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TLP PUBLIC PROGRAMMING
RADICAL MAPPING PART 2
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Hatuey: Good afternoon everyone my name is Hatuey. I'm the director of programs at the Laundromat Program. My pronouns are he/him/his. Thank you for joining us today. For those of you new to the community. The Laundromat Project is a Black rooted people of color arts organization working at the center of arts and social justice and community building. Since 2005 we have advanced artists and neighbors as change agents in their own communities. Thank you for joining us today for part two of the two day public program, radical mapping, making meaning in our communities. This program is supported in part by Humanities New York.

What you’re seeing today on the screen is a map of part of Brooklyn and lower Manhattan by the neighborhood data portal courtesy of our panelist Sadra Shahab and we would like to begin the program by sharing a few access notes. The Laundromat Project is committed to hosting accessible events real-time captioning is available for this program. You can turn captions on or off through the closed caption to located on the features bar at the bottom of the screen. We will be recording today’s session for archival purposes. The recording will also be available on our YouTube channel after the event.

If you do not wish to appear in the recording, please be sure to turn off your camera. Your mics will be turned off for the duration of the program and the program is also being streamed live via Facebook. We highly encourage you to engage with one another and share questions via the chat function, which you will find located on the features bar at the bottom of the screen. In addition, there will be a brief question and answer period following the discussion. We encourage you to share questions throughout the program for consideration later on.

We also begin each public program with a land acknowledgment. We at the Laundromat Project respectfully acknowledge that our primary location of operations at 1476 Fulton St. in Brooklyn New York sits on the occupied and unceded lands of the Canarsie who are part of the Munsie Lenape. We recognize them as the original stewards of the land and pay respects to the elders past present and future. I invite you to join me in acknowledging the histories of the land where you are currently gathered and pay respect and gratitude to its original histories.

Now for the program, throughout history, maps have helped shape human endeavor and human experience are hardly neutral and deeply embedded in the fall tenets of power. Maps have been used to delineate lands peoples and states yet for just as long artists activists communities and those cartographically marginalized especially people of color have drawn themselves their histories their dreams and their realities onto new self-determined maps.
Throughout the Radical Mapping series we are exploring how Black, Indigenous, and People of Color communities can creatively use practices like cultural asset mapping cartography and archiving to invest in and make meaning of our neighborhoods.

We have gathered a global group of artists, historians, mapmakers, local leaders, community members and all of you to share how mapping concepts and methods can democratize the knowing and keeping and making of people and place. For today’s program, we are joined by Laura Bustillos Jáquez, Education Program Coordinator, Femme Frontera; Steve DeRoy, Director, The Firelight Group and Founder, Indigenous Mapping Workshop, Sadra Shahab, Director of Data and Research at Hester Street Collaborative; and Armando Sullivan, Urbanist and Geographer, Black Space.

Their discussion will be moderated by Stephanie Johnson Cunningham, co founder and creative director of Museum Hue. You can have access to the bios via the linked chat. And now I’m excited to turn it over to our moderator Stephanie. Welcome, Stephanie.

Stephanie: Hi, thank you so much. First I want to thank the Laundromat Project for having us and thank you all for joining us for the Self-Determined Society panel as was mentioned we will be discussing mapping tools and concepts to realize self-determined visions in Black, Indigenous, and People of Color communities. I am thrilled to be moderating this very timely discussion, especially as someone who is also working on radical mapping and just to share really briefly I have here a map and directory of museums created by Black, Indigenous, and People of Color and this online platform helps to showcase these institutions, the incredible work that they do.

These museums have been a part of the nation’s landscape for many years and I began creating this directory and map of Black and other People of Color museums because there was a lack of aggregated data and information that tells the stories of the critical work and needs of these institutions. Through this ongoing comprehensive research and compilation of these museums, visitors to the site can filter the searchers by different categories, names and locations to learn more about these entities. The site has over 150 museums and the list is still growing. This web-based platform provides a rich visual and textual record that contextualizes a larger spectrum of US museums and communities. It is an effort to assist in moving these museums methodology from the periphery to the center to inform museum practice. And it is used to expand and also think about ways that we can learn more about art, history, and culture.
Their work highlights that an essential part of liberation has been the creation of museums to tell our own histories, celebrate our artistic practices, strengthen cultural ties and improve the state of our communities. This map helps to paint a fuller, more vibrant portrait of arts and culture across the nation's landscape. Although widely differing, they are united in their vision to bolster greater advocacy and representation in the field.

