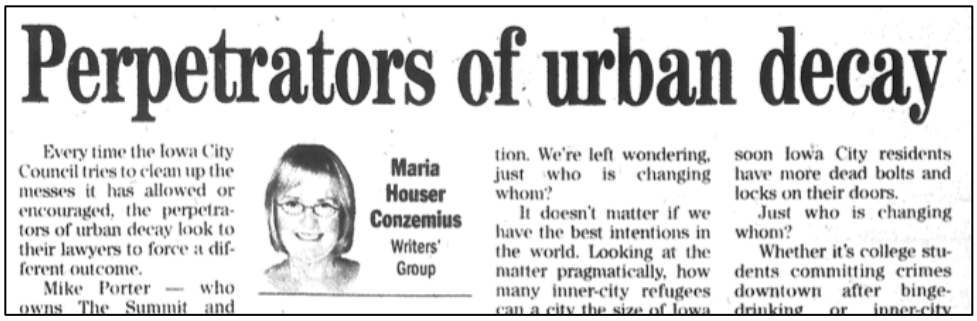
According to the "Welfare Queen" myth, urban black women birth more children in order to increase their welfare, which they use to buy drugs, material goods, and to support lazy boyfriends. While a gendered archetype, the "Welfare Queen" came to represent both black women and men in news coverage of Iowa

City's Southeast Side, particularly when the coverage discusses issues of affordable housing.[10]

A 2009 guest opinion in *The Press-Citizen,* written by a former Iowa City police officer, further characterized place by blaming people within the place. The article said that "tax-supported programs" such as affordable housing were responsible for having "introduced a culture of violence" to Iowa City (Roth, 2009). The opinion piece said that affordable housing had attracted "hooligans" and "hoodlums" to Iowa City who brought with them a violent urban culture that had "endangered our children." The opinion piece continued, saying that these "hoodlums" had negatively influenced more than just Iowa City's Southeast Side, but had "ruined some of Iowa City schools" and "destroyed some property values."

The strongest example of this Chicago-to-Iowa welfare narrative appeared in a 2010 *Press-Citizen* opinion piece (Conzemius, 2010), headlined "Perpetrators of urban decay" (Figure 4.6).

[10] Despite data that show two-thirds of households that received housing assistance in 2010 were elderly and disabled (Spence, Lawson & Visser, 2010), white, and spread evenly throughout the city, newspapers published news and opinion articles about widespread misuse of welfare by blacks from Chicago. Furthermore, only seven percent of the households enrolled in Iowa City's affordable housing program had migrated from Illinois (Spence, Lawson & Visser, 2010).



Perpetrators of urban decay

Every time the Iowa City Council tries to clean up the messes it has allowed or encouraged, the perpetrators of urban decay look to their lawyers to force a different outcome.

Mike Porter — who owns The Summit and

Maria Houser Conzemius
Writers' Group

tion. We're left wondering, just who is changing whom?

It doesn't matter if we have the best intentions in the world. Looking at the matter pragmatically, how many inner-city refugees can a city the size of Iowa

soon Iowa City residents have more dead bolts and locks on their doors.

Just who is changing whom?

Whether it's college students committing crimes downtown after binge-drinking or inner-city

Figure 4.6. A *Press-Citizen* Opinion Piece about "Little Chicago."

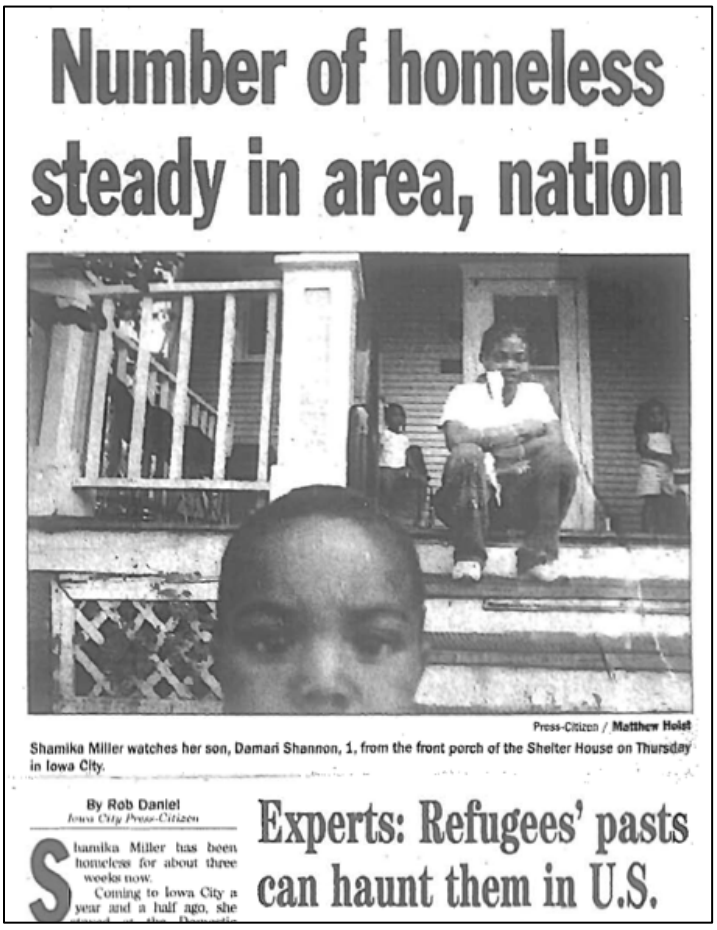
Written by Maria Houser Conzemius, a community member who was part of a the newspaper's Writer's Group,[11] the article labeled Iowa City's Southeast Side as "Little Chicago" – a smaller version of a mythical inner city infested with gang violence, welfare mothers, and children in public housing:

> When will Iowa City have done enough to serve as a sanctuary city for those whose Chicago projects have been torn down and not rebuilt? How much "Little Chicago" can Iowa City afford to absorb and hopefully, some day, supposedly assimilate?

Conzemius continued in her piece to say that people who moved to Iowa City's Southeast Side from Chicago had done so "[f]or a better life for myself and my children" and to have "[f]ewer deadbolts and locks on my doors." However, Conzemius wrote, these same "inner-city refugees" brought with them "[b]oyfriends not on the lease and possibly wanted [by police] in Chicago" and "[r]elatives and friends who need a place to stay." Conzemius ended her piece by saying that "[t]hese lodgers – invisible to the public housing bureaucrats – bring

[11] The Writer's Group is discussed in Chapter 3.

their bad habits with them, and soon Iowa City residents have more dead bolts and locks on their doors."[12]



Number of homeless steady in area, nation

Press-Citizen / Matthew Holst

Shamika Miller watches her son, Damari Shannon, 1, from the front porch of the Shelter House on Thursday in Iowa City.

By Rob Daniel
Iowa City Press-Citizen

Shamika Miller has been homeless for about three weeks now.
Coming to Iowa City a year and a half ago, she

Experts: Refugees' pasts can haunt them in U.S.

Figure 4.7. *Press-Citizen* Coverage of Homelessness.

Other news stories applied similar rhetorical devices, including vocabulary and personification, to build notions of the Southeast Side-as-"Little

[12] After this piece appeared in 2010, I spoke with both Conzemius and *Press-Citizen* opinion editor Jeff Charis-Carlson about what I considered the article's incendiary language (ie. "inner-city refugees"), broad characterizations (ie. "perpetrators of urban decay"), and how this particular story contributed to overall coverage of the Southeast Side. Both Conzemius and Charis-Carlson agreed that the language was provocative, but they said that the story represented a dominant viewpoint in Iowa City and that they wanted to print opinion pieces about the Southeast Side that would "stir up" local discussions.

Chicago." A 2009 *Press-Citizen* story (Daniel, 2009) about increasing homelessness in and around Iowa City told of two Chicago natives who moved to Iowa City and became homeless (Figure 4.7).

One of the story's sources, Shamika Miller – a black, single mother who was pictured on the newspaper's front page with her children – had been homeless for three weeks when the article was published:

> Coming to Iowa City a year and a half ago, she stayed at the Domestic Violence Intervention Project shelter after leaving her boyfriend behind on Chicago's Southside. She had a job at a packaging plant until she was laid off four months ago, and she and her four children had an apartment on Benton Street until they were evicted three weeks ago, landing them at Shelter House.
>
> "I was one month behind (on my rent)," Miller said. "(The landlord) took me to court and she didn't want my money. (But) I've been cool since I've been here." (Parentheses in original.)

The article then focused on yet another Chicago resident, Kenneth Porter, who became homeless in Iowa City after having been convicted of dealing drugs:

> Born and raised on the south side of Chicago, Porter said he came to Iowa City via Madison, Wis., in January, planning to be near his daughter, Marie, who lives in Marion. He said it took him until May to find a part-time job as a janitor despite his experience in driving a forklift and in the food service industry.
>
> Much of his problem, he said, comes from his conviction in 2005 for dealing drugs in Illinois, a part of his past that continues to haunt him in housing and employment applications.

Both of these stories put a face on "those people from Chicago" that fit notions of the Southeast Side. Stories of those from Chicago – homeless or not – were cast as outsiders throughout news coverage of the Southeast Side that divided them from the rest of the Iowa City community. One need not look hard for subtle mentions of black Chicagoans as devious and dangerous outsiders; indeed, use of the word "decay" in the opinion piece mentioned above resembles

images of deteriorating urban cities. The news article's accompanying photograph of a homeless mother and her son also contributed visuals to the local archetype of the "Welfare Queen." While the news article did not specifically mention that the mother, Miller, received a welfare check, Miller does fit into a general definition of the "Welfare Queen" in that she appears to be black, is unemployed, lives in a homeless shelter, and has multiple children. Her connection to the archetype is further reinforced when the news article discusses how homeless people moving to Iowa City have increased the number of those receiving money form the "county's general financial assistance fund."

Much of the characterization of the Southeast Side was performed in subtle ways, such as descriptions and language used to talk about the neighborhoods' spaces and people. For example, the page-one story on homelessness discussed above shared a box with another news article that was focused on the police shooting of a homeless Sudanese national in Iowa City that same year. Headlined "Refugees' pasts can haunt them in U.S." (Hermiston, 2009b), the sidebar complimented the other news story on homelessness; however, the sidebar's use of the term "refugee" strengthened an overarching narrative of dark-skinned people spreading inner-city deviance and a hunger for welfare handouts to Iowa City.

News scholarship reveals a recent history of using the term "refugee" to stereotype poor blacks. Used by news media to describe thousands of poor black residents who had evacuated New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina in 2005 (Shah, 2009), Masquelier (2006) writes that "[b]y referring to stranded residents as 'refugees,' … journalists effectively misidentified them: Many so-called

refugees felt they were being singled out on the basis of an invalid criterion" (p. 736).

Representations of Iowa City blacks from Chicago as "refugees" was reinforced in other local coverage of the Southeast Side, including in a *Press-Citizen* news article written by Bob Elliott (2009), another member of the newspaper's Writer's Group. Though he did not use the term "refugee," Elliott described people living in the Southeast Side as migrants from Chicago who are "taking advantage of subsidized housing and other need-based services here … [and who] come from inner city neighborhoods with radically different cultures."

News coverage that both overtly and covertly characterized groups of people as deviant blacks from Chicago who settle on the Southeast Side became so established in news coverage that journalists are able to assign the Southeast Side a secondary place-name.

Fight central

Fights on Hollywood Boulevard are "spiraling out of control," authorities said.

By REGINA ZILBERMINTS
regina-zilbermints@uiowa.edu

One Iowa City woman has pulled her children from school and said she is leaving the city following a series of riots outside her home.

Figure 4.8. ***Daily Iowan*** **Coverage of "Fight Central."**

A *Daily Iowan* story about "The Mother's Day Riots" (Zilbermints, 2009a) carried the headline "Fight Central" (Figure 4.8) to identify the location of recent violence. Focused on a personal tale of one mother who "pulled her children from school and said she is leaving the city following a series of riots outside her home," the article ran with a secondary headline, naming the Southeast Side street of Hollywood Boulevard as being where "fights" are "'spiraling out of control.'"

No Go Zone

Some food vendors are cautious about delivering to the city's Southeast Side.

By DANNY VALENTINE
daniel-valentine@uiowa.edu

One local business will no longer deliver pizzas to the city's Southeast Side after two of its employees were recently robbed at gunpoint.

Figure 4.9. *Daily Iowan* Coverage of the "No Go Zone."

Another *Daily Iowan* article, also published in 2009, labeled the Southeast Side a "No Go Zone" (Valentine, 2009) after a pizza company announced that robberies of delivery workers – possibly "committed by members of the Broadway Goons, a locally brewed gang mostly made up of individuals age 17 and under…" in Southeastern neighborhoods – forced the company to halt future deliveries there (Figure 4.9).

These secondary place-names solidify ideological constructions of a place considered once safe and homogenous but that has since been influenced – as one story put it – by "juvenile crime [that] is taking over (Southeast Side residents') community" (Petrus, 2009).

Such discourse revealed a belief that a utopian community, Iowa City – a

traditional, wholesome, and safe place – had become corrupted, influenced by urban and black culture from a neighboring city. These news stories relied on narratives of places outside of Iowa City to describe a less-desirable portion of the hometown that exists as its own entity, thereby releasing the wider community of responsibility to positively influence those neighborhoods.

Conclusion

In the end, there appeared to be little change over the course of the coverage of the Southeast Side in 2009 and 2010. While local news media may have begun referring to southeastern neighborhoods as the Southeast Side in the mid 2000s (Spence, Lawson & Visser, 2010), the term took on specific meanings in the news in 2009 that was maintained and strengthened throughout 2010. The Southeast Side became not just a place or a geography but a mythological setting that houses and breeds racialized social disorder, a story mediated by a journalistic community that was fueled by narratives and supportive evidence from official sources.

More specifically, officials described the Southeast Side in terms of its disorder – violent youth, crime reports, loitering, and fear, and little news reporting provided more complex explanations and descriptions that may have revealed influences on the Southeast Side that came from outside the space, such as economic or racial inequalities. Journalists consistently cited police sources who charged hip-hop as an element of urban culture and deviance, and news reports told stories that fit with other dominant perceptions of urban settings – young men "congregating, loafing and loitering," "chronic truancy," and black youth "roaming" the streets.

Meanwhile, news coverage presented the most violent area of the city – its downtown and university area – as being somehow safer, in part because the perpetrators were white college men. In turn, this juxtaposition of news coverage embedded meanings of urban environments in the Southeast Side, implicating "black culture" for social deviance in the neighborhood, rather than larger social and cultural influences, such as racism, unjust economies, and local values that may have marginalized black communities in the city.

In instances of Southeast Side coverage, journalists seemed to follow notions of "broken windows" (Skogan, 1990) – that physical or behavioral signs of disorder reflect the cultural deviance of a neighborhood and its residents – and did more than present information about social conditions in geographies scholars have identified as "The Inner City" (Burgess, 1985) and the ghetto (Wilson, 1997). Notions of "broken windows" is especially telling in a piece written by a community member that labeled Iowa City's Southeast Side "Little Chicago." This piece described the Southeast Side as a place ripe with gang violence, welfare mothers, and general "urban" disorder, which were moved to Iowa City from Chicago. And while a newspaper staff writer did not write the article, the newspaper likely published it in part because the discourse fit dominant community beliefs about the Southeast Side.

Characterizations of the Southeast Side as "The Inner City" or as a ghetto were reinforced, however subtly, in coverage of crime among black youth, comparisons of the Southeast Side to urban centers and their problems, and news stories referred to homelessness who moved to Iowa City's Southeast Side from Chicago as "refugees" and as other. Such subtle and lasting tales worked in conjunction with other covert forms of characterization, including the secondary

place-names "No Go Zone" and "Fight Central" used to re-label the Southeast Side and by turning to official sources rather than Southeast Side residents to define and describe the neighborhood.

News coverage about the Southeast Side seemed to be just as much about creating a geographic difference between southeastern neighborhoods and the rest of Iowa City as it was about informing the public about social conditions there. Throughout these two years of coverage, the "Southeast Side" became a geographic place that represented dominant beliefs about an urban, black ghetto as a way to define and separate some Iowa City neighborhoods from each other. Such a divide is especially clear in coverage of violence among youth downtown versus in the Southeast Side, for example.

Whereas both groups of youth were referred to as "packs" and roaming or crowding streets, explanations for the college students focused on the joys of college life and described ruckus and violence from college students as being ordinary and expected. On the other hand, the term "pack" became racialized when viewed in context with other storytelling about animalistic, urban behavior among young black men in the Southeast Side.

In the following chapters, data from the textual analysis informs an analysis of interviews with and mental maps by journalists, officials, and residents of the Southeast Side to explore how each group characterized spaces of Iowa City and the Southeast Side in particular.

CHAPTER 5 – TALKING AND THINKING ABOUT NEIGHBORHOOD FROM THE OUTSIDE

> Sometimes I feel like it's another chip in the pile of what's happening in the Southeast Side.
>
> Annika, Iowa City journalist.

This chapter analyzes how journalists, public officials and other 'outsiders' regarded the Southeast Side as a place based on their work and personal experiences in the community.[13] I found that journalists and officials typically turned to familiar sources and narratives – such as official reports and anecdotes from longtime residents – to guide their interpretations of the area.

Identifying Desirable Space and People

By and large, journalists and officials relied upon personal and work experiences with particular Iowa City geographies to describe the city. These places, participants said, were most preferable for working and were where they felt most comfortable. In turn, participants also said that their perceptions of place influenced their perceptions of the people who lived or frequented particular Iowa City neighborhoods.

Journalists said that their perceptions and knowledge of Iowa City places, particularly the university, the downtown, and some residential neighborhoods influenced what they covered as news. Ashley – a white, 20-year-old college journalist at *The Daily Iowan* – described Iowa City based upon the news that occurs on and around the college campus. Such news includes geographies such

[13] All mental maps are presented in Appendix D.

as the University of Iowa, the Iowa City's downtown business and bar district, city government, and police department (Figure 5.1).[14]

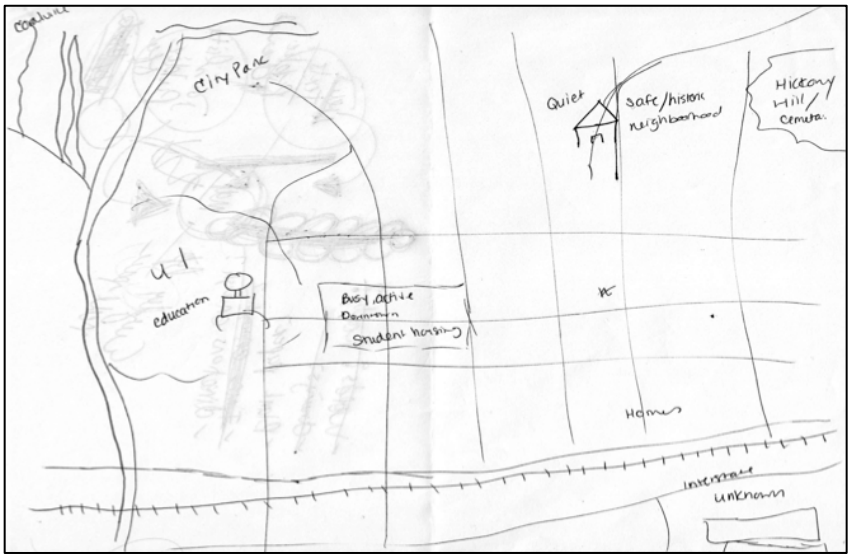


Figure 5.1. Ashley's Map.

In addition to seeing the city through the perspective of a journalist, Ashley located "Hickory Hill Park" at the top right of her map and wrote her feelings about the spaces ("safe/homes"; "neighborhoods"). In her map's top left, Ashley shows the city of Coralville, home to a shopping mall that she frequents. The grid that dominates much of her map represents streets that she considers "residential neighborhoods" and that are also "safe" and "nice."

[14] Little reporting, Ashley says, appears in *The Daily Iowan* if it is not connected directly to the university campus and downtown. However, *The Daily Iowan* did report on the murder of a white landlord on the Southeast Side, the opening of a new police station there, and elementary school redistricting. Thirty-one of the 82 news stories analyzed in Chapter 4 came from *The Daily Iowan*. Additionally, *Daily Iowan* staffers say that these stories were presented as newsworthy by professional papers, *The Gazette* and *The Iowa City Press-Citizen,* and that *The Daily Iowan* needed to cover them to remain competitive.

Journalists and officials alike showed a preference for institutions and geographies that were closely related to their daily lives, places that they could easily visit, and where they felt safe. Ashley's map, for example, is especially telling in how it reveals her connection to local institutions, particularly in how she demarcates the University of Iowa's physical boundaries. Instead of drawing landmarks such as buildings or streets to show the university's borders, for example, Ashley draws the university in what she called a "bubble." This "bubble," she said, shows the university as "an entity" that heavily influences local culture, politics, and economy. The university's political power "ebbs and flows" beyond any specific geographic boundary, she said: "Some things can't happen in the community without university approval or their support."

Ashley's descriptions of other spaces in Iowa City, including the Southeast Side, were also shaped by her perceptions of the university and other institutions, such as police, city government, and businesses – all located in the city's downtown. These institutions and geographies, it seems, receive a unique amount of attention as journalists construct the news. Again, Ashley drew boundaries as boxes or "bubbles" around important places: the downtown is labeled "busy" and "active"; another space is labeled "student housing."

Barb, a white, 36-year-old *Gazette* reporter, said that her map shows how she moves around town as a reporter and mother (Figure 5.2). Inside Iowa City, Barb draws her downtown office, the Old Capitol on the university campus, and the public library. She also locates her favorite grocery store and her children's daycare. On the map's left side, Barb drew a large circle that she labeled "University Hospitaland" to represent the university's medical campus West of the Iowa River.

"University Hospitaland," Barb said, is where she "gets a lot of [her] news," specifically from press releases about medical research and the hospital's finances and employees.

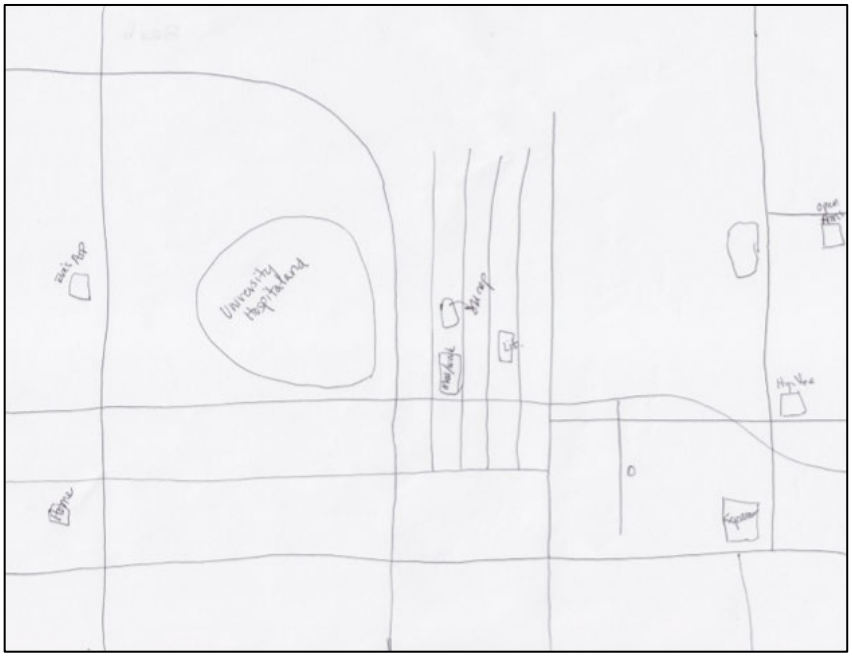


Figure 5.2. Barb's Map.

As Barb shows and other participants explained, news is influenced, in part, geographic location of institutions, such as the hospital, police department, and business districts which were all close to the journalists' offices and homes. Barb said that she focuses more on what she perceives as an East-West divide in Iowa City geography because she has children in the school district and just purchased a home on the West Side. "This really is the divide, I think, that defines Iowa City," she said. Riverside Drive – the curved line between "University Hospitaland" and her downtown – represents both the Iowa River and a physical entry point to either the East or the West Side.

As Barb explained this divide – the city's West Side, for instance, "is full of rich people" and "the more wealthy;" whereas, the East Side is home to "history" and "culture" – it sounds as though she is describing two different cities. Barb said that the meanings she assigns to different geographies helps her determine the news audience and the importance of what might be covered in different parts of the city.

All journalists said that they did not know much about several areas of the city, including the Southeast Side, and that their understandings of these spaces were shaped by information from city agencies, including the police, the school district, and the City Council. Stories from longtime Iowa City residents are also valuable sources of information, participants said.

Ashley, for example, said that she knew about the people and places in and around the university and downtown, because she spends most of her time in these areas, but that she did not know much about who and what exists outside these spaces. While the Southeast Side appears on her mental map, bordered by railroad tracks and confined to a small rectangle that she labeled "unknown," Ashley said she included those neighborhoods because she knew my study dealt with that space. However, she said, "That really is what I think about it."

She explained:

> I really don't know what is there… There is not a lot of focus (on the Southeast Side) compared to the downtown and university. And, I am largely affected by what the public says. Because I can't say from personal experience, I have to go off what the public says, as a person who is part of the media. I don't have a car and I am not able to go down into this area, so I have to rely on what people report about it.

Other participants said that even though they are able to move around the

city (illustrated by the various roads included on their maps), they must rely on multiple sources of information to understand some of Iowa City's city spaces that they have never visited and that appear as blank spots on their mental maps. For instance, Barb's drawings of crisscrossing streets take her to the city's edges and run off of the map's edges, leading to neighboring communities of Cedar Rapids, North Liberty, Hills, and West Branch.

