

AEPP 2017

Finding Chicago: Global Perspectives



UChicago**GRAD**



English Language Institute

"This picture was taken at Logan Square. My classmate and I were walking down the road to a restaurant where we chanced upon this group of artists spray painting the wall (as seen in the photograph). While these artists were painting the graffiti, there was a dj playing hip-hop music and a few photographers taking pictures. It was an event sponsored by one of the spray painting companies and was within legal regulations. What I found really fascinating was how the loud sound of the L passing above the wall would fade to give rise to the hip-hop music, chattering of artists, and the sound of spraying paint, only to be subdued again by the rumbling of the L."

- Sugata Paul

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A Very Efficient Way to Getting Around



Photo taken from <http://safety-security.uchicago.edu/>

Background

UGo, that the way we usually called it. It is the transportation shuttle service that you should utilize the most when you are here in University Chicago. Not only because it is free, but also it is safe. It is free because it been paid when you pay your tuition. And, it is safe because this shuttle is only for people who have affiliation with University of Chicago.

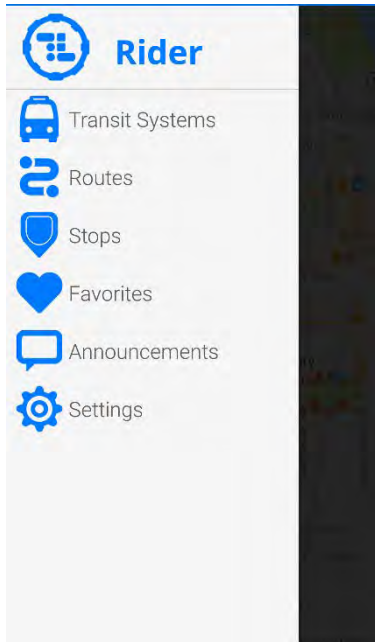
First thing first, you have to learn about how this shuttle service operate, the routes, the schedule, etc. In traditional way, you just have to enter this website www.safety-security.uchicago.edu/transportation/, and read everything on it or you can just ride on and explore it by yourself. In my opinion, the last will give you more sense and knowledge about the service. However, in my case, I did both read and do because I am not much as an adventurous and spontaneous person.

There 3 key points that you should know about UGo. First, is has the day and night service. Second, there are more than 5 routes, so it is ok to get confused first. Third, download Transloc Mobile App. (Rider), it will help you a lot. The day service of UGo is called UGo Daytime, and the night service is called UGo NightRide.

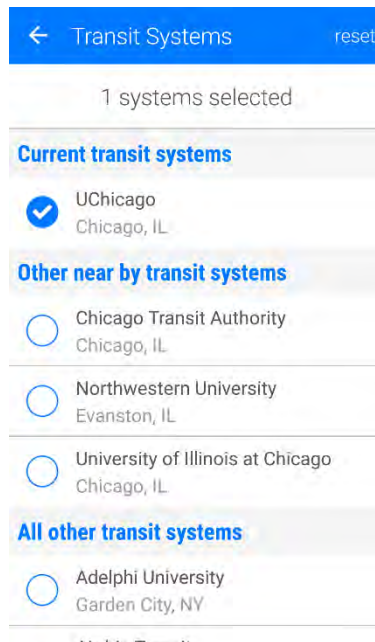
UGo Daytime has 7 routes. They are Friend Center, Drexel, Apostolic, Apostolic/Drexel, Midway Metra, Polsky Express and 53rd Street Express. In my view, the last is the most popular one, because it has wide coverage of many convenience designated stops at Hyde Park. And if you need to go fast Polsky Express is the one you should choose, but it has the fewest designated stops. UGo NightRide has what we called as Shuttle Staging Locations routes. They North Route, South, East, and Central routes. It is

obviously referring to which part of university of Chicago the route will go. I usually use Cental route to help me running errands because the stop is just next to my apartment's door, so find yours.

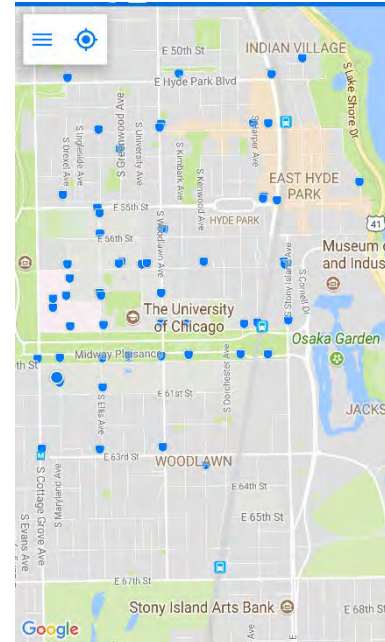
In this part, I will show you how to use Transloc Mobile App. You can find it on Apple or Play Store. It is free app, and no ads, you could not ask more than that. Let say I want to go to Kimbark Plaza at 6 pm. So, this is the steps:



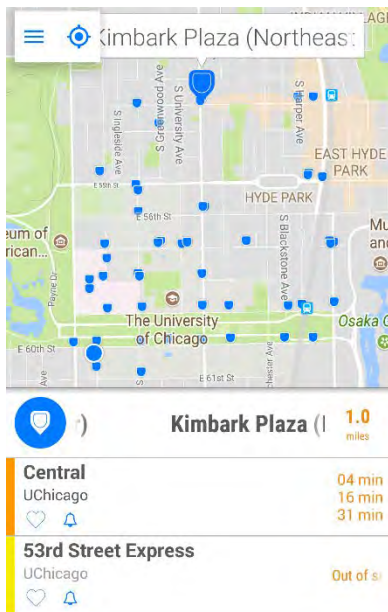
Open the app, and hit the menu. You will see the main menu with 6 features.



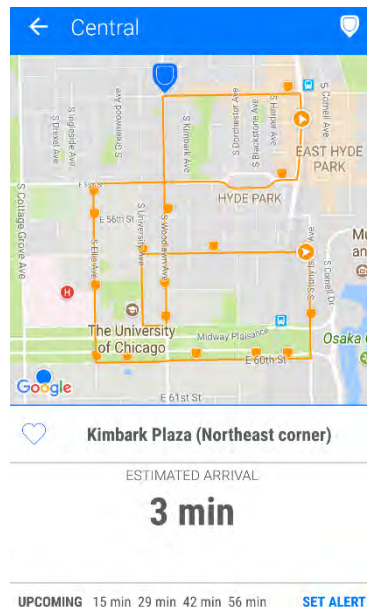
Choose on "Transit Systems" and checklist UChicago



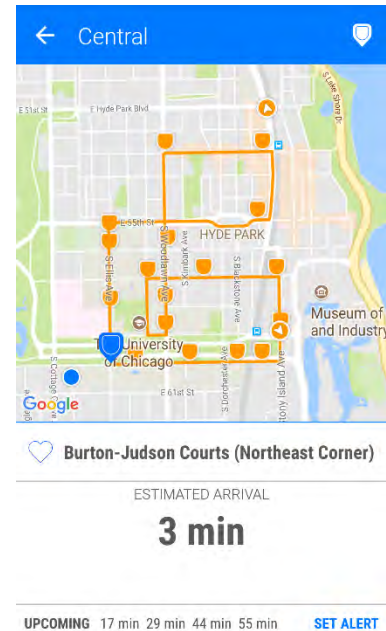
Go back to the main screen, and you will see the map with all the designated stops.



Use your google map to locate in which part on the map you want to go to. I choose "Kimbark Plaza" as my destination. And then the choices of the UGo routes will pop up and as you can see there is only one route is available which is "Central". Tap on it.



After you tap "Central", you will see the whole route. The blue dot is my location, so I will choose one stop that the closest to my place. Mind the estimated arrival in this screen because the one you should know is the next screen.



Tap on the closest stop and you will see the name of it which is Burton-Johnson Courts, and it located in 60th Street & Ellis. Ave. with 3 minutes estimated arrival times, so I better hurry. Wait there and get on the UGo. Enjoy the ride.

Broader Issue

One of the biggest and most important concerns for students preparing to start college is the issue of safety. This is especially true of international students, who may not be familiar with the culture and safety issues of the country in which they are planning to study (www.internationalstudent.com). For the first couple months, the new students especially the international one, will experiencing culture shock, confusedness, and having a big bondage on everything about their campus because that is all what they know. Student Security Policy is the university's primary responsibility. Safety feeling that students had will have a linear impact on their academic achievement. A good study climate, safety and enjoyment are assumed to be necessary conditions for a good learning environment (Rosén et al., 2005). Providing a very good university shuttle service is one example that university do to create a safety condition to the students.

References

- Anonym. *Safety Issues*. https://www.internationalstudent.com/study_usa/way-of-life/safety-issues/. Accessed 25 August 2017.
- Rosén, M, Gustafsson, J.-E., & Myberg, E. *The IEA Progress in International Reading Literacy Study*. Goteberg's Studies in educational sciences 236: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis. 2003

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On the Lawns, Under the Dusky Sky

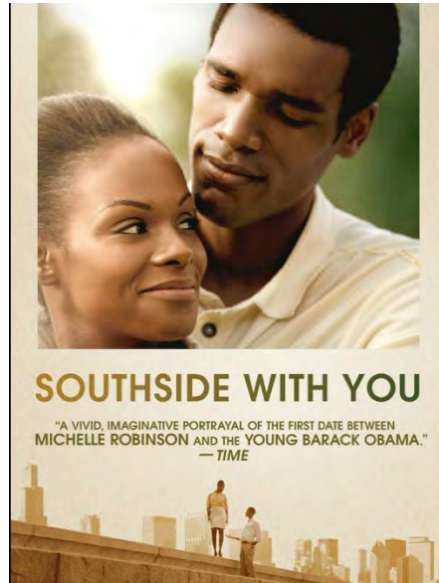


Photo: Facebook event page for the movie

On Saturday, August 19, 2017, My friend and I went to see the movie "Southside with You" at the Dusable Museum of African American History. The screen was placed in the Sunken Garden, Washington Park, beside the museum. The event was organized by the Chicago Park District under Chicago's Mayor Rahm Emanuel's, initiative, Movies in the Parks. By the time we reached the park, it was brimming with people who were sitting on folding chairs or on bedsheets which they had brought from their homes. Since this was first such event that we both had been to, we didn't carry anything with us and had to sit on the grass. Soon we realized how underprepared we were when our fellow movie watchers lit floating candles beside their chairs and opened their food items. Though we felt hungry, it was sated as soon as the movie began. The movie was about a daylong date between Barack Obama and Michelle Obama and ends with their first kiss which happened very near to the Museum by the Baskins Robins on the 53rd street. The place bears a commemorative stone to one of the finest men sworn to the highest office in America

More than the movie my friend and I were impressed by the culture that the city of Chicago has adopted. The well-developed park system has enticed me since I stepped into Chicago. However, hundreds of people sitting together and watching a movie under the open sky is a rare sight in the cities of my country. As I googled more after the event, I realized the laudable work done by the Chicago Park District in organizing events which are accessible to all. These events are important as they create a feeling of belongingness among people.

As a public policy student, I would like to study more of these social policies that are prevalent in the city of Chicago which could be implemented in Indian cities. However, fitting these policies into the Indian landscape will be difficult because of the higher population issues. When I googled the demographics of New Delhi and Chicago, I realized that 8 times population lives in twice the area in New Delhi when compared to Chicago.

When I look back, a very prominent policy initiative, taken by the Delhi government, of building public gyms strikes me hard. The initiative has been successful as there have been no thefts and people from all walks of life use these equipments without any charges. And I believe if one initiative can be successful other initiatives can also be tried to make the city life more vibrant and socially cohesive.



Photo: by author

DuSable Museum is on 57th Street, Cottage Grove.

I walked to the museum, it is very near to the university.

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No Room for Racial Segregation



Soldier Stadium: Photo by Vivid Seats LLC

Background

I will always remember the night of August 17 as one of the most magical nights of my life. That Thursday, I went to the Coldplay concert at the Soldier Field Stadium. Coldplay is one of my favorite bands; nowadays, it is considered as one of the greatest bands in the world (if not the greatest). The band's tour is named after its latest album, "A Head Full of Dreams". In one of their songs they refer to the world as a place "where there are miracles at work for the thirst and for the hunger." Through music, Coldplay sends a message of hope for unity, solidarity, equality, love and peace. I share these dreams, which is why I am advocate for public service and am currently enrolled in the Master of Public Policy program at Harris.

I come from Paraguay, which is a developing country where the government still struggles to guarantee unity and equality for all citizens. After a few weeks in Chicago I have realized that even in the U.S. those miracles are still at work. One of the things that shocked me the most about Chicago was the persistence of racial and ethnic segregation. How come a country, which is home to diversity, is also home to segregation?

Despite this fact, for a couple of hours during that Thursday night, inside the Soldier Field there was no room for any racial division. I heard people speaking all kinds of languages and I saw people with different physical traits sitting next to each other in the Stadium. For sure, there were (what demographers commonly state as) Whites, African Americans, Muslims, Hispanics, Asians and Europeans. People from all over the world sang Coldplay's songs in unison. During the show, the band appropriately honored Martin Luther King, projecting one of his speeches for equality.

The concert was also a spectacle for the eyes, filled with fireworks, rainbow colors, and laser lights which ignited the night. The colorful show again signaled the message of inclusion and radiated joy, setting a perfect scene for cultures to collide. The audience was also made up of millennials and all the other generations.

Moreover, I believe that the Soldier Field was the optimal place to host that concert. I was completely delighted by the place. The Stadium was built in 1924, with the designer's desire to build the largest and most beautiful public arena in the world. It was named Soldier Field to honor Chicago's World War I soldiers (including African Americans & Whites). According to the article called "The Storied (and Sometimes Strange) History of Soldier Field," the Field was originally built in a neoclassical architecture style, and was renovated in the early 2000s changing its appearance, mainly on the inside. The Stadium maintained some of its exterior design; however, this reconstruction led it to lose the National Historical Landmark Status.

Broader Issue

Despite the loss of status of the Soldier Field, it represents an icon for Chicagoans. Soldier Field is a place where different people from several races reunite. They sit together in a common ground. This shows that despite the different backgrounds people share similar interests. Taking into account the common interests is important to take a step forward in the fight against the persistence of segregation. The Field has hosted all kinds of events including N.F.L. matches, World Cup soccer games, boxing events, major rock concerts, circuses, operas and many more. In all of these events the Stadium has gathered together thousands of individuals without any particular ethnic origin requirement nor racial segregation.

Humans naturally tend to approach what seems familiar in order to stay in their comfort zone. This may be a reason why immigrants in Chicago mostly live in neighborhoods where they can find people with similar backgrounds. For instance, Chinese mostly live in Chinatown, Hispanic and Latinos live in Pilsen, Kenwood is mostly composed by African Americans, and Lincoln Park's population is mostly White. However, when violence and conflict arise because of segregation and because of the refusal to recognize equal rights and opportunities for all, is when action should be taken. Public policies should be aimed at promoting inclusion, tolerance, unity, and equality. Promoting events such as the Coldplay

concert may reduce social conflict. Acknowledging the iconic common spaces like the Soldier Field could increase the diverse crowds' sense of belonging. Building integrated schools should favor the acceptance of diversity among future generations. Penalizing acts of discrimination would reduce racial violence.

In all, to move forward into a tolerant and unified society some actions must be taken, not only by government policies, but with the cooperation of NGOs, teachers and all of the residents. As Coldplay's "Up & Up" lyrics' say, "We are going to get it together."



Coldplay Concert at Soldier Field. August 17, 2017: Photo by Variance Magazine

Soldier Field
1410 S. Museum Campus Drive - Chicago, IL 60605
Transit time for CTA = 34 minutes
Transit time for car = 14 minutes
Transit time for bike = 33 minutes

Reference

Schneider, A. (2016, February 03). The Storied (and Sometimes Strange) History of Soldier Field. Retrieved August 25, 2017, from <https://chicago.curbed.com/2016/2/3/10942386/a-brief-history-of-soldier-field>

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Looking for a Quiet, Calm Open-air Place



Quiet sunset along the Loop (photo by Jaume Ayats)

Looking for a quiet, calm open-air place

Chicago is a noisy city. Beyond the windy reputation, probably “noisy city” is one of the most exact descriptions in the first perception of a foreigner. An experienced professor of Musicology at the University of Chicago warned me: “In Chicago, as a musician, you need earplugs.” And my experience in Chicago’s public places is exactly that, continuous noises: an ambulance showing sonorously the urgency of its goal, followed by a police car or firemen, or from the supermarket truck in operation; and then public works, an extroverted pedestrian shouting, a Harley-Davidson driving enjoying heavy metal, and finally, a young man with loud speakers expanding music not requested by the other pedestrians. Also, obviously, the unbroken buzz of dozens or hundreds of cars moving without stopping, plus buses, plus a trembling metro or train.

I can't stand this level of noise for days, for weeks, for months, and I decided to discover quiet, calm open-air places in the center of this sonorous concrete jungle. I asked my friends around and I began my Chicago's discoveries. The majority of the tips were to look for the shore line and in public parks. These are good open-air places, certainly, but after some minutes, noises were emerging in form of ambulances or dogs, or still public construction. So, I began a singular Sunday tour across Chicago.

First stop: Ukrainian Village

Sunday morning is, probably, the calmest moment in the core of Ukrainian Village. In well-maintained streets from the early twentieth century, neighbors were still sleeping or enjoying themselves at home. Only some of them were working in the garden or walking the dog. Cars were rare and they even ran slowly. The faithful went to church: St. Volodymyr Ukrainian Orthodox Church or St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral, both sounding bells and multipart chants. Yes, this is an excellent calm place to breathe far from the city troubles but, probably, only on Sunday morning (except for bells). I'm not sure that weekdays are so calm.

Second stop: Old Town

Then I went to Old Town Triangle, another recommended old house neighborhood, in the oldest historical district built after the Great Chicago Fire of 1871. The flavor was quite similar to Ukrainian Village but now in a wealthier neighborhood. Little parks or green spaces between houses appeared in different streets as a hidden, well-kept secrets: children's games and dog walkers along the streets in front of some isolated shops, bars and cleaners. A new place to keep in mind, and calm too, probably, in week days.

Third stop: Lake Michigan

Afterwards I proceeded to the lakefront and south way to the pier. My intent was just to see again Lake Michigan before sunset. On the docks, I observed the tourist boats and the pleasure rental big boats, crowded with boisterous people with a loud, powerful music, especially DJ music and dance music. In the last place, there was a small boat without music, absolutely empty, waiting for passengers. I asked about the destination. It was the last boat to the Shedd Aquarium, situated just close to the Field Museum. Nobody was waiting because the Aquarium was already closed. For only eight dollars, I was in the Water Chicago Taxis boat. To do the twenty-minute journey along the coast of central Chicago was the best decision in months. After the pier noises and the rental pleasure boats with the strong music, the lake was quiet and waveless. The engine of the boat was almost silent. Only the breeze sounding like whispered poetry in a mysterious language was accompanying the three people crew and me, the only passenger. In front of us, the sunset skyline of Chicago Loop.

By chance I probably enjoyed the best calm open-air places of Chicago. Is it necessary to go in the lake to find the quietest, calmest open-air place?

Ukrainian Village

Short description in:

<http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/2160.html>

Touristic and pleasure places:

<https://www.timeout.com/chicago/ukrainian-village>

Old Town

Short description in:

<http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/927.html>

Touristic and pleasure places:

<https://www.timeout.com/chicago/old-town>

Water Chicago Taxis boats from Pier to Shedd Aquarium:

<http://shorelinesightseeing.com/misc/shedd-aquarium-navy-pier/>

Bruno Barbarioli
Brazil
Computer Science

Cycling in the Windy City



Photo by: Unknown. Taken from: <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2013/dec/26/deploy-special-bike-cops-chicago-considers-taxing/>

Cycling has been a part of my life for the last 15 years. When in my teenage years, it represented an easy way to have fun and get fit at the same time, and afterwards it turned into a possible commute option from my house to college. So, when I arrived in Chicago and got a glimpse of all the available bicycle lanes throughout the city, it was clear to me that the Windy City would be a perfect home.

Hyde park provides a unique environment for bicycle aficionados. It is a 40-minute ride from 55th street to Millennium Park, which is exactly the same time that it takes when using the Chicago Public Transit system. However, instead of being stuck inside a bus or train, you can enjoy the lakeshore and the amazing views along the route to downtown. The bike path along the lakeshore makes the experience pleasant and safe and is probably the main reason for the crowded venues during the weekend.

Just like every other issue, the push by city officials to make cycling a viable commute and recreational option has positive and negative effects. On the positive side, there are many benefits to the city and

to the riders. As the number of people that choose to commute by bicycle instead of cars increases, the traffic and pollution decrease making everybody's commute faster and better. The wear that pavement suffers due to regular car usage also is reduced since there are fewer cars on the streets. People riding their bicycles get the benefit of daily physical activity and they can also avoid car related expenditures. However, there are a few issues that need to be taken into consideration. Accidents tend to increase with the number of riders thus requiring governmental policies to prevent their occurrences and provide adequate first response. Streets need to be retrofitted to accommodate bicycle lanes, thus reducing the amount of space available to other vehicles. This could accentuate the traffic problem of an already congested city.

Either way, the bicycle trend is moving forward around the country and especially in Chicago. For the past couple of decades, city officials have invested heavily in making the city a great place for those who choose cycling as their lifestyle. Hopefully Chicago will continue to lead the trend and move forward at becoming the Mecca for urban cyclers.



Photo by: Unknown. Taken from: <https://www.timeout.com/chicago/blog/things-to-know-about-riding-in-chicagos-bike-lanes>

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Harris School of Public Policy:
Masters in Public Policy

One of many Pilsen Jewels: Carnitas Don Pedro Carniceria



Photo by author

Background

It is difficult not to be attracted by the Don Pedro's famous Carnitas when walking along the 18th Street. The unique pork aroma escapes to the sidewalk through the door, or inside to-go boxes, and invites pedestrians to peek through the small glass window or even enter to this Pilsen's culinary jewel. This traditional Mexican restaurant has more than 30 years and sticks to its original cooking recipes present on Duarte's family for decades. The pork is deeply cooked in its own fat for hours, resulting on

a salty meaty goodness, says Eduardo Duarte – son of Don Pedro, founder of the restaurant. Don Pedro’s restaurant attracts many ethnic groups and people from all town, it is a common activity for families and friend, but also many people come and order as a take-away the delicious carnitas, brain tacos or chicharrones (fried pork skin).



Photo by author

Broader Issue

Don Pedro Carniceria is located in Pilsen, a Mexican hub for almost a century that encountered several difficulties, sharing the same space with German, Irish and Bohemian communities, who founded the neighborhood around the 1840s.

Ethnic groups have a strong presence in Pilsen, mostly Hispanics, but more recently many Chinese, African-Americans and some few remaining Irish, are taking control over the neighborhood. The tension in the area have been increasing, especially due clashes of gangs and less police in the streets. Nevertheless, a feeling of safety can be perceived in most of Pilsen’s streets.

Close to Pilsen there are a few universities; whose students bring excitement and cultural enrichment to the local community, keeping alive many established business such as Don Pedros’s restaurant. The students really crowd the restaurant in the looking for great food at a reasonable price.

Travel times:

Starting from Hyde Park, the most convenient way to get to Pilsen is by car, either using sharing services or driving by yourself, a 15 minute ride will get you to the heart of Pilsen, where Carnitas Don Pedro is located.

Taking public transportation, a 45 minute ride from Hyde Park will get you there just in time, and you could take one Jarritos (traditional Mexican soda pop) for your way back!

Jingying (Jane) Bi
PRC & Singapore
Social Sciences, MAPSS,
Economics

Omnipresent Local in Chicago



A gray squirrel in S. Woodlawn Ave. Photo by author

Bus service to campus is not available over the weekend. So I walked to the Regenstein Library through South Woodlawn Ave. This street is around 10-meter wide with two-flats and trees on both sides. I saw some squirrels salvaging food from the plastic bags on the street while others sitting in a tree and chomping on a walnut. I encountered five of them in one early morning and four on another day at

noon. I also saw squirrels in other places when I ambled on campus after lunch, ran along a track near the 57th beach, visited the millennium park and rested on a bench in Andersonville's greenland. Once a man in his fifties saw me squatting in front of a squirrel and flirting it, he said "you need to feed it!" People living in this city seem to get used to these omnipresent locals already.

I wonder why there are so many squirrels in Chicago as I only see a few in Singapore, a city with trees and nice climate as well. Moreover, the squirrels that I have encountered in Hyde Park, the Loop and Andersonville look the same – bodies in brownish gray, bellies in white, fatty tails in grey with white furry fringes. Such part as cheeks, the top of ears and the end of legs are brown. They are the so called gray squirrel. Fox squirrel is also conspicuous in Chicago. They are with bright orange bellies and larger body sizes. Since I have only seen gray squirrels so far, I am curious about how these two species choose their habitats – do they coexist in the same neighborhood or they separate each other in a particular way. If they rarely live together, what are the underlying factors that drive such a separation, probably the species of trees, existence of certain predators or human densities?

Studies show that tree species affect the distribution of squirrels. Specifically, gray squirrels are more frequently associated with oaks and pines, while fox squirrels with elms and maples (Project Squirrel , 2006). Acorns are important food sources for squirrels. Pines also serve cashable nuts. In contrast, elms and maple seeds only satisfy the squirrels' food demand within short period. Since squirrels do not hibernate, a stable food supply is premium especially during the brutal cold winter in Chicago. Hence the fox squirrels living with the elms and maples better resist the adversity of food shortage than their gray counterparties. However, my personal observation in the South Woodlawn Ave differs slightly from the studies. The trees on which the gray squirrels sitting were not oak but the village green zelkova which is in the elm family. Nor the nuts they crunching were acorn or pine nuts.

In addition to the tree species, according to Merwe and Brown (2005), the distribution of gray and fox squirrels highly associates with cat abundance. Specifically, fox squirrels are observed in areas with more cats because their larger body sizes make them more difficult to subdue by predators. On the other hand, the abundance of cat or dogs in the street did change due to human activities in history. For instance, in 1950s, Oak Park was dominated by the fox squirrels. By 1990s, a new influx of grey squirrels took over. According to Brown, fewer pet owners left their cats or dogs outside due to the adoption of a local leash law, which reduced the predation risk and made Oak Park more habitable for the gray squirrels (Keenehan, 2017).

Last but not least, research showed that fox squirrels prefer areas with more affordable single-family homes, while the gray counterparts are in favor of wealthier neighborhoods with highrise buildings, parks and campuses (Project Squirrel, 2006). At least, this aligns with my own experience. Human activities seem to play important roles in squirrels' behavior. Several questions pop up in my head simultaneously. How does gentrification impact the squirrels' choices of habitat? Since a gentrified area evolves from a less affluent to an opulent with more highrise buildings and higher population

density, does it experience a period of fox squirrel exodus or gray influx?

In a nutshell, gray and fox squirrels select nesting sites by trading off the tree species, pet abundance and population density. The impact of human activities on their distributions leaves great space for further studies.

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Civil Disengagement with the Neighborhood



Photo Credit: Ridvan Bolgi

The University of Chicago unquestionably is one of the best institutions of higher education in the nation. I decided to take their AEPP course to experience the campus environment and to prove that I know more about Chicago than any other international students. I have told my classmates I am cheating in the course because I am a half Chicagoan since 2015.

I was ready and excited as newcomer. However, the day I started the course, I was not able to access the internet because I was an “outsider insider”: I was not a student of the University of Chicago but I have lived in Chicago for several years already. Thankfully, the great people of the language department gave me a temporary internet password, so I could use the internet. According to Wikipedia and a friend of mine, the University of Chicago’s library is one of the largest in the nation, and it has great collections. I ran to the library in one hell of a hurry to see the books and magazines from all over the world. I was planning to take a look at the Kurdish section first. I walked faster and faster to get there as soon as possible while listening to the Gangs of New York’s soundtrack, “the Hands That Build America,” by U2. I had arrived to the door, and I saw a security person sitting there scrolling down the browser on his phone. I tried to enter but he told me that I needed to use my card. I took my all cards out like in a poker game. I thought I had a powerful hand. I patiently played them all. Student IDs from other Chicago universities, my Illinois driver's license and state ID, my laundromat card, and my Ventra card for Chicago travel. Nothing worked. I could not enter the library because of the library policy: only University of Chicago students, faculty, and researchers can enter. I desperately left the library. I did not look back but put the music on, Pink Floyd, Lost of Words which says “because there is no safety in numbers when the right one walks out of the door.”

End of the first week of the course, Ryan Priester who looked like MLK with his clothes and mustache, talked about civic engagement and how the university build connection with the people in Hyde Park. However, I was surprised that an ordinary resident of Illinois can not access the internet or use the library unless they have some academical research.

Information is worthless if people and public can’t reach it when they want to. The internet and the libraries are only not for students, aristocrats, or philosophers. A private library, private internet, private security isolate the campus from the residents. The campus is located in an African American neighborhood. I would not go to the University of Chicago’s campus if I were an African American resident who did not have a good connection with cops because it’s surrounded by an army of police. Chicago is pretty well known with police brutality against people of color and having a police car on every corner of the campus creates an unpleasant image in people's minds. In addition, since people have no access to the university’s services, they can’t get information, only frustration.

Over all, technically, the university does not reduce the crime, educate or help the people in the city, but it pushes them out off campus by not providing services to the residents and instead providing fear by over policing. I heard that in the past, the University of Chicago was about to move to Arizona. If an Institute does not offer much to where it locates, It would better to move somewhere else because it is only a burden on the neighborhood and not a source of pride

Elif Bozgan
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Humanities: Near Eastern
Languages and Civilizations

Enjoying the Scenery



Photo courtesy of Chicago magazine

On a warm August afternoon, me and a friend of mine left Hyde Park to head to the Chicago River. Not downtown but towards the north branch of the Chicago River. Upon arrival to the kayaking location, perfect, I think, to break out of the city's hustle and bustle. After meeting with two friends of us, we put our canoe on the river; ready to paddle in tandem. Excited to see species of herons indigenous to the area, we began paddling. Alas, it took less than a few minutes to hit on a branch of a tree at the left edge of the river. Nervous by the immediate strike, we have an argument and I concede to leave the paddling to my friend sitting behind me, Luckily, he saves us from flipping over and we gradually find a balance. I hold my paddle and wait to see any herons. No herons but I see a couple of turtles. This doesn't help me to get bored and I soak my paddle in the river again. With this attempt of me at

paddling, we lose the balance again and my friend calls out behind me: “Stop!” and then he adds with the same apprehensive tone: “Enjoy the scenery!” Soon after I see a black-crowned heron under a tree and look at my surrounding with a peace of mind. I reply back with a similar nervous but theatrical tone. “I do!”. On the way back to the dock, we finally manage to paddle together and feel the current flow smoothly beneath the kayak. At that moment, I think that it takes time to find the balance and to move forward against the current in tandem, but once you catch each other’s rhythm, you definitely enjoy the scenery.

North Branch of Chicago River

The Chicago river is a part of a system including the Main Stem of the Chicago River, South Branch and North Branch and 52 miles of constructed waterways: the North Shore Channel, the Sanitary and Ship Canal and the Calumet Sag Channel. The river system provides information that sheds light on the history of Chicago. The river played an important role in Chicago’s development as a center of lumber and meatpacking. Chicago became the departure point for lumber wholesale for the Midwest in the nineteenth century. The access through Illinois and Michigan Canal to Des Plaines River and Mississippi River made shipping possible throughout the Midwest. Furthermore, the river, through the areas that it flowed made Chicago an important center for fur trade. Fur trade became an important source of income first for the Potawatamis, Native Americans of the Great Plain and then European and African settlers.

Sources: Encyclopedia of Chicago. www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org

Travel Times:

Chicago River Canoe and Kayak
3400 N. Rockwell

Edgar Braham Herrera
Mexico
The Harris School of Public Policy

Fostering Curiosity for a Better Awareness of Science, Technology and Innovation in Chicago



Photo by Edgar Braham

One of the many venues found in Chicago is the Museum of Science and Industry. This landmark is located in Hyde Park, a Neighborhood in the Southside of Chicago, a mile away from the University of Chicago. The building itself is more than 100 years old and was home to be the Columbian White Fair Fine Arts Palace. Today, the museum holds three floors of permanent science, technology, and industry themed exhibits, as well as different temporary ones in an area of more than 400,000 square feet (MSI, 2017). The museum presents the evolution, current course, and cutting-edge discoveries in science, ranging from energy, engineering, physics, space, manufacturing health, transportation, innovation, technology, among other science related topics. While the museum might seem to be designed for a young audience, the exhibits are suitable and attractive for all ages. For example, visitors will find a complete exhibition of the functioning of the human body and mind, as well an insight on the most important health issues. They will also be able to explore the history of flight, go inside an actual Boeing 747 or see how a turbine works to thrust a vehicle.

Moreover, people can learn from the current developments of technology and innovation in different areas of life. For instance, they could immerse themselves in the facts and dynamics of global warming, discover future trends in technologies and new inventions, as well as explore the cosmos and the evolution of the space race.

Today, one of the museum's hot spots is the Robot Revolution exhibit. This showroom bears a collection of the most advanced robots developed by private and public institutions for a variety of purposes. At the entrance of the exhibit there is a C3PO-like robot that will greet visitors and explain to them the typology of robots, their different current task capabilities and the future roles they will have in our society. It points out that today's robots can learn from experience, help with home chores, or recognize feelings, and that in the future they will serve as teachers, companions, house keepers, among other human-like roles in life. Throughout the showroom, different robot prototypes are presented, from the popular industrial assembly robot to a Blackjack dealer robot with amazing card handling skills and a vision recognition robot device. It is surprising to see a great number of children and teenagers interacting with the robots, an experience that will motivate many of them to study science-related courses and light the spark of innovation in their minds.

Science, Technology and Innovation are three related concepts that have been crucial for the success of the most developed societies in the world. The United States is known for its leadership in the world's scientific arena. The influence of the U.S. discoveries, technological creations, and standards has defined a great part of the current way of life in most countries around the globe. Curiosity for the unknown, among other reasons, has motivated Americans to develop such creations and, thus, explore space, build robots or find cures for the rarest illnesses. In this sense, institutions such as the Museum of Science and Industry can keep curiosity alive particularly in young American minds. In fact, the museum describes its exhibits as "designed to spark scientific inquiry and creativity" (MSI, 2017). That is why it is so important to foster and fund a scientific museum network.

Moreover, it is important that museums bring cutting-edge technology exhibits, at least temporarily, that are suitable for all ages. In particular, the showrooms should have an attractive and colorful design, fun activities and, when possible, physical interaction with the museum pieces. For example, the effort of the Museum of Science and Industry to bring the Robot Revolution exhibit is highly valuable. People of all ages get a glimpse of what the future would look like with robots around. Visitors become aware of the unlimited possibilities to imagine and implement, robotic solutions to both daily and the most sophisticated problems.

Finally, it is important to stress that empirical studies and economic theories suggest that Innovation, Science, and Research and Development have a positive impact on sustained growth (Romer, 1986; Griffith, Redding & Van Reenen 2003). New discoveries become profitable assets for societies which causes a boost in productivity and competitiveness. In addition, it is said that innovation presents spill-over effects in economies because a new discovery not only helps the individual that invented it, but rather makes processes easier for third parties (Aghion & Jaravel 2015). Think of the impact on society of a Cancer vaccine or a new battery that recharges with air particles. Both of these creations would definitely be profitable for the inventors, but also would benefit the lives of many of the users and, thus, of the whole society. If bringing high-tech exhibits to museums helps to wake up curiosity in

children, then the money spent to make it possible would certainly be an investment in future scientific and technological discoveries.

Travel times from the University of Chicago are short because the Museum is located in Hyde Park.

By foot: It takes a 16 minute walk from the University of Chicago along the Midway Street.

By car: It takes a 6 minute ride from the University Main Quadrangles.

By bus: It takes a 15 minutes bus ride with a bus interchange. First the 171 bus should be taken at the University Ave. and 57 St. stop. Then, you should take the the 55 bus at 55 St. and Woodlawn and get off at the museum stop.

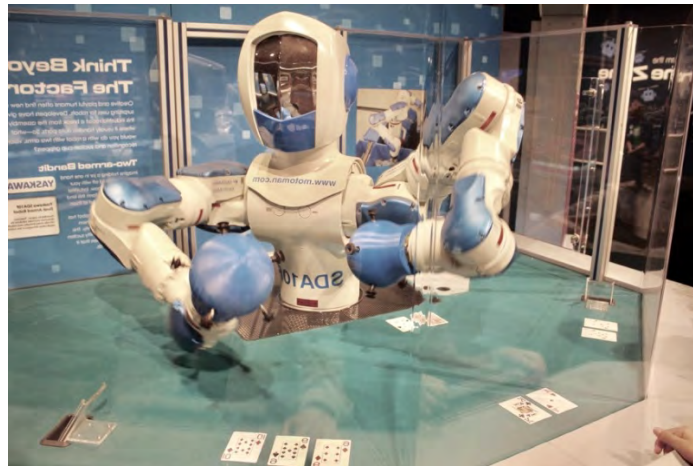


Photo by Edgar Braham

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Liang Cai
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Social Sciences Division

Why Are Walk-in Closets So Popular in the United States?



Photo from Internet. Source: <https://www.pinterest.jp/pin/487585097147392519>

When I first moved into my new apartment in Hyde Park, I was instantly amazed at how big it was. I was particularly impressed by the walk-in closet, which I only expect to appear in huge mansions and villas. Yet most of the apartments where my friends stay in Chicago are also equipped with walk-in closets. It seems walk-in closets are a prevalent essential to American apartment, from those built in 1970s to today's newly built houses. Interestingly, it is uncommon to have walk-in closets in apartments in China and Europe. Instead, the European and Chinese apartments, no matter how modern or old, typically have wardrobes.

As a matter of fact, the modern walk-in closets we see today originated in Europe. The European royalty has a long history of having rooms specially for storing clothes. It, however, remained a privilege to the royal families for centuries. Yet, it was in 19-century's New York city that closets that most resemble modern walk-in closets were installed to serve the new-rich ("A brief history of walk-in closets", n.d.). Later on, as the American dream of suburbia trended in 1950s, the large walk-in closets were made available in Americans' in big suburban houses. For instance, a house in Levittown was planned to have "[a] master bedroom with two walk-in

closets" (Auchter, 1958). A house, preferably in suburb, with a walk-in closet gradually gained its popularity and became a template of American new homes.

Another reason why walk-in closets being more prevalent in the US than in China and Europe may lie in differences in house sizes. As of 2009, the average house size in the US is 201 square meters, surpassing that of China (60 square meters) and most European countries (Wilson, n.d.). Such gap in average house size may have rooted from various social, historical and demographic reasons. In the post-war era, the Americans built countless high-rise commercial and residential buildings, bringing considerable quantities of residential space for urban residents. In addition, the US also benefits from its well-designed city systems and well-developed suburban residential areas. Instead of concentrating its population in urban areas, the US systems is, to a large extent, a decentralized one for residing. Accordingly, the demand for housing inner cities is moderate and the average living space remains relatively high. Although the Chinese also attempt to plan cities in a space-efficient way by building high-rise residential buildings, the Chinese population is unevenly distributed, with cities being too densely populated. A huge demand for houses is always the case in big cities, forcing the urban planner to favor compact apartments. The average house size is therefore much smaller.