These museums have helped broaden our collective understanding of art, history, and culture. Their creative practices and cultural contributions has also helped to counter art historical omissions, misconceptions and problematic depictions of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color's communities. These museums have been a key part of the strategy of community building. Their pedagogy can also be referred to as culturally responsive, which places people and community care at the center of their practice. They make meaningful connections between their constituencies' experience and their offerings within their exhibitions, programs, and social services within the space.

So again it is my great pleasure to be here with you all today. And share with my colleagues about some of the work that they have been working towards as well in radical mapping and place making. And so I will invite Laura to also begin to present her work. Thank you.

Laura: Thank you Stephanie and Hatuey. Hello everyone. I would like to acknowledge I'm on Lenape land now known as New York City. My name is Laura Bustillos Jáquez and I'm a Brown Mexican American person gender pronouns she/her I have long hair and I'm wearing a dress that has black, pink, yellow, and other spring colors and I'm sitting in a room with a white wall behind me.

I'm a documentary film maker from the US-Mexico border Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua Mexico, and El Paso Texas. I started making short documentary films as a way to cope with my own immigration barriers. Eventually I realized that folks in my community were being portrayed by the media as dehumanized people who lived in a war zone, an extremely violent place and divided by a border wall. This led me to want to work directly with young people in the region and later with adults as well through the film collective I am a cofounder of called Femme Frontera. And now I am the education coordinator. We provide free filmmaking workshops for BIPOC in the region and I like to give a shout out to Angie Reza Tures who is the executive director.
I've also recently finished a film with DNA Works called HaMapah/The Map Dance on Film for which we traveled internationally with the purpose of mapping the diverse heritage of professional dancer Adam McKinney. The film was directed by Daniel Banks and I served as director of photography and editor. I will now show you two scenes from some of my earlier films. The first one is from Ni Una Mas, which translates to not one more and the second one is from Border Mass. Ni Una Mas was a documentation of a protest in Ciudad Juarez where women took the streets downtown to protest gender violence and Border Mass is a documentation of Catholic mass that happens on the border fence that is now a wall. Every year on the Day of the Dead where families cannot cross the border often meet to see each other through the fence. Let me show you.

[No audio available]

Laura: Thank you.

Stephanie: Thank you so much, Laura, next up Steve.

Steve: Bonjour my name is Steve DeRoy. I'm calling from the Saulteaux Nation in North Vancouver British Columbia, Canada. My background, I'm a cartographer by trade and mapping to me is the ultimate equalizer for indigenous communities. I have been in this field of cartography for about 23, 24 years. And one of the things that occurs to me with maps is that they are always in the hands of outsiders.

And I see them as a colonizer's tool and one of the things that I have done throughout my entire career is to somehow turn the tables in support of indigenous communities being Anishinaabe from Manitoba Canada, I saw the power of mapping from a very early start and to tell the story of space and place is critical to protecting the rights and interests of indigenous peoples and so in 2014 with the leadership of my company The Firelight Group we began hosting an indigenous mapping workshop and the whole goal of the indigenous mapping workshop was to create a safe space for indigenous peoples to talk and share stories of the use of maps, data, and technologies.

We wanted to increase spatial literacy by providing access to culturally relevant training. We wanted to expose indigenous peoples to the wide variety of geospatial technologies. We want to celebrate and advance indigenous pedagogies of mapping and research methodologies, and finally we wanted to build a global community of indigenous mappers. And so through this workshop we have managed to build partnerships with the folks here that you
see on the screen. And the whole idea is to expose people to the wide variety of mapping tools that are available in their toolbox.