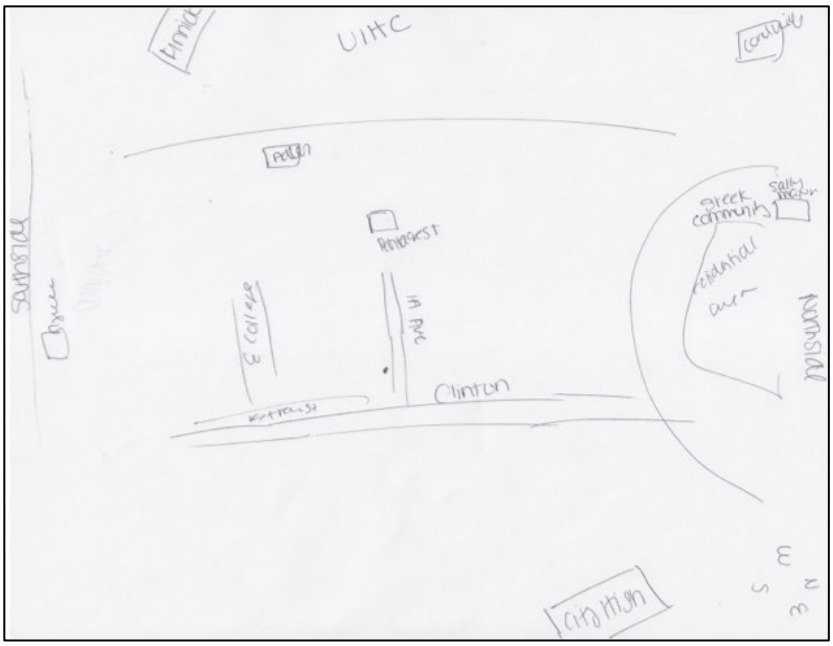


Figure 5.3. Annika's Map.

While her sketch shows her ability to move throughout the Iowa City area, including to the Southeast Side where she has done some reporting and exercises at a neighborhood gym, Barb said that she relies on the work of other reporters to inform her about those neighborhoods. Similarly, Annika – a white 20-year-old reporter at *The Daily Iowan* – said that she drew spaces where she

spends most of her time, particularly downtown and at a shopping mall in Coralville (Figure 5.3). Annika said that because she does not have a vehicle, she struggles to get around the rest of Iowa City, which has stopped her from experiencing more city neighborhoods and meeting more people.

However, Annika said that even though she has never been to the Southeast Side and left that space empty on her map, she still "know[s] about it" from conversations with police officials, other reporters, and city leaders.

She explained:

> I think community members, and I think readers, have negative connotations of over there. I think you have this whole thing where community members think all these people are coming from Chicago, they're causing gang activity and all of these problems, and we need more police over there with all of this gang violence, and its not safe no one knows what's happens over there… I probably don't spend enough time over there to say.

> I feel that whenever there is coverage, people in the Southeast Side are more grouped together than maybe in other neighborhoods. Sometimes I feel like it's another chip in the pile of what's happening in the Southeast Side. If the same events happened in some other neighborhood that happened in the Southeast Side, would they be covered differently? I don't know.

Some participants were very clear about how local storytelling – particularly anecdotes from longtime residents – informed their perceptions of city spaces. Ulrich – a 37-year-old white man who moved to Iowa City in 2007 to work at the *Press-Citizen* (Figure 5.4) – said his ideas about some blank spaces on his map come from stories of social disorder that had "been told to me by people." These sources, he said, were public officials and other journalists.

What Ulrich came to know about the Southeast Side, then, revolved around the Broadway Condominiums and stories of crime. He said the Southeast Side is the place that he had heard the most about since moving to Iowa City. "It

didn't take long after I moved here to hear about the Southeast Side [as being] a poor, black – I hate to use the term – but ghetto part of Iowa City," Ulrich said. "Coming here from outside, people taught me the stereotypes to know what they were talking about shorthand whether they were true or not."

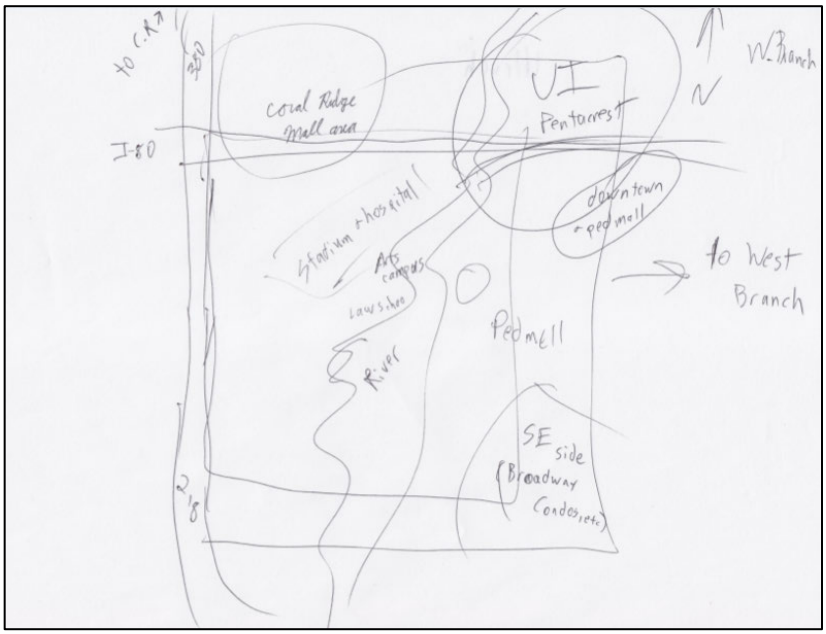


Figure 5.4. Ulrich's Map.

Ulrich also said that he would listen to a morning show on the local KCJJ radio station that played Elvis Presley's *In The Ghetto* when it aired police reports about Southeast Side crime.

Such reliance on anecdotal information about the Southeast Side is representative of how journalists and public officials discussed how they learned about city spaces and constructed their personal beliefs about Iowa City. Indeed, two police officers discussed how their own personal opinions and experiences from responding to crime on the Southeast Side, police department data, and

news reports about black violence and combined to form their perceptions of place.

The men's experience as police officers, interaction with the same department, other officers, residents, and journalists led to similar interpretations of space, evidenced by their almost identical mental maps.

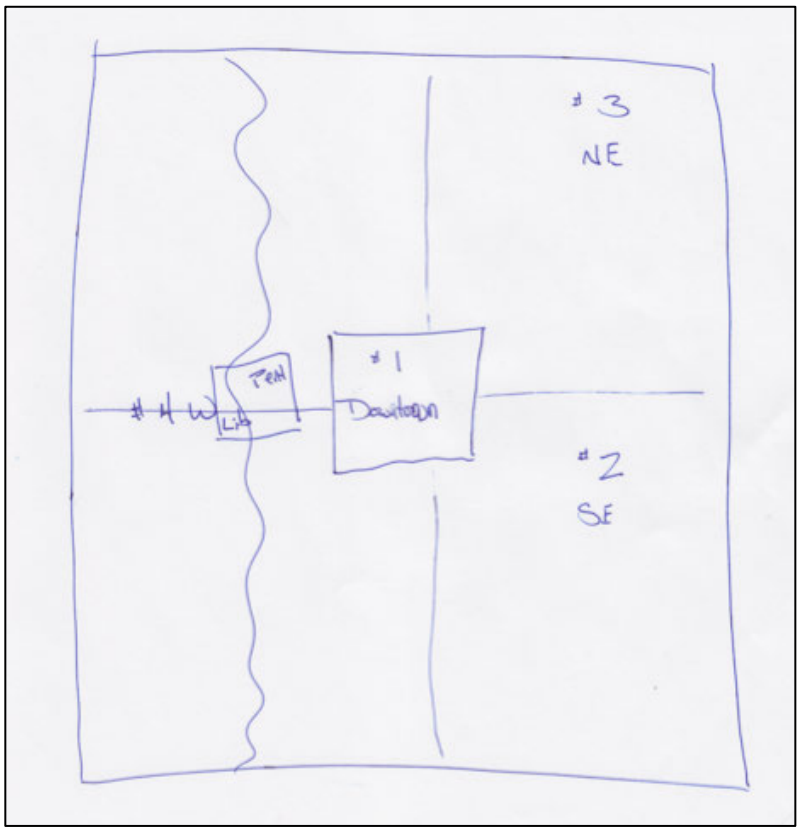


Figure 5.5. Allen's Map.

Allen, a white 49-year-old officer, drew his map with the Iowa River, a box around the university, another box around the downtown, and numbers that identify police patrol areas (Figure 5.5).

Fellow officer, Paul, who is white and 32, also drew roads, the Iowa River, and other landmarks, such as a highway, the downtown police station, and the Southeast Side police station (Figure 5.6).

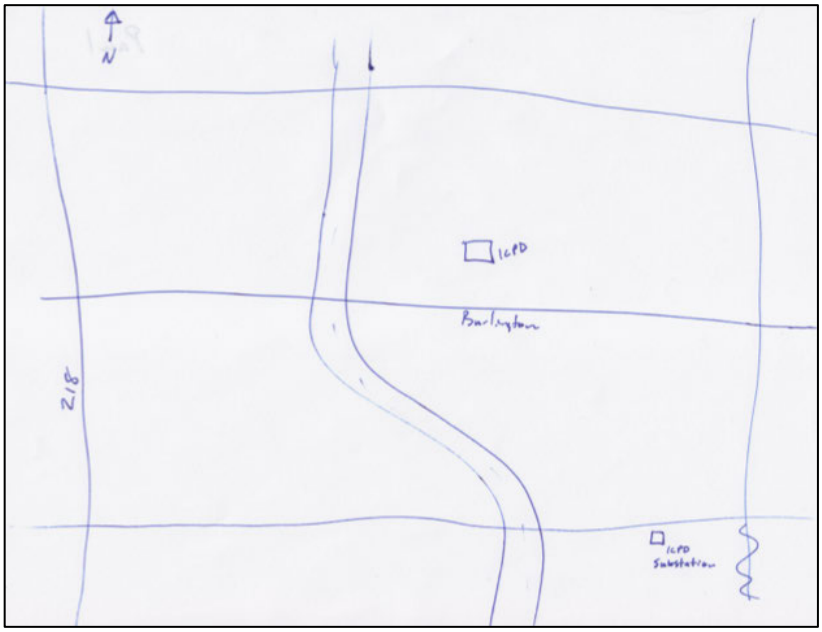


Figure 5.6. Paul's Map.

Even though Paul did not place numbers on his map to identify patrol areas as Allen did, Paul did talk about Iowa City geography in terms of what types of police work are done in particular city spaces. Indeed, Paul said that while "I consider Iowa City community," his map excludes landmarks and other points of interest because they were "insignificant" to his work.

While both officers said that they spend personal time in Iowa City beyond their work hours, they viewed city spaces according to what areas attract the most "business." Interestingly, these officers' maps match the police department's patrol, or beat, areas (Figure 5.7). Just as police officers subscribed

to their department's interpretation of space and place, Gary – a white reporter in his mid-30s who lives in the Southeast Side – shows how institutionalized notions of place enter into the journalistic community as reporters and sources work together.

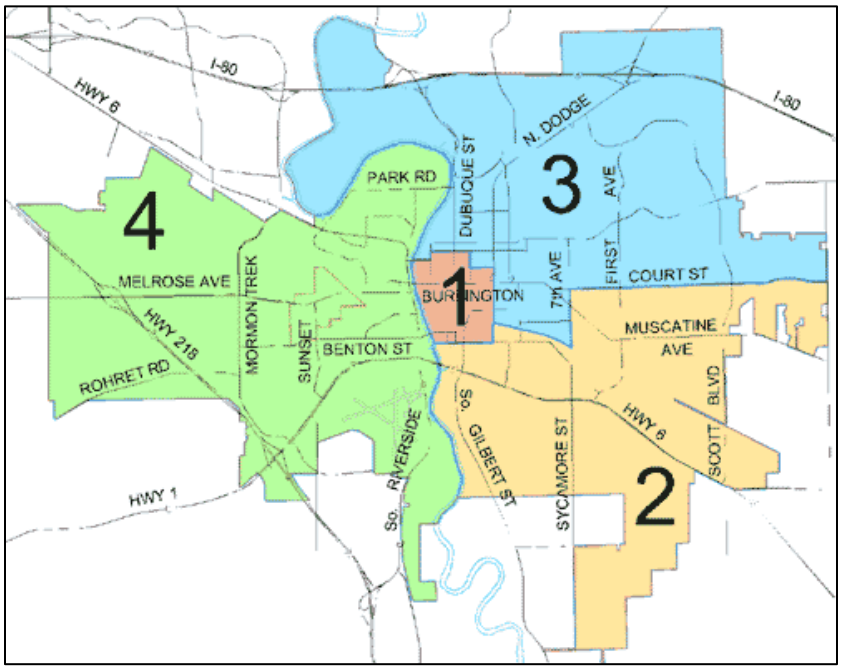


Figure 5.7. Iowa City Police Department Beat Map, 2012.

On his map, Gary drew circles that reflect his perceptions of news that comes from geographic areas. His circles are based on perceptions of who lives there and who would be interested in reading news from those spaces (Figure 5.8).

Gary's first circle encompasses Iowa City's downtown and the university campus, which has "bars," "retail," "education," and other "development." News from this area relates to business owners, city officials, the university community, and police.

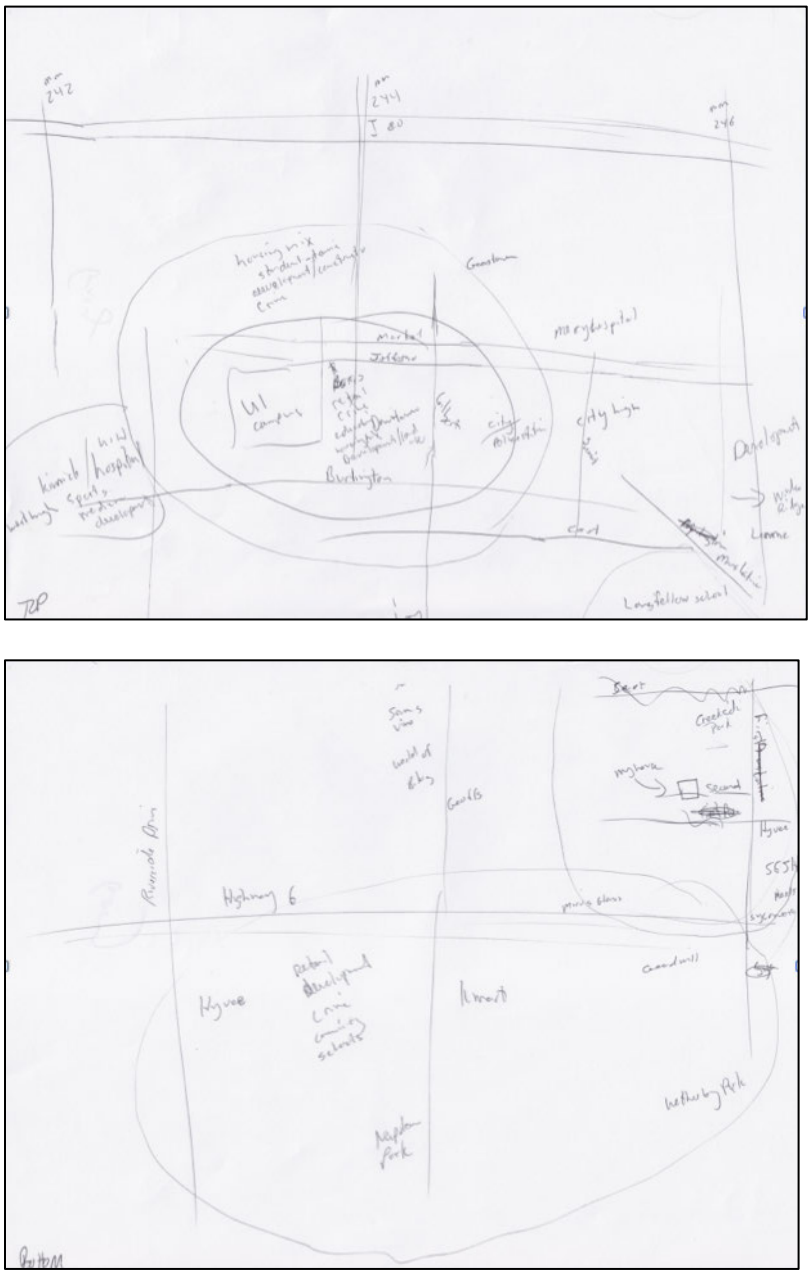


Figure 5.8. Gary's Map.

Gary's second circle includes residential neighborhoods, a "housing mix" of students and professionals. Gary said that crime in this area mostly involves

college drinking and property damage. News from this area relates to college students, city officials, and long-time residents.

News from outside of these two circles focuses either on schools, government, or business, Gary said. News from the Southeast Side, however, (which is in its own circle) is a complicated collection of "a housing mix" and racial and ethnic changes that are difficult to report. News from this area relates to the neighborhoods' racial and ethnic changes and crime. Even though such coverage tends to focus on "negative news," Gary explained:

> I don't think there is any intentional... And there is that accusation that's out there that people are intentionally trying to make the Southeast Side look bad or writing one story and ignoring another. And I could not disagree more with that. I think people who are in the news business are in it for altruistic reasons. Its not like you make a lot of money. You know you want to make your community a better place, so I could not disagree more that anybody that I know of is doing it intentionally. You follow the news, right?

Gary said that politically progressive Iowa Citians have contacted the newspaper to complain about journalists' use of the term "Southeast Side" (representing the ideograph of the "Southeast Side" discussed in Chapter 4) and how the newspaper covers those neighborhoods. However, he said, the Southeast Side term is used by officials, residents across the city, and other journalists. The newspaper, Gary said, does not make changes in how it covers the Southeast Side – or in their terminology – because making changes because of reader input may undermine the newspaper's objectivity. He explained:

> The "Southeast Side" means more than a geographical reference to the community… There was definitely pressure from groups like the neighborhoods center who said the press makes the Southeast Side look bad. I don't think that's the case at all, but there is pressure to do stories that focus on the Southeast Side, because people are saying you only do crime stories.

Gary's explanation of how local news characterized the Southeast Side is representative of how journalists' as a group explained the neighborhood stereotypes. These characterizations show a reliance of journalists upon public officials to explain social conditions with an authority that journalists need not further legitimize in the news, as they may for a resident.

Explaining Place with Stories of Authority

Journalists and public officials revealed a need for stories about place that held traditional notions of authority, such as statistics, police reports, and personal experiences.

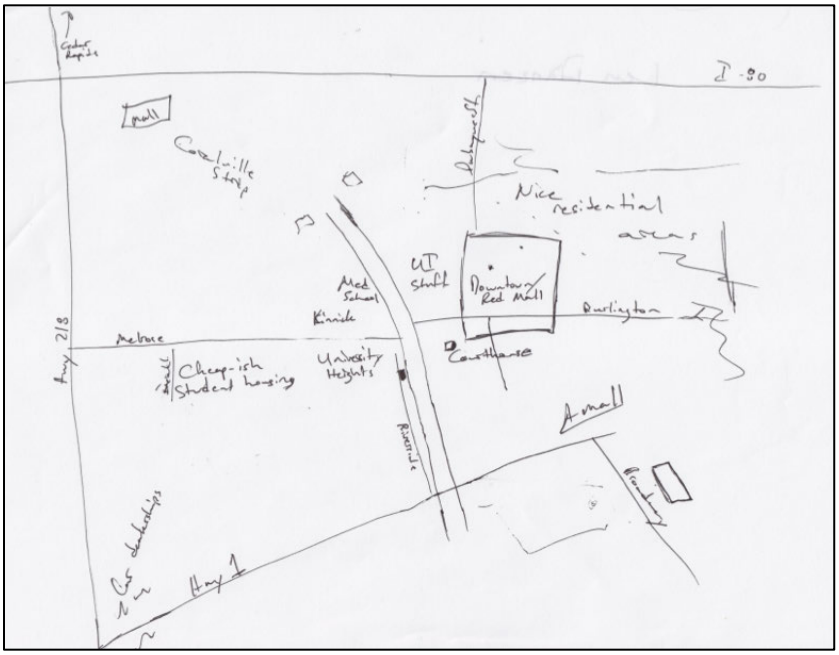


Figure 5.9. Len's Map.

Interviewees said that stories of dramatic violence among blacks in the Southeast Side as told by police and other official sources (such as with the

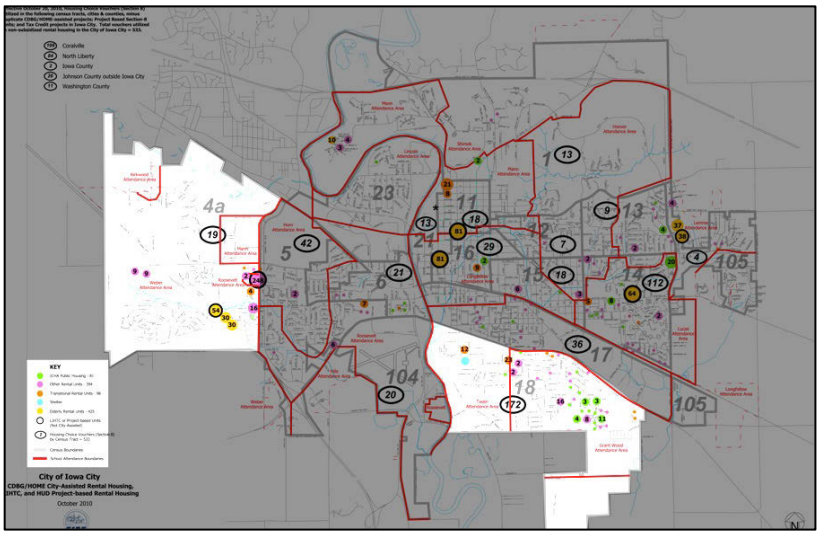
"Mother's Day Riot") fit their perceptions of urban-like places – even though most of them said that they had never been to the Southeast Side. Len, a 29-year-old white reporter who worked at *The Gazette* in 2009, said that "people in Iowa are soft" when it comes to living in diverse neighborhoods. Compared to residents near a racially diverse boarding school he attended in Georgia before moving to Iowa, Len said whites in Iowa want to live only by other whites. "They want to live out in Waukee (a Des Moines suburb) so that they are safe, but (black neighborhoods in Iowa are) not that really unsafe. I don't even feel it at Broadway (on the Southeast Side)."

Indeed, Len's map of Iowa City's (Figure 5.9) includes more features of Southeast Side than most of the other journalists, possibly showing his feelings of greater comfort there. His map includes an apartment building, streets, a shopping mall, and park on the Southeast Side. Len explained why other white people might not be comfortable in black communities:

> You walk through the street and you see more black people… I think there is a lot of racism still, you know. That's no secret. Like, you grow up in a town of 500 or 5,000 in Iowa like most people around us did and you never saw black people except for on TV. You will want to live out in Waukee where you are as far away of them as possible.

Narratives of urban black neighborhoods, as discussed in Chapter 4, held such cultural authority that notions of race and welfare from other parts of the country emerged as some participants explained their mental maps. Bill – a 54-year-old, white official in Iowa City's affordable housing department said that he constantly reads local newspapers, while looking at a map of Iowa City that shows public housing scattered across the city (Figure 5.10). Bill said that he reads newspapers for police news that may show residents who receive housing assistance as violating their agreement with the city to stay out of trouble.

Bill said that he is so familiar with the map – and its meanings – that when I met him in his office and asked him to draw his mental map of Iowa City, he turned to his housing map, unrolled it across a conference table, and asked, "Can't I just use this? This is what my map will look like anyway."



5.10. Iowa City Community Block Development Rental Housing, 2010.

Indeed, when Bill finished drawing, portions of his mental map (Figure 5.11) did resemble his "official" map: the Iowa River snakes through Iowa City, several major streets stretch across the city, and the municipal airport, appears below Riverside Drive on the map's left side.

As Bill explained his map, he turned to his past experiences overseeing affordable housing programs when describing the Southeast Side. He openly discussed the controversies about neighborhoods with dense numbers of racial minorities.

Bill described a city that seems to relate race to poverty and welfare, such as affordable housing and neighborhood disorder to urban crime.

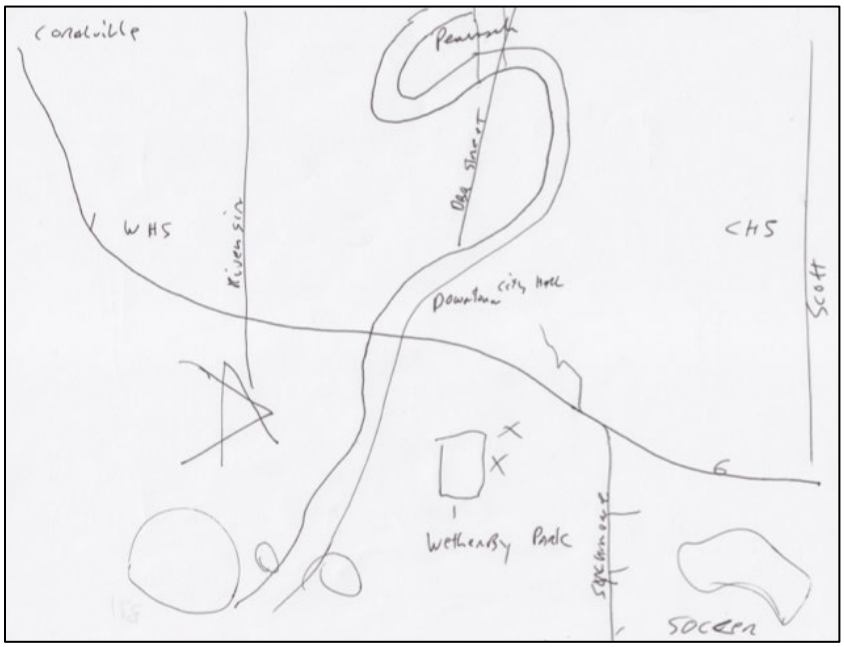


Figure 5.11. Bill's Map.

Bill said that explanations of black and urban culture and disorder from other cities help explain social conditions in the Southeast Side:

> What's happened is this is really sort of where the issues started – the Broadway area. The city put public housing in down here. The fellowship has added to rentals down here, Habitat has built some owner-occupied homes down here. I think what has happened is this is where it started, but then you have African American families down here, you have assisted housing … and therefore the people are making connections that you had crime over here, and assisted housing – that assisted housing equals crime.

While he talked, Bill pointed to his mental map, reminding me that it resembles his "official" city map and that because the map reflects facts from statistics and information from the city, it is an especially accurate tool for

discussing what types of people live in different neighborhoods. As shown with Bill and the police officers, Paul and Allen, public officials generally preferred to describe Iowa City based on "official" and "authoritative" maps. So too, journalists' tended to reinforce that their own maps were "not to scale" and often corrected where streets "actually are" as a way to make their maps more "realistic."

