Visualizing Support Through Speculative Digital Spaces

Master of Design Thesis Defense

Presented By: Melissa Palermo   Supervisor: Dr. Rilla Khaled

Presentation Overview

1 Introduction

2 Theoretical Framework

3 Research Methodology

4 Design Research & Process

5 Reflections & Conclusion

Introduction

Rape culture is...

a culture wherein sexual violence, especially sexual violence against women, is treated as a normal and acceptable part of our daily lives.

From #YesAllWomen to #MeToo

"#YesAllWomen because 'I have a boyfriend' is more effective than 'I'm not interested' – men respect other men more than my right to say no"

- "The Power of #YesAllWomen", 2014

"#MeToo
And I was blamed for it.
I was told not to talk about it.
I was told that it wasn't that bad.
I was told to get over it."

- @najwazebian, 2017

Dialogue Through Design

> Social media is a forum for reclaiming personal experiences, finding community, and building solidarity.

> How can design be used to shift the discourse on rape culture and consider how support is conceptualized within these spaces?

The Research Question

This research focused on **how to collect and visualize affective, qualitative data about the diverse ways that people imagine supportive environments.**

Theoretical Framework

Adversarial Design:

the design or use of artifacts or objects to engage with political issues (DiSalvo, 2012).

Speculative Design is...

the use of design, "as a means of speculating how things could be," (Dunne and Raby, p. 2).

A traditional data visualization...

offers viewers new understandings and insight at a glance (Iliinsky & Steele, 2010).

Visualizing information
can be used in projects about war to produce emotional responses.
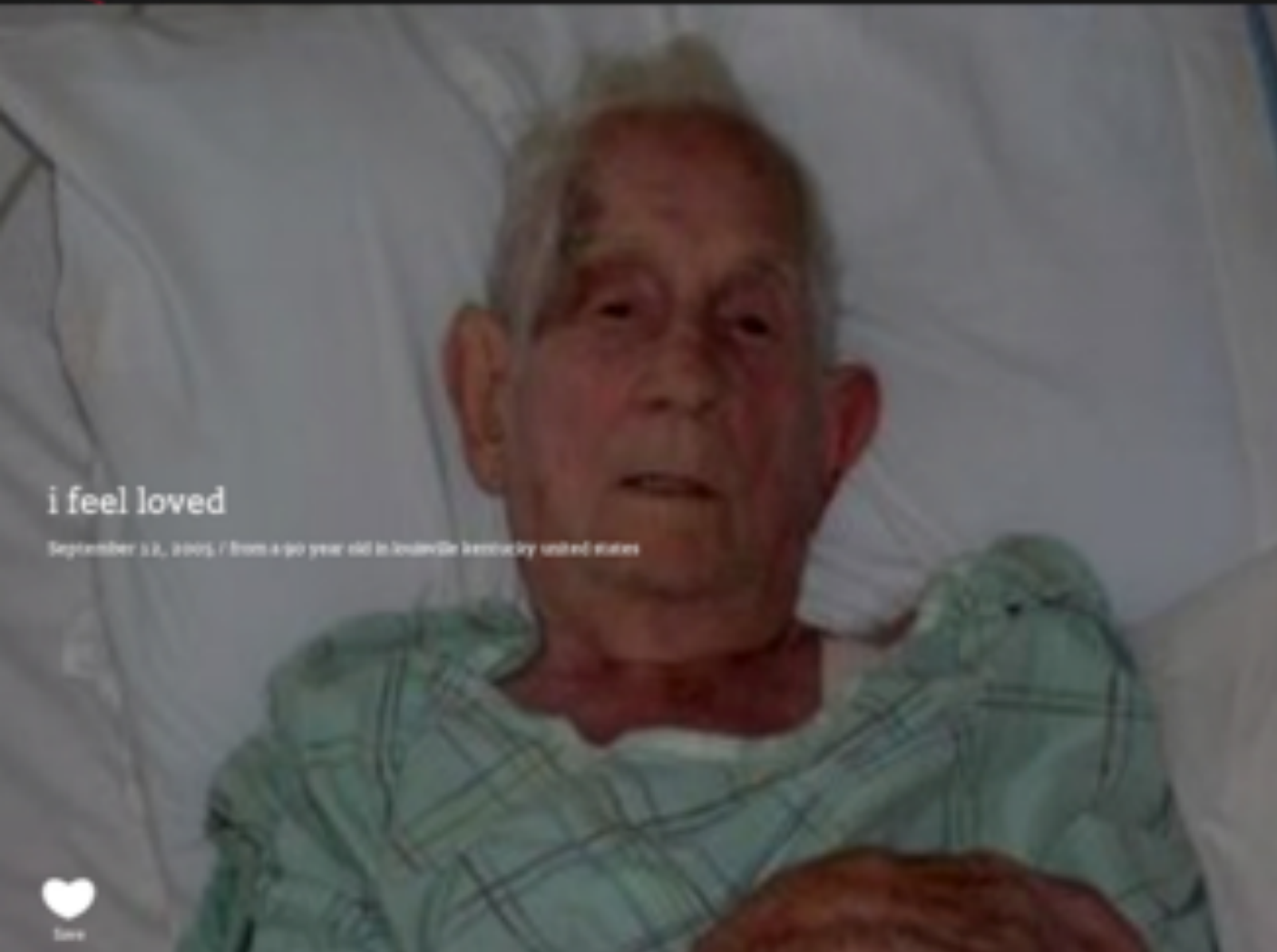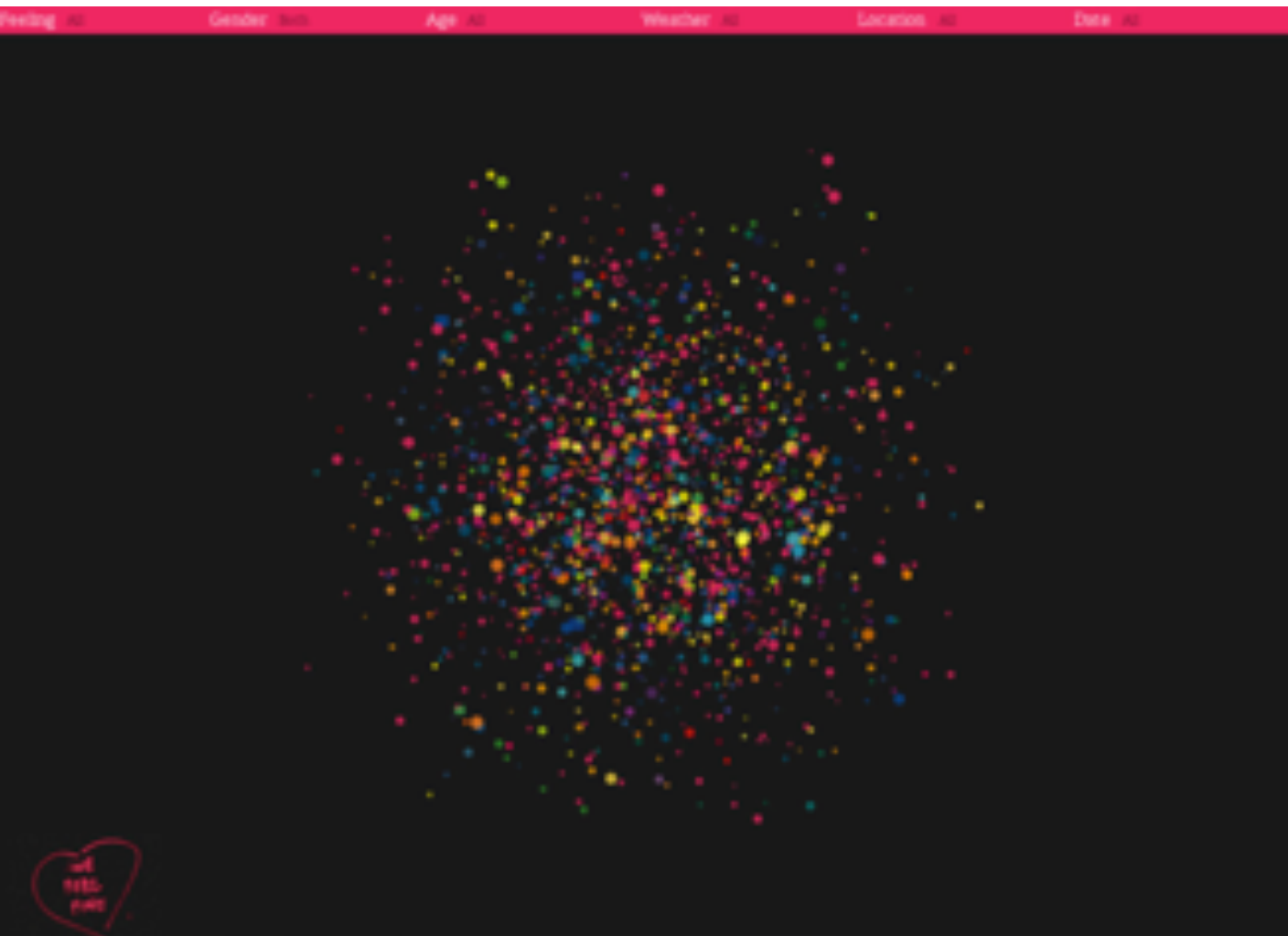
Experiential & Casual Visualization