In the past few years we have noticed a change or at least in my career I've seen a change from paper mapping to computer-based mapping, to mobile mapping, to cloud-based computing. And the pace of technological advancement has meant that indigenous peoples require ongoing training to be able to access and utilize these tools. And so that's what the whole idea of the indigenous mapping workshop is to expose people to the wide variety of those tools. We are software agnostic in that sense in that we don't want to say choose this tool over that tool.

We want to say you will have a suite of tools that you will be using in order to be able to tell that story of space and place. And throughout this workshop what we have really learned is that there are some powerful ways of telling that story and ways that we never imagined. And so when we put these workshops on what we are hearing is stories of indigenous peoples application of these tools. And it is pretty exciting to be able to see that in terms of the wide variety of applications from, and this is where you kind of where you see things from a bird's eye view to a worm's eye view. And everything in between and it's pretty exciting to hear of communities that are actually applying these tools.

These are some of the examples of some maps that have come out of the workshop where communities have been producing stories of space and place to tell narratives that are important to them. And so I just wanted to make sure that we showcase a few of these projects from some of the people that were participants in the indigenous mapping workshop. So I look forward to the conversation later on. I feel like I'm now rambling. And I say [indigenous word] for the opportunity to speak today.

Stephanie: Thank you, Steve. Next we will have Sadra.

Sadra: I want to make sure you see the screen that I'm sharing. Is that the case? Stephanie can you confirm? Oh, I got it. Hello everyone. So glad to be here today with you all. I should extend my gratitude to two of my amazing arts and cultural organizations in New York City truly the Laundromat Project and Museum Hue. I'm so lucky to be in contact and working with the amazing team at the Laundromat Project for organizing today and also being moderated by the amazing Stephanie Cunningham. If you don't know about Museum Hue, which I'm sure you all know, I would invite you to definitely check it out today. Museumhue.com.
My name is Sadra Shahab. Right now I am sitting in Brooklyn which is Lenape land and I recognize that. I’m an Iranian refugee to the United States and it pains me to see myself sitting on stolen land as well. I am the director of data and research at Hester Street but if I want to introduce myself out of like the traditional title right now I am mostly a city planner technologist map maker, GI specialist but all of these titles only mean like being an activist to me because as as Steve said, looking at maps and like tools of mapping data etc. there’s a lot of history with that and a lot of you know, these tools being used as colonizers tools. That there is a lot of de-colonizing work there.

My interest in the past 10 or 15 years being a city planner and GI specialist I’ve always played the role of a data person who is on the side of community-based organizations helping with advocacy planning in New York City and beyond and mostly interest in democratizing access to data and information, especially use of spatial data analysis tools for the benefit of communities and creating more autonomy at the community level.

So in the past I have, and I have a bunch of web browsers to show I guess in the past I have created a project and lead it for a number of years called Neighborhood Data Portal, which is a free online public tool for organizers and advocates to be able to extract the most vital statistics at the neighborhood level. So essentially instead of having like fancy GIS or geographic information systems capacity at an organization level or for organizers, you would be able to easily access something online that has both of the vital statistics that folks would need before you are planning for neighborhoods.

Let’s see if I can... The context of Neighborhood Data Portal is, and I could talk about the context a little bit more to show the relevance and that is, this was created some six or seven years ago when the new mayor then, DeBlasio talked about housing and affordable housing in New York City and with that came rezoning of a lot of communities which from the beginning we knew that might add to the displacement of populations and communities. And so one of the responses to help community-based organizations to stand in the way of new gentrification as a result of rezonings was to create tools that would promote access to the same data that lets a department of city planning would have to use when they come to neighborhoods to rezone or to create changes. And so this was like a response to create a free, accessible tool.

There are some times I’m working on a specific campaign and providing technical support to specific policy campaigns. One example was the Base Campaign which I created an online tool which is an information tool for organizers around legalizing basement apartments to
better understand locations of basements etc. etc. and to be able to effectively advocate for it. And this is part of a larger coalition with some other community based organizations. I'm only playing the role of technical assistant within these spaces and this work has been with the CDC, Cypress Hills LDC and Center for NYC neighborhoods and so on and so forth.