Journalists and officials made their maps in other, comparable ways, as well. For example, striking similarities appear when comparing the map-making of a school official and an education reporter. Fred – a white 45-year-old who works for the school district – drew his map in terms of how it relates to his job. He explained that his map largely resembles an official placement of schools in his district (Figure 5.12).

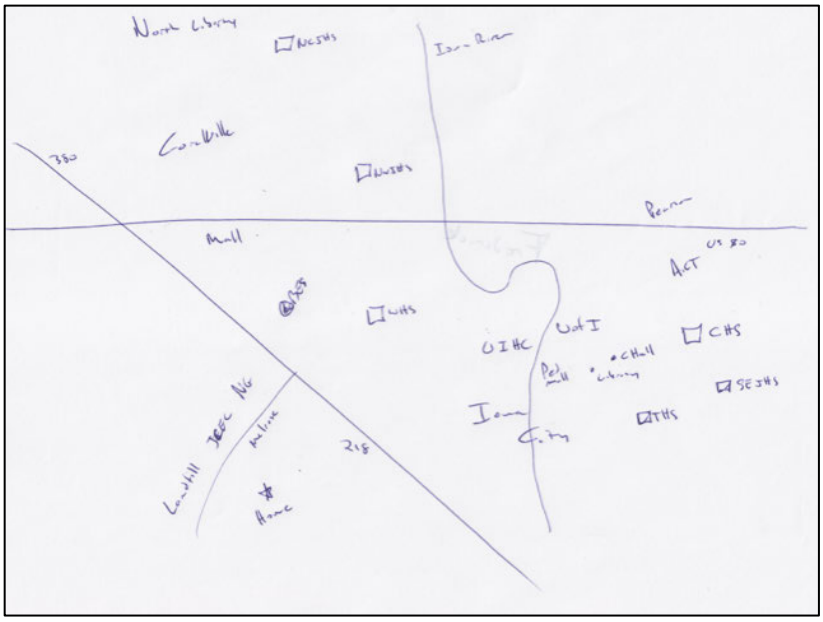


Figure 5.12. Fred's Map.

After drawing major roadways and the Iowa River, Fred placed elementary, middle, and high schools. Almost immediately, he started talking about Iowa City as a school district, a subset of the larger community. Even items that may seem out of ordinary to be mentioned on his mental map, Fred identified the county landfill, the National Guard Armory, and the Johnson County Emergency Center. Each location is marked because of how they relate to the schools he oversees: Fred identifies the landfill because local officials were looking into smells that were impacting a nearby elementary school; he located the armory and emergency center because he had been asked to speak about leadership at both locations.

Fred used schools on his map to talk about the people of Iowa City. For example, on the West Side, he said, students who attend Kirkwood Elementary and Coralville Central Elementary had:

> a higher proportion of students that are in lower socio-economic strata. And then if you look at Lincoln Elementary School, Horn Elementary School, Weber Elementary School – both high socioeconomic status. Roosevelt, closer to the river, lower socioeconomic status. So you've got a bit of a mix in there, and then you move out here (Southern Iowa City), you get more rural and there's a lot of poverty out there. I know a lot about the demographics for ya.'

Fred's place-making relied on perceptions of how place affected his work. Roger's place-making reflected the emphasis of his job as well (Figure 5.13).

Though Roger's map includes his church, his home, and several neighborhoods, his focus is primarily on schools and the types of students that they serve. A 35-year-old Hispanic reporter for the *Press-Citizen* covers K-12 education, Roger said that his reporting on socioeconomic status of elementary schools during redistricting influenced his perceptions of who lives in Iowa City neighborhoods.

"You should have seen [how parents discussed their desire to keep children apart] in redistricting," Roger said, especially "[w]hen parents were saying, 'I don't want my child going to *that school*,'" meaning, he explained, that the pairing of students from diverse economic and racial backgrounds were not appealing to some parents.

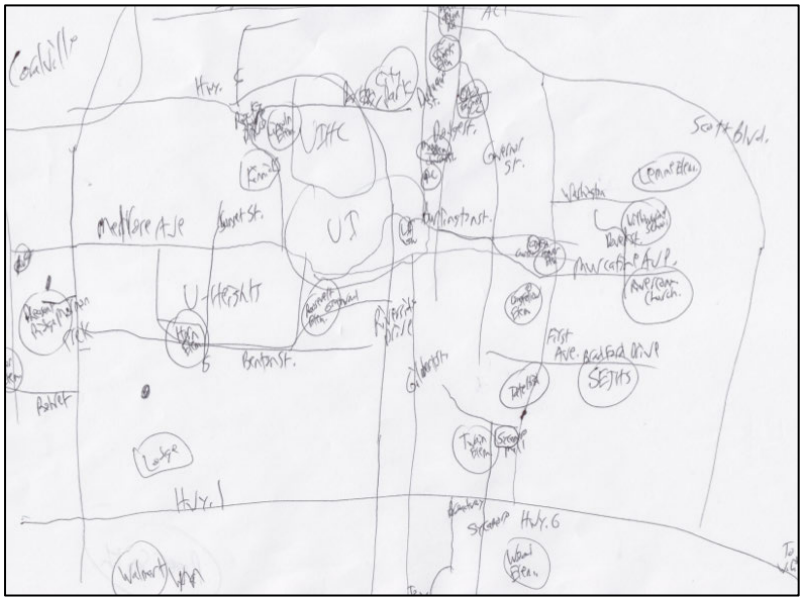


Figure 5.13. Roger's Map.

As journalists and public officials described their maps – and the Southeast Side, in particular – they said that the "Southeast Side" label, though not an official term, has become accepted and widely understood. They also said that they were aware that the news reports might further negative stereotypes of those neighborhoods; however, participants said that the term helped express complicated social conditions in a quick way.

As Len said, "it just takes time and effort to get to the level of [neighborhood or street] specificity that is respectful for the story and still

helpful for the reader." Barb said that such place-names are "like a shorthand" and that while "it is unfortunate that you could pigeonhole a bunch of people who live in one area," she often uses the term "Southeast Side" in her coverage of those neighborhoods.

David, a white 33-year-old *Press-Citizen* reporter, said that place-names help report the news. He explained:

> What a lot of people really care about is what's going on in their neighborhood and what's going on with their kids. So they care about the schools, prep sports, and crime. And so when we're saying that police have arrested somebody for stabbing someone – something that's going to draw your attention – I think the first thing people want to know is "Where did that happen in relation to where I live? Am I in danger? Did something dangerous happen near me?
>
> So a quick and easy way to establish generally speaking where that is to say Southeast Side Iowa City. So three fourths of the community can say, "OK, that's not my back yard."

Journalists and officials, alike, adopted the Southeast Side label. Susie – a white, 40-year-old woman who works at the Broadway Street Neighborhood Center and who is often quoted in news about the Southeast Side – said that "sensationalized" media coverage has contributed to public perceptions that the Southeast Side is a neighborhood of "poor black people doing bad." Susie said that the news ignores that "there are poor black people all over the city," and that the Southeast Side label has become synonymous with notions of a black ghetto. She adds:

> I find it interesting that this is the only neighborhood that is identified as a neighborhood, routinely… If you ask people where the Southeast Side is, they may all have a difference in the starting and ending of streets, but they have a pretty good idea of where it is.

James, a white 31-year old neighborhood association member in the Southeast Side had similar thoughts on news coverage of the neighborhoods he

represents.[15] James also said that news focused on "negative" news from the Southeast Side. He said, "I think that when out-of-season markets happen at the elementary school… that gets covered, but that local media are "writing from press releases" and "are playing up some of [the] tension."

He explained:

> It is a neighborhood that has changed a lot in the last decade and has moved away from being older, working class families … and is younger and is more diverse. And I think that … the people that complain are the ones that can tend to drive news coverage.
>
> There is the old white lady who lives right behind us and who is big on the neighborhood watch thing. I wouldn't say she is racist, but certainly sees young black kids who [pause] when you're driving around and there are groups of young black kids riding their bikes or walking down the middle of the street, it is a little intimidating.
>
> But because it is groups of kids walking in the middle of the street [pause] and I don't know if it's a cultural thing or a kid's thing or what it is, but I think some people see that kind of thing and feel like it is, "Well, there goes the neighborhood."

On the surface, mental maps by Susie and James look similar to those by other officials; however, they explained city spaces quite differently than other public officials. On her map (Figure 5.14), Susie placed major streets, the Manville Heights neighborhood (top left), Hickory Hill Park near her home (top right), the University of Iowa (center), and the "Southeast Side" (lower right).

Susie also included two schools (Mark Twain and Grant Wood) near the Southeast Side and marked the space as "low-income housing" as a way to

[15] Neighborhood associations are, after all, groups recognized and endorsed by the city government, acting as a liaison between residents and city officials. The neighborhood center is funded by the county and assigned roles in daycare and guiding residents to governmental resources. Neighborhood association members and neighborhood center staff were news sources in coverage of the Southeast Side in 2009 and 2010. Furthermore, these sources were the "boots on the ground" who brought a recognizable level of authority and legitimacy to the stories.

distinguish the space from other neighborhoods. Susie also drew the Iowa River as a major divide in the city that demarcates east from west in a similar way to other participants, such as Barb.

However, Susie's explanation about the divide is much more focused on the cultural interactions between people.

Figure 5.14. Susie's Map.

She says, "In the (school) boundary discussion, there is a feeling of 'We want to stay put, and don't you dare move us across the river.'" However, Susie is quick to explain that the city's "primary divide is the Highway 6 divide," which borders the Northern edge of the Southeast Side:

> North of the Highway 6 you would consider – although you have various types of neighborhoods – this to be the tracks. If you were to say there is the "wrong side of the tracks" in Iowa City… there is this barrier of a simple four-lane highway, even though the schools that some of these students go to are on the other side of the tracks.

> If I were to describe Iowa City to someone, I would say we have placed the low-income here (South of Highway 6) and this (divide) appears as though we can't cross it.

James also described neighborhood boundaries on his map. First, he drew a square around two neighborhoods and labeled them ("Northside" and "Goosetown"). James included the Iowa River, Interstate 80, his home (starred in the lower right corner), and several streets that he uses to enter and leave the city (Figure 5.15). Yet, his interpretations of meanings behind the boundary lines, for instance, deal with issues of social power, a perspective lacking in many interpretations by journalists and officials.

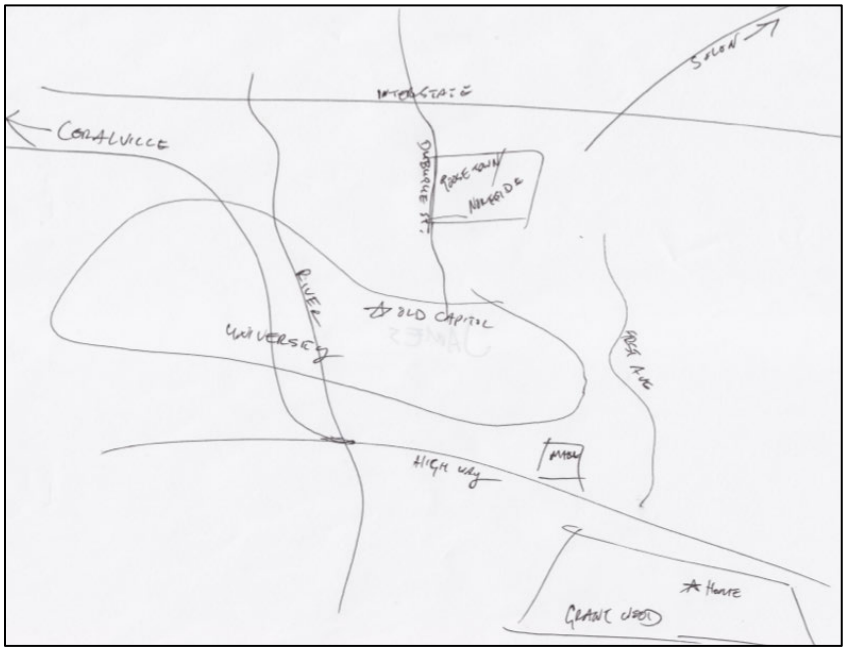


Figure 5.15. James' Map.

For example, James drew the University of Iowa in a circle similar to Ashley's "bubble," and does so because it is "disconnected" from the rest of the

community. Whereas Ashley discussed how the university's power "ebbs and flows" throughout the community as a kind of connection, James said:

> (The university) doesn't pay taxes, so it doesn't support the city in that respect… It doesn't use municipal services. It is self-contained. Like, it worries about its own power. It worries about its own water. The university, essentially, could lop-off Iowa City and be OK. Like, if the zombie apocalypse comes, you could barricade yourself in the university and have access to a lot of stuff.
>
> I don't get a sense that the university does anything for "the community," the wider Iowa City community. It does things for the "university community" and obviously that entails a lot of people in Iowa City, but I don't think that entails my neighborhood.

Interestingly, both James and Susie drew maps of Iowa City that resemble an official, city neighborhood map (Figure 5.16), yet they expressed different concerns about how the Southeast Side and how it is portrayed in the news.

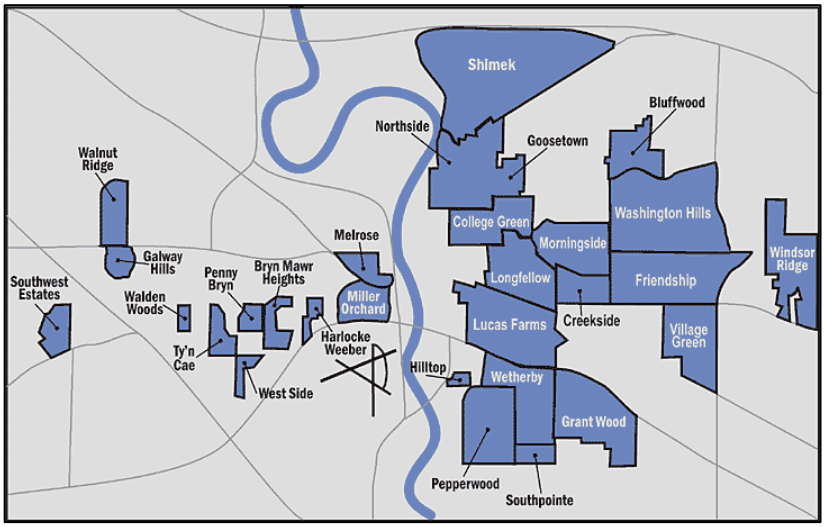


Figure 5.16. Map of Iowa City Neighborhoods, 2012.

James and Susie may be outliers among public officials and journalists in how they described place, perhaps because they work so closely with people in the Southeast Side, are protective of its reputation, or feel they have a greater

understanding of the neighborhoods' complexities. Regardless, the narratives presented by James and Susie were not as strongly represented in news texts, as shown in Chapter 4, and were set aside in lieu of information and explanations that seem to better resonate among police, city officials, the school district, and journalists.

Conclusion

This chapter presents several findings. First, journalists and officials both based their perceptions of place on personal experiences and characterizations from sources outside of the Southeast Side that resonated with dominant narratives of urban space, namely narratives of social disorder identified in Chapter 4. More specifically, journalists relied on information and explanations from sources in positions of social power within the community – police and officials – to construct their mediated characterizations of the Southeast Side.

For example, a comparisons of interviews and mental maps revealed several interesting patterns: Fred, the school official, drew and explained Iowa City in similar ways to Roger, who reported on schools for the local newspaper; police officers Allen and Paul drew maps resembling an official police department map of police patrol areas, which mirrored how local journalist, Gary, described reporting territories that he identified; Bill, a housing official, drew and explained Iowa City based on an official city map that he uses at his job.

This reliance on "official" and "authoritative" explanations of space and place resulted in residents (no matter if they were themselves authorities on their own neighborhoods) as being marginalized, ignored, or overruled on defining the Southeast Side. Furthermore, such a reliance on "official" descriptions and

explanations show the degree to which journalists and officials rely upon each other to define and explain social conditions and their causes.

Second, journalists showed great power in their choice to name particular neighborhoods as the "Southeast Side" while they also recognized that the term may stigmatize and stereotype. The term, journalists said, served as short-hand for identifying physical space, though some journalists suggested the name may be problematic. *The Gazette's* Barb, for example, said, "It is unfortunate that you could pigeonhole a bunch of people who live in one area." Other journalists seemed to recognize similar dangers of using the "Southeast Side" place-name, but did so more cryptically, often in phrases of "I know about *that place*," and then describing the Southeast Side either as "mostly black," "crime-ridden," or "poor."

These findings suggest that the institutional role of local journalism upholds dominant ideologies on race, class, and place in the U.S. by representing local place and people in comparison with popular narratives of deviant, urban geographies. For example, journalists followed narratives that suggested the Southeast Side was built around urban, black, and deviant culture, which gained further legitimacy through similar tales told by local police and government officials and long-time Iowa City residents.

Such ideological work is evidence by Annika, a journalist who said that even though she has never been to the Southeast Side police officials, city leaders, and other journalists told her about the place to the point where she said she "know[s] about it." Ulrich, also a journalist, said that people he considered authorities on Iowa City spaces quickly – and consistently – talked to him about

the Southeast Side as a ghetto from the moment he arrived in the city, which formed his foundational understanding of the city space.

Journalists and officials also revealed shared dominant place-making processes that deepens an understanding of how the two groups reinforce each other's explanations of city geography, such as in the case of Fred, a school official, and Roger, a journalist who covered Iowa City schools. Through their mental maps, both men showed how their focus on their professions and the spaces they frequented as professionals – namely, elementary and high schools – shaped both their descriptions of city space and the interpretations of who lived in those spaces. Fred, for instance, turned to student demographics collected by the school district to describe and explain social conditions in Iowa City neighborhoods, based, in part, on students' socio-economic status.

This chapter further suggests that at the same time journalists operated at a cultural level, embedding historically dominant racialized narratives of black communities and geographies in local news, they diverged from their normative operations. While Kovach and Rosenstiel (2007) write that journalism's "first obligation is to the truth" and its citizenry by serving as watchdogs through independence "from those they cover" (p. 5), this study suggests that physical and philosophical connections between journalists and officials assign a form of authority to interpretations and explanations of everyday life.

In other words, journalists believed official descriptions of the Southeast Side and its residents, in part because the their "official" explanations fit other dominant narratives rooted in a history of racial injustice and oppression that is maintained in popular culture and mass media. These narratives, reiterated by officials, carried such authority that journalists did not need to enter the

Southeast Side to report about the neighborhoods. In effect, journalists extended their interpretive community to include officials as full-fledged participants, challenging the notion of journalism as an independent, watchdog institution rooted in objective and citizen-based.

While this chapter focused on how journalists characterized the Southeast Side by embedding dominant explanations for urban social conditions into local news through place-making, the next chapter explores how Southeast Side residents characterized place through their experiences, explaining Iowa City and its social conditions in very different ways.

CHAPTER 6 – TALKING AND THINKING ABOUT THE NEIGHBORHOOD FROM THE INSIDE

> I don't know much about what's over here. But I have a desire to know.
>
> Alicia, Southeast Side resident.

This chapter explores residents' place-making, using the same mental mapping process to develop more complex alternative descriptions of their neighborhood.

Identifying Desirable Space and People

Like journalists and public officials, Southeast Side residents tended to explain Iowa City based upon their personal experiences and feelings of comfort. However, while journalists and officials preferred public spaces, such as the University of Iowa and the downtown, residents said that they avoided those places and stayed close to their homes in and near the Southeast Side. Indeed, residents' maps and descriptions of Iowa City showed a preference for the Southeast Side.

For example, Lisa – a 23-year-old black woman – drew a shortcut to her child's elementary school that cuts through a grove of trees. She also included her routes to the playground at the Broadway Street Neighborhood Center, Kmart, and to her brother's house (Figure 6.1). Lisa said that these paths – details of a neighborhood that were absent in maps by officials and journalists – reminds her of how quiet Iowa City is compared to Chicago. "I like walking down the block and not feeling like you're going to die," she said. Though she is aware of negative stigmas about the Southeast Side, Lisa described it as "nice or quiet or boring."

Lisa's labels such as "home" and a smiley face near the BSNC show elements of her everyday life living in Iowa City's Southeast Side. Her map is representative of how Southeast Side residents expressed feeling unwelcome in other places of the city – such as downtown and the university – where officials and journalists said they spent most of their time and felt the most comfortable.

Figure 6.1. Lisa's Map.

By and large, all residents used their maps to show a distance from the downtown and much of Iowa City while revealing a closer connection to the Southeast Side. Residents tended to highlight particular roads, businesses, social services, and spaces they spend their time in and around the Southeastern neighborhoods. Michelle, a 34-year-old black woman who has lived in Iowa City since 2001, drew Kmart, the Pepperwood strip mall, and her apartment on Taylor Drive – all that branch-off from Highway 6 on the Southeast Side (Figure 6.2).

Michelle said that Iowa City is safer and quieter than Chicago. In Iowa City, children "can be active" and it is a place where she can find work and attend college.

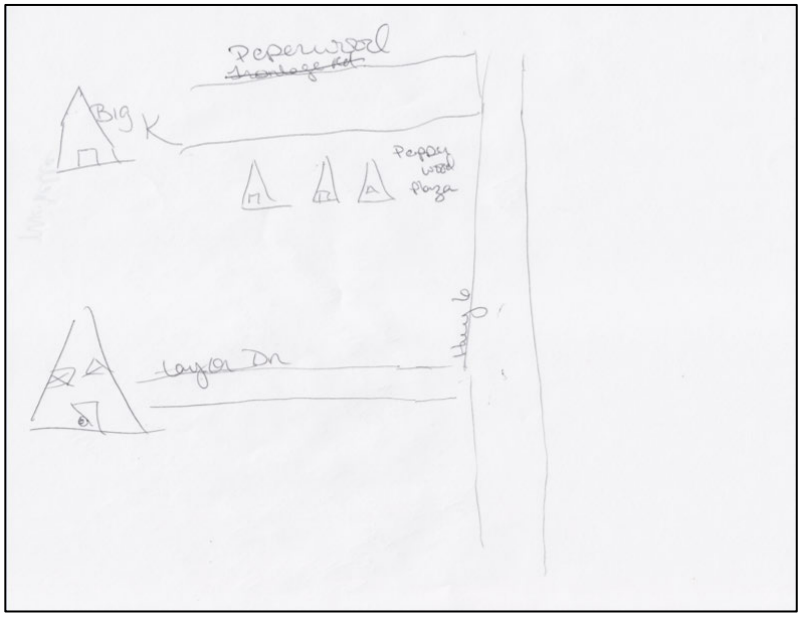


Figure 6.2. Michelle's Map.

Despite assigning positive attributes to Iowa City – which all residents mentioned – participants often followed these characteristics with concerns about their safety or lack of involvement in the broader community. Michelle said that her map shows how she stays close to home because she feels that the larger Iowa City community "seem(s) to be afraid" of blacks who have moved into the city – specifically to the Southeast Side. "When black people are over here, they kind of portray you in a certain way," she said. "This place is better than what they portray it to be – a ghetto, worse side of town." While looking at her map, Michelle said that residents outside of her neighborhood "know what

type of people live on the Southeast Side and what the Southeast Side is supposed to be about."

While journalists and officials also drew roads on their maps – broad sketches of roadway and streets that lead to neighboring cities – residents focused much more on the roads themselves, drawing them wide and crowded with traffic. For example, Jeff – a 41-year-old white man and reporter who has lived in Iowa City for 13 years – drew his routes out of Iowa City to visit in-laws, a music school, and other cities (Figure 6.3).

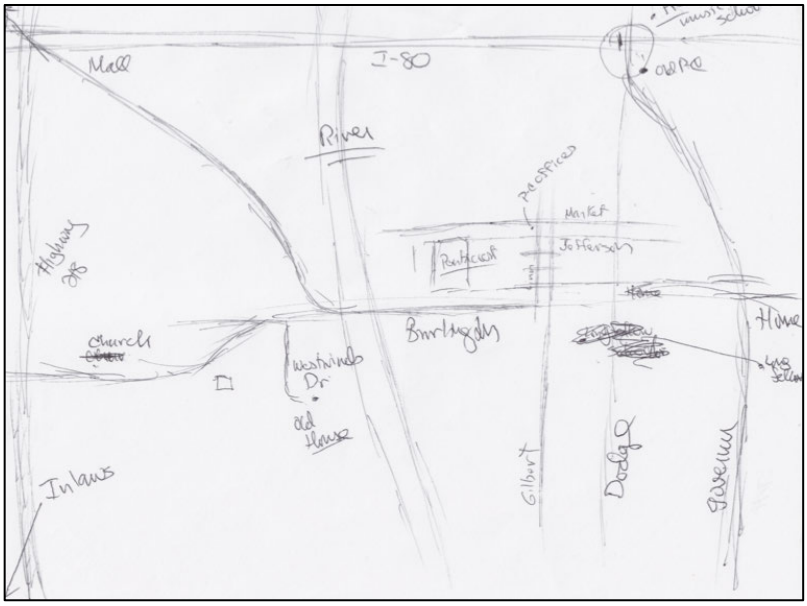


Figure 6.3. Jeff's Map.

Like other journalists and officials, Jeff's roads are thin, interwoven lines. Residents, on the other hand, drew roads as wide spaces that often took up most of their maps. Indeed, several residents drew vehicles on their roads. Hash-

marks show streets not just as ways people move around, but, perhaps, also the effect of how much time they spend on the streets.

In addition, a lack of streets or simple lines that follow bus routes are equally as telling. Tony, a 27-year-old black man, said that he tries to "stay at home" and "stay out of their (long-term, white Iowa City residents) way" to avoid a "run-in" with police. He fears that police may target him because he is black. In his map (Figure 6.4), Tony seems to reflect his feels of isolation, showing only the places he goes, including where he lives in Coralville ("CV"), his uncle's house ("U"), the neighborhood center ("NC") and the warehouse where he works ("W").