> Experiential data visualizations:

>> Communicate by example

>> Encourage interaction

>> Influence Affect

> *Casual Information Visualization* broadens the concept of visualization

Installation Images. From "The Neighbourhood Our Garden", by Barbara Roosen et al., 2013. Adapted from "Visualising things. Perspectives on how to make things public through visualization," by Jessica Schoffelen et al., 2015, October 12, CoDesign, p. 187)

We Feel Fine Project Images. From "We Feel Fine," by Sep Kamvar and Jonathan Harris, 2011, http://www.wefeelfine.org/movements.html.)

i feel loved

September 12, 2005 / from a 90 year old in louisville kentucky united states
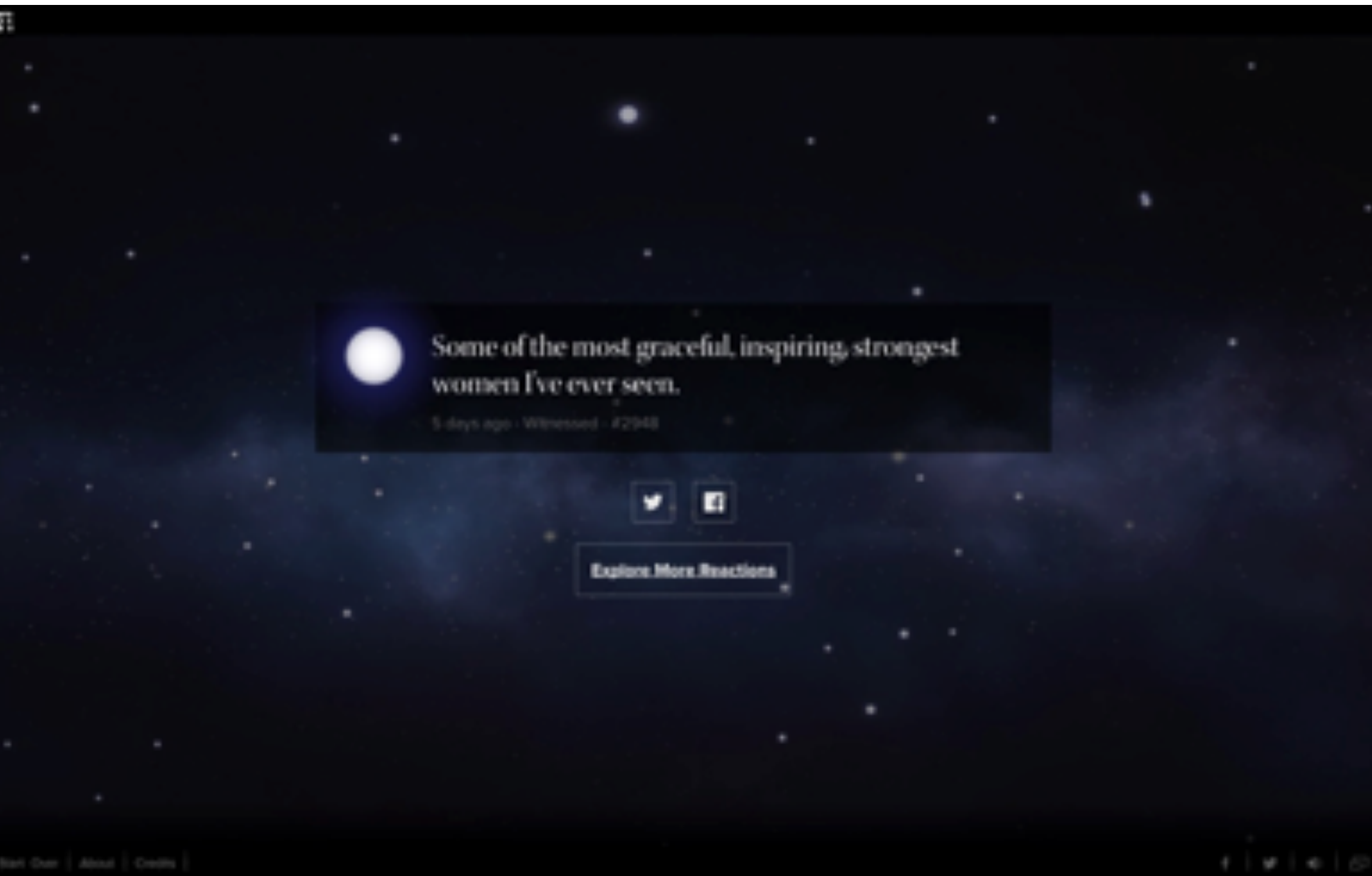
Speculative Visualization...