Likewise, the European countries also suffer from its dense population, as evidenced by the impossibly steep stairs in the Netherlands. Moreover, historically built private houses in many European regions are still preserved in good conditions, despite being small and low-rise. At the time when those houses came into use, walk-in closets were not popularized to public. Today, it would be unrealistic and costly to bring down these small blocks and rebuild the city to host newcomers. As such, the walk-in closets have never really been made possible in Europe or Asia. In addition, the modernization in the United States also makes a difference. As the most industrialized countries in the world, the United States has abundant commodities in the market. Taking toys as an example, "the U.S. has 3.1% of the world's children, but consumes 40% of the world's toys." (UCLA, n.d.). A similar situation happens with their shoes and clothes. Apparently, rich commodities as such require more storage space at home. In a nutshell, the reason why walk-in closets being more popular in the United States may reflect differences in demography, history, and lifestyles between these countries.

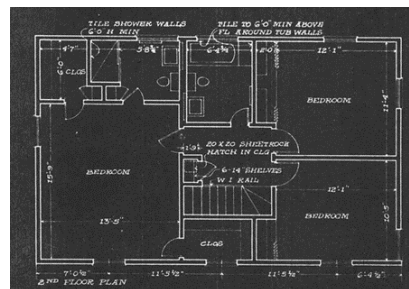


Photo by Auchter (1958). Source:

<http://photobucket.com/gallery/user/TrafficJam28/media/bWVkaWFJZDo2MTkwNzQ1NQ==/?ref=>

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Tacos Mexico Style



Photo by Edgar Braham

Background

Tacos are a very traditional Mexican food. My classmate Edgar, who happens to come from Mexico, and I went to Pilsen, a Mexican neighborhood in Chicago, to have taste of its culture and diversity during our neighborhood projects. I remember that these tacos are served with pork and beef. The side dish served together is red beans with rice. Taste was wonderful, since the Mexican food was spicy and I came from Hunan, a province in China where people love to eat spicy food. The sauce is a mixture of vinegar, chili and oil. It tastes sour and spicy, and you won't feel too greasy.

Broader Issue

All Americans eat tacos, but the culture which brought them here does not share the same popularity with the food. Mexican Americans suffered from significant social, cultural and racial disadvantages.

Chicago, like the U.S., has a great deal of racial and cultural diversity. But when we look deeper into statistics we find that minority race suffered from the inequality.

The Mexican community in Chicago is the second largest in the world just after the Mexico City. 28% of Chicago's population is Latino. Cultural Inclusion and racial equality disadvantages and States. Racial gap and employment. insured compared Survey, 2015) The median wealth of White households is 18 times that of Hispanic households in 2009 according to Pew Research Center's analysis. (Kochhar et. al., 2011) The poverty rate of White was 9.9% compared to 26.6% for Hispanics. (DeNavas et.al. 2011) In America, the racial issues are accumulated across the time. Certainly there is no easy solution for the issue. China is a country with different minority group, while there is a large proportion of majority ethnics. The perspective towards the racial relationship is quite different from here. However the American perspective of race for us, foreigners, is an important way to understand what really happened here, what is going on here and make a sound judgement what will happen here.

Travel Time:

26 Min Driving

42 Min Public Transportation

Yang Cao
China
Physical Science Department:
Chemistry

Organic Food: A Myth or the Truth?



Whole Foods: photo from <http://www.ineedtext.com/FoodBlog/category/food-markets/>

Buying fresh vegetables and meat is an important part of my daily life. I started to know Chicago by the grocery stores and markets, including Treasure Island, Hype Park Produce and Whole Foods. What really confused me is there are always two kinds of food, organic food and conventional ones in all the markets. Organic vegetables, fruits and meats are always labeled specially and sold at more expensive prices. Last week from August 28th, after being taken over by Amazon, the Whole Foods started its big sale. I went there only to see a huge amount of crazy people and empty racks! Although the prices were still higher than the conventional foods, customers I met explained to me that organic is good to health and everything. This was the first time that I personally felt American's enthusiasm about organic food. In China, a concept of Green Food is kind of the same with organic food but it is never as popular as in America.

As a chemistry student, I am very familiar with the word "organic" but not in the context of food and the concept of limiting artificial chemicals draw my attention. I started to think whether organic really matters or how much and in what ways does it matter.

The first interesting question about organic food is what food can be called as organic. People tend to simply regard organic food as healthy food but is that true? The 'organic' is not a natural concept but a manmade definition based on the country's certification, which means food produced by the restricted use of some pesticides, fertilizers, antibodies or other substances listed as harmful by the USDA.

Organic food is more about process than the product quality. To make it clear, buying organic food may be good for the environment, but no obvious evidence proves organic food is sure to be healthier than conventional one.

Another question about organic food is they are as good-looking as conventional food. That means farmers must have used the natural alternatives of pesticides and fertilizers to get rid of insects and diseases. Concentrated chemicals are more efficient than those natural alternatives, which is the reason why chemists developed them. In that case, organic farmers need a lot more 'natural' pesticides and fertilizers than non-organic ones. To consider effects of substances on biology system, the amount absorbed is as important as substance itself. Considering this, is this still safer to eat all that amount of pesticides even if they are 'natural'? Even more, is organic produce still better for environment? The last thinking about organic food is why not all the farmers make their food organic.

One possible reason is that natural pesticides and fertilizers are more expensive. Besides, the organic certification asks for more investment. It's not necessary for farmers to do bad things as non-organic food producers. The non-organic food is not that bad if it can pass the quality testing of food. The appropriate response to organic and non-organic food should be keeping aware of the truth about organic and choose organic food when necessary. There are some lists like the Dirty Dozen and Clean 15 of Produce to guide people. In the end, don't be too obsessed into organic food and a balanced diet is much better for the health than the organic certification.

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Harris School of Public Policy: MPP

Dating in Chicago – A Guide for Single International Students



Source: 10Best.com

I was going to the supermarket for the first time here, alone, by foot. Just walking on the street, very excited about my new life here, so probably, I was smiling while walking when a guy came to me and said:

- I can tell, you're not from here.
- Well... I guess I'm not... - I answered scared and a little afraid.
- I can see, your posture, the way you dress and walk... Where are you from?
- From Brazil. – I was giving all my answers carefully, as I don't know what he was about to do.
- Would you give me your number? I'd like to invite you for dinner...
- Well... that's weird, I don't know you...

- I'm just asking you out... do you date black guys?
- I do... I just don't give my number to anyone on the street, you know?
- Ok, so maybe I can add you on Instagram, and we can talk there. How does that sound to you? Safer?

I couldn't think of many risks of giving him my Instagram, so I accepted it (I haven't had the courage to go out with him though – at least not yet). This was my introduction to Chicago's dating life. My country's culture is well known as very out and easygoing people, still, guys' approach here shocked me – the more I go out and meet new people, the more it confuses me. So I decided to do a little research to find out whether this was normal, or I was just being weirdly (un) lucky, and maybe the outcomes of my research can be very helpful for single international students.

First things first: Have fun!

This is not supposed to be stressful, you better not be in a husband/wife hunt, the main propose of this whole thing is to just have fun. At Chicago seems to be the perfect city for that. I know you chose to come here because you wanted to be in one of the best universities (at least, I did), but lucky us, in 2016 Chicago was voted the best city to date in the US, according to Chicago Tribune.

Apparently, the reasons for this achievement are more related to the social environment and to the variety of pleasant activities, than to the actual guy-meets-girl thing. You do what you like to do, have a good time and suddenly, magically you'll meet a nice guy/girl/whatever-you-like. Happy people are attractive, this is true in Chicago, San Francisco, Tokyo, Barcelona - everywhere.

Second things second: What to expect? How is Chicago dating scene?

My American friends told me that the dating scene in Chicago is better than NYC and DC. They say that the "Midwest men" who tend to be more marriage oriented than the men on the East Coast. If this is super accurate, I don't know – I don't even know if this is a good information, as they announce to be, seems a little desperate. I can only say that, indeed, they seem to be very intense here. I found some data to support this idea (and open our minds to others ideas).

A research conducted by the website TimeOut in many cities across the world presents some very interesting data about Chicagoans. About the availability, 52% of the guys and 59% of the women are single. I would say that is a comfortable percentage, but the respondents do not seem to agree very much with me. While 44% of the men describe Chicago as "a fertile orchard" to date, only 22% of the of women described Chicago's dating scene as "a warzone".

The rate the average dateability (the quality of being desirable as a potential lover) of the opposite sex in Chicago is 7.5 for men and 6.33 for women. I would not be very attached to this numbers, perhaps women have broader standards everywhere.

Cultural facts

The dating culture still somewhat sexist, ironic and confusing (that might be the reason I'm still trying to understand it). According to the research, 75% men and 55% women think men should make the first move. Pick-up lines are something not very frequently used, only 14% of men and 5% women use it! People here get attached easily, as 39% of men and 59% of women know they want a second date within 2-3 minutes of the first date!!! You will find some more curious data about the dating culture in Chicago:

The biggest deal-breakers on a first date:

	MEN	WOMEN
Bad breath	14%	73%
Bad politics	16%	82%
Bad posture	3%	27%
Bad resemblance to their profile picture	16%	64%

Source: TimeOut

What do Chicagoans find attractive on a first date?

	MEN	WOMEN
Looks	28	118
Anatomy	19	36
Sense of humor/good personality	30	148
Shared interests	24	107
That spark	19	83
Stench of wealth	0	9
Professional attitude	11	63
Intelligence	31	127
Someone at another table	0	2
Signs they're attracted to you	21	0

Source: TimeOut

Other cultural curiosities

	MEN	WOMEN
These people prefer "moderate-booze-buzz" dates	58%	58%
thinks that first date sex is "occasionally permissible, if it feels right"	37%	41%
Average number of dates after which it's acceptable to suggest sex	2.3	3.98
Average number of dates after which you should stop seeing other people	6.5	6.72
Who has been on a date with a co-worker?	67%	57%
What percentage of dates end in "fuckbuddyhood"?	22%	4%
What percentage of dates end in a serious relationship?	22%	12%

Source: TimeOut

Where to meet people

Option 1: organic non-virtual experiences

For incomers, my interviewees recommended events by interest area, like those BYOB dinners, cooking classes (or any other areas that are of interest of yours) - try it, but might I suggest not going for the mere fact of meeting a guy/girl, but to go, learn and have a good time. That is the real purpose of it all. When you find someone interesting, according to my research and personal experience so far, everywhere is place to meet someone. Americans like to chat, they are capable of starting conversations in any situation you imagine, so if you find someone attractive in the Walgreens, go ahead - talk to him/her (do not be like me, don't feel weird if someone approaches you in an unusual situation). In Chicago, you can approach talking about politics, weather or anything you want. The only thing I do not recommend is to talk about President Donald Trump, unless you like approaching by anger, otherwise the receptiveness trend to be very high.

According to The Masculine Traveler, the receptiveness to Daygame approach is 4.5/5, and to Night game is 3.5/5. The Ambiance Matchmaking gave some suggestions about where to meet people, make those approaches, learn something and have fun: sports leagues, training groups, cooking classes, food & drink (did you know that Whole Foods Market hosts a starling number of social events?), community events (like meetup.com), networking events (Young Professionals of Chicago hosts events that are

great for meeting other career-driven individuals), volunteer (we learn about many options during the AEPP course, right?).

Option 2: Online

The dating apps that I know are those famous worldwide like Tinder and Happn. I tried both of them and hated it. Happn I used for 2 days, didn't even started a conversation with anyone, no interesting people at all – maybe it isn't popular here. Tinder I tried for 1 week, it was ok. Some guys are super sex-oriented, others are open to just meet new people and have fun. It is possible to have fun there, but as a very talkative person, I feel much more comfortable meeting people at bars, parties, beaches, and supermarkets. I feel very weird chatting in those apps, nevertheless, if you are shy and acquainted with technologies, I would definitely recommend it. During my research, I found about an app named Date My School, which is exclusive to students of good universities like UChicago, Yale, Harvard, etc. It seems to be a good option; I didn't try because it's paid service.

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Andrés Caro

Gauguin on Michigan

To come to a city like Chicago as a grad student from a place that does not offer the diversity and different leisure options this city has is overwhelming. For example, one can choose what to eat by randomly selecting any country in the World: Ethiopian food, check; Mexican food, check; Pakistani, check; Italian food, Peruvian food, Israeli food, check, check, check (If you—like me—are Colombian, the coffee won't entirely disappoint you. Thank you, Chicago).

Chicago opens itself with a grid of crossroads and possibilities. If you look at a map you'll easily understand the disposition of the roads, avenues and strange diagonals that give Chicago one of its multiple features as a truly architectural miracle (ask Frank Lloyd Wright, ask Mies Van der Rohe). In another sense, Chicago has always been a crossroad. What in the 19th century was a city/bridge that connected the East (its Yankees, its patriots) with the West (mavericks and fortune seekers) and the South (?) via de the Mississippi has become a global city/bridge that brings together people from every single corner of the World. (I am taking a French class with a South Korean couple, a Saudi soccer fan, a Brazilian from Paraná and with one —just one local, kind south sider who instructed me not to fear the winter).

Beyond the lake, the buildings, the food, and the winter (which for me started in the last week of August) one thing that overwhelmed me for its diversity and beauty is the Art Institute on the Northern side of Millennium Park, on Michigan Avenue. I came to the Art Institute one Thursday evening — Thursdays the museum is open until 8 pm (from the University of Chicago you can take Metra from the 51st/53rd station to the north, or take the 55 bus west from the 55th and Ellis , then get off at Garfield Station of the Green Line to take a train to Millennium Park). Early that day I had discovered that the University of Chicago offers its students something called ArtsPass (<https://arts.uchicago.edu/arts-pass/organizations>) that enables us to visit 70 art and culture institutions in the Chicago area for free or with great discounts.

That Thursday, handing my UChicagoID, I entered the Art Institute for free.



The above image is a picture by French artist Paul Gauguin (1848-1903), and one of the main features of the special exposition I saw that Thursday: “Paul Gauguin: The Artist as Alchemist”. It was a huge show for me although not rare –in scope and size– compared to what the usual visitors of the Art Institute are familiar with. I have no recollection of seeing a one-man exposition as wide-ranging as this one, and at the same time as specialized in one aspect of his work: his use of unusual techniques and materials, and the different ways in which his travels informed and nourished his work and his various experiments.

The exhibition was divided into several rooms that displayed Gauguin’s travels around the World, from his first trip abroad to Peru with his mother in his childhood, to his last trip to the Marqueses, where he died.

Gauguin’s career was paralleled to that of his friends, the Impressionists and the Post-Impressionists. However, Gauguin decided to travel abroad, and France remained for him a place to reencounter with friends but not a creative center, which in fact moved with the years along with his bags and tools.

The exhibition also displayed the different varieties of art forms Gauguin explored, from woodworking to furniture, passing to various methods of printmaking, and ceramics. Each method was informed by the diversity of experiences the trips gave to Gauguin. The vast number of pieces in the exhibition also showed the broad intellectual and aesthetic interests Gauguin had, especially religion, spiritual practices and quotidian but nevertheless bucolic scenes and imaginaries that became common in his work. Although his interests were present in all the periods of his career (from the peasants and the nuns of Bretagne, in Northern France to the sad, naked women and violent goddesses of the Pacific islands), Gauguin experimented with forms, colors, materials, and styles in a way that amazes: one cannot believe that the same painter of the now famous Tahiti women is the same artisan who made such a strange set of jars or a pair of clogs out of wood.



What is an alchemist? Is a wizard who is capable of mixing strange stuff in order to get gold. That is the comparison the curators made when they said Gauguin was an artist who was also an alchemist. The essence of the association lies in the artist's use of different things, materials and sources in order to produce something worthy.

You won't be able to see this exhibition. It left the halls of the Art Institute in September 2017, but you have those very halls and also a city that, like Gauguin, echoes the alchemical mixing of stuff, and the surprises that come with the multiple combinations of matter. In a sense, Gauguin was for me the first welcome to Chicago and remains a key to understanding this place. It is not Tahiti, nor Lima, but I am sure you'll find something from Tahiti and Lima here, in this city of encounters.

I would like to invite you to the Art Institute. Choose one room, or a single work, and just see it. In that observation may lay the secret of belonging to a place that is not home.

Jesus Castaneda
Mexico
MPP

CME Group: History of Chicago's Quadrillion Dollar Market



Source: <http://www.cmegroup.com/>

Background

What is main purpose of the CME Group (CME) and what is his history?

The CME provides an extensive selection of derivative products to cover the rising necessities for risk management tools. According to CME's overview¹, their main customers are portfolio managers, investment bankers, traders, as well as farmers, ranchers and other entities. All of them look at the CME for alternatives to mitigate the potential losses that they may have because of variations in currency rates, interest rates, and commodities prices among others.

CME Group has more than 150 years of history and during this period the company has contributed with key technological, industrial, and financial innovations that translate into global economic development². Based in Chicago, the CME was founded on 1848 as the world's first futures exchange; the market began with forward contracts over bushels of corn, but by 1969 the product breadth also included futures on pork, non-storable agriculture commodities, and non-grain products such as silver.

¹ CME Group Overview. Retrieved August, 2017, from <https://www.cmegroup.com/company/files/cme-group-overview.pdf>

² CME Group Overview. Retrieved August, 2017, from <https://www.cmegroup.com/company/files/cme-group-overview.pdf>

By 1982 the CME had future contracts and options on foreign currencies, mortgages, US Treasury Bonds, and the S&P 500; lately, on 1987 the CME ushered in the electronic era through the development of the CME Globex platform, and by 1997 all the CME future contract operations were already migrated to electronic systems. Then on 1999 CME began the operation of the first weather-based future contracts. Finally, the 2000-2012 period was also marked by important events such as the merge with the Chicago Board of Trade in 2007, the acquisition of New York Mercantile Exchange in 2008, and the acquisition of Kansas City Board of Trade in 2012.

What is the magnitude of the CME for the worldwide economy?

Nowadays, the CME Group is the largest derivative market in the world; annually the CME Group handles on average 3 billion contracts that are worth approximately USD \$1 quadrillion³. In other words, Chicago houses a market that values almost 54 times the 2016 US GDP and 956 times the Mexican GDP⁴. Moreover, according to a study conducted by the United States Government Accountability Office, the 2008 financial crisis cost to the US economy around USD \$22 trillion⁵, which means that on average the CME Group manage more than 45 times the 2008 crisis' cost on derivative instruments, and for this reason the CME Group is an interesting case study for the development of economic and financial policies focused on crisis prevention and international risk management good practices.

Broader Issues

Like many MPP students I come from outside the USA with a lot of expectations and eagerness to begin the grad school in one of the most amazing cities in the world. Chicago is recognized worldwide as city full of diversity where anyone can find everything at any moment, and among all those things the one that takes my attention is the Chicago Mercantile Exchange Group. As an actuary, I have always been very interested in risk management, and for this reason I consider the CME one of the most amazing things in Chicago; nevertheless, and to my surprise, not all the Chicagoans are aware of the history and the magnitude that this Market has on a worldwide level. From my perspective the history of the CME should be widespread just as other amazing and historical projects such as the River reverse.

CME Group, 550 W Washington Blvd.

Take bus #6 to Michigan Madison / Walk to Michigan & Randolph / Take bus #124 to Clinton & Madison

Walk to CME Group building

³ CME Group Overview. Retrieved August, 2017, from <https://www.cmegroup.com/company/files/cme-group-overview.pdf>

⁴ World Bank national accounts data, and OECD National Accounts data files. Retrieved from http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD?year_high_desc=true; US GDP as of 2016 USD \$ 18,569,100 millions; Mexico GDP as of 2016 USD \$ 1,045,998 millions.

⁵US GAO. (2013, January). Financial Crisis Losses and Potential Impacts of the Dodd-Frank Act. Retrieved from <http://www.gao.gov/assets/660/651322.pdf>

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Social Segregation in Hairdressers or Just a Matter of Different Tastes?



Hyde Park Hair Saloon: Source: <http://www.gettyimages.com>

Background

When someone moves to a new city, he usually spends a lot of time evaluating his decisions, in order to maintain a level of well-being equal to or greater than he already had previously. Usually, the issues are food, neighborhood, new friendships and, why not, where can one get a haircut?. Moreover, the differences between countries and even neighborhoods in the same country are immense in each of those matters.

In my personal experience, I have been traveling a lot in the last ten years to countries with very different cultures, like Buenos Aires in Argentina or Auckland in New Zealand. Indeed, in each one of these countries I have often felt the need to decide the issues that I mentioned above as best as possible, always considering my preferences and, of course, my adjusted student budget. However, in Hyde Park, it is the first time that I have experienced that each of these decisions may be restricted by a new variable: my origin or maybe the color of my skin.

A couple of weeks after I arrived at Hyde Park, I decided that I need a haircut. Almost all the important matters, like my new neighborhood, daily food, some new friends and even where to buy my secondhand furniture were already decided, so I went for a walk to observe a potential place and thus fulfill my objective. On the other hand, in that same week, we were reading quite a lot in the language camp classes about social segregation in schools, especially in Chicago. Subsequently, I was very up to date about the social problems of the city and the country.

During my expedition through the streets of Hyde Park, I realized that the probability of finding an African American hairdresser for white people was very close to zero. The opposite was practically the same, and the first question that I asked myself was if this separation between "people with different color" persists even in a hairdresser, isn't it coming to an extreme case in which nothing can be shared?

Broader Issue

The problems of racial segregation presented by the city of Chicago and in some other cities in the United States are alarming, and this is evident not only in schools, neighborhoods, parks, beaches but also, even in hairdressers. Indeed, the fact that people can't share everyday activities should be a concern for the government, and public policies should be implemented to minimize this situation.

A set of policies that the government should implement needs to focus on eradicating racial segregation in schools. The essence of these types of policies is explained in a quote from Nelson Mandela posted by Barack Obama in Twitter a few weeks ago: "No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin or his background or his religion...." Providing equal access to quality education to all individuals regardless of gender, color or economic situation should be the primary goal of the government to eradicate this problem.

Education plays a vital role in providing students with tools that enable them to participate actively in their community and country. The government, through schools, should focus their efforts on transmitting values, attitudes, and skills that allow students to live together, with equal opportunities, in a world characterized by diversity and plurality.



57th Street Hair Salon: Source: <http://57thstreethairsalon.com/home.html>

57th Street Hair Salon is a short walk from UChicago

Xiaodong Chen
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Physical Science Division:
Mathematics

Dream of Acting



Picture from Guoshuai Cao

As a graduate student from China, I am really excited to immerse myself to learn and to do research at the University of Chicago. But sometimes, I am really tired after an all-day study session and want to relax in some way. I happened to see an advertisement from Windmill Drama presenting Night of January 16th. My roommate Bingjin and I went to watch the drama, and we were both thrilled by the excellent show.

“What would you like to do in the future?”

“I would like to be an actress.”

In fact, this was my dream since elementary school. But it is scarcely possible to come true due to the reality, which is a usual case for most people in China. It’s more common to try to get good scores in order to enter those high-ranked universities and to avoid fostering other talents than taking theater

or other art courses. There are many well-known film and television bases in China, one of which is called Hengdian World Studios, which is also named Eastern Hollywood. Many people with their acting dreams go there and start acting in small roles. But at the University of Chicago, you can concentrate on your school work as well as continue your acting dreams. There is a club called “Windmill Drama,” which performs two dramas every year. One is in spring and the other one is in winter. There are three ways that you can either participate in or just enjoy the dramas provided by Windmill Drama.

If you like acting, you can directly join in the dramatic performance. Take the incoming drama *Rhinoceros in Love* as an example. Though its show time is in November, the club selected the actors or actresses among the students at the University of Chicago at the beginning of August. It takes a long time to prepare for any production. Whatever major you study, you can apply and go for the interview to convince the judges that you are eligible if you find some suitable and interesting roles. Then you can appear in the upcoming drama.

If you hope to engage in a drama but do not like acting, there are still various positions that you can apply for, like styling designer, lighting engineer, wardrobe, and so on. It is known that stage managers are as important as the actors/actress to a drama.

If you just like watching as an audience member, then keep a lookout for the advertisements at the end of April for spring and October for winter, and then you can find the exact show time. There are two rehearsals for free and one formal performance for about 8 dollars. Last quarter (spring), I went to watch their rehearsal of *Night of January 16th*, which was so fantastic that I recommend it to all of you. Although all the lines in the Windmill Drama performances are spoken in Chinese, people speaking different languages can also enjoy their excellent performances.

Wechat: fengchedramaclub

Website: <http://www.windmilledrama.com/>



Picture from Guoshuai Cao

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Chinatown at an International Glance



Photo by Google

‘You are beautiful’. Yes, Chinatown is indeed. Chinatown, the neighborhood with more than 48000 local resident, its location occasionally changing through history, is an amazing place for everything Chinese: whether you want to go to Chinese (mostly Cantonese) restaurants for a good fest, or to the KTV for a Karaoke till morning, or even just to chat and see which Chinese dish you can make for yourself to amaze your friends by just going into a Chinese Kitchenware store and ask the beautiful boss lady for it -though they might just refer you to some reference for recipe- is just a walk-by. The reason that people, no matter local residents or foreign tourists are so fascinated by Chinatown seems to be obvious. But there’s a deeper reason why people would choose to spend their afternoon or even the entire day here - cultural diversity.

I’ve been to Chinatown three times for the past twenty days. Every time, I’d love to experience the local restaurant and get different Chinese taste there. But one thing I observed lately that looks counter-intuitive is that Chinatown is actually a quite mixed-culture place. If you walk through the famous northern Chinatown Gate like most first-time tourists do, you will only be going to find those bunch of Chinese eateries, shops and markets, occasionally find schools, and etc. But once you came from east or from south, you are bound to discover the big sign of ‘K-POP’, of which is the Korean fans shop for Korean actors and singers; a bit far from the central street are Korean restaurants. I

discovered Japanese world-famous sweets shop Aji Ichiban at Chinatown Square, a place which I also like to pay more visits because of the delicious milk-tea from Kung-Fu Tea Shop (it's a most recent start-up with great milk-tea and other drinkables). Still you would find many other attractive merchants within the Square, it is almost like a big mall with everything!

Currently, it is known that Chinese Community in Chinatown are fighting for a high-school for themselves, and since the CPS has arranged a local school which is serving for mainly primary school black student, there are conflicts of interest between Chinese-American community and African-American community on this issue. Let's see how this finally turns out.

Location

Chinatown Neighborhood

Centered on Cermak and Wentworth Avenues

Travel Times from University of Chicago

By CTA: 30 min; By bike: 50 min; By car: 10-20 min

Baorui Cheng
China
Chemistry

Why Are So Many CTA Bus Drivers Black?



Retrieved from <http://chicagocommuter.com/>

During my one-month stay in Chicago, I have travelled by CTA bus more than 10 times. However, an interesting fact I noticed is that all the CTA bus drivers I have encountered are black. Although I had already heard before I came to Chicago that the Windy City is one of the most segregated cities, if not the most, in the U.S., I had never expected segregation in the job market as well. Unfortunately, the black-dominance in the CTA workforce is not an illusion resulting from my random experiences. According to Bennett (2013), minorities make up 85% of the total CTA workforce with African Americans accounting for more than 65%, which is twice their share of the total population in Chicago area. These percentages are further reflected in CTA's own media portrayals of their employees. For

example, if you go to the Facebook of CTA, you will always find the majority of employees are African-American.

Multiple reasons may have contributed to the African-American majority of CTA bus drivers. First of all, economic incentives must have played an important part. According to data retrieved from Glassdoor (2017), the average annual salary of a CTA bus driver can be as high as \$57,413 a year, plus extra benefits from having a public sector job. On the other hand, the 2015 median household income of African-American is only \$29,678, slightly over a half of a CTA bus driver's salary, while, by contrast, the median household income of Whites in 2015 is \$68,397 (City-data, n.d.). Consequently, a CTA job is much more of an economic attraction to black person than to white person, which would definitely encourage a lot more African Americans to apply for the job than the whites. Second, education may also account for the dominance. According to Statisticalatlas.com (n.d.), only 19.9% of black women and 15.1% of black men have a college degree. Lack of educational attainment certainly stops African Americans from access to well-paid jobs. Nevertheless, CTA bus driver is not among those jobs: being a bus driver doesn't require a Bachelor's degree. Therefore, many black people apply for a CTA bus operator position out of economic incentives, and they are able to find good employment regardless of their disadvantaged educational background.

The disparity of racial distribution in CTA workforce is a really complicated mixture of many factors, to which I can not draw a close conclusion in this article; however, rather than see it as merely occupational segregation, I see the role of public sector as more than country-related jobs but a form of regulation and social justice implementation: such jobs do not have very high education background requirements and hence increase the overall fluidity of the society by offering people lack of higher education a chance to accumulate wealth and take better care of their family lives. While segregation and accumulated wealth-gap, which have a long history here in Chicago, and their byproducts as discrimination, educational inequality, community violence keep doing great harm to the city, there is no easy way to solve it. Making public sector jobs open to people with a disadvantage in education, which may be a consequence of wealth-gap and segregation, although can not solve the problem totally, may help to improve the quality of black lives and narrow the wealth gap a little bit.

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Filling the Gap: Safety or Privacy?

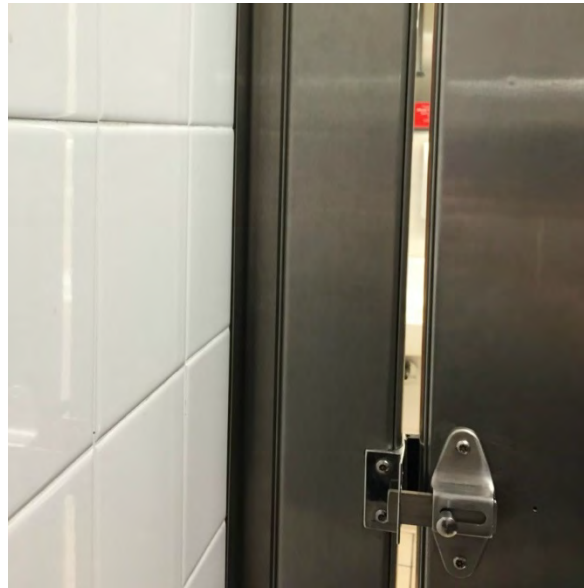


Photo by *How to Play House*

Background

When I first arrived in Chicago, I was so excited about studying in the city and country portrayed so amazingly and widely in TV dramas and films, and I could not wait to explore and embrace Chicagoan as well as American culture. However, right after the flight landed at the O'Hare Airport, as I walked into the bathroom at the airport, something puzzling caught my eyes, took my breath, and for a moment my fantasy about America was frozen, if not crushed. The thing was: there was such a huge gap between every door and its frame in the bathroom which left toilet users little privacy. I convinced myself that this must be some bizarre design at airports in the United States. Nevertheless, on the following day, as I went to the Social Sciences Research Building at the University of Chicago to attend the welcome presentation for incoming AEPP students, I found exactly the same thing in the restrooms in that building. Not surprisingly, same design also was found in the English Language Institute at the University. Then I realized that such wide bathroom door gaps, despite how unpleasant they are, are a phenomenon in Chicago and the United States.

Broader Issue

So, why are there giant door gaps in toilet cubicles in the United States, with Chicago being no exception? Aren't the gaps intruding on toilet users' privacy, and isn't America a country that highly values freedom, individualism and privacy? Clearly, there must be a reason (or a bunch of reasons) for why public toilets in the U.S. have large gaps between doors and their frames.

The first possible explanation is a practical one, that is, to lower the construction costs. Obviously, building bathrooms with doors having larger gaps require fewer techniques and materials. Nonetheless, this simplistic explanation does not suffice to provide grounds for the ubiquity of the disturbing toilet door gaps throughout the U.S. Even if reducing costs can be appealing when building restrooms, the principle of lowering costs should not be applied in public spaces which may influence a nation's image, for example, an international airport. It makes no sense for a large-scale international airport like O'Hare to build restrooms with wide gaps in order to bring down construction costs.

Another plausible explanation for this weird phenomenon is to shorten waiting time. With the gaps that enable people to peep into and outside the restrooms (and technically able to make an eye contact with strangers washing their hands when you are sitting on the toilet), it is quite unpleasant to use public toilets and people are inclined to stay in the bathrooms as short as they can. In this way, it reduces the chances of long occupancy and long waiting lines. This reasoning may hold true in public restrooms where the users may not afford to wait in long lines, for instance, passengers in train stations who may have to hurry up to catch trains. However, this does apply to other places where the shortage of restrooms is not an issue, for example, the University of Chicago. Does the University really need to avoid waiting lines in restrooms at the cost of sacrificing students' privacy?

A more credible explanation is called for. So far the most convincing explanation for the appalling door gaps I could think of is to prevent and reduce crimes. With the existence of door gaps in public restrooms, once a crime, say, a rape or sexual assault takes place in a toilet cubicle, it is easy to be detected and stopped. These door gaps in turn serve the purpose of crime prevention. In a similar vein, keeping closed toilet stalls visible "to some extent" to public eyes can also prevent illegal activities such as drug-taking or dealing as well. In addition, the door gaps also make it easy to notice anyone passing out in toilet cubicles. In summary, it may well be out of safety concerns that the door gaps are implemented in public toilets in the United States.

This argument leads to the conclusion that privacy does not triumph over everything. In other words, it may be judgmental (though intuitively true) to claim that America is a country that holds individual privacy prior to anything else. The mere fact that giant toilet door gaps, no

matter how creepy they are, are still existent and widely applied in the U.S. reveals that when safety issues are concerned, security outweighs privacy. Americans' priority of safety over privacy reminds me of the case of Edward Snowden, a former National Security Agency employee who revealed U.S. government's surveillance scheme. On the one hand, Snowden is hailed as a hero fighting for information privacy and essential human rights. On the other hand, he is more generally disgracefully regarded as a traitor, posing threat to national security by disclosing classified governmental documents. For those who deem security as more important than privacy may agree to improve and ensure safety even at the price of privacy. As for the mysteriously wide door gaps in public bathrooms in Chicago and in the U.S., they seem to continue to remain, for the sake of safety. Therefore, bearing in mind the safety concerns, we had better learn "not" to "mind the gap" while using public toilets during our stay in Chicago and the United States.

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Chicago from the Pink Line: Who Let the Skyscrapers Out?



Chicago River from the inside of a train on the CTA's Pink Line: Photo by Nicolás de la Maza.

Chilean people say that everywhere you go you will find a Chilean; or, similarly, there is a Chilean everywhere. The statement might be true, but sometimes people will have to travel a bit through the city. When I arrived in Chicago, a friend of mine was staying coincidentally in another part of the city, and we agreed to meet one day. However, a couple of weeks from then, after I visited him, I began thinking about the possibility that our places were in fact two different cities.

My friend was staying in “La Villita”, as in Spanish for little village. This neighborhood is just 6.5 miles from South Ellis Avenue and East 58th Street, Hyde Park – where it is possible to place the core of University of Chicago’s campus, and just exactly where the English Language Institute is located. However, you will have to travel at least 10 miles to go from one place to another, either by public transportation (more than one hour) or driving (twenty minutes). By bike you will save one mile and the ride will take nearly fifty minutes, but I do not know how pro-bike the route is.

My personal experience with public transit in Santiago, my home city, has been very disappointing since a complete failed overhaul took place in 2007. Therefore, since I landed in Chicago, I decided to give a chance to the sixth best public transit among big U.S. cities, according to Redfin [1]. It took me around two hours to get from O'Hare airport to Regents Park by the "L" Blue Line and transferring to the bus number 6. Nevertheless, the Ventra system worked wonderful and trains and buses were on time. I started exploring Chicago's transit and the city itself from my first ride, and moving through the city reinforced what I have seen from the airplane, that the skyscrapers were placed just in a very delimited area of the city. As a sharp mountain, this astonishing collection of tall buildings suddenly ends as you move away from Lake Michigan to the west.

The fact that the shape of the city changes as you move to a certain area reminded me how the landscape of Santiago transforms from the west to the east. Streets are cleaner, there are more green spaces, buildings are taller and newer, access to services is easier, and so on.

As I arrived at night, I wondered if this phenomena was also similar in Chicago.

Although the distance from Hyde Park to Little Village is not that much, what makes longer commuting is that the transit is designed in a way that most of the commutes are directed to the Loop. Hence, a six-mile trip turns into a 10 miles and at least one transfer.

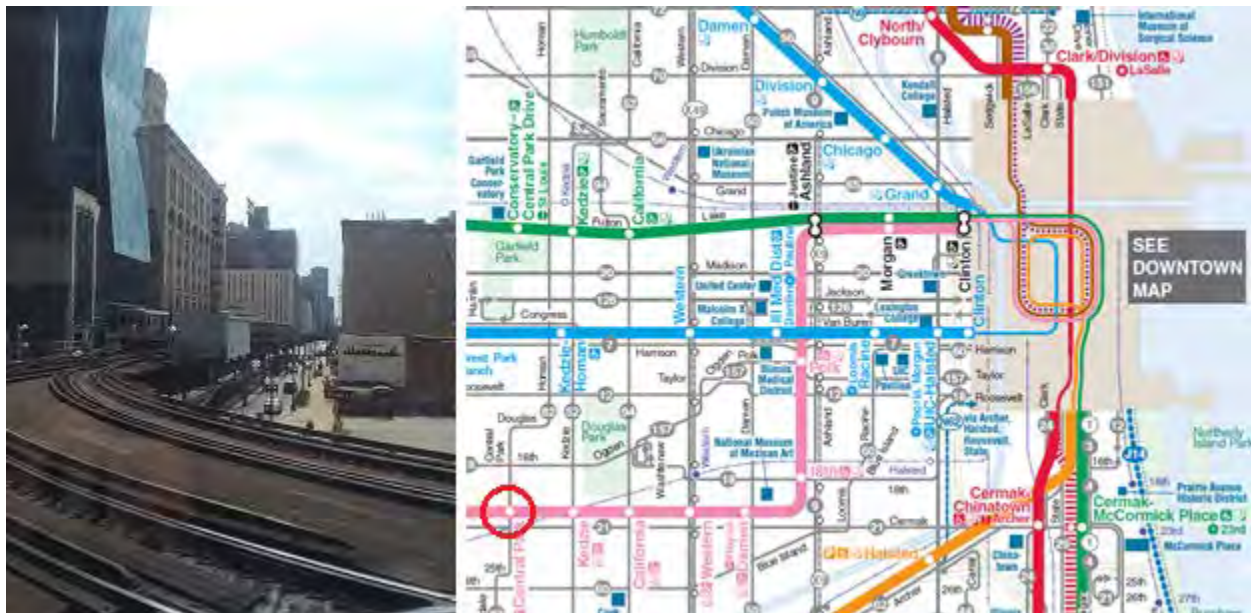
One route to get to Little Village from Hyde Park is to take bus 6 to the Loop's Michigan and Monroe stop. What is remarkable is the abrupt manner you get in and out of the skyscraper landscape. You will get off of the 6th bus in Michigan Avenue and you will not be able to avoid looking up. Then you will need to head to Pink Line's Adams and Wabash station, go upstairs or take up the lift and pick the train to 54th street and Cermak until stations Kedzie or Central Park, all the way over the street level (see the map below). The Pink Line is the newest line of the rail "L" system, and was introduced in 2006 with the aim of increasing the number of trains going to and from 54th street and Cermak, a service that was before served as part of the Blue Line [2]. Up on the train, your perspective will change. In the Loop you will be below the buildings' rooftops, and you will keep looking up to the astounding buildings, but downwards to the river and the street. The train will turn west and after you cross the South Branch of the Chicago River you will not be among taller building anymore. You will reach the west side of the city, and you will see the houses' rooftops for the following nine or ten stations.