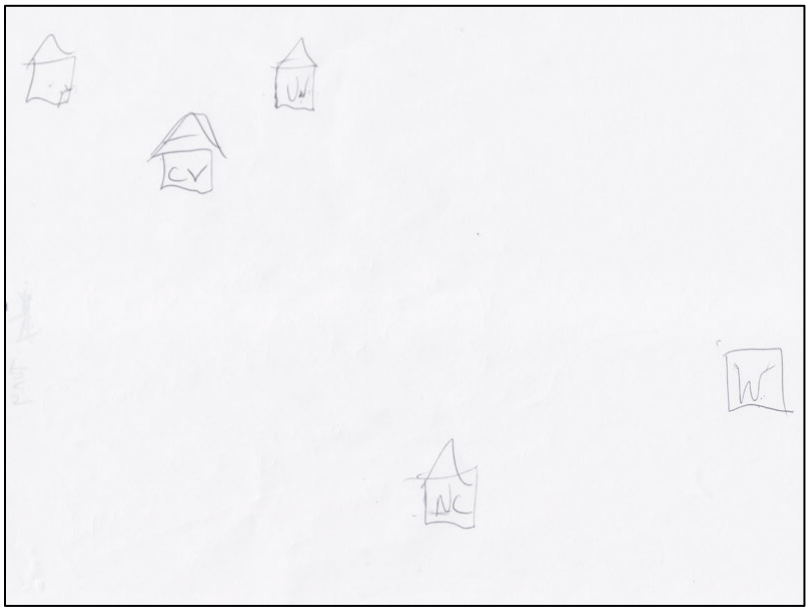


Figure 6.4. Tony's Map.

By and large, residents said that the Southeast Side is a place meant to keep blacks separated from the rest of the community. Sandra, a 51-year-old

black woman, said that Highway 6 keeps blacks from entering into the rest of the city. The highway is a physical boundary that represents a border that shows "where blacks live."

Figure 6.5. Sandra's Map.

Sandra's map (Figure 6.5) also shows her limited exposure to the rest of Iowa City, in part because of her reliance on public transit. Her map represents a a tight route that moves from the Southeast Side to the Old Capitol Mall downtown, the university hospital where she works, the HyVee grocery store, Goodwill, Highway 6, and the neighborhood center. Sandra said that even if she were able to move around town easier and visit more places, people would not want her in their neighborhoods or downtown. "People portray this place (the Southeast Side) as bad," she said. "They are afraid of a lot of African Americans over here."

Residents also described Iowa City in terms of race relations, particularly in terms of how white residents treat blacks and portray the Southeast Side as a black ghetto. Tom, a 22-year-old black man, said that those who live outside of the Southeast Side rely on what they "think" happens in the Southeast Side, not on what they "know" from personal experience. "They should live down here and see nothing [bad] goes on," he said.

Figure 6.6. Tom's Map.

Tom's map (Figure 6.6) is representational of other Southeast Side residents in that it is presents an image of Iowa City that is quite different than those of journalists and officials. Whereas journalists and officials showed how they move throughout the city, including to the downtown, Tom's map shows how he avoids the downtown, because, he said, "It's not a place for me."

Countering Stories of Authority

Residents said that they questioned the authority of those outside of the Southeast Side who would call the neighborhoods a "ghetto." Indeed, Southeast Side residents are adamant that news reports misrepresented their neighborhoods as being a "ghetto." Tony – a 21-year-old black man who has been in Iowa City for nine years – said that the Southeast Side "ain't the ghetto. I been in the ghetto [in Chicago], and this ain't it."

Even though residents acknowledge that crime does occur on the Southeast Side – noting that more crime happens downtown among college students – they say it was not close to what they experienced somewhere else and that the media and police overreact to crime in the Southeast Side. While residents acknowledged that the Southeast Side has some problems with crime and poverty, residents discussed other issues, such as a lack of mass transit and racism, as causes for social conditions on the Southeast Side.

Amanda, a black 23-year-old woman who moved to Iowa from Chicago when she was a child, said that she spends about "60 percent" of her time in the Southeast Side, most of it at her mother's house, the Crisis Center, and the Outlet, where she gets cigarettes (Figure 6.7).

Amanda said that her neighborhood is often misrepresented in the news. Reporters focus on stories of black crime that do not go "deeper" into stories that may explain causes other than culture and notions of Skogan's (1990) "social disorganization" or "broken windows" explanations for urban conditions. Amanda said, "In the media, they portray more than three people standing together as a gang…. That's what you hear sometimes on the news, but people should not say it if they don't know."

Figure 6.7. Amanda's Map.

A comparison of two representational mental maps by David, a 33-year-old white reporter, and Beth, a 35-year-old black woman who lives on the Southeast Side, reveals how those people inside and outside rely on different aspects of evidence and assign authority to different types of data about the neighborhood and news reports.

David's map includes the jail and sheriff's office, businesses along Highway 1, and the hospital (Figure 6.8). He said that he constructs his ideas about the city in terms of journalistic beats, specifically city government. His map is focused on the courthouse, the roads he takes to get to places where he reports, city hall and the university. Areas of the city outside of the downtown and the Southeast Side include schools and residential areas, places where police, city government, and businesses offer fewer news events and topics for journalists to cover.

Figure 6.8. David's Map.

Beth, however, focused much more on a detailed and complex environment South of Highway 6 (Figure 6.9). Beth, who moved to Iowa City from Chicago 10 years ago, said that the Southeast Side is home to support systems, a splash pad waterpark for children, large parks, schools, and businesses. And even though she said that the Southeast Side "is the worse side of Iowa City" because of crime and perceptions of who lives there, that:

> people say nothing about the West Side and the bank robberies. I know about lots of robberies. This has to do with what police report and what they say about the Southeast Side.

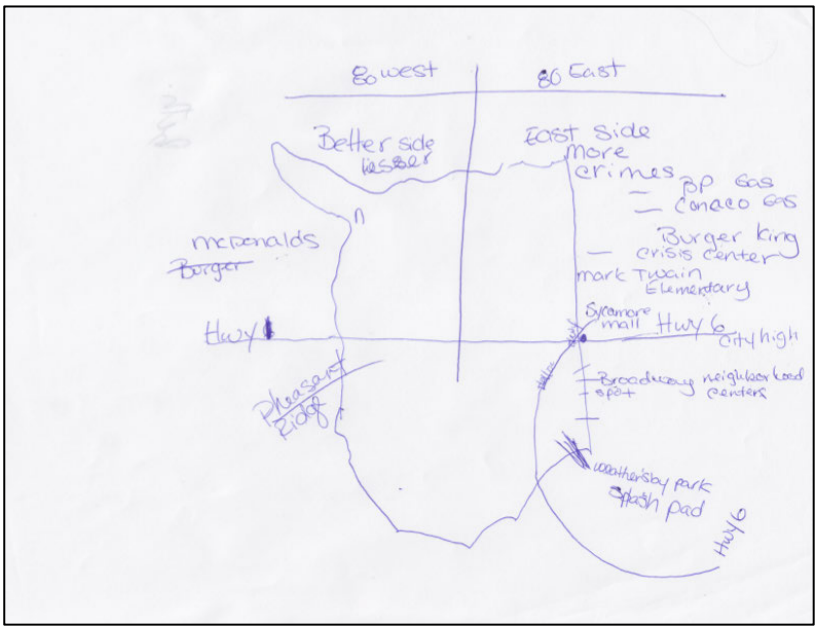


Figure 6.9. Beth's Map.

Comparing maps and explanations of place by Beth and David reveals how these two sets of people – residents and journalists – relied on very different types of authorities for explaining place. Generally, while journalists described space based upon the social institutions, such as police, residents turned to past and current personal experiences with their environments and focused more on their thoughts on how other Iowa City residents treat racial minorities and people on the Southeast Side.

Personal stories about the Southeast Side, residents said, influence their feelings about the place, but public stories brand them with meanings that follow them throughout the city. Nevaeh, a 57-year-old black woman, wondered how much the stereotypes of the Southeast Side and its people influence public policy, such as what she considers a lack of public transportation to and from the Southeast Side. Nevaeh said limited bus lines and schedules make her feel "confined to one place," boxed in by Highway 6 (Figure 6.10).

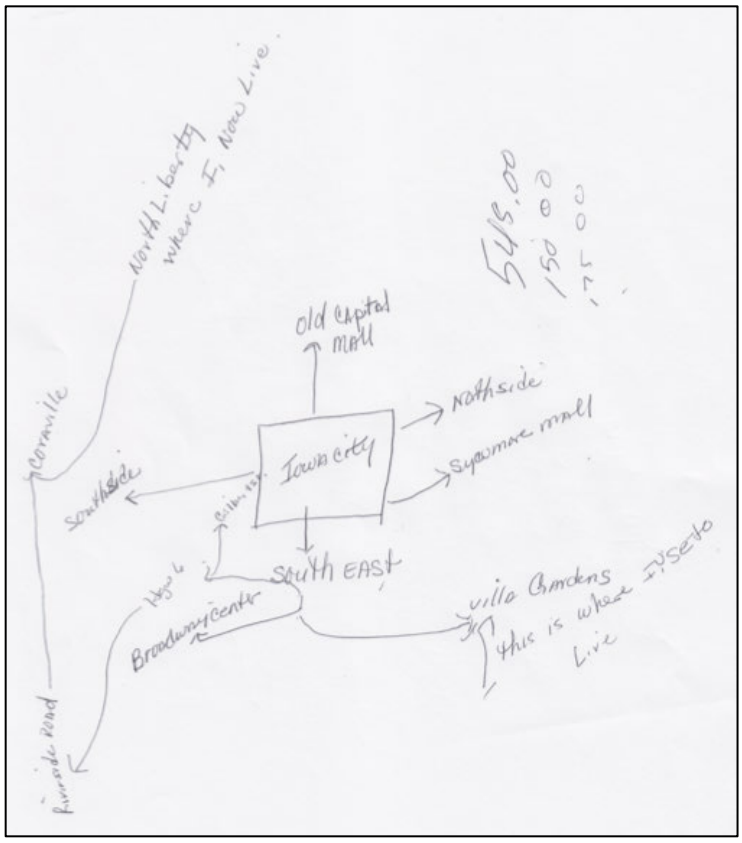


Figure 6.10. Nevaeh's Map.

Maps and descriptions of Iowa City by Southeast Side residents, as shown here, challenge the authority of those who speak publically about the Southeast Side as a "ghetto." Residents said – and their maps show – that the Southeast Side is more complex and subtle than presented by outsiders and by what appeared in news coverage of the Southeast Side. Journalists and officials tended to speak in broad terms about the entire city, focusing on areas throughout Iowa City and describing elements of several neighborhoods and spaces.

For example, Max – a 28-year-old white reporter at the *Press-Citizen* – is very particular about including many spaces on his map (Figure 6.11).

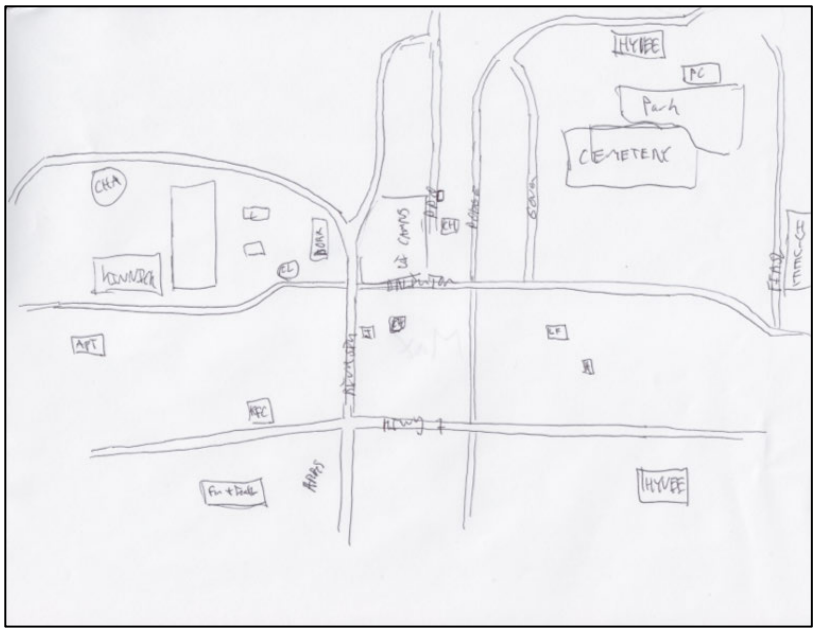


Figure 6.11. Max's Map.

Branching west from the Iowa River to the university football stadium to new neighborhoods at the east, Max also includes cemeteries, parks, grocery stores, and several other locations, such as his office and police station. Like many journalists and officials, Max said that he was concerned about the map being, in his words, "accurate" and "to scale."

Residents, on the other hand, tended to go much deeper into describing their own neighborhood, telling stories of people's homes, events, and discussing their emotional connections to their environment. Angel, a 23-year-old Black woman, drew the Southeast Side with trees and places she frequents (Figure 6.12). On her map, she locates the homeless shelter where she and her family stay, Kmart, Stuff Etc. (a discount store), her former apartment off of Broadway Street, and her favorite Mexican restaurant.

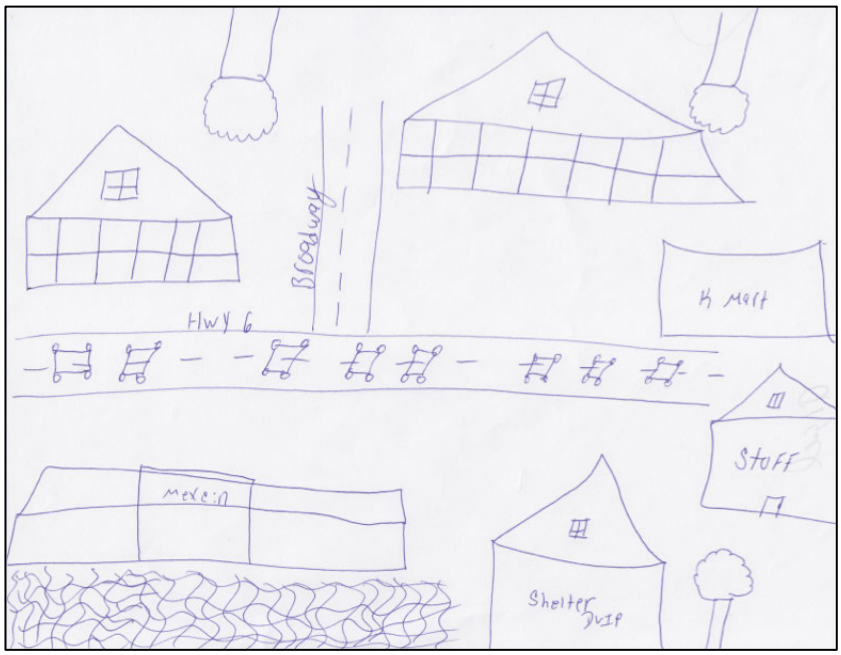


Figure 6.12. Angel's Map.

And even though Angel has positive feelings about her neighborhood, her stories about the Southeast Side reveal the trouble she said she has integrating with the rest of Iowa City. Angel said that she "came [to Iowa City] for help," but that the city is "depressing" in that "you get set up for failure down here." Angel said that community members "set (the Southeast Side) up to be what it is" by placing clusters of low-income blacks in one space and then telling stories about their perceived deviant and dangerous behavior and culture. Many residents described both positive and negative experiences living and working in Iowa City and discussed at length what seemed to be interest in knowing more about the city, but wanting – and needing – to stay to themselves and in their own neighborhoods.

Residents, therefore, tended to focus their maps on a smaller geographic portion of the city and places they lived. For example, 16 of the 17 journalists and

public officials drew the Iowa River – most of those at the center of the map – and said that the river was a major feature of the city. Of the 17 residents, only one did; most said that they did not know about the Iowa River, where it was, and that it was not an important part of their lives. Such a striking comparison reveals how drastically residents, journalists, and officials experience and define the city.

Conclusion

Mental maps by and interviews with a subset of Southeast Side residents provides storytelling about their neighborhoods that conflict with dominant news characterizations of the Southeast Side as a black ghetto, as identified in Chapters 4 and 5. Residents unpacked the ideograph of the "Southeast Side," identifying dominant characterizations made about their neighborhoods by journalists and officials. However, residents challenged the application of these narratives of urban spaces to the Southeast Side.

Lisa's map of the Southeast Side, for example, showed that while she is aware of negative stigmas about the Southeast Side, she drew walking paths, playgrounds, and schools on her map and described the Southeast Side as "nice or quiet or boring." Michelle also identified the dominant characterization of her neighborhood when she said that "This place is better than what they portray it to be – a ghetto, worse side of town."

Comparisons between maps by residents and those by journalists and officials are quite telling, particularly in what some participants included and others did not. For instance, journalists and officials tended to include the Iowa River and other spaces of Iowa City where they would spend time, such as the downtown business district and the University of Iowa campus. Residents, on

the other hand, often excluded the Iowa River and, only in interviews, mentioned the downtown and campus. Residents Beth and Amanda, for example, said that they did not know about the river and said that it was either not important to their daily lives, whereas journalists David and Max said the river was crucial to the city's identity.

In describing Iowa City, residents complicated and countered dominant definitions and explanations of social disorder the Southeast Side and other city spaces conveyed by journalists and officials. This complication reveals the power of residents to provide alternative voices to dominant social roles in a community. By sharing details of everyday life, residents provide alternative meanings of place, namely that the Southeast Side may not be a "ghetto." Alternatively, residents said that the Southeast Side is their "home" and demarcate other city spaces as places that they feel unwelcome.

These findings reveal how journalists maintained a close ideological relationship to officials who shared their interpretations of place and causes for social conditions in the Southeast Side. Part of this maintenance required keeping residents' outside of this expanded interpretive community and restricting them from contributing to the dominant, mediated definition of the neighborhood. For example, while journalists and officials relied on "official" reports and statistics to define the Southeast Side as a "ghetto," "urban," or an undesirable place to live, residents often compared the Southeast Side to what they described as safer and quieter than their Chicago neighborhoods. Furthermore, residents such as Slimmy and Tony described other spaces throughout the city as off-limits to black residents from the Southeast Side, an articulation that strikes at city descriptions by officials and journalists that the downtown and university spaces

were most welcoming and central to the city's identity. Indeed, another residents, Sandra, described the Southeast Side as being bordered by Highway 6 to identify a physical border to show "where blacks live."

Residents' counter-narratives to mediated definitions of the Southeast Side reveal several implications for the traditional role of journalism to serve as a tool for democratic representation and self-governing. A seminal voice in this topic, Meiklejohn (1965) writes that government should not be ruled by the elite, businesses, or politicians, but that citizens are – and must – be deeply involved in governing, which includes an involvement with the press. Additionally, Kovach and Rosenstiel (2007) argue that journalists' have an obligation to engage with the citizenry in producing and disseminating information and building public involvement in democratic efforts. Indeed, they write, journalism's "first loyalty [is] to citizens" (p. 5).

However, this study exposes how place-making – perhaps an otherwise ambiguous journalistic practice – excluded residents from informing the Fourth Estate's definition of the Southeast Side and the perceptions of social conditions that formed it. Indeed, this analysis reveals the accessibility reporters likely had to residents and their alternative stories about the Southeast Side, strengthen my assertion that journalists chose to ignore or avoid such sources. Had journalists gone into these spaces to do reporting independent of public officials, including police, however, alternative meanings of place would have challenged the mediated storyline and the cultural legitimacy and authority of the press. Further implications of these findings in terms of journalistic place-making are discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 7 – CONCLUSION

We all tell stories and we live in their midst.

Ruth Finnegan, *Tales of the City*.

This chapter takes my analysis of place-making in news into a broader realm, exploring how and why dominant as well as contrary discourses of place have emerged in the case of Iowa City's Southeast Side. It also examines how place-making relates to ideologies of power that are embedded in news. Each of this study's research questions are recapitulated and examined below. I then present an analysis of the study's findings and end with study limitations, and directions for future research.

Research questions for this project are as follows:

- RQ1: What are the standard institutional mediated constructions of Iowa City's Southeast Side?
- RQ2: What institutional, occupational and other factors help explain these mediated constructions of place?
- RQ3: How do journalists, public officials, and other "outsiders" characterize the Southeast Side as a place?
- RQ4: What alternative characterizations of place emerge from Southeast Side residents themselves?
- RQ5: How do these competing conceptions of neighborhoods help illuminate power differentials between different social groups involved in defining the community?

My first research question sought to identify the dominant stories that appeared in news coverage of the Southeast Side in 2009 and 2010. A qualitative textual analysis in Chapter 4 showed how journalists cast the Southeast Side as an urban ghetto by using news narratives of other urban places and people,

racialized language and imagery, and official sources from outside the neighborhoods who supported dominant claims about these neighborhoods.

Such storytelling about neighborhood violence, gangs, and perceived welfare abuse assigned dominant constructions of urban spaces to local geography, thereby constructing the "Southeast Side." In this way, the "Southeast Side" became an "ideograph," a recognizable, rhetorical symbol of cultural values and ideology (McGee, 1980). Comments by journalists, officials, and residents confirmed that the term Southeast Side was code for "black people from Chicago," "the bad side of town," or "the ghetto." Consistent storytelling in the news that not only described but interpreted social conditions in southeastern neighborhoods affirmed this racialized archetype. By turning to an ideograph such as the Southeast Side, journalists embedded a deep history of urban narratives and stereotypes of black city dwellers to explain social conditions among newly arrived blacks to a small, Midwestern city.

While this study captures a snapshot during a time of cultural change within Iowa City, the dominant news narratives identified in coverage of the Southeast side are part of an enduring pattern of race in class in America. Narratives of deviant blacks have become so pronounced in American society that they were easily applied to Iowa City's Southeast Side, perhaps especially because the narratives and the Southeast Side setting both related to notions of blacks in general, "The Inner City," and crime.

In this dissertation, I was also curious about how journalists and their sources interacted and interpreted local spaces, which I addressed through my second and third research questions. As discussed in Chapter 4, journalists and officials tended to provide what they considered "objective" and "accurate"

descriptions of city spaces. These participants turned to personal experiences to describe where they felt most comfortable, highlighting the University of Iowa campus, the downtown business and bar districts, city parks, and other public spaces on their mental maps. In these spaces, participants told stories about their work and personal lives. They also identified the cultural importance of local landmarks. For instance, when journalists and officials explained why they included the Iowa River (which only one resident included), they described how the river was "a part of the city's identity," "very important," or a "major feature."

City spaces that participants said they did not know about were left empty on their maps. These blank spaces – often including in the map's southeastern portion – were described as unsafe, stigmatized, and "ghetto." Journalists and officials, many lacking personal experiences in these particular neighborhoods, relied on neighborhood demographics, housing and school district statistics to describe who lived there and what the environment was like. These "official" reports, often coming from city agencies and local police, held a kind of objective authority for participants. This perceived objectivity seemed to bolster the participants' perceptions of their own objectivity in assigning meanings to geography.

Journalists and officials also said that their impressions of particular spaces, such as the Southeast Side, were also influenced by stories from long-time Iowa City residents and from what they knew about urban environments as portrayed in popular culture and news. These participants said that they questioned the validity of Southeast Side stereotypes, they still relied on stories

from other seemingly similar geographies (ie., black neighborhoods in Chicago) to describe and explain Iowa City's Southeast Side.

Perhaps the most striking finding from interviews with journalists and officials is how officials and journalists applied their place-making to their mental maps. In particular officials and journalists drew and explained mental maps in ways that closely resembled each other's and that seem to mirror "official" maps that they used in their work. For example: Bill, a city housing official, drew his map to match a departmental map that showed placements of affordable housing clients; police officers Paul and Allen drew nearly identical maps to each other that resembled the police department's "patrol map"; and, *Press-Citizen* K-12 reporter, Roger, drew elementary schools to describe neighborhoods in an identical process to that of Fred, a school official.

This reliance on what they considered objective, official, and authoritative descriptions of place showed the close connection between sources and journalists that shaped place-making and explanations, seeming to relinquish journalists from exploring the spaces deeper from those living there.

My fourth research question dealt with how residents of the Southeast Side who attracted news attention experienced their neighborhoods and described the city. In Chapter 6, residents focused on places where they felt most comfortable and where they spent most of their time. Residents tended to draw their maps as pictures, with wide streets – sometimes with cars – and emotions and expressions, including sun and smiles, chimney smoke, and trees.

Whereas journalists and officials described spaces throughout the city as being safe, comfortable, and accessible, residents described the city through instances of inequality. Residents focused on what they considered inadequate

public transportation, overt racism from white Iowa Citians, and personal experiences in city spaces that influenced decisions to spend most of their time in the Southeast Side. Tight circles on residents' mental maps show how residents experienced the city from the bus or from driving to and from work. Blank spaces in the center and on the edges of these circles reveal the spaces and places where residents say they do not go, most notably, downtown, the university campus, and most of the city's neighborhoods, parks, and landmarks

While mental maps of journalists and officials included thin lines that represented streets crisscrossing the city and to neighboring cities, residents' mental maps showed wide and thick roads that revealed the effects of built environment. More specifically, these wide roads revealed how Highway 6, which borders the Southeast Side at the north, serves as both an ideological and physical barrier for residents. Interestingly, residents' feelings of segregation in Iowa City were also evident in what they left off of their maps. Generally, residents did not include the Iowa River on their maps, a landmark that journalists and officials said was vital to the city's identity.

Finally, as residents described their mental maps – and their own neighborhoods, specifically – they expressed frustration that news media demarcated and characterized the Southeast Side as a ghetto without expressing alternative views. Several residents questioned the notion that this is the "worse part of town," as portrayed in public discourse and in the media. In effect, residents questioned the legitimacy and authority of journalists to make claims about the Southeast Side and its people, though their voices were silent in the coverage of their neighborhoods.

My last research question sought to identify and explain how and why media accounts and outsider/insider conceptions of the neighborhood converge and diverge in terms of power differentials. As discussed above, significant differences emerged in how journalists and officials described space compared to Southeast Side residents, which likely were related to the abilities and power awarded various social roles in the community. For example, journalists and officials showed in their mental maps an ability to explore vast geographies in and around Iowa City that came, in part because of their professions required and allowed them to move in and out of social settings and geographies. Residents, on the other hand, showed restricted access to city spaces due to racism and a lack of adequate transportations. This limited exposure to city spaces, however, gave them a deeper awareness of fewer city spaces, including the Southeast Side, which also increased their authority to speak about this space.

Despite these differences between place-making among participants, I am mostly interested in explaining how these differences influenced news coverage of place and to identify elements of power embedded in news coverage of geography. In short, the social roles and power that afforded journalists and officials access to city space and restricted residents also played out in the types of stories journalists were aware of and able to tell. Such power also affected the ability sources had to influence the dominant mediated story of the Southeast Side in that officials were both in close proximity and philosophy to journalists, creating a seemingly natural connection between the two groups and what appeared in news coverage.

