Photovoice: A Participatory Approach to Health Promotion

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Outline

► Photovoice Overview
► Examples from past Photovoice Projects
► Current Project:
  ▪ The Dirty Truth Campaign
Photovoice

“Photovoice blends a grassroots approach to photography and social action. It provides cameras not to health specialists, policy makers, or professionals, but to people with least access to those who make decisions affecting their lives.” (Wang, 2005)
Photovoice: Theory

► Freire’s education for critical consciousness
  ▪ Enable participants to consider and seek to act upon the historical, institutional, social, and political conditions that contribute to personal and community problems

► Feminist theory
  ▪ Everyone has a specific story, a particular experience of the configuration of class, race, gender, sexuality, family, country, displacement, alliance.... Those stories are mediated by the forms of representation available in the culture

► Non-traditional approaches to documentary photography
Photovoice: Goals

► To enable people to record and reflect their community's strengths and concerns

► To promote critical dialogue and knowledge about personal and community issues through large and small group discussions of photographs

► To reach policy makers
Photovoice: Goal # 2

► To Promote Critical Dialogue

▪ Contextualize using SHOWeD freewrites
  ► What do you See here?
  ► What is really Happening here?
  ► How does this relate to Our lives?
  ► Why does this problem or strength exist?
  ► What can we Do about it?
Photovoice: Principles

- Images teach
- Pictures can influence policy
- Community people ought to participate in creating and defining the images that shape healthful public policy
Photovoice: Usage

Examples:

► Yunnan, China: Rural women advocating for reproductive health services

► San Francisco, California: Youth affected by HIV/AIDS

► Detroit, Michigan: Hmong women’s perspectives on family, resources, and gender

► Washtenaw County, Michigan: Homeless men and women

► Flint, Michigan: Gonorrhea transmission
The Dirty Truth Campaign

► Accountable Communities: Healthy Together
  ▪ Funded by NCMHD
  ▪ Launched in October 2005
  ▪ Year 1 – Data Collection and Decision-Making
  ▪ Year 2 – Pilot Interventions
  ▪ Year 3 – Pilot Interventions & Evaluation

► Photovoice
  ▪ Year 1 Needs Assessment Tool
  ▪ Year 2 Intervention Strategy
Pictures Shape the Agenda

► Trash
► Construction Debris
► Vacant Properties
► Relocation and Issues Related to Quality of Life for AHA Clients
Themes Related to Neighborhood Conditions

► Trash & Waste
  - Vacant Housing
  - General Litter
  - Construction Debris

► Vacant & Unaffordable Housing
Making the Case for Health

A study by Cohen et al. (2003) concluded that neighborhood physical deterioration, as measured by the presence of boarded-up vacant housing units, was associated with premature mortality from all causes.
Making the Case for Health

► Health outcomes associated with neighborhood disadvantage include depression (Yen & Kaplan, 1999), intimate partner violence (Cunradi et al., 2000), and alcohol-related problems (Jones-Webb et al., 1997).
Galea et al. (2005) found that persons living in neighborhoods characterized by poorer features of the built environment were 29%-58% more likely to report past six month depression and 36%-64% more likely to report lifetime depression than persons living in neighborhoods characterized by a better built environment.
Making the Case for Health

► Architectural research indicates that violence is more likely to occur in locations where ownership and definition of responsibility for the space is ambiguous (Astor, et al., 1999).
Trash: Vacant Housing
Trash Lot
Trash: General Litter
Throw Away
Trash: General Litter
Walk of Shame
Trash: Construction Debris
Building Up or Tearing Down
Trash: Construction Debris

Beauty and the Beast
Trash: Construction Debris
Development, Really?
Housing: Vacant
Crackhead Haven
Housing: Vacant
Nice House for Bad Use
Housing: Unaffordable

What’s the Buzz?
The Guidance Committee

To serve as a conduit between NPU-V residents and the larger policy and media community by connecting residents with policymakers, media outlets, and display venues.
Key Recommendations
October 2007

► Determine the Magnitude of the Problem
► Understand the Policy Context
► Develop a Website
► Educate and Mobilize Community Residents
Recommendation #1

Determine the Magnitude of the Problem

- Technical assistance request to the Neighborhood Data Advisory Group
- ~20 residents participated using a coding scheme and maps developed by AECF
- Data collection challenges
- Key finding: 1296 vacant or unoccupied properties in NPU-V, representing 43% of all properties (underestimate).
√ Recommendation #2

► Technical Assistance Request
  ▪ National Vacant Properties Campaign
    ► Smart Growth America
    ► Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)
    ► Metropolitan Institute at Virginia Tech
  ▪ Code Enforcement Coordination
  ▪ Land Bank/Land Trust
  ▪ Survey of local, state, and federal policy
  ▪ Immediate intervention strategies to address nuisance properties
Recommendation #3

- Develop a Website
  - Contracted with web designers
  - Developed language and graphics
  - Secured domain name
  - http://www.dirtytruth.org
  - Launched website on April 19, 2007
DIRTY TRUTH

The Dirty Truth Campaign represents a group of residents of Neighborhood Planning Unit-V (neighborhoods in Atlanta near Turner Field) and partner organizations who want an end to the trash, construction debris and vacant properties that are plaguing the community.

In 2006, approximately 20 residents of NPU-V used a process called Photovoice (see www.photovoice.com) to take pictures, tell stories, and reach policymakers about the issue that was plaguing their community. On Earth Day 2007, Dirty Truth volunteers identified the most blighted properties in NPU-V. The list, known as "The Dirty 100," includes properties that are vacant with significant challenges such as the presence of illegal activity and drug use.

DIRTYTRUTH.ORG

How did you hear about us?

- Word of mouth
- Flyer
- Earth Day
- T-Shirt
- Yard Sign
- Community Meeting
- Television
- Radio
- Newspaper

GET INVOLVED |
GALLERY |
OUR HERITAGE | TELL US ...
Recommendation #4

► Educate and Mobilize Community Residents

- NDAG Counting Project
- Meetings with CBOs/WE CARE Pledges
- Calling Campaign
- Earth Day Action
- Parks Middle School CIS Photovoice Project
- Carver High School Video Documentation Project
- Peoplestown Intense Mobilization Efforts
Code Enforcement & Community Mobilization Strategy Map

Dirty Truth 100 Properties

Of the 89 mapped 'Dirty 100' properties in NPU-V, more than half (48) are within 500 feet of a park, school, or recreation center.
Theory of Change

Figure c.1 The Dirty Truth Campaign Theory of Change

Organizational Structure
- Photovoice Participants
- ACHT, CWF, and AECF Partnership
- Photovoice Guidance Committee

Media Advocacy

Community Mobilization

Policymaker Support
- Policy Actions
- Reduced Blight
- Improved Mental Health
- Reduced Crime Rates

Assessment
- Magnitude of problem
- Policy environment
- Message development and dissemination

Website
- Public dialogue
- Events
- Partnership building
- Policy outreach
Photovoice: Reaching Policymakers