Visual Ethnography for Community Participation in Urban Development

Greg Stone
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Supervisor: Gloria Gallardo
Evaluator: Maria Ignatieva
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GREG STONE

Stone, G., 2013: Visual Ethnography for Community Participation in Urban Development. Master thesis in Sustainable Development at Uppsala University, No. 147, 34 pp, 30 ECTS/hp

Abstract: The purpose of this study is to assess how inhabitants of the Lidköping community value or perceive their surrounding in relation to urban planning, specifically the new Hamnstaden urban development. This perception was collected as data mainly through photos, conceived here as visual ethnography, combined with written responses.

As the trend of urbanization continues to grow around the world, who or what is determining how cities are built? What elements of our urban environments do we value, and how do we measure these values? Many of the current trends with urban development are inconsistent with sustainable development and new perspectives on the construction of our cities are required to make cities more sustainable. This research uses a qualitative research approach in a case study in an urban development project in Lidköping to attempt to address some of these questions. The results are very diverse, but the highest-valued elements according to the participants were green space, old buildings, pedestrian space, public art, and cafes.

Keywords: Sustainable Development, Community Participation, Visual Ethnography, Urban Development, Urbanization

Greg Stone, Department of Earth Sciences, Uppsala University, Villavägen 16, SE- 752 36 Uppsala, Sweden
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Greg Stone, Department of Earth Sciences, Uppsala University, Villavägen 16, SE-752 36 Uppsala, Sweden
1. Introduction

The United Nations predicts that by 2030, 61% of the world’s population will live in urban areas (United Nations, 2004). This rural exodus is a relatively new trend. Sociologist Anthony Giddens explains that the mechanisation of production during the industrial revolution initiated urbanization, “Britain was the first country to undergo industrialization, a process that began in the mid-eighteenth century. The process of industrialization generated increasing urbanization - the movement of the population into towns and cities, and away from the land” (2009, the cities which emerged after the industrial revolution. Since then, cities have become incredibly complex systems and are perceived very differently. Whether the city is perceived as an exciting cultural epicentre, dynamic and rich with opportunity, or a polluting, cold, unfriendly concrete jungle, there is no question that the process of urbanization is a global one.

As the process of urbanization continues, who determines its course? Who or what determines how our cities will be constructed, and for what purpose? According to several theorists, the process of urbanization has been a process of power. Social theorist David Harvey argues that command over money, time and space translate to a command over urbanization (1985). He argues that, in the context of this kind of power, the foundations of urbanism were created by capitalism, money and, ultimately, the introduction of heavy industry into the town. The use of money as the main form of communication in commodity exchange defines space and time and ultimately defines the dimensions of urbanism (1985).

Capitalism has had a major influence on how our built environments were founded, as, under capitalism, workers and industries became more concentrated to provide labour to expanding enterprises (Therborn, 2011). Capitalism also determined how much of the specifics of the urban environment were developed, “Capitalism development did tend to substitute public or quasi-public for original private ownership, in telecommunications, urban transport, railways and energy production, largely independent of right- or leftwing governments” (Therborn, 2011, p.88). Within this capitalistic framework, industries and firms began expanding and began to centralize their production. This process perpetuated the transformation towards urbanism. Later, in the Western world, and more recently in the developing world, the process of urbanization was defined by another symptom of capitalism; the automobile. The design of western cities in the 1950’s and 60’s was majorly influenced by the car (Gehl, 2010), leading to trends like

![Percentage of the world’s population living in urban areas (reproduced from UN, 2012).](image-url)
suburbanization, and, in the cities of the developing world, there is a current challenge of rising numbers of cars on their streets.

While the process of urbanization has been a global affair, its specific characteristics are not consistent throughout. The trends and consequences of urbanization differ greatly around the world.

1.2 Global Trends in Urbanization

Urbanization is a child of Western culture. It began in Britain in the mid-eighteenth century, and spread first among the world’s wealthiest nations. A defining trend of urbanization in developed countries, especially in the USA and Britain, which began in the 1950’s and 60’s, is suburbanization. As dependence on the automobile grew, families were able to move out of the city centers and into houses on the city’s outskirts. Though this transformation was not simply based on convenience; there were social motivations behind the trend of suburbanization as well. In the United States, the first trends of suburbanization came from white families after the end of segregation. Many white families wished to relocate from the inner-city and its new mixed-race schools to put their children in all-white schools in the suburbs (Giddens, 2009).

Suburbanization has had many different effects on the dynamics of the city. Many western cities, especially in the United States, have experienced the decay of their downtown cores due to the exodus to the suburbs. Suburbanization has also had a tremendous effect on the social climate of cities. Many suburbs are the sites of racial segregation, and have acted as a canvas for class polarization. Frustrations with the conditions in suburbs, and the subsequent racial segregation, have been on display in recent years, manifested through demonstrations and even violent rioting. In the United States, the suburbs of Los Angeles saw massive rioting in 1992, sparked by a police brutality event, but driven by unbalanced class and race structures in the suburbs of L.A. In 2011, several suburbs around London saw massive rioting over several days that involved vehicle and home destruction. The reasons behind these suburban riots are complex, but at the very least are good indicators of the problems that exist in the suburban city model.

The dynamics of suburbanization in Europe differs from that of the USA or Britain. Though there are many different trends within European suburbanization, one major difference is that, instead of the exodus from the city core to the suburbs that exists in the USA, in Europe, suburbs act more as a point of entry into the city for many immigrants (Clapson, 2010). While most European cities are not experiencing the inner-urban decay that many American cities are experiencing, many of the trends in the suburbs are similar. This suburban point-of-entry system has resulted in segregation from the hosting societies, which has created similar kinds of frustrations that exist in American and British suburbs. For example, many of the suburbs around Paris act as ports of entry for North African immigrants, who experience segregation once they arrive in Paris (Clapson, 2010). It is no surprise, then, that civil unrest occurs here, as happened in Parisian suburbs in 2005.

Issues of segregation also exist in cities in the developing world, where the highest rates of urban growth occur (UN, 2012). The high rates of urban growth in developing countries, like developed countries, is related to the rural exodus. Another reason for urban growth in developing countries is the high rate of fertility among city-dwellers in developing countries (Giddens, 2009). High rates of urban growth can be problematic anywhere in the world, and developing cities with high urban growth are, and will be experiencing great challenges.

City planning is one of the biggest challenges in developing cities, as cities throughout the world are seeing an increase in unplanned settlements. “High rates of overall population growth, together with significant rural–urban migration, have contributed to the rapid and unplanned expansion of low-income settlements on the outskirts of many large cities” (Cohen, 2006, p.73). This expansion of low-income settlements is married to other major problems, including insufficient public services, ageing and incapable infrastructure, and higher competition for jobs (Giddens, 2009).
Regulations for environmental practices are also very liberal or non-existent in many developing cities, resulting in many problems. Many of these cities do not have adequate services to account for the waste that is being discharged into the water and air (Cohen, 2006).