Is that change of perspectives related with how people living in each area are meant to look to one another? Do those differences encourage a discriminatory behavior or are those disparities a consequence of a preceding reason? The city's socioeconomic distribution reflects much of these urban differences. According to the Chicago Health Atlas project, in South Lawndale – the neighborhood where Little Village is placed, 28.1% of the population was below poverty level [3], 17.6% lived in crowded houses [4] and had one of the lowest per capita incomes (\$10,697) [5] during the 2007-2011 period. On the other hand, the Loop's population was on the opposite side of each measurement: low rate of poverty (almost one third of South Lawndale's rate), low percentage of

crowded houses (just two out of every one hundred) and high per capita income (nearly six times the one of South Lawndale). This situation has probably not changed much during the past years. The viewpoint from the elevated railway of the Pink Line allows to see things that are not noticeable from the street. Near to Little Village there will be some empty lots among buildings, broken windows, lack of green spaces and messy gardens. This makes a lot of sense given the numbers above.

While Chicago is an amazing city, full of events and entertainment, it is also one of the most racially segregated major metropolitan areas of the U.S. [6], although is not in the top ten economically segregated ones [7]. There is a great opportunity to explore ways to undermine the prejudgments that you may have or have heard by visiting some of the somehow less appealing neighborhoods of the city. The CTA's Pink Line is an excellent mean to scout the differences across the city as if you were on a tour. I would suggest to eventually put your feet on the ground and be surprised.

Figure 2



Left – Pink Line turning north. Photo taken from the train (by Nicolás de la Maza).
Right - Part of the CTA “L” train system map, surrounded in red is Central Park Station [8].

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Chicago Bulls and Its Relation with the Community



Photo Credit: Chicago Bulls via <http://www.nba.com/bulls/news/united-center-joint-venture-hosts-ribbon-cutting-ceremony-new-addition>

Background

As a big fan of basketball, I have been watching NBA for almost 12 years. When talking about basketball, you will never forget Michael Jordan and the Chicago Bulls. Although I did not watch MJ's games since I was too young at that time, his legend and stories still have a deep influence on me. Ever since MJ retired, the Bulls struggled for a long time until they used the first pick of NBA Draft to select Derrick Rose. D-Rose and his teammates under Thibodeau's coaching led the Bulls back to the top of the NBA Eastern Conference. However, injury destroyed D-Rose. The former MVP was traded to New York in 2016. And after a struggling 16-17 season, they began the rebuilding process and traded their all-star player, Jimmy Butler, to Minnesota. Although the team is experiencing a tough period, people in Chicago always give their deepest support. They just enjoy basketball and the game. According to ESPN's report of NBA attendance, the Bulls ranked first in average attendance in the home games for 9 years since 2009. The Bulls play their home games at the United Center, which is located in west part of the loop. So, the most exciting thing for me in Chicago is that I can enjoy a game at the United Center. However, it is offseason from July to October, so I have to defer my watching plan to November after the regular season begins.

Because there is no game in the summer, the Chicago Bulls and its players spend a lot of time doing community activities. The team and players will hold basketball camp in summer, providing kids with professional basketball skill training and developing interests in sports and basketball. Also, they coordinate with the Chicago Police Department in hosting a basketball tournament for students in Youth Guidance's Becoming a Man (BAM) program. From their official website, I also found that the Bulls provide ongoing support for 34 non-profit organizations. Bulls have built a tie with communities in Chicago. They try their best to give back to the community and help build a better neighborhood.

Broader Issue

High crime rates became a hard case for Chicago for a long time. But people found that crime prevention could be an effective way to reduce the crime rates. Thus, some nonprofit organizations like the advocate center started by the BAM program guide those teenagers and prevent them from just hanging out on the street. For those NGOs, basketball can be a great after school activity to attract teenagers from hanging out on the street, decreasing the chance for those youth to be involved in drugs or guns, especially in Chicago. With help from the Bulls, those students in BAM can learn professional basketball skills, teamwork and build their competitiveness.

In addition, Bulls can influence the community by its social advocacy. The team and its superstars could use social media to advocate people putting their attention on anti-violence, racial equality, teenagers in poverty and other social problems, which could be more effective than voices from disadvantaged groups. Sometimes, people may argue that sports team should not participate in political affairs. But it is everyone's responsibility to build the communities and make the country better.



Photo Credit: Chicago Bulls via <http://www.nba.com/bulls/community/home>

Travel Time from UChicago to United Center

By Car: 22 min / CTA: 54 min / By Bike: 1hr 4 min

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Division of Social Science

Tip Generously?



Photo by: Nookies

Background

I step into the Nookies in Old Town, Chicago with my friend Sanya because of the high recommendation people gave during our AEPP interviews—not to mention because of how busy the home-styled restaurant is during the lunch hour. It is a lovely café: clean tables and floor, warm-lighted modern-styled ceiling lamps lighting inside, summer sunlight shining on the smiles of people eating with their friends and dogs. The food was good, too. I had an omlette with mashed potatoes and probably the best white toast I have ever had. Sanya had eggs benedict, that she really enjoyed. After lunch, we spent quite a few minutes talking about how and how much we should tip because back in China and India, people do not tip waiters. Leaving around 10% of our subtotal on the table after getting the change, we left the restaurant feeling unsure.

Broader Issue

I first knew the concept of tips when I saw the two waitresses complaining how miserly people tipped in “Two Broke Girls”. All they wished for was that more customers would tip generously so that they could make ends meet. Do tips actually improve the economic conditions of waiters and waitresses whose service make our meals more enjoyable? Or does it go to the opposite direction of our goodwill?

From the perspective of Economics, waiters are actually worse-off with the consensus of tips. People, at least the majority of them, are risk-averse, meaning that they prefer stability to fluctuation of income. Restaurant owners, knowing the consensus of tips, deduct the expected amount of tips from the wage of waiters. Ideally, the expected pay is the same, but since people hate risk and uncertainty, the utility, the overall benefit, declines. A flat wage that is not affected by the mood or habits of customers will make most waiters better-off. Moreover, their well-being can also be compromised by the liquidity constraints and the fluctuation of income. For example, if a waiter has a bad day in business and receives much less than he expects, unable to borrow enough money, he is not able to pay his bills before the deadline and has to pay extra penalties



Photo by: Zomato

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Harris School of Public Policy:
Computational Analysis and Public
Policy

Drop the Donut, and Eat Healthy Already!



Gala Apples have a very close pronunciation to the Chinese name. Photo taken in Hyde Park Produce by Ke Duan

I still could remember the first time when I went to the restaurant in Bernard A. Mitchell Hospital on 58th Street, I felt that I was lost in a sea of junk foods—donuts, cheese burgers with fries, and

spaghetti cooked with heavy oil. These are not familiar compared to what I used to eat in China. After trying eating out a few times, I seriously started to think about how healthy I was eating when I was in China. Tired of food trucks, I decided to say goodbye to those junk food vendors and start to cook healthy dishes at home.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “29 million people in the United States (9.3 percent) have diabetes.” (CDC) Don’t have a clue where these calories come from? Here are some hints: A cheese burger contains 303 calories; one serving of medium fries contains 365 calories. What about a tiny little yummy-looking glazed donut? 255 calories! (USDA) So if women and men need 2,000 and 2,500 calories respectively per day to maintain their weight (Healthline), how would you like to figure out your meal plan? Do the math!

New Food Pyramid



Food-pyramid.org

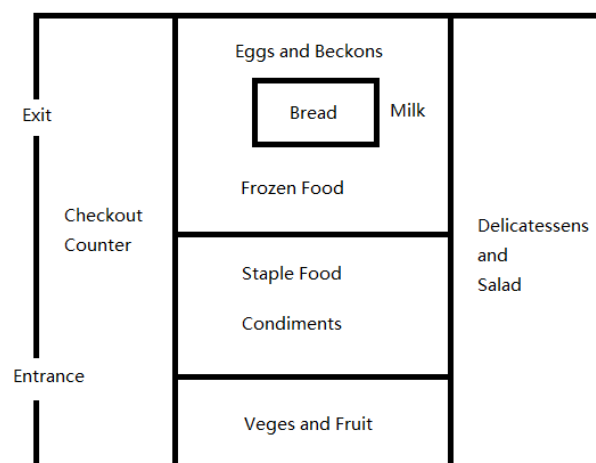
In Chinese way of cooking, people use vegetable oil instead of butter. Veggies are always cooked before they are served on tables because oil can enhance nutrition making food easier for the human body to absorb. Staple foods such as rice only serve as a light proportion of diets where they are often complemented with different veggies, eggs, and meats. However, what I find tricky is that, even though I think the Chinese way of cooking might be healthier, China has the highest diabetes rate in the whole world. A best guess for the reason is that the increasing richness leads to an indulgence in eating habits. Besides, a lack of exercise intensifies the

situation. (Huffpost) So a compromise in between of cooking healthy meals and working out regularly can be a reasonable resolution.

The moment when you realize the importance of eating healthy, you may want to get started and pay an adventure to a grocery store, say, Hyde Park Produce which is my favorite one. Here are some items you may want to add on your shopping list:

- Veggies: artichoke, leek and brussels sprout
- Fruits: mango, strawberry and banana
- Staple foods: spaghetti, rice and Nongshim Ramen
- Meat and dairy: Chicken sausage, beckon and eggs

What is so amazing about Hyde Park Produce is that, it is a place full of serendipity—even when you are in the American grocery store, you can grab those ingredients and eat in an authentic



Chinese way! Here is a map for you to navigate:

By foot: around 15 mins

1 CDC <https://www.cdc.gov/features/diabetesfactsheet/>

2 USDA <https://ndb.nal.usda.gov/ndb/search/list?qlookup=21138>

3 Healthline <http://www.healthline.com/nutrition/how-many-calories-per-day>

4 Food-pyramid.org <https://food-pyramid.org/food-groups-pyramids>

5 Huffpost http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/09/04/china-diabetes_n_3867778.html

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Add More Sweetness to Life? Maybe Not...



Picture retrived from http://images2.wikia.nocookie.net/__cb20130830195617/whatever-you-want/images/2/23/Sweets-Food-Donuts.jpg

Background

I am a huge fan of sweets. Chocolate, cheesecake, lollipop, ice cream, you name it. I love them all. So imagine how excited I was when I found this interesting candy shop called Windy City Sweets while doing my Chicago Neighborhood Project with my teammates in Lakeview. The store looks plain and small on the outside without any fancy signs, but once we walked inside, we were dazzled by the different kinds of sweets displayed in it. There is a wall of colorful candy bars, rainbow ice cream, chocolate fudges, and even lollipops with insects trapped inside. We ended up

buying a chocolate-dipped caramel apple, an Oreo cruncher that looks like stone, a rainbow ice cream. I also bought a delightful pack of Harry Potter chocolate frogs and Bertie Bott's Beans because I have always loved Harry Potter since I was a kid.

We found a table beside the wall and began feasting. They all looked delicious and also tasted good, but after a few bites we began to feel so full that we couldn't eat anymore. The problem is that they are too sweet. After having all these candies, even coke tasted like water.

I have also noticed that not only in this unique candy store, but in supermarkets and restaurants, sweetened food is popular everywhere. There are doughnuts and cakes covered in thick icing, and extra sweetened Asian dishes that earn high credits in Yelp. After a while I begin to feel like food here in general is a bit too sweet even for my taste. And I am the one who craves for sweets everyday. So that got me wondering, why do Americans eat so much sugar?

Broader Issues

Research shows that the U.S. sugar industry has played a vital role in manipulating Americans' ideas about food and nutrition. In 1960s, the Sugar Research Foundation paid scientists to correlate fat with heart disease but tune down the role of sugar, so that low-fat food is recommended by the federal government and is considered healthy by most (Kearns, Schmidt, & Glantz, 2016). Through manipulating research, sugar industry successfully disguised itself as largely harmless, therefore managed to add a little extra sugar to every food they produce. This kind of manipulation happens every day. According to O'Connor (2015), Coca-Cola has donated millions of dollars to researchers that seek to prove there is no obvious correlation between sweetened drinks and obesity. In decades of effort, the industry has spoiled Americans' tongues and cultivated its most loyal consumers. Even now when more and more public funded research has revealed the link between sugar, heart disease and obesity, and government is advocating for lowering sugar intake, the effect is still negligible. The Americans have been so used to heavy sugar added in food and drinks that now it has become very difficult for them to accept otherwise.

But this does not mean the situation is hopeless and nothing can be done to keep people healthy. Among the feasible measures, Cook County recently announced a new tax on sugary drinks. So the question is, can soda tax be a good solution to sugar-related obesity? The theory is that with the new tax, the price of sugared beverages will increase, hence either the industry produces less, or customers will buy less of them. But critics think that it will not work because people may alternatively go to other markets to buy untaxed drinks.

To evaluate this problem more clearly, this article identifies three groups of consumers. First, people with low income and no time or transportation may choose to consume less sugary drinks, but the

amount of sugar consumption decreased in this group is limited because they do not have enough spare money to buy soda in the first place. Second, people who are too rich to care about increased price in sweetened drinks will not be influenced. Third, people who care enough about both the drink and the price may choose a most comfortable and affordable method: drive to nearby cities that do not have taxes on soda to buy their beloved drinks. So statistically, sugary drinks consumed within the county may decrease, but overall sugar intake remains the same. From any perspective, soda tax is hardly a good solution to fight obesity.

All in all, it seems so hard to keep healthy in the U.S. Big money infiltrates academic fields and manipulates government, but in the end, it is always ordinary consumers who have to pay the price, whether it is taste bud, health, or tax.

Windy City Sweets
 3308 N Broadway Street
 CTA: 1 hour
 Uber: 30 minutes

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The Big Bean? The Magic Bean?



Photo by Xuanyu

Even till now, I cannot help myself taking a glance at that big bean each time I pass by. This Cloud Gate sculpture, which is also known as what it looks like, the bean, is one of the most famous and attractive landmarks in Chicago. I haven't realized how it could be so charming until the first time I stood in front of it. Actually, it is not only a single sculpture, but also the miniature of the prosperity of the whole modern Chicago city. Just as the picture showed here, the bean reflects the entire city skyline of the Michigan Avenue, which, amazingly, varied when you move your steps. Besides, the bean itself has totally different shapes when looking from different angles, which make it the kaleidoscope of the metropolis. Even you can spend a whole afternoon if you want, just sitting on the bench, enjoying the clouds scudding across, which makes every moment of the bean a fantastic masterpiece. Believe me, you won't want to miss this miracle when you visit Chicago.

Actually, built in 2006, Cloud Gate is a public sculpture designed by Indian-born British artist Sir Anish Kapoor, which displays as the centerpiece of AT&T Plaza at Millennium Park in the Loop community area of Chicago, Illinois. (Wikipedia, 2017) Totally covered with stainless steel, the whole surface of Cloud Gate has no edge or corner, which makes it an excellent mirror with significant wide reflect angle. Through reflecting the Chicago skyline, this big bean magically turns into a symbol of the modernization of Chicago and, of course, United States. More importantly, the twist and distortion of the miniatures caused by the arc cover altogether form this amazing artwork. Therefore, ss we are standing in front of the big bean, the only thing that left in mind will be the amazement and surprise got from this magic work of mirror.



Photo by Xuanyu

Reference

Wikipedia, 2017. Retrieved from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cloud_Gate on 09/12/2017.

Travel Options (from Hyde Park):

By Car: 20 min; By CTA: 40 min; By Bike: 50 min

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Law School

Boystown: For How Long Will We Need Safe Spaces?



(Photo by the Jackson Ferreira)

Background

I was really excited about visiting the famous Chicago “gay” neighborhood. As a gay man in the year 2017, the very idea of a place, a person or something I can identify with in terms of sexual orientation means a lot to me. This could also be true for gay men in the 1960s or 1970s – so the existence of the same thought in 2017 is interesting, to say the least. In fact, as I approached the beginning of N. Halsted Street – with its impressive colorful totems and LGBT flags hanging for a mile along street – I felt nothing but belonging, safety. The presence of lots of gay men (some more extravagant than

others!) walking around and seeming not to care about a thing actually made me feel at home, in the presence of brothers and sisters. This fact inevitably makes me reflect. For how long will I need to search for a specific place to feel comfortable? For how long will these LGBTQ communities exist as sort of “cities of refuge” amid a much broader, more “traditional” or “normal” society which still resists taking LGBTQ behavior and lifestyle as one as worthy of respect as any other type of behavior, instead of something abnormal?

As part of my neighborhood project for the Academic English Pre-matriculation Program, I had the opportunity to interview some people who lived and/or worked in Boystown. One of the questions I asked them – and actually the most representative question to me – was the following: “Do you think a gay neighborhood is somehow necessary?”

I was impressed at the answers I received, although they did not exactly surprise me. Most of the interviewees said they really felt belonging to that community, in the sense that they identified with it in a way they could not do elsewhere in the city. Along with having authentic LGBTQ entertainment, with lots of bars and nightclubs where one can easily find cute dudes (as one gay interviewee highlighted), above all, locals can find a friendly neighborhood. They mentioned that in Boystown they could be themselves without outside judgment, and one of them even mentioned that such a neighborhood was important so the LGBTQ community could feel “protected”.

Broader Issue

That word – “protected” – inevitably makes us think of the possible threats against the LGBTQ people outside Boystown. And if we stop to think about the history of the settling of the gay population in Chicago, it is easy to find out that it is a frequently recurring story. LGBTQ people settled in Towertown in the 19th century, then moved up to Oldtown in the 1950s, before heading to Boystown in the late '60s. Finally, as rents have been increasing in the recent years in Boystown, even a larger population of LGBTQ people are found living in the northern neighborhoods of Andersonville and Edgewater – always together, so as not to lose the sense of community and, certainly, protection from the “outside world” full of prejudice. We are now in the 21st century and we still see a movement of separation, delimitation, of a specific space (for the gay people) that echoes the past centuries. The impression that one gets is that the gay community is, unfortunately, always trying to flee and find a safe and peaceful place to live their lives, as if living among the rest (of the majority) of the society stood for living in a hostile environment. The bad news is that this is not only an impression – it is actually a horrible reality.

Having a neighborhood where the LGBTQ community can feel happy and comfortable is good, but not ideal. Behind the fair façade, we can be afraid these types of neighborhoods are rather showing – maybe yelling about – the underlying injustice of LGBTQ people not being accepted as part of the community of the other neighborhoods. These other neighborhoods do not raise flags supporting

heterosexual pride, as most of them do not feel the need to raise any specific flag whatsoever. They are all-encompassing neighborhoods which are just unable to encompass the LGBTQ community as a minority group. The result is that in those neighborhoods gay people just feel oppressed, facing judgmental stares at every corner just because of the way they dress, or because of the type of bars they like to attend, or even because they hold the hands of one same-sex partner who they love. Were they treated correctly, as human beings worthy of the same respectful treatment others deserve, then maybe there would be no Boystown, but a whole city open to many different colors and finding out that they are really beautiful like a rainbow.



(Photo by Jackson Ferreira)

Travel time from UChicago

By CTA: An hour

By Car: 30 minutes

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P.R. China
MACSS

The Correct Perspectives to Appreciate the Bean



Photo by Author

Cloud Gate, also known as the Bean, is a landmark of Chicago known by every visitor that no one will miss it. However, most people will only come to the front side, take a picture of it or a selfie with it and leave for other spots in a rush, missing the true beauty of this sculpture. The first time I have been there, I was with a group of friends. Thus I was just like other tourists, rush through this sculpture and

head to the next. The second I have gone there, I was alone so I can take my time. Then, I discovered the correct perspectives to appreciate the beauty of this sculpture.

First, you have to go to the back side (the western side) to look at the Bean. From the eastern side, the background for the bean is those buildings on the Michigan Avenue. Though magnificent, you may find the Bean distinct among the background and wonder why this sculpture is called “Cloud Gate”; while from the south side, no any high building is in your way. All the background is the sky. Now you realize where the “cloud” in the name comes from: The clouds on the western sky is spliced with the cloud reflected by the Bean, just as the photo above shows. You’ll find it difficult to determine the border of the bean is, as it perfectly fit in the sky. Itself becomes a piece of cloud!

Simply changing the direction is not the whole story; the most exhilarating and secretive part of the Bean is that you have to go to the underside. Once you go underneath the Bean, you will literally find yourself in an exotic space. Look above, there are multiple reflections of you on the wall of the Bean, some of which are left-right reversed and some are upside-down. Too many times reflections between the concave wall of the bean makes it hard to tell light’s path to form those images. What’s more, there is a circle in the center of the Bean directly reflect the image from the ground. The wall is concave but there is absolutely no distinct physical circle on the wall, so where does this circle come from? After observation, you may find the border of the circle is actually the multi-time reflections of the feet of the bean. With the right curvature, this reflections of the feet constitute to a circle. How amazing it is!

This artwork is not only a masterpiece of the artist, but also the quintessence of technology and industry. From the appearance, no one can tell how it is produced. Actually, the Bean is made up of 168 stainless steel plates, but not a single seem can be seen on its exterior. In fact, when the design is chosen, there are many concerns regarding to the construction and assembly, and many experts did not believe existing technology can make this design possible. Besides, the “omphalos”, the concave chamber underneath it also requires advanced optical technology and precise construction to form the exact circle.

In some respects, this artwork is representative for the US. The US does not have a long history comparable with Europe or Asia, so for traditional arts, like painting, the US is not competitive. However, the US has the strongest science and technology, can produce artwork that is no more than a concept for other countries. This kind of art, mixed with artistic inspiration and the cutting-edge technology, compared with some bizarre paintings or performance art, is more like so-called modern art.



Photo by Author

By Uber: 30 min

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Skyrocketing Parking Rate in Chicago: Lesson on PPPs



Photo by Zbigniew Bzdak / Chicago Tribune (Renn, 2016)

Background

“On-street parking fee in Chicago is very, very high,” I was told by an LL.M. alumnus, which made me decide not to buy my own car in Chicago. Indeed, two-hour parking in Loop is \$13, while the cost in New York City is just \$7 (Wisniewski, 2017).

This high parking rate in Chicago is attributed to the notorious decision made by the city in 2008; Chicago leased their parking meter business for 75 years to Chicago Parking Meters LLC (CPM), a joint venture invested by Morgan Stanley, Alliance Capital Partners, and the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority. Although the city received \$1.15 billion in turn, the amount revealed later to be lower than

its market value (Cohen & Farmer, 2014). Since then, CPM has increased the parking rate drastically for several times.

However, this expensive parking rate is not the only problem concerning on-street parking operated by CPM. Under the agreement between the city and CPM, the city must pay CPM when the “compensation events” occur, events that the city has to remove a parking meter due to such as road constructions or street festivals. Because of this terms of compensation events, the city has already owed to CPM \$61 million for compensation amount.

Broader Issue

The Chicago parking meter arrangement is one example of public-private partnerships (PPPs). PPPs have been developed in order to bridge the gap between limited financial resources of the government and an increasing need for infrastructure services.

PPPs are generally defined as contractual arrangements between public agencies (e.g. federal, state or municipal governments, or publicly-owned corporations) and private entities (e.g. privately-owned corporations or NPOs) with regard to one or more of the following phases: design, construction, maintenance, operation, or financing. The purpose of PPPs is to ensure the efficiency and high quality of infrastructure services by utilizing the know-how and/or funds owned by private entities.

One of the features of PPP agreements is their prolonged term. Many PPP deals, especially those relating to infrastructure, run for over thirty years, and, in the case of Chicago’s parking meters, 75 years. However, this excessive length of term is problematic because it restricts flexibility in varying situations, as Chicago’s parking meters case shows. Furthermore, the case in Chicago shedd some light on the problem of PPPs.

First, it was revealed that the public agencies tended to desire long-term PPP agreements because they could receive a larger up-front payment from private entities. Indeed, Mayor was criticized on Chicago’s parking meters lease because of his short-sighted decision seeking for up-front \$1.15 billion.

In addition to this public agencies’ appetite for “entering into” long-term PPP agreements, they also hesitate to “terminate” long-term PPP agreements even though termination is obviously beneficial for a society. Julie A. Roin, a Seymour Logan Professor of Law at the University of Chicago, examines this hesitation by focusing on politicians’ behavior; she points out that current politicians are less likely to take future voters’ interest into account and will refrain from termination. This is because the payment of damages resulting from termination will occur during the lifetime of these politicians while benefits from termination possibly arise only in the far future (Roin, 2013).

Chicago’s parking meter lease, which is referred to as “an epic civic fiasco” (Renn, 2016), provides us an

important lesson on PPPs; the politicians should keep their policy long-sighted, and citizens should monitor politicians' ineffective decision. If keeping the policy long-sighted is difficult for public agencies due to the unpredictability of the far future, they need to consider of holding from the beginning the right to terminate or renegotiate PPP agreements in order to adjust to societal changes.

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Ruiqi Ge
China
Department of Chemistry

“Parks” in Chicago



Photo by Author

One of the most interesting thing that I had noticed before I came to Chicago is the name of our university's neighborhood — Hyde Park. Is not this a namesake of the famous London scenery spot? Well, there is New York, New Hampshire, even New England and '*Nova Scotia*', so I would not feel too surprised if there are other namesakes scattered around this country. (By the way, there is a 'Buckingham Fountain' in Chicago too, which, according to a kind local lady who helped me settle down during the first several days, is related to another Buckingham, not the British one.)

However, what really shocked me after my early exploration of the city was that, there are so many other 'Park's in Chicago: Lincoln Park (As shown in the photo), Irving Park, Jefferson Park, Douglas Park, etc.. Where do these names come from? Is there necessarily a real 'park' in the area? Is this unique to Chicago or common in the U.S.? These issues really intrigue me.

For the first issue a simple answer is no. There is no Hyde Park in Hyde Park, although we have Washington Park. But Lincoln Park, Jefferson Park and Douglas Park are still there in their corresponding neighborhood. So why did people first named the place now we live in Hyde Park even though there is no such park? To address this second problem, I searched for this topic on internet and found an article titled *How Chicago's Neighborhoods Got Their Names*.

(<http://mentalfloss.com/article/55060/how-chicagos-neighborhoods-got-their-names>).

This article is informative, from which and Wikipedia I know that Hyde Park used to be kind of a suburban resort for city Chicagoans to visit in their free time. Or in other words, it could be considered a 'park' which is quite large — 300 acres if I put it precisely. Other park names are essentially memorial, like Lincoln Park for Abraham Lincoln, Jefferson Park for Thomas Jefferson, and Douglas Park for Stephen A. Douglas in Lincoln-Douglas Debates. Thus one could get a good lesson on 19th century American history, simply by visiting several parks and their corresponding neighborhoods in Chicago. This reminds me of an assignment in AEPP, where a journalist tried to narrate the whole American history at a Chicago street corner, simply by referring to her surroundings. What an amazing city.

There remains a last concern: is this 'park-naming' system unique to Chicago? This is hard for me as a foreigner to tell, as there are countless towns and villages in America, all bearing their own names. But after a little googling, I could at least make sure that park-naming neighborhoods are not common in either New York or Los Angeles. To my surprise, I even found a forum thread discussing a related topic, where a chicgoan expressed his grief that Chicago neighborhood names are so banal with 'way too many' 'Park's'. (<http://forum.skyscraperpage.com/showthread.php?t=129134>) Of course, Chicago definitely is not the only place where one could find a park-named neighborhood, as I found a 'Ormewood Park' in Atlanta through the internet.

Cosmos Godson
Ghana
Division of Social Sciences

Chicago, the Foreign Origin



Source: Ghana National Council, Chicago

As a Ghanaian, the idea of traveling, studying and living abroad was pre-conceivably connectable to alienation of me from my people, tradition, and culture. Indeed, my previous travels and residencies in other foreign countries bore out this perspective; hence, coming to Chicago for the first time prompted no differing from this stance. The experience was as usual a period of disconnect from my roots. Upon my arrival in Chicago, rather ironically, I consistently ran into one Ghanaian after another, which overtime culminated into a community of friends and family. Paradoxically, my strong desire for traveling, meeting new people, making new friends and learning new cultures was perfectly complemented with a new belief that one's heritage should still be maintained intact. My newly discovered Ghanaian community in Chicago later introduced me to the "Ghanafest – Chicago".

"Ghanafest – Chicago" is an annual event organized by the Ghanaian community residing in the city of Chicago and its surrounding suburbs in Washington Park, Chicago each summer under the auspices of the Ghana National Council, Chicago. The event attracts audiences and participants from all walks of life (African descendants residing in the U.S. and from abroad as well as scores of people from other regions of the world). Usually on display are music, food, fashion, and traditional and cultural performances from many subgroups within the larger Ghanaian community in Chicago. Also

represented is live entertainment of authentic Ghanaian and African music and dance as well as other traditional displays.

Children are vibrant patrons of “Ghanafest – Chicago” and therefore are keenly considered by the organizers of the event. The program usually features a “Youth Village” which encompasses a dancing competition, trivia games, face painting, etc. Many private organizations (including financial institutions, real estate companies, etc.) from Ghana use the occasion to promote their goods and services.

“Ghanafest – Chicago” is not only a social gathering of foreigners from a certain country mingling and reviving the national values among its people but also shows to the world the beauty of the tradition and culture they share together as a people and the benefits thereof to its expatriate community. This aspiration directly reflects the very principles and ideologies of a city like Chicago where diversity, tolerance and harmonious coexistence are its hallmark.

Over the years, this cultural integration event has symbiotically inured benefits to both the Ghanaian immigrant community residing in Chicago and its host community at large. Through it, the demographic of citizens residing in Chicago begin to be more conjoint for the “melting pot” effect to be realized. In consequence, increasing numbers of Ghanaian immigrants are privileged to be partakers in more than one society, notably second generation Ghanaian immigrants.

As Chicago becomes an ever increasing diverse city, the need to synergize the dividend of cultural integration among its residents cannot be overemphasized. Cultural integration has not only contrived the Chicago metropolitan but also the American society at large, affecting the way people eat, dress, socialize, worship, and relate to one another in the society. By encouraging the burgeoning of cultural intermixture, the corollaries over the years include the respect for other cultures and a palpable sense of unity within the Chicago community. On individualistic levels, participants in multiple cultures are able to leverage resources from multiple societies to enlarge their scope of social and economic reach and become better-rounded. Equally worthy of note, these multifarious cultural practitioners in Chicago tend to experience a more quality of life within the city. This is the opportunity the “Ghanafest-Chicago” brings to the Ghanaian immigrants living in Chicago and the entire Chicago populace. The good news is this event is open to the public.

Ghanafest-Chicago takes place in Washington Park

Five minutes by car

16 minutes by bus

Seven minutes by foot

Yuqian Gong

Random Thoughts from Gauguin Art Exhibition



Background

In the summer before I came to Chicago, I read a book called *The Moon and Sixpence* and it turned out to be one of my favorite books. This novel, written by British author W. Somerset Maugham, tells a story about Charles Strickland, who used to be a stockbroker, quit his stable job, left his children and wife behind and set off to pursue his art dream on a small Island in the Pacific Ocean. The story is based on the life of Paul Gauguin. Just like Strickland, Gauguin is both a controversial figure and great artist. Fascinated by the mysterious culture in Tahiti, he spent most of his art career on this island and depicted many local people and sceneries. Arriving in Chicago, I was excited to learn that there is an exhibition of Gauguin's art work going on in the Art Institute of Chicago. Curious about what Tahiti look like under Gauguin's brush, I paid a visit there last weekend.

From the exhibition, you can see that Gauguin explored different materials and forms to express his artistic ideas, from painting to carving. He wasn't a ruthless father; his daughter slept serenely under his tender and loving stroke. He wasn't a hermit who didn't care about fame as described in the book;

he came back to Paris, expecting to gain a reputation by displaying his paintings from Tahiti. The recurring theme of naked local Tahiti women with Khaki-colored skin, usually sitting or lying towards the audience in a surreal background, delivered a message of exotic and bold beauty. Though his path to realize his art dream was different from Strickland's, he still shared one thing in common with Strickland—Gauguin's deep attachment with the indigenous culture in Tahiti are embedded in his paintings, his approaches of symbolism and post-impressionism.

Broader Issues

However, these paintings didn't reflect what he actually observed there. When Gauguin arrived at the Island, he was disappointed at the influence of European culture on local people. People wore the same clothes as their colonizers; children were learning European languages; the architectures on the streets were all in European style. For him, it was the past Tahitian culture that he loved instead of the westernized one. To portray the lost Tahiti, he applied much imagination in his paintings to incorporate the old Tahitian cultural legacy from his own perspective, including indigenous spirits and living conditions.

Nowadays many primitive cultures are only preserved in artists' creation and imagination. Cultures collide, blend and evolve. It is a natural trend for some cultures to prosper while others fall. However, history has shown us more cases where one culture tried to dominate another culture. Minority groups were either assimilated or marginalized in their original territories. The powerful culture is always thinking of how to prove its strength by imposing its superiority and expanding its influence.

When I walk through the skyscrapers in Chicago, there is a feeling that most parts of American history have been coerced into this modern and capitalized city, shaped into a culture named capitalism or consumerism. High office buildings, giant shopping centers, and Starbucks at every corner of the streets. This is very similar to what is happening in my hometown, Shanghai China, where all the obsolete houses and streets are replaced with modern shopping malls or luxurious residence. There is a trend that consumerism are homogenizing cultures in different countries. Sometimes people who travel from their home to another to experience different cultural legacies would be disappointed as Gauguin to find they are surrounded by the same international brands and similar high-rises.

The process of consumerism comes at a cost of losing cultural legacies. In recent years, many Shikumen houses in Shanghai, a kind of old Shanghai-style buildings and homes to many old Shanghainess, are torn down by the governments and the lands are sold to property developers. Residents have to leave the homes they have lived since they were born, who are mostly descendants of old Chinese generals or soldiers. Ironically, Shanghai government promotes the Shikumen legacies to attract tourists; on the other hand, they are removing these buildings despite their historical significance.

In Chicago, gentrification and consumerism are also taking away homes of minority groups. Cabrini Green used to be a neighborhood for African-Americans. After demolition and renewal in the 1990s,

most African-Americans lost their homes, leaving behind their memories in that neighborhood. Hundreds of years ago, American-Indians had the same fate as these African-Americans. Now we can only retrospect their culture in museums or secondary resources.

Then what about the future fates of so many diverse ethnic communities in Chicago? Who can guarantee that their cultures won't give way to gentrification or consumerism? Maybe this is a too complicated topic. Maybe this question is unnecessary. What I wish is that people will not be reminded of their existence and glory only when they appreciate artworks or cultural relics in museums.



Travel time from UChicago:

Twenty minutes by car

Luis E. Gonzales C.
Bolivia
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3 Impressions from Chicago to Chuquiago

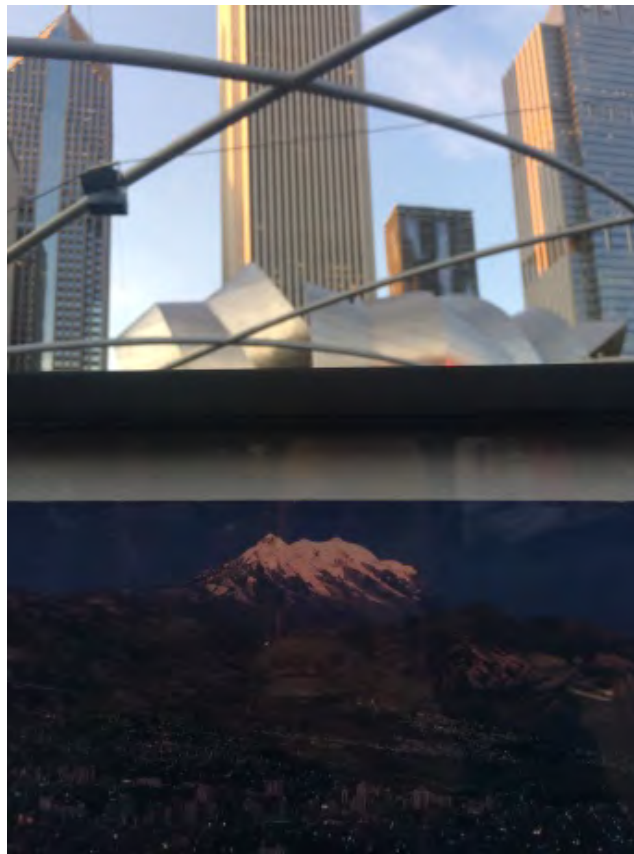


Photo by Luis E. Gonzales "The illimani in Chicago"

I arrived to Chicago on August 27th a warmer day, Hyde Park was a nice place to start my new life studying the Master in Public Policy at Harris School at the university of Chicago. It was a long trip, 12 hours from Chile, even though I am from Bolivia. After so many hours, I decided to take in firsthand the soul of Chicago and I decided to go to the great Lake Michigan; diving in this amazing lake I just remember the beauty of the nature in my hometown. It was a sign that few differences set me apart from home.

Chuquiago Marka is the Aymara name of La Paz, one of the most important cities in Bolivia, the heart of South America. Compared to Chicago there are three letters that differentiate the name of this amazing N. American city from the name of my hometown. Taking this fact into account, I as a Chuquiago boy, will remark on three impressions from global perspective of the windy city in order to become a Chicago boy.

First, both cities possess amazing and impressive natural landmarks; good examples of these places are Illimani, a mountain in Chuquiago, and Lake Michigan in Chicago. Both constitute the soul and main identity of the cities. Illimani inspires many emotions. As the intellectual giant Carlos De Mesa writes:

[Illimani is] Like a shield that protects
Like a cloak
As the only horizon

Similarly, Tigerman said: “[Without the lake] Chicago becomes a dumb city..... a city that just expands like a blob equally in all directions until it just peters out eventually.” Living here now, I can fully understand these sentiments.

Second, both cities have mythic jazz bars like the Green Mill in Uptown or the Thelonios Bar in Sopocachi. Specifically, the Green Mill is the ambassador of one of the most exciting neighborhoods because of its history, dynamic culture and the fascinating mix of flavors and tastes of the world. This icon of Uptown, the jazz infected neighborhood of Chicago, is the benchmark for Thelonios, which wants to grow to become a similar jazz infection in Sopocachi.

Finally, Chicago through the lens of a Chuquiago boy is one of a diverse and friendly city, in particular, Uptown locals express their passion and determination through the ups and downs and keep working even despite great segregation in their community.

Lake Michigan: a walkable distance from anywhere east of Halsted Street

Melva Viva Grace
Indonesia
Harris School of Public Policy

Keep Calm and Go to the Park



Photo by mountgreenwoodpark.com

One of the many things I expected upon my arrival to Chicago is their public space such as parks and playgrounds for children. Trees, flowers and open space are the things that most people who lived in big cities desired to experience. I lived in Jakarta, the capital city of Indonesia, where malls are the famous place for people to relax and spend their times with families. Finding a decent and friendly park in Jakarta has never been easy. Most parks in Jakarta were built in fully fences, dark, solitude and have an admission fee. Some parks are associated with the unsafe neighborhood, sexual activities, and unlicensed hawkers. These conditions make park become an uninteresting place to visit.

Fortunately, I had the opportunity to enjoy a lot of parks in Chicago, especially in Hyde Park. These parks offer a variety of attractive facilities and spaces for children and adults. The spacious green grass and shady trees are available in these parks for visitor to relax or have a picnic or just for playing frisbee. We can also easily find parks which devoted for infant and toddlers. Bixler park for example, is a children's themed park which has educational and play

equipment such as swings, slides, climbing equipment, a fountain that has spray feature which perfect for hot sunny days, and of course it's free of admission. Next to Bixler Park, older children can enjoy playground which dedicated for them. It has lots of slides, climbers, balancings, crawl tubes with soft playground tiles. Besides all the facilities, these parks give opportunities for visitor to socialize and also assisting children to learn surrounding.

