

Dolla Dolla Bill, Y'all: A Youth Participatory Action Research Project

Findings Report | Juxtaposition Arts

Executive Summary

Overarching Research Questions

- What are the experiences of Black business owners on West Broadway?
- Who owns the land that houses those businesses?
- How can we build collective wealth for North Minneapolis residents?

Approach + Method

- This project was developed and executed by Juxtaposition Arts' Tactical Urbanism team which uses art/design-based approaches and community engagement practices to create interventions in public space and speak with folks about issues that affect them in that public space.
- The Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) project was conducted over the course of 12 months.
- Initially, 8 Juxtaposition Arts (JXTA) apprentices (youth staff) and 2 adult leads were working on the project. Because Tactical typically works on multiple projects at one time, we created a smaller work group of 3 apprentices and 1 adult lead who would work solely on this project. Other apprentices and staff offered support as needed.
- We used qualitative and quantitative data:
 - ◆ Collected 19 usable surveys from business owners and 11 usable interviews from Black business owners
 - ◆ All businesses were located on West Broadway between Penn Ave and I-94
 - ◆ 84% of surveyed business owners identified as black and as owning a small business
 - ◆ Analyzed land ownership along West Broadway using taxpayer zip codes available in Hennepin County parcel data

Primary Findings + Recommendations

Because of our small sample size, our findings are limited. However, the Black business owners that we interviewed:

- describe resources like usable space, capital, economic literacy, and responsible landlords as rare on West Broadway.
- stated that people from outside the community would describe Black business on West Broadway as suspicious and challenging regardless of how successful the business has been or how long they've been open.
- identified the biggest challenges to owning a business on West Broadway as crime and the stigma that comes with it, lack of community support from each other and financial support from institutions like banks.

- stated that the biggest opportunities for them lie in the growth and development of the abundance of vacant buildings/lots and foot traffic along West Broadway, as well as the Avenue's central location in North Minneapolis. There is also opportunity in Black business owners' creativity and adaptability.

Outcomes + Actions

- Zine Summary – We created a zine (self-produced magazine) as an artistic method for sharing our project and findings with JXTA's surrounding community. The zine format is informal and easy to reproduce. We have delivered copies to businesses that were interviewed and will share this project with community members during bus stop engagements in early 2017.
- Community Presentation – We have presented our work to the rest of the YPAR Network and are planning to host a community presentation in February 2017. Northsiders, business owners, youth, and other stakeholders will be invited to learn more about our project and bring more expertise to the work.
- Street Vendor Pilot Program – Apprentices have identified researching Minneapolis street vendor policies and street vending in other cities, as well as developing a street vendor pilot program as a possible next step.
- Keep interviewing Black business owners and create a West Broadway Black Business Directory – We'd like to increase our sample size in the next six months by refining our method for administering surveys and scheduling interviews with Black business owners. A West Broadway Black business directory will be created.

Team Introductions

Youth Researchers

- Dara Crawford
 - Dara is a 16 year old junior at Wayzata High School. She is an apprentice in the Tactical and Environmental Design Labs at JXTA.

- Cameron Downey
 - Cameron is a senior at the Blake School and a Tactical apprentice at JXTA. She loves to write, talk and create in all ways possible. She likes dogs and learning new things.

- Rochelle Lund
 - Rochelle is a 19 year old multimedia artist and an apprentice in the Tactical and Textile Labs at JXTA. She graduated high school from the School of Environmental Studies in June 2016. She is intrigued by anything that has to do with the arts and her motivation is rooted in helping folks and making the world a better place.

Staff Leaders

- Adrienne Doyle – Project Manager
 - Adrienne Doyle is a multi-media artist whose work is based in creating space for people of color and shifting narrative. Her practice develops DIY tools and models for the self-expression and self-determination of herself and her community. By centering the collective, connective, and vulnerable aspects of marginalized identities, Adrienne challenges widely-believed narratives and invites her community to speak their truths. Self-publishing and zine-making are at the crux of this work.

- Kristen Murray – Tactical Lab Lead
 - Kristen is a designer, engineer, and educator with a background in youth development, urban design and program development. Kristen sees the intersection of design, art, research and entrepreneurship as a boost to a youth artist's impact in their immediate environments. About working at Juxtaposition, Kristen says, "It is a wonderful thing to be a part of a family of young people, artists, designers and leaders who ask big, tough questions and look at the world with a sense of possibility and a desire to create."