In her book, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, which she calls “an attack on current city planning and rebuilding” (Jacobs, 1992, p.1), urbanist Jane Jacobs addresses many of the problems associated with urbanism in America. Jacobs argues that the current trends of city building lack perspective, “The pseudoscience of city planning, and its companion, the art of city design, have not yet broken with the specious comfort of wishes, familiar superstitions, oversimplifications, and symbols, and have not yet embarked upon the adventure of probing the real world.” (Jacobs, 1992, p.13) She argues that much of the city’s problems revolve around “handling organized complexity” (p.14), and the solutions to these problems, while equally complex, lies in the “need of cities for a most intricate and close-grained diversity of uses that give each other constant mutual support, both economically and socially” (p. 14).

![Urban and rural populations by development group, 1950-2050 (reproduced from UN, 2012).](image)

**1.3 Urbanization and Sustainability**

Many of the current trends of urbanization, whether in cities in developed or developing countries, are not sustainable. Socially, a created urban environment based on capitalism and industry, argues David Harvey, is fertile soil for social imbalance, “...the urban process under capitalism (is) a peculiarly open affair, in the sense that confusion, conflict, and struggle are a normal condition and that fixed outcomes cannot be determined in advance. What this seeming openness conceals, however, is an underlying process that precludes liberation from the more repressive aspects of class-domination and all of the urban pathology and restless incoherence that goes with it” (1985, p.1). Anthony Giddens explains this process of ‘class-domination’ and ‘restless incoherence’ lucidly, “The
new global economy is highly problematic in many ways. Nowhere can this be seen more clearly than in the new
dynamics of inequality visible within the global city. The juxtaposition between the central business district and
impoverished inner-city areas of many global cities should be seen as interrelated phenomena” (2009, p. 239).
Socially, the mainstream trends of urbanization can create negative environments in cities.

1.4 Reclaiming Cities

The first indications of people reclaiming their cities came on the heels of the mass introduction of the car in cities in
developed countries. In the 1960’s, the French philosopher Henri Lefebvre developed the idea of the ‘right to the
city’, a philosophy, born as a response to the Fordian urban transformation, that called for greater citizen access to
and participation in the urban center. In his own words, Lefebvre defines the right to the city as, “the right to
information, the rights to use of multiple services, the right of the users to make known their ideas on the space and
time of their activities in urban areas; it would also cover the right to the use of the center” (1991,p.34).

David Harvey argues that urbanism constructed on capitalism will naturally breed the spirit of reclamation in people,
and that the oppression that occurs due to imbalance of power in the urban setting will breed revolt (1985). These
revulsions and revolts, Harvey argues, occasionally lead citizens to, “demand to construct an alternative society,
subject to different rules, outside of and beyond the rational discourse and the disciplines and constraints determined
within the community of money” (Harvey, 1985, p. 16).

The idea of spatial justice also relates the forms of space and society. Edward Soja (2010) argues that social justice
is deeply connected to spatial patterns, and thus justice has its own geography. From this perspective, then,
understanding the complexities of social justice or injustice often means understanding the spatial dimensions
around the society, and that the interests of an individual can be greatly improved by taking a spatial perspective.

A more contemporary example of people reclaiming their cities in a bottom-up way is Park(ing) Day, an annual
event where ordinary people are reclaiming urban space from motor vehicles. On a pre-determined day every year,
people in cities all over the world pay for a few hours of time for a parking space usually reserved for cars. During
these few hours, this parking spot is transformed into a small but effective space specifically for pedestrians; either a
small park, or a lemonade stand, or an art gallery. What began as a small initiative by a group of artists in 2005 in
San Francisco is today a world-wide event. In 2011, there were 975 parking spaces occupied for parks in 162 cities
(Rebar, 2013). Park(ing) Day is just one example of people reclaiming their urban spaces and transforming it for
their own needs and priorities.

Regardless of early urban critical theory, capitalistic elements like the car and industry continue to take priority in
city planning. However, the dynamic of the city is changing rapidly. For example, cities around the world are
beginning to restrict car access to their urban centers. For the first time since the car appeared in urban settings,
cities are beginning to change their practices towards cars. Beijing is one such example of initiated car restriction.
As China’s economy grows, the population of cars in its city centers also grows. Between 2005 and 2010, the
number of cars in central Beijing skyrocketed, rising from 2.6 million to 4.81 million. In 2011, Beijing began
restricting car use in the city centre and allowed only 240,000 new cars registered. As a result, traffic congestion has
dropped in the city (Beijing Traffic Management Bureau, 2012). While this is a simple example, it demonstrates the
beginning of a shift away from planning for cars.

1.5 Sustainability and Community Participation

Determinants of the process of urbanization, mainly power and capitalism, can be considered unsustainable when
practiced exclusively. If society wishes to shift its course to a more sustainable one, then this trend cannot continue
(Kasemir et al, 2003). What, then, are the factors behind sustainable decision-making? In decision-making, the
inclusion of community participation is necessary for sustainable development. As Green and Chambers state, “The question of participation is inextricably linked to sustainable development, for without a plurality of actors and approaches, sustainable development cannot be realized” (2007, p.2).

The inclusion of community participation in sustainability studies did not develop immediately. In fact, early sustainability studies relied on quantitative data and studies (Clark, 2003). However, the question of sustainability has become an increasingly complex question, resulting in an increasingly complex strategy to address it. “More recently, it has become increasingly clear that the sorts of science and technology assessments used to address climate change and related sustainability issues are necessarily shaped by value-laden choices regarding which questions to ask, who to treat as an expert, and how to deal with disagreements. Democratic societies must therefore find means of assuring appropriate participation of affected citizens in the process of negotiating such value judgements” (Clark, 2003, p.xviii).

1.5.1 Sustainable Urban Planning and Community Participation
In the planning of sustainable urban environments, including the perspectives of all of the stakeholders is important. This includes the daily users of these urban areas: the citizens. Urbanist Jan Gehl testifies to the increasing importance of the participation of individual citizens in urban planning, and that greater emphasis needs to be placed on the needs of people who actually use the cities (2010).

The inclusion of community participation in urban planning is becoming more essential, and there are examples from all over the world of citizens participating in the decision-making process behind planning. Community participation takes on different forms in different contexts.

In several developing countries, community organizations among the urban poor have formed with the intentions of improving infrastructure and housing conditions in informal settlements. The largest such organization is the National Slum Dwellers’ Federation in India. With 700,000 members, the organization is self-organized with support from NGOs and works with different levels of the Indian government to improve their urban conditions (UN Habitat, 2009).