uses visual representation methods to create thought-provoking work by combining multi-disciplinary practices (Kim and DiSalvo, 2010).
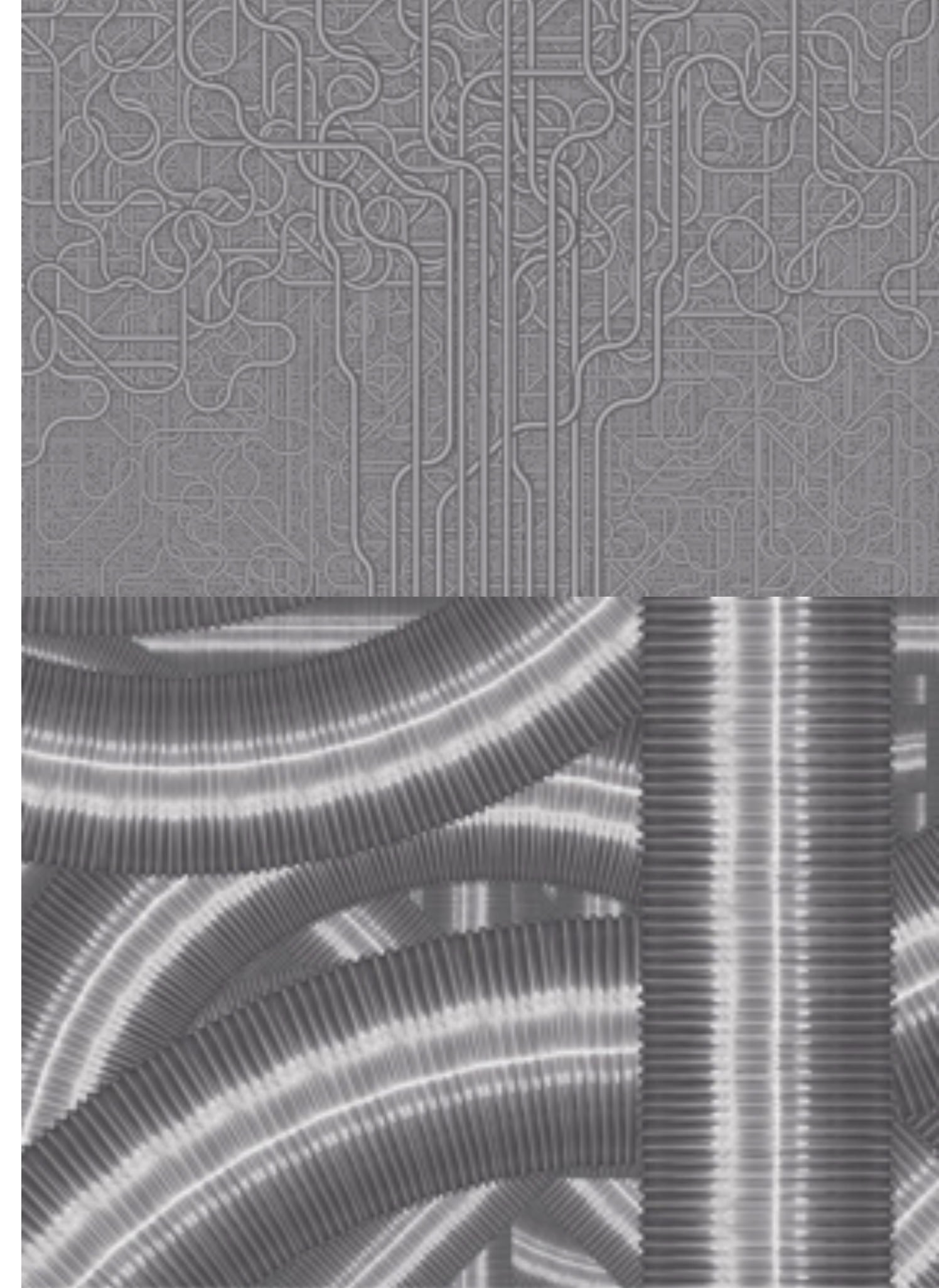
Plastic Cups Screenshot, Top – Full Image, Bottom - Detail. From "Plastic Cups," by Chris Jordan, 2008, http://www.chrisjordan.com/gallery/rtn/#plastic-cups

Other Means of Visualization

The Space We Hold Screenshots. From "The Space We Hold" by National Film Board and Cult Leader, 2017, https://artscience.ca/work/the-space-we-hold/

Installation Image of Noplace. From "Noplace" by Martin Wattenberg et al., 2007 2008, http://www.bewitched.com/noplace.html

Other Means of Visualization

Monument Quilt in stages, From "Monument Quilt" by FORCE: Upsetting Rape Culture, 2013, https://themonumentquilt.org/view-the-quilt/

From the form of data visualization to the discourse of combating rape culture

❯ Women's experiences with violence and harassment are not homogenous (Crenshaw, 1991).

❯ Barriers to accessing justice have been even more difficult for black women (Freedman, 2013).

❯ Research can be reframed to prioritize relationship building and give and take (TallBear, 2014).

Overview of Insights

> Considering how design can be used for discussion and debate through the creation of agonistic spaces that encourage imaginative solutions

> Building a creative environment to elicit an emotional engagement with information

> Communicating insights provided by participants by example rather than words

> Utilizing both analog and digital technologies as methods of engagement

> Fostering spaces to consider creative solutions for a society where rape culture is not deeply ingrained in social systems

> Considering the construction of spaces in relation to the witnessing of stories of sexual violence

> Utilizing layered imagery to convey a multitude of ideas

> Engaging in research at all stages with an intersectional feminist lens that recognizes that women's experiences with violence and harassment are not homogenous

> Approaching research with a *standing with* approach, centering speaking with people rather than speaking for them

Research Methodology

Participatory Design methods...

center the contribution of participants as direct contributors to the design process.