JXTA Tactical Apprentices who assisted with the project:

Amairani Jonapa, Canaan Ray-Strong, Chango Cummings, Ky'Mari Love, Namir Fearce, Tiara Cortez, Ysabella Johnson,

Project Advisors:

DeAnna Cummings (JXTA), Kristine Miller (UMN), and Roxanne O'Brien (Northside Community Organizer)

Research Process + Method

Brief Project Summary + Timeline

To address our research questions, we took the following steps over the course of approximately 12 months:

→ Oct – Dec 2015: Brainstorming + Background Research

- ◆ Brainstormed and discussed possible topics important to Northside youth and residents and identified the group's collective values
- ◆ Researched other YPAR projects to get a better understanding of what YPAR looks like in practice
- ◆ Took a walking survey of West Broadway between Penn Ave and I-94 to become more familiar with what is located where along the Avenue
- ◆ Decided to focus our work on the topic of black wealth and West Broadway and began to research Black Wall Street and cooperative economics models - not POC, not comparison, why can't we recreate Black Wall Street
- ◆ Invited Neeraj Mehta (from CURA at UMN and Northside resident) to share his Race, Place and Poverty workshop with us
- ◆ Identified four core research questions:
 - How can we create more long-lasting economic opportunities for potential business owners and consumers of color who already live in North Minneapolis?
 - Who are the North Minneapolis residents that own a business in their neighborhood and what are their stories/needs?
 - What short-term and long-term solutions can we create or advocate for?
 - Where are the opportunities to meet two community needs at once?
- ◆ Created survey and interview questions for business owners and Northside residents.

→ Jan – April 2016: Reasoning + Refining

- ◆ Met with Duane Johnson, creator of the Tuloko app and Black Wall Street expert
- ◆ Interviewed Rob Hanson (WBC) and Oskar Ly (AEDA) to learn about the economic development work of their respective organizations
- ◆ Assembled a YPAR Advisory Board that consisted of DeAnna Cummings (JXTA), Kristine Miller (UMN), and Roxanne O'Brien (Northside Community Organizer) to help us refine our plans for our research questions, method, and survey and interview questions
- ◆ Received a workshop from DA Bullock on basic video skills and using video to construct narrative
- ◆ Met with Sheri Horowitz and Jeff Washburn from the City of Lakes Community Land Trust and talked about how community land trusts work, how CLCLT makes houses affordable for people to buy, and commercial land trusts.

- ◆ Created a game based on the theory of 8 Forms of Capital to interrogate the definitions of wealth and capital, and piloted the game during a bus stop engagement
- ◆ Read Michael Bonds', "Looking Beyond the Numbers: The Struggles of Black Businesses to Survive: A Qualitative Approach", originally published in the *Journal of Black Studies* in 2007, and decided to use similar interview questions and compare West Broadway's Black business owners' answers to those of Black business owners in Milwaukee, MI.
- ◆ Solidified our data collection methods:
 - Survey for business owners
 - Interview for Black business owners
 - Analyzing parcel data and land ownership

→ **May – Aug 2016: Survey + Interview**

- ◆ Created a Google Forms survey and a paper survey for business owners
- ◆ Walked in teams between Penn Ave and I-94 on West Broadway to survey business owners and interview Black business owners
- ◆ Recorded survey responses in a spreadsheet and transcribed audio recordings of interviews
- ◆ Identified and mapped taxpayer zip codes for the land parcels along West Broadway between Penn Ave and I-94
- ◆ Interviewed Marcus Owens, President of the Northside Economic Opportunity Network to learn more about NEON's work and the resources they offer

→ **Sept – Nov 2016: Analysis + Share Out**

- ◆ Hosted and invited youth from Cookie Cart, Appetite for Change, Juxtaposition Arts, and the surrounding area to a Youth Visioning Workshop – youth used a modeling exercise to talk about what they wanted for the future of West Broadway and what steps need to be taken to manifest those desires
- ◆ Analyzed quantitative and qualitative results of the surveys, interviews and parcel data
- ◆ Created zine to share our findings during bus stop engagements and with the business owners we interviewed
- ◆ Presented to YPAR Network at Youthprise
- ◆ Plan to host a community presentation for Northsiders and other stakeholders in late January 2017
- ◆ Plan for next steps through June 2017
 - Interview and survey more businesses
 - Research street vendor programs that already exist and Minneapolis policies around street vending

Our Research Question + Goals

Core Research Questions:

- What are the experiences of Black business owners on West Broadway?
- Who owns the land that houses those businesses?
- How can we build collective wealth for North Minneapolis residents?

JXTA's Tactical Urbanism team usually engages in client-driven work, so we took this opportunity to work with community issues identified by our youth researchers. All of our youth researchers are employed on West Broadway and most of them live in North Minneapolis. After much brainstorming and discussion, our team decided to center our work on Black wealth and ownership on West Broadway, holding the legacy of Tulsa, Oklahoma's Black Wall Street as inspiration.