With the rise of population in urban areas in most of the countries in the world, the demand for public spaces such as parks is becoming a challenging issue. The cost of opening and maintaining park need a particular attention. The recent municipal government in Jakarta has started several projects to develop Child-Friendly Integrated Public Spaces by inviting private companies to contribute their funds as part of their corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs. The facilities at the parks are in accordance with the requests of local residents such as a library, children's playgrounds and even a space for family planning consultations. The development of these public spaces has received a pleasant feedback from the public due to the current shortage of such facilities in residential areas. Improving and revitalizing public spaces also need a number of funds. Chicago Park District manages their fund from taxes and other sources such as private clubs and local businesses. Attractive and cozy parks will draw attention and trust from the public and as a return, they will support the sustainability of the parks.

Parks are important to maintaining the quality of life in a community, ensuring the health of citizen, and contributing to the environment. From the economic side, the quality of a park and proximity to the park can increase the value of a property and lead to the rise of the local tax revenue. Parks are also promoting healthier life since everyone can do physical activities such as exercising, playing and relaxing. Parks allow people to develop their sense of belonging to the community. They provide places for people to interact with each other, meet new people, and engage in recreational activities. These benefits make parks become one of the crucial parts of a community.

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The Evaluation of Asian Foods in Chicago



Photo from www.pinterest.com

Everyone likes delicious foods, no matter which culture you are belong to. As a graduate student from China, finding great Asian foods is a big problem in Chicago. In China, we have various kinds of delicious foods such as hotpots, dim sum, noodles and dumplings. Chinese dishes have a multitude of categories that can satisfy any flavor. Besides, other Asian foods like Korean and Japanese foods are also popular in China. For example, Korean BBQ and Soup, Japanese Sushi and Ramen are prevalent all over the world. So when we come to Chicago, our desires of delicious foods motivate us to look for great Asian restaurants. However, it is not an easy task in Chicago. In this article, I will compare different available Asian food in Chicago, which can give you a reference of enjoying them.

In this part, I will evaluate the available Chicago Asian foods in aspects of flavor, price and convenience. I mainly discuss the Chinese foods, Korean foods and Japanese foods. Most Chinese foods are served around Chinatown located at south side of the downtown. So it is very convenient for us to have foods there. Most restaurants in Chinatown are served by Cantonese. Their dishes have a light taste. They serve great dim sum in the morning and afternoon. Besides, healthy soup is famous for the Cantonese restaurants. MingHin Cuisine and Grand Palace are pretty awesome Cantonese restaurants in Chicago. Another type of Chinese food is Sichuan dishes. Sichuan dishes have a very heavy and spicy flavor. Beiguo Restaurant and Yanbang Chuancai are recommended by most people who like spicy foods. At last, the hotpot restaurants in Chicago such as Little Sheep Mongolian Hot Pot are really great for you to try. They offer fresh fish, beef, lamb, mushroom and vegetables. Hotpot is healthy because there is little oil in the pot and the soup is really good to drink. The price of Chinese foods is not high compared with the traditional American foods. You only spend about 20 bucks per person in one of above recommended restaurants.

Besides the Chinese foods, Korean and Japanese foods are also welcomed in Chicago. Korean BBQ and Korean soup are delicious. But Korean town is at the North of Chicago which is far away from the University campus. All you can eat is very famous for Korean BBQ. But it's not very healthy to have Korean BBQ so often. Korean bone soup is fine if you want to keep fit. In downtown of Chicago you can find authentic Japanese foods like Sushi and Sashimi. But they are very expensive compared with Chinese and Korean restaurants. There are some cheap Japanese restaurants near the O'Hare Airport. Gyu-Kaku Japanese BBQ is also awesome and can be afforded by students.



Photo from YoNinja.com

Restaurant Name: Grand Palace, Little Lamb, Sichuan Restaurants
transit time: CTA: 20mins, Car: 10mins, Bike: 30mins from the UChicago campus.

Restaurant Name: Gyu-Kaku Japanese BBQ
transit time: CTA: 30mins, Car: 15mins, from the UChicago campus.

Husheng Guan
China
Physical Science Division

A Glance of Chicago



Picture#1 Garden of the Phoenix, Photo by author

Background

Before I came to Chicago, I thought it was a very modern city with lots of skyscrapers and full of modern art. However, I changed my mind after exploring several places in Chicago. Of course, there are tall buildings and art museums in downtown, but buildings of other parts of the city are comparably less urban. Though those houses and small shops look common, they show me their culture stories through architecture styles.

Chicago has great diversity in races, and each of them builds its own neighborhood and bring its culture here. Just like the beautiful scene in Chicago, these various culture are very fascinating and attract me to learn more about them.

Broader Issue

Among those buildings exhibit culture, you can experience fantastic artistic conception in Museum of Science and Industry and Jackson Park. When you visit the Museum of Science and Industry, you will experience not only power of science, but also history and culture. You will find submarine and plane exhibitions there. The artificial twister will let you know how fancy the science can be, while those history exhibitions will tell you what happened on this land. Jackson park locates near the museum, there is a small island in the park called wooded island. At the entrance of the island, you can visit Garden of the Phoenix, a Japanese style garden. Walking in the garden, the little bridge, tress, water and special path make you feel very pleased. This Japanese garden creates a tranquil atmosphere for Chicago and indicates culture diversities of this city.

In China, it is difficult to find foreign architecture style in big cities. But in Chicago, you can find different culture everywhere including Chinese culture. The Chinatown in Chicago is the largest one in America. You can find churches, restaurants, shops and traditional entertainment on the main commercial street. Local Chinese gather in restaurants, eating dim sum and chatting about latest news. All these scenes here are so similar to those in China. Also, there are new things generated when Chinese culture collide American culture. There are innovative cuisines, new architecture style and beautiful decorations.

What's more, there are also many meaningful buildings in African American neighborhood. Taking Bronzeville as an example, houses and sculptures here exhibit a lot on history. The population in this neighborhood boomed during the Great Migration, they came here for more opportunities and better life. In 1930, the word 'Bronzeville' was created for this neighborhood. African Americans love their culture, history and great people in their history. They build sculptures, name avenue with great people's name and put up picture of their heroes to commemorate them.

Because of culture tolerance, a variety of culture flew to Chicago and because of culture diversities, Chicago has become a great and unique city.



Picture#2 Monument to the Great Migration, Photo by author

Xinghan Guo
China
Institute for molecular Engineering

Better Metra, Better Chicago



Upper: An MP36PH locomotive at the rear of Metra train at Glenview on the Milwaukee District North line. Image by therailife. <https://therailife.wordpress.com/2013/11/30/usa-urban-and-intercity-rail/>

Lower Left: A train of 8th Subway in Beijing. Image by Hat600.

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:%E6%9C%B1%E8%BE%9B%E5%BA%84%E7%AB%99%E5%8C%97%E4%BA%AC%E5%9C%B0%E9%93%818%E5%8F%B7%E7%BA%BF%E5%88%97%E8%BD%A62.jpg>

Lower Right: A train of type DD-IRM (double-deck trains) of the Dutch railways (NS) in Utrecht Centraal. Image by Ad Meskens, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:NS_DD-IRM.jpg

Since arriving in Chicago, I have been told many times not to use Metra, which we call the “little train” in Chinese. For example, for the first homework of the AEPP class, we went to the beach at 55th Street and one girl working at University of Chicago persuaded us not to use Metra, saying, “No one knows when it will really come.” This is just a joke because we can all find its schedule easily by using Google Maps or other applications on our smartphones, but the truth is that one-an-hour Metra is deficient compared to people’s expectations.

To have a better understanding among different intercity trains around the world, I also want to mention Netherlands' intercity railway, under nationwide railway system called Nederlandse Spoorwegen (NS) and Beijing's intercity systems called "Beijing Subway" in China. However, since underground and intercity trains are combined in Beijing, I will discuss only those lines that reflect those in Chicago to have a better comparison.

Netherlands' railway is highly organized: Sprinter is the fastest, Intercity Direct is slower, and Intercity stops at every station. Anyone can buy a card called OV-chipkaart for any public transportation in Netherlands. Intercity trains have a reasonable price. 15 miles ticket from Rotterdam to Den Haag, for example, has a price of less than 5 Euros. Season tickets, day pass, group tickets are also available and attractive for special purposes. When I was studying in TU Delft, a school lies between Rotterdam and Den Haag, many of my friends lived in Den Haag or Rotterdam and took Intercity to school every day because interval is less than 5 minutes.

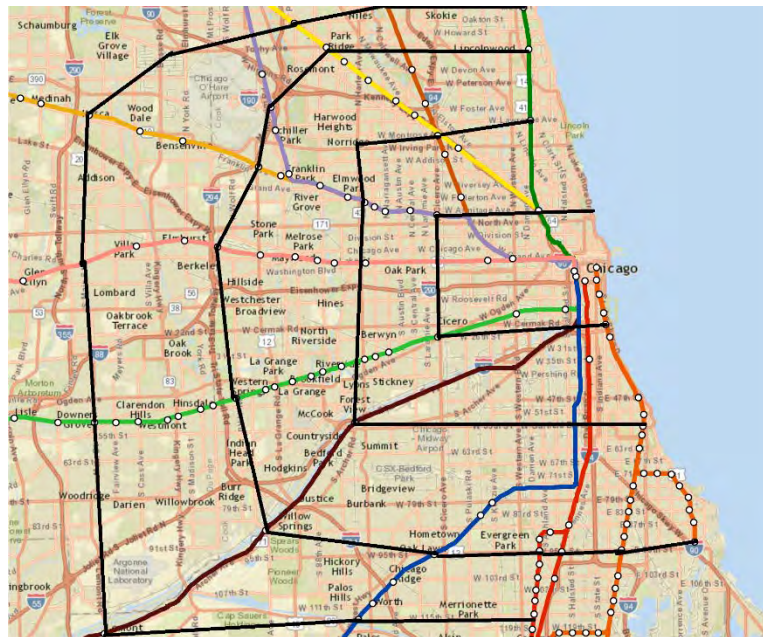
Beijing also has a modern and effective public transport system. There are ten stretched out underground lines exclusively for intercity purpose. Because of the high rent in Beijing, many young people choose to live in nearby districts like Changping or Daxing. They need to travel more than 25 miles to get to work every morning. High speed and low interval subways make all this happen. Due to transportation subsidy from government, tickets for 25 miles underground cost only one dollar, which make the underground subway the most competitive transportation system in this huge city

There is a Chinese saying that the number one path to wealth is the path itself. Clearly public transport system will influence the development of city a lot, and intercity trains or underground subways are the keys to forming a huge city or metropolitan area. The number and shape of train routes even dominate the shape of city.

In Netherlands, the main city is connected by crisscrossing railroad tracks, like nets. Small towns inside the net can easily connect to any main city around it. Due to this highly developed system, there are mere differences from city to countryside. In fact, the whole country is connected together tightly by NS trains which contribute help Netherlands to be a country with one of the highest population densities in Europe.

In Beijing, circled underground rail tracks help more expanded areas connected to each other easily. People in outer part of Beijing do not need to reach the center of the city to move to another stretched area. Various paths can be found to reach one destination. This rail track pattern allows the population to distribute more evenly during rush hours, and all the places near underground stations are connected tightly. In sum, every acre around Beijing received the same chance to be developed by this acentric railway pattern and intercity undergrounds make a larger Beijing a reality.

Finally, let us talk about Metra in Chicago. The intercity of Chicago has a rather simple pattern, which is clearly centralized like half of a target. All Metra railways end around the Loop, and they seldom connect with each other. Besides, CTA underground subways face the same problem, they come together just around the loop. Communication between different sectors divided by Metra or CTA trains are suppressed dramatically. People have to take a trip to central Chicago to move to other sectors. As a result, loop region is highly developed and all other parts of Chicago remain to be suburb. As a suggestion, half-concentric Metra or CTA trains would help improve the current situation, connect more neighborhoods and provide opportunities to them. Many neighborhoods in southern and western part are suffering from high unemployment rates. There are deficient companies and markets for them to find a job. If a convenient subway system is established, those people will benefit a lot from commercial opportunity accompanied with it. Future of those neighborhoods could even change dramatically. An ideal Metra design is shown below. Black wires are added on an original figure of present Metra. Hope it come true in the future!



System map. Image by Metra Official Website. <https://metrarail.com/maps-schedules/system-map>

Black wires were added by Author.

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India
Harris School of Public Policy

Montrose, the Dog Beach

Only a few things are as sacred to people as their dogs. From licking your face when you wake up to sitting on your feet when your toes are cold, dogs serve as a gentle alarm clock and the best slippers you'll ever have. Dogs are the most invaluable companions and they simply deserve the best.

The Montrose Dog Beach, located on the Northwest corner of Montrose Beach in Uptown, is Chicago's first legal off-leash beach. It is conveniently located in the park and has a lot of green space for dogs to run around. Not only do the dogs get to run free, they also get to swim and play with other dogs and dog lovers. The original guardian of this beach, MonDog is a completely volunteer organization which endeavors to represent the dog beach community with an emphasis on owner participation and responsibility. Its mission is to ensure that Chicago residents and their canine friends have a fun, clean, and safe beach experience. It is committed to the ongoing preservation and improvement of Montrose Dog Beach through owner education, volunteer support, and community partnerships. They provide additional services too. There's a dog food truck right outside the park where the dogs can get a dog cookie or treat of choice. Recently, they've installed a dog washing center so the dogs don't have to leave the park all sandy. Also, there's a handicap accessible ramp located at the entrance to the beach making the beach experience more comfortable for all. With water, a huge space to run, soft sand, and a lot of other dogs for your dog to befriend, this place is definitely a heaven for dogs. It's a great place for unfriendly dogs as they can slowly become more sociable when they are around other dogs. Overall, the view is scenic, the people are friendly, and it's the best place for enjoying a good walk with our four-legged friends.

Being a responsible dog owner goes beyond taking care of "business." It is doing right by your pet. It means keeping it from danger, attending to its needs and also providing a comfortable environment.

CTA: 1 hour 19 minutes

Car: 39 minutes

Bike: 1 hour 18 minutes

Ana Gutiérrez
Peru
Harris School of Public Policy: MPP

The Benefits of a Transit Authority in the City



Photo by: Ana Paola Gutiérrez Alegre

I still remember the first day I had to attend AEPP. Some friends had told me to take the shuttle or the CTA bus so I decided to stand at the bus stop and wait for a bus, as I usually do in Peru. However, when I arrived there I noticed the bus had just passed and I had to wait 30 minutes for the next one! This might have been an unpleasant experience but actually, it allowed me to learn more about one of Chicago's best offerings: the public transportation.

In the city, public transportation is managed by an independent public company: The Chicago Transit Authority (CTA). According to CTA, the company operates the second largest public transportation system in the USA, that includes rails and buses to serve the city of Chicago and 35 suburbs (Chicago Transit Authority, 2016). This public company offers a high-quality service, which includes professional drivers, well-defined bus stops, settled schedules and GPS equipped buses. This is a crucial point because it allows technology to make life easier for people. For example, if you want to make a trip, you can use Google Maps to see and accurate description of the preferred route and estimated arrival time. Moreover, as you can see your bus in real time, you can better manage your time to get to the bus stop. This is especially useful when it rains, snows or even when it's hot out!

The system in Chicago is completely different from my home country. In Peru, a transit authority does not exist and the buses are managed by private companies. This means that lots of buses operate during the same time, competing in the roads to get passengers. As the private companies are always worried about their profits, they do not invest money in their fleet, and that is why the buses tend to be old and uncomfortable. Moreover, as there are too many companies, you cannot use a unique card in all the buses and you are forced to pay cash. This also prevents the users to make connections for a lower rate, as you can easily do in Chicago with your Ventra Card.

The advantages of the Peruvian system are that you can find a bus every 5 minutes and the service is really cheap. A bus ticket in Peru ranges from 20-90 cents, depending on the length of the trip. In contrast, buses in Chicago have a flat \$ 2.5 fare. However, it should be noted that CTA's fares do not cover its operating costs and for this reason, the company receives public funding. This extra money allows the company to provide non-profit but useful services to citizens. For instance, CTA provides around-the-clock service in some areas and drivers assist people with disabilities getting on the bus. In contrast, people with disabilities do not have access to public transportation in Peru because, of course, it is not profitable.

To sum up, in my home country transportation is a public service provided by a private company and that is why it is extremely different from what I found in Chicago. In America, and in most parts of the world, public transportation is a citizen right, and that is why it must be managed by the Government. It does not matter if the transit company does not make profits as long as it properly fits the citizen's needs. So, if you plan to come to Chicago, remember you might pay an expensive bus fare, but the money helps to provide the best service for you and all the Chicagoans users. Just tap your card and enjoy your ride!

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Zvi Hasnes Beninson
Israel
Social Sciences Division

A Boutique Hotel in a Not-So-Boutique Location



Photo by author

Background

UChicago students who move to Hyde Park in order to be close to the university are usually quick to learn that a central location for their foreseeable future is 53rd street. And not without a good reason—dense as it is with restaurants and bars, as well as grocery stores, local produce market, a “Target” store, a liqueur store and many others, not a day goes by without students heading there for one reason or another.

To be sure, this is not the most appealing area in the city. There is nothing wrong with it— it is not dangerous like other areas in Chicago— but it does not have the tourist attractions of the Loop or the Magnificent Mile, nor do its residents enjoy the living standards of Lakeview, Lincoln Park or Old Town. Hyde Park is not among the prestigious neighborhoods of Chicago, and outsiders tend not to arrive

without a reason. All in all, this is just another American neighborhood.

So a question arises: what does a boutique hotel have to do in this area? Boutique hotels are usually associated with luxury tourism, two things that are not common in Hyde Park. At the time of writing, it seems that the foundations of the new hotel have been laid, and that the construction is in progress. But in the long run, by listening carefully, one can hear the bells of gentrification ringing.

The Broader Issue – Gentrification

Gentrification is not a unique issue to Hyde Park or to Chicago. In fact, it is not even limited to the United States as a whole. Almost every country in the global north is facing this process and tries (some more than others) to find solutions to some of the social problems that derive from it. Problems such as displacement of entire communities, or the rising rents that tend to hurt the disenfranchised members of society. Yet some aspects of gentrification are indeed unique to Chicago, as well as to Hyde Park.

The first thing to note in this regard is that the process has already begun on 53rd street. Across the street from the new hotel, one can find a “Target” store. This store is located on the ground level of a brand new high-rise building that is obviously not part of the environment. The architecture reveals this fact– while most buildings in the area are designed in the Late Victorian and Prairie styles, the new building is an ultra-modern, all-glass façade. The rent in the new building is, accordingly, much higher than the average on the street. The second thing to remember is the history of Hyde Park as an already heavily gentrified area. In the past thirty-odd years, the university has played an active role in the attempt to give Hyde Park a more “accommodating” appeal to students. The actual meaning of this attempt was the gentrification of the neighborhood, the displacement of a large amount of its original inhabitants, as well as the tighter policing of the remaining ones by UCPD– the second largest private police department in the country. The changes that 53rd street is going through are nothing but a micro cosmos to a much broader trend in the region.

Finally, one should also consider the history of segregation and housing discrimination in Chicago. In a similar fashion to the rest of the country, marginalization of communities in Chicago follows ethnic lines. It is not a coincidence that the most disenfranchised communities in the city are African-American; rather, it is a direct result of the city being one of the most segregated in the country. And like in so many other instances of gentrification in the past, the residents of 53rd street were already subjects to other forms of discrimination. To conclude, it does not require much imagination to see the some of the local businesses being closed and replaced by more expensive, luxurious– and one may even add “boutique”– stores.



Photo by author



Photo by author



Photo by author



Photo by author

Location:

Hyde Park Boutoque Hotel, E. 53rd St. and S. Dorchester Ave.

Travel Details (from UChicago):

By CTA: Use lines 171 or 172 from 55th St. and Ellis or 58th St. and S. Woodlawn Ave (between 5 and 10 minutes).

Walking: Head north on S. Woodlawn Ave. and turn right when reaching 53rd St. (about 15 minutes)

Weijia He
China
Physical Science Division:
Computer Science

RedEye: The Phantom News “Paper”



Photo by Weijia He

RedEye boxes were the most confusing thing that I have noticed in Chicago. At first, I thought they were some kind of fire hydrant because they were all in red and standing at the corner of streets. However, when I walked nearer and saw its strange outline, I realized it was just a weird red box on street, with the name “RedEye” painted on it. Because of this name, the large, red sphere above the box always makes me associate it with a big, bloody eyeball, staring at everyone that walks through. These weird red boxes are almost everywhere in Chicago, making me really curious about what purpose they serve and why they are scattered all over the city.

RedEye is a free tabloid published by the Chicago Tribune. It serves for commuters from 18 to 34, in an attempt to reach out to young people who seldom read newspapers (Channick, 2017; Miner, 2017; Mullman, 2005). To help these young people form the habit of reading newspapers daily, the Chicago Tribune set up lots of RedEye boxes all over Chicago, especially in places like train stations. People who commute to their work or home can just grab one to kill some time on their way. Young people's interest in reading paper-based newspaper has been declining, which is why RedEye was established in the very first place. According to Mitchell (2016), American young people tend to get news from screens rather than printed materials, and the gap between these two sources continues broadening.

The popularity of TV and the Internet plays a very important role in this phenomenon. To most people, if they can get news from TV or the Internet for free, it may seem to be a waste of money to buy a newspaper daily. To tackle this problem, RedEye became free in 2005. It actually worked. The circulation of RedEye increased from 12,000 in 2004 (Mullman, 2005) to 250,000 in 2009 (Rosenthal, 2009), which could be considered as a big success.

However, this increase didn't last for a long time. The circulation of RedEye dropped to about 170,000 in 2013 (Channik, 2017). In my opinion, the reason why it dropped again probably was caused by the prevalence of smartphones, because people have more options during their commuting time. It's common to see people using their smartphones on a bus or a train, chatting with their friends, playing games or watching videos. Even people who are interested in reading news can use their smartphone to read online. Reading printed newspapers may be seen as an old-fashioned way to kill time on a train.

As a result, even reducing its price from twenty-five cents to zero and keeping its territory in Chicago for 15 years, RedEye is still restructuring. It released its own app for smartphones in 2011 and another version for tablets in 2012 (RedEye, 2012). At the beginning of 2017, RedEye announced that it would change from a daily weekday tabloid to a weekly one (Channick, 2017; Miner, 2017). Though it's still hotly debated whether reading electronic materials is good for people or not, it seems to be unquestioned that the trend of electronic reading is unstoppable.

RedEye boxes are still living in Chicago, but the future is not so promising. I can't help but wonder whether there will be a day, when these red boxes really become a void stare from the phantom of news "paper".

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Jie Heng
China
Division of Social Sciences: MACSS

Outside Chinatown, a Chinese Grocery Paradise



Photo by Jie Heng

Background

While exploring Bridgeport with my classmate, we hit an amazing supermarket on Cermak road. At first, we thought that this was just an ordinary market like Jewel Osco. To our surprise, although it is not located in Chinatown, the supermarket has diverse and fresh Chinese groceries. One can find duck egg, preserved egg, fried bean curd, soymilk and many Chinese vegetables in Cermak Fresh Market. What's more, the price is nearly the same as Chinatown's. Take duck egg as an example. It sells as 2.69 dollars in Cermak, only ten cents higher than Baijia Supermarket in Chinatown. But some are cheaper than Chinatown's, like the price of needle mushroom is 50 cents lower than that of Chinatown's market.

Apart from its Chinese grocery, Cermak Fresh Market has other strengths. It is close to two famous Chinese restaurants: Grant Triple Crown Seafood and Northeastern City. After shopping, one could try

some Chinese food within five-minutes walking distance. Additionally, this supermarket is closer to UChicago compared with Chinatown's.

Next time, when you want to buy some Chinese grocery with limited time, you could go to Cermak Fresh Market.

Broader Issues

Cermak Fresh Market is located in the north of Bridgeport, where Asians compose nearly 35% of its population, the major ethnic group in Bridgeport. On the north of Bridgeport is Chinatown. With Asian population expansion in Chinatown, Bridgeport has become one of the top alternative options for Asians to go.

As food is the basic needs of people, Cermak Fresh Market and other Chinese restaurant reflects the most obvious influence of Chinese culture in Bridgeport. But besides Chinese food, Chinese-style education method also imposes significant impacts. Walking on the W 31st street, a street in Bridgeport, one could feel the competitive atmosphere among children. The billboards of various private educational organizations are in Chinese, saying "let your kid become number one in primary school", "we help your kid stand out," same with those advertisements in China. It seems that Chinese parents raise their children in the same way no matter where they are.

Cermak Fresh Market,
3033 S Halsted St, Chicago, IL 60608
Travel Times from UChicago:
CTA: 45 min
Bike: 32 min
Car: 16 min

Zhi Hong
China
Department of Computer Science

The Charm of Little Italy



Photo by Zhi Hong

Background

My partner eagerly suggested we explore the Little Italy as part of our Chicago Neighborhood project since he is of Italian ancestry. Unsurprisingly, Little Italy got its name from the early 20th century mass migration of Italians who moved from their Europe to America, in search of a better life. Thus, it's only natural for the largest park in the neighborhood to have an Italian name, Arrigo. It's a popular place for both local residents and visitors of Little Italy to come and enjoy a leisurely Saturday afternoon. Kids play around, dogs run on the grass, and college students sit under trees reading books. At one side of the park stands a statue of the renowned Italian explorer Christopher Columbus, cast in 1893 in Rome and installed in the Arrigo Park in 1966.

One would assume, given its name, that Little Italy would have Italian shops and restaurants packed with Italian descendants lining its streets with Italian flags on each corner. At least that was what we thought before our visit. It turned out that Little Italy, albeit once a predominantly Italian community, is much more diverse today. The highest rated restaurant on Yelp, which

was our first stop in Little Italy, turned out to be Canadian. Among the dozen or so people we met, there were Irish, Polish, Chinese, but none of them were Italian.

Broader Issue

The demographics in Little Italy began to shift in the latter half of the 20th century. The neighborhood has become more desirable because of its proximity to UIC and the Loop. Different groups of people began moving in and the originally dominant Italian people were reduced to a minority. Although the demographics have changed dramatically, one thing remains the same. The new people arriving to this neighborhood have the same dream as the Italian immigrants who left their motherland for America in the 1900s, the same dream that Columbus had when he took on one of greatest voyages in human history, the dream of a better tomorrow. The Arrigo Park opens her arms to all people, regardless of their sex, race, or nationality, offering everyone the same serene green space. The people who live in Little Italy change over time, but her openness and the opportunities she offers have always been the charm that draws people there. In this sense, Little Italy is an epitome of America as a whole. After decades, although the people who erected the Columbus statue may have left, Columbus is still there, looking at all the different people passing by.



Photo by Zhi Hong

Travel Time

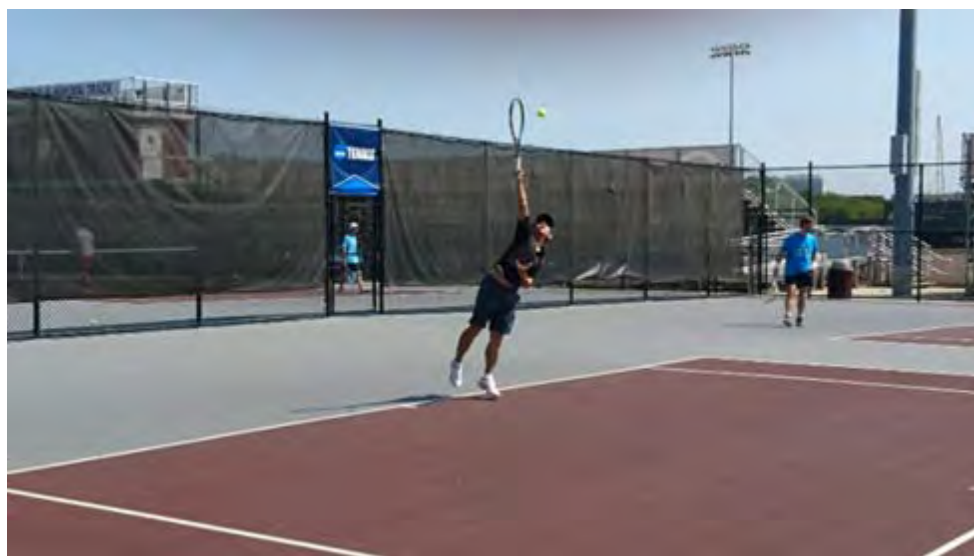
CTA: 1 hour

By Car: 30 min

By Bicycle: 50 min

Tomohiro Hosoi
Japan
Harris School of Public Policy

It's Time to Play Tennis in Chicago!



(Photo by the author) Tennis courts in The University of Chicago

I have been playing tennis for 18 years. Tennis is essential in my life. When I was a junior and senior high school student, I practiced tennis hard from Sunday to Monday and cultivated a friendship with my team mates. The moment I entered a university in Japan, I joined a tennis club and built a personal network with various students and alumni. After I started my job, I had been attending a tennis school before I came to Chicago. This enabled me to improve my physical and mental health. Actually, according to CalorieLab, we can burn almost 400 kilo calories in an hour (sec.). Because tennis is a fundamental element of my life, I wanted to start tennis in Chicago as soon as possible. And when I stood in a tennis court of The University of Chicago in August 2017, I felt that it was the best day in my life. I strongly recommend you start playing tennis because you are living in Chicago, which is the best city to play tennis.

First of all, the U.S is said to have the largest population of tennis players. The U.S. National Championship started in 1881 and became US Open, which is one of the most important tennis tournaments in the world. These show that tennis is deeply rooted in the U.S. In addition, there are so many facilities including tennis courts, shops and tennis clubs in the U.S. Chicago, the third largest city in the U.S., also has a number of facilities. Chicago Park District says that there are 128 public tennis courts in Chicago and we can use these for free (sec.). If we want to play tennis in winter, indoor courts

will be available and we can find those on the website of Chicago Park District. Moreover, The University of Chicago also has excellent courts. They are located near Medical Campus.

It is also important to find a tennis shop where we get rackets, shoes and other items needed for tennis. Many shops are located in Chicago. Japanese people especially who want to start playing tennis should visit String Attached in Lincoln Park. We can get goods necessary to play tennis guided by a clerk who is fluent in Japanese. If we have little time to go to shops, E-commerce will be useful. Tennis Warehouse is an E-commerce website dedicated to tennis goods and we can receive goods including rackets in 2 or 3 business days after we order it.

Based on the information above, Chicago has a wonderful environment to play tennis. Now, it's time to play tennis!



(Photo by the author) String Attached

It takes about one hour to go to String Attached from the University of Chicago when we use CTA.

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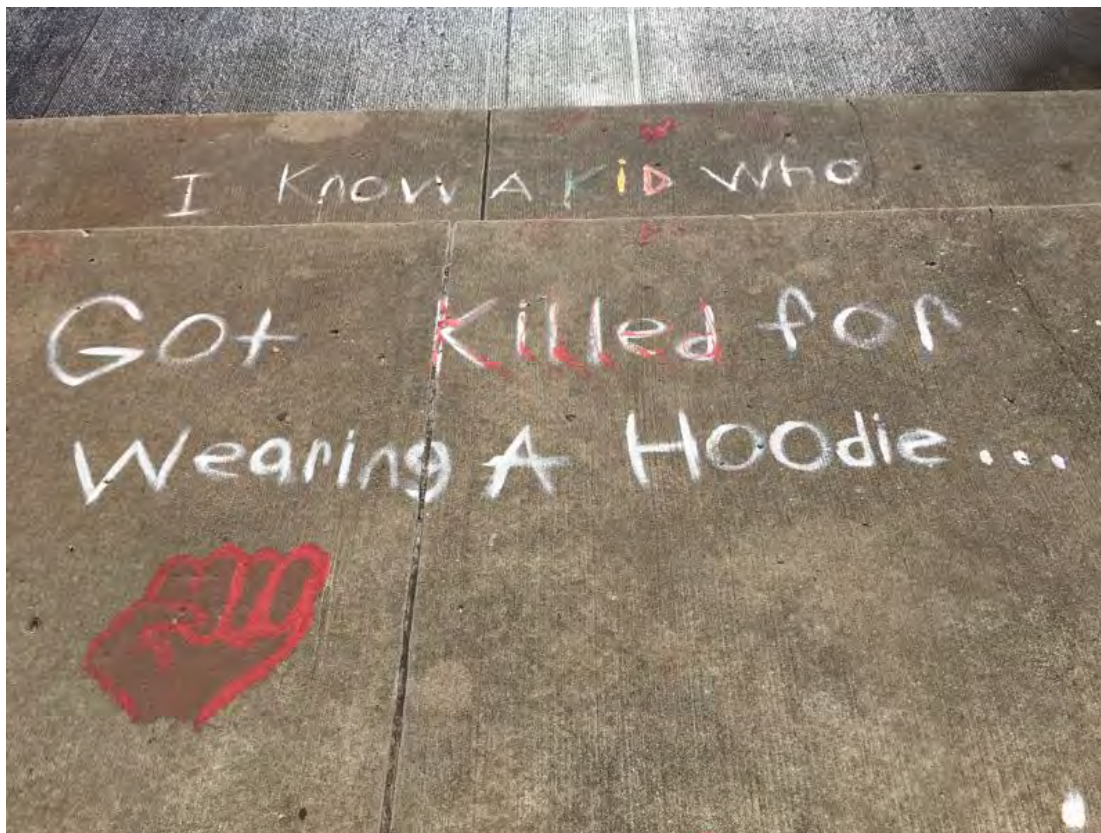
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<http://www.chicagoparkdistrict.com/facilities/tennis-courts/>

Wei Huang
China
School of Social Service
Administration

A Hoodie Kid Got Killed - Chiraq?



(credit to Yinzhan Tang, he took the photo when my iphone was power off)

Background

"Dangerous", is what many would use to describe the city. It's also the main impression that people around me had of Chicago before I came. The city is immersed in such a mysterious atmosphere, which is also the charm I find in it. Therefore, the first day I arrived in Chicago, on the way to our apartment, I asked the taxi driver, a Moroccan American, about the security issue of the city, and he replied that "people get robbed every day", as if it's something usual. No wonder in 2015 the director Spike Lee entitled his controversial film describing the city's gun violence: "Chi-raq".

On August 4th, I went with my friend to the lakeside near 53rd street, where a lot of seagulls wandered around. The day after that, we passed by the same area when we were doing the neighborhood

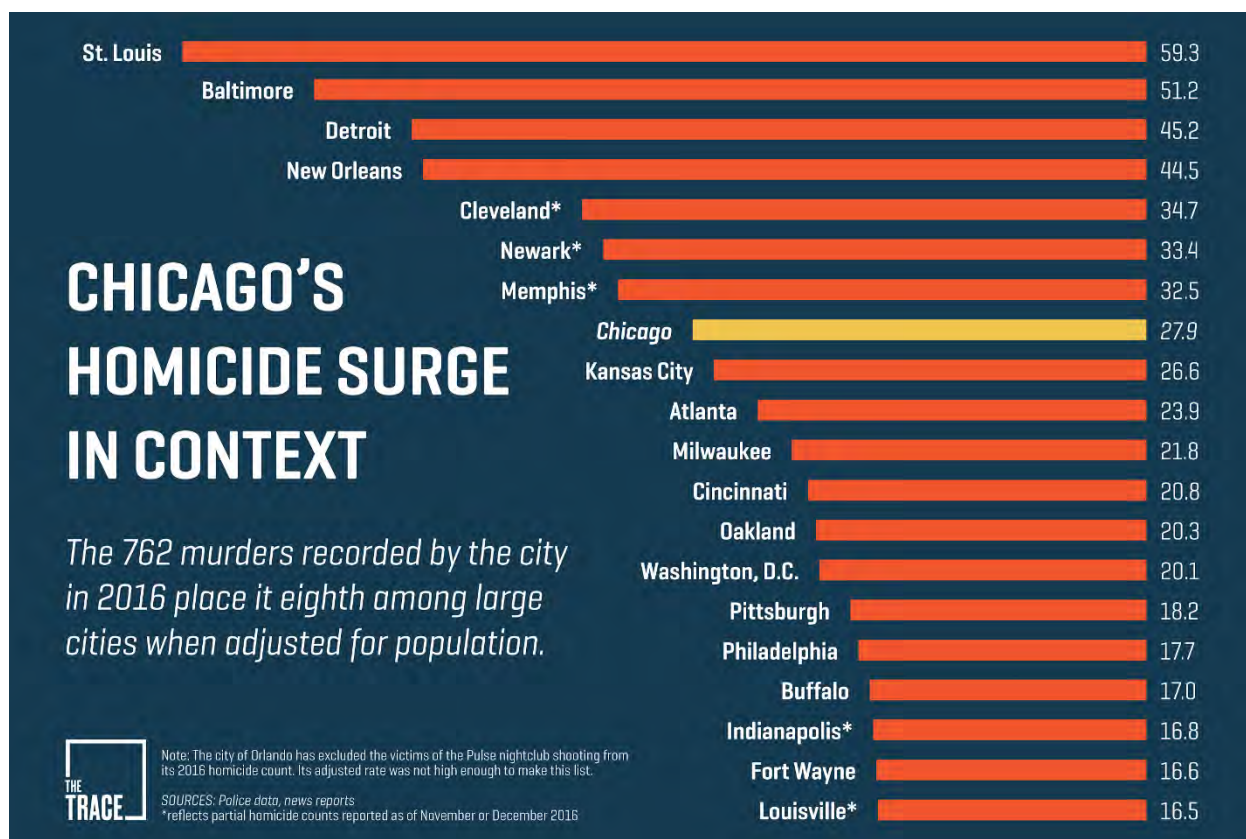
exploration and found a horrible notice written on the ground in chalk that said “I Know A KID Who Got Killed for Wearing A Hoodie...”. It looked pretty scary although we didn’t really know if it was just a prank or a serious clue for a murder case. I googled the sentence, and surprisingly, I discovered the stories behind the sentence. Back in 2012, a teen rapper named Lil JoJo was fatally shot dead on September 4th by a gang, Black Disciples, because he composed a song aiming at the gang. Three months later, on Christmas day, his best friend JayLoud got shot wearing a hoodie with Lil JoJo’s name on it. This encounter somehow stimulated my desire to explore the gang culture in Murder City.

Broader Issue

The first gang in Chicago was born out of volunteer fire companies before American Civil War and became involved in machine politics soon after that. During late 19th century, most gangs were Irish. By the early 20th century, Polish and Italian gangs emerged. Later on, Prohibition transformed Chicago into a perfect nest for gangs and their underground activities. In this period, white gangs and black gangs supported Democrats and Republicans respectively in political campaigns, which led to fierce confrontations around the “color line.” As racial violence intensified, the African American, Puerto Rican and Mexican gangs thrived in late 1950s to contend with their white counterparts. Because of the presence of some powerful Black and Puerto Rican gangs and their partnership with political groups and community development organizations, gangs became more active in political movements and thus improved their own images. Asian gangs joined the game in 1970s, which is also the time when gangs began to participate in drug trafficking and violent recruitment efforts. Generations of gangs were interwoven into the communities and have continued refreshing themselves until today.