Cultural Probe Kit Package. From "Cultural Probes" by Gaver et al., 1999
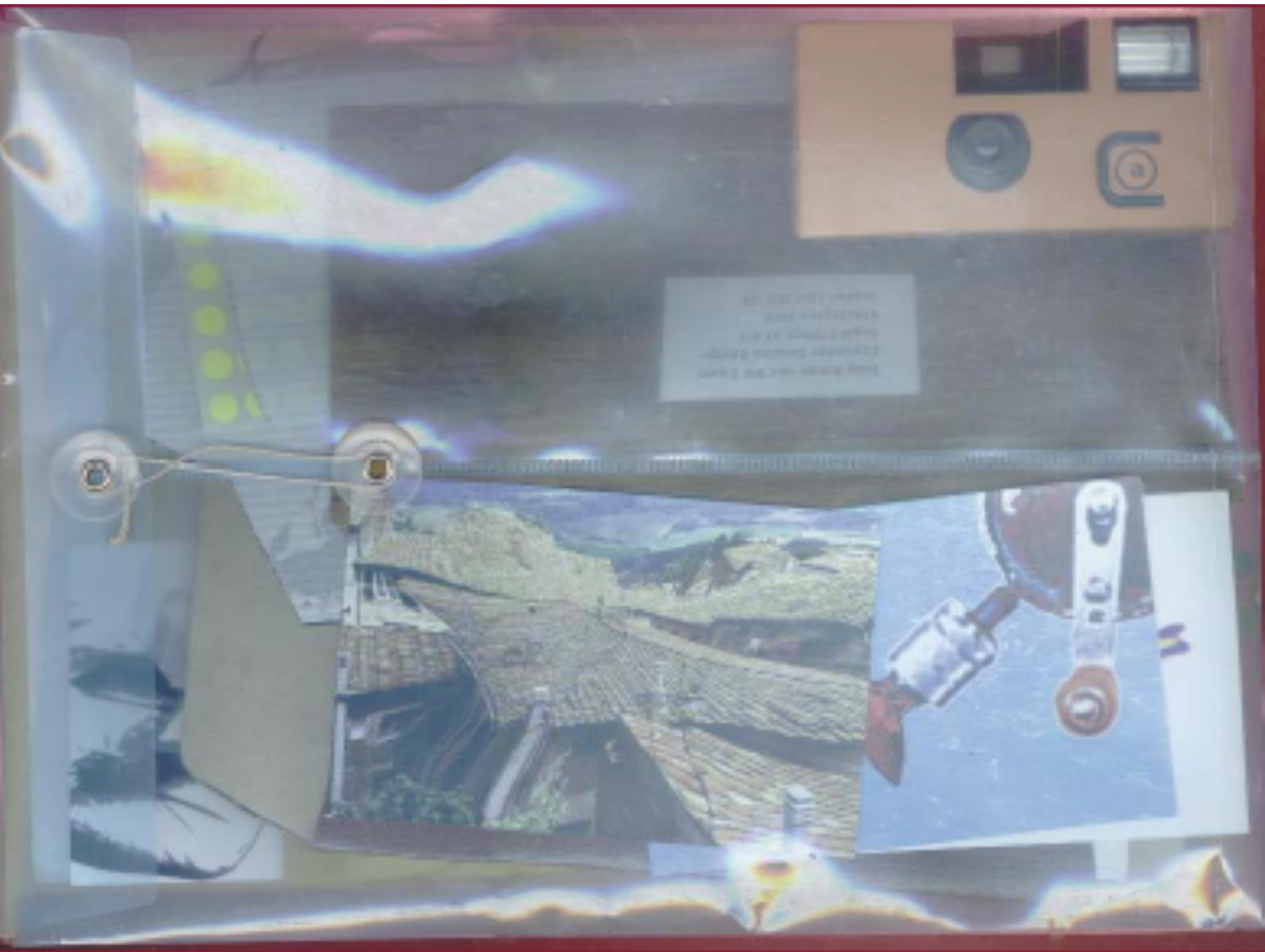
Cultural Probe Kits

were developed to gain deeper insight into people's daily lives, thoughts and interactions (Gaver et al., 1999).

Cultural Probe Kit Goals

1 Investigating participants' trust in dominant systems for dealing with instances of sexual violence and harassment.

2 Gaining insight into participants' experiences with 'everyday impacts' of sexual violence and harassment.

3 Engaging in speculative visioning. Exploring the tools and spaces that participants wish existed in the fight against rape culture.

Word Association Activity

Word Association worked to gain insight into participants' understanding of rape culture.

Please circle the words you associate most with reporting sexual violence to the police:

Necessary   Inconsequential   Supportive   Discouraging
Pointless
Sympathy   Insensitive   Effective   Pointless
Accessible   Inaccessible   Justice   Harm

Other: _____, _____, _____

Reflections:

Please circle the words you associate most with sexual assault trials:

False-Accusations
Justice   Inequity   Fair   Inaccessible   Supportive
Accurate   Accessible   Adequate   Useless
Oppressive   Accountable

Other: _____, _____, _____

Reflections:

ACTIVITY 1: WORD ASSOCIATION

Please circle the words you associate most with sexual assault policies and procedures on college and university campuses:

Supportive   Discouraging   Student-Centric   Fair
Public Relations   Bias   Adequate   Useless
Representative   Homogenised   Inconsequential   Necessary

Other: _____, _____, _____

Reflections:

Please circle the words you associate most with media coverage of sexual violence:

Fair   Bias   Survivor-Centric   Victim-Blaming
Representative   Homogenised   Trolls   Support
Compassion   Hostility   Accurate   Inaccurate

Other: _____, _____, _____

Reflections:

ACTIVITY 1: WORD ASSOCIATION

Visualizing Support Through Speculative Digital Spaces
Presented by: Melissa Palermo

Everyday Encounters

ACTIVITY 2: EVERYDAY ENCOUNTERS

How do you encounter conversations about rape culture and sexual violence? What attitudes around rape culture and sexual violence are displayed in these conversations?

The goal of this activity is to make note of the places these conversations are happening, and to measure the general attitudes you feel are presented. Throughout the week record your encounters with conversations about rape culture and sexual violence using the Everyday Encounters worksheets. Complete the worksheets by summarizing the attitudes of the conversation or encounter in the text bubbles. Indicate where the situation took place by drawing the environment in the empty space.

Participants' were asked, "How do you encounter conversations about rape culture and sexual violence? What attitudes around rape culture and sexual violence are displayed in these conversations?
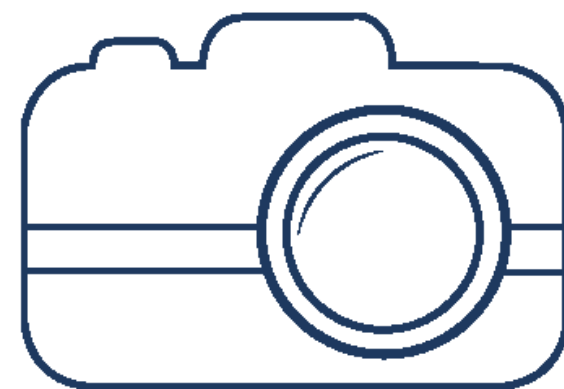
Picture This

Asking participants to take photos worked to gather visual information about more positive aspects of their daily lives.

ACTIVITY 3: PICTURE THIS

11.
12.
13.
14.
15.
16.
17.
18.
19.
20.
21.

ACTIVITY 3: PICTURE THIS

Using the included disposable camera take at least 10 photos, one for each description listed on this card. These photos can be taken anywhere.

1.   Something beautiful
2.   Something you like to read
3.   Something that brings you joy
4.   Something comforting
5.   Something empowering
6.   Your favourite time of day
7.   Somewhere you feel safe
8.   Your favourite object
9.   Your favourite colour
10.   Something you want

Note: You are invited to use the remaining frames (up to 14) to take additional pictures. Please provide descriptions for these images in the space provided on the back of this card.

Draw It

Viewing the page as an outline of a room participants were asked to consider what objects, furniture, technology etc. they would want in a space where they feel entirely supported.

Distribution

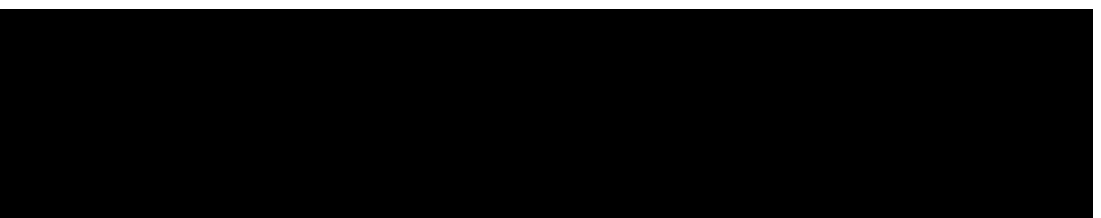> Distributed across Canada from June-August 2017