Beyond providing information about community issues and social conditions from southeastern neighborhoods, the term Southeast Side performed a singular ideological purpose: to identify and maintain dominant community values throughout the rest of Iowa City. Racialized and stereotyped news narratives of urban people, places, and problems in a place called the Southeast Side created an ideological boundary between those in and outside the Southeast Side. Such a boundary subjugated the Southeast Side's cultural diversity and its people, presenting them as being counter to Midwestern values and a threat to notions of a safe, white and historically homogeneous community. Indeed, the creation of Southeast Side was just as much about creating an "Inner City" as it was about constructing notions of Iowa City itself.

Much of the ideological work in journalists' place-making was subtle. For instance, the Southeast Side was presented as an ambiguous space that could not be identified. While news articles may have mentioned streets or specific addresses for where events occurred on the Southeast Side, stories did not provide readers with maps or consistent indications of where the Southeast Side was and was not. That journalists did not overtly identify physical boundaries for the Southeast Side, allowed the audiences' perceptions of boundaries and the place's meanings to be left undefined and debated. By not providing specific details about where the Southeast Side started and stopped, the place became more of an ideological construct that could be formed and altered based on the needs of a particular story.

Empty spaces on mental maps of journalists and public officials reveals an important aspect of place-making in that ideological frameworks rely on empty spaces to be filled with dominant perceptions of culture (McGee, 1980). These

lacking boundaries allow the audience to apply mythical constructions of place and people to further develop the ideograph of Southeast Side as a particular type of place. Indeed, these places of the "unknown" are filled with "local legends" that are used to "explain ambiguity – something does not quite seem to belong or stands out from its surroundings" (Bird, 2002, p. 525).

The construction of the Southeast Side as an idea also came with its own rhetorical function. While journalists may have come to use the name "Southeast Side" to quickly identify people living in specific neighborhoods, the place-name came to hold a particular ideological power. Through the use of racialized language, myth, and descriptions of space, these meanings of this particular place were embedded in the news. Such interpretations took on authority and resonance to condition audiences to recognize or adopt these meanings.

Further, ideological construction of the Southeast Side as a black, dangerous, and deviant place branded not only people from that space, but people of a particular skin color that would follow them throughout the city, as residents described. Interactions between these powerful messages and devices and explanations of geography bolstered dominant cultural explanations for everyday life in a changing Iowa City while simultaneously suppressing alternative explanations from subjugated audiences.

In the end, this study reveals place-making as a fundamental role of the journalistic community and identifies another ideological function of the press in that they assign power and meanings by describing news by where it happens. Through interviews and mental mapping, this study also deepens understandings of ritualized patterns of journalism and institutional power in that while grassroots interpretations of the news and neighborhoods are

accessible to journalists, ideological connections between journalists and other institutions hold an authoritative power and exclusivity.

Journalists and media scholars have long talked about the press as improving community journalism to meet the notion of the public sphere. Yet, this dissertation is not another such study that only encourages journalists to alter how they report on local news and communities. Instead, I suggest that journalists and scholars recognize the cultural power of journalistic place-making and the challenge to their authority to do so by residents from a particular place. Journalists should also consider incorporating alternative sources to coverage of urban news to begin to address inequalities of news storytelling that traditionally and consistently places blame on racial and ethnic minorities. Such reporting may uncover uncomfortable injustices in communities – perhaps even within media itself – but such coverage may help newsworkers follow and uphold the very tenants of journalism that have attracted many of us to the field in the first place: to provide an independent and open source of information and self-governance.

Study Limitations and Directions for Future Research

This study has several limitations that should be noted and considered for future work on news constructions of place. First, as with any study, it is difficult to ascribe the findings identified here to all journalists and their construction of all places. However, future research should continue to explore how news media shape place and identify how dominant ideologies and power appear in media representations of place. Such research may expose researchers to more complex and nuanced portions of the news place-making process.

Second, I recognize that interviews for this project were conducted in 2011

and my textual analysis focused on news in 2009 and 2010, when some of the Southeast Side residents I spoke with were not living in Iowa City. Additionally, had I conducted all interviews in 2009 and 2010, this may have been a very different study. However, I was more concerned with perceptions on the lasting perception of place that was constructed in 2009 and continued throughout 2011. Future research might consider exploring how immediate news coverage of complicated social conditions in a particular place form initial characterizations of place.

Third, this study focused on three sets of participants – journalists, officials, and a subset of Southeast Side residents – thereby excluding long-term residents, youth, college students, and other community members. While these other groups may have provided expanded explanations of place-making, I considered black residents who rely on the Broadway Street Neighborhood Center to be the most vulnerable and stigmatized, effected by negative characterizations of the Southeast Side. Widening the pool of participants to include more sectors of the community, however, may contribute to a broader examination of news place-making and may deepen what otherwise may be considered an oversimplification of place-making in that it focuses on subsets of larger communities of officials, journalists, and Southeast Side residents.

Fourth, this project focuses on place-making of the Southeast Side as a local issue, specific to two or three neighborhoods in one city. Future research on local place-making may consider including perceptions of place from a regional level. In this case, my articulations of Southeast Side place-making is limited in understanding how journalists, officials, and residents located Iowa City within a larger, growing geographic region.

Indeed, mental maps by journalists and officials show their interest in cities neighboring Iowa City, with several noting routes they take to cities such as North Liberty, West Branch, and Cedar Rapids. It was also common for participants, including Southeast Side residents, to include the Coralville shopping mall as though it were part of Iowa City itself. Expanding future research to explore regional influences, therefore, might reveal added explanations and descriptions of place-making.

Finally, future research on place-making should consider implementing the methodology of mental maps. Involving participants in explaining their maps provides an interactive opportunity for participants to become involved in research, which offers a deeper understanding of the maps and their stories. Asking people to recreate place in a map and express those maps to a researcher attempts to bridge what ethnographers have struggled with – the idea of writing from "here" about people who are "there" (Denzin, 1997; Lewin, 2006; Soja, 2010). Scholars who use this methodology are also able to spur social action by "listening to voices" (Cloke, et al., 2004, p. 30) of those who are being studied.

Combined with the textual analysis of news stories, mental mapping provides an analysis of media production and reception that emerges from an interaction of various texts and stories (Bauman, 2004). As Shoemaker and Vos (2009) write, news media research should begin to incorporate study of social institutions, news processes, audience reception, and inquiry that focuses on news texts and creation. There could be several applications for mental mapping in understanding stories of place and breaking down issues of power between researcher and participants. Mental mapping can also add a valuable visual component that could ease communication between journalists and community

members to explain how places – and their people – are represented in society through the news.

In the end, this analysis builds upon current research to show how notions of place – as described by official sources, not the place's residents – is a valuable tool for dominant society to expand and mark its ideological standings and to express power through news.

APPENDIX A – INFORMED CONSENT

Informed Consent for Residents

Project Title: The use of story in news to create place during a time of Black Mobility

Principal Investigator: Robert E. Gutsche Jr.

Research Team Contact: Robert E. Gutsche Jr., [redacted], robert-gutsche@uiowa.edu

This consent form describes the research study to help you decide if you want to participate. This form provides important information about what you will be asked to do during the study, about the risks and benefits of the study, and about your rights as a research subject.

- If you have any questions about or do not understand something in this form, you should ask the research team for more information.

- You should discuss your participation with anyone you choose such as family or friends.

- Do not agree to participate in this study unless the research team has answered your questions and you decide that you want to be part of this study.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY?

This is a research study. I am inviting you to participate in this research study because you are a community member in Iowa City, Iowa who either lives in the city's Southeast Side or have worked as a public official or journalist on issues related to Iowa City and its changing neighborhoods.

The purpose of this research study is to understand the ways in which members of a community understand their neighborhoods.

HOW MANY PEOPLE WILL PARTICIPATE?

Approximately 60 people will take part in this study.

HOW LONG WILL I BE IN THIS STUDY?

If you agree to take part in this study, your involvement will last for anywhere between 10 and 60 minutes.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN DURING THIS STUDY?

During this interview, I will ask you to draw a map of Iowa City, Iowa, identifying what you consider important physical characteristics, such as roads, buildings, etc. As you do this, I will ask you to tell me what you are thinking about and to tell me why you have made the map as you have. The interview will take place where you are most comfortable, including on the sidewalk, in a public park, or in your own home or office. I will ask you to talk to me about your thoughts regarding the Southeast Side and other city neighborhoods. When our interview is done, I will take your map and look at it alongside others to see what interesting themes emerge.

AUDIO/VIDEO RECORDING OR PHOTOGRAPHS

One aspect of this study involves making audio recordings. So that I can best remember what you said during our conversation, I will record our talk and save it on my computer. No one else will have access to these recordings.

You can still participate in this study if you wish to not have your conversation recorded.

[ ] Yes [ ] No I give you permission to make audio recordings of me during this study.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF THIS STUDY?

You may experience some uncomfortable emotional feelings while you talk about your neighborhood and your map, and you are able to end your participation in this study at any time.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THIS STUDY?

I don't know if you will benefit from being in this study.

However, I hope that, in the future, other people might benefit from this study because it is important to understand how community members talk about their neighborhoods.

WILL IT COST ME ANYTHING TO BE IN THIS STUDY?

You will not have any costs for being in this research study.

WILL I BE PAID FOR PARTICIPATING?

You will not be paid for being in this research study.

WHO IS FUNDING THIS STUDY?

The University and the research team are receiving no payments from other agencies, organizations, or companies to conduct this research study.

WHAT ABOUT CONFIDENTIALITY?

If you are a resident, I will keep your participation in this research study confidential to the extent permitted by law. However, it is possible that other people such as those indicated below may become aware of your participation in this study and may inspect and copy records pertaining to this research. Some of these records could contain information that personally identifies you.

- federal government regulatory agencies,
- auditing departments of the University of Iowa, and

- the University of Iowa Institutional Review Board (a committee that reviews and approves research studies)

To help protect your confidentiality, I will work with you to assign yourself a pseudonym -- another name by which you will be identified in the research study. If you agree to audio recording, this will be the name that is used on the recording. This name will also be placed on the back of the map you have drawn. If we write a report or article about this study or share the study data set with others, we will do so in such a way that you cannot be directly identified.

If you are a journalist or public official, it will be more difficult to maintain your confidentiality, in part because you may have been quoted in published news reports or other public documents. Therefore, I will not be able to provide you with confidentiality.

IS BEING IN THIS STUDY VOLUNTARY?

Taking part in this research study is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to be in this study, you may stop participating at any time. If you decide not to be in this study, or if you stop participating at any time, you won't be penalized or lose any benefits for which you otherwise qualify.

WILL I RECEIVE NEW INFORMATION ABOUT THE STUDY WHILE PARTICIPATING?

If I obtain any new information during this study that might affect your willingness to continue participating in the study, I will promptly provide you with that information.

WHAT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?

I encourage you to ask questions. If you have any questions about the research study itself, please contact: Robert E. Gutsche Jr. at robert-gutsche@uiowa.edu or at [redacted]. You may also contact the supervising faculty member, Frank Durham, at frank-durham@uiowa.edu, or at [redacted]. If you experience a research-related injury, please contact Frank Durham at frank-durham@uiowa.edu, or at [redacted].

If you have questions, concerns, or complaints about your rights as a research subject or about research related injury, please contact the Human Subjects Office, 105 Hardin Library for the Health Sciences, 600 Newton Rd, The University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA 52242-1098, (319) 335-6564, or e-mail irb@uiowa.edu. General information about being a research subject can be found by clicking "Info for Public" on the Human Subjects Office web site, http://research.uiowa.edu/hso. To offer input about your experiences as a research subject or to speak to someone other than the research staff, call the Human Subjects Office at the number above.

Informed Consent Email for Journalists/Officials

I invite you to participate in a research study. The purpose of the study is to understand how the media and residents of Iowa City, Iowa perceive the city's Southeast Side.

I am inviting you to be in this study because you have been involved in talking about the Southeast Side in the local media as either a journalist or public official. I obtained your name and email address from public documents and websites.

Approximately 60 people will take part in this study. If you agree to participate, our interview could last between 10 and 60 minutes, during which I will provide you with a blank sheet of paper and a pencil. I will ask you to draw a map of Iowa City and to tell me why and how you decided to draw it. Please email me within the next week if you are willing to participate in this study about the meanings of neighborhoods within Iowa City.

As a public figure, it will be difficult to keep the information you provide confidential, in part because your identity may be traced to you through specific comments about your position in the community that you may make in our interview. Further, I may include in my study comments that you have written or made that appear in public documents or media reports, which could be traced back to you. Finally, federal regulatory agencies and the University of Iowa Institutional Review Board (a committee that reviews and approves research studies) may inspect and copy records pertaining to this research.

There are no known risks from being in this study, and you will not benefit personally from this study; however, I hope that others may benefit in the future from what we learn as a result of this study.

You will not have any costs for being in this research study, and you will not be paid for being in this research study. Taking part in this research study is completely voluntary. If you decide not to be in this study, or if you stop participating at any time, you won't be penalized or lose any benefits for which you otherwise qualify.

If you have any questions about the research study itself, please contact me, Robert E. Gutsche Jr., at [redacted] or at robert-gutsche@uiowa.edu or my supervising faculty member, Frank Durham, at frank-durham@uiowa.edu, or at [redacted]. If you experience a research-related injury, please contact Frank Durham at frank-durham@uiowa.edu, or at [redacted]. If you have questions about the rights of research subjects, please contact the Human Subjects Office, 105 Hardin Library for the Health Sciences, 600 Newton Rd, The University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA 52242-1098, (319) 335-6564, or e-mail irb@uiowa.edu. To offer input about your experiences as a research subject or to speak to someone other than the research staff, call the Human Subjects Office at the number above.

Thank you very much for your consideration. Returning this email or phoning me with your consent will indicate your willingness to participate in the study.

Sincerely,

Robert E. Gutsche Jr.

Ph.D. Candidate, School of Journalism and Mass Communication

The University of Iowa

APPENDIX B – INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Interview Questions – Officials and Journalists

Would you please place your name on the back of this sheet of blank paper?

With this sheet of paper, I will ask you to draw a map of Iowa City as you know it to be. You will only have this sheet of paper to draw your map. Consider drawing roads, people's homes, schools or whatever you think is important. Draw where you go in the city and what you do. Write in the map your thoughts about specific spaces. What do these places mean to you?

I will give you a few minutes to get started. Please ask any questions you have. After a few minutes, I will ask you to talk to me *as you draw* the map. I am interested in why you drew what you did and to tell me about your map as you continue to make it.

(After a few minutes): Please start talking out loud as you draw and tell me why you are making it the way you are.

Where do you live on this map?

Tell me about specific features of the map.

How long have you lived in Iowa City?

Where did you come from?

Could you please describe your media use?

Tell me your thoughts about the neighborhoods on this map. What do you think about the different parts of town?

How do you find media coverage of these neighborhoods and the different parts of town?

What do you do in Iowa City?

Are you male or female?

What is your race and/or ethnicity?

What is your age?

Interview Questions – Residents

To protect your identity, let's create a name that you'd like to have for this study. What name would you like to use?

Would you please place your (name or the name you have created) on the back of this sheet of blank paper?

With this sheet of paper, I will ask you to draw a map of Iowa City as you know it to be. You will only have this sheet of paper to draw your map. Consider drawing roads, people's homes, schools or whatever you think is important. Draw where you go in the city and what you do. Write in the map your thoughts about specific spaces. What do these places mean to you?

I will give you a few minutes to get started. Please ask any questions you have. After a few minutes, I will ask you to talk to me *as you draw* the map. I am interested in why you drew what you did and to tell me about your map as you continue to make it.

(After a few minutes): Please start talking out loud as you draw and tell me why you are making it the way you are.

Where do you live on this map?

Tell me about specific features of the map.

How long have you lived in Iowa City?

Where did you come from?

What do you think people outside say about your neighborhood and your space?

Could you please describe your media use?

How do you find media coverage of your

Is there anything you wish people outside knew about your neighborhood and your home?

What do you do in Iowa City?

Are you male or female?

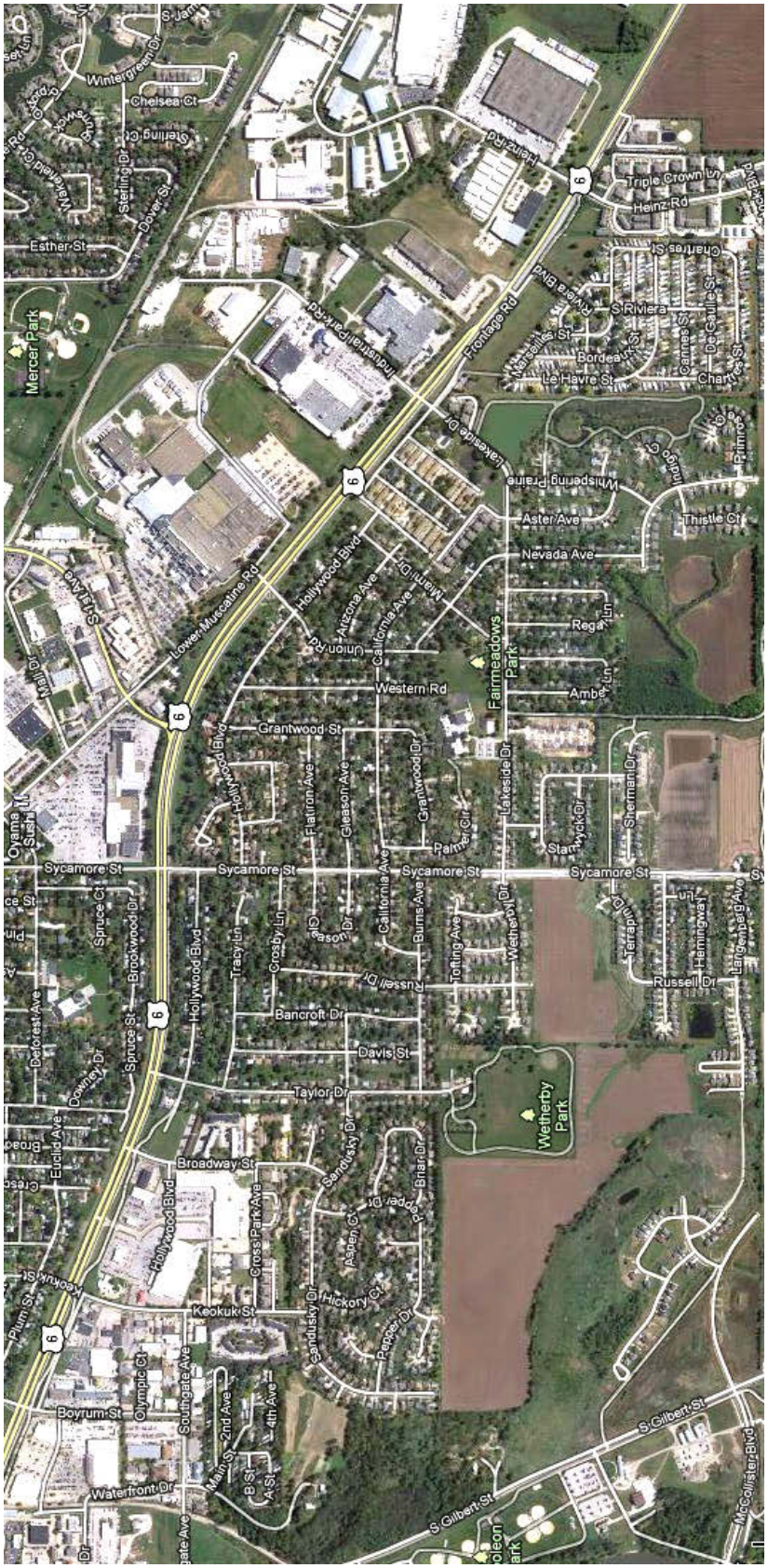
What is your race and/or ethnicity?

What is your age?

Do you have work or school?

If so, what is your job or where do you attend school?

APPENDIX C – IOWA CITY MAP FOR JOURNALISTS / OFFICIALS


Mercer Park
Esther St
Chelsea Ct
Wintergreen Dr
Sterling Ct
Sterling Dr
Dover St
Heintz Rd
Triple Crown Ln
Frontage Rd
Riviera Blvd
S Riviera
Marseilles St
Bordeaux St
Le Havre St
Chartres St
De Gaulle St
Lakeside Dr
Whispering Prairie Dr
Primrose Ct
Aster Ave
Thistle Ct
Nevada Ave
Regal Ln
Amber Ln
Fairmeadows Park
Western Rd
Lower Muscatine Rd
Hollywood Blvd
Arizona Ave
California Ave
Union Rd
Manatt Dr
Grantwood St
Grantwood Dr
Gleason Ave
Flatiron Ave
Palmer Cir
Lakeside Dr
Stanwyck Dr
Sherman Dr
Sycamore St
Tracy Ln
Crosby Ln
Gleason Dr
Burns Ave
Tofting Ave
Wetherby Dr
Terrapin Ln
Hemingway Ln
Langenberg Ave
Russell Dr
Bancroft Dr
Davis St
Taylor Dr
Wetherby Park
Spruce Ct
Brockwood Dr
Spruce St
Deforest Ave
Downey Dr
Euclid Ave
Broadway St
Sandusky Dr
Briar Dr
Pepper Dr
Aspen Ct
Hickory Ct
Cross Park Ave
Keokuk St
Keokuk St
Plum St
Olympic Ct
Southgate Ave
Boyrum St
2nd Ave
4th Ave
Main St
B St
A St
Waterfront Dr
S Gilbert St
McCollister Blvd
Oyama Sushi
Mall Dr
S 1st Ave
9

APPENDIX D – MENTAL MAPS

Maps by Journalists

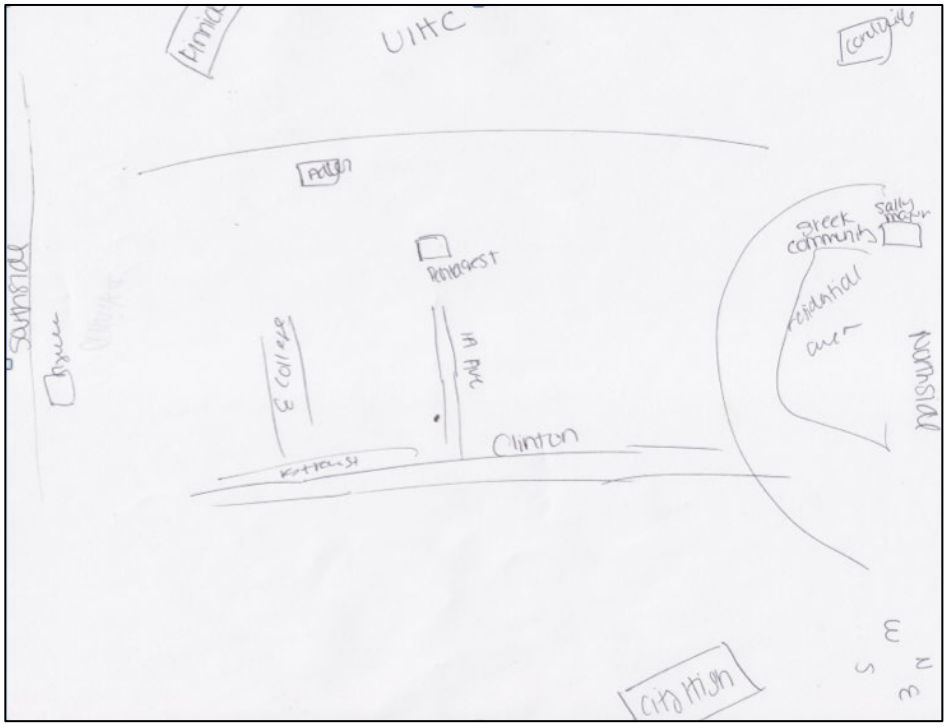


Figure D.1. Annika's Map.

Annika, 20, is a white college student journalist in Iowa City who has worked at *The Daily Iowan* for two years. She says that she spends most of her time in the city's downtown and does not have a car to see other parts of the city. On her map, she locates one of the city's three high schools, because she covered a story there once. Annika says that she has an idea about the North Side as being where students, professors, and the university president live. The center of Iowa City is the university's Pentacrest and Iowa Avenue, where Annika once

lived. She said she drew the university building that houses the student newspaper because she spends most of her time there.

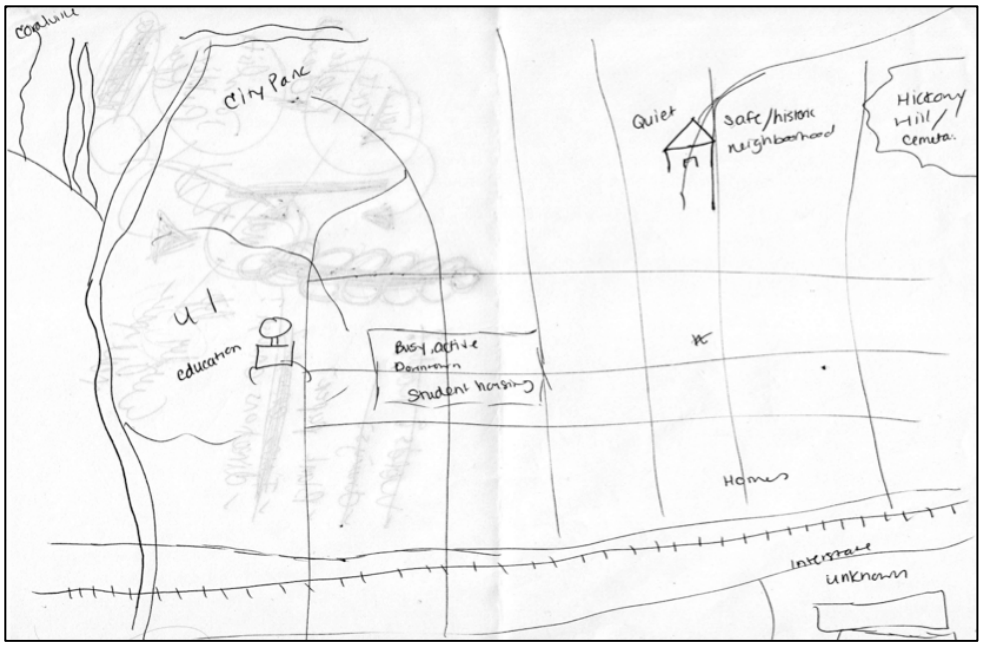


Figure D.2. Ashley's Map.