Running a gang is as challenging as entrepreneurship. The gangs in Chicago usually operated like the Mafia. They create a set of ranks, codes, oaths and scriptures. Being a gang member means that you have to obey the rules of the organization and protect each other. Gang leaders will maintain their authority by displaying violence. Most of the time, gangs will try to maintain peaceful coexistence so they can make profits sustainably. Gangs normally charge the residents in their communities, many of whom are squatters, and protect their safety. Exchanges of interest between gangs and housing committees, police, stores, politicians and community organizations happen all the time in order to maintain the underground economic ecosystem of the community.

The proliferation of gangs naturally breeds crime and violence in the city. The situation deteriorated in 2016, when 762 murders were recorded in Chicago. The number of murder cases is a 59.4 percent increase over that of 2015 and the peak since 1990s. What’s worth noticing is that this number stands out partially because of the huge population total of Chicago. When it comes to the crime rate, Chicago is actually left behind by St. Louis, Baltimore, Detroit and four other U.S. cities. Still everybody knows that the city needs a cure, and the municipality is required to take actions, otherwise the winter is coming.



Graph from the Trace (<https://www.thetrace.org/2017/01/chicago-not-most-dangerous-city-america/>)

Yusuke Iida
Japan
Division of Physical Science, MSFM

Andre Weil and Young Japanese Mathematicians



International House at the University of Chicago, Photo by author

What comes in my mind is Andre Weil for the first time when I hear the university of Chicago. Andre Weil was one of the most famous French mathematicians in the twentieth century and moved to the University of Chicago after World War II. He contributed to the entire field of mathematics and wrote a lot of books. When I was a university student in Japan, my professor asked me to read his book titled Basic Number Theory. You might think that the book is basic and numbers are simple, but “basic” does not mean easy and number theory is the most profound theme in modern mathematics. As Carl Friedrich Gauss, a.k.a. the king of mathematics, wrote, “Mathematics is the queen of sciences and number theory is the queen of mathematics.” I remember that I had the same nightmare the previous nights before I gave a presentation about the book every two weeks. Eventually, I gave up wanting to be a mathematician and worked instead in a financial industry after graduating from my Master’s program. Nevertheless, I still respect Andre Weil and his mathematics.

How did Weil spend his life in Chicago when he was a professor in the department of mathematics at the university of Chicago? According to Kodaira, Weil in Chicago was very kind to young mathematician and always loved to discuss mathematical matters. At the time, a lot of young mathematician came to the University of Chicago from all over the world. Among them, brilliant young Japanese mathematicians, Kodaira and Iwasawa, investigated mathematics with Weil. Kodaira later received the Fields prize for the first time as a Japanese. They all lived in the International House at the University of Chicago and they started discuss mathematics every morning as soon as they said “Good morning” to each other. Kodaira told that Weil was a superman and knew everything and he had to study mathematics three times more than before. (I cannot imagine what a genius Weil was because the Fields winner reported this.) Weil also liked to walk around when he was considering mathematics. A colleague told us that mathematics students had constant contact and took long walks along the south coast of Lake Michigan when it was still safe. Kodaira also described that Mr. Weil liked taking a walk together with other mathematicians, and it is troublesome to follow him because he could not be satisfied unless he walked at least three miles. Every morning that these walks took place contributed to the Japanese mathematicians’ great works. Today, I took a walk on a path which Weil and young Japanese mathematicians also took while expecting great ideas.



Path, Photo by author

Travel times from UChicago to the path:

By walk: 5 mins

Akira Iizuka
Japan
Law School

Football (?)



Bear's game: Photo by author

Background

Before coming to Chicago, I have never watched an American football game. Because the American football is not so popular in Japan, even now I cannot understand the rules of it fully, but I know people in the U.S. love American football. I went to Soldier Field, the home stadium of Chicago Bears to watch its game. I found that 61,500 seats in the stadium were almost full, and all spectators were crazy for the game.

I am a big fan of football, known as soccer here, so I wondered why people in the U.S. love this “fake” football (by using the word “fake,” I mean players of American football use their feet only a little bit for kicking balls, so the word “football” seems not appropriate for that) and that was all my image of American football. Actually, I didn’t have much interest in it. However, the excitement in the stadium changed my mind. By next time I go to the stadium, I would like to master the rules and be a member of excited spectators.

Broader Issue

The origin of the American football is soccer. More precisely, first American football, played in 1860's and 1870's, was something like a cross between soccer and rugby. As the rugby had been developed in England based on soccer, we can say the origin of the American football is soccer. At that time, eastern universities, such as Yale, Princeton and Columbia played this soccer style American football. (Smith)

After that, the current American football gradually became popular and American people lost their interests in soccer. Now four major sports in the U.S. are the American football, baseball, ice hockey and basketball, and soccer is not included there.

However, soccer is becoming popular in the U.S. In 2014, more than three million kids registered in U.S. youth soccer league, compared with just 103,432 in 1974. In addition, some say that the MLS (Major League Soccer) is now more popular than MLB (Major League Baseball) among 12- to 17-years-olds. (Neil; Bryant)

Considering the diversity and the number of immigrants in the U.S., it seems soccer will gain further popularity. Since the most popular sports in the world is soccer, those who coming from other countries know how exiting it is. In some decades, Chicago Bears might be surpassed by Chicago Fire in its number of spectators.

Travel time to the Soldier Field from UChicago campus

30 mins (by CTA bus and walk) / 20 mins (By car) / 45 mins (By bike)

Location (Soldier Field): 1410 Museum Campus Dr, Chicago, IL 60605

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Sanya Jha
India
Harris School of Public Policy

The Architectural River Tour



Photo by author

I arrived in Chicago on August 2, 2017, and was welcomed by traffic downtown. It took me nearly two hours to get from O'hare International Airport to Hyde Park. After traveling for almost 22 hours, getting stuck in traffic is probably the worst thing one can ask for, and the immediate feeling is that of frustration. That was not the case for me. I was mesmerized by the way all the buildings downtown looked so organized. It seemed as though each building had a history behind it. That is what made me fall in love with the city and its architecture in just two hours.

While exploring places in Chicago I went to Navy pier and saw the sign-board for Architectural River Cruise. Many Chicagoans had already told me about this tour and how it is a “must do” thing in Chicago. So, I decided to go ahead and got my ticket from Shoreline Sightseeing. The tour was for 75minutes and cost around \$37.

I was there in the line by 3:00 p.m., and the tour started at 3:15 p.m. Before entering the boat, they took a ‘Photo before the tour’ which was available to be picked up afterward. The boat was full of enthusiastic people from different cultures, all excited to see the city and learn more about the architecture. There was a drinks and food counter in the boat, so one could also just sit back, relax and enjoy the beauty of the city.

At 3:15 pm, the boat left from the shore and the tour commenced. The guide was a very lively person who knew exactly how to engage the audience and grab their attention. He began talking about the buildings and their architects right after we left the shore. It was surprising how he had something to say about almost all the buildings around, even the ones that couldn’t be seen up close from the river. He spoke about how different buildings were made by the same architect and what tricks were used to make a building taller were, by just adding spires to them. We saw everything Chicago has to offer, from the Trump Tower and Wrigley Building to unique apartments with beautiful porches. Apart from that, there were people kayaking in the river, standing on Riverwalk and in restaurants who made it a point to wave to everyone on the boat. As the tour ended, the guide asked us all to write a review on Trip-advisor, and our photographs were ready for us to buy.

It has become, indeed, one of my fondest memories in Chicago. Not only did I learn a lot about the architecture and the thinking behind the construction of different buildings, but also got the chance to have 75 minutes of an uninterrupted view of this beautiful city.

From an economic point of view, the Architectural tour is a very good way to boost up the economy. With the magnificent architecture and a river flowing through the city, Chicagoans have realized how an architectural river cruise could benefit them to a great extent. Rather than just ignoring this opportunity, they have decided to make use of the resources they possess.

There are many companies like Shoreline Sightseeing and the Chicago Architectural Foundation that arrange these tours all throughout the day. Having many companies provide the same service creates a perfectly competitive environment which ensures the efficient working of the industry and also keeps the ticket price in the range \$35-\$45, depending on which company a person chooses.

With US News ranking it #2 in Best Things to Do in Chicago, all the tourists who visit Chicago make the tour a priority when weather permits. As a result, no matter what the cost is, dozens of people go for the tour every day, which shores up the economy. With at least 50 people in a boat per ride and approximately 17 tours per day per company which gives each company approximately \$34,000 per

day (taking \$40 as the cost of the tour), we have around \$1,020,000 per company per month. Taking the five major companies organizing the tours, there's an overall revenue of around \$170,000 per day. This revenue estimate does not include the revenue from selling the photos that they take before each person gets on the boat; four photos cost \$20 and almost every tourist wants to have them. It's not just the revenue; these tours are also generating employment and volunteer opportunities.

Various websites are available to help people choose the company. These websites rank the companies and show reviews of people who have gone on the tour. As a result of the presence of different websites, there is competition. All the websites compete with one another and do their best to increase their credibility. Moreover, one website might be biased towards a particular company and vice-versa, which can be seen by the fact that Shoreline sightseeing specifically mentioned Trip-Advisor. A kind of collaboration is present between different companies belonging to different industries. This collaboration is probably the best way to do business; all the companies involved benefit.

Let's see what we can learn from Chicagoans approach towards the river and architecture. Chicago has a beautiful skyline, architecture and river which gave the entrepreneurs an opportunity to start their businesses. By utilizing the public space, these businesses are not only generating revenue, but are also giving back to the city. People look forward to being on the boat or just look at the boats from a bridge, which further adorns the city. Every city in the world has some resource that can provide a starting point for the private players. It's all about recognizing that opportunity and taking advantage. The entrepreneurs will not only get their revenue generation model but will also provide something in return to enhance the beauty of their city. The economy, architecture, resources and entrepreneurs are all inter-related; the only thing that needs to be done is- put everything in the right place.

Ananth Kamath
India
Department of Chemistry

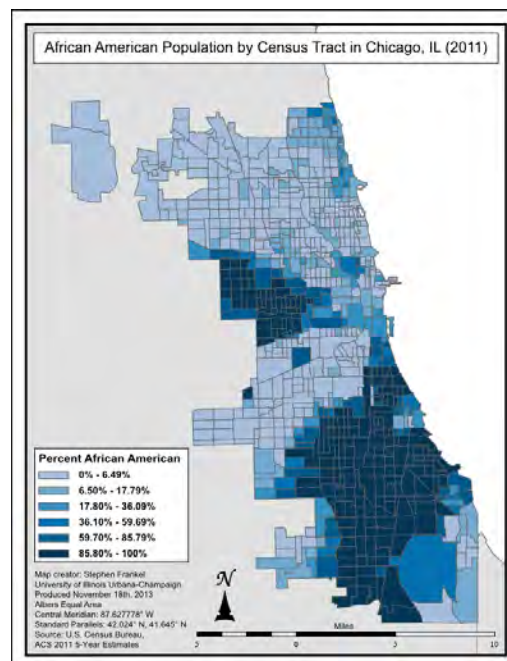
Safety or Segregation



Picture of the Social Security Administration at Cottage Grove, by Jose F. Source: <https://www.yelp.com/biz/social-security-administration-chicago-8>

I decided to apply for a Social Security Number during the second week of September, 2017. Upon asking the administrators in my department, I came to know that the Social Security Administration (SSA) offices commonly visited by University of Chicago students are in Cottage Grove and Downtown. Though the Cottage Grove office is only one mile away against the 7.5 miles from the Downtown office, I was strongly urged to not visit the former office due to its location in the south side of Chicago. A resource on the university website also advised against going to the Cottage Grove location due to safety reasons, but suggested using public transportation instead of walking. The office is very conveniently located on the CTA bus 4 route. Favouring the convenience, I decided to visit the 'unsafe' office. On entering the bus, it came as a surprise to realise that all passengers were black. With the exception of one other Asian person, all of the nearly hundred people in the SSA office were African Americans and Hispanics. Considering the university is so close and new academic year is approaching, the scene was quite unexpected. The bus on the way back too was full of black people. I got reminded of Rosa Parks, and wondered whether the situation is really different today.

The law strictly prohibits and stigmatizes racial discrimination. But the preferences and actions of people and institutions still promote segregation. The university discourages students from wandering outside Hyde Park, and has created a diverse non-Black locality in the otherwise Black-dominant South Side. These restrictions confine the talent gathered by the university to the boundaries of this small neighbourhood. Students – who might have otherwise helped find a solution – are thus deprived of awareness about the problem of segregation in the city. Even short bus trip or visit to a public place can help develop an impression of the problem. As a compromise for safety of its members, the university is aggravating the issue that has plagued Chicago for decades.



African American populations in Chicago.
Notice the low concentration in Hyde Park.

Picture by Stephen Frankel,

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:African_American_Population_by_Census_Tract_in_Chicago,_IL_\(2011\).svg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:African_American_Population_by_Census_Tract_in_Chicago,_IL_(2011).svg)

U.S. Social Security Administration, 6338 S Cottage Grove Ave, Chicago, IL 60637
CTA: 12 min, Car: 4 min, Bike: 7 min

Akinori Kanaya
Japan
Harris school of Public Policy

The Road to Michael Jordan



(Photo by author)

The first thing I learned about Chicago was the Chicago Bulls. It is an NBA team which in the past, Michael Jordan belonged to. When I was a child, I had many Chicago Bulls goods, such as a basketball and a sweater. One of the reasons why I decided to enter the University of Chicago is that I was a fan of Chicago Bulls. Since I came to Chicago, I have wanted to not only watch the basketball game, but also enjoy playing basketball by myself. In Chicago, there are many outdoor basketball courts and we can play basketball in the courts any time and for free. On the other hand, in Japan, especially in Tokyo, there are few open basketball courts because of the limited space. Therefore, when I want to play basketball, I should register for a court in the gym, and it is not free. For residents in Tokyo like me, it is a rare experience to play basketball under the blue sky. So, I tried some open basketball courts in Chicago.

I would like to introduce my favorite basketball court in Hyde Park. The basketball court is located about 2.5 miles north of the University of Chicago. Since it is near Lake Michigan, we can enjoy playing basketball while seeing the beautiful scenery of the lake. There are two basketball courts including as many as eight basket goals, so even if another group occupies a court, you can use a different court. In addition to that, there is a road which many people enjoy running or cycling on even on weekdays, so you do not have to be too concerned about your safety. I sometimes practice

basketball for hours in the court. On one occasion, two black men who lived near the court talked to me and we enjoyed playing basketball together. I was really delighted to play basketball in Chicago because the city is a kind of sacred ground for basketball where Michael Jordan played basketball. In order to approach him even a little, I would like to continue practicing basketball in my free time.

In Chicago, there are much more places open to everyone for free such as the basketball court than in Japan. Besides, their equipment is in relatively good repair. This sports equipment has certain functions in local communities, and among several sports equipment, basketball courts play a key role.

First, these courts provide people with space for exercise. The appropriate amount of exercise is essential for good health in mind and body. Through enjoying exercise in these open spaces, residents can reduce their weight or refresh their spirits. From the viewpoint of easiness for exercise, basketball is one of the most excellent sports. The necessary items for game of basketball are only a ball and a goal, and we can play it even alone. There are many types of game such as 1 on 1, 3 on 3, and 5 on 5, even though the last one is the most typical, so basketball is flexible about the number of players. In addition to that, the rules are simple. Therefore, if you are so poor that you cannot get a lot of sports equipment, or if you cannot gather many players with experience, you can play basketball. This casualness of this sport may be one of factors that many basketball courts have been prepared as places for residents' exercise in Chicago.

Second, these courts provide residents with places where they gather and make relationships with each other. People can make local communities through utilizing these courts. Since the isolation from a community and the feeling of uneasiness lead to crimes and delinquency, it is important to give people opportunities to discover communities which they feel included in. In open basketball courts, it is a common occurrence that players spontaneously play games with people who they met for the first time. Through playing basketball with other residents, we can get connected with them and feel included in the local community.

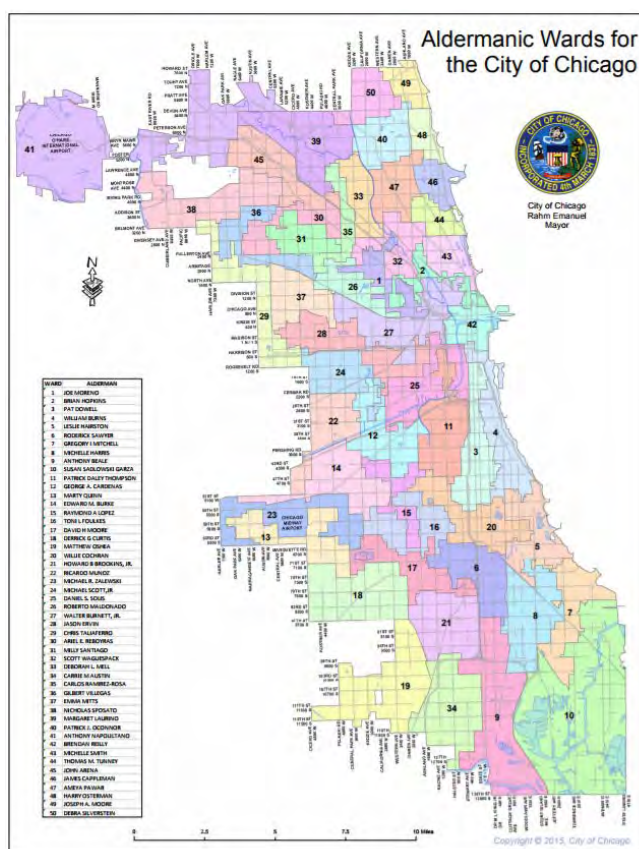
In conclusion, there are several functions of open sports courts such as providing residents with the place where they exercise and maintain their health and opportunities to create local communities. In Chicago, the basketball court is the most typical example.

Travel Time from the University of Chicago

- 10 minutes by car
- 50 minutes on foot

Donghyun Kang
South Korea
Sociology, Social Science Division

The Shapes of the 50 Political Wards in Chicago: Why Is It a Hodgepodge?



Visual #1: 50 Political wards in Chicago (City of Chicago, 2015)

Background

It was total confusion to me; I was puzzled when I first realized that the administrative boundary for the Census, 77 community areas, did not correspond to the political districts, 50 political wards, that are represented by each alderman. I simply assumed that the legislative and administrative districts in Chicago had to be the same thing. Soon, I learned that the two concepts differ, and the city of Chicago officially recognizes both. It was not difficult for me to understand the system, partly thanks to the fact

that South Korea, the country I came from, also has a complicated system for legislative districts. Nonetheless, the shapes of some aldermanic wards (for example, the 2nd ward) in Chicago still look like a hodgepodge, especially when compared to the division of Community areas. Thus, I decided to explore this issue a bit more.

Broader Issues

A city grows and declines; people come and go; factories come and go; small businesses come and go. Along with the change, we can observe a city's boundaries change as the time goes; and a governing body needs to develop an district system to accomplish the various goals, such as collecting taxes and setting the voting districts. Admittedly, there could be hundreds of various district systems across the world and the City of Chicago also has a distinctive system, currently consisting of 77 community areas and 50 legislative wards, both of which often include multiple neighborhoods.

One of the most conspicuous features of the Chicago's district system is that the 77 community areas do not match to the 50 aldermanic wards: clearly, the numbers are not the same. But why? First, the origins and the purposes of the two districts system were different. It dates back to the late 1920's when the 75 community areas were identified by the Social Science Research Committee at University of Chicago, which was affiliated with the U.S. census bureau (Seligman, n.d.). The community area system has stayed almost constant to ensure comparability of the census data along the history, except in two cases (i.e., the integration of the O'Hare in 1950's and the split of Edgewater from Uptown). However, despite its consistency, it is well-known that the local residents often do not agree with the boundary drawn by the community areas (Seligman, n.d.) and this reveals that the Community area was not only designed by a top-down style but also does not reflect the perception of the geographic boundary that the residents feel.

In contrast to the community areas, the ward system has gone through drastic changes since it was first introduced. There were six wards in 1837 when the legislative district was created and the number of wards increased as Chicago's area expanded (Knox, n.d.). The number of legislative district was stabilized in 1920's but the election law in Illinois states that the boundaries of the wards should be examined by the city council in every ten-years after each census, aiming to guarantee the fair representation that reflects the population of the residents in each ward (Knox, n.d.).

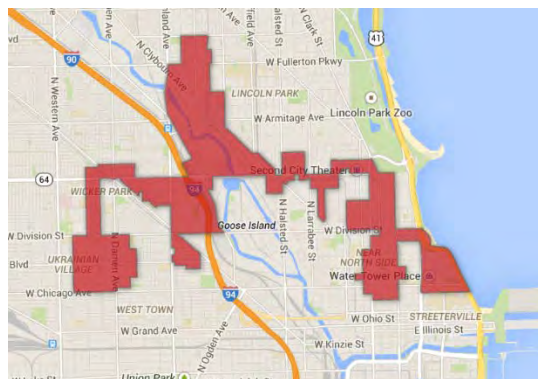
However, it does not mean that the political boundary in the city of Chicago, the wards, was drawn and redrawn reflecting Tocqueville's ideal of American democracy. This is because Gerrymandering, a change of a political boundary favoring specific political groups, has affected the shape of the political boundaries in Chicago, making the aldermanic demarcation lines look unorganized. The conspicuous instance is the 2nd ward. The boundary was redrawn after 2010 census and it now resembles a mutant lobster with oddly unbalanced hands (Please see the visual #2). Political commentators said that it was purportedly redrawn by the current mayor, Rahm Emanuel, as a revenge on his political enemy, Bob

Fioretti, disconnecting Bob from his base of support (Gardner, 2017). As this example shows, the problem of Gerrymandering is, beyond the bizard shape, that it benefits the established to maintain their political positions while distorting the true will of the people whom the political system is supposed to serve. Of course, Rahm Emmanuel was not the first mayor of Chicago who restricted the wards to achieve one's political goal; it is not a top secret that the previous mayors, including famous M. Daley and J. Daley also used this method as a political weapon.

Then, it is natural to think about the reason behind why this has been possible. One might suggest that it was rooted in the close relationship between the city council and the mayor in Chicago, which is dubbed as 'Chicago feudalism'. A mayor like Rahm Emmanuel have a political power in both Chicago and national level to reward and punish the local aldermen, so relationship can become similar to the king and the lords could develop. However, awkwardly shaped political districts can be found without much effort across the states because Gerrymandering has been pervasive in the U.S. political scene, thanks to the autonomy of the local governments from the federal government in US which allows the local (a state or a city) governments to easily alter the political districts.

So, is the Chicago style feudalism the sole culprit of the hodgepodge wards map? The answer might be "no." It has been rampant in U.S; it is like pizza or hotdogs although there are some variations across the U.S. Then, can the political system in US, which emphasizes the autonomy of the local government from the federal government, explain the topsy-turvy shape of the map? Partly, yes. But there also exists Gerrymandering practices even in South Korea where it is relatively difficult to redraw the political districts. Indeed, it is a universal phenomenon.

It should be noted that the fundamental reason for the convoluted wards district in Chicago also lie on the common character of the modern representative democratic system that often alienates the citizens from the important decision-making process while the politicians pursue their own self-interests. It seems apparent that the issue only can be redressed by the citizens' active participation; but it is still worth remembering the principle of direct democracy often conflicts with the principles of the delegation, the backbone of the modern representative democracy.



Visual #2: The map of the 2nd ward in Chicago: (Google maps, 2017)

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Rikita Karakawa
Japan
Law School

Sing, Touch, Play in Baby Time



Pic #1 Harold Washington Library

(Photo by <https://www.chipublib.org/>)



Pic #2 Entrance of Children's Library

(Photo by author)

I live here in Chicago with my wife and one-year-old son. Because we were advised that winter in Chicago is a little harsh and it might be difficult for my son to play outside of our house, it was important for us to find a playground where he can play freely before winter comes.

Since I have heard that Thomas Hughes Children's Library, which is a part of Harold Washington Library, has really nice place for children and that gatherings for babies called "Baby Time" are held there almost every week, we went to the library and attended that gathering.

From our apartment nearby Navy Pier, it took only 15minutes by bus to get to Harold Washington Library (Pic #1), which is located just nearby the Buckingham Fountain. When we arrived at the library, I was surprised at the solemnity of the building and how large it was. Then, we rode the elevator to go to the second floor where the Children's Library is located. Since it had good "barrie-free" environment, we had no difficulty walking even with a storoller.

When we got to the second floor, we were welcomed by stylish light green wall, the entrance of Children's Library (Pic #2). Inside the Children's Library, there was a quite large space for bookshelves and playground for children (Pic #3). There were plenty of child-oriented books and DVDs sorted by a lot of genres and toys for children. While it was 9:10am, just after the

library started, there were already about 10 children with their parents. I found that Asian was dominant (5 or 6 out of 10), however, there were also White, Black and Latino children. It was also notable that Asian children tend to be accompanied with not only mother but also father, and one Asian child seemed to have her grandparents there.

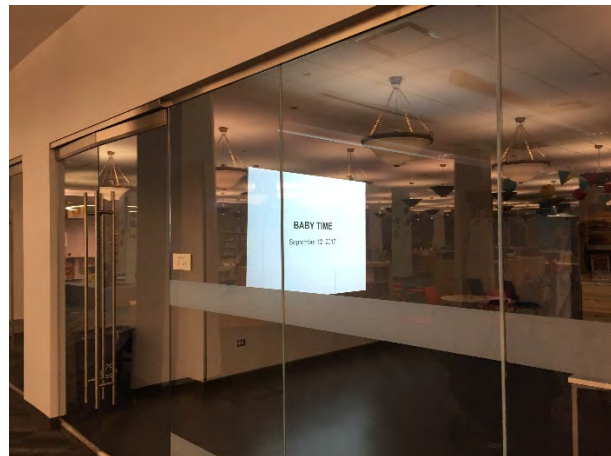
From 9:45am, the “baby time” began. It was held in a small (but enough to have all participants) room in the library. About 20 babies attended this “baby time” with their parents. This “baby time” is intended for babies of under 2 years old and participants of the day were consisted of crawlers, grabbing walkers and toddlers.

In the “Baby Time”, the instructor sung songs with easy choreography like clapping hand, projecting the lyrics on the screen (Pic #4), and read books to babies. Although we were not familiar with baby songs in the United States especially with the lyrics of them, we could enjoy ourselves because the melody lines of these songs were same with Japanese ones (ex: “Itsy Bitsy Spider”, “Clap Your Hands”).

Participating in the “Baby Time”, I personally felt that we adults enjoyed more through communicating with baby rather than babies did because babies did not seem to understand what they were doing. However, I believe that such a close and joyful communication between parents and baby nurtures them mentally and physically. So, if you live with baby in Chicago, I am certain that going to Children’s Library is one good option.



Pic #3 Inside of Children's Library
(Photo by author)



Pic #4 The room for the “Baby Time”
(Photo by author)

Travel times from U-Chicago:

CTA #4 bus, 45 min (from Cottage Grove & 58th Street to Michigan & Congress)

Amir Kazi
Pakistan
Harris School of Public Policy

Southside with You (and 300 Other People)



Courtesy of the DuSable Museum

Hyde Park is an interesting place. It lulls you into a sense of security before a Sunday morning UChicago security update email jolts you out of it, reminding you to keep your cash & phone safe, and walk around with friends—if you have any. Two things are inevitable in this neighborhood: seeing a topless man run on the streets, and seeing yourself run into an unsuspecting spider’s web every now and then. It’s a nice neighborhood. Options for entertainment are limited though. When Facebook with its ever-intrusive data analytics figured out I was in need of recreation, it suggested I head out to the DuSable Museum of African American History to watch a movie, ‘Southside with You’, a biographical romantic drama about Barack and Michelle Obama’s first date. Bored out of my mind, and enticed with the offer of a free movie, I dutifully obliged.

Unwilling to use an Uber – when you’re a grad student, you save everything you can – I walked to the museum along with my friend from India. Apprehensive because of the security emails

sent earlier that day, he carried no more than \$5. I, coming from a city that has its fair share of muggings, felt more at peace. After a 25-minute walk, guided by Google Maps and an ever-growing understanding of Hyde Park's streets, we reached the museum.

I was greeted by an expansive, ever-expanding, view of a lavish green field, with golden lights flickering on and off. It took me a while to realize that those were fireflies that I had chanced upon. As I moved closer from between the trees, my face was met with a spider's web. I did tell you this was an inevitable facet of Hyde Park life.

As I moved towards the screen, I saw a crowd of people sitting together. Families and friends had brought their own chairs and cozy little picnic baskets to enjoy an evening out. Some had scented candles, while others had beer. People from various ethnicities and economic backgrounds from all over Hyde Park were sitting together under an open milky blue sky.

In true American fashion, the event started off with a word from the sponsors. This was followed by a plug for the Chicago Parks District and an announcement that free popcorn was provided. While the movie itself was casual and cursory, the entire experience of watching it left a much deeper impression however.

In Karachi, an event such as this would be unlikely to happen, for a variety of reasons. For one, the Parks department is more interested in filling up their own pockets. Funds for a movie night would more likely end up in a politician's bank account. With no expectation from the public that any such event might ever happen, no initiative is taken from the politicians either. In the words of a famous meme, "Ain't nobody got time for that."

Security is a big concern as well. In large gatherings, police tend to be on high alert, and everyone entering through a gate is checked. There are always threats that something might go awry. Certainly, the provision of free popcorn would be unheard of, causing the masses to flock there. Such an event, if ever held, would only be attended by people from humble backgrounds. The rich would stick to their own homes, where things are of an exponentially higher quality.

Seeing a diverse community sitting in a park watching a movie might seem like a mundane affair in this part of the world. However, it represents hope and promise, and an example that Karachi can follow

Travel time from UChicago:

12 minute walk west on 56th Street

3 minutes by car.

Lorena Kiehnle Barocio
Mexico
University of Chicago Law School

Discovering Polish Culture in Chicago



Photo by author

When I first arrived at Chicago, I imagined myself exploring big buildings, parks, the lake and Chicagoan food and culture in general. It never crossed my mind that within the first weeks I would be exploring Jefferson Park, a Chicago neighborhood with one of the biggest Polish communities in the United States. However, due to the “discover a Chicago’s neighborhood” assignment from the AEPP, there I was, and actually, it was a great discovery.

Everyone around us spoke Polish, there were Polish bakeries, Polish restaurants and Polish everything everywhere. We went to the museum of a Chicagoan-Polish artist, Ed Paschke and found a girl who told us all the history of said museum. Apparently, her aunt grew up with the artist’s son, and when they were older they discovered together that all of Ed Paschke’s art was just sitting there in a warehouse. That is when they decided to create a free museum where people could have access to Ed Paschke’s work and to promote local artists at the same time,

Jay Kim
South Korea
Social Service Administration

A Brief Contact with African-American Civil Rights Movement



Photographed by author

Background

A reason that I chose University of Chicago is that it is located in the city of dreamers. The city was filled with prominent political figures ranging from Barack Obama to Saul Alinsky, and had been home to many activists of different backgrounds such as German socialists, trade unionists, and anarchists who conveyed their enthusiasm for a better society.

Having participated in social movement myself, I have a tendency to sympathize with people who, at first suppressed and battered, stand up for themselves and march on the course of their own emancipation. Through my readings on early United States history by Howard Zinn, I realized that African-American people in the U.S. had been highly discriminated. Imports of

African slaves had been a crucial factor in establishing the U.S. economy. Slaves were beaten, chained, and starved, sometimes to death. Some slaves fled, which resulted in their being caught and executed. Others rebelled, for which they attained similar results. And 150 years later, during Civil War, many African-American people in the North were killed by white people without reason. African-American people were scapegoats of indiscriminate, inflammatory anti-government, anti-draft sentiments.

Then I was introduced, in an AEPP Friday workshop, to the DuSable Museum of African-American History. So I decided to give myself a little education. The museum was located in Hyde Park, near the University of Chicago, which made it easier for me to make up my mind to go on a fieldtrip.

Broader Issues

DuSable Museum of African American History is a museum established by historian Dr. Margaret Burroughs and is an independent institution preserving collections of African-American history. The museum is comprised of many sections including exhibitions of poet Maya Angelou, African-Americans serving at war, the life of Harold Washington - who was elected as a first black mayor of Chicago - creative art figures about African American rights made by school students and artists, and history of African American civil rights movement throughout U.S. history.

Especially, the last section covers relatively modern social justice-related scenes of history in Afro-American thrive for civil rights. Starting from slave trade and early abolitionist Sojourner Truth and historian W.E.B. Dubois, it features signs and customs of daily segregation in the 1800s, Ku Klux Klan, marches in Selma and Illinois proposed by Martin Luther King, Black Panther Party movement, and prominent black figures of politics that stretch from Harold Washington to Carol Braun, Jesse Jackson, Bobby Rush and finally, Barack Obama.

Notably, Black Panther Party, formed to self-defend the black people against incessant violence of white supremacists, is an important factor in rewriting civil rights movement era. Black Panther Party activists, known as Panthers, objected to mainstream non-violent resistance of Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and proclaimed to arm themselves, sometimes displaying a shotgun in public and thus gaining notoriety. However, as is seen in its Ten Point Program, Black Panther Party was essentially a grass-roots democratic movement directed toward improving African American civil rights, such as rights to be educated, to receive medical care, and to procure higher wages. One of the policies suggested and implemented by BPP was to provide children with free breakfasts.

However, as the movement grew, the federal government saw it as a threat and also an

opportunity to defame African American civil rights movement. FBI imposed an operation to exploit existing rivalries between activist factions to derogate wide-known African American civil rights organizations including Black Panther Party. The founder of the party, Huey Newton, was imprisoned for false accusations. Sometimes Panthers were assaulted by gangs, who were tricked by the FBI into believing that the Black Panther Party threatened them. Members of the Black Panther Party were frequently engaged in street gunfire and were killed by police and FBI, as were many leaders of the party such as Fred Hampton.

Having faced many atrocities, Black Panther Party dissolved in 1982. Although depicted by media and public as being radical and violent, the party made distinct contribution to organizing and representing impoverished and discriminated African American people. Black Panther Party was a network of activists who connect themselves with lower strata of the people, who in turn, organized themselves and made change in their daily lives. As history shows, Black Panther Party left a clear footprint in the African American civil rights movement, making it progress once more.



Early slave children. Photographed by author.

References

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Location

E. 57th ST & S. Cottage Grove Ave. 5-minute walk from U of Chicago.

Khwan Kim
South Korea
Social Sciences: Political Science &
Sociology

How to Get Away with Real Threat



A police officer of the University of Chicago in a photo taken by Reuter patrols the campus.
November 30, 2015.

All those concerned including students and faculty received an email called “Security Alert” in the morning on 20th August. It contained the description of a robbery happened to a U of Chicago student on Greenwood Ave. 54th Street which is only one block from my apartment. It was just after four hours to get the second alert email with the surprising fact that another robbery attempt occurred next to the first one four hours ago. Although the attempt turned out to fail, the target of the attempt was a U of Chicago student again. School police announced it increased patrols in this area. However, is it enough? Can increasing patrol keep violent crimes away from our students or faculty?

In 1897, Paul Mimande, a French writer, named a virtual city with rampant corruption and violence as “Criminopolis” in his book which has the same title. As you can assume, Criminopolis is the compound word of crime and metropolis. It, also, reminds us of the city where we just landed in.

Among many speakers in the AEPP orientation was a UCPD officer whom tens of students asked security-related questions. Questions did not end until the officer stop them, saying that he had to go for his own job. AEPP (Academic English Pre-Matriculation Program) is a language course for international students and UCPD is the abbreviation of University of Chicago Police Department. The ceaseless questions demonstrate how insecure the students feel their surrounding in the middle of criminopolis, Chicago.

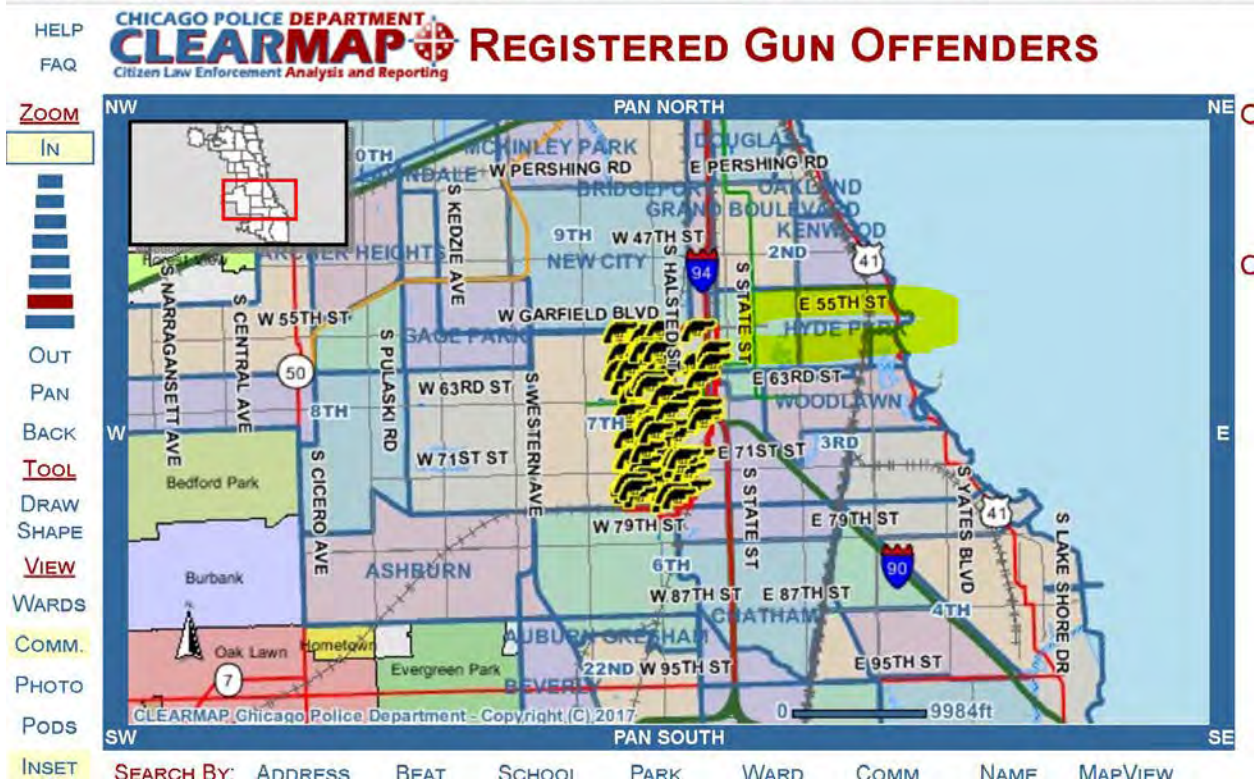
Did those new comers over-react? No. While national crime rates have gone down for two decades, Chicago is still ranked as the deadliest city (The Washington Times, 2017). Last year, Chicago tracked over 3,000 shooting incidents and had 27.9 killings per 100,000 residents, according to Newsweek. As the end of July, this year already saw the 400th homicide victim in Chicago, overwhelming other cities (Newsweek, 2017).

Some people vaguely say that living in Hyde Park would be safer than in other neighborhoods. The rationale behind their thoughts is that it is the school neighborhood zone and then school police keep watching its surroundings. However, such a naïve assurance is exactly what makes us more dangerous. CPD (Chicago Police Department)’s record shows that U of Chicago is literally sieged by violence. The number of gun offenders that Englewood, Kenwood, and Grand Boulevard put together exceeds 120 (CPD Clear Map, 2017). Although they may not have a strong motivation to shoot residents who are mostly UChicago-affiliated in Hyde Park, the guns at their hands can take what those residents have anytime and anywhere. More importantly, the current UCPD’s system cannot be the solution to the threat. Is their patrol enough? Can a blue light emergency phone act as a real security precaution? Is there anybody who can immediately run to the emergency call box, leaving a gun at the face of himself behind his back?