> Participants were self-selected

> Participants came from diverse lived experiences.
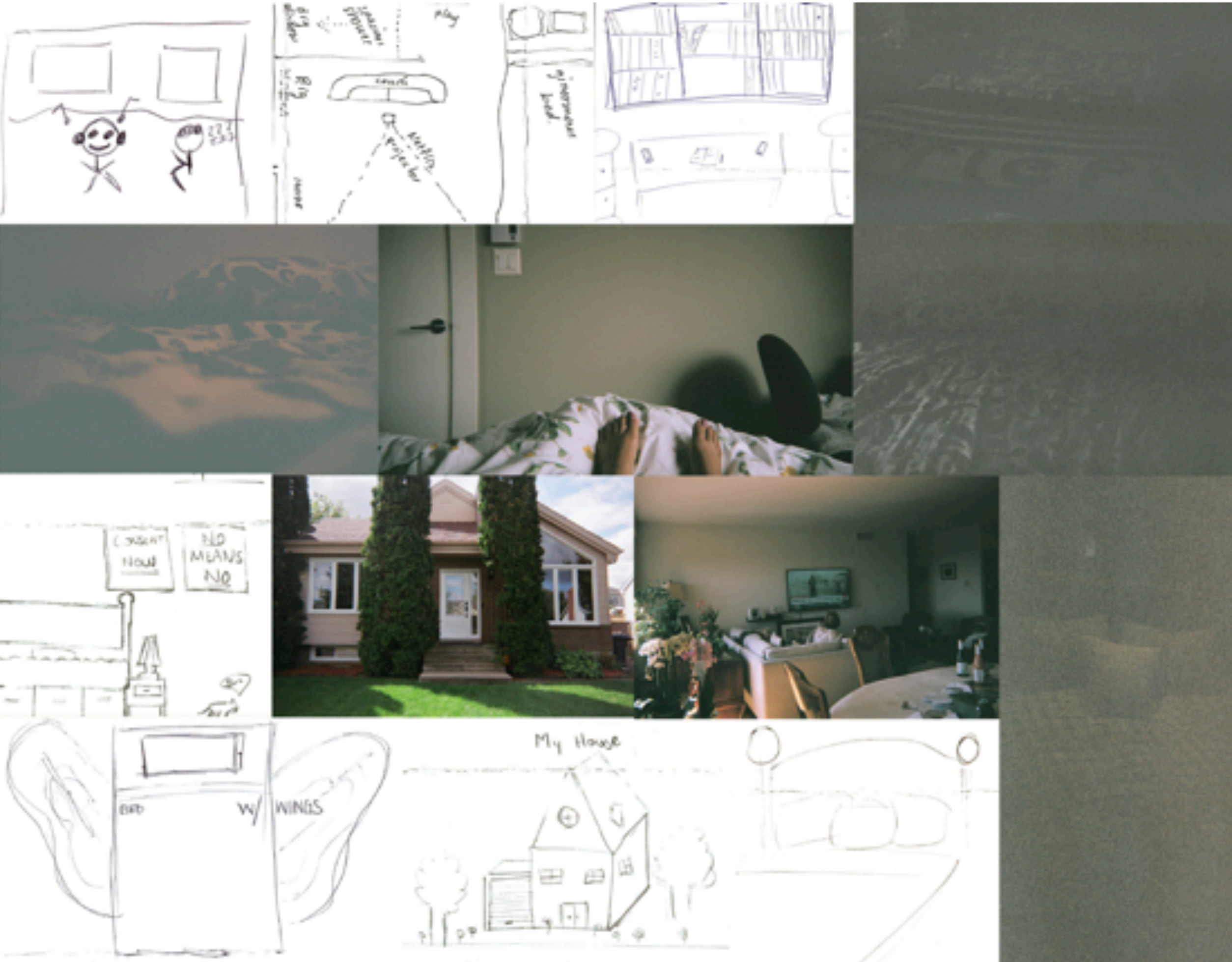
Design Research & Process

Kit Interpretation

> "We have to see our volunteers in terms of their own experiences, understanding their responses empathetically, not intellectually," (Gaver et al., 2004).

Kit Interpretation

To gain a global understanding of the information I unpacked the returned materials and laid them out in a circle on the floor.

Findings

1. Images of nature as empowering and comforting

2. A need for policies and procedures to address sexual violence on campuses.

3. Examples of positive encounters & interactions that participants felt embodied a move away from rape culture
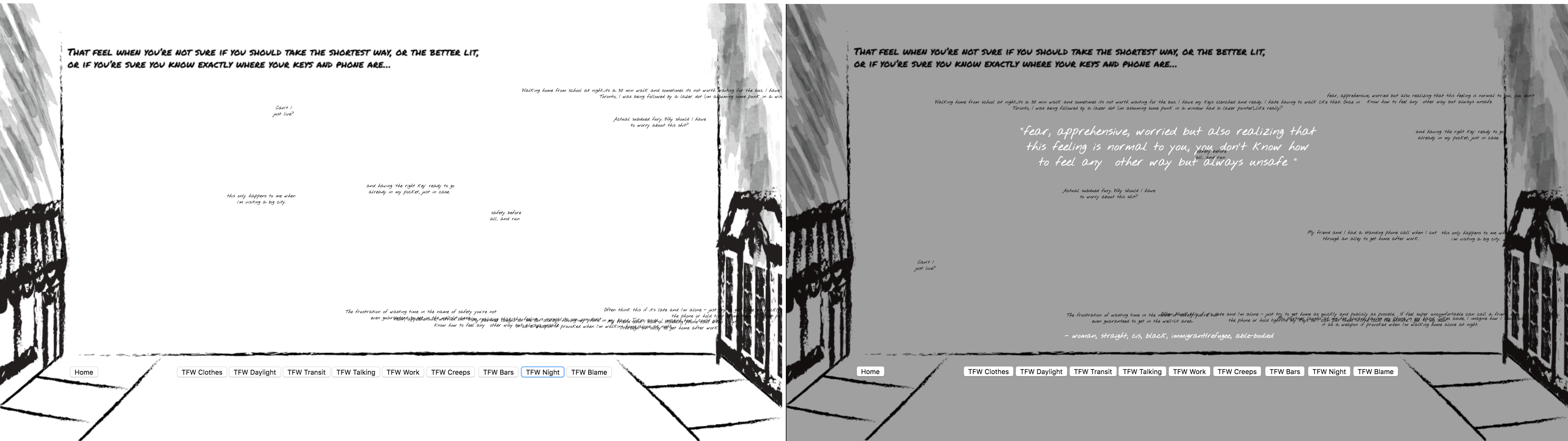
4. Images of physical spaces such as home, and specifically bedrooms, as places of comfort and empowerment

Research-in-progress

lockerRoomTalk: an interactive, visual representation of the way that space can be reclaimed when people share their experiences with sexualized violence.