And another project that I am involved in as a collective which is called Housing Data Coalition and I am so happy to be showing this collective work to you, and you can check it out on the website Housing Data Coalition, on our website. And you will see this Housing Data Coalition is really a collective of a number of tech heads or those more savvy with data and data analysis for are trying to figure out what are the missing housing data in New York City and what should be accessible to tenants, organizers and those who are planning for quality-of-life and neighborhood. So you will see there's a resource gallery in here, which will show you a lot of other online tools that are really information portals for advocacy.

And being a cofounder of Savvy Spatial Analysis and Visualization Initiative at Pratt which is a center that promotes access to GIS, geographic information system education but also does pro bono work for community-based organizations all over the city. So in a nutshell, that is who I am, and like some samples of my projects really looking forward to getting engaged in this conversation and being in conversation with all the panelists. Thank you so much.

Stephanie: Thank you Sadra. Last but certainly not least, Armando.

Armando: Hello my name is Armando Sullivan. My pronouns are he/him. And I'm calling in from Harlem, New York where I live. I'm the co chair of programming for Black Space urbanist collective. Black Space is a group of planners, architects, artists and urbanists working to ensure that Black people, Black spaces, and Black culture matter and thrive.

As an organization we are rooted where we organize ourselves where a lot of our members live which is Central Brooklyn and over time have been alarmed by the physical gentrification and cultural erasure that we were seeing in this community. And as urbanists, we thought heritage conservation could be key to countering this. We have members tied to Brownsville both personally and professionally and again attending storytelling events and celebrations in the neighborhood, talking to people and collecting stories over the course of several years.

Brownsville Heritage House came up in all of these stories as a hub that extends out to the history of Black Brooklyn and connects those stories. Through these stories we were able to
map 60+ cultural assets that were for the time calling Brownsville Heritage spaces and they are organized around the themes that you can see in the bottom right. And we were trying to be intentional about mapping both tangible and intangible assets like neighborhood celebrations. And we wanted to work through what it would look like for us to be co-creators of this mapping project with the Brownsville Heritage House community.

So we created this first draft of these maps. Our next steps will be talking through this draft and getting feedback from the intergenerational leaders in Brownsville at the Brownsville Heritage House 40th anniversary celebration which is actually tomorrow. And through this iterative process, we hope to learn what might be missing from these maps and thinking about future formats of the map whether we print them and add them to the archive at Brownsville Heritage House or publish them online, what locations, events and stories does a community want to see memorialized in this way and more importantly or equally important, what spaces are sacred that they might not want to have publicized.

And in alignment with Black Space’s manifesto this process of co-creating will be iterative and the final output will be determined through our conversation with the Brownsville community. Thank you.

Stephanie: Thank you so much and thank you everyone for sharing. I'm really excited to jump right into some questions. And the first one that I have for the panelists is what do you hope to achieve through mapping and/or data visualization? What do you hope that this work that you are engaging in changes?

We will start with you, Steve.

Steve: My hopes and dreams for mapping is that indigenous peoples will have the necessary tools to be able to articulate narratives of space and place, that through those dialogues of talking about those spaces and places that they will be able to create an understanding with outside agencies and neighbors and other folks about the importance of that to indigenous communities. That the dialogue will lead to opportunities and that, indigenous communities can be recognized and celebrated into the future. So for me, mapping is the starting point of all that. In my world. That telling that story of space and place is the recognition of that indigenous sovereignty and indigenous heritage. And so, it is important to know where you come from in order to know where you are going.
So part of this whole process of maps is the ability to be able to tell that story and help people understand your history. And so for me, I have to start building that community and in the future I hope that there’s a global community of indigenous mappers that can apply these tools and advance their interests forward.

Stephanie: Absolutely. Thank you for that. Anyone else want to join in?