The two consecutive robberies during the daytime on 20th August mentioned above prove that UCPD’s patrol is inadequate. If UCPD had taken an action properly and adequately right after the first robbery on that day, the other student would not have been the target of the offender on the same street. Also, it is common sense that potential offenders who intend to commit robberies appear on the street without an emergency call box unless they are a novice.

Therefore, students need an action and an answer which are more realistic and effective than just saying “Be alert and aware of your surroundings at all times” via email. Otherwise, their school life may always has anxiety that fun is not the only thing that goes to die in this sleepless criminopolis.

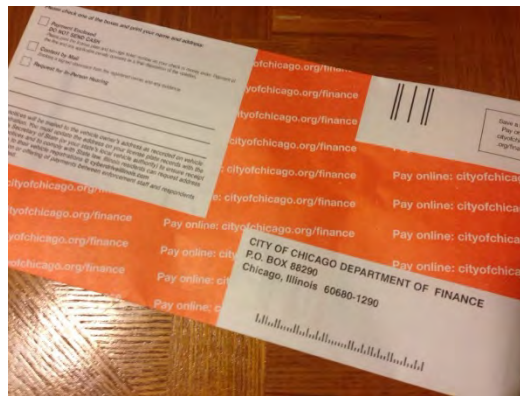
① gis.chicagopolice.org/website/clearMap_rgo/viewer.htm?COMMUNITY=ENGLEWOOD&AGEFROM=18&AGETO=



captured from CPD official website

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Parking in Chicago: Public Property for Whom?



Ticket in orange envelope: by Timothy J. Kim

Background

I live on the north side of Chicago, so I drive every day to come to school. As most Chicagoans would agree, parking in Chicago is not an easy task, and it was not an exception for me. That was a cloudy, crowded morning when summer break was over and most students go back to school so that it was even harder for me to find a place to park, and when I finally found one empty spot, I parked there with such a relief and hurried to the class. Unfortunately, it was a reserved parking area for disabled people, but I missed the sign because I was in hurry. When I came back from the class, I found the terrifying orange colored envelop with parking violation ticket stating that I have been fined \$250 for parking in the reserved area.

At the first moment, I couldn't believe that the penalty for just a single parking violation is so pricy. But given the high parking fee in this city, I soon agreed that the penalty was reasonable to fulfill its goal to prevent parking violation. Then, another question came across my mind. How come parking is so pricy in Chicago?

Broader Issue

In 2008, parking meters in the city were privatized and belong to one private company, CPM (Chicago Parking Meters). From the privatization, the parking system became modernized with new machines and mobile payment, but at the same time the parking rate has increased significantly from \$2.00 to \$6.50 (Dumke & Fusco, 2016). It was a dramatic increase, and one response from the citizens was to cheat the meter system by using other's or fake handicapped placards since any kind of placard exempted parking fees. Under this policy, more and more people cheated the meter system, and CPM charged Chicago government \$21.5 million a year (Dumke & Fusco, 2016) which led the government to amend the law in 2014. According to the amendment, drivers with blue or white placard are no longer exempted from parking fees, and only drivers with yellow or gray placard can park without charge (City of Chicago, n.d.).

This new law meant unless a driver has severe disability that disables parking payment procedure or walking, the person is not qualified for free parking access which has made the reserved parking area even more valuable. Given the expensive parking fee and the rich people living in the city who might just pay the fine to exploit the accessibility of reserved parking area, exceptionally high penalty for parking violation seems to be inevitable to accomplish its goal: let the privilege go to the people in need.

Of course, this expensive fine is not solely due to expensive parking in Chicago. It also represents the city's respect and care toward disabled people which has been consistently shown with the variety of aid for them. If this city did not care about the disabled, reserved parking would have been neglected, or even not existed at all. However, when the parking rate increased significantly after privatization so that even the law had to be amended, parking issues cannot be disregarded. Several ideas can be suggested to deal with this issue. In terms of exceptionally expensive fine, regulation can be enforced by giving penalty points instead of charging a fine so that constant violation would bring suspension or revocation of license. When it comes to lowering parking fee to reasonable rates, it might be impossible for now because of excessively high population in Chicago. However, at least the revenues from paid parking should benefit the public rather than a private company. Streets belong to the public and should be used for the public. Who can be the only owner?

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Beautiful Interruptions into the Expected Narrative of Daily Life



Photo by Shawn

Background

We see strangers almost every day of our lives, from an invited guest of a family member at home to the man on the street or on public transportation as we make our way to our destinations. Many of us plan our lives like we plan routes to our destinations: straightforward, routine, repetitive. Strangers are like the beautiful flowers, shrubs, or evergreen firs along the path that we never quite notice. Sometimes, if we take the time to “smell the flowers”, we begin to see the world in a different light. *(Names below have been changed.)*

Jack

Jack is an elderly black gentleman in his 70s. He was speaking loudly to various strangers on the Red Line train, and everyone seemed compelled to humor him by engaging in small talk before they alighted. I kept to myself and avoided any eye contact with him. Moments later, he barreled right up to me and brandished a photo of himself and a pit bull lounging on a park bench, exclaiming, “Isn’t that the most beautiful pit bull you have ever seen in your life?” We proceeded to have a lively chat about our dogs and music, among other topics.

Mary and Eleanor

On the way home to Hyde Park from Roscoe Village, Mary, who was sitting in front of me, was curious to know what was inside my music instrument case; I showed her my cello and we struck up a conversation about the Hyde Park neighborhood that she lived in since young.

Eleanor boarded the same bus shortly after with her walker, and she immediately identified the cello case. She spoke excitedly and shared snippets about her travel to Italy as a young black woman, about her nephew who plays the cello in Zurich, and her dream of becoming a bass-playing singer without shoes. She apologized for her speech as she had had an aneurysm and had difficulty finding certain words to express herself.

Michal

Michal is a part-time Uber driver who relocated from Eastern Europe more than 20 years ago. He holds a PhD and was previously a faculty member in the one of the Universities in Chicago. He shared a summary of his dissertation and his aim to be the Uber driver with the best reviews. He believes in being a good role model to his 4 year old son: to do one’s best in whatever one does, be it a prestigious teaching job or driving Uber.

Broader Issue

As a child, we were warned by our caregivers that unfamiliar persons can be dangerous. As we grow older, we have to navigate unfamiliar social terrain on our own, and many of us continue to hold on to this narrative of “stranger danger”. The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines a stranger as “a person ... with whom one is *unacquainted*”, not a person who is dangerous. More often than not, danger can happen closer to home too, just like cases of domestic violence.

It is important for us to recognize that not all strangers are dangerous and be able to differentiate them. Although the habit of labeling unacquainted people as strangers has kept us safe and focused on our own lives, it has also confined us within the walls of what we are familiar with so that we obtain a sense of predictability to manage the increasingly chaotic social environment around us. Hence, we tend to view or respond to others with varying degrees of suspicion, usually dependent on first impressions and/or physical similarities.

Singaporeans are a reserved people: given to neither flamboyant gestures or loud exclamations nor approaching complete strangers. Based on a historical event, July 21st is observed as Racial Harmony Day (Sim, 2015) when the various neighborhood resident committees organize different celebrations and the younger students dress up in their ethnic costumes to school instead of wearing school uniforms. This event provides a structured opportunity for Singaporeans to know more about other cultural practices that they are unfamiliar with, hoping to promote interaction and understanding among people and turn strangers into neighbors.

Chicago seems like a whole different city compared to Singapore. Jack, Mary, Eleanor and Michal all made the first move to start a conversation with a stranger. They represent a very different culture and each encounter was a pleasant interruption that added to the day's events.

With Jack, it was how first impressions don't always hold up.

With Mary, it was to retain a child's curiosity to ask, without the fear of looking silly.

With Eleanor, it was about sincere self-disclosure and the courage to live beyond one's medical condition and/or disabilities.

With Michal, it was about honest work and doing one's best no matter what job or qualifications one holds.

In a nutshell, most of us do not interact with strangers due to preconceived notions or habits and could miss out on little snapshots of humanity or compassion. Through the brief connection we make with a stranger, we could possibly be "making beautiful interruptions into the expected narrative of [our] daily [lives] and theirs". (Stark, 2016)

Travel Times

In an Uber Car

On the Red Line Train

On a CTA Bus

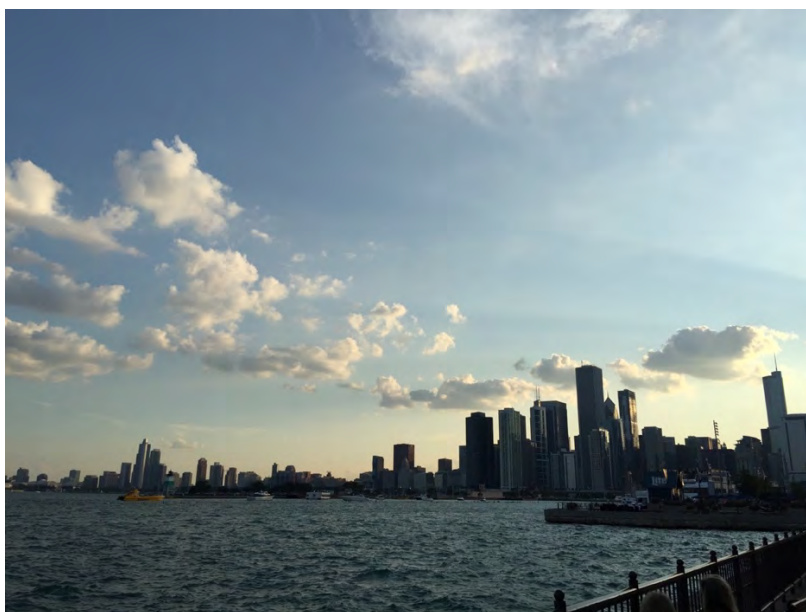
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Xianglong Kong
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Social Science Division

The Second City, The Best Experience



Skyline Chicago, Photo by Xianglong Kong

Background

Prior to my arrival I portrayed Chicago in my mind to be a metropolis comparable to other megacities such as New York, Tokyo, and Shanghai. However, when I finally arrived with exhilaration and excitement, approaching the skyline by the great Lake Michigan, I did not feel as astonished as the first time when I passed through the Lincoln Tunnel. The crossroad at Michigan Avenue and Wacker Drive seems to be dimmed compared to the Times Square. The city view from the Willis Tower may not be as magnificent as the panorama from the 103rd floor at the Empire State Building. As the first city in the United States, New York is likely to possess any feature that Chicago has for a city to be memorized for its affluence and beauty.

Chicago has long been recognized as the second largest city in the United States with New York being its unsurpassable rival, while such position is now challenged by Los Angeles. There are numerous arguments on which city is better, and the probable results of such arguments usually fall into derisions and insults to one another. One of the most famous, but to Chicagoans the most notorious, denigrations to Chicago was launched by Abbott Joseph

Liebling, who was a journalist at The New Yorker and lived in Chicago for several years. He described Chicago as “a non-quite metropolis”, “an autonomous dreariness”, and “a large expanse of juxtaposed dimness.”

As time goes by, I find out that Chicago deserves more credit than Liebling offered as well as more than I initially considered it should receive. I become fascinated by this young, charming, and habitable city. Chicago is not only a city with profound historical sediments, but also a paradigm of modern art and entertainment. Despite being the second city, Chicago successfully unshackles itself from the oppression of brick and mortar and embraces the nature with harmony, therefore, making it a city of best experience that I have ever had.

Broader Issue

The history of Chicago is a demonstration of the unyielding spirit of Chicagoans against the laws of nature. Ever since Louise Joliet discovered the treasured spot for a pivotal port out of a muddy swamp, Chicago was destined to be different. From building one of the world’s most vast sewer systems at that time, to recovering with amazing speed from the Great Fire, to the triumph of the World’s Columbian Exposition, Chicago and its people proved their perseverance and persistence. The phrase, “I will”, was more than a motto of Chicagoans, it was a symbol of Chicago spirit that inspired everyone to realize his or her dream with courage and diligence. Afterwards, Chicago witnessed the accomplishment of the first skyscraper in the world, the commencement of the Atomic Age on a squash court under the west stands of old Stagg Field at the University of Chicago, and even the heyday of Playboy which reshaped the business entertainment industry. The legacies of history and spirit are reflected on this young city and its energetic citizens; it will not be long before we are amazed by what Chicago is capable of achieving as well as how creative Chicagoans can be.

Chicago is an epitome of modern culture and art, applauded by its architecture, statues, paintings, and music. Among all those metropolitan skyscrapers that outlined the skyline, there are masterpieces by renowned designers such as Ludwig Mies van de Rohe and Louis Henry Sullivan. Meanwhile, Chicago is home to the greatest art museum in the world, the Art Institute of Chicago, and is the Mecca for pilgrims of modern as well as classical statues and paintings. Fifty years ago, on August 15th, people in Chicago celebrated the completion of the first statue, The Picasso by Pablo Picasso, at Daley Square. Even now, people gathered around this abstract art work to celebrate its 50th birthday, showing that Chicago is a city of aesthetics and inclusiveness. Chicago in summer is a paradise for music enthusiasts who crave various music festivals, concerts, and symphonies of different genres and styles. There is rarely another city which is on an equal footing with Chicago in cultural and art prosperity.

Unlike many other cities, Chicagoans live in harmony with nature. “Urbs in Horto” is never an overstatement with respect to the beauty of Chicago. Not only does Chicago name its neighborhoods with parks, but it is actually a city dotted with green spaces. Wandering in the parks in downtown areas, one could gaze the wideness and wildness of Lake Michigan, leaving

the noise of the city, only a few steps away, behind. Several feet below the surface of the road, a winding narrow Riverwalk lies peacefully by the Chicago River, providing pedestrians with sanctuary and relaxation at the center of the city. Within Lincoln Park and Chicago Botanic Gardens, people walk at ease while keeping harmonious distance with wild animals and plants, bearing in mind that beauty derives from respecting and appreciating the very nature endowed to human beings. Such harmony between human beings and nature is what makes Chicago an inhabitable city.

To many people who lived or are now living in Chicago, the ranking of their city is likely to be pointless. Their pride of being a part of this great city originates from the historical, spiritual, cultural, and natural aspect, each of which bestows on Chicagoans the best experience ever.



Harmony between Nature and Humanity, Photo by Xianglong Kong

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Takafumi Kubo
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Why is Lake Shore Drive Free?



Photo of the Lake Shore Drive with Navy Pier by
Takafumi Kubo



Photo of the North Lake Shore Drive from
Hancock Building, 2014 by Chicago Public
Library

Background

I usually come to the University of Chicago by car. The distance is about 10 miles from the Loop to Hyde Park but it takes only twenty minutes. This is because there is a highway called Lake Shore Drive (LSD) along Lake Michigan from north to south of Chicago. Whenever I drive on it, Chicago's skyline, Lake Michigan, and Grant Park spread ahead of me. I have been attracted to this convenient highway with majestic sceneries soon after I came to Chicago.

On the first day when I used this expressway, I was surprised that it was free. I have been working for Japan's transportation sector for seven years and I believe that highways should charge users to compensate construction and maintenance costs for them. This idea comes from the beneficiary-pays principle in economics. Based on this principle, most of the highways in Japan are charged. Then, why is LSD free?

Broader Issue

There are mainly two types of highway systems in the U.S., the United States Numbered Highway System and the Interstate Highway System. The former highway system is often named U.S. Route XX (insert number), while the latter highway system is named I-XX (insert number). In most of these highways, maintenance costs are paid for by state and federal gas

taxes. LSD is a part of the U.S. Route 41. In short, we unintentionally pay the costs for LSD when we fill fuel.

Without tollgates, everyone has easy access to LSD. Using LSD, we can go to many famous spots along Lake Michigan, such as Lincoln Park Zoo, Navy Pier, and Grant Park. Hence, this freeway is embedded in Chicagoans' lives. Chicagoans often say LSD using the abbreviation as I have referenced here. There is even a song named Lake Shore Drive by Aliotta Haynes Jeremiah. I think this Chicagoans' affection for LSD causes traffic jams on the parkway, especially in the morning and afternoon rush hour. However, to some extent, I think the toll-free expressway contributes to reducing traffic jams related to tollgates where cars slow down to pay tolls. Moreover, this toll-free highway prevents tollgates from hurting Chicago's beautiful lake shore scenery.

On the other hand, there are some toll sections on highways in Chicago. For example, I-90 and I-94 have several tollgates. In addition, there is also one section of highway which is maintained and operated by a private company. The Skyway on I-90 is the first privatization case of existing toll highways in the U.S. When you pass these toll highways, of course you can pay tolls by cash. However, if you attach a designated device called I-PASS to your car, you can get 50% discount for toll payment. It is also a faster way to pass tollgates since you don't need to stop at them. You can buy I-PASS at Illinois Tollway's online site, highway oases, and even Jewel Osco. Through my driving experience, I feel tolls in the U.S. are much cheaper than those in Japan. It costs about \$30 for driving just 100 miles on Japanese toll highways.

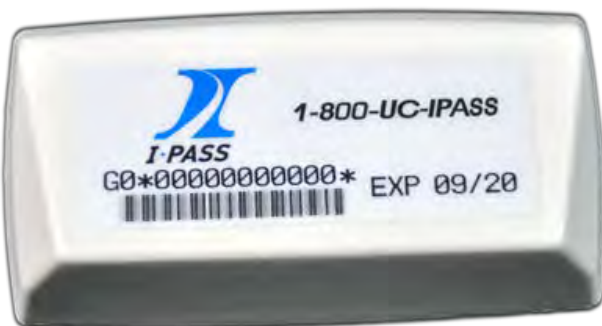


Image of I-PASS by Illinois Tollway



Daily Herald file photo of tollgates with I-PASS

<http://www.dailyherald.com/article/20120921/news/709219935/>

Travel Times

There is an entrance for LSD just next to the Museum of Science and Industry, Chicago. When you go to the north side of Chicago from Hyde Park by car, you can enjoy Chicago's spectacular views with no extra charge for the highway.

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Harris Public Policy

The Secret History of Lincoln Park's Cemetery



A map of the cemetery overlaid on top of Lincoln Park. Author Pamela Bannos

In my childhood, I always found graves, mummies and hidden treasure in the graves interesting. I always liked to watch documentary programs about discovering and digging in an ancient tomb, investigating the mysterious identity of the tomb owner, finding out the treasures buried with the people who have passed on, verifying the curses sealed in the Pharaoh tomb and all the things related to ancient graves.

On the second weekend in August, a beautiful summer day, I visited Lincoln Park, one of the 77 neighborhoods in Chicago. Impressed by its wonderful environment, beautiful beaches, connected community and energetic people, I thought the neighborhood must be as sunny as it looks like. And then, in the hot dog festival, When having a nice chat with an elderly history museum volunteer, I was told that Lincoln Park was a large cemetery back to 1860s and there are still many bodies just beneath where I was standing.

Curiously, I looked up many resources and the findings turned out to be even more interesting and a little bit creepy. "Every time they dig in the park, they find bones" says Chicago artist Pamela Bannos, who is a faculty in Northwestern University leading a project researching

Hidden Truth in previous Chicago cemetery and runs a website that tries to uncover the stories behind Lincoln Park: “how it became Lincoln Park and why so many bodies were left behind in the process.”

The vast area of Lincoln Park was originally a cemetery starting in 1835 and then the cemetery expanded northward several times. During the outbreak of cholera and smallpox from 1849 to 1854, more than 10,000 people were buried here, and then around 4,000 soldiers who died in the U.S. Civil War battlefield during the 1860s were also buried here. Because graves were near the lakeshore, sanitary concerns urged Chicago to move the graves out of the area, and then the government turned it into a Park, which is Lincoln Park. The dead continued to be buried in the City Cemetery until 1866. Once, there were more than 35,000 Chicagoans buried here and now, as estimated, there may still have as many as 12,000 people buried sleeping underneath the park. So there are always many warnings saying that when rich people buy a beach house, they will end up digging bones or skeletons out of their basement.

As one city starts expanding or developing, certain areas of the city may have to change their original use because of urban replanning, such as sanitary concerns, location preference, transportation system or other elements. Cases like Lincoln Park could happen everywhere. It brings up a district named Zhongguan Village in Beijing, the capital and the fastest developing city in China, which has the same story. The village's name, Zhongguan, means eunuchs in Chinese. Eunuchs were private servants for the emperor and his family members in the Palace or in the Forbidden City. Zhongguan Village was formed during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). Initially, the village served as a cemetery just for dead eunuchs, who had no descendants. They needed a cemetery where they could be remembered or feted by younger eunuchs. But as the city expanded and expanded, the tranquil cemetery also gave way to the high rises, the highways and the fancy malls. Now, Zhongguan village is a vital district in Beijing. Rivaling with Silicon Valley in California, USA, it serves as the important base of Chinese most powerful and most promising technical company, attracting hundreds of thousands of talented people. Rather than staying as creepy and lonely as it was before, now Zhongguan village is the most promising and vigorous area in Beijing, completely opposite with what it was like 100 years ago. Those achievements are astonishing, indeed. But those stories belong to the winners. But who would tell the story, for the pity and poor previous owner of this land? No written records, no descendants' worship, at last, they even lost their tombstone, the only evidence shows they lived.

Urbanization, a term refers to the expanding and developing of a city, definitely would along with enormous economic achievements, but it also always comes with loss, pain and disappearance. The boost of Chicago population made the lakeshore cemetery become history while the developing in Beijing also makes Zhongguan village a modernized area, but who would remember the people who lived there? As the history is gradually being covered by neon

lights, high rises and the bubble of economic boost, fortunately, we have scholars such as Pamela Bonnas, who keeps track of the traces of the people who lived in the city, just like we all do.



Zhongguan village 2003, photo linkage as below
linkage as below

(<http://list.beareyes.com.cn/cgi-bin/newlist.cgi?20110105270>)
(<https://www.vcg.com/creative/809279162>)



Zhongguan village 2015, photo

Take CTA orange line and exchange to CTA bus line 151 in Millennium Station. Take about 1 hour to get to Lincoln Park. Or take Uber to go there, it takes about 30 minutes.

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Number Love



Photo by Jiahui Li

Americans show strong preference on numbers for they often trust and care more about numbers than humans. Numbers are neutral and the comparison between two numbers is completely explicit. Therefore, people build up their faith in numbers instead of people. I believe “Number Love” indicates Americans’ rational thinking style and furthermore, the distrust and boundary between humans.

In academic field, numbers are the most compelling evidence. The reason a rational person believes in a report is usually not that the author is trustworthy in terms of his personal integrity, but that the data shown are transparent and unquestionable. UChicago has a good reputation for its tradition of valuing the rigorous methodology of quantitative research. The most impressive thing this school has shown me is the high employment rate and salary level of graduated students. Through this data, UChicago proved itself to be a successful educational institution.

However, even though data did not lie, they could be misleading and partial. From the perspective of qualitative reasoning, the data drawn by UChicago avoided many important factors that might influence its conclusion. Employment rates and salary levels only stands for one dimension of good education. In fact, not only should a well educated man gain a job and perform well in work arena, he is supposed to responsible, sympathetic and so on. If schools stop considering what is good education and stop guiding their students to build up good characters, the schools only teach skills for work are no difference from machine manufacturers.

In addition to academic research, numbers also construct unique personal lifestyle of Americans, especially when they are applied in money. For example, splitting the bill is a fixed rule in this country, even in its dating culture. People would tell the waiter directly that they would like to separate the bill and pay with different cards. This plot seems quite weird to Chinese, especially for the elder generation not being influenced by western values. In some cases, people would scramble to be the one paying the bill because it is traditional way to show that you treasure the friends who share the meal. Going Dutch in Chinese context indicates people are not in a close relationship.

Americans get used to make things clear and explicit with numbers, but it does not mean that they care less about relationships or tend to be stingy. Actually, they are just more rational in dealing with relationship and attend to maintain an independent self-image. By splitting bills, people are refusing to owe others anything and hence, draw a boundary between each other. This boundary further shows that the people of each side are in an equal position. Equality is worshipped in almost every American style relationship and explicit numbers help build up the sense of equality.

Numbers, in both case of professional and personal life, indicates a rational way of thinking, which reveals the social fact that the U.S. consists of people with diversity and there exists distance and distrust between them. This is a huge society of strangers with different homelands, cultures and languages. They are not familiar with each other and therefore, there is no confidence that was used to be the foundation for relationships. In the new era, people trust themselves only and believe in their own eyes. So, it is understandable that Americans have an affection for number in academic sphere since “the number didn’t lie”. Moreover, what replaces confidence and becomes the basis of relationships and communities is contract that protects every person’s equality and rights. We realize they draw on numbers so clearly in personal life for the purpose of maintaining contracts and safeguarding themselves.

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Public Policy

Antique Stores in Chicago



Photo by author

When I was doing my neighborhood project in Andersonville, we went to a Antique store. It was full of beautiful, delicate stuff. Sofas and chairs with patterned cushions on them were placed beside the entrance, which attracted our eyes. We sat on those sofas and found them really comfortable. Going deep into the store, we saw glass cases with gold-plates in them. There are also sculptures, lamps, pictures and even matchboxes in this room. The prices of the furniture are a little higher than normal ones, but not unaffordable.

I became very curious because it is rare to seem this kind of stores in my country. So I searched on the Internet. People's passion for antiques surprised me. Nowadays, there are more than 10 boutique stores in Chicago. They all have their own features. Architectural Artifacts is one of the oldest and most famous one. It was accidentally founded and incorporated in 1987 by archaeologist and rabid collector Stuart Grannen. The store now encompasses 80,000 SF of extraordinary antique objects at competitive prices. It sells all kinds of antiques, most of which are really expensive. For example, a monumental French mirror is 9750 dollars, which is unaffordable for most people.

Artifact Events also offers spaces for special events, weddings, fundraisers, film and photo shoots. Its indoor area has high ceilings, beautiful natural light, exposed beams and hardwood floors while outdoor area is a secluded courtyard, which is perfect to hold cocktail party. Holding events in such a vintage and delicate place will become a lifetime memory. Besides stores, there are also antiques sales on street market, such as Randolph Street Market. This is a monthly, European-style vintage market with a large variety of goods. There's something for everyone. They separate furniture, vintage clothing, jewelry, collectibles and more in booths into categories within the market: Chicago Antique Market, Indie Designer Market and Modern Vintage. People can just drop by that area and see if there is anything that interests them.

Antique store has become a prosperous industry in America. I was confused the first time I saw an antique store. Because under normal conditions, people buy antiques to gain profit after the values increase. But the antiques those stores sell are just for normal people to decorate their home. Customers do not buy antiques for their potential value, but for the history they carry and the emotions they convey.

We can see how life style changes and how technique develops in America from antiques. There are iron from 100 years ago, wooden washing machine invented in 19th century and paintings showing gentries' life. Antiques remind us of who we are and where we have been. They are witnesses of history and treasures of the whole country. No matter what their values are according to the tags, they are all priceless.

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<https://www.timeout.com/chicago/shopping/randolph-street-market>



Source: <https://www.timeout.com/chicago/shopping/randolph-street-market>

Xilin Li
China
Booth School of Business

Embrace Chicago from the Top

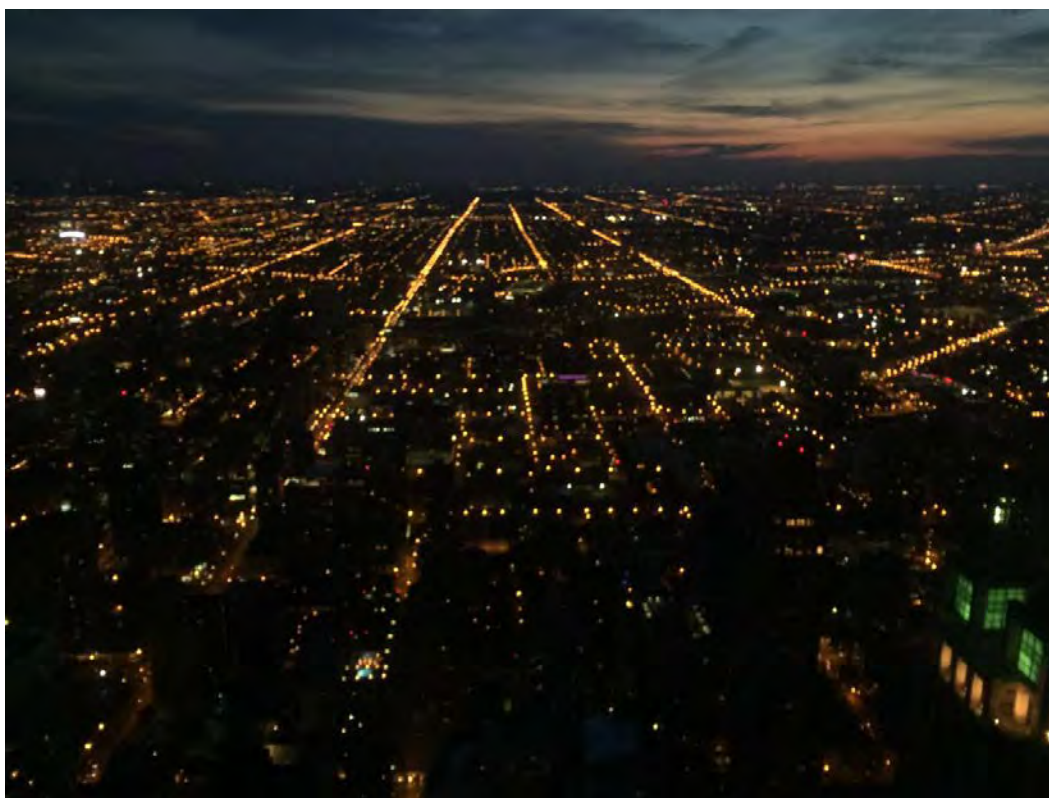


Photo by author

Undoubtedly there are countless ways to experience this giant city, and here, for those who relish in skyline I salute you one way to experience the city – breathing Chicago from the top of John Hancock Center. Located on North Michigan Avenue and with nearly 50-year history, John Hancock Center is definitely a landmark in Chicago city. The dark and crossed steel frames on the outside of the walls make Hancock Building extremely masculine. So, let us begin the journey. A small tip here, it is not so easy to find the entrance to the observatory. Tourists should go down to the first basement, rather than the ground floor, to take a super-fast elevator, which directly send you to the top in just seconds. There are three amazing things about the 360° observation deck on the top of John Hancock Center.

First, if you are an adult, buy the drink package ticket. The drinking package provides you with a cup of tasty and unique cocktail with only \$4 more than the regular ticket (the official website of 360 Chicago, 2017). A little bit alcohol is really compatible for the top, both of which will give you the feeling of dazzling in a positive way. It is worthy also because a cup of cocktail can be sold at a much higher price in other similarly busy places as John Hancock Center.

Second, if you think yourself as a courageous person, take the TILT, which is advertised as the most thrilling experience in Chicago (the official website of 360 Chicago, 2017). Specifically, in the TILT activity, you will lean your body on a board of automatic glass, which is a part of the building's wall. Through the glass, you can take both the scenery in front of you and under you into eyes. Once the board of glass is activated, it will incline to the outside more and more, and therefore makes you feel that you are dropping. I was so scared that I closed my eyes for the most time. Shame on my timidity, which made me miss such breath-taking scenery during the TILT.

Third, go to the observatory half an hour before sunset and stay there until the sky totally gets dark. I think it is the perfect time because you can both see Chicago in day and night. Before the sunset, you can see the blue sky along with the Michigan Lake clearly, which is so lively and energetic. During the sunset, you can see sun shine spreading on the whole city. Then, the man-made light is illuminated little by little, replacing shading sun shine. After the sunset, you can see the other charming face of Chicago, filled with colorful light, wine and music.

Although I recommend John Hancock Center as the place to embrace Chicago from the top, but actually, it is not the tallest building in Chicago and ranks only third place. Here comes the question, which two skyscrapers run ahead of John Hancock Center? They are Trump Tower as second and Willis Tower as first (List of tallest buildings in Chicago, 2017). You may ask which building can give you the most excellent experience of embracing Chicago from the top. The following is the best answer I can say for now.

I went to Trump Tower and had an afternoon tea at The Terrace, a roof bar located in the middle level of Trump Tower. The reason why I do not recommend Trump Tower as the first choice because the view there is not so open as the one from John Hancock city and the commercial atmosphere is strong there, in my point of view.

I have not been to Willis Tower yet, and I am looking forward to experiencing its Skydeck, a glass floor from which everything under your feet directly go into your eyes. I believe it also will become a really memorable experience of embracing Chicago from the top. Plus, Skydeck is a perfect place in which you can use your creativity to take different kinds of pictures because I saw some wonderful pictures, which come from my friends who have been there.



Photo from <http://www.willistower.com/media>



Photo from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trump_International_Hotel_and_Tower_\(Chicago\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trump_International_Hotel_and_Tower_(Chicago))



Photo from <https://www.trumphotels.com/chicago/dining/rooftop-restaurants-chicago>



Photo from <http://theskydeck.com/>

I highly recommend you to take the Uber Pool there if you have another person with you. Uber Pool can take you there in about 20-30 minutes with a similar cost of taking public transportation per person.

Reference:

360 Chicago, 2017. <http://www.360chicago.com/>

List of tallest buildings in Chicago, 2017.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_tallest_buildings_in_Chicago

Andi Liao
China
Social Science Division

Zhou Brothers: Forgotten Chinese Artists Discovered by Chicago



<https://www.artsy.net/zhou-b-art-center/article/zhou-b-art-center-the-legend-of-the-zhou-brothers>

As I have learnt Chinese calligraphy for more than a decade, I pay particular attention to traditional arts inherited by Chinese literati arts, including calligraphy, painting, poem and seal impression. It's completely shocking for me to figure out that there are prominent but unfamiliar Chinese artists working in Bridgeport area when I was doing research for the neighborhood project. And they are Zhou Brothers.

Zhou Brothers, DaHuang Zhou and ShanZuo Zhou, are world-recognized contemporary Chinese-American artists. Growing up as Zhuang nationality members in Guangxi Province, Zhou Brothers are strongly influenced by fables and legends of minorities, as well as fresco of ancestors. Zhou Brothers' painting career in China was too rocky, but they gradually gained recognitions in the United States. Recognitions were so wide that Zhou Brothers were invited

for improvisation on opening ceremonies of important international conferences, and national gifts for several Chinese Presidents.

And Zhou Brothers do more than painting. Zhou B Art Center, which located in the 35th street in the Bridgeport community, is one of the top art venues around the world. Exhibitions, shows and weddings take place all the time there. There are also a sculpture garden, public creating projects, an art foundation and countless times of assistance towards impoverished artists under the name of Zhou Brother.

It's interesting that although Zhou Brothers were raised by Chinese culture and their works contain plenty of Chinese culture elements and philosophy ideas, the first place to embrace them was Chicago. So the question is, why did the art circle in China fail to discover such talents, and why did Chicago manage to do so?

The reason is subtle. Different from most population in China, Zhou Brothers belong to a minority nationality, Zhuang nationality, which has its distinct subculture. Fables and legends, sing and dance, characters and value, are entirely different from the mainstream culture, Han nationality.

It can be clearly seen in their work and their life. There are always symbols of two people, originated from Zhuang fables, and utilizations of primitive fresco in paintings of Zhou Brother, and this is something that artists from Han nationality won't do. Additionally, Zhou Brother inherited the rakish personality from their father, which is not the same with humbleness advocated by the mainstream culture. Perhaps this is why Zhou Brothers' work had been rejected by the art circle of mainland China at that time.

However, Chicago cares nothing about that. As an immigrant city, it welcomes all kinds of art. With mysterious flavors of the East, Zhou Brother's paintings are even more popular. Another reason might be that westerners are better at comprehending abstractions, while easterners are better at understanding concretization. Some people argue that the success is the realization of American dream, but Zhou Brother believes that they only had Chinese dream, somehow, it is realized in the United States beyond their imagination.

Thanks to Chicago, the forgotten Chinese artists are glowing brightly on the other side of the ocean.



<https://www.artsy.net/zhou-b-art-center/article/zhou-b-art-center-the-legend-of-the-zhou-brothers>

Those who are interested in Zhou Brothers can take Bus No.4 then Bus No.35 from Uchicago to Zhou B Art Center, and it's only a 45-minute journey. Taking a Uber or taxi will shorten the travel time to 15 minutes.

Bingjin Liu
China
Mathematics

Under the Mask of Eckhart Hall: A Brief History of Math Department



Photo by Bingjin Liu

When I was admitted by the math department of the University of Chicago, I was totally thrilled. The math department, which currently is one of the strongest math department in the USA, has a long history from 1892. I am proud that I could be part of this big family and was curious about the up-and-downs of the department.

In October 1892, the mathematics department of the University of Chicago was established. The core members consisted of Eliakim Hastings Moore, Oskar Bolza and Heinrich Maschke. An enthusiast, a meticulous analyst and a deliberate geometer supplemented each other remarkably. They created the first golden age of the department from 1892 to 1908. R.C Archibald commented that during this period, “the University of Chicago was unsurpassed in America as an institution for the study of higher mathematics”. The department held an international congress in association with the World Fair in 1893, and the congress inspired the organization of the International Congress of Mathematicians, which is currently the largest

meeting for mathematicians. Also many later influential mathematicians graduated from the University of Chicago.

Then Maschke's death and Bolza's leave ended this committee. In the next 30 years, by the virtue of sheer numbers, the University of Chicago was a dominant source of the mathematics community. But students' average level of mathematical profundity was lower than that in the earlier time. Just as Saunders Mac Lane pointed out: "Chicago had become in part a PhD mill of mathematicians." During this time, the math department of Chicago did train a few brilliant researchers plus produced many routine members in the math community. One reason of the downs may have been the tradition of appointing Chicago PhD students to the faculty here. In this way, the research focus of the department was narrowed down to the calculations of variation, projective geometry and number theory. And these areas encountered bottlenecks in their development and were not so active in the mainstream. On the other hand, due to World War II, the attempts to appoint new faculty did not gain much success.

At the end of the war, Marshall Stone brought the Renaissance to the math department. Stone made great efforts to appoint new faculty members to revive the declining department. The list of new appointment is remarkable: Andre Weil (a number theorist), Antoni Zygmund (an analysts), Shiing-Shen Chern (a geometer) and so on. As Stone pointed out, the faculty list consisted of "great mathematicians, and great teachers, and leading specialist in almost every brunch of pure mathematics." This group of patient and open-minded researchers spent a lot of time discussing basic principles of math and detailed questions, undergraduate curriculum and graduate course requirement. The distinction of faculty members and a rich offering of seminars attracted lot of young promising mathematicians to Chicago. Besides, the department also strengthened the connections between the physics department.

In retrospect of the history of math department, I can deeply feel the important role of diversity and communication. In the two golden ages of the departments, the research interests of the faculty members were broad and diverse. When you are doing research, it is hard to predict precisely the potential of the subject. So diversity means more opportunities and potential. Now the math department has a large group of Langlands programs. Surely when recruiting new graduate students every year, the committee should balance between keeping the strength and improving the diversity. Also as far as I know, the math department also has the strongest complexity group but only 2 students are going to study it. It is a waste of resources, and maybe it is another problem the committee should consider.