Research-in-progress

▲ *That Feel When...*: a web-based visualization of responses to nine written prompts that, though broad, have the potential to evoke moments in someone's day when they have experienced rape culture.
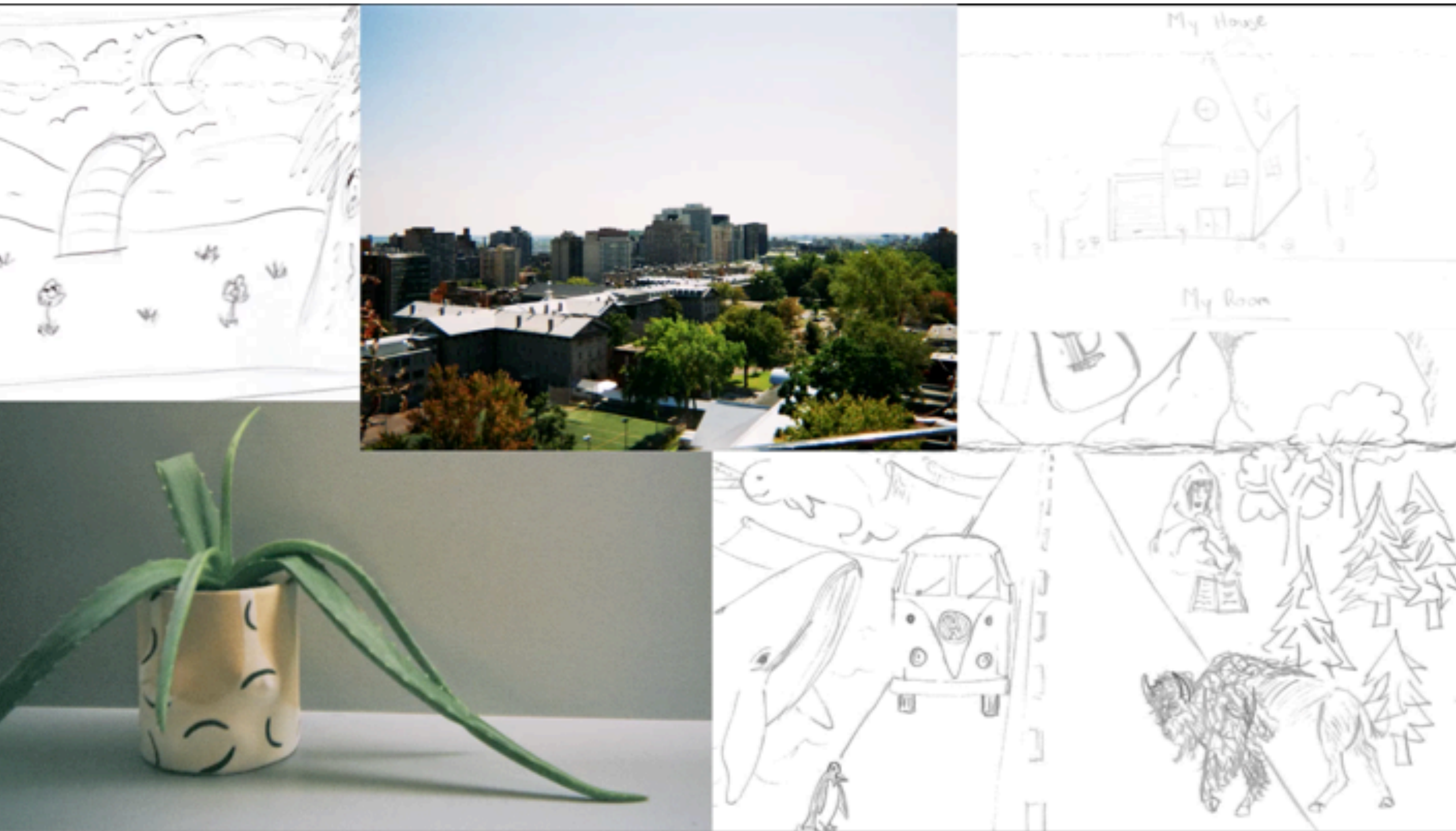
Showcasing the Data

> Working directly with participants' data offered the opportunity to represent the diverse ways they viewed supportive and empowering environments.

An Iterative Design Process

Visualization Sketching Test 1

Visualization Sketching Test 2

Collage has a history within feminist art practice...

providing a site that suggests new ways of connecting different identities, perspectives and relationships (Raaberg, 1998).

Generative Collages

◆ Building on the use of collage by feminist artists as a method of visualizing multiple perspectives, the generative aspect provided an opportunity to see the many possibilities that arise when diverse perspectives are considered and brought together in different ways.