Many countries in the developed world have a high level of citizen participation. In Canada, for example, the government provides funding for community urban planning organizations (UN Habitat, 2009). Cities in developing countries have also seen the emergence of ‘e-democracy’ exercises for planning. One such example comes from the planning for the World Trade Centre reconstruction project in New York. 4,000 citizens of New York gathered at the city’s convention centre to review proposals for the site. Participants were split into small groups and asked questions about the reconstruction proposals, and their answers were displayed on huge screens for everyone to see. Eventually, the participants expressed unanimous opposition to the proposed plans, and the planners were forced to completely redesign the site, eventually to worldwide recognition (Birch, 2009).

1.6 The United Nations and Sustainable Development
There have been many institutions involved in recognizing and developing the idea of sustainable development. The origins of sustainable development as an institution, however, have its roots in the United Nations. The seeds of the idea of sustainable development were planted during the Stockholm Convention in 1972, a meeting among nations of the world which attempted to marry the ideas of environmental justice and the global economy.

It wasn’t until 1987, however, until the words ‘sustainable development’ appeared within the UN. In the document Our Common Future, also known as the Brundtland Report, the United Nation World Commission on Environment and Development (UNWCED) created a definition of sustainable development as, “development that meets the
needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (UNWCED, 1987).

This report established the foundation of how development and the environment should interact. The environment and development are unavoidably linked. Development cannot continue based on declining environmental resources, and the environment cannot be maintained based on development which does not account for the limits of the environment. These problems cannot be addressed separately (UNWCED, 1987). Since the publishing of this document, many UN initiatives have assumed responsibility towards sustainable development.

1.7 Purpose
The purpose of this study is to assess how inhabitants of the Lidköping community value or perceive their surroundings in relation to urban planning, specifically the new Hamnstaden urban development. This perception was collected as data mainly through photos, conceived here as visual ethnography, combined with written responses.

The nature of the procedure, deliberately liberal, allowed for several possible problems, which will be discussed later in the report. My expectation is that the majority of cameras will be sent back to me, and the resulting photos will indicate some loose trends, but will be mostly sporadic in what they represent.

1.7.1 Research Location

Lidköping Harbour Development
In the coming years, the Lidköping harbour, which is located on the shore of Lake Vänern and within walking distance of the town’s centre, will be a completely redeveloped area of town and will include 1,500 new apartments, and places of culture and leisure. It is also intended to be a connecting space between the city’s urban center and the lake. The development of Hamnstaden is based on Lidköping municipality’s overarching vision that “Lidköping is a welcoming and sustainable city” (www.lidkoping.se, 2011). Based on this vision, Hamnstaden will be a mixed-use area with opportunities to live, work and play for people of all ages and backgrounds. Also, under the mandate of sustainability, the Hamnstaden development must “prevent environmental disturbances, minimize risks, and conserve natural resources” (www.lidkoping.se, 2011).
Since at present, planning for Hamnstaden is in the “detailed planning” stage of development (Sånnek, 2013, pers. Comm. 27 Feb.), this particular urban development project, especially when it is in this particular stage, input from individual citizens is most valuable, thus becoming an ideal site for the purposes of this thesis research. Thus the site for the research of this thesis became the Lidköping harbour area, located within the UNESCO biosphere reserve Vänerskärgården Kinnekulle.

**Biosphere Vänerskärgården Kinnekulle and the European Landscape Convention**

A UNESCO biosphere reserve, the Biosphere Vänerskärgården Kinnekulle, has a mandate to foster innovative ideas for sustainable development. Currently, the biosphere has several initiatives in this field, including one program to encourage local fishing.

The Biosphere Vänerskärgården Kinnekulle has also recently assumed responsibilities from the European Landscape Convention (ELC). Created in Florence, Italy in October 2000, the ELC “promotes the protection, management and planning of European landscapes and organises European co-operation on landscape issues” (Council of Europe, 2012). Currently, 37 countries have ratified the ELC, including Sweden. Under the ELC, the Biosphere Vänerskärgården Kinnekulle has assumed responsibilities towards the local landscapes, both natural and urban. One of the most important responsibilities under the ELC is the inclusion of public participation in planning for the landscape. The biosphere project summary states that, “a very important part of the Convention is that it should be implemented in dialogue / interaction with the public, civil society, private organizations and public authorities” (Biosfär Vänerskärgården Kinnekulle, 2013). The Biosphere Vänerskärgården Kinnekulle has assumed the responsibility of practical application of the ELC in Sweden.

As it is described in the Biosphere project summary, the ELC project at the Biosphere is “divided into two phases where the first phase includes the acquisition of knowledge, choice of working, setting objectives and planning for
Within the project summary, one of the specific tasks of the ELC project is to, “Define methods for co-creation of civil society actively participates in the development of proposals and action plans that manage conflicting objectives and contribute to that identified goals reached. The starting point is to find a method where civil society can be involved in the entire process from problem description to development of policy proposals” (Biosfär Vänerskärgården Kinnekulle, 2013).

**Man and the Biosphere Initiative**

A UN initiative which has assumed responsibility towards sustainable development is the Man and the Biosphere initiative (MAB). In 1971, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) established the MAB programme. Aiming to improve the relations between people and their natural environments, the MAB, “proposes an interdisciplinary research agenda and capacity building that target the ecological, social and economic dimensions of biodiversity loss and the reduction of this loss” (UNESCO, 2012).

In practice, MAB’s main mandate was to establish ‘biosphere reserves’, which are designated areas where initiatives for sustainable development can be practiced. According to UNESCO’s website, “Biosphere reserves are sites established by countries and recognized under UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme to promote sustainable development based on local community efforts and sound science. As places that seek to reconcile conservation of biological and cultural diversity and economic and social development through partnerships between people and nature, they are ideal to test and demonstrate innovative approaches to sustainable development from local to international scales” (UNESCO, 2012). Globally, there are 610 biosphere reserves in 117 countries.

**2. Methodology**

For the purposes of this research project, I chose the method of visual ethnography to collect data. Visual ethnography is the process of collecting anthropological data through photographs and images. This approach to community participation is not a new one, and it usually involves members of the community recording their experiences through photo or video. In the context of evolving urban areas, this method is gaining importance. As Nicola Dempsey points out, “If the requirements of the intelligent city are changing, then we will need to reconsider how we (re)create our cities. This has implications both for urban policy and for the processes we undertake to develop urban accommodation. A shift in emphasis from quantitative to qualitative is needed” (2005, p.31). In general, the value of qualitative information is indeed different from qualitative information, and has a unique value, which, as pointed out by Swartz, can be very liberating, “I consider photographs inherently ambiguous, their specifiable meanings emergent in the viewing process. This ambiguity is not a disadvantage or limitation; rather the multiple meanings negotiated by viewers can be mined for the rich data they yield” (1989, p.4).