Another aspect I am thinking about the history is how big of a role money plays in building a prospective department. Both the golden ages came with a solid support of funding—one was Rockefeller's huge investment, and another one was government funding brought by the Manhattan project. I sincerely believe that scientists' devotion is not driven by money, but a good salary surely will remove concerns and decrease the living pressure. This is a huge

problem in China. Many researchers are paid poorly and not respected. The government does provide generous rewards to these outstanding scientists, but most researchers just spend their whole life doing some routine work, and they are not treated well. So many of these researchers would change to other jobs, and this phenomenon would have bad consequences. Because every breakthrough in science history consisted of not only some genius's ideas but also many routine work done by ordinary people. This is a problem in China that should be considered.

Jiazhi Liu
China
Harris School of Public Policy

How Does Deep Dish Pizza Become One of Chicago Icons?



Photo by author

Background

When we mention Chicago, the first three things came to our mind is the weather, the Bean and deep dish pizza. The moment I stepped foot in Chicago, I figured out the “weather” because it was so windy. On my way from the airport to home, I passed by the Bean and the driver told me this is the symbol of Chicago. Therefore, the only thing I haven’t experienced is the famous Chicago-style pizza: deep dish pizza. This weekend, I had deep dish pizza in person and tried to get to know how deep dish pizza has become one of the Chicago icons.

Based on my own perspective and interviews with local people, the first reason is because Chicago-style pizza is delicious and warm. When winter comes, imagine slicing a deep dish pizza. Your knife sinks through layers of tomato sauce, dense and juicy mozzarella cheese, pepperoni and sausage and finally a resistant cracker-like crust. The oozing cheese, crushed tomato and crumbled meat are perfect for warming your insides on a Chicago winter day. However, what are the rest of the reasons?

Broader Issue

To find the answer, I started from the history and found out the deep cultural meaning buried in the deep-dish. Throughout the late 1800s and early 1900s, Neapolitan immigrants (Italian immigrants from Naples) arrived in the US, like many Europeans of that time, in search of factory jobs. Before long, Chicago was home to a thriving community of first and second-generation descendants, hungry for the thin pizzas that represented their culture and culinary roots. Eventually two entrepreneurs, Ike Sewell and Riccardo, decided to create something different: an Italian-American version of pizza. In 1943, the business partners opened Pizzeria Uno in the Chicago's Near North Side and this is where deep dish was born.

Though the development of the recipe still remains a mystery, it reflects how immigrant culture has influenced Chicago's culinary style and promoted positive changes. Chicago is known as one of the most segregated yet diverse cities nationwide. Various ethnic neighborhoods coexist, including Chinatown on the South Side, Greektown on Halsted Street and Little Italy on Taylor Street. Streets are highlighted with numerous eateries from different nations. For example, Middle Eastern fare can be found along Lawrence Avenue, while Polish cuisine is well represented along Milwaukee Avenue on the Northwest side and Archer Avenue on the Southwest side. Argyle Street district in Uptown is the center of Vietnamese restaurants.

Generally, deep dish being famous reflects its awesome taste and the multicultural integration in Chicago. It not only becomes the symbol of Chicago, but also demonstrates regional diversities. Different cultural collision can always bring new fresh blood into a city, and the deep dish encourages more Chicago-born innovations, contributing to Chicago's inclusive culture.

Travel Details

Giordano's Location: 730 N Rush St., Chicago, IL 60611

Time: CTA 40min/ Car 20min

Rui Liu
China
Physical Science Division:
Ph.D. in Computer Science

To Rent or Not to Rent: That is the Question



Photo by Rui Liu

Background

When I accepted the offer of UChicago, an important issue I had to face is how to live in Chicago. The most common way is renting. However, I have two problems, 1) as an international student, how to rent a place before arriving Chicago; 2) the rent is expensive in Chicago, so how to get a wonderful

place within a fair budget. I believe that most students from other cities or countries have the similar problem.

One solution is that looking through some available residences online such as Zillow, then directly contacting the owners for the following processes, like negotiating the price. It works for sure, but I preferred an alternative way--finding (not hiring) a real estate agent who has more experience to help you.

There are several types of residences in Chicago: house, apartment, condo, studio, and townhome. In terms of my requirements, the agent collected all the potential apartments for me to select and recorded video clips for the unit which I satisfied with due to my absence. This is an advantage for the international students. What's better, the agent will charge the owner instead of me since he/she works for the owner. This is quite different from my hometown (both tenants and owners will pay). Now I have taken swimmingly to live in Chicago, and this is mostly credited to the stunning apartment I have rented.

Broader Issues

A foreigner commonly has to rent an apartment in the U.S. What is surprising is that many local residents in Chicago, as distinct from the citizens in my home country who are always keen for owning residential properties even via mortgage, choose to rent as well instead of buying their own home. There are several reasons behind it: (1) local residents will be burdened with maintenance fees and the property tax if they buy a house or apartment; (2) although housing loan can be exploited, down payment is still too heavy to afford; (3) for the youth, their living places are subject to their working location, so renting is a more convenient and flexible way.

Although there are sound reasons for renting, is it a right choice consistently in Chicago? It is definitely a personal decision which is subject to many factors, but my answer is no, i.e., renting is not always a perfect way. According to recent housing market trend, the housing price and the regarding rent are increasing quickly. On one hand, rent becomes a cumbersome financial burden as well, and the money you pay for rent is gone as time goes on. On the other hand, buying properties is an investment and is not as difficult as we thought. For example, a typical 750 square foot unit may sell for \$300,000 or rent for \$2000/month. The down payment in U.S. is usually 20% of the property value, i.e., \$60,000. That is higher than rent of three years (\$72,000). The normal mortgage of 30 years is less than the rent (the mortgage rate is less than 4% in 2017). Furthermore, selling a property while in mortgage is a fairly common thing and people can get the money back accordingly. Therefore, in this case, if a person is expected to live in Chicago more than three years and can afford the down payment, he/she should buy a property and sell it when moving out of Chicago. If so, the total cost of residing in Chicago is the difference between the buying and selling price of the property he/she has, and it will be remarkably less than the rent in total.

Tongyi Liu
China
Harris School of Public Policy: MPF

Religion in Hyde Park



Photo by Architecture UChicago

Background

As a world-class religion center with global influence, Chicago shows great religious diversity. According to Bert Sperling, an online database, 59.8% of the residents in Chicago are religious, 38.67% are Catholic, 0.32% are LDS, 5.06% are another Christian faith, 1.11% are Jewish, 0.62% are an eastern faith and 3.89% are with Islam. Christian are dominant in religion society of Chicago, but other religion still exists and flourishes. As a neighborhood in Chicago, Hyde Park has its own religion communities with diversity, represented by different types of religion houses of worship in this area.

From 47th street to Woodlawn, there is a three-mile route that will take you to some of the most historically important houses of worship in Hyde park. Beginning from 47th Street, there stands Masjid al-Fatir (1200 E. 47th), the significant mosque in the Southside. Heading south, there are Congregation KAM Isaiah Israel (1100 E. Hyde Park), a long-lived Jewish community,

St. Thomas the Apostle Church (5472 S. Kimbark), a Roman Catholic parish and Hyde Park Union Church (5600 S. Woodlawn), a non-denominational community. In the University of Chicago, Rockefeller Memorial Chapel (5850 S. Woodlawn) is one of Chicago's largest Protestant houses of worship.

Religion is essential to many people's daily lives in Hyde park and it has a significant effect on the international students, too. I am a non-religious international student from China and I am attracted by religious diversity in Hyde Park since I have always been a big fan of religion and didn't get chances in China to know those who put their faith in different religions. Due to various factors, I sought help from the Chinese Christian Fellowship for my personal issues, which is something that I would not have imagined before I came here. Then it occurred to me that what I've done is fascinating and a little bit unusual for me, which is worth exploring.

Broader Issue

When the international students come to the US for the first time, they often seek help from religious group, especially Christian group. So do international students in the University of Chicago. I am interested in understanding why international students in UChicago prefer to going to religious group for help even if they are not religious. I believe that religious and non-religious international students tend to seek help from religious groups is because religious groups are more friendly and more engaged with them. There are few programs in school focusing on the needs of International students. Moreover, some international students are not used to seeking help from official organizations in school, driving them to religious groups.

For many international students, religious groups are very friendly and offer so much help, making them attractive. Take Chinese Christian Fellowship in Chicago (CCF) as the example, it's a routine for CCF in UChicago to work with Chinese Students and Scholars Association (CSSA) to pick up new students from the airport and develop friendships with them through this program. With a mission aiming to help Chinese students and scholars to get used to their surroundings, improve English skills and introduce Christian to them, CCF has many free and UChicago-oriented events to support Chinese students. Moreover, CCF is not radical, which looks safe to new students.

For UChicago, there are few specific programs for international students, even though it has many programs for all students like Student Health and Counseling Service. For example, CSSA has a survival guide for all new Chinese comers, but there are few special programs/events to help them get involved in UChicago and new surroundings at the beginning of the school year. CSSA and CCF are the only two big organizations focusing on all Chinese students in UChicago and CSSA is not as helpful as CCF in this case. Thus in UChicago, CCF become the most popular

choice for Chinese students to ask for help.

Also, it's possible that religious groups attracts religious students that share the same faith with them. For those who are not religious, like most Chinese students, it's possible that they are not used to asking the university for help because it's not what they were used to in their own countries. In China, universities are not so helpful when it comes to solving daily problems and other problems so most Chinese students won't go to official institutes in universities for help. Though universities in the US support students in their academic and daily life, it's highly possible for students like Chinese students to keep their habits of not seeking help from universities. Asking help from unofficial groups especially the religious group, where there are a large number of students and scholars with similar cultural background, would be a choice that make them more comfortable.

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from <http://www.uchicago-ccf.org/about>

Yuanhao Liu
China
Social Science Division

Find a Big Family from Peloponnese



Picture1: Greece wedding held in St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church.

Source:

<https://www.bing.com/search?q=st+demetrios+greek+orthodox+church+chicago&q=HS&pq=st+demetrios+greek&sc=8-18&cvid=99BE3E8B0CA043879106EC7DF39A64A0&FORM=QBRE&sp=1>

It is easy to find a China town in Chicago, but how to find a Greek community? The answer is to go to a Greek Orthodox Church. St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church located in North Chicago, famous for its beauty and grander among Chicago Greek community. This church not only has a chapel, but also has an affiliated school and a dining hall. It welcomes all to visit and often hold Greek festival or other activities on weekends, providing homemade Greek foods and cultural activities.

St. Demetrios Church takes special status in many Greek-Chicagoan's lives. A Greek-American friend told me, she was born in Chicago and baptized in this church, learning Greek language and culture in this church, having weekly family reunion in this church and maybe will hold wedding in this church. People go to this church has a strong warmth and friendliness to each other, like a big family.

Paintings and decorations in St. Demetrios Church have their own historical stories. When I went there, a 90 years old grandpa proactively acted as a volunteer to show me around. The wooden shelf with saint pictures settled in chapel's frontage shown in picture 1 was transported from Greece during World War Two, when fire of war burning in Peloponnese. The grandpa said he was here when trucks arrived and he took part in unloading works. Paintings in this church hung on each walls in the chapel are all finished in 1944. Visitors can still figure out signatures and dates in bottom right corners of pictures.

St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church in Chicago has so many special things that are hard to explain. Even a stranger with no Greek background like me could feel something warm like a family. People here will say, "Now you are a Greek", if you often come here and chat with them.

How to maintain diversity while enhance cross-culture and cross-race mutual understanding? This issue is crucial for Chicago. St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church is a vivid case. Every culture has its special differences. People live in surrounding neighborhoods with Greek background come here actively and inherit their culture and memories. Although the frequency of activities held in this church is quite high, the social structure of connection is loose. Greek-American could choose to come or go whenever they want, on pressure and no forcible obligation. People come here and learn Greek culture because they choose to come, on their own decisions.

At the same time, St Demetrios Church welcomes all kinds of people from different cultures and races, taking them as old friends and narrating its own stories if visitors are willing to hear. Religious rules are only conducted to restrict followers' own behavior not to others. Visitors could treat this building as a common public area like a public park or museum without religious or identity burden.



Picture 2: Greece fest on August 18, 2017.

Source: Photo by an author's friend.

2727 W Winona St, Chicago, IL 60625
Around 1 hour by train and bus

Hoiying Mak
Hong Kong
MA in Social Sciences

Tips for Tipping in Chicago



Source: <https://www.theodysseyonline.com/tipping-in-the-us>

Background

Tipping may be a second nature to the Americans. But to me, gratuities is an art requiring careful observation and numerous practices to learn to do properly.

When I first arrived Chicago, I took it for granted that a 10% tip is acceptable when dine out. In retrospect, I might have unwittingly likened tips to Hong Kong's 10% service charge, a fixed-rate fee automatically added to the bill at restaurants. It was not until when I had lunch at Old Town's rib place Two Anchors Restaurant with classmates Shawn and Vaibhav that I was told a 10% tip means very bad service. The normal tip rate in the US should be 15% to 18%.

Thereafter I've heard of an unspoken formula for the tipping rate: A double of the sales tax rate at that individual state or city. Since Chicago's tax rate is 10.25%, the restaurant servers here could be expecting a 20% gratuities from their customers.

Whether to include the gratuities on the credit card bill, or to pay in cash, was another enigma to me. A waiter at downtown Chicago's Remington's explicitly expressed that he prefers the tips to come in cash although we paid the meal with bank card. It was later a friendly waitress at

Noodles in Hyde Park who explained to me that cash is preferable because it takes time for the employee to claim the credited tips from the restaurant. On top of that, it gives waiters an option to report a smaller taxable income if the gratuities are not documented on bank card bills.

Broader Issues

At first glance, gratuities should be a voluntary gift of money of which the amount depends entirely on the customer's goodwill. In the US, however, tipping has become an obligation and an indivisible complement to the bill for the service received.

Some critics consider the US tipping custom as a distortion of the true meaning of good service, as they believe the motivation for the servers to provide quality service should come from their sense of responsibility, rather than the prospect of receiving extra money. In fact, in countries such as Japan, polite and respectful service is expected at all times. Tipping could cause awkwardness, or even be misconstrued as an offense.

This stark difference may be originated from how restaurant servers get paid. In the US, customers' gratuities make up almost 100% of the income of the waiters; while in Japan and my hometown Hong Kong, waiters are normally paid by the restaurant owners with a fixed salary.

For both practices there are pros and cons. Notwithstanding, a floating gratuities income serves as an initiative for servers to work at their best. However, it may also aggravate inequality among servers from different ethnic groups. A 2014 study found that both white and black restaurant customers discriminate against black waiters by tipping them less than their white co-workers.

Therefore, in late 2015, the American restaurateur Danny Meyers announced his decision to eliminate tipping across his restaurant empire as he thought it was "a hoax that fosters inequality". Would his pioneering practice trigger a revolutionary change in the country's ingrained tipping custom? We'll have to wait and see.

References

Jordan Rane, U.S. tipping guide: Expert advice on when, where, how much -- and why, *CNN Travel*, 6th March 2015.

A photograph of a CTA bus at a bus stop. The bus is white with a black stripe and has "CTA" and "LSES" visible on its side. The destination sign above the front door reads "15 GARFIELD TO". The bus stop is a modern structure with glass panels and black poles. Several people, including a woman with a child and another woman, are waiting at the stop. The background shows a park-like area with trees and a sign that says "BOULEVARD 5".

Background

My arrival in Chicago for my graduate studies started a new chapter in my life. This signaled the most drastic change that I ever underwent. For the first time, I left home. For the first time, I travelled abroad. For the first time, I was completely alone in an unknown territory. But I could not be distracted with these thoughts. I had to rush to Hyde Park to drop my luggage at my apartment and then catch a flight to another city from the Midway International Airport.

The taxi ride from O'Hare to Hyde Park cost me \$70. It seemed that in order to afford another taxi ride, I might have to sell part of my luggage. Hence, I decided to use public transportation. Google Maps showed the 55-Garfield bus arriving at 55th Street & Kenwood. Without thinking much, I kept following the location of the stop and soon I found myself aboard the 55 bus. That was the first time that I really caught my breath, looked around and saw Chicago.

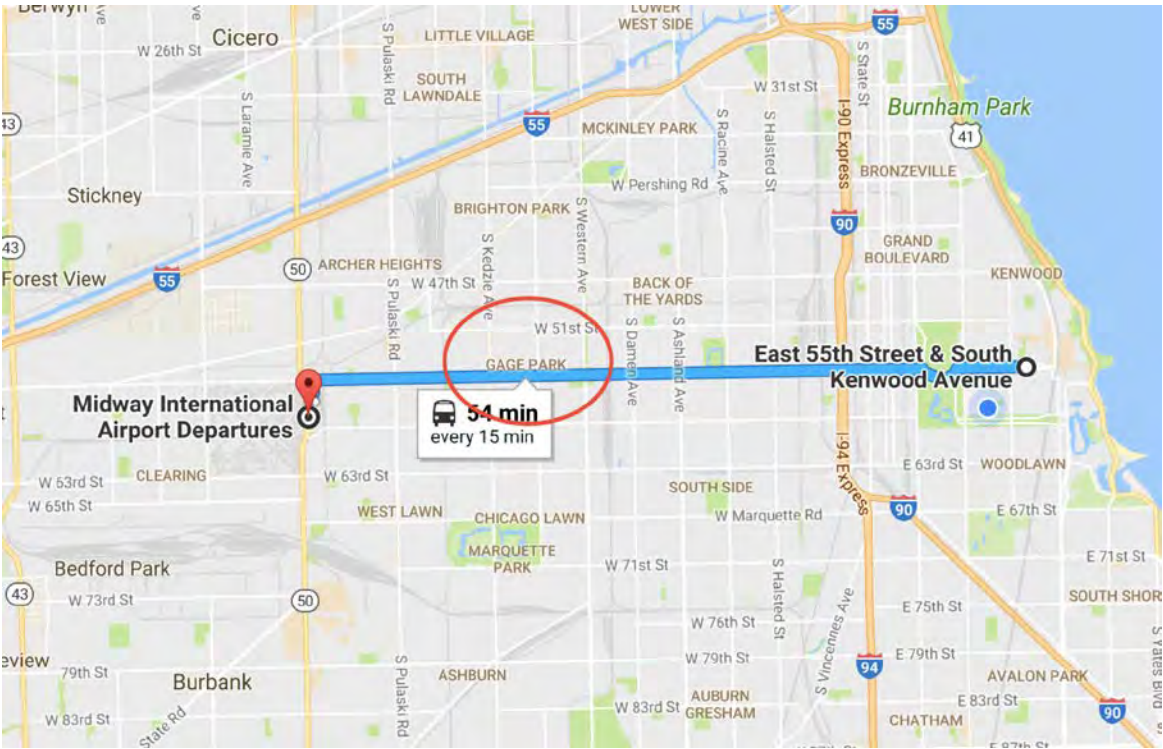
In that 46 minute journey, the bus made 60 stops. Dozens of people got on and off the bus, and almost all of them were people of color.

Broader Issue

Why was it that hardly any white people boarded the 55-Garfield bus? Was it that most white people in Chicago owned a car? Over the next few days, this hypothesis was refuted. Most Chicagoans living in Hyde Park used the CTA buses. The 6-Wacker/Columbus bus that goes from Hyde Park to downtown Chicago had a greater percentage of white passengers as opposed to people of color. The difference in the composition of passengers aboard these two buses (bus 55 and 6) highlighted the broader issue of segregation in Chicago.

Take the example of the neighborhood of Gage Park – an area between Hyde Park and Midway International Airport (refer to the Map below). The table below highlights how the area is predominately Hispanic in population which is in complete contrast to Chicago's ethnic composition.

It was not that the people of color preferred taking a particular bus – it was that the routes of certain buses serviced particular ethnically dominated neighborhoods which then represented the bus route segregation. For me, this served as the most stark example of segregation in the city of Chicago.



Picture from Google maps

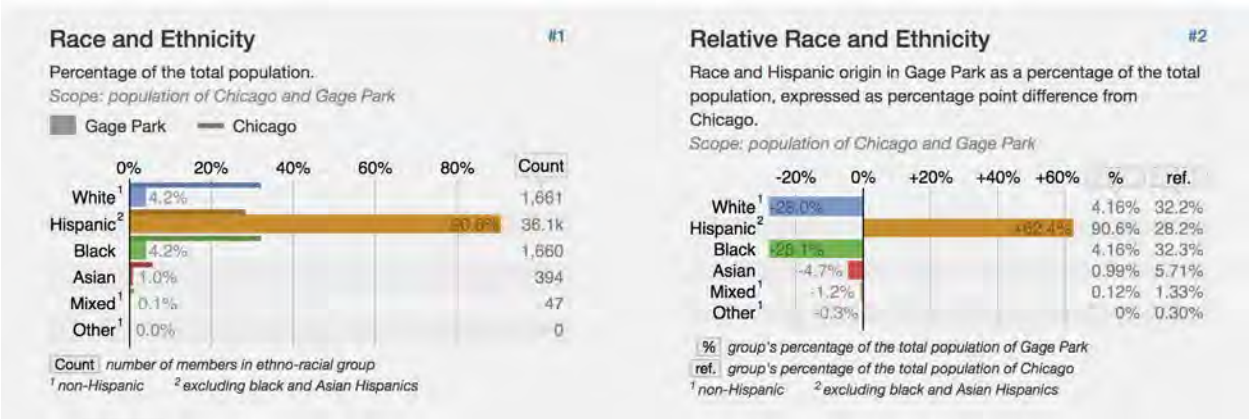


Table from Statistical Atlas (<https://statisticalatlas.com/neighborhood/Illinois/Chicago/Gage-Park/Race-and-Ethnicity>)

Lingyuan Meng
China
Institute for Molecular Engineering

Take a Cat Home



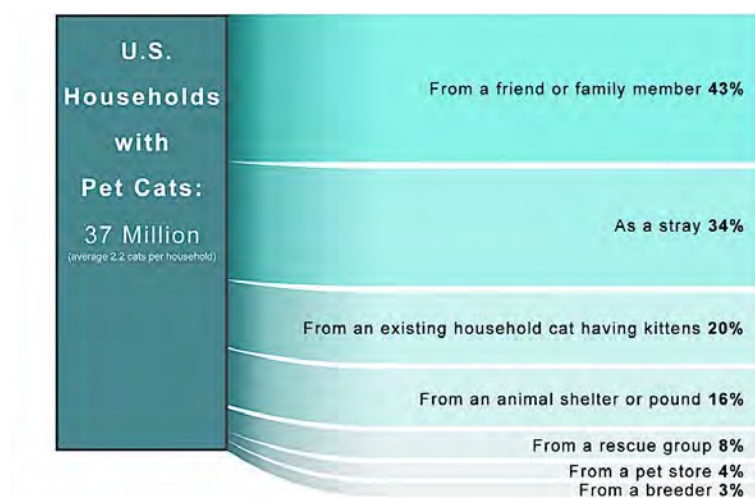
Duchess (Photo by author)

Background

Having a cat living with me is the very thing that I find solid happiness in recently. I remember when I moved in and first saw our “Duchess,” a 14-year-old tabby cat; she gave me a warm welcome by rubbing against my ankle. As she got familiar with me, she spends more time accompanying me. Sometimes when I am doing my homework, she stands there on my table and watches me typing, from time to time touching my hands tentatively. She is lovely and obliging. According to some scientific reports, having a cat living around has several benefits, including lowering the risk of heart disease, helping children with autism, reducing stress and anxiety, and toughening up babies’ immune system. Therefore, having a cat at home is a good idea.

Adopting is one of the sweetest ways to have a cat. But what if you love cats but don't have a long-term residency to let the adopted cat settle? Being a foster parent can be more flexible. In Chicago, PAWS Chicago, Hyde Park Cats and other non-profit animal shelters are great places to foster a cat. Foster homes provide homeless cats with a temporary living place, while veterinary care is in the shelters’ responsibilities, which makes fostering more affordable than adopting. And fostered cats are still available for adaptation when needed.

According to Karyen Chu, 43% cat-owning households get their cat from friends and family members. However, this way is inaccessible to most of international students like me. 34% of the pet cats were strays and only 16% came from an animal shelter or pound. The data about pet cats source of China is unavailable, but I assume it is similar to the situation in American.



Sources of cats in U.S. households

Source: <https://www.alleycat.org/resources/sources-of-cats-in-u-s-households/>

Broader Issue

Homeless cat rescue is an important way to help solve the stray cats overpopulation crisis. Take PAWS Chicago for example, the organization helped find new families for stray cats and provided vaccinations, spaying and neutering. As more and more efforts put forward to achieve a no kill city, the number of euthanized cats and dogs fell to only 4,452 in 2015. In 1997, Chicago was one of the highest kill cities in the nation, with 26,394 pets killed in the city pound.

Interestingly, in 2013 and 2014, the Chicago city decided to “release”, instead of providing home to, feral cats, to control rat populations. So far, more than three thousand cats are released into the Chicago neighborhoods. Unlike other homeless or careless stray cats, these freed cats are guaranteed to stay “happy, healthy, and safe”, said Paul Nickerson, the manager of the Cats at Work program. However, the seem-perfect program has a downside – the cats at work actually kill any other animals come cross them, not only rats, but also squirrels, rabbits and birds. We cannot ignore the collateral destruction they cause to wildlife. And that’s why we probable still need to provide these outdoor cats a home.

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Rodrigo Merino Chavez
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Harris School of Public Policy

An Enigmatic View of Chicago



Photo by author

Background

When I was admitted to the Master of Public Policy at The University of Chicago, I started looking for places to enjoy a scenic view of Chicago. There were many options such as the different rooftops (London House, Cindy's) and the Skydeck. Finally, I found one: The Signature Room on the 95th floor at 875 N. Michigan Avenue. So the first Sunday I was in Chicago I traveled by CTA to the Loop and then walked around 8 blocks to arrive at the John Hancock Center, a 1,128 ft. building in downtown Chicago. There, I waited in line for about 30 minutes to grab an elevator that would take me to the 95th floor. I had never been in such a tall building in my entire life, so I felt kind of dizzy, but luckily, I felt relieved after a couple of minutes. The bar was crowded, but I decided to wait for about twenty minutes with a friend who accompanied me. After the ride, we were taken to the table near the window where I ordered a non-alcoholic lemonade for around \$9.50 to enjoy an enigmatic view of the place where I would live for the next two years of my life. It was an incredible Sunday to start my journey with a scenic view the windy city.

Broader Issue

Context plays a role in determining the value of goods and services. Anyone will think that paying almost 10 dollars for a lemonade is a robbery. It may be, but it depends where and how. If someone goes to the grocery store and buys three lemons and a little of sugar, that person will be able to prepare a lemonade for less than 1.5 dollars. So, in this sense, why would anyone pay 9.5 dollars for a lemonade? Well the solution to this question is the scenic view and a moment of relaxation. A view is a moment that will give joy, happiness or tranquility to a person for a couple of minutes so it may be worth paying for it. For example, a 30 minutes' massage to obtain a relaxing moment at any spa is worth at least 50 dollars, so then why not pay one fifth of the price to receive the same relaxing moment for the same amount of time. Also, in the Signature Room the viewer has the option to take a photo or a selfie to post on the different social networks. So, if you compare the price of the lemonade at the Signature Room with other options that will give you at least the same tranquility for the same time, then it is worth it. When ascribing a price to a product experience it is important to take into consideration all the things included.



Photo by author

Travel times from 1642 E. 56th Street:

A) By Uber: The ride is about 40 minutes and it will cost around 23 dls.

B) By CTA Bus: Use line 6 (Wacker/Columbus) until Michigan Av and then walk 8 blocks. (The ride is 2.25 dls and the travel time 60 minutes).

Hiroki Miyaji
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Who Fouls the Earth; Who Cleans the Earth?



Photo by author

Living in Chicago for nearly one month, I was really surprised at the way residents dump their garbage, which is totally different from that in Japan, from which I come. In my apartment in Chicago, all residents have to do when dealing with garbage is just dump it into a dust shoot. When I moved into the apartment, a manager of my apartment told me that I can throw away any garbage anytime into a dust shoot, as long as it can be put into the shoot. It was definitely surprising for me!

In Japan, on the other hand, we have to deal with complicated procedures about separating and sorting trash for recycling; when we finish orange juice packed in a plastic bottle, for example, we have to separate the label into paper garbage, the plastic cap into a special area, and clean the bottle and put it into a recycling box. Every resident in Japan should obey these complicated rules of garbage.

Actually, the American style is convenient for me just as a resident. At the same time, however, I am wondering why Chicagoans are just throwing away their garbage. Are they not considering ecology or are any other factors involved? I would like to analyze this garbage problem.

First of all, I would like to discuss whether Chicagoans are considering ecology. Chicagoans or U.S. citizens, in my opinion, have much interest in ecology, in spite of their loose restrictions on separation of garbage. For example, at many supermarkets such as Whole Foods or Treasure Island, we can see maybe more customers than in Japan bring their own eco-friendly bags with them and decline one-time plastic bags. The customers probably do so partly because they are eco-minded and partly because the supermarkets provide discount with the eco-friendly bags, which means the shops or the authorities have eco-minded policies. This attitude toward decreasing the plastic garbage shows Chicagoans are trying to be eco-friendly.

Then, why are the residents in Chicago so indifferent to the rule of sorting garbage? It can be attributed to division of labor. Blue Cart Recycling movement, for instance, shows this division of labor. In Chicago, as is similar to other cities in U.S., residents can take out recyclable trash into specified Blue Carts, but they put every type of garbage like bottles, cardboard, cans and so on, into just a single cart. Of course, separation and sorting of this trash are indispensable to recycling procedure. Then, who should do it? Waste collection workers should do it. I can assume that all the garbage we put into dust shoots will be separated at garbage facilities by garbage workers as well since disposal of garbage, generally speaking, requires some kinds of sorting. It is clear that separating garbage at each house takes less costs and labor than separating it in garbage collection facilities, in which laborers have to work in extremely dirty and sometimes dangerous condition. However, in Chicago, garbage workers do it.

Then, why should the garbage collectors be engaged in it? It, in my opinion, is due to social inequality since the society regards this sorting of garbage to be a job not for ours but for these garbage workers'. In other words, even though it is possible that each of us would separate trash in each house, which takes little time and effort, the residents actually foist this job to these workers, which takes much more extra time and effort. The garbage workers have no choice but to earn their livings by this kind of job even though it is dirty and sometime dangerous. If they could have a bit higher "social status", they could argue, "you should sort your garbage by yourselves, or we will not accept it." This, however, never happens, for now.

As above, the dust shoot seems to be a symbol of disparity, for me. Certainly, Chicago is very suitable place to live in; it has so many fascinating foods, magnificent buildings, interesting events and friendly neighbors. However, this kind of inequality is actually one part of this metropolis, and we should have interest in it as one of these Chicagoans.



Photo by author

Daisuke Muro
Japan
Harris School of Public Policy:
Master of Public Policy

Can a Rideshare Service Revitalize Rural Areas in Japan?



Photo by author

Background

To take a rideshare service as represented by Uber is one of the most memorable experiences in Chicago because of its user friendliness and easy installation.

To reach a destination by combining public transportation in a new place is very difficult. Sometimes people are forced to take a taxi when they cannot find a right way by a guidebook or the Internet. Therefore, a lot of people might wish the advent of cheaper transportation services which directly deliver them without any detailed instruction about their destination. When I went to Evanston, one of the famous Chicago neighborhoods, by a rideshare service, I felt that the service can be the answer. All I did was to download the app, to select a payment method, and to enter a departure point and a destination!

Also, a rideshare service can be easily introduced if there are roads and Wi-fi (not to mention cars and cell-phones!). Evanston is famous for its old-fashioned and beautiful architecture.

However, even though the neighborhood maintains the traditional scenery, a rideshare service, the latest service, can be installed without any eminent domain or new construction, and thus promote sightseeing. This ability to connect tradition and state-of-art technology in a harmonious manner really moved me.

Broader Issue

The ridesharing experience makes me feel that people will be able to enjoy sightseeing more in Japan. Therefore, I would like to hypothesize promoting a rideshare service in Japan as a public policy issue. Actually, Japan is now facing difficult challenges which few nations have experienced before, due to the most advanced declining and aging population in the world. The other developed countries might see the same challenges in the future.

One of the serious challenges is a substantial deterioration of fiscal accounts especially in rural areas. Now some residents put a great effort to vitalize sightseeing in order to improve their fiscal conditions. When people living there try to attract tourists, improving public transportation is important, but it sometimes needs a lot of cost and time. In this regard, a rideshare service can easily resolve this dilemma. Additionally, it does not require any landscape changes, so the residents can not only develop the transportation quickly, but also protect their traditional landscapes.

Japan also has an important issue to save the quality of life of elderly people living alone. Especially for transportation, without daily help from their families, the elderly people feel difficulty in even going out for food and commodities. In this case, a rideshare service can provide a concrete, reasonable, easily-introduced, and affordable solution—all of which are important to meet the dwindling budgets of some depopulated towns whose public transportation system may be downsized or discontinued. The service can be a social security net to supplement public transportation.

Travel Times:

Between UChicago and Evanston

By Uber: 50 minutes

By public transportation (train and bus): 90 minutes

Hai D. Nguyen
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Department of Computer Science

Two Museums, One Story



The Human-Headed Winged Bull at the Oriental Institute Museum, Photo by The Oriental Institute Museum, University of Chicago.

A few days before the AEEP program began, I arrived in Chicago and spent a day exploring the university's campus where I will visit every day in the coming years. The campus is very large and I got lost in the first day I was there. When I was trying to reach my department, I found the Oriental Institute. The picture of an ancient Egyptian at the entrance of the building quickly caught my attention since I am very interested in the history of Ancient Egypt. I assume there would be many exciting things inside and decided to step into the building.

One good point of the Oriental Institute is that students of the University of Chicago are free to enter and can take photos inside the exhibition areas. The real impression, however, is the richness of knowledge and the diversity of antiquities. The primary goal of the Oriental Institute Museum is to preserve and exhibit studies of the ancient Near Eastern civilization and, in my opinion, they did their job very well. The whole museum is divided into many different exhibition areas. One area is dedicated to one ancient civilization such as Hittite, Babylonian, and Nubian and each has its own must-see collection. For example, in the Assyrian room, you should not, or probably cannot, miss the huge Human-Headed Winged Bull, a sculpture which

guards the entrance to the throne room of the Assyrian king in 700 BC. The museum also reserves a large room for those who are interested in ancient Egypt with the collection of the Book of the Dead, Colossal Statue of King Tutankhamun, and the mummy and coffin of Meresamun. Not only just displaying objects from archaeological digs, the museum also provide knowledge related to them as well as how they reveal the lives of ancient civilizations.

I also visited the Museum of Science and Industry a week after that. Some bad news is that the museum requires you to pay for entering some special exhibition areas. I just walked around free areas but the museum is really impressive with a lot of animation videos and demonstrations with beautiful effects. However, many advanced technologies such as Intelligent Artificial are not shown as I expected.

Despite lacking state-of-the-art technologies and high entrance fee, the Museum of Science and Industry still attracts many visitors. In contrast, only a few people enter the Oriental Institute Museum even though it is free and there are many interested things inside the building. When I asked a friend to choose one of the two museums to visit over the weekend, he instantly replied that he would recommend the Museum of Science and Industry although he had never been to either of them before.

One reason that makes the Museum of Science and Industry more attractive than the Oriental Institute Museum is the fact that innovations in science have reshaped our lives. The convenience and efficiency brought by advanced technologies make people believe that controlling them is the key for success. Therefore, in their mind, spending time visiting the Museum of Science and Industry to understand how technologies work and how they were developed is much worthier than just standing and seeing the life of ancient people a thousand years ago.

Another point is that the Oriental Institute Museum is just open for allowing the public to see the majority of the collections that came from its expeditions instead of inspiring the visitors to investigate history. Therefore, a visit to Oriental Museum may become boring due to the lack of animations and demonstrations. All we see are pieces of paper describing thousand-year-old objects which often look ugly and weird. On the other hand, everything exhibited at the Museum of Science and Industry is for demonstration; all of complicated mathematic formulas underlying the technologies are hidden. They also display many animation models and play movies with easy-to-understand explanations for visitors. Those makes the museum a good place for entertainment and for satisfying the visitors' curiosity.

As a lover of history and science, I find both museums are good places for those whose seek to broaden their knowledge. And there are many ways that I think the Oriental Institute Museum could attract more visitors. They could produce or play more movies and documentaries about the lives in the ancient world. Also, making animation models and placing them next to the real

ones is another way to catch visitors' attention and help them to easily know the function as well as the value of antiquities displayed in the museum.

The most important point, however, is to let the museum inspire visitors to learn history. I believe this is an efficient way to make visiting the museum as a memorable moment in their lives. To do so, the museum could pose interesting questions and related topics or documents to motivate the visitors to seek the answers. They can also design games that visitors can only win if they know some knowledge provided somewhere in the museum. Another idea is to cooperate with the Museum of Science of Industry because, originally, science and technology themselves have emerged from the very first time of the ancient world.



Inside the Museum of Science and Industry (Photo by the Museum of Science and Industry)

The Oriental Institute Museum is on the University of Chicago campus. Arrive the Museum takes you about 4 minutes driving from the campus

Yuri Numata
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Harris School of Public Policy

What You See Through a Train Window



Forest Glen Station (Photo by author)

I love riding on trains. Trains show me various scenery through their windows; what's more, they show me people's lives. People's profile differs when you take different lines or the same line at different time. I traveled Japan, my home country, by trains, from urban areas to countrysides. My love towards trains was a sufficient motivation for me to take a Metra Milwaukee District North Line (MD-N) from the Union Station to the Forest Glenn Station, only a 10-mile trip, even though it takes more time than using CTA trains or buses.

My journey started at Union Station. It is a classic and huge station, working as a hub of railway traffic. Enjoying the view from the window, looking at interiors of the train, and watching people around me, my exciting trip quickly ended. I found it old-styled and bucolic, and I liked it. It is true, however, that there were some scenes that were surprising to me, a person who has been commuting in busy trains for more than 10 years in Tokyo. At train stations in Tokyo, everything is mechanized. At ticket gates, you can purchase a paper ticket or load money to your card with bright-colored touch panels. When the train approaches to the platform, a notification screen above shows signs, an announcement informs us of its arrival, and doors that were installed to prevent people falling off the rails opens automatically.

Since the Metra line is so manual and old-fashioned, MD-N gives us a feeling that it is inefficient, but is it true? First, MD-N had multiple cars, but not all of which were available for passengers. Only doors which conductors opened manually were available, and there were several cars that were not used. This means trains run with extra cars. If you cut off those cars when not in use, you can reduce the amount of electricity or fuels consumed. On the other hand, running trains with cars that are not used increases trains' flexibility. You may use more or fewer cars after the train departs from the garage.

Secondly, almost nothing was automated. There were no automatic ticket gates; Forest Glen Station did not have even a ticket machine. Each train door was manually opened by conductors. In other words, if there are five doors to open, five conductors are needed. Conductors walked through the entire train between every station to check passengers' tickets and punch them. These examples show that unautomated procedures require more manpower to manually handle the situation. If checking the tickets and opening the door were automated, the city of Chicago could reduce the number of personnel to work on them. On the other hand, introducing automated systems costs a lot. If the system is not used so often, it would be cheaper to manually do it than to introduce machines.

Finally, there comes a question; What is efficiency? Does mechanization always solve problems?