Laura: I can go. So first of all I'd like to apologize I didn't realize my video did not have sound. For everyone so I'm going to type the websites for the organizations that I work with here in the chat. You all can check them out. My hope...I never thought about my work as mapping so I'm trying to translate that towards the education programs that we offer at Femme Frontera.

I think for us it is really important that the people living on the border share their own narrative, they claim their own narrative. And that the record of our stories remains. That is very important for us. I think through, I grew up in the middle of a drug war. So everything that was known about my region was what the media portrayed. So we really feel it is important for people of all ages to know how to tell a story, to realize that they most likely already have the tools to tell stories like smartphones or smart devices so that is really our hope to share these tools with our community

Sadra: Armando please go ahead. I will go after you.

Armando: Okay so I think for Black Space our hope with this process is to one, to kind of unlearn some of the practices in mapping that we were taught as urbanists traditionally and also we are really excited about being able to take these skill sets we have as urbanists and just talk to the leaders in Brownsville to see what opportunities they see in this kind of representation. For different objectives that they have for their own heritage preservation. So yeah. I think those are our big goals, to kind of more thoughtfully set up this mapping process of co-creating with the community and also give them the opportunity to determine the most useful place for these maps to live.

Sadra: And for myself what do I hope to change or achieve with all of this data democratization or mapping efforts, first of all it would not be me. It would be like for us. And I am so lucky to be joined by the amazing colleagues that I work with Devon and Caesar are in the audience but I'm not sure if there are other of my colleagues who are working like in a team and a lot of these amazing projects. For us it is really like the goal is really to achieve, you know, we have a theory of change at Hester Street which talks about community autonomy and self-determination for
communities, the right to self-determination. And what is the relationship between like the spatial data analysis and mapping and self-determination has everything to do with that.

Most often as Steve set as well, like mapping tools and spatial data analysis especially like creating map documents, you know and map documents is a very specific thing when you show it to someone there is some sort of reality to it all of a sudden. I bet even if you have your hands on the treasure map you would be thinking considering the treasure exists. So there is this reality making in mapmaking. And most often GIS, which is like mapmaking tools etc. has been in the hands of power and elites. GIS in the US has been created by Army projects and also elite universities, Ivy League universities like Harvard University then in Canada by the government and also the more influential research centers etc. And it has always been a tool in the hands of money and power to be able to maneuver space. And so democratizing access to data and mapping tools to us means folks from communities would be able to respond back with all sorts of quantitative data analysis that claims legitimacy over their own arguments and narratives, to reverse that.

But also like really quantitative and qualitative data in the hands of all the communities that are interested in long-term planning for their own self and the future. And so tools of autonomy and community self-determination that is how we look at why we do data democratization and why we do mapmaking or spatial data analysis in city planning or advocacy contexts.

Stephanie: Thank you all so much for that. And I love Sadra, the idea of reality making and Steve, Armando, and Laura talking about recognition and relearning and self-realization and determination and creating our own stories. That brings me to my second question. How do you determine best practices for community engaged work? So we know that this work is not always individualized. It is not only us that is doing this work but how can we collaborate with our communities and are there frameworks that guide collaborative processes?

Steve: Is there an order to the questioning or you want us just to follow the same one?

Stephanie: Anyone who wants to jump in feel free to do so.

Steve: Thanks Stephanie that's a really great question and something as a business at the Firelight Group that is something we have been very conscientious of in terms of how we do the work that we do. And a lot of it is, many of us have graduate degrees and we have the training and education. And experience and a lot of it is having the confidence to be able to step aside
and say why don’t we hear from you. Why don’t you lead this process? If we are talking about working with indigenous peoples why don’t we put the power into the hands of indigenous peoples and let them decide who they hire and fire and let them decide our research project should go down. Let them decide what goes on the map and what gets excluded from the map.

And being able to have the confidence to say, Well, maybe the people that are living here, living this reality should have a say, and maybe I should just step aside and let those communities be able to take the lead. And have a community design process that works for the community. And so that is how we have tried to carry out our business with communities in terms of our community engagement is to really listen to what those priorities are. To learn from what indigenous communities have gone through and be able to apply our skills to be able to support what those aspirations are. The more we do that, the more indigenous peoples can be drivers of these processes.