Visual ethnography is a very important method of qualitative research. In their report, “Zen and the Art of Travel Behavior: Using Visual Ethnography to Understand Transit Experience”, researchers Fink and Taylor encouraged participants to use photography to capture the experience of traveling with Los Angeles public transit. Fink and Taylor found that, “While a large body of literature has examined how factors such as income, education, sex, ethnicity, and age influence travel choices, surprisingly little has examined how individual perceptions of travel modes are shaped by the travel experience” (2010, p.1). In an attempt to record the travel experiences of Los Angeles public transit users, Fink and Taylor set up a website and encouraged transit users to use their mobile devices to photograph their transit experience. The participants then uploaded these photos to the website, and included captions with their photos, explaining their motivation behind each photo. Fink and Taylor specifically
chose a qualitative research method because it was highly relatable to their research question, “Qualitative methods hold great promise in exploring questions of why people choose particular modes, how travel affects their lives, and, in turn, how their lives affect travel decisions” (p. 6).

Gathering Information Bottom-Up
One of the major goals of this community participation method is to broaden the information being received. What this means is that this method seeks to involve members of the community who would not normally participate in community planning. Often, community participation includes a select few highly-involved people from the community, involved in highly-organized participation methods, like meetings, interviews and surveys. Perhaps other members of the community would be willing to participate if the participation methods were more flexible and approachable. Giving people the option to contribute their opinions on their own time in a less formal way could increase participation and decentralize the perspectives from those select few to a broader public sphere.

Advantages of qualitative data collection
Thus for the purposes of this research, public participation in urban planning, I decided to collect qualitative data over quantitative data. The process of qualitative research is a very broad field with different definitions and different approaches, with fundamental differences to quantitative research. While quantitative research assumes that objectivity about the world can be determined using particular techniques, qualitative research is much more interpretive and offers an emergent, gradual interpretation of reality (Gallardo, 2008).

There are benefits to both qualitative and quantitative research methods. But a reliance purely on quantitative research could lead to overlooked elements. Silverman (2004) states that quantifiable methods do not take into consideration all the variable which qualitative methods account for. But what are the characteristics of qualitative research? John W. Creswell, a leading theorist on qualitative research, suggests several common characteristics of qualitative research.

Qualitative research is generally conducted on site, with the researcher traveling to the location of study. This allows the researcher access to details about the study otherwise inaccessible, and allows the researcher to develop a rapport with the research participants. Qualitative research also uses several methods that are “interactive and humanistic” (Creswell, 2002, p.183). This translates to high involvement by the participant of the study using a variety of tools to gather data. Another characteristic, according to Creswell, is that knowledge derived from qualitative research is emergent rather than deterministic. The research unfolds during the process, and the process must be flexible to changes. Qualitative research is also highly interpretable, which means that the researcher’s own perception of the research will influence the outcomes. Qualitative research also perceives holistically. This allows for highly complex research to generate many conclusions. The nature of qualitative research also encourages the researcher to reflect on his or her own self, and how his or her own characteristics influence the research. As Creswell states, “The personal-self becomes inseparable from the researcher-self” (2002, p.185). Another characteristic of qualitative research is that, throughout the whole process, the reasoning performed by the researcher is complex, “Although his reasoning is largely inductive, both inductive and deductive processes are at work. The thinking process is also iterative, with a cycling back and forth room data collection and analysis to problem reformulation and back. Added to this are the simultaneous activities of collection, analyzing, and writing of data” (2002, p. 185-6). Finally, typically, qualitative researchers use multiple strategies of inquiry to guide their process (2002).

One of the most popular methods of qualitative research is the interview. Gallardo (2002) reviews the advantages of this tool in the following way, after interviewing the comuneros, or locals, in an agricultural community in Chile to gather information on an old land tenure conflict, the benefits of qualitative methods were clear. The participants helped to guide the researcher with their knowledge and expertise on the subject, and at the same time, the participants were given a real voice in the process, based on their experiences and memories (Gallardo, 2002).
2.1 Research Procedure

2.1.1 Participants
Participants for this research were approached spontaneously in the downtown area of Lidköping throughout one day. I had intended on securing 30 participants, but finally 25 participants were found. I intentionally attempted to secure a wide range of ages, and equally as many men as women.

Of the 25 participants who agreed to participate, 16 returned their cameras. These 16 participants thus provided all of the information for this research. Participants were given the option of revealing information like age, gender and occupation, and including a written response connected to their photos. Two participants chose not to provide their demographics or written answers.

The 16 participants were diverse in gender and age. The age interval of participants was 54 years, and the average age was 40.2 years. Nine of the participants were female and five were male. The demographics of two of the participants were not provided.

The main criterion for the participants was that they were frequent ‘users’ of Lidköping; that either they lived in Lidköping, worked in Lidköping, or spent a lot of time in Lidköping.

2.1.2 Sampling Method
Participants were simply approached in public by myself and asked if they were willing to participate in the research. Potential participants were approached mainly in the center of Lidköping, in the public library, in cafes, and in local shops. I made a point to approach a diverse group, including males and females and diverse ages.

There was no compensation offered for participating in this research. The participants were informed that their photos would be shared with Lidköping Kommun, but that since this research is independent, the photos would not necessarily be used in the actual Hamnstaden development.

2.1.3 Non-Response
In total, 9 of the 25 potential participants did not respond by returning the cameras and response papers. Since I was not able to contact the participants, I cannot say why they chose not to respond. One of the 25 participant simply kept the disposable camera and returned the empty envelop to me. Two participants returned their envelopes and cameras without having taken any photos.

2.1.4 Materials
The main materials for this research were included in a small package each participant received. The container for the package was a self-addressed, pre-paid envelope. Within the envelope was a 27-exposure disposable camera, a sheet of paper which included instructions on one side, and a small form on the back side which participants were asked to fill out, and a short note from my thesis supervisor, authenticating my thesis and offering contact information.

2.1.5 Procedure
First, I acquired 30 disposable cameras. They were very simple in design, with instructions for use written on the exterior.

I also created an instruction sheet for each participant, explained the Hamnstaden context, my goals, their task, and my contact information. The instructions requested that the participants, “With this camera, take only 3 or 4 photos of elements of your urban surroundings in Lidköping that you most value, values that you would like to see
maintained in the development of the new Hamnstaden (Harbour City) in Lidköping.” The back of this instruction sheet was a small form that I asked my participants to fill out along with taking pictures. This form asked for gender (optional), age (optional), occupation (optional), and requested a short written response to the question, “In your opinion, what is the ideal Hamnstad?” Once I created this sheet, I asked a Swedish-speaking friend to translate the sheet into Swedish. I printed out one sheet to accompany each camera. I combined the cameras and instruction sheets into 30 pre-paid, self-addressed envelopes.