Blending Physical & Digital Space
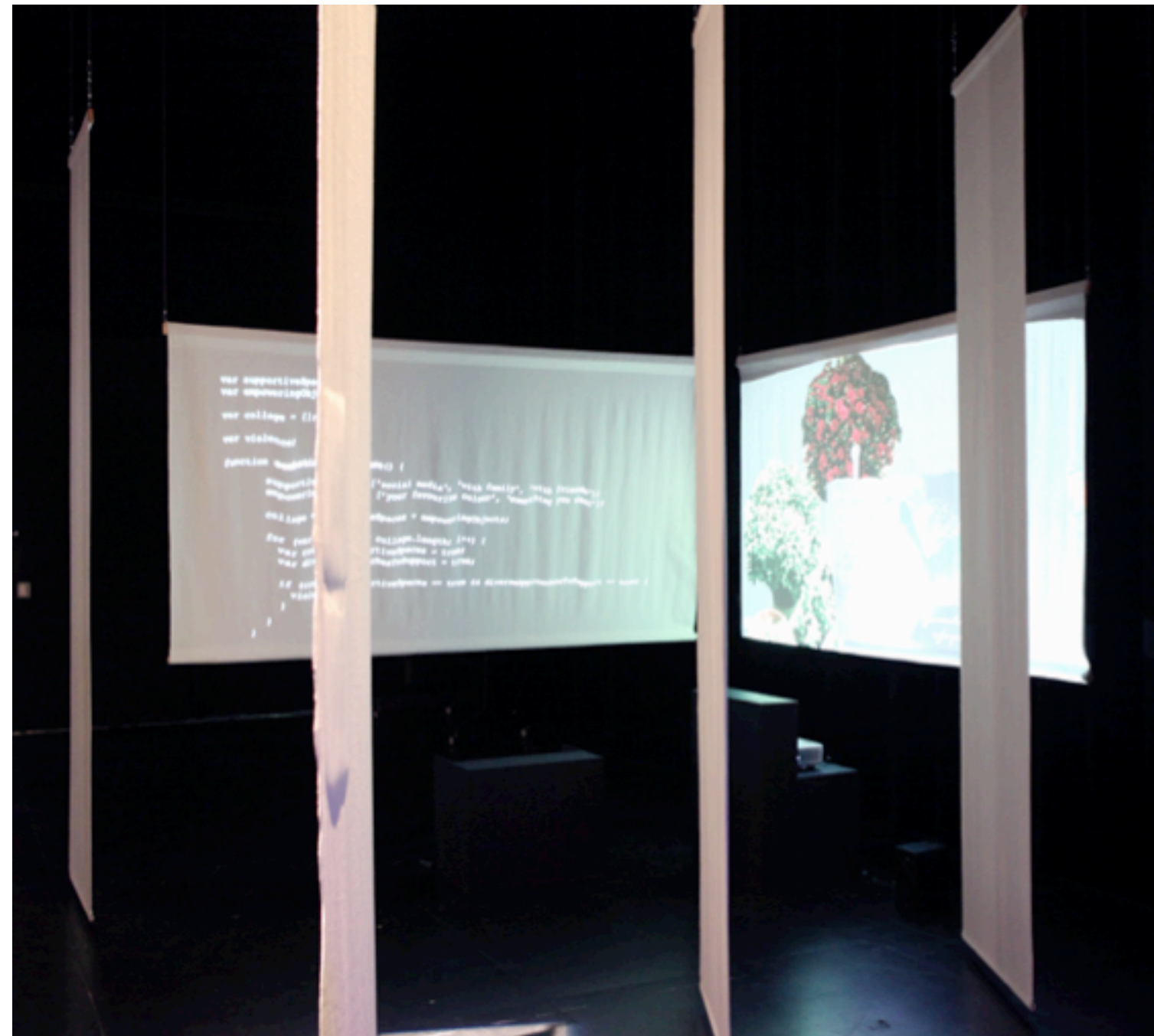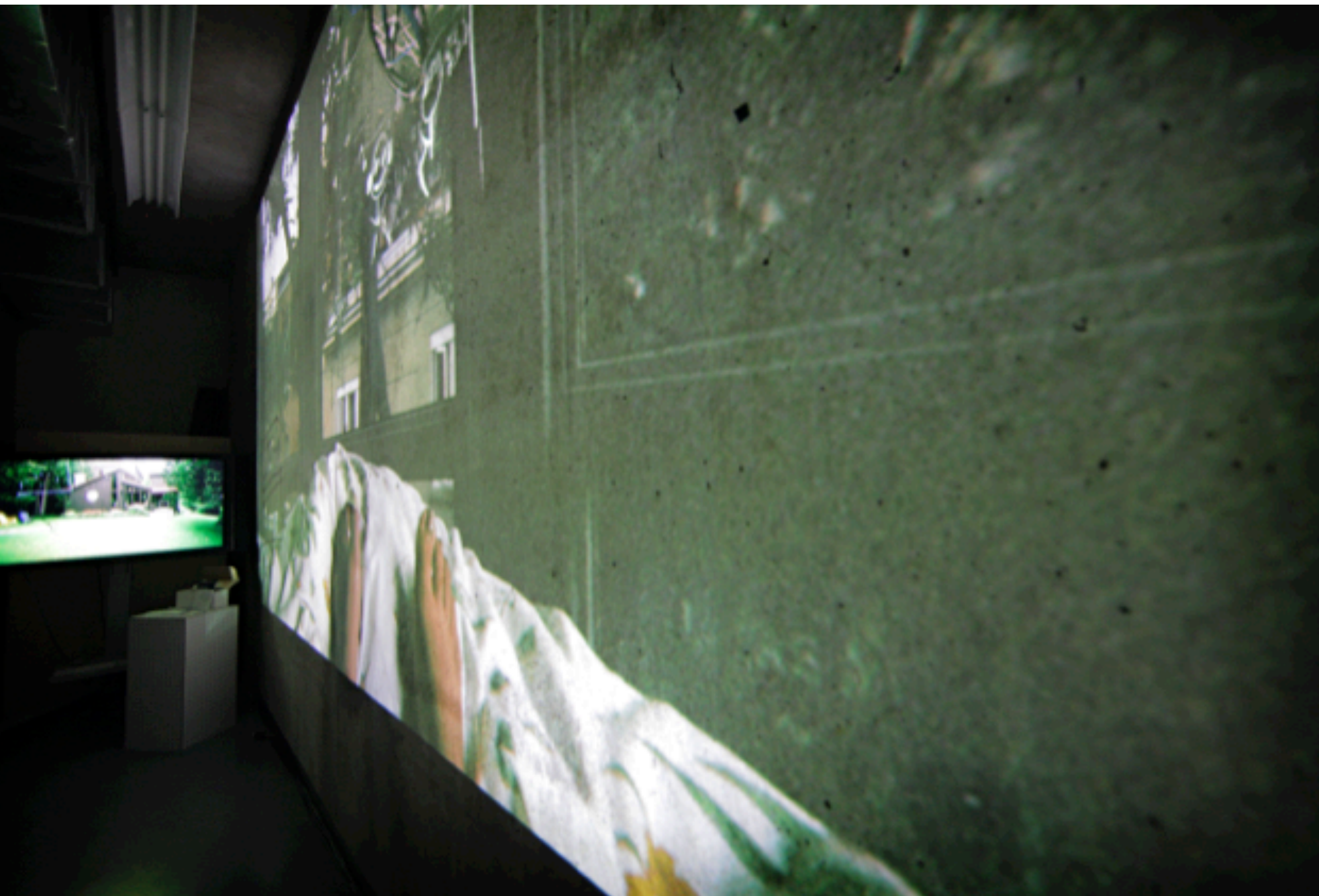
Taken together, the project created out of the findings of the cultural probe kits, and the creative exploration of the data was titled *What Do You Need?* Described as a visualization of imaginative spaces of support that used participant submitted visual data

Reflections & Conclusion

Project Challenges

❯ Disconnect between showcasing humanity and displaying data

❯ Diluted information

❯ Lack of interactivity

Possible Solutions

Showcasing full cultural probe kit data

Utilizing an algorithm that more systematically chose and placed images

Adding an interactive component for user contribution

The emerging field of data visualization engages audiences in a new experience...

by bringing together collage and computation the audience is tasked with interpreting *What Do You Need?* on more than one level.

Design Research Insights

> **Participatory design methods lend themselves well to the collection of affective information.**

> **There is strength in bringing together different fields such as collage and data visualization to visualize complex information.**

> **Interpreting affective, qualitative data visualization requires a broadening of viewer's expectations.**
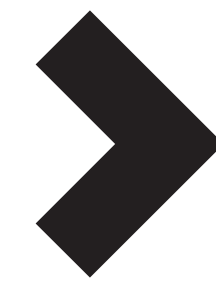
> **Visualizing emotional information provides alternative insights into complex issues.**

An exploration into how to visualize affective, qualitative data provided an opportunity to investigate

what spaces of support might look like for those who experience or are working to combat rape culture.

Opportunities to visualize these spaces can help foster hope...

and give society something to strive for as we work to change the culture that perpetuates sexual violence and harassment today.

Thank You

References

@carabear133. (2016, October 9). @kellyoxford I was 16 and walking in Rome and a grown man went out of his way to try to grab my crotch #notokay [Tweet].

Boal, A. (1985). *Theater of the oppressed* (C. A. & M.O. Leal McBride, Trans.). New York: Theatre Communications Group. (Original work *Teatro del oprimido y otras poéticas*. New York: Urizen Books, 1979).

Boden, M. & Edmonds, E. (2009). What is generative art?. *Digital Creativity*. 20. 21-46. 10.1080/14626260902867915.

Boehner, K., Vertesi, J., Sengers, P., & Dourish, P. (2007). How HCI Interprets the Probes. In *Proceedings of the SIGCHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (pp. 1077–1086). New York, NY, USA: ACM. https://doi.org/10.1145/1240624.1240789

Bresler, L. (2006). Toward Connectedness: Aesthetically Based Research. *Studies in Art Education, 48*(1), 52–69. https://doi.org/10.1080/00393541.2006.11650499

Buchwald, E., Fletcher, P. R., & Roth, M. (2005). *Transforming a rape culture*. Minneapolis, Minn: Milkweed Editions.

Chen, C. (2010). Information visualization. *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Computational Statistics, 2*(4), 387–403. https://doi.org/10.1002/wics.89

Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color. *Stanford Law Review, 43*(6), 1241-1299. doi:10.2307/1229039

Cvetkovich, A. (2003). *An Archive of Feelings: Trauma, Sexuality, and Lesbian Public Cultures*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

DiSalvo, C. (2012). Adversarial design. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.