At the end of the day, in some places around the world we won’t be able to live there and feel the daily reality of those indigenous communities. And so how do we apply our skills to best support those aspirations of those indigenous communities, and oftentimes it means taking the pen and putting it in the hand of indigenous peoples and saying you decide. You write this. We will help you get there, but why don’t you lead this process.

Armando: For Black Space all of our work, all of our practice is guided by our manifesto. And with this project we really want it to be iterative. So we have this draft that we are taking to the community to get their feedback on. And also to help lead us in the next and more final direction of the project. So we don’t have a specific framework for co-creating with them, but I guess the overall framing principle is just iteration and like Steve said, handing the mic over to the organization to kind of let us know what they see as the greatest potential for this project.

Laura: I would like to answer next. The two organizations that I work closely with are Femme Frontera and DNA Works. With Femme Frontera it’s very important for us to work with communities on both sides of the border so that has taken us some time to build. At first it was just sort of on the El Paso side, on the Texas side, and then we realized that there was something missing. Right.

So we grew from being a filmmaker collective to a community. So we went, as soon as somebody submits a film to us or submits an application to be considered for the film festival or for the workshops they become part of the Femme Frontera community so they have a say in our programs. They have, their opinion matters. And so this is the first year that we have a really
great fund from the Ford foundation. And we started distributing grants for filmmakers on both sides of the border. So that is really exciting. You know, we had to obviously figure out how to make this possible outside of the US. But it's great. It has been successful so far and we are really excited.

And with DNA Works it is similar. The DNA Works manifesto you called it, Armando, the DNA Works manifesto is dialogue and healing. And so every time we share our work or go into a community to either film or present a film or a theater piece we always will look for ways to connect with the community that we are visiting and we ask for their permission. Right, to be in that space and the film in that space and it is really a special experience.

Sadra: Stephanie I should confess that I forgot your question. Could you please repeat the question?

Stephanie: Absolutely. Absolutely. So my question is, I wrote it down here. Okay. So how do you determine best practices for community engagement work? And are there frameworks that guide collaborative processes?

Sadra: Yeah that is a good one. I guess my professional job is 90% thinking about participatory methods and engagement methods really. And that is what it is a struggle. I don't think like you know I have like a good complete answer to what it means for us to get engaged in best practices ever, but what we do is a lot of iterative process and reflecting back to you know, how did engagement or participatory components of a single project went or how could it be better.

I'm a big fan of also I'm a member of a lot of collectives that would address open data, open algorithm and data democratization. So that means like we are much interested in wider participation in data analysis or self-determination tools like planning. And that comes in all sorts of shapes and forms. From the ways that we analyze the data, from the ways we publicize or visualize data from the ways that we create tools, from the ways we create processes for community planning efforts etc. So a lot of different parts to it. But yeah I guess you know, how it is being, what is, yeah I leave it at that. So I'm really struggling with your best practices and much interested in creating these best practices within educational settings or professional settings as well.

Stephanie: Yeah, thank you. I think to your point Sadra, and points that were made by others there's different methods and ways to activate and collaborate with people in the communities that we represent and serve and thinking about these data, ways that we do data gathering and
ways that we are thinking about encouraging others to be a part of these processes and thinking about ways to be radical mappers in their own way. And so for me, and I definitely want to get questions from the audience.

So again if anyone has any questions feel free to list them in the chat and we will try to get to as many as possible. But how do we encourage people to think about radical mapping, or understanding the importance of indigenizing mapping and looking at the creation of maps in Black spaces, and also you know, in Laura's case thinking about how people, the ways that we move throughout these spaces, how can we encourage people to create in this way to provide a lens into greater radical mapping and thinking about creating and forming our own narratives. And again, anyone please jump in.

Sadra: Let me actually disrupt the order of answering the questions because I was so terrible answering the last question. Laura is now like when I look at what Laura has done, you know like at the border and the documentation and the filmmaking etc. I didn't know about the projects so part of being on the panel discussion is I get to know about an amazing project and a bunch of other things that are connected to it. And to me it seems like the best case of radical mapping.