My friend, Ainis Ojutkangas accompanied me to Lidköping to assist with distributing the cameras, and, since she is Swedish-speaking, to help with language barriers.

All of the cameras were distributed in central Lidköping. My main source of participants was the city library. This was also the first place I approached people. It seemed to be the most comfortable environment to approach potential participants, and was a good source for a broad range of ages. I also approached potential participants in shops and cafes around central Lidköping. This was also a good source for participants.

When I approached people, I introduced myself and explained that I was a student from Uppsala University conducting research for my Master’s thesis, that I was looking for participants to take 3 or 4 photos for me, and I asked if they were willing to participate. If they said no, I thanked them for their time and left them alone. If they agreed, I thanked them, showed them the contents of the package, explained the instructions clearly, and, very importantly, asked them to return the cameras within one week.

The majority of people refused to participate for varying reasons. Reasons for refusing included being too busy, not being interested, and not being good photographers. However, many people agreed to participate, and by the time I had to leave Lidköping, I had distributed 25 of the 30 packages I brought with me.

After the first week, 9 cameras arrived at my house, and one empty envelope. During the next week, 7 more cameras arrived at my house, for a total of 16 cameras.

3. Results

From the 16 cameras returned, 112 photos were taken. After removing all duplicates and undecipherable photos, 88 photos were included in the results of this research. Also, 14 of the 16 responders included written answers and their demographics to the question sheets I provided. Only participants #13 and #16 did not respond to the written question, nor provide their demographics. Below are all of the results from each of the participants, both their photos and their written responses, if they were provided. Again, the instructions related to the photos was to, “take only 3 or 4 photos of elements of your urban surroundings in Lidköping that you most value, values that you would like to see maintained in the development of the new Hamnstaden (Harbour City) in Lidköping”, and the question related to the written responses was, “In your opinion, what kind of place would the ideal Hamnstaden be?” I have also summarized the themes which occur in the responses of each participant, which will be examined more thoroughly in the Discussion section.
Participant 1: Gender: Woman, Age: 40, Occupation: Clerk

Themes in Responses:
Old buildings, public art, green space, meeting points

Participant 2: Gender: Woman, Age: 17, Occupation: Student

Written response: In your opinion, what kind of place would the ideal Hamnstaden be?

“A place for encounters
  ...Encounters between people
  ...Encounters between water and land
  ...Encounters between past and present
  ...Encounters between humans and experience
  ...Encounters between nature and architecture
  ...Encounters between old and new
  ...Encounters between boldness and serenity”

Themes in Responses:
Old buildings, public art, green space, meeting points
Written response: In your opinion, what kind of place would the ideal Hamnstaden be?

“Modern but also old architecture. It should be open and have old park benches and nice trees. Also a statue that is typically Lidköping. Natural colours and it should be a nice environment for both old and young people and accessible for disabled people.”

Themes in Responses
Old buildings, pedestrian space, public art, green space, River Liden, iconic artifacts

Participant 3 Gender: Girl, Age: 17, Occupation: Doing creative things
Written response: In your opinion, what kind of place would the ideal Hamnstaden be?

“I like the part of Lidköping that looks old. Old nice houses, sculptures, bridges, and then a little splash of colour on everything wouldn’t be bad but something new should come. Everything looks the same. Building needs to be developed in some way, also the creation.”

Themes in Responses
Old buildings, public art, cobblestone, social content, pedestrian space, cafes, bridges, iconic artifacts

Participant 4: Gender: Man, Age: 69, Occupation: Pensioner
Written response: In your opinion, what kind of place would the ideal Hamnstaden be?

- A green roaming area for flaneurs
- A space for cultural experiences.
- A place for the games of children and adults alike.”

Themes in Responses
Green space, bridges, public art, old buildings, Lake Vanern, local economy, culture, pedestrian space

Participant 5: Gender: Woman, Age: 71, Occupation: Ex-nurse

Written response: In your opinion, what kind of place would the ideal Hamnstaden be?

- Closeness to nature
- Access to rental apartments
- Common community space for, for example, bridge (the card game)”

Themes in Responses
Green space, Lake Vanern, affordable living, social content, meeting points

Participant 6: Gender: Man, Age: 69, Occupation: unintelligible
In your opinion, what kind of place would the ideal Hamnstaden be?

“Very light, spacious and a view of the water.
Access to service in the form of healthcare.
Library, swimming opportunities, business.
Spacious parking for car, mobile home and boat.”

Themes in Responses
Local economy, public art, library, social content

Participant 7: Gender: Woman, Age: 48, Occupation: Preschool worker

“A place should be a social meeting place like the main city square in the centre preferably with nature near the area with opportunities for outdoor life – meaning exercise and swimming. Rich cultural life and events of different kinds. Of course a harbour with boats and everything that means.
Environmentally-friendly place of course!
I have taken 3-4 pictures that symbolize the main square centre.
2 pictures of spiken – a good place for fishing – symbolizes the harbour area and boat life
One picture of the Framnas area – meaning outdoor swimming and pool, Vänern museum and restaurant plus walking/biking path along the beach of Vänern where I walk as often as I can all year.”

Themes in Responses
Local economy, meeting points, social content, culture, green space, Lake Vänern, old buildings, iconic artifacts, sustainability, bicycle

Participant 8: Gender: Man, Age: 32, Occupation: Personal Assistant

Written response: In your opinion, what kind of place would the ideal Hamnstaden be?

A place that can give new life to the city’s (illegible) harbour part.

My pictures:
1. Trees/fir = greenness, green is nice
2. Accessible disability symbol with ramps, elevators, etc.
3. Playground for children (and grown-ups with child-like mentalities)

Themes in Responses
Green space, accessibility, playgrounds

Participant 9: Gender: Woman, Age: 18, Occupation: Student
Written response: In your opinion, what kind of place would the ideal Hamnstaden be?

“A sustainable part of the city. A place in the front when it comes to the environment. It would be best if, for example, if car traffic was forbidden and if there was a well-thought bike route instead. It would also be ideal if it could be a meeting place for different people across generational and cultural borders, for example, cultural events within art, theater, music, etc.”

Themes in Responses
Bicycles, meeting points, culture, cafes, green space, sustainability

Participant 10: Gender: Woman, Age: 19, Occupation: Student
Written response: In your opinion, what kind of place would the ideal Hamnstaden be?