Understanding the societal circumstances that made Black Wall Street possible was imperative to the development of our project's direction. Institutional and physical racial segregation was at the root of Black Wall Street's success. Jim Crow laws and the railroads that separate white neighbors from Greenwood, the Black neighborhood in which Black Wall Street was situated, are examples of that segregation. After developing economic autonomy, Black Wall Street was decimated by its white neighbors in 1921. Instead of trying to reimagine a contemporary economic climate similar to that of 1920's Tulsa, we chose to meet Black business owners along West Broadway and learn about their experiences and needs, research the property development happening along West Broadway, and further interrogate ideas of wealth, capital and ownership by creating a game.

Our Survey + Interview Methods

Surveys

Our survey questions and groups of target participants were revised multiple times by the summer of 2016, when we administered the bulk of our surveys and interviews. We created an online survey using Google Forms and a paper survey with info on where to find the online survey. The survey consisted of a number of questions intended to collect basic information about the business owners and their businesses.

We asked

- the name of the business and the owner
- the address of the business
- the race of the owner
- how long the business had been open
- if the business was part of a franchise
- if the business had changed hands at any point
- how many employees worked there
- what types of services and/or products were offered, and
- If the business owner rented or owned the property.

To administer our survey, our youth researchers broke into teams to visit as many businesses as possible from mid-June until mid-August. Most business owners filled out the survey during our visit. If the owner wasn't there, we left surveys with employees and picked them up later. All survey responses were entered into a spreadsheet.

Interviews

Our interview questions came from Michael Bonds', "Looking Beyond the Numbers: The Struggles of Black Businesses to Survive: A Qualitative Approach." We wanted to be able to compare our findings with similar data on another economic corridor, but didn't have the resources to complete two sets surveys and interviews. Using the interview questions from Bonds' work created an opportunity to compare the experiences and need of Black business owners across state lines.

Our interview questions were as follows:

- What words would you use to describe opportunities for Black business ownership on West Broadway?
- What words would you think others would use to describe opportunities for Black business ownership on West Broadway?
- What do you think are some of the biggest challenges for Black business ownership on West Broadway?
- What do you think are some of the biggest opportunities for Black business ownership on West Broadway?

All of our interviews were conducted in person and typically took about 15 minutes to complete. Audio from the interviews was recorded on Adrienne's phone and transcribed by youth researchers. As a group, we looked at the responses to each interview question and pulled themes, paying attention to shared sentiments among the interviewees.

We will further analyze the qualitative data by comparing it to the findings from Bonds' report and creating visual representations of our findings.

Challenges + Limitations

Choosing a research topic, further refining our research questions, and deciding on what we wanted the project to look like was a difficult and lengthy process. We managed to pull the heady wondering phase of the project to a close and build an actionable research process.

In early 2016, we attempted to organize a focus group in order to test our survey and interview questions and receive feedback. We invited four or five business owners of color and only one attended. Most of our invitations went out through email and to business owners we didn't already have a relationship with. If we tried something like this again, we would probably be more successful meeting with each invited business owner in person.

As we began to survey and interview business owners we ran into a few challenges. Scheduling and executing interviews proved difficult because employees at non-franchised corporate businesses along West Broadway said that corporate policies prohibit them from completing our survey and interview. We also had trouble scheduling interviews with Black business owners either because of lack of time or misorganized notes. These two challenges resulted in a sample size that is smaller than what we initially hoped for.

We lost a few interview transcriptions due to a broken laptop hard drive and had to transcribe the interviews again. Our limited meeting and working time was also a detriment to our project. Our Tactical team typically meets 1-2 times a week throughout JXTA's year-round programming schedule.

Findings + Recommendations

Parcel Data

Using GIS collected data for the land parcels along West Broadway between Penn Ave and I-94, we identified the taxpayers' zip codes, mapped the parcels, and translated the data into a narrative. Our findings are as follows:

- 33% of land parcels are owned by taxpayers with zip codes in cities and towns outside of Minneapolis, but still inside the state of Minnesota
- 27% of land parcels are owned by taxpayers with North Minneapolis zip codes (55411, 55412)
- 20% of land parcels are owned by taxpayers with zip codes in other parts of Minneapolis
- 14% of land parcels are owned by the City of Minneapolis
- 3% of land parcels are owned by Hennepin County
- 2% of land parcels are owned by taxpayers with zip codes from outside the state of Minnesota
- 1% of land parcels are owned by the Minneapolis Public School District

Survey Results – Quantitative

Of the 19 business owners surveyed:

- 84% identified as Black, and 84% identified as owning a small business
- 42% had been in business for 3 years or less
- 73% had owned the business since it opened, and
- 63% rented the property that housed their business.
- Businesses surveyed were either retail, food, or services.