What is mapping? That means to me, I guess I need to redefine it a little bit and mapping to me is to put a location to other information that we have. And what is stronger than creating documentary narratives that would have that specific location in the spatiality, plus the other things that are so important happening at the location. Bringing light, putting it into attention in creating narratives around the spaces everything that radical mapping is to me as well. You know what does it mean to bring that information into a spatiality of things in the human species like so many other species is pretty territorial that means controlling and owning territory has everything to do with her quality of life and well-being.

And there are so many underserved communities, like Global South, BIPOC immigrants and communities in colonial settlements that are deprived of practicing you know like the most basic free movement in a space for example or ownership of land or controlling territories that belong to them for centuries etc. So radical mapping, that notion is that. Basically thinking about how would it be possible to claim territory and movement in a space and spatiality for the benefit of those deprived from like owning or being able to move etc..

And so that means like what I do in zoning and data analysis to fight with Department of City Planning initiatives that would cause displacement. Or Steve, like the attempt to map
indigenous communities and using those tools or Laura at the border that specific location and bringing that narrative to attention is everything radical mapping.

Steve: Thanks Sadra. When I think about radical mapping the most radical part is giving indigenous communities the tools for them to be able to do their own mapping and when we first started it was about how do we decolonize these processes and it was not until just the past year that someone said well we are at a point now where we should be indigenizing these processes. And so I think about that and I think maps have always played a critical role for communication and navigation but the underlying notion of a map is an exertion of power and so when it comes down to being able to exert that power, the person holding the pen has a lot of latitude. I talk about pens just because maybe I'm old-school. Maybe the person holding the keyboard. [Laughter] but the idea being that the person holding the pen has a lot of power to decide what gets put onto that map and what gets excluded.

And historically indigenous peoples have been erased off of maps at the lack of a stroke of a pen. And so from my perspective it is all about how do we place the pen into hands of indigenous peoples to be able to start creating those narratives. And that is radical to me because when you start to do that you start to gain recognition of that indigenous sovereignty. You gain a recognition of that identity and you gain a recognition of the healing processes, I loved what Laura said about that earlier, the healing processes that can emerge from these mapping processes.

And so I just find that maps can elicit a lot of memories of space and place and our experience when we go through the mapping exercises and we are documenting the values it can be quite emotional for people because many times some of the activities that people have been doing on the landscape have been with people that are no longer there. And no one has ever asked indigenous peoples why these places matter and why is this important to you. And so basically by training communities on how to do this it allows for the healing process to begin. And for me that's the most radical part of it all is that people can come away with a stronger understanding of their identity and a stronger ability to articulate their stories.

Laura: So I would like to share this experience I had once. I was invited to a middle school in the outskirts of Ciudad Juarez and the people there didn't really have cell phones and stuff but I had my camera. I said here let's do a series of interviews, what is your vision for the city. What is your favorite thing about the city?
Then I put it together and I projected it at the school for them. And one of the children after watching it raised his hand and he said I just want to say that after watching this now I know that I exist. And to me in that moment I just felt like okay I can die in peace now. Like this is it. His existence was confirmed by seeing himself and his schoolmates on the screen. So that I just get really emotional thinking about that because I think that is the goal of our work. I think I had another experience but I forgot. I forgot what it was. Next person.

Armando: Yeah, so what is radical for me is the iteration and I guess the opportunity like as Steve mentioned to have the community determine was is included on the map, what is not included on the map and thinking about the format it's going to take, where it is going to live, and what perspective it is going to project I think that is radical. And kind of putting or working with the community to have them determine those outputs.

Stephanie: Absolutely absolutely and while you were all talking some wonderful questions came in. I think I'm going to try to squeeze in one, so if we can just keep our answers for this one short, and it is, I think a really beautiful way to end. In thinking about how do you come in creating your map make what may be invisible, not a landmark or a particular place? Do you think about ways to make it visible? Really quickly.