Dunne, A. & Raby, F. (2013). *Speculative everything: design, fiction, and social dreaming*. Cambridge, Mass: The MIT Press.

Dunne, A., Raby, F. & Anastassiades, M. (2008). *Do you want to replace the existing normal?*. Retrieved from: http://www.dunneandraby.co.uk/content/projects/75/0

FORCE: Upsetting Rape Culture. (2013). *The Monument Quilt*. Retrieved September 7, 2017, from https://themonumentquilt.org/about/

FORCE: Upsetting Rape Culture. (Artist Collective). (2013-Present). *The Monument Quilt*. [Installation]. Retrieved from https://themonumentquilt.org/view-the-quilt/.

Freedman, E. B. (2013). *Redefining rape: sexual violence in the era of suffrage and segregation*. Harvard University Press.

Graham, C., Rouncefield, M., Gibbs, M., Vetere, F., & Cheverst, K. (2007). How Probes Work. In *Proceedings of the 19th Australasian Conference on Computer-Human Interaction: Entertaining User Interfaces* (pp. 29–37). New York, NY, USA: ACM. https://doi.org/10.1145/1324892.1324899

Gaver, B., Dunne, T., & Pacenti, E. (1999). Design: Cultural Probes. *Interactions, 6*(1), 21–29. https://doi.org/10.1145/291224.291235

Gaver, W., Boucher, A., Pennington, S., & Walker, B. (2004). Cultural probes and the value of uncertainty. Interactions - Funology, 11(5), pp. 53-56. ISSN 1072-5520

Hsiung, T., Kang, C., & Lee, P. (2017). *The Space We Hold*. Retrieved from http://spacewehold.nfb.ca/

Hsiung, T., Kang, C., & Lee, P. (Creators). (2017). *The Space We Hold*. [Interactive Documentary]. Retrieved from https://artscience.ca/work/the-space-we-hold/.

Huss, E. (2005). Researching creations: Applying arts-based research to Bedouin women's drawings. International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 4(4), Article 4. Retrieved May 16, 2018 from http://www.ualberta.ca/~iiqm/backissues/4_4/pdf/huss.pdf

Jenkins, A. & Mazer, J. (2017): #NotOkay: Stories of Sexual Assault in the Midst of the 2016 U.S. Presidential Election, Qualitative Research Reports in Communication, DOI: 10.1080/17459435.2017.1404487

Jordan, C. (2006-current). *Running the Numbers: An American Self-Portrait*. Retrieved from: http://www.chrisjordan.com/gallery/rtn/#plastic-cups

Jordan, C. (Photographer). (2008). *Plastic Cups*. [Photographs]. Retrieved from http://www.chrisjordan.com/gallery/rtn/#plastic-cups.

Kamvar, Separandar D., & Harris, J. (2011). "We feel fine and searching the emotional web." *Proceedings of the fourth ACM international conference on Web search and data mining - WSDM '11*. Web.

Kamvar, S., & Jonathan Harris. (Artist). (2011). *We Feel Fine*. [Experiential Data Visualization]. Retrieved from http://www.wefeelfine.org/movements.html.

Keifer-Boyd, Karen, P. D. (2011). Arts-based Research as Social Justice Activism. *International Review of Qualitative Research, 4*(1), 3–19.

Keller, J., Mendes, K., & Ringrose, J. (2018) Speaking 'unspeakable things': documenting digital feminist responses to rape culture, Journal of Gender Studies, 27:1, 22-36, DOI: 10.1080/09589236.2016.1211511

Khomami, N. (2017, October 20). #MeToo: how a hashtag became a rallying cry against sexual harassment. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from http://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/oct/20/women-worldwide-use-hashtag-metoo-against-sexual-harassment

Kim, T., DiSalvo, C., & Jeremijenko, N. (2010). Speculative Visualization: A New Rhetoric for Communicating Public Concerns.

Klima, J. (Artist). (2001). *The Great Game*. [Video Game]. Retrieved from http://www.cityarts.com/greatgame/.

Kurgan, L., Cadora, E., Reinfurt, D., Williams, S., & Meisterlin, L. (2006). *Million Dollar Blocks Project. Spatial Information Design Lab*. Web. http://c4sr.columbia.edu/projects/million-dollar-blocks

Kuhn, S., & Winograd, T. (1996). Participatory Design. *Bringing Design to Software*. New York: Addison-Wesley.

Lehrer, E., Milton, C. E., & Patterson, M. E. (Eds.). (2011). *Curating Difficult Knowledge: Violent Pasts in Public Places*. Palgrave Macmillan UK.

Mazza, E. (2017, October 16). #MeToo: Alyssa Milano's Call For Sexual Abuse Victims To Come Forward Goes Viral. Retrieved June 1, 2018, from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/me-too-victims-come-forward_us_59e4271ae4b03a7be5817b3f

Pousman, Z., Stasko, J., & Mateas, M. 2007. Casual Information Visualization: Depictions of Data in Everyday Life. *IEEE Transactions on Visualization and Computer Graphics 13, 6 (November 2007)*, 1145-1152. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1109/TVCG.2007.70541

Raaberg, G. (1998). Beyond Fragmentation: Collage as Feminist Strategy in the Arts. *Mosaic: An Interdisciplinary Critical Journal, 31*(3), 153-171. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.torontopubliclibrary.ca/stable/44029815

Roosen, B., Devisch, O., & Martens, S. (Artists). (2013). *The Neighbourhood, Our Garden*. [Installation]. Adapted from from "Visualising things. Perspectives on how to make things public through visualization," by Jessica Schoffelen et al., 2015, October 12, CoDesign, p. 187

Raley, R. (2009). *Tactical media*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Steele, J., & Iliinsky, N. (Eds.). (2010). *Beautiful Visualization*. Sebastopol, CA: O'Reilly.

Schoffelen, J., Claes, S., LHuybrechts, L., Martens, S., Chua, A., & Van de Moere, A. (2015) Visualising things. Perspectives on how to make things public through visualisation, CoDesign, 11:3-4, 179-192, DOI: 10.1080/15710882.2015.1081240

TallBear, K. (2014). Standing With and Speaking as Faith: A Feminist-Indigenous Approach to Inquiry. *Journal of Research Practice, 10*(2), 1–7.

Wattenberg, M., Walczak, M., Feinberg, J., Solomon, R., & Kindvall, J. (2007, 2008). *Noplace*. Retrieved October 11, 2017, from http://www.bewitched.com/noplace.html

Wattenberg, M., Walczak, M., Feinberg, J., Solomon, R., & Kindvall, J. (Artists). (2007-2008). *Noplace*. [Installation]. Retrieved from http://www.bewitched.com/noplace.html.

Weiss, S. (2014, May 26). The Power of #YesAllWomen. *The New Yorker*. Retrieved from https://www.newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/the-power-of-yesallwomen

Zaleski, K. L., Gundersen, K. K., Baes, J., Estupinian, E., & Vergara, A. (2016). Exploring rape culture in social media forums. *Computers In Human Behavior, 63*922-927. DOI: 10.1016/j.chb.2016.06.036