Ashley, 20, is a white college student journalist who has worked at *The Daily Iowan* for two years. Her map includes the university and larger public spaces, such as parks. Ashley says that she often drives to Coralville, a neighboring city, and she includes it in the northwest corner. She says that she wrote "unknown" in the southeastern corner, in part because she knew I was interested in her perspectives of that side of the city. The university is drawn inside a bubble, because the space is not very well defined, takes over a lot of space, and is an "entity" in that it imposes power over the community.

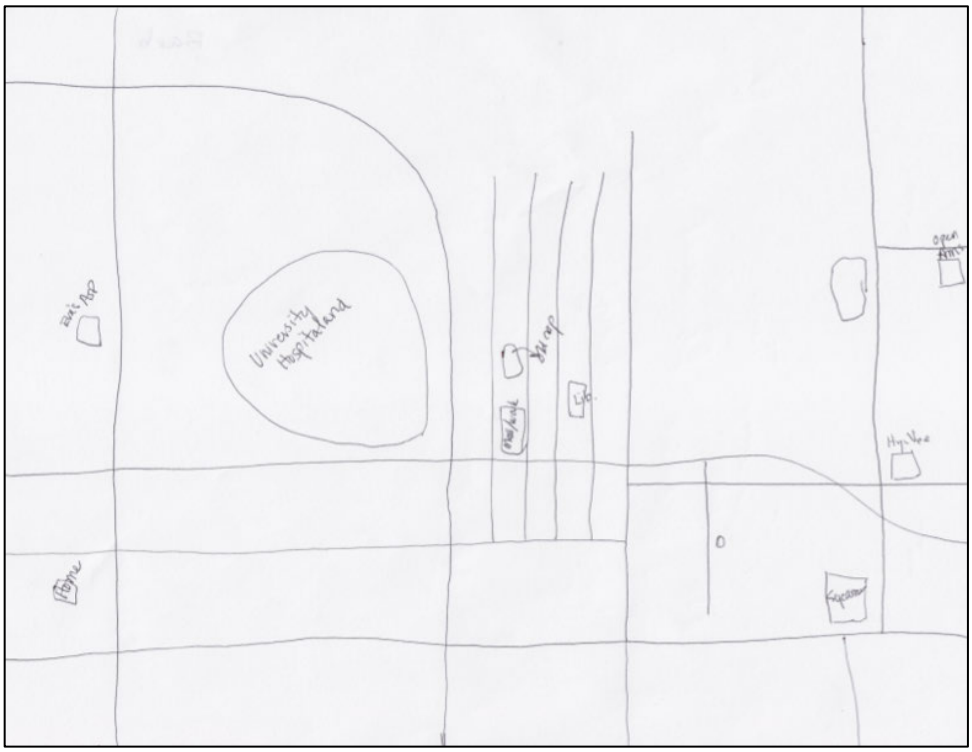


Figure D.3. Barb's Map.

Barb, 36, is a white reporter who has worked at two newspapers in the city for more than 11 years. She said she drew her map based on where she goes during a "regular day." Barb, who lives on the West Side, works downtown. A large portion of the map is called "University Hospitaland," where the university's hospital is located.

Figure D.4. David's Map.

David, 33, is a white man who has lived in Iowa City since 1996. He attended college in Iowa City and has been a reporter at the *Press-Citizen* since 2005. He moved to Iowa City from near the Quad Cities. In Iowa City, David covered city government, and he constructs his ideas about the city in terms of journalistic beats. David thinks about housing, because he just bought a house in Coralville and added the courthouse and city hall, because he often reported from there. Other spaces where he reported are indicated in boxes on his map.

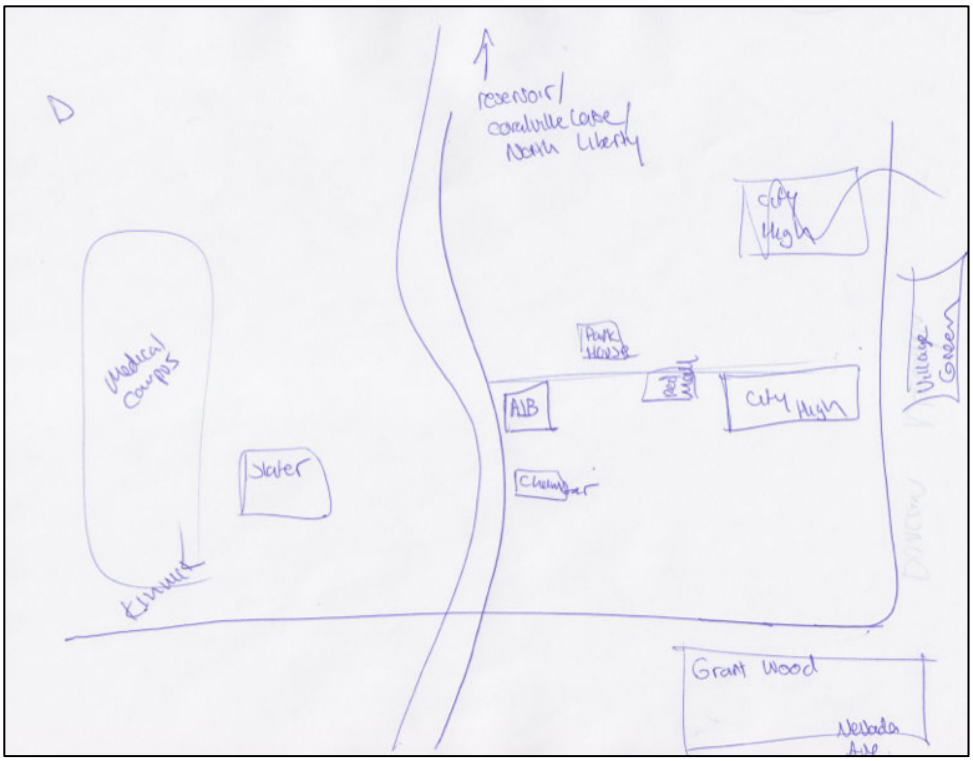


Figure D.5. Duncan's Map.

Duncan, 21, is a white reporter at *The Daily Iowan*. He has lived in Iowa City since birth and was raised on the "Southeast Side." On his map, Duncan marks all of the places in the city where he has lived. The West Side of the Iowa River contains the medical campus. He drew other particular places, as well, including university buildings. He also drew roads or lines to show places outside of Iowa City that he frequents.

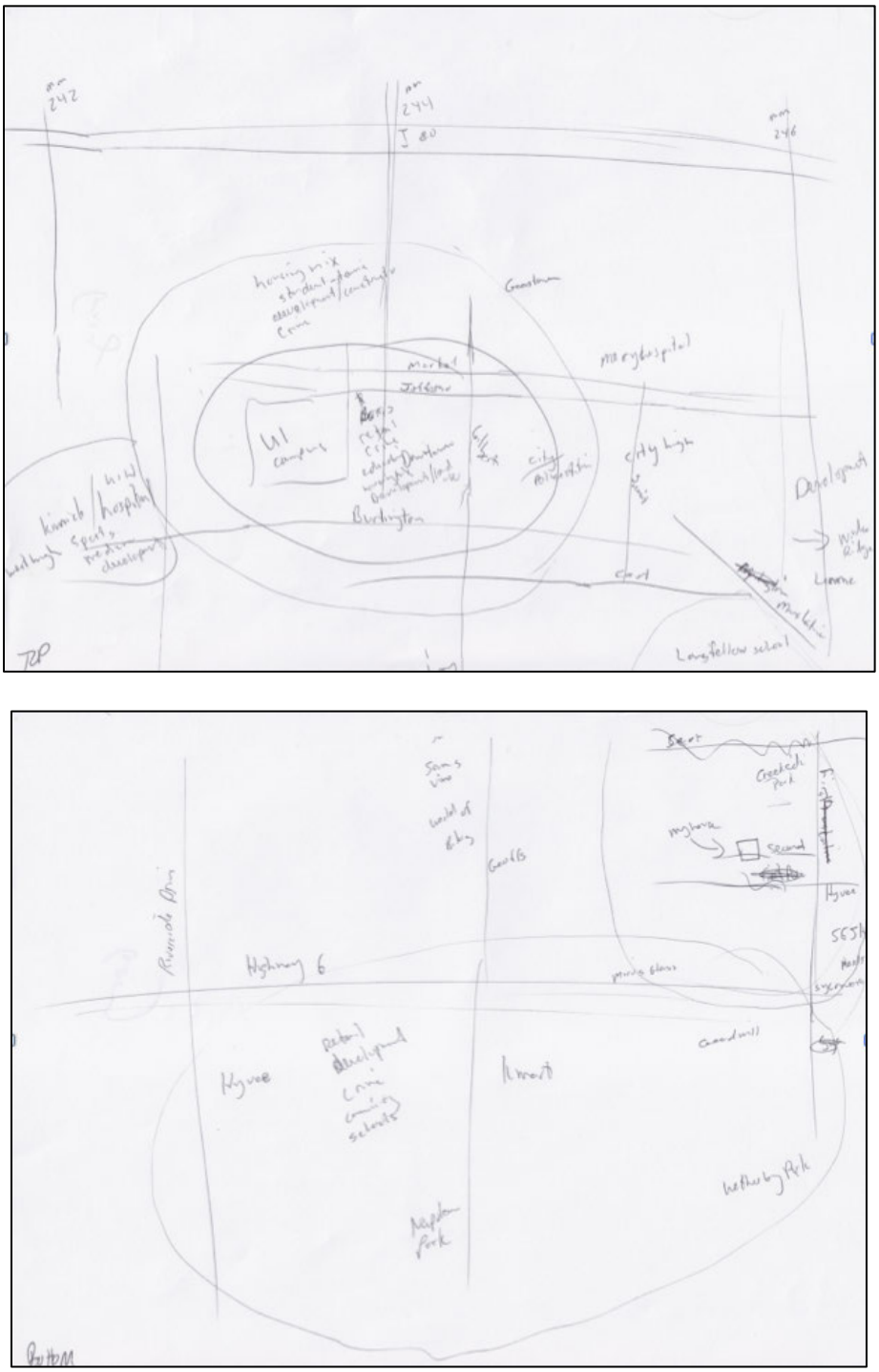


Figure D.6. Gary's Maps

Gary, 33, is a white reporter for the *Press-Citizen* who has been in Iowa City for 10 years. A father of two, he spends his time in his Southeast Side

neighborhood. Gary is the only participant to use two pages for his map, in part because he wanted to show details and, more specifically, he wanted to discuss how reporters see the community. Each circle outside of the downtown has its own types of stories, dealing with different audiences. Reporting in the center circle deals with college students. The next circle contains neighborhood stories.

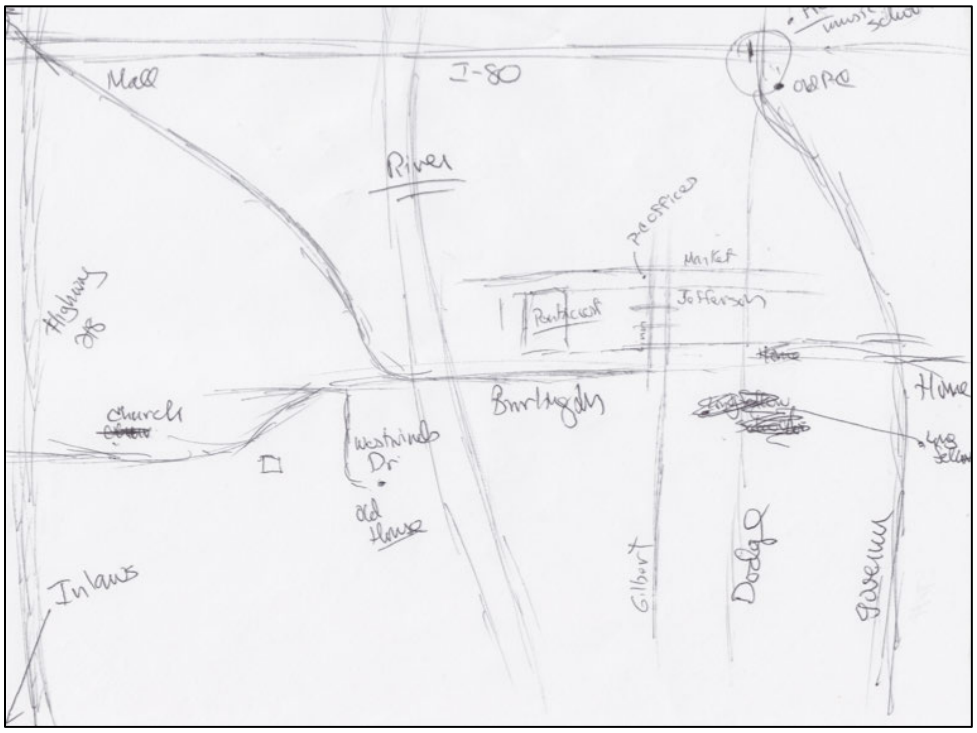


Figure D.7. Jeff's Map.

Jeff, 41, is a white reporter at the *Press-Citizen* who has lived in Iowa City for 13 years. He came to Iowa City from Chicago. Jeff shows specific streets that he uses to describe various neighborhoods. He places his old and new home on the map, the university Pentacrest, and he draws an arrow to where his in-laws live. He includes the shopping mall in a neighboring city and a music school north of Iowa City.

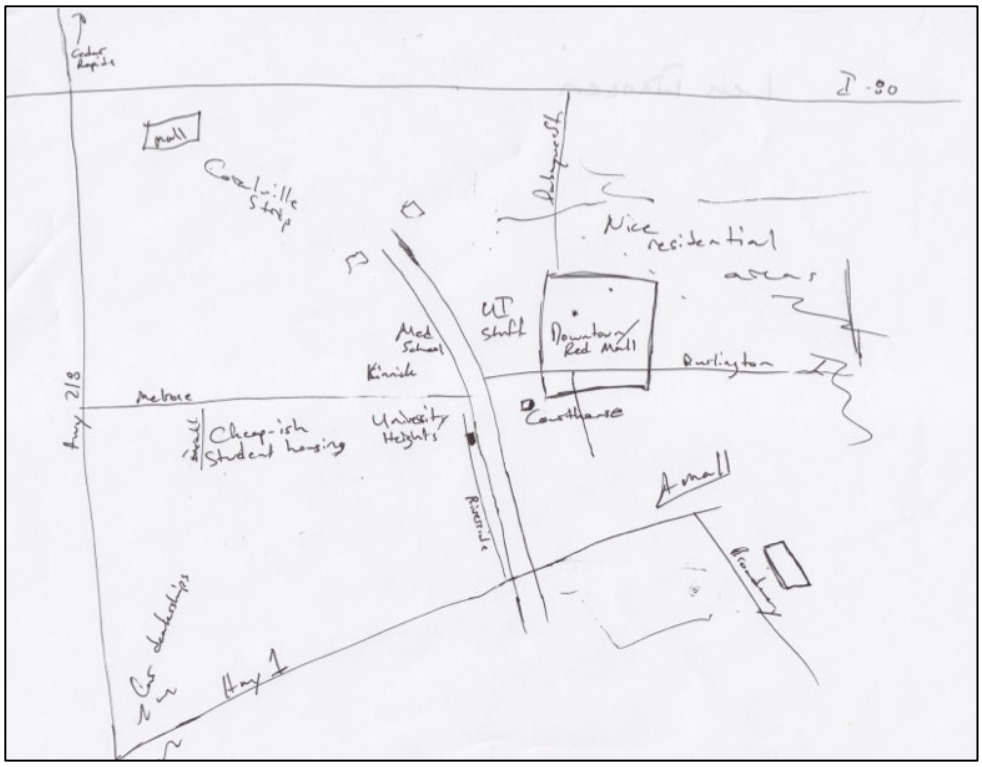


Figure D.8. Len's Map.

Len, 29, is a white reporter at *The Gazette* who uses his map to show class distinctions between neighborhoods in Iowa City. He writes that the Southwest Side is "cheapish student housing," whereas the northeastern side is a "nice residential area." He says he knows the downtown is close to "UI stuff" and that there are apartments on the Southeast Side. Len has never lived in Iowa City.

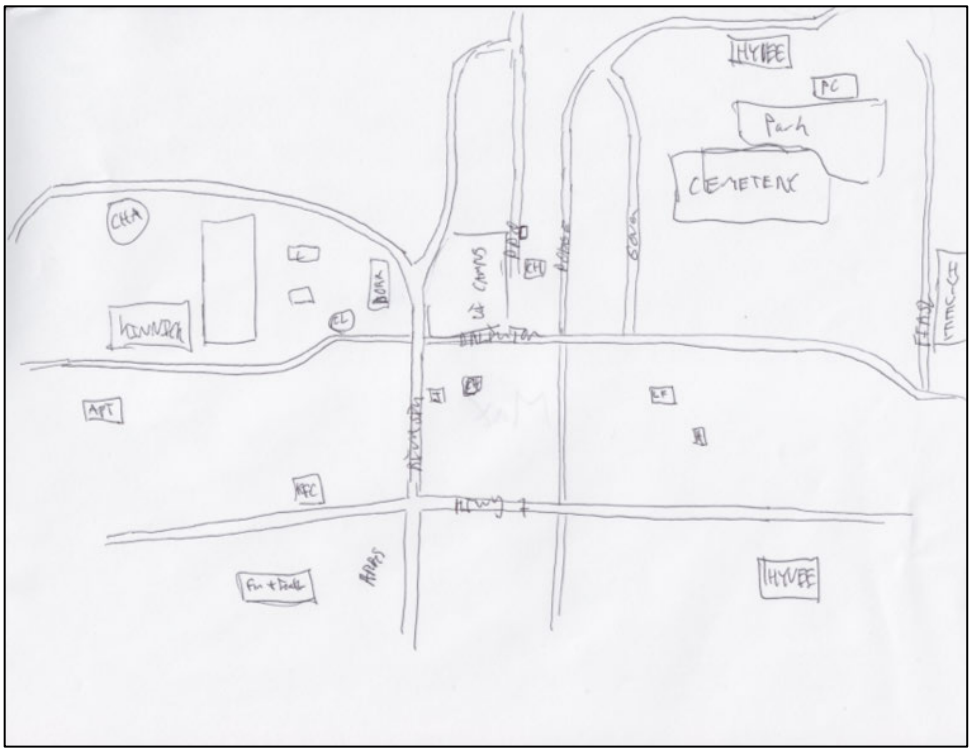


Figure D.9. Max's Map.

Max, 28, is a white reporter at the *Press-Citizen.* Max is very particular about his map, branching out from the Iowa River. His far northwest and southeastern sides are largely blank. At first, he says that he did not draw much there because the spaces are largely residential, but says that the West and East Sides are more detailed because he lived there in college and did not spend time in other spaces. He also locates his office, the university campus, and the university football stadium.

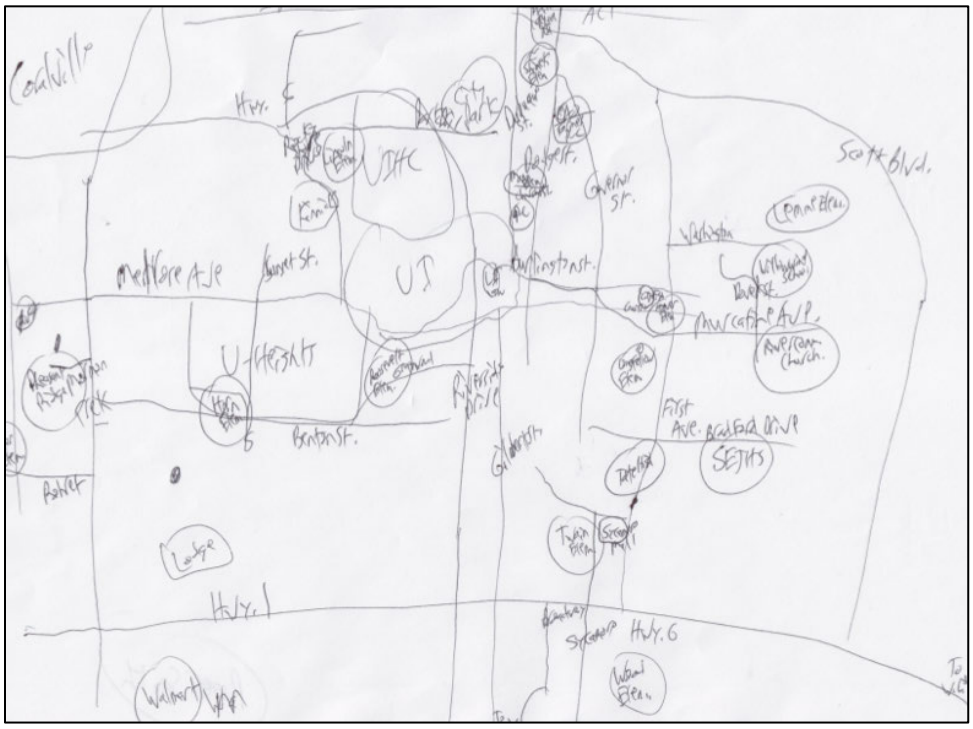


Figure D.10. Roger's Map.

Roger, 35, is a Hispanic reporter for the *Press-Citizen* who has lived in Iowa City since 2003. Because he covered education, he locates many of the schools he visited. He places the university and the hospital in large circles and notes some of the businesses he visits, including Walmart. He also shows where some of his friends live. Roger lives on the West Side and pays attention to what he remembers seeing when he enters and exits the city's core.

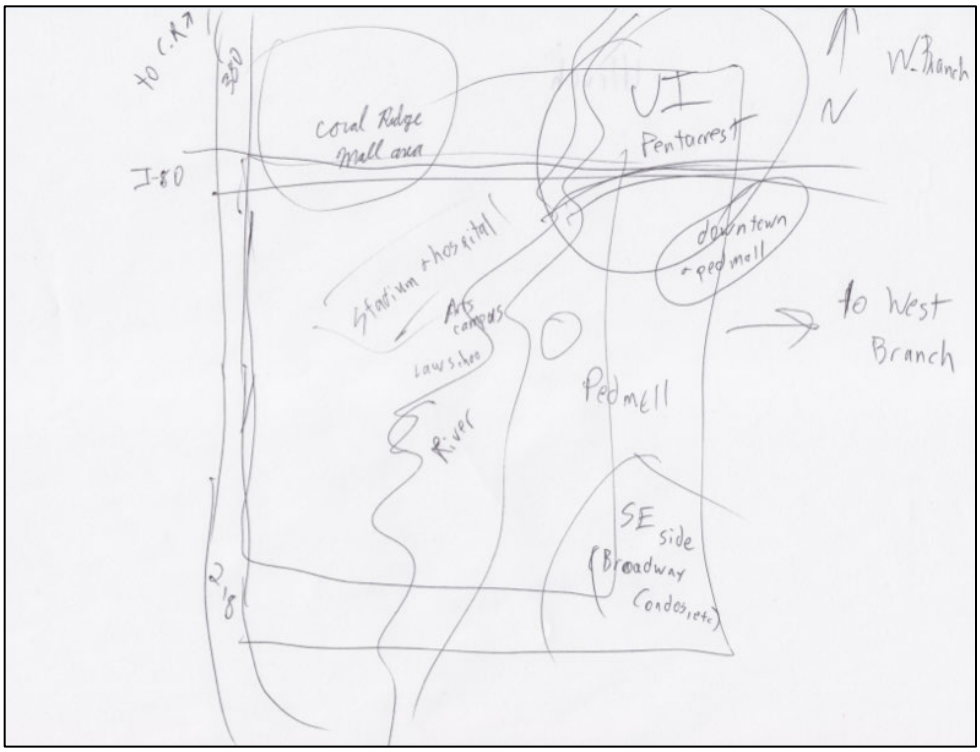


Figure D.11. Ulrich's Map.

Ulrich, 37, is a white reporter for the *Press-Citizen* who moved to Iowa City in 2007. His map includes apartments on the Southeast Side, but the majority of the map shows some of the major corridors in and out of the city, including highways and interstates that take him to surrounding communities. The university, downtown pedestrian mall ("Ped mall"), football stadium, and hospital are also located on the map.

Maps by Public Officials

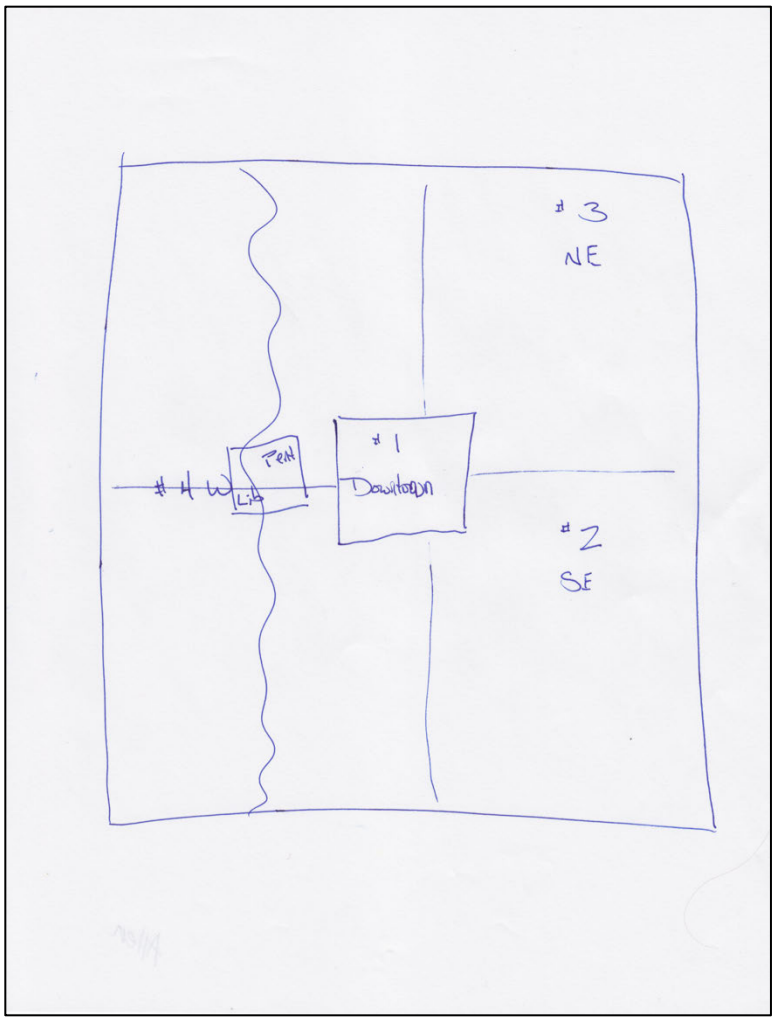


Figure D.12. Allen's Map.