Interview Results – Qualitative

- What words would you use to describe opportunities for Black business ownership on West Broadway?
 - ◆ **Rare** – Starting and maintaining a business is difficult. Folks described Black-owned businesses on West Broadway as “trying to survive.” Habitable properties are scarce.
 - ◆ **Lacking** – Many Black business owners expressed lack of access to resources like funding, financial literacy and education on how to run a business, usable buildings, and responsible landlords and property managers.
 - ◆ **Potential for Growth** – The adaptability and unique services of Black business owners was identified as signifiers for growth. Landlords' willingness to rent property was also mentioned.
- What words would you think others would use to describe opportunities for Black business ownership on West Broadway?
 - ◆ **Established** – Black business owners used words like “successful”, “thriving”, “legacy”, and “longevity.” There are Black-owned businesses that have been on Broadway for upwards of 20 years.

- ◆ **Suspicious** – Business owners mentioned the narrative of the Northside being a violent as a deterrent for people who are not from the area or do not go there regularly. They said it “depends on what angle people are coming from.” Some people assume that the stores are “dusty” and sometimes people assume that there is fraudulent activity happening there. Some people are unaware that Black-owned businesses exist on West Broadway.
- ◆ **Challenging** – Owning a business requires patience and perseverance.
- What do you think are some of the biggest challenges for Black business ownership on West Broadway?
 - ◆ **Unsafe** – Black business owners reported that the crime and the stigma surrounding the Northside hurts their business. Violent crimes happen near businesses and put customers and employees in danger
 - ◆ **Community and Financial Support** – Black business owners need to support each other. There’s a lack of direction for Black men and young people in the neighborhood. It’s difficult to get financial support and loans
 - ◆ **Other** – A shortage of parking spaces and businesses selling the same products or services were mentioned here.
- What do you think are some of the biggest opportunities for Black business ownership on West Broadway?
 - ◆ **Development** – Black business owners said that the potential for development is the biggest opportunity on West Broadway. The vacant lots and buildings in disrepair would become usable. Businesses get a lot of foot traffic along the Avenue and there are a good amount of people looking for work. West Broadway being “in the heart of the Northside” was also cited as an opportunity.
 - ◆ **Creativity** – There are lots of opportunities for old and new business owners to think outside the box and bring different kinds of businesses to West Broadway

We have yet to compare our analysis with that of Bonds’. We will revisit this aspect of our project in early January 2017.

Youth Visioning Workshop

On Oct 10th, 2016, the Tactical team invited young people from Cookie Cart, Appetite for Change, JXTA, and the surrounding area to a youth visioning workshop. We used a modeling exercise to talk about what they want for the future of West Broadway as the generation that will inherit it. In small groups, we discussed the values and spaces that were important to our ideal West Broadway and the actions we could take to manifest our hopes for the future of the neighborhood.

Folks wanted

- Green space – plants, community gardens, parks, trees, plaza space
- family/intergenerational spaces – roller rinks, swimming pools, library, restaurant, movie theatre, places for young kids

- Healthier and affordable food options – more grocery stores, community-owned co-op, no more restaurants like Hooks, more sit-down restaurants, less fast food, more community gardens
- arts/cultural spaces – performance spaces, community bandshell, black history museum, more public art
- Urban planning changes – Emerson turned into a walking street to promote businesses, less parking and more stores, speed bumps and roundabouts to slow traffic, energy efficient bus stops

Folks valued

- Safe places
- Positive vibes
- Community businesses
- Parks
- Health – food, physical, mental, collective
- Art and performance spaces and functional public art

Steps to manifest

- Open another affordable Northside food co-op
- Start an organization and/or organize people
- Meet with folks at the City to learn more about how development decisions get made
- Learn more about urban planning and design
- Reach out to folks already doing “the work”

Next Steps

- Community Presentation – We have presented our work to the rest of the YPAR Network and are planning to host a community presentation in February 2017. Northsiders, business owners, youth, and other stakeholders will be invited to learn more about our project and bring more expertise to the work.
- Update YPAR Findings Zine – We have found more refined ways to communicate our findings and would like to republish the zine in early 2017. We will hold 2-3 bus stop engagements along West Broadway to talk with Northsiders about our project.
- Street Vendor Pilot Program – Our Youth Researchers have identified crafting a Street Vendor Pilot Program as the desired next step. We will work to develop this idea with our YPAR Advisory Board and create an actionable plan from there.
- Keep interviewing Black business owners and create a West Broadway Black Business Directory – We’d like to increase our sample size in the next six months by refining our method for administering surveys and scheduling interviews with Black business owners. A West Broadway Black business directory will be created.