“Hamnstaden should be a meeting point, a place where you can feel an aura of calmness. I love cafes and I think there should be a special cafe along the shore of Vänern. Hamnstaden should be a place that inspires people from different countries and cultures, as well as us living in Lidköping. It is extremely important to value the environment. Smart environmental solutions with solar panels and solar cells. Climate-smart construction materials and environmentally-adjusted technology. The best would also be that Hamnstaden had many walking and pedestrian bike paths to minimize the amount of cars.”

Themes in Responses
Pedestrian space, local economy, bicycles, cafes, Lake Vänern, River Liden, sustainability, cobblestone

Participant 11: Gender: Woman, Age: 30, Occupation: Hairdresser

Written response: In your opinion, what kind of place would the ideal Hamnstaden be?

“Affordable, central living. Shops and restaurants near the water. Walking path along the water. Small-boat harbour.”
**Participant 12:** Gender: Man, Age: 52, Occupation: Civil servant

**Written response:** In your opinion, what kind of place would the ideal Hamnstaden be?

1. A place with access to boats and piers.
2. Open grassy areas for picnics, Frisbee, sunbathing and swimming.

**Themes in Responses**
Green space, library, Lake Vänern, old buildings, pedestrian space, social content.

**Participant 13:** Demographics not provided
Themes in Responses
Pedestrian space, public art, iconic artifacts, River Liden

Participant 14: Gender: Man, Age: 29, Occupation: Within the cultural sector

Written response: In your opinion, what kind of place would the ideal Hamnstaden be?

“It would be a place where you could mix the old times style and environment with the new-times modern view on sustainable development. You could, for example, use old street bricks which have their origin from Rörstrand instead of soulless concrete slabs. One or more green areas with linden trees would be nice. Passive houses that aren’t that big and luxurious could be built. The house facades could be in the same style as Lidköping’s old stone or wood houses. The streets wouldn’t necessarily have to be straight because it gives such a sterile impression. One or more meeting places should exist. Maybe a part of the library, a newspaper room and cafe where people could pay spontaneous visits to.”

Themes in Responses
Green space, cobblestone, pedestrian space, old buildings, sustainability, library, cafe
Participant 15: Gender: Woman, Age: 55, Occupation: Librarian

Written response: In your opinion, what kind of place would the ideal Hamnstaden be?

“Closeness to water
Cozy
Connection to the small town
Old style mixed with modern
Old-style street bricks
Bike
No cars in the area
Green.”

Themes in responses:
Old buildings, bicycles, pedestrian space, old buildings, cafes

Participant 16: Demographics not provided
Themes in responses:
Public art, old buildings, cafes, library.

4. Analysis

For the analysis of the content of both the photos and the written responses, I have identified 20 themes which occur among the responses. The themes are: old buildings, green space, social content, public art, pedestrian space, iconic artefacts, bridges, Lake Vänern, River Liden, local economy, culture, accessibility, playgrounds, bicycles, cafes, sustainability, affordable living, cobblestone streets, meeting points, and the libraries. All of these themes have been identified because they appear in at least two different participants’ responses. If a theme was mentioned by one participant, but then not again by any other, it was not included in this list of themes.
This chart shows the common trends among the responses and includes information from both photographs and written responses.

**Explanation of categories**

**Old buildings**
One of the most common themes among the responses was old architecture. 10 of the 16 participants included old buildings in their photos or written responses. This category is rather broad, since old architecture is a broad definition. However, elements which appear in this category are traditional red and yellow Swedish houses, old doors and doorways, old balconies, and the iconic Radhus in the main square.

**Green space**
Another one of the most common themes among the photos was greenery. 10 of the 16 participants included it in their responses. These elements included parks in central Lidköping, and greenery in more rural areas outside of Lidköping. These images display elements like trees, grass, public parks, forests, etc. While many photos have elements of greenery in them, I only counted the photos that were obviously targeting greenery (and not just greenery in the background, for example).

**Pedestrian Streets**
8 participants included pedestrian streets in their responses. Pedestrian streets are streets which are inaccessible to cars. Lidköping’s main shopping street, Stenportsgatan, is a pedestrian street, and is common among the photos. Other images of pedestrian streets include small back-alleys which are accessible only to cyclists and pedestrians.

**Public Art**
Public art was another common trend. 7 participants included elements of this theme. Common elements were statues which appear throughout the city in public spaces. Also, a few participants photographed un-commissioned public art, including graffiti and street art.

**Cafes**
7 participants mentioned local cafes in their photos and written responses. The majority of these photos focused on cafe Söderströms Conditori on the main shopping street, Stenportsgatan, and the cafe attached to the library on the same street.

**Social content**
Social content was another common theme among the photos. 6 participants demonstrated their high value on social content in the urban environment. Several of the participants demonstrated this value through their process of photographing, which was done with friends or family. The outdoor market which takes place at the main square was featured in several photos.

**Lake Vänern**
Lake Vänern was also a theme among the responses, appearing in 6 participants’ responses.

**Local Economy**
6 participants suggested the importance of the local economy in their responses. In the written responses, this topic was discussed broadly, while the photos typically showed images of local cafes, or of the market which occurs occasionally in the main town square.

**Iconic Artefacts**
6 participants also alluded to their high value on artefacts which are unique to Lidköping. In the photos, images of the Radhus were interpreted as being iconic symbols.

**Cobblestone Streets**
5 participants alluded to the importance of the old cobblestone streets in Lidköping. This was mostly represented through photos, while participant 14 even suggested a local source for new cobblestones. These cobblestone streets also relate to the old architecture, which was also very popular.

**River Liden**
River Liden was a common theme among 4 participants. The river, called Liden, drains Lake Vänern and flows through the center of the city. The river will act as the eastern border for Hamnstaden, so it is an important aspect for the new city developments. Any photo which focused on the river was included in this category.

**Bicycles**
4 participants included bicycles in their photographic or written responses. The photos contained images of bicycles, and bicycle-related objects like bicycle-parking.

**Sustainability**
The trend of sustainability, which could only appear in the written responses, was alluded to by 4 participants. Since it is difficult to photograph ‘sustainability’, none of the photos were included in this category. Only if a participant mentioned sustainability or ‘environmentally-friendly’ was their response included in this category.

**Meeting Points**
4 participants expressed their high value of an urban environment with meeting points.

**Library**
3 participants included the public library in their responses, which is located on the main shopping street, Stenportsgatan. It should be noted that many of the participants were sought out at this library.

**Bridges**
Among 3 participants, bridges were highly valued.

**Culture**
3 participants also indicated the importance of an urban environment that promotes culture. This included both local culture, and non-Swedish culture.
**Playgrounds**

2 participants included images of playgrounds in their responses. These playgrounds appeared on both school properties and in public parks.

**Accessibility**

For 2 participants, accessibility for disabled people was highly valued.

**Affordable living**

Finally, 2 participants, both in their written responses, indicated that affordable living was an important element.