Allen, 49, is a white police officer who has been in the Iowa City area since the early 1990s. His map of Iowa City is focused on its policing; therefore, he breaks it into four sections that match policing quadrants. Allen says that he does not have connections to the community since he lives in rural Iowa, several miles outside of the city.

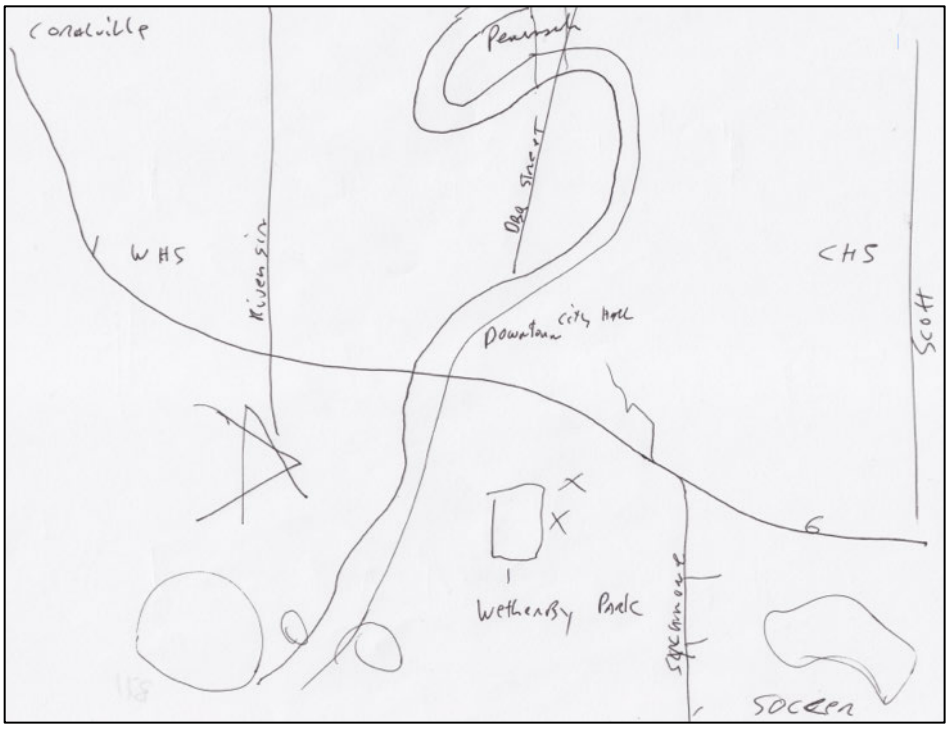


Figure D.13. Bill's Map.

Bill, 54, is a white male who has been a city housing official in Iowa City since 2003 and who moved to Iowa City in 2006. Bill sees his city as a map of housing and city services, even though he lives in the "Southeast Side." In his map, he notes a park, airport (one of the few participants to do so), and a soccer complex with its connecting riding trails.

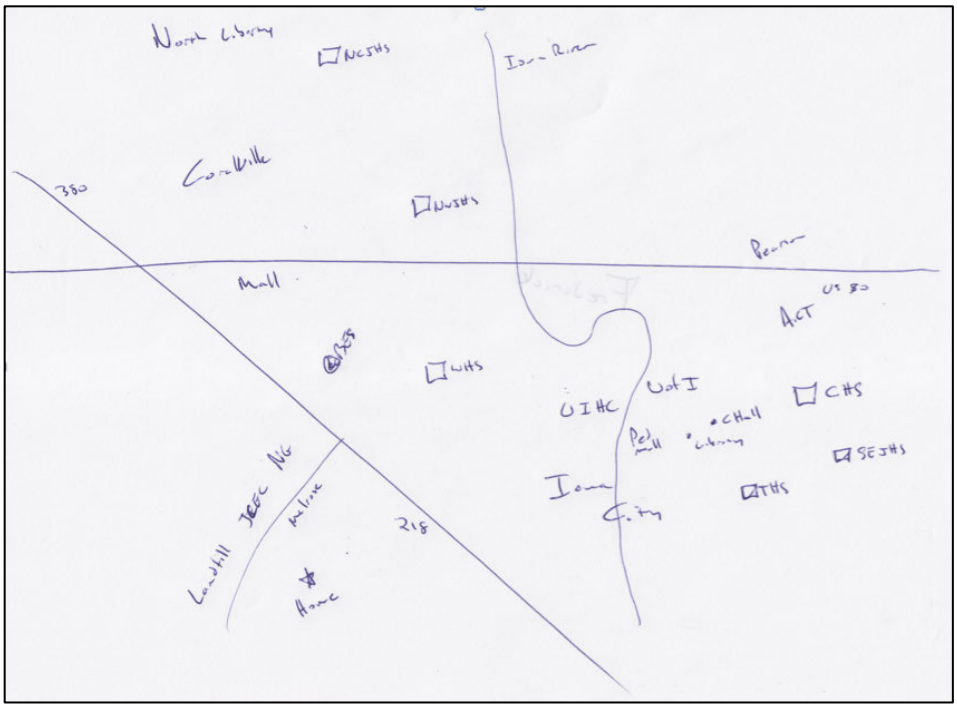


Figure D.14. Fred's Map.

Fred, 45, is a white school official who arrived in Iowa City in 2010. He interprets the city based upon the location of elementary schools. He also lists the city hall and library. He does not place other major roads on his map, such as Highway 1/6 on the South Side, but includes the streets to his house and marks the nearby landfill and the shopping mall.

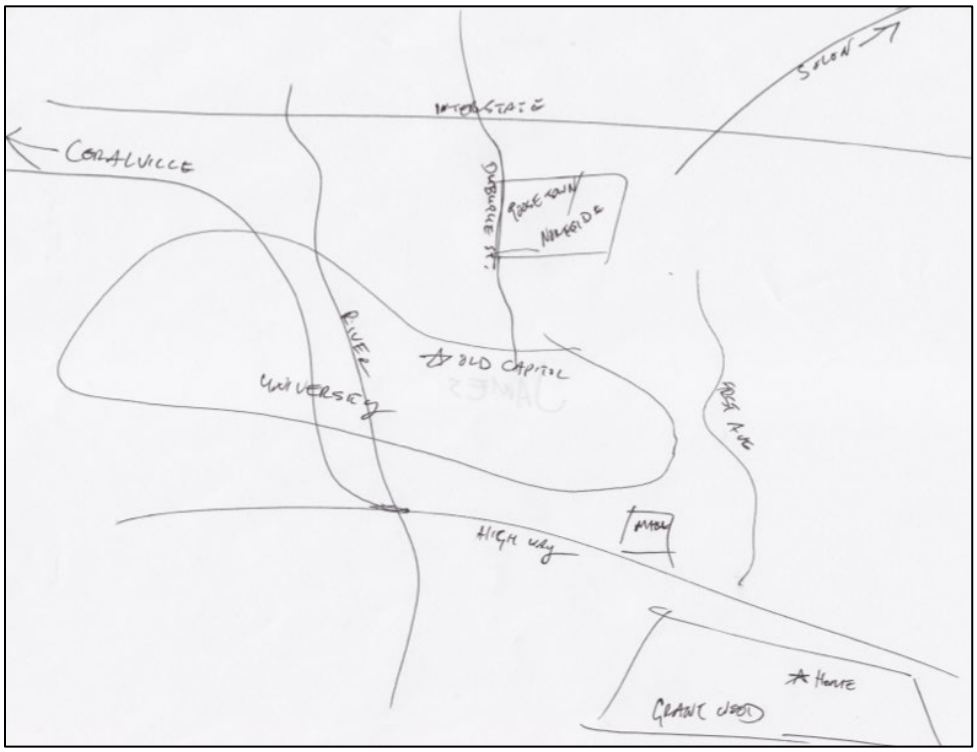


Figure D.15. James' Map.

James, 31, is a white man who has lived in Iowa City since the early 1990s. He was a student in Iowa City and works in city funded media production in and around the city. James is also a member of a neighborhood association south of Highway 6. He draws the university as a bubble, because he sees it as its own community that does not support the rest of the city, though it is a major employer. He marks his home, several other neighborhoods, and routes to get to other cities.

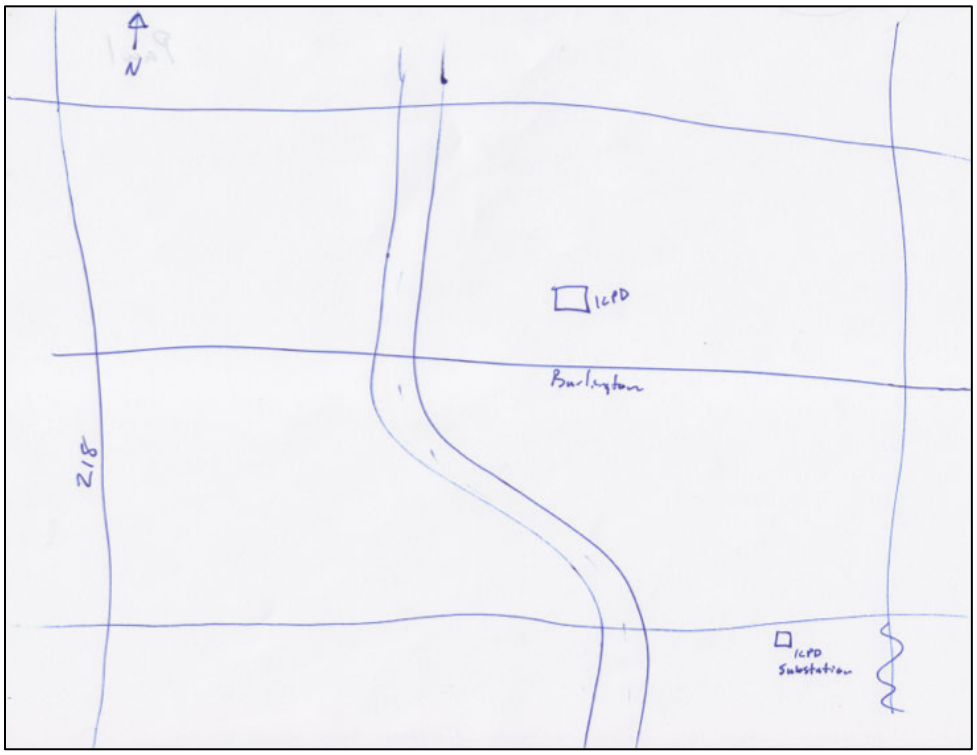


Figure D.16. Paul's Map.

Paul, 32, is a white man who has worked as a police officer in Iowa City since 2001. Though he does not live in Iowa City, he said he considers it his "community." His map includes the Iowa River that he says divides the community both geographically and culturally. Paul says he sees the city as a place he patrols and includes both police stations and major roadways. He says shopping areas, schools, and other places are not on his map because they are "insignificant" to his role as a police officer.

Figure D.17. Susie's Map.

Susie, 40, is a white county worker who is often quoted in news stories about the Southeast Side. Susie drew her map with several neighborhoods, including one on the Northwest Side, one near her home on the Northeast Side, and one in which she works on the Southeast Side. She identifies the Southeast Side neighborhood as low-income and also includes specific roads, as well as the two elementary schools there.

Maps by Southeast Side Residents

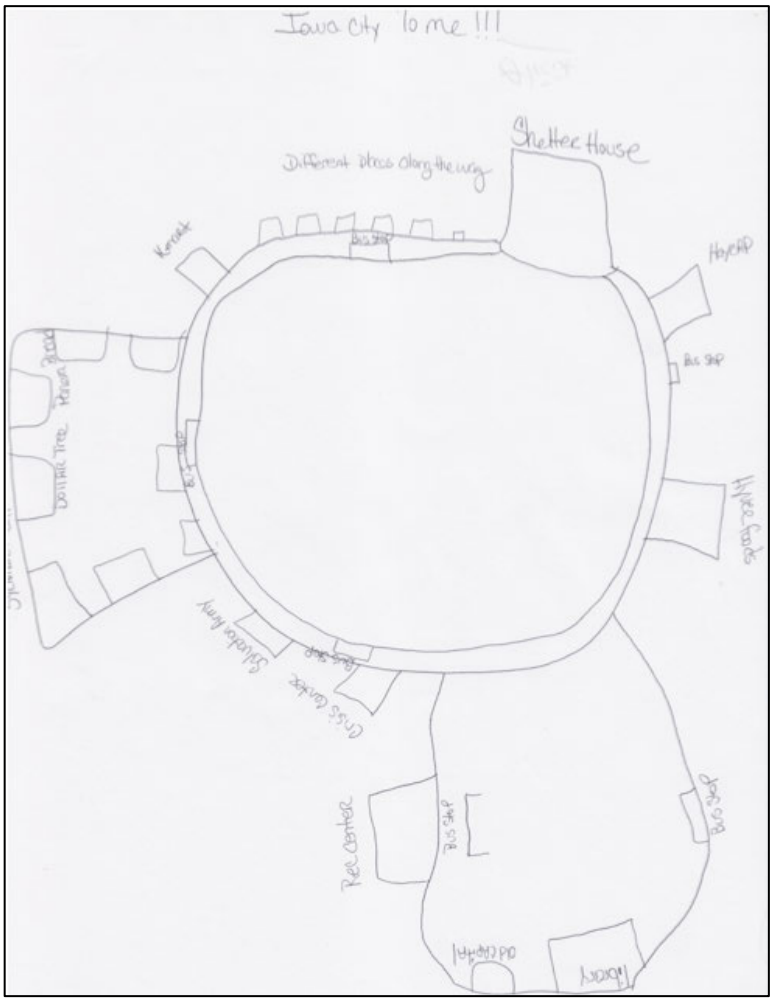


Figure D.18. Alicia's Map.

Alicia, 27, is a black woman from Chicago. Alicia stays in a homeless shelter with her five children. Her map of Iowa City follows the bus line, moving from the Shelter House homeless shelter to a nearby mall area where she works, then to Downtown. The far right of her map shows two other places she goes, including a grocery store and community resource facility.

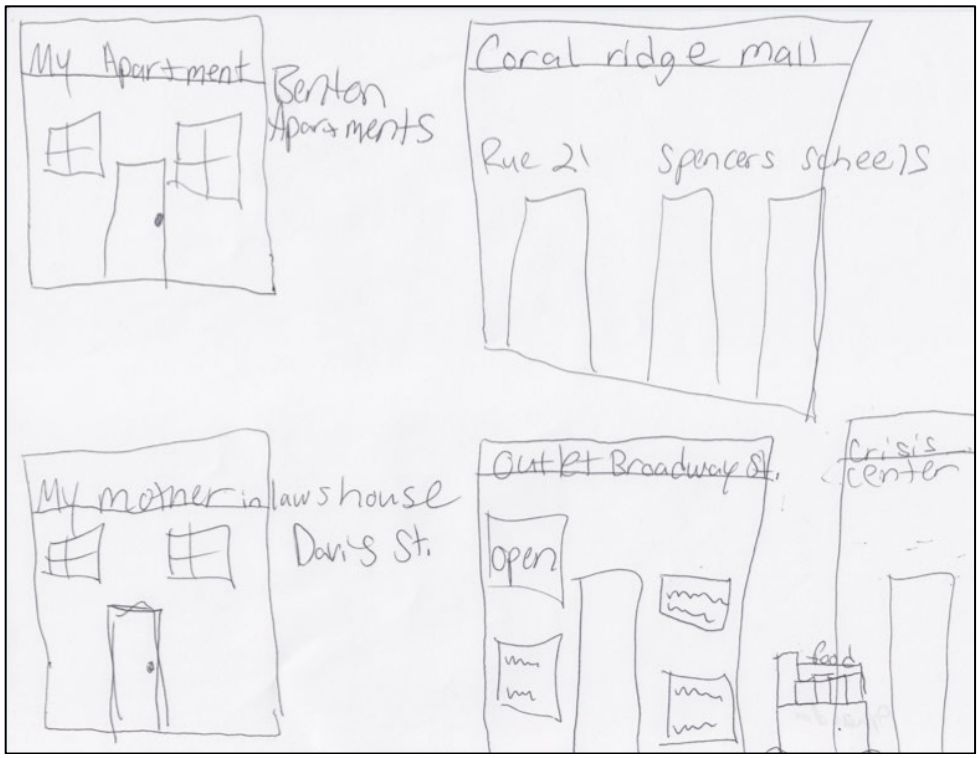


Figure D.19. Amanda's Map.

Amanda, 23, is a black woman who has lived in Iowa for 20 years and in Iowa City for 10 years. Amanda's map identifies specific places that she goes, though about 60 percent of her time is spent in the "Southeast Side." Her map includes her mother's house, the crisis center, the Outlet where she goes to get cigarettes, her apartment, and the Coral Ridge Mall in neighboring Coralville.

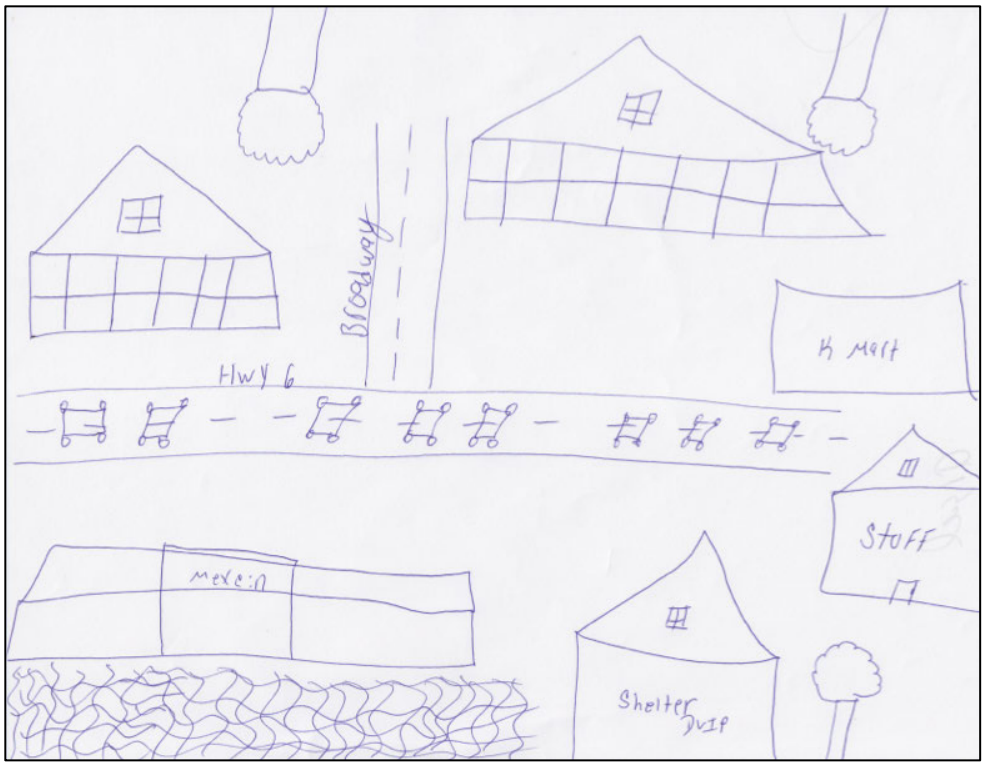


Figure D.20. Angel's Map.

Angel, 23, is a black woman, a community college student, and a mother of three. Her map shows the homeless shelter, Kmart, Stuff Etc. (a discount store), and her former apartment on Broadway Street. She represents two streets, including Highway 6, in the center of her map. Even though it is not shown on her map, Angel says the downtown area is solely for white college students and wealthy people. Angel used to live on Broadway Street, but now lives at a shelter for the domestically abused. Her bottom left corner shows doodling in a parking lot that she made as we spoke.

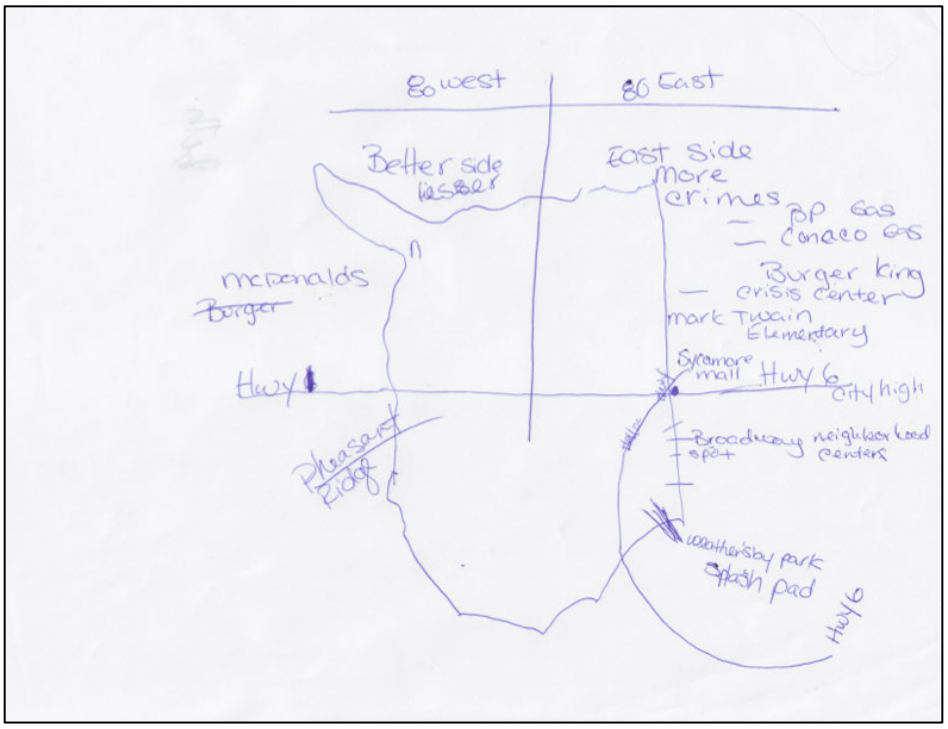


Figure D.21. Beth's Map.

Beth, 35, is a black woman who has lived in Iowa City for the past 10 years. Beth's map shows one side of the city as being "better" than another, that the East Side has "more crimes" and the West Side has "lesser." Beth also lists places that she knows on the map, beginning with Burger King on the East Side and McDonald's on the West Side. She lists schools, the Broadway Neighborhood Center, and a small water feature in a park on the Southeast Side.

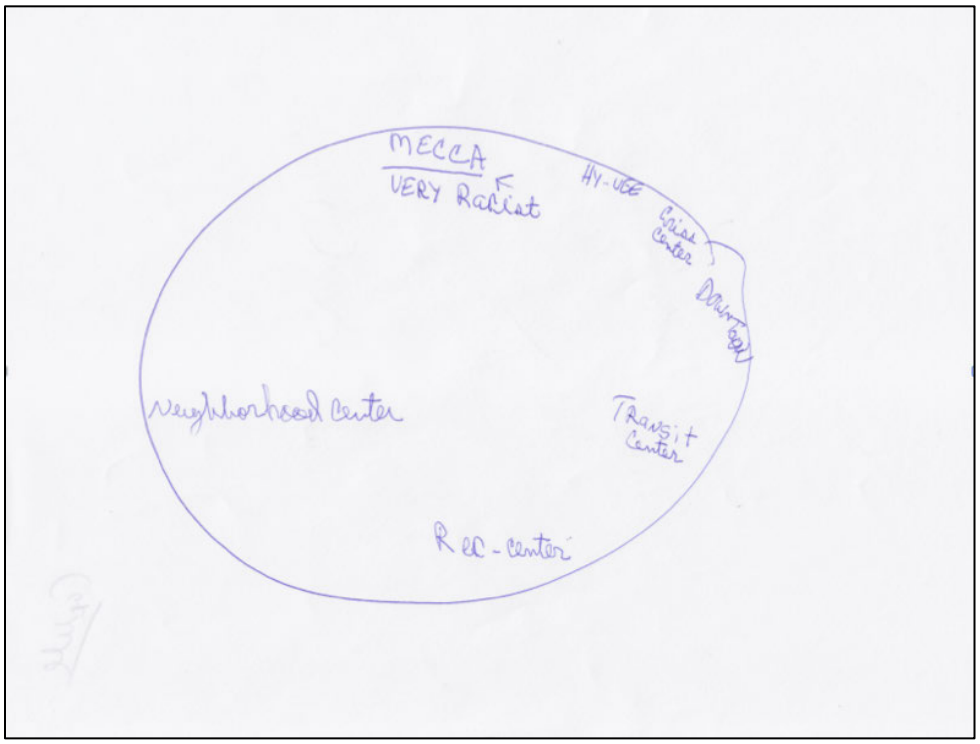


Figure D.22. Cordell's Map.

Cordell, 53, is a black man who has lived in Iowa City for four months, living at MECCA, an addiction treatment center, which is located at the top of his map. Cordell writes that MECCA is "very racist," but he does not describe what he means by that. Cordell says that he knows little about the city, other than what he sees and where he goes on the bus. He goes to the Crisis Center, downtown, the transit center and the community recreation center, which is also downtown.