Steve: Well, maps are just one tool in the toolbox for telling stories. And so I beg borrow and steal every kind of tool that we can to be able to talk about those narratives of space and place so if it means we have a map visualizing it, maybe we have photos showing activities maybe we have audio or video that describe what those activities are. Maybe we have some beautiful texts or narratives. Finding other ways of being able to tell the story, mapping is just one part of the story. And so that is what I always say. Do not just narrow yourself to maps. You need to think broader about the wider story you are trying to tell and then be able to apply those tools as necessary to be able to convey that message.

Laura: I think for my, our communities on the border we often think about that, right, like the border, border wall, border fence. And what I’ve found through watching the stories that our community makes when they assist our workshops is that the stories go beyond their experiences of watching a wall or seeing a wall every day. There is more to that. There's our connection to the desert. There's connection to the culture, to the Fronteriza culture, the across borders culture there's a connection and memories to cultural spaces, to parks, to neighborhoods, right so it is actually an incredibly rich cultural place that goes beyond the wall.
Armando: Yeah, and maps are just one form that this cultural and heritage preservation takes within Brownsville. You know we have stories, we have photos, we have videos of walking tours that people have given throughout the neighborhood. What we have really learned is that every spot has a memory. And so I think we are just trying to be really open in format to try to incorporate lots of different important cultural assets that might not be someplace you can specifically chart on a map.

Sadra: Yeah making invisible the visible is a quest of a lot of data visualization mapping that we do but also mapping in general. And that has everything to do with changing existing narratives in the hope to change systems. So for example you know like the latest, one of the members of the housing data coalition for example we collectively work on that data and there was an article published by one of the members that showed the relationship between evictions in the Bronx and Covid impact. Not that it is like unclear that race and social class in this country has everything to do with social inequality and for example Covid impact as public health issues.

But also this act of mapping. Like bringing, you are asking for the attention, bringing the subject back to the news and talking about it is a way of resistance that would be just pushing for this is visible in so many ways. We have qualitative data analysis all the time. We had talked about these things and now you are showing on data and maps this is the phenomenon and the way to bring the invisible to the visible. Like the history that is erased, the problems that are being erased and not being discussed to the attention in hopes to make systemic change.

Stephanie: Wonderful, beautifully said everyone. Thank you all so much for your brilliance, for your work. And please everyone you can find more information about all of the panelists' work on the website. And thank you all again, thank you to the Laundromat Project for having us. We appreciate you all and we hope that you all remain safe. Thank you.

Hatuey: Thank you so much Stephanie and thank you for this amazing conversation. It's a lot of great action in the chat, so follow up with that. And you know, just before I say our goodbyes I want to address briefly there is a question about what mapping looks like for the Laundromat Project in Bed Stuy and right now we started last year what we called the listening tour and what that means for us is we are asking the question how can the Laundromat Project be a good neighbor in Bed-Stuy? And what we are doing is hosting one-on-one conversations and small group conversations with different community groups.

You know, leaders, organizations and we have talked so far to about 100 folks already and this is an ongoing process. So the hope is that we are able to on the one hand understand
the context of Bed-Stuy, the challenges people have, the things that people love and how we
can be good neighbors. So all of that is in the works. So I hope that gives you some information
on that. And we can share on our website that we have more about that there. And so I want to
thank the panelists for such an engaging conversation. I thank supporters for making programs
like this happen.

Thank you to the LP team for all your time, your thought and care and consideration in
putting the program together. Thank you all for joining us. I hope you take some of what you
heard and learned back to your communities and work collectively to draw a more just future.
We will be sharing the recording and transcript of this conversation with you shortly.

I hope you will join us later today at 4:30 PM. We have our Radical Mapping Part Three.
“Where is Home on the Map?” And if you have not already registered to join, we will drop the
link in the chat so you can do so. We also invite you to follow and stay up-to-date with LP and
our various platforms, which we will drop into the chat as well so thank you so much. And have
a great rest of your day. Thank you have a good day.