**What is not in the photos**

My research question to the participants resulted in photos with content that convey a lot of information. However, it is also interesting to note what is not in the photos. For example, while central Lidköping has many chain or ‘big brand’ stores, almost none of them are featured in the photographs. Also, there were very few photos of outdoor activities. While this angle of analysis is highly interpretable, it should not go un-noted.

**Sense of Humour**

Several of the photos returned to me contained elements of humour or light-heartedness. For example, a photo of a cartoon bather, or pictures of people in funny poses suggest a sense of humour among the photos. In the context of this research project, this could suggest the importance of an approachable, light-hearted city feeling. These photos suggest that a city that is ‘uptight’, or too formal is not a particular value of the participants.

**What is important to Lidköping’s Identity**

Many of the photos included ‘iconic’ aspects of Lidköping; the Radhus in the town square, the town square itself, the river Liden, several pieces of recognizable public art, etc. This could be interpreted to suggest the importance of developing and maintaining Lidköping’s identity and personality. Items and artifacts that are specific only to Lidköping appeared in many photos, and suggest that people value having unique, recognizable elements to their city.

**Comparing Response Sheet Answers and Photos**

Many of the trends which occur in the response sheets mirror the trends from the photos, but are expressed in different ways. While the photos give a visual indication of what is highly valued in Lidköping, the written answers give it in words. Also, some elements of the written responses cannot be captured on film, for example, the desire to have cheap rent and affordable living, or the concept of sustainability. Also, it is likely that some elements of the written responses did not appear in the photos because there was no opportunity to photograph these elements. For example, the photographs were taken in early spring, when it is too cold for outdoor activities like Frisbee or swimming, activities which were mentioned in the response sheets.

**4.1 Post-research analysis, limitations of the study and lessons for the future**

**On the distribution method**

I deliberately chose an unstructured method to distribute the disposable cameras. I wanted to make the process very open to the participants, and to take away as much pressure as possible. The very interesting aspect of this process was the wide array of reactions I received while approaching people to ask them to participate.
The first problem was that far more people I approached refused to participate than to participate. This alone made the process very exhausting. I began to approach people expecting to be refused, which was not a very motivating thought. I did not record every denial I encountered, but roughly 75% of the people I approached refused to participate.

The reasons for refusing to participate were very diverse. Some claimed to not have any opinion about the subject, some claimed to be too busy to participate, others simply refused without having any reason, or some simply were not interested in my research. Many people seemed very confused about why I was approaching them, and in those cases, people did not give me full enough attention to be interested in my project, or they chose not to understand the simple task I was requesting from them.

Some people were even rude when they were approached. For example, Aina-Maria approached a group of older men to participate, and before she could finish explaining the project, the men were laughing at her, and asking her to ‘come back tomorrow’. This kind of response made the process very unmotivating, since it created a sense of unpredictability about the people who were approached.

I quickly became aware of how to articulate my request to people. The instructions for this project are somewhat complex if heard spontaneously, and I realized that if I took too much time to explain, the person became either uninterested or confused. It was very important for me to be concise, approachable and friendly. Also, a big factor in my articulation was how I used my language. Being an English-speaker, and approaching people in English also likely made the interaction more confusing. I attempted to greet people in Swedish, and to ask them, in Swedish, if they spoke English. Usually, this reduced the surprise of being approached in English. However, my heavy North American accent made it difficult for some people to understand me, and this scared away some potential participants. Also, some people I approached simply did not speak English, so it was impossible to ask them to participate. I should also question my status as a foreigner in the process. Perhaps some people refused to participate or to listen to me because of the simple fact that I am not Swedish.

I also used humour to relax the person I was approaching, by telling small jokes about the project. This seemed to work quite well in making the people I was approaching more comfortable with me.

While some people were cold towards me, many people were very pleasant to speak with. Most of these people were hesitant when I first approached them, but they quickly became interested in my project as it became clearer to them. It was very relieving when a person seemed interested in my project.

In general, this method of distributing the research materials was not sufficiently effective. It was time- and energy-consuming, and resulted in a lot of denials to participate. One possible improvement could be to leave the cameras unattended in a public place with written instructions on how to participate. This would be far more time- and energy-efficient for the researcher, and would encourage the low-pressure environment I hoped to generate. However, this approach could also result in lower return rates of the cameras, since the participants would feel even less responsibility towards the research, and possibly this approach would result in a longer waiting time for the cameras to be returned.

**Participants**

While the distribution method was not ideal, the responses from the participants were sufficient enough for the purpose of this thesis. Of the 25 cameras distributed, 16 were returned. I was pleased with this rate of return, and it demonstrates that most of the participants were willing to contribute their opinions to the project. Moreover, when I distributed the cameras, I asked for the participants to take only 3 or 4 photos with the cameras. This was also requested in the instruction sheet. However, almost all of the participants took more than the requested amount of
photos (including one participant who took 28 photos with the camera). I interpret this to suggest the enthusiasm of the participant to include their opinions. Participants took the extra time to take more photos than was necessary.

Also in the written responses, several participants expressed support for my project, and one even included contact information to receive updates about the project. It is obvious that some of the people who chose to participate were enthusiastic about it.

**Research Questions**

While my two research questions complement each other, they could have been much better constructed. Both the question for the photos and the question for the written response were perhaps too open. This resulted in a very wide array of responses, making the data difficult to interpret. More specific questions could have resulted in more reliable data.

Also, while the two research questions do complement each other, they are also very different. They asked two different questions which resulted in two sets of answers, not always harmonizing. For example, the question for the photos asked participants to reflect on their actual reality in the current town of Lidköping, and to state their values based on that, while the question for the written response asked participants to reflect on a future reality, one that does not yet exist. This lack of harmony made the data inconsistent at times.

**Influence on Responses**

I constructed my research method to create a very open environment for the participants to contribute responses that were uninfluenced from exterior forces. My research question was deliberately unbiased. However, in this kind of situation, even subtle influence can affect the participant’s responses. For example, it is possible that by explaining to the participants that I am studying sustainable development, I would influence the participants to think about sustainable development, and include it in their responses. Many of the written responses, and even many of the photos, contained elements of sustainable development. There could be a relation between my status as a sustainable development student, and the high levels of responses about sustainable development.

**Timing**

The timing of this research could have influenced the outcomes. The cameras were distributed in early spring in relatively cold temperatures. Perhaps there were elements of the town that are of high value to participants, but which are not common when the weather is cold. For example, outdoor activities are likely very important for many of the participants, but were not represented in the photos.

Also, the cold weather could have affected the rate of camera returns. Perhaps if the weather was nicer, people would have been more likely to go outside and take photos.