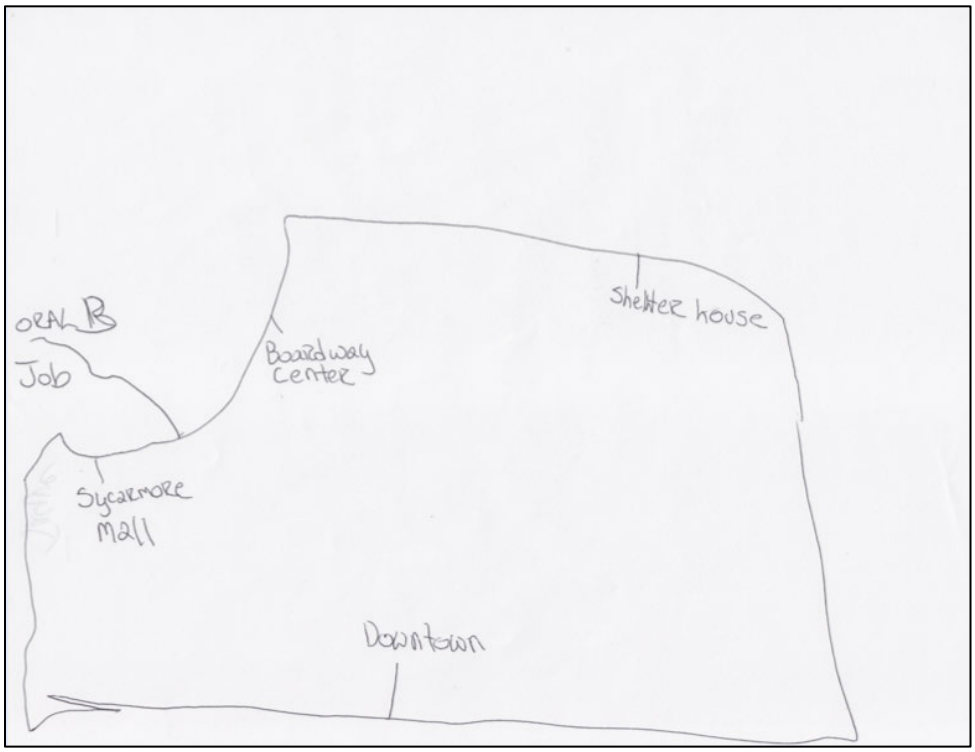


Figure D.23. Jacque's Map.

Jacque, 29, is a black man who has lived in Iowa City for two months. He says that he arrived in the Southeast Side because "this is where people start once they get here." Jacque's map follows the bus line, starting at where he is staying, the homeless shelter in the top right. He includes the Broadway Neighborhood Center and Oral B, where he works on a factory line. He also locates the Sycamore Mall and downtown.

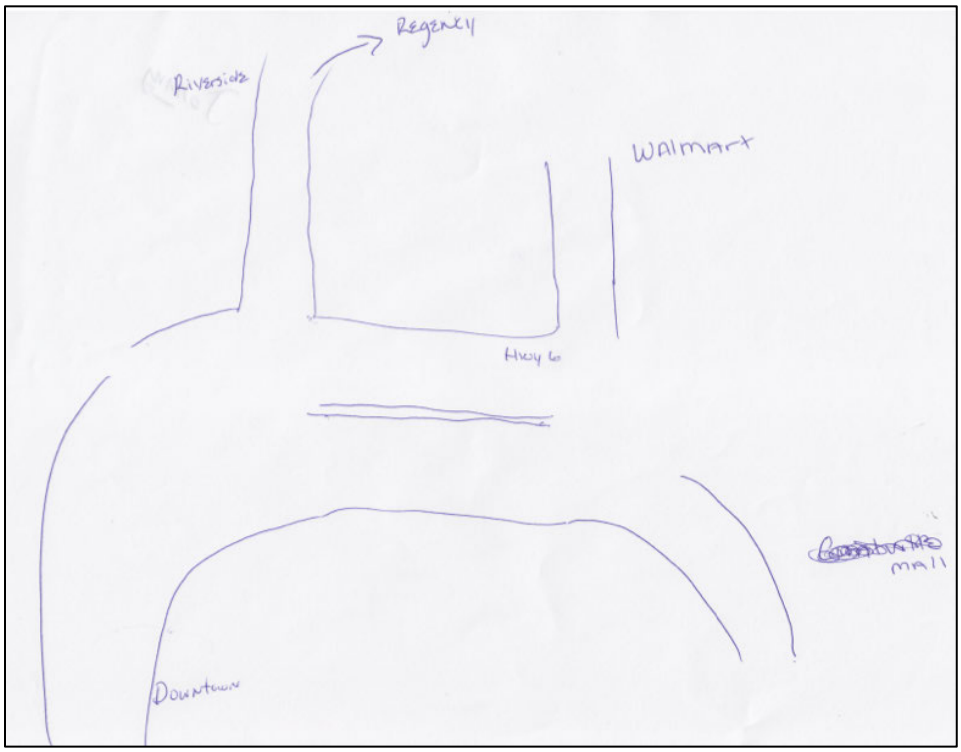


Figure D.24. Johnny's Map.

Johnny, 20, is a black man who has been in Iowa City for more than two years. In Johnny's map, Highway 6 takes up a large part, because it connects him with the downtown (specifically the bus stop there), a mobile home park where he lives south of the city, and Walmart. He says he does not know much about the community, because he travels back and forth between his home, the neighborhood center, and work in North Liberty, a nearby community. He says he often takes the bus or shares a ride with friends.

Figure D.25. Lisa's Map.

Lisa, 23, is a black woman who has been in Iowa City for one year. She draws where one of her children goes to school and where another plays at a nearby playground. Lisa draws trees and a shortcut to the school she uses. Kmart is on her map because it is the closest store where she can buy food.

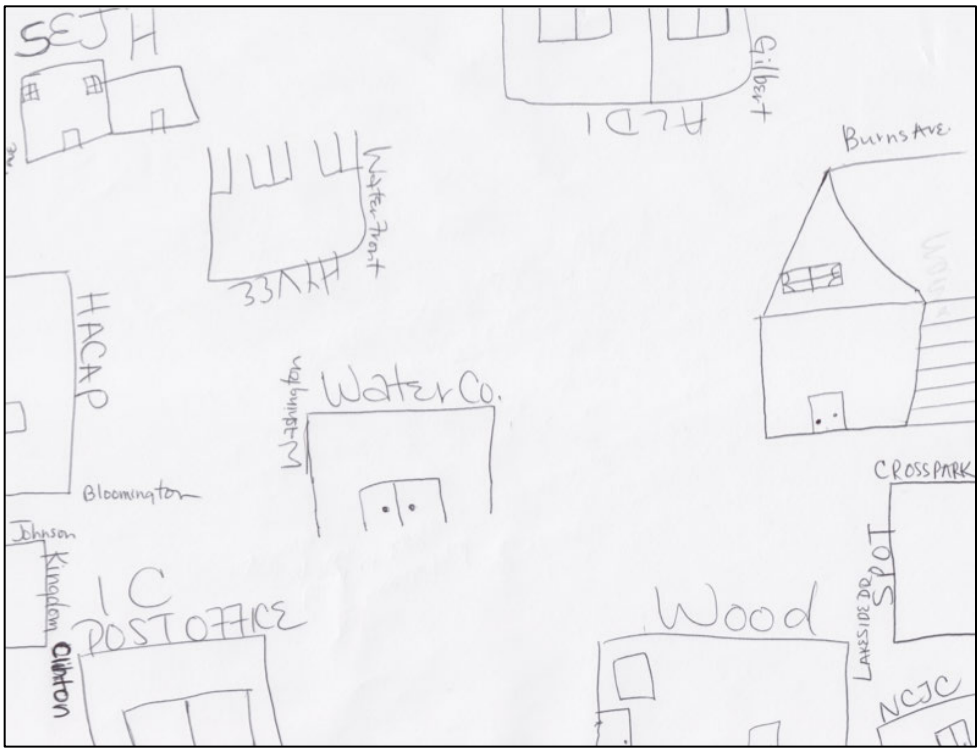


Figure D.26. Maria's Map.

Maria, 33, is a black woman who moved to Iowa City eight years ago. Her map represents the many places she goes in the community, including her church, her children's daycare and school, where she pays the water bill, and her home on Burns Avenue.

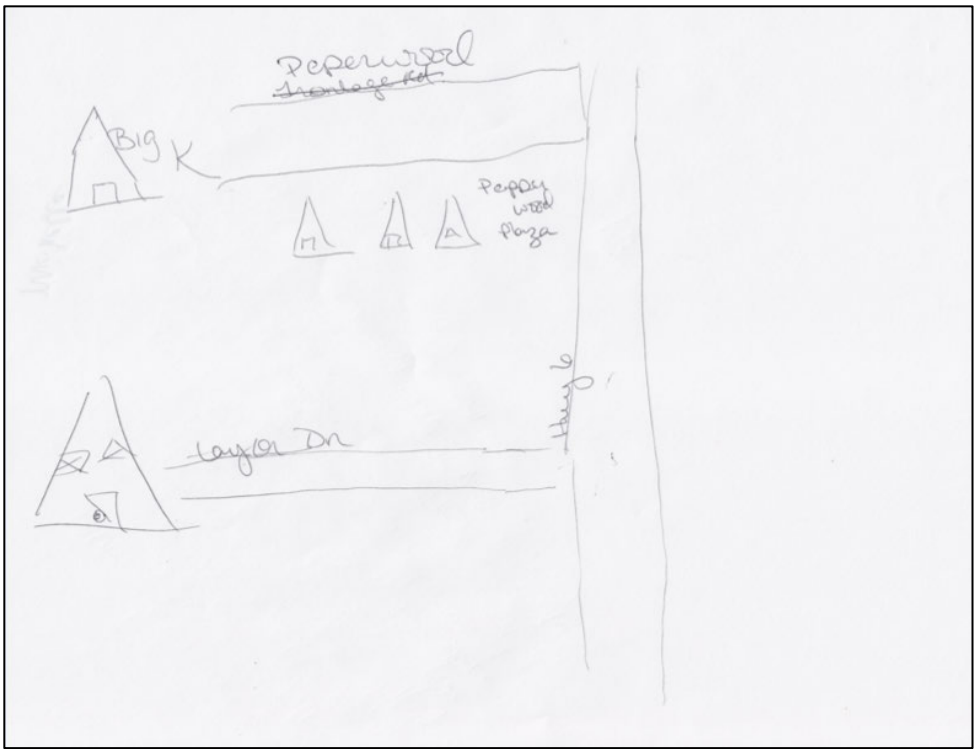


Figure D.27. Michelle's Map.

Michelle, 34, is a black woman who has lived in Iowa City for nine years. She compares Iowa City to Chicago suburbs, which she considers mostly white and middle class. Michelle drew Highway 6, the nearby Pepperwood shopping mall, and her house off of Taylor Drive.

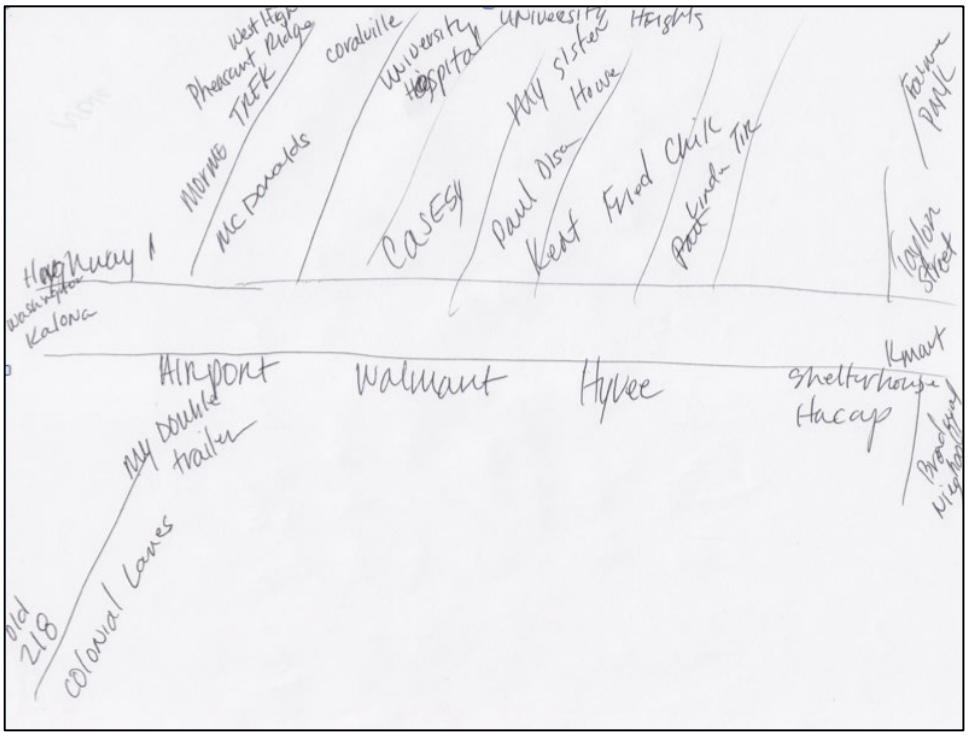


Figure D.28. Nene's Map.

Nene, 44, is a black woman who has been in Iowa for 21 years. About 14 of those years have been in Iowa City. She says the Southeast Side, which takes up most of her map, revolves around Highway 6/1 and isolates residents in the Southeast Side.

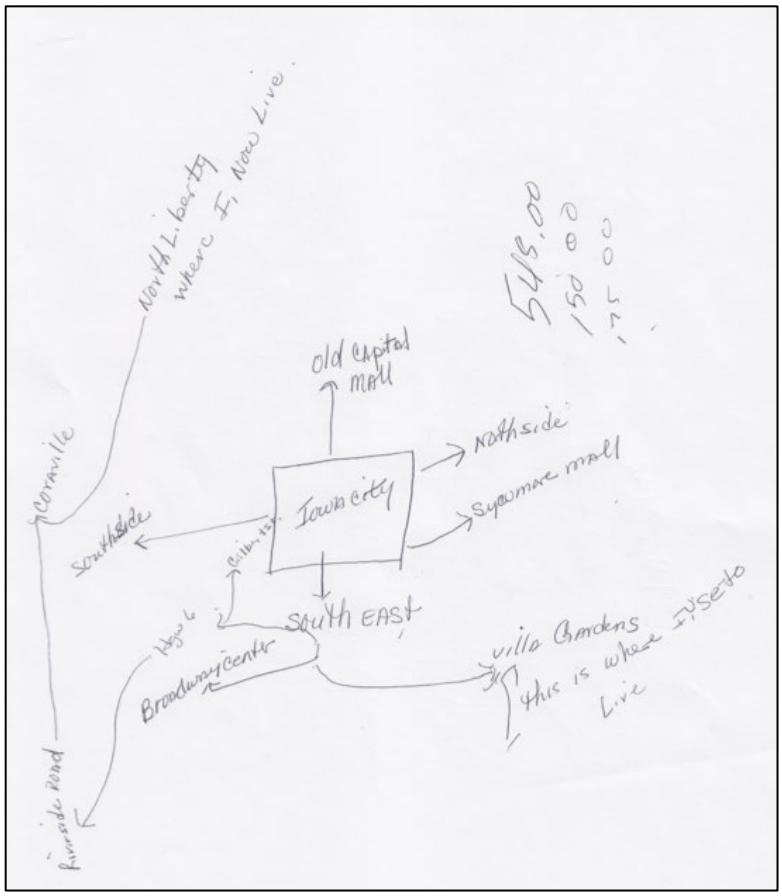


Figure D.29. Nevaeh's Map.

Nevaeh (Heaven spelled backwards), 57, is a black woman who has been in Iowa City for eight years. She says she wishes the bus system would get her around town so that she "wouldn't be confined to one place." On her map, she includes the Broadway Neighborhood Center, her former home at Villa Gardens apartments, and a nearby mall as places that she visits. Nevaeh wrote the numbers on the map when describing how much of a rental security deposit was returned.

Figure D.30. Sandra's Map.

Sandra, 51, is a black woman who has lived in the Iowa City area for 10 years. Sandra works as a custodian at The University of Iowa and uses the bus to travel. Sandra's understanding of Iowa City is constrained by her ability to get around, she said. She drew her apartment, her sister's apartment, and the Iowa River, where she fishes for catfish. Sandra considers the Northeast Side as the business district and where she visits the Social Security office. She also includes the hospital, the Hyvee grocery store, and the Broadway Street Neighborhood Center. Her map's boundary follows the bus line.

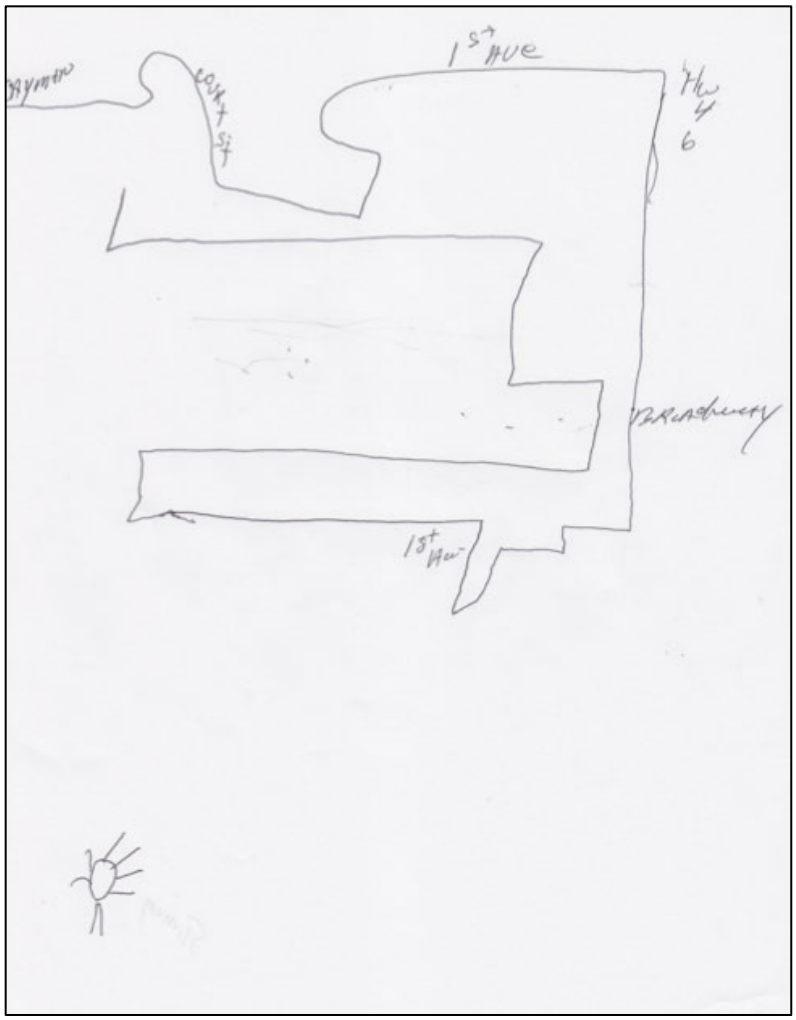


Figure D.31. Slimmy's Map.

Slimmy, 47, is a black man who has been in Iowa City for 20 years. Slimmy's map of Iowa City shows his route to and from the neighborhood center and other spots throughout the town. He says that he spends most of his time at home, with his friends, or transporting members of his family to places in the city.

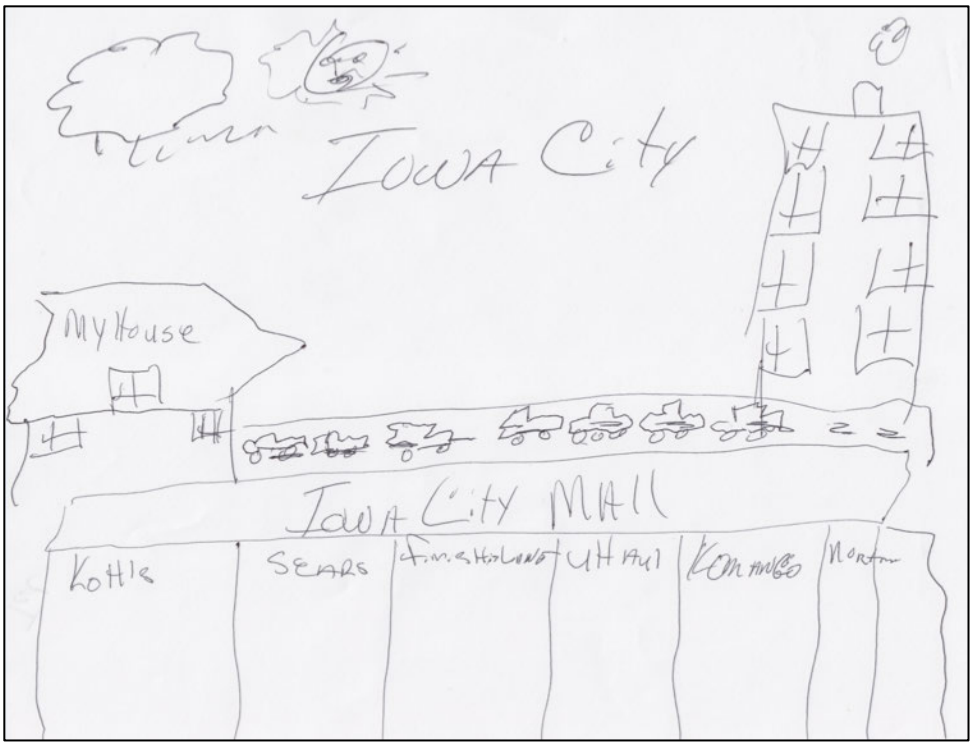


Figure D.32. Ted's Map.

Ted, 49, is a black man who has lived in Iowa City for seven years. In addition to volunteering at the Broadway Street Neighborhood Center, he works at cleaning houses that are being renovated. Ted says that he has a hard time explaining his thoughts of the city neighborhoods, because he does not know much about the city. Ted draws his home, a road that represents the many streets and highways on which he rides his bicycle to get around. He focuses on the courthouse in the top right of the map, his house, and the several stores he sees at the mall, which is in Coralville (not Iowa City, as he indicates).

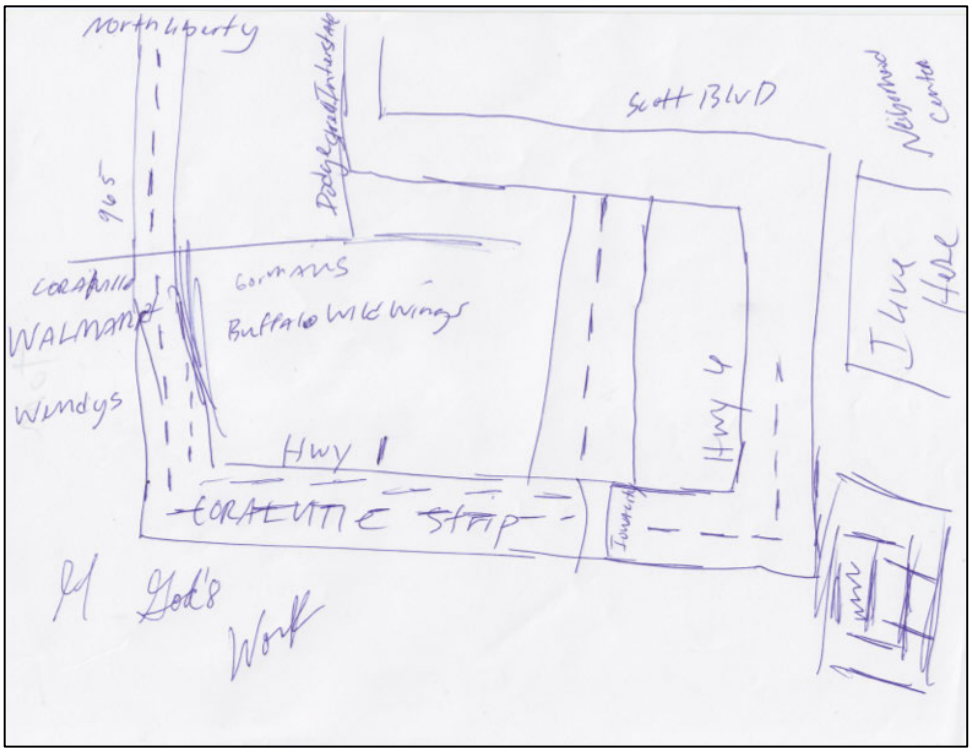


Figure D.33. Tom's Map.

Tom, 22, is a black man who has lived in Iowa City for two years. Tom's map is very much about the roads that lead through and around Iowa City, which he uses to get to work in North Liberty. Tom says the Southeast Side is a quiet place that is not the ghetto and that the downtown is where to party, where college students are, and where "you get business done." The West Side "is where rich people live." His map details businesses, such as Wendy's, Walmart, and Buffalo Wild Wings.

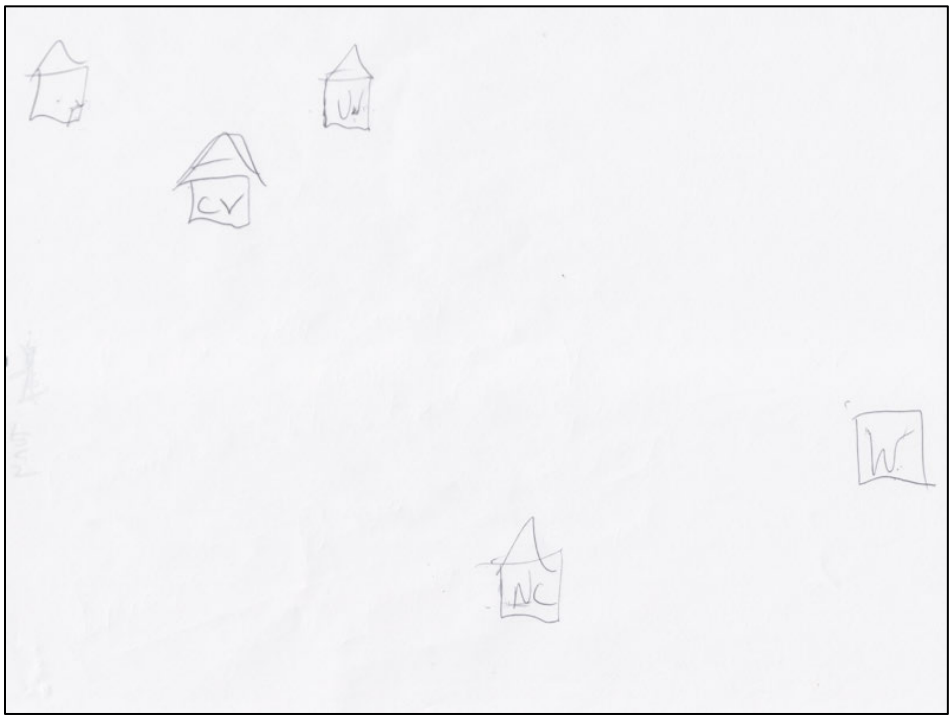


Figure D.34. Tony's Map.

Tony, 21, is a black man who has been in Iowa City for nine years. He works in a warehouse. Tony attended Iowa City's West High School and now lives in nearby Coralville (represented by the empty house in the top left). Tony says that he does not go very far from home other than to the Coralville mall (labeled "CV"), to his uncle's home (labeled "UN"), to work (labeled "W"), and to the Broadway Street Neighborhood Center (labeled "NC") where he performs community service.

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