**Suggestions for Improvements**

A major logistical improvement on this thesis would have been to collect digital photos instead of analog, film photos. This could be done by setting up a homepage online and encouraging Lidköping citizens to upload photos directly from their digital cameras or mobile phones with the same instructions I have given with the disposable cameras. This would have saved money and physical resources, and would have allowed for a broader base of participants.

One problem with this method, however, would be the question of informing citizens about the project and website address, and ensuring that they remember to take photos. The camera acts as a physical reminder for participants, and without that physical reminder to take photos, participants may not feel as responsible.

However, in general, visual ethnography as a form of qualitative research is still valuable. As several other researchers have demonstrated, the advantages of qualitative research overwhelm those of qualitative research.
Qualitative research allows the participants to guide the process with their expertise on the subject. In this case, who knows Lidköping better than those who live there? Qualitative research also accounts for a different kind of data, one that cannot be quantified. Finally, qualitative research gives the participants a real voice. The research begins conducted is most important to them, so it is important that they are properly represented (Gallardo, 2002, p.52).

5. Discussion

The twenty common themes among the photos reveal a lot of information about the priorities of the participants, and about the range of their values.

In general, many of the trends in the photos and written responses suggest a commitment towards sustainability, specifically ecological, economical and social sustainability. Several of the participants specifically mentioned the importance of sustainability in their written responses. Ecologically, there were several photos of bicycles and bicycle parking, and only one photo of a car parking lot. This emphasis on human-powered transportation suggests a commitment to sustainable ecology. This is also visible in the high frequency of car-free streets among the photos. Also, the high frequency of references to green space suggests this commitment to ecology. Economically, while central Lidköping contains many chain stores and malls, almost none of them were featured in the photos. Instead, participants chose to focus on local enterprises, like the market in the main square, and the small cafes on Stenportsgatan. There is certainly a focus on small-scale, local economy. Socially, several participants suggested that Hamnstaden should be socially equitable, with space for people of different ages and cultures.

The high rate of images of old architecture suggests that cultural identity is important to the participants. Many of the older buildings included in the photos were specifically Swedish style buildings, and their frequency in the photos suggests that maintaining Swedish culture in Hamnstaden is important. These buildings can be iconic for cities, and elements which make that city unique.

The frequency of including the main town square could also suggest the high value of iconic elements in the city. The town square in Lidköping is important for the town’s identity, and it seems that many of the participants desire to have similar iconic places in Hamnstaden. Also, the town square is a popular meeting point for Lidköping citizens. This could also be important for Lidköping’s inhabitants. Finally, it seems that, in the photos, participants were also capturing the open space of the main square. This feature is also highly valued for the participants.

One interesting aspect of the photos was the social content. Many photos included elements of social interaction. In fact, it was obvious from several of the contributions that some of the participants completed the task of taking pictures with friends or family. They chose to make the entire process a social one. This is a very powerful observation, and is very telling of the priorities of the participants. It is important for their public space to encourage public meetings, and possibly for public space to offer activities for families and friends.

The appearance of Lake Vänern in the photos is also very important. Currently, a tourist to Lidköping would hardly realize that the city actually on the shore of Lake Vänern, since the town center and the lake are separated by an unapproachable industrial area. The idea of Hamnstaden is to make the lake more accessible to people. The appearance of the lake in so many photos confirms how important it is for citizens to have better access to it.

6. Conclusion

The resulting data from this research provided some interesting insight into what the participants value in their current urban environment and their visions are for the upcoming Hamnstaden development. The results and content
of the responses were very diverse, but the highest valued elements in the urban environment for these 16 participants were old buildings, green space, pedestrian space, public art, and cafes.

The participation from the research was sufficient enough for the purposes of this research, however, the resulting data should be viewed as being specific to these 16 participants, and not at all representative of the town of Lidköping.

The method of this research was slightly experimental and contained several mistakes. However, with some revision, this method of visual ethnography combined with written observations could be valuable to the urban development process. Obviously, this method should not be used independently, but combined with other methods of planning urban environments.

7. Acknowledgements

There are several other people responsible for the production of this Master’s thesis, and I would like to thank them for their help and advice. First, I sincerely thank the 16 participants for taking the time to take some pictures and answer some questions for me. I would like to thank my internal supervisor Gloria Gallardo for your insightfulness, willingness to help, and encouragement and to Johanna MacTaggart and Ove Ringsby at the Biosphere Vänerskärgården Kinnekulle for their counsel and enthusiasm. Also, thank you to my thesis evaluator Maria Ignatieva. Thank you, as well, to Ainis Ojutkangas, for helping me distribute cameras, helping with translating anything that needed to be translated, and for your patience and encouragement. I would also like to thank Andrew Butler for giving me some valuable tips. Also, I would like to acknowledge the support I received from my good friends Stina Andersson, Sara Hedlund, and Maggie Melin. Finally, thanks to Brian Drizzler.
8. References


Sånnek, R. 2013, email. 27 February, < richard.sannek@Lidköping.se >.


Appendix

1. Master’s thesis supervisor, Gloria Gallardo’s authentication note:

To Whom it May Concern,
I acknowledge that this research is being conducted for Greg Stone’s Master’s thesis in Sustainable Development with the Department of Earth Sciences at the University of Uppsala. As his thesis supervisor, feel free to contact me about this project at 018 471 72 13 or gloria.gallardo@csduppsala.uu.se.

Sincerely,

Gloria Gallardo

2. Instruction sheet distributed to participants, English version:

Dear Participant,

Please use this camera to help me complete my Master’s thesis in Sustainable Development at Uppsala University. I am searching for your opinions on your urban environment through photographs for the upcoming Hamnstaden development.

Instructions:
With this camera, take only 3 or 4 photos of elements of your urban surroundings in Lidköping that you most value, values that you would like to see maintained in the development of the new Hamnstaden (Harbour City) in Lidköping. This can include anything from a particular tree you like, a place that encourages social meetings, public events, etc. These are just examples. Along with these photos, please answer the written question on the back of the page. Once you have taken 3 or 4 photos and answered the written question, please put the camera and this sheet of paper in the envelope and put it in the mail. Please send the camera back within one week of getting it! I have a very limited amount of time to complete this research.

The goal of this thesis is to collect qualitative information from a broad range of Lidköping inhabitants to assess what Lidköping’s inhabitants want in the new urban area Hamnstaden.
I intend on sharing this research with Lidköping Kommun but, since this research is independent of the Kommun, there is no guarantee that your photographs will actually be used in the development of Hamnstaden.
The success of this thesis relies on your participation, so thank you very much for your help!

Sincerely,

Greg Stone
MSc. Sustainable Development

Participant Information

Gender (optional): ______________________
Age (optional): ______________________
Occupation (optional): ______________________

In your opinion, what kind of place would the ideal Hamnstaden be?
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
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