Takashi Omiya
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Smoke-free Chicago



Tobacco in Walgreen in Hyde Park. Photo by author

Background

When I moved to Chicago, I firstly noticed the beauty and cleanness. High-rise buildings in the Loop are well-organized and beautiful architecture. I rarely see scattered trash on the streets. However, what surprised me the most was a difference in smoking between Chicago and Japan, which I am from. No one smokes even in restaurants and bars serving alcohol in Chicago. When I visited Billy Goat Tavern to watch a Cub's game, every fan was watching TV with only drinks and foods. Chicagoans and visitors can inhale clean air until their lung is full of it anytime and anywhere. Many restaurants, bars and other public spaces in Japan allow customers to smoke, or have smoking seats or areas. I felt that Chicago is thorough about smoke-free, which makes the city more clean and healthy.

Broader Issues

Smoking Ban: Prohibition by Laws

The Smoke-free Illinois Act prohibits smoking in virtually all public places and workplaces, including offices, theaters, educational institutions, retail stores, restaurants and bars to protect its residents, workers and visitors from the harmful effects of secondhand smoke (Illinois Department of Public Health). According to Illinois Department Public Health, there is no protection afforded by separating smokers from non-smokers within the same enclosed environment, and ventilation systems and air cleaners are not effective at eliminating secondhand smoke. This thought is critically different from Japan, where separating smokers from non-smokers is considered to protect non-smokers from secondhand smoke indoors in Japan.

Besides the act, Chicago has had its own Clean Indoor Air Ordinance since 1988. The ordinance also prohibits smoking within 15 feet of the entrance of these establishments (City of Chicago, 2017). You see the sign below in public spaces. Yet, it means that people can smoke on the streets in this beautiful and clean city. We are sometimes forced to breathe secondhand smoke while waiting for traffic lights. Even families with little children suffer from it while shopping in Magnificent Mile. I think Chicago cannot help but let smokers do outdoors, while it applies strict laws to indoor spaces. In Tokyo, on the other hand, smoking on the streets except for enclosed smoking areas are punished by ordinances. Current Chicago's ordinance might be a halfway measure. Also, while individuals who smoke in areas prohibited by the ordinance are guilty by fines up to \$250, the city receives an average of only about two dozen reports of violations a month (City of Chicago, 2017). I am also concerned about smokers not following this ordinance.

Highest Tobacco Taxes in the US

On August 21st in 2017, the price of Marlboro, one of the most popular cigarettes, was \$11.82 per pack in Walgreen in Hyde Park, Chicago. Of \$11.82, \$6.16 (Time, 2017) are tobacco taxes combined with federal, state, county and local taxes. The tax rate is the highest in this country. The price of the same product in Japan is only \$4. Around \$12 per pack seems to be a price enough to make smokers stop smoking.

However, according to Fair Reports, the average prices of tobacco in neighbor states are as follows. Indiana \$5.97, Iowa \$6.29, Michigan \$8.00, Wisconsin \$8.82 (Fair Reporters, 2017). Taxation in a city has only limited effects in preventing smoking because smokers can purchase them in other states or online stores.

In conclusion, here, Chicago has vigorously addressed smoking issues in that strict laws are implemented and high taxes are set to discourage smoking. However, considering the fact that the rate of smokers in Chicago is 18.4% (Chicago Department of Public Health, 2014), compared to the nation average 15.1 % (CDC, 2015) , it is difficult to conclude Chicago is successful in smoke-free.

Although several problems remain, you can enjoy clean air almost everywhere. Needless to say, smoke-free is beneficial for health of residents and visitors from babies to adults in Chicago. At least, smokers have to follow these strict laws carefully. Even when you feel an urge to smoke in bars with a nice atmosphere, don't do this. We shall contribute to cleanness in Chicago.

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A sign on campus of the University of Chicago. Photo by author

Takahiro Ono
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Skyscraper Economics: The Two Famous Gigantic Black Buildings



The Willis Tower (left) and the John Hancock Center (right)
Photos from Wikipedia.org

Background

The beauty of night views from high-rise buildings has fascinated me for a long time. When I was in Japan, I used to visit lots of high-rises to enjoy night views from the observatories. My favorite high-rise is Tokyo Skytree, the second tallest structure in the world (2,080 ft / 634.0 m), with the observatory located at 1,480 ft (450 m) above street level. If you go up there at night, you will be certainly astonished by a myriad of lights like gems. Staring at countless lights leaking from buildings and residences, I cannot help thinking about the lives of millions of people!

Before the first day of the AEPP, my wife and I visited the Willis Tower (WT), the tallest building in Chicago (1,729 ft / 527 m), with an observatory of 1,353 feet (412 m) above street level. To get to the observatory, we paid \$23.00 each on the general admission ticket and waited for one hour before getting on the elevator. The night view was amazing. What impressed me most

were streetlights that extended straight to the southern horizon. I had never seen such a spectacular view in Japan because the horizon could not be seen due to the Japan's mountainous terrain.

Two weeks later, we visited the John Hancock Center (JHC), another famous tall building in Chicago (1,499 ft / 457 m). The price of the general admission ticket to the observatory (1,030 ft / 310 m) was \$20.50 per adult, but we paid just \$10.25 each because of the 50% discounts for Chicago residents. Better yet, the observatory was not very crowded and there was no waiting time, and the view was far beyond my expectation!

Broader Issue

Today, "million dollars view" may sound like a stale cliché, but it is still food for thought about what determines value of night views. According to the conventional microeconomic theory, a market price (equilibrium) is determined by demand and supply. For example, even if the night view in Hong Kong (supply) were worth "one million dollars," the price of admission to the observatory there (equilibrium) must be well below one million dollars because few tourists readily pay the value (demand).

As mentioned above, the WT was very popular with its one-hour waiting time, while the JHC did not require any waiting time. This implies that the demand for the WT was much stronger than for the JHC. This WT's popularity might be explained by the fact that the observatory is higher than the JHC's by 323 ft (102 m), or the WT's brand as the "tallest building in Chicago." As for the supply-side, there was no significant difference in the quality of night views from the two observatories.

By considering the demand and supply, the difference in two equilibria should be large; but the actual price difference was a mere \$2.50. This may lead to the conclusion that the WT is a great deal. For economically rational Chicagoans, however, the JHC must be the best deal. We need to take into account of the fact that there are the 50% discounts for Chicago residents and no waiting time (no opportunity cost!)

Travel Times from UChicago:

Willis Tower: 50 min (by CTA bus), 45 min (by bike) or 20 min (by car)

John Hancock Center: 55 min (by CTA bus), 55 min (by bike) or 25 min (by car)

Andres Ovalle Andrews
Chile
Booth School

42.195k – The Path to a New Challenge



A team training in Chicago

Source: <http://www.cararuns.org/en/Training/Summer-Marathon-Training/>

Background

As many other students, I have viewed this stay in Chicago not only as a way to improve different professional skills at the University of Chicago but also as an opportunity to achieve other significant goals such as, in my case, prepare for the Chicago Marathon. I believe that the flexibility of a student's life together with the incredible event that this city hosts is the best scenario to prepare this tough competition.

Last April, I just ran my first half marathon in my home country, Chile. That became my first step toward the Chicago Marathon and what made me aspire to take the chance of participating in this race. For the ones who do not know, there are six Marathon events that are the largest and most renowned in the world, and the Chicago Marathon is one of them. They are called the World Marathon Majors, so it has become a major challenge for me.

I live in the South Loop, and after a few weeks wandering near my home I am now absolutely sure that it will be an incredible experience to train near the shore of Lake Michigan and through the beautiful gardens of the Millenium and Grant Park: either running alone among the different Chicagoans who are practicing different kinds of sports or training in a team with a running club.

Broader Issue

Running a marathon is a very difficult task that should not be taken lightly. No matter if your goal is simply to finish the race with a view toward future marathons, or to chase a significant personal best record, preparing for this event requires planning and vision.

To prepare a Marathon, it is necessary to train a minimum of three to six months' worth of running four times per week. The good news is that the Chicago Marathon is in October, so it will be a perfect excuse to take off your winter coats and put on your shorts and t-shirts. If you start training in the middle of April, you will have enough time to get ready for the October event.

Joining a running club would be a very good idea to reach this hard and long-term goal that you want to achieve. In Chicago, there are a lot of clubs where you can start training. Moreover, as members of the University of Chicago you have the opportunity to participate in the Triathlon and Running Club or in the unofficial club, organized by students, Road Runners. Also, if you want to look into other options you can check the Chicago Area Runners Association (CARA, www.cararuns.org) where you can subscribe and become a member of a large club, which will help you to plan your training and will support you with the target you have in mind. Being part of these organizations will help you to have a structured workout, find extra motivation and, as many of the running clubs work closely with training coaches, will help you to customize your training for your specific goal and abilities.

Another important issue that you should know before beginning training are the places where you can run. You are going to spend a lot of time in those routes, so it is important to find beautiful and secure roads. In Chicago it is very easy to find a beautiful route near the Lake Michigan. For example, you can run almost 10k from Navy Pier in the Loop to the Morgan Point in Kenwood, always running through parks and just at a few steps away from the beach. So, depending your current distances you can make different routes in this large path. You can also search for other alternative training routes in <https://fitt.co/chicago/best-places-run-chicago/> and <https://www.mapmyrun.com/routes/>.

Besides your long-distance training, your training plan may also feature weekly or biweekly speedworks meant to build speed and endurance through intervals training. For those trainings, the recommendation is to look for these two places in downtown (close to the Navy Pier): the Lake Shore Park, which has a quarter mile soft running rubber track, and the Milton Lee Olive Park with a grass surface.

Finally, last but not least, after all your effort and completing your Marathon goal, you must recharge your energy and let your body recover. For that, Chicago is the best place because you will find the greatest pizzas in each of its corners. After 42.195k, enjoying a fantastic pizza in Lou Malnati's Pizzeria it will be as pleasant for you as crossing the finish line.

Shuo Pang
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School of Mathematics

GSU: Exacted or Exaggerated



Picture from homepage of GSU

(<https://uchicagogsu.org/2017/04/04/president-zimmer-dont-gamble-with-our-future/>)

“Excuse me but, have you ever heard of Graduate Student United (GSU) in UChicago?”

On one Friday night last year, when I was waiting in line for Happy Hour food, an enthusiastic girl came to ask the question to people one by one. Behind her was a counter-like table around by several of her colleagues, preparing for patient explanations to all questions including those about motivations, member fee, or successful pioneer schools etc., from curious students. That was my first time to hear about GSU. My first impression was so simple: obviously, the Happy-Hour organizers are in approval of the group. Actually at the time, some students from my department had been keen on doing propagation like this, though I personally lost further interest.

What led me take GSU seriously was a public letter (which we will call “the letter”) from the Dean of Division of Social Sciences, David Nirenberg, in May, 2017. The letter described his testimony process before National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) about the matter. The letter expressed, to me, two points: firstly he thought GSU seemed to reduce the “collaboration” of the school, faculty and students to “precisely an economic calculus”, and could “have a negative effect on the shared values of thought and expression that are the foundation of teaching and research at a university like ours”; secondly, he was unhappy that those for GUS who tweeted his own words for a win, were against the reasoned discourse people in this

university has devoted to. Around approximately the same period, I saw posters from GSU on campus, full of sarcasm accusing David of belittling student work.

Triggered by the debate, I searched the homepage for GSU in UChicago, and had a look at the motivation, plans on organization, examples of what they got and so on, just as those information appearing in Happy Hour. My understanding is, GSU in UChicago is mainly to “advocate for graduate students, including higher wages [including RA and TA], better healthcare, improved parental leave policies ...”; the plans include to form a bargain committee with graduate representatives for negotiating with the school representatives on economic issues, via some enclosed all-student-voting process until a satisfying contract; and GSU in other schools like UIC, UMchigan, had achieved something like increasing TA salaries. It is said over 800 graduate students here have taken part in, although as a math student I do not realize the necessity fully. I thought everything related to money had been clearly presented in the contrast when I decided to purchase a Ph.D. degree here, about which I believed I had been clear. And honestly, to me the matter of money is really the last to be considered compared to academics, especially the stipend or salary is in a reasonable range supporting an expected 5-year-long study. However, I know I cannot simply ignore possible problems since, from a scientific and realistic view as long as it includes a matter of money, there should be some healthy rules or organizations to prevent all kinds of erosion or deviation. Also there has been, as always, rumor about some of these bad cases.

In lack of more details, I was, and have been in a dilemma of making a sound. A more recent piece of news is in August this year, that the NRLB had approved there would be a all-graduate-student-wide vote in October, 2017, to decide whether to set up GSU in our university. Thus it seems really a time to investigate more.

As said, it has been the time to ponder the vote. Together with fact that GSU has been established in many schools, it is doubtless a reasonable to ask: do we need it here. This comes down to assessing the good side and possible risks as much as we can, better with suggestions.

Firstly, as raised initially by David (included in “the letter”), is it proper to concentrate in this way on the “employee” identity on students, at the expanse of possible impacting the value that graduate students are never raised by school because of their labor in teaching, but because of the desire to pass on knowledge and the enterprise of exploring the unknown? To let this make sense, we must consider why currently the majority of private schools reject GSU (is it simply because the interest on somebody is affected?), as well as how GSU has done to the value above as the letter mentioned. What we at present know is that there are students who do want more salaries to be paid since they think their teaching or researches kind of expertised labor, but also are there who appreciate teaching more like a career training with a considerable sponsorship.

Secondly, it is about efficiency and a clear division of rights between students and school. Would GSU lower down much the efficiency of making decisions, especially when we consider that we students are not professional workers for a long term, with the fact that situation varies significantly from department to department? For the latter, GSU explained on the website, there would be different agendas with respect to different divisions insuring efficiency. But details seem to be further listed. Moreover, every monitoring system needs professional remainders to maintain its own sanity, but how graduate students investigate properly in this as a serious job? Here it might be of independent interest to see what happens in Chinese universities. There nearly all universities are public, and there are different levels of dealing with student-school controversies. Roughly, the shallowest is online public-to-students accusation system, like President's Mailbox. Through this system students can complain about local issues such as food price or about healthcare, for explanations from the president office. When the problem rises up to a situation where the higher administration of the school is enrolled in, there would be the third, independent party involving in for investigations, which could be court or even CPC. The point is that this third party is professional, independent of both the school and students, and run by the government. However, a somewhat drawback of this comparison is that, in China requests from graduate students of raising salaries as TAs are very rare, probably because students do not really view it as a job but more of a training process.

Last but not least, maybe it is really a problem (instead of concerns) I could see so far, that we must note the way of propagation. Seeing the picture in the beginning, what does one think about? Does this lead one to assume in advance that, administrators and faculty in universities are kind of enemies of students in the sense of a pure employee-employer oppression? As we know, the larger a group becomes, the easier any tiny problem on value or ideas of the group could evolve into disastrous prejudice: numerous historical events from little debates to monstrous wars, could prove this. Hence to justify the way of making claims is as important as to justify the claim itself. Under this angle, it is definitely better for GSU to have more detailed cases or evidence, to replace any sarcasm or possible exaggerations. After all, while asking for better conditions in a place valuing truth, one must seek and respect truth first.

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Swapnil Patel
India
Physical Sciences

People's Palace: Centre of Free Everything in Chicago



Source: <http://www.inetours.com>, Lee W. Wilson

My first outing to explore the city after I arrived here in Chicago was to take the CTA downtown on a Sunday afternoon. I got off near the infamous 'Cloud Gate', and on the other side of the street was an old but grand building with 'Chicago Public Library' engraved on the top. I was pleasantly surprised to find such a neoclassical construction surrounded by the tall modern skyscrapers that define downtown Chicago. I went in just in time to be part of a free guided tour. This was the first place I had visited in Chicago and through the tour, I got to know more about the history of Chicago than ever before.

Walking through the various awe-inspiring and glamorous halls and corridors—rich in art, engravings, and decorations dating back decades—I realized that the best thing about the building was its character. I was awed to find out about how integral this one structure has been and still is to the city. During my visit, it was impressive to see people using the building as a place to meet, have lunch, play board games or even take advantage of the free events and use it as an outing venue. It actually felt like a place every Chicagoan can call his own, a People's Palace in every respect.

Completed in 1897, the building served a dual purpose of being the first central public library of the city, and being the headquarters and later a memorial for the Grand Army of the Republic. To fund this building, which was built to show the world that Chicago had grown into a metropolis, an unusual system was used. A 1% tax was levied on the citizens of the city and hence in that way, the library would truly belong to the people of the Chicago.

One sees old, historic buildings being demolished to make way for the new, tall, shinier buildings that adhere to the untold 'rules' of a metropolitan city. Hence, the fact that the Chicago Cultural Center still stands today—in the heart of the city—and is still used by the people of the city commands admiration. From surviving growing calls for its demolition in the 1970s to its rededication as the Chicago Cultural Center in 1991, it has truly stood the test of time.

Ever since its rededication, this has been the place for art exhibitions, music concerts, film screenings, lectures, theatre, and dance. But the most important aspect is that all these events are free to the public. It is extraordinary to follow the history of this one building and the way it has been adapted throughout history for its one purpose; serving the people of Chicago.

Travel Times from UChicago:

CTA: 40 mins

Car: 20 mins

Bike: 50 mins

Sugata Paul
India
Masters - Physical Sciences
Division

All Around Me Are Friendly Faces



Photo by Atlanta Black Star

Background

It was my first time setting foot off of Indian soil, and the destination was Chicago, U S of A. The day prior to my departure, I had received security alerts from the University of Chicago, notifying me of robberies which had happened: one of them a block away from the campus, and one of them right outside the airport. Given the time I had spent reading about Chicago and its history of crime, I was emotionally well prepared to handle some level of hostility. So, I walked out of the airport, ignoring people (read: strangers) with whom I have no business, only to realize I needed to call my uncle, who was there to pick me up. So, I now had the daunting task of walking up to a stranger, who doesn't speak my first language and of asking for his phone to make a call, without seeming like a goof. Being an introvert, the difficulty of soliciting assistance gets multiplied by 10. So, before I could begin my search for an approachable stranger, someone walked up to me. "Hey, could I help you with something?", he asked and his generosity made my day. I could have been standing for hours in my home country, looking like a lost 5-year old in a supermarket, without being offered any voluntary help. This was the first incident of the countless many that followed on that same day, let alone the three weeks that I have been here. People always greet you with the bare minimum of a smile, if not the casual 'hello, how're you doing?'. From store-owners, to gate-keepers, to passers-by, to fellow

passengers, to every second person that you make eye contact with acknowledging you with a friendly gesture or greeting, makes you feel very welcomed in this new city. It was a little overwhelming initially, being used to not having any sort of interaction with a stranger even though the person could be sitting right across from you, on a train, and could have been looking in your general direction for the past 45 minutes!

Broader Issue

A benign smile often has much larger implications. In different cultures, smiling has different connotations attached to it. In Asian countries, smiling without a reason is often ascribed to being silly and sometimes even crazy. A smile is also a more intimate form of expression of feeling pleased, happy, or amused, which is shared with only your friends and can be extended to acquaintances but almost never to strangers. According to a study, it has been seen that countries which have had a history of immigration have relied more on non-verbal communication. America is one of the most diverse countries on the planet, having 60 source countries as a representable part of its population. The diversity explains the polite gestures that seem to be floating around every nook and cranny of our neighborhood, which were historically used to build a sense of trust and community within the country.

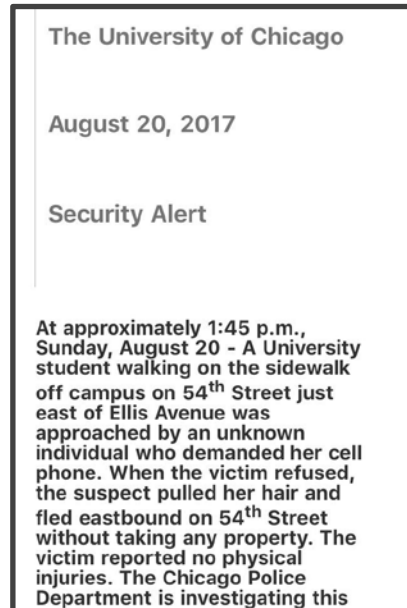
Location: O' Hare International Airport, Chicago

Travel time: 21hrs from Kolkata, India

1hr 30min from Hyde Park, Chicago

Renata Guimaraes Thomaz Pereira
Brazil
Law School

Be Alert at All Times!



Picture by author of Mr. Eric M. Health's e-mail of August 20, 2017,

Associate VP for Safety and Security at the University of Chicago Police Department.

Background

August 20, 2017. I woke up that day and started packing because my flight from Sao Paulo, Brazil to Chicago, United States of America was scheduled for the following day. At that moment, I received an email from the University of Chicago Police Department stating that a student was disturbed by an unknown person near the campus. A couple of days later, I received another email about a student that was robbed off campus. Then, I started to wonder why I was receiving such e-mails, and whether the security alerts would keep being sent every couple of days.

Broader Issue

Safety on campus – or the lack of it – was such an important issue that in 1990 a federal law called “Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act” (Clery Act) was enacted. It happened a few years after the death of Jeanne Clery, a student who was raped and murdered in her residence hall in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania at Lehigh University by another student on April 5, 1986.

The act (20 U.S. Code §1092(f)) establishes that all colleges and universities participating in federal student aid programs should, as from September 1, 1992, send to all students and employees an annual security report with information on campus safety policies and crime rates. Since then, amendments to the Clery Act have been made, such as the addition of a public daily crime log and of emergency notifications in 1998 and 2008, respectively. As per the enforcement of the Clery Act, the U.S. Department of Education is responsible for it and also determining the penalties that shall apply to institutions that fail to comply with such law.

In order to conform with the requirements of the Clery Act, the University of Chicago’s Department of Safety & Security publishes (i) the Annual Security & Fire Safety Report (ASR) which comprises crime statistics for the last three years, among other issues; (ii) security alerts and emergency notifications, informing students and employees about robbery on and off campus and others unsafe situations that happened with any of the students/employees in the area; (iii) a daily crime and fire log, listing daily incidents that are informed to the Police Department of the university. In addition, the university has an escort program, in which police officers will walk with the person that does not feel safe to be alone on campus for any reason.

Looking at the latest ASR, the overall crime in Hyde Park – South Kenwood decreased ten percent compared to 2007. As per the University’s daily reports, it shows that fifteen events were reported to the Police Department from September 1 to 8, 2017, and only two reports are still open as of September 9, 2017.

In my view, the Clery Act called people's' attention to a very serious subject: violence on campus. It also developed rules and an effective system where people receive the information about a crime right after it’s happened and then they can manage to avoid those places. Even though receiving a security alert email makes me scared, it also makes me feel safe that the Police Department is trying hard to avoid new crimes.

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Caroline Alves Pires de Aguiar
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University of Chicago Law School
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CUBS vs WHITE SOX: Rivalry Beyond the Sport



(Credit from left: SecretName101 / Wikimedia Commons; Geoff Livingston / Flickr)

According to what I have observed so far, Chicago is a city comprised of different people: white people, black people, Asians, Indians, and other ethnic groups. However, I was surprised when I noticed that this well-known diversity does not reflect a mixed and integrated community, especially with regards to white and black people. As I have noticed, in the south part of the city, the majority is black and the further north you go, the more the white population increases and the black population decreases. If you take a bus to Lincoln Park, for example, the percentage of black people should be low and the opposite applies for the percentage of white people.

From my point of view, segregation in Chicago is not only present in regular daily events, but unfortunately you can also find traces of this rivalry between white people and black people in baseball. The study by Vivid Seats (see figure 2 below) demonstrates how the segregation related to baseball fans works. On the one hand, you can see that in the south area of Chicago, which is occupied

mostly by black people, there is a predominance of White Sox's fans. On the other hand, in the north area of Chicago, which is occupied mostly by white people, the favorite team is the Cubs.

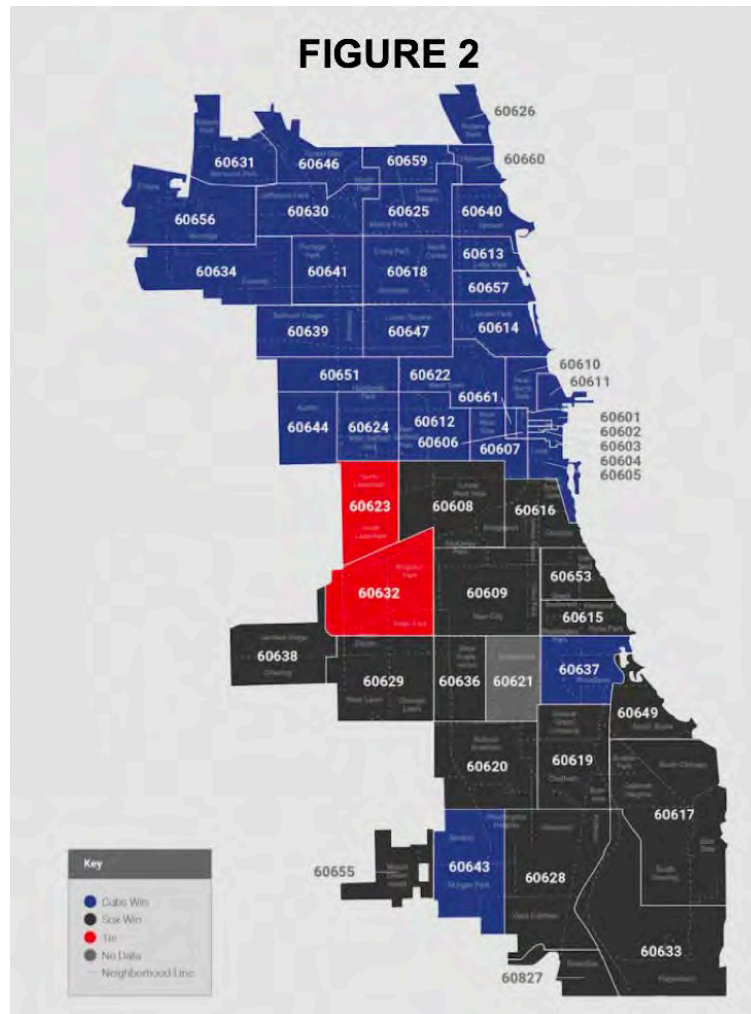
In those past two weeks of the English course, we discussed racism and gentrification in Chicago a lot. What bothers me mostly, is the fact that even in Cook County, one of the most populated counties of the United States (a developed country), racism is intensely present. That is the reason why I decided to write my article about this subject. Maybe the cry of "GO WHITE SOX" means a lot more than a wish for a home run and people should pay more attention to it.

In addition to being a country that values freedom, the United States determines equality as a principle. As an example, the United States Constitution has an Equal Protection Clause in its Fourteenth Amendment which guarantees that "the right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude." However, it does not seem to reflect what happens outside the theoretical world. And it is not just in the United States. Brazil classifies equality as one of its most important principles in written laws, but it is not what people see in daily life there.

As mentioned above, in Chicago, the segregation between black people and white people seems to be strong. The metaphor about the Cubs' fans and the White Sox's fans is just one example of segregation incorporated in regular activities. Consciously or not they divide themselves in two different communities in order to cheer for opposite teams. This is a situation in which winning can mean more than just receiving a trophy or a gold medal.

Another problem which has to be pointed out here is the stereotype created about the Southside of Chicago being an extremely dangerous region with bad people. People spread this information without even knowing the community and going there. It shows how racism can be fortified by popular opinion. Finally, it is noteworthy to mention that racial segregation is commonly accompanied by other problems, such as weak education and poverty. So, in the end it all becomes a vicious cycle.

Many countries, states, and cities have introduced laws to combat racial segregation, but the problem is that they are only on paper. A law has no strength if people do not change their behaviour and if they do not fight for the practical implementation of the rule. A guilty person is not only the one who supports the practise of segregation, but also the one who ignores the existence of such a huge social problem.



<https://www.bizjournals.com/chicago/news/2016/04/08/vivid-seats-studyreveals-where-hardcore-chicago.html>

Aldy Pradana
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Harris School of Public Policy

Economy and Crime Connection in Chicago

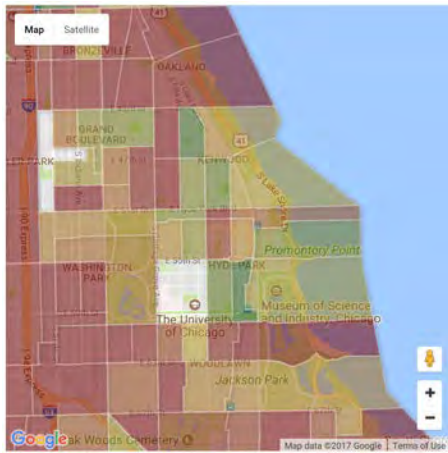


Figure 1: Chicago poverty map ^[1]

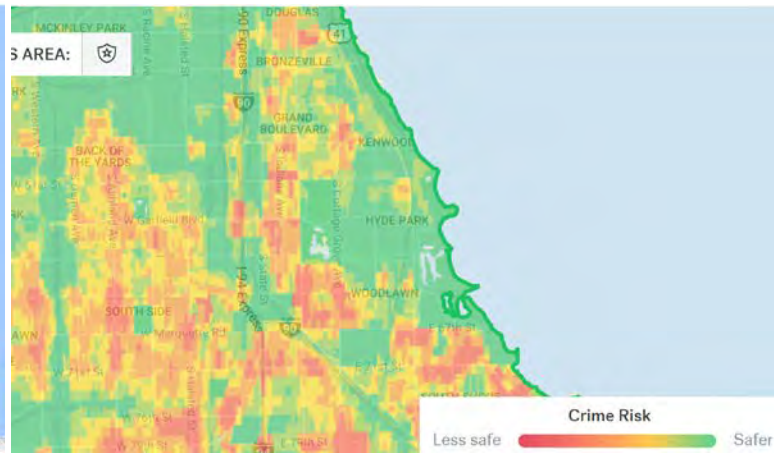


Figure 2: Chicago crime map ^[2]

During my first weeks in Chicago, I was warned about its higher crime rate, especially in the area outside the surveillance of University of Chicago Police Department (UCPD). Every security alert emails sent by university officials alarm me about crimes that happened nearby. As a newcomer, I feel a bit worried about US safety condition, partly because I come from a neighborhood where I can walk alone at night safely, and firearm ownership by civilians barely exists due to law restriction.

After doing some research, I found out that actually campus and student residential areas in Hyde Park and Kenwood are relatively safe neighborhoods. However, the surrounding neighborhood of the university—such as Washington Park, Grand Boulevard and Woodlawn—showed higher crime rates. Chicago Tribune data showed that in the past 30 days, the crime rate in Hyde Park and Kenwood areas was 2.7 incidents per 1000 people, only a half of which were in Washington Park, Grand Boulevard and Woodlawn areas (5.2) [3].

Another interesting fact is that the crime rate in Chicago has a cyclical pattern, which increases during Spring and Summer, and declines during Fall and Winter [4]. Northwestern University news reviewed that there is positive correlation, not causation, between temperature and crime[5].

The root of criminality can be traced back to poverty, low education, and unemployment. A recent study from the University of Illinois concludes that Chicago joblessness and crime are connected [6]. Fewer industrial jobs, in current years, compared with the pre-crisis situation, has caused young men, especially African – American and Latino men, difficulty adapting to a now-dominant downtown service economy. The out-of-school and unemployed rate among young black adults aged 20 to 24 in Chicago reached 39 percent, higher than nation's 25 percent average.

The relation between welfare and crime can be explained by spatial data map. The poverty map (Figure 1) and the crime map (Figure 2), showing that Hyde Park – Kenwood neighborhoods are relatively wealthier and safer than surrounding neighborhoods, support the welfare and crime rate relationship argument. Fortunately, during the current unfavorable economic conditions, the crime rate trend of Chicago is slightly declining over the years. Government, university and police initiatives, for example providing intensive patrol, emergency facilities, security alerts, crime data and transportation around campus area, should be appreciated.

In order to further reduce the crimes in the long term, the government should give priority to preventative policy that can ease the gap of welfare, education and employment among communities, not just those related to policing. In addition, gun control (or firearms regulation) should be implemented for prevention reason, or at least gun should be able to be tracked by police officers using a GPS signal.

Feeling safe is a basic human need and part of the foundation that allows us to open up and connect with people around us. If we don't feel safe, it's impossible to feel at home. With safer neighborhood and our willingness to follow university's safety advice, Chicago started to feel like home.

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Muhamad Ihsani Prawira
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Harris School of Public Policy

Gun Ownership Should be Restricted!



Chicago gun violence spot. Photo credited to: <http://money.cnn.com/2016/08/24/news/chicago-gun-control/index.html>

Background

The main concern to newcomers when they plan to move to Chicago is the weather and the crime. Chicago indeed is notorious for its higher crime rate. While I was coming to Hyde Park and met new many international students, I was not startled that every student has same afraid and concern regarding their safety. Before I came to Chicago one month ago, things like skyscraper, lake Michigan, windy, and disastrous crime situation were pondered in my mind.

When I try to type a sentence keyword : "why chicago is" in the google, the top suggestion keywords appeared on this website are : (1) why chicago has gun problem, (2) why chicago has two baseball teams, (3) why chicago has so much crime, (4) why chicago has so many murders, (5) why chicago has so many shootings. This result depicts the fact that many people also has

special concern about the crime in Chicago.

Indeed, this city has bad reputation on high rate of crime which based on data published by Chicago Police Department, there were 762 murders in Chicago in 2016 and claimed as the deadliest year in almost two decades. To reduce crime in Chicago, Government of Illinois has enacted a gun control law since 2016. Yet, I am questioning about the effectiveness of this law as the number of homicide in Chicago was increasing dramatically in 2016.

Broader Issue

There was more than a 50% increase in murders in just one year from 2015 through 2016. If we compare Chicago and other large cities in USA, the crime rate in Chicago is much higher than those in Los Angeles and New York (Chicago Police Department, 2016). Data depicting that the city of Chicago is unsafe city to live in was haunting my mind. Yet, I deem that the capital city of Indonesia, Jakarta, has more or same disastrous crime rate compared to Chicago, USA. Jakarta was also listed as the bottom of the list of 50 cities in the safe city index (The Economist Intelligence Unit, 2015).

Although Chicago is often cited as the most dangerous urban area in the United States, even with a near record-breaking 762 murders in 2016, the murder rate remains at 28.2. (Source : World Atlas). Chicago was also not listed in top 50 dangerous cities in the world. Moreover, Chicago's homicide rate per 100,000 people in 2015 was 17,50 which brought Chicago to the rank of 15 as the most dangerous cities in the USA. Furthermore, Chicago was also nominated as the top 20 safest city in the world in 2015 as reported by The Economist Intelligence Unit. Meaning, Chicago is still safer than any other cities in the USA.

In 2016, Illinois Gov. Bruce Rauner signed a new gun control law which imposes heavy penalty for anyone without a gun owner identification card who brings a gun into Illinois to sell (CNN, 2016) . They will get penalty and imposed a prison sentence of four to 30 years. The law is however somewhat different from the gun control law in New York, where people living in New York have to register guns you own. Meanwhile, in Illinois, people don't have to register their own guns.

According to Stroebe (2016), gun prevalence is positively related to homicide rates, and there is no evidence for a protective effect of gun ownership. Siegel (2013) also agrees that "although we could not determine causation, we found that states with higher rates of gun ownership had disproportionately large numbers of deaths from firearm-related homicides. That being said, the number of gun ownership was increasing significantly from 2015-2016 in Chicago. Based on data obtained by DNAinfo from State Police, the state issues 63 percent more permits to Chicagoans to own a gun in 2016 than in 2015.

In conclusion, I argue that there was a robust correlation between 63% increasing of the number of gun ownership in 2016 and the high number of shooting death in 2016 which labelled as the deadliest year of Chicago in two decades. Moreover, I believe that the law of gun control can be an effective way to reduce gun violence in Illinois and Chicago. However, this law can be well implemented if the Government of Illinois is strictly restrictive in issuing permits to own a gun.

Based on the trend of the number of homicides and the number of the gun ownership, I strongly encourage Government of Illinois to confine the total number of people who can eligible to own a gun. Moreover, every gun owner in Illinois should be carefully monitored and evaluated periodically to decide whether or not they will still can own a gun any longer. Perhaps, Government of Illinois should consider to ban the gun ownership for civil citizenship.

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Weihong Qi
China
Harris School of Public Policy

Street Arts in Chicago: Emotional and Political Expressions



Photo by Weihong Qi

Born in a family in which both of my parents work in the government, political issues are always what I am interested in. To my experience before coming to Chicago, people generally express their political opinions on TV, magazines, newspapers, and by speaking in public. In my opinion, politics is always something serious. However, when I came to Chicago and walked around the neighborhoods, I found it surprising that so many artists are trying to show and argue political opinions by using arts. Art is considered as personal emotional expression in my home country, but it is playing significant roles in Chicago. Thus, I decided to do some research on the street arts in Chicago, and know more about the stories of people struggling in difficult situations behind the arts.

Comparisons can always be helpful for me in understanding new features, and street arts in Chicago is no exception. Decorating the young and international city, various arts all around on the streets of Chicago. From south side neighborhoods, the Loop, to the far northern communities, murals, mosaics, and graffiti are painted on the walls alongside the streets and under bridges. Differentiated from the elaborated, historical or religious street arts in Europe, young Chicago city has its arts in a more spontaneous way. Meanwhile, compared to the government funded street art in China, which intends to tell the principles of the government, Chicago artists present their emotions and imaginations a more natural way. In addition the great differences with other culture in the world, Chicagoan artists also express their political opinions, which are widely related to the past and the current situations of the city, in their works. One can easily find feminism, equality for LGBTQ community, racial equality and other essential issues in the street arts of Chicago.

One of the easiest ways to have a street arts journey is to travel to 1006 S Michigan Ave in the Loop. On the wall of a deteriorated building, a huge picture of birds and flowers are showing the beauty of nature within the bricks, steels, and busy traffics in the central area of the city. The birds around flowers are so vivid that one may believe they will fly from the wall towards sky. However, with the majority in the blue and purple, it also brings calm and peace to the busy street. The conflicts are just the greatest part of the mural. In the near blocks of the blue bird and flowers mural, there is painted with even more murals and graffiti. With cafes surrounded, the street arts create imaginative and emotional space, which is separated temporarily from the real world for the residents and the visitors.

If the street arts in Chicago only tells stories about imaginations and emotions, they might be some more personal issues. However, street arts in Chicago are more like historical records and debate space of the city. An example of the expression is the mural on the wall of a parking lot, right near the birds and flower one. With serious faces of women, words next to the pictures shows that “stop telling women to smile”. The mural is part of the art series around the world, trying to make voices of women in uncomfortable and unsafe environment to be heard. The argument reveals that gender inequality is still a problem in Chicago, or even in the United States. The implication of the mural should be that it is unreasonable to tell women to smile, if they don’t have equal chance to get a job without prejudice, equal promotion opportunities, equal pay, freedom to choose to get married or being single without any social pressure, or any other human rights they deserve. If there is still a glass ceiling, it is hard for women to be who they want to be, and they will not smile because nobody will be happy if they can not rise to their full potentials. Similar art expressions can be seen in the Andersonville, which is a northern neighborhood of Chicago, calling for gender, sexual orientation and sex identification equality.

Witnessing the severe racial segregation of Chicago, Chicagoan artists also take efforts in calling racial equality. Under the bridges from 53rd st. to 55th st in Hyde Park, murals are painted by black artists or telling stories of black people. Faces and lives of ordinary minority people are

picted on the walls. They seem to be happy, sad or struggling. I believe the artists are trying to show the similarities and differences between the once discriminated ethnicities with the others.

Integrated as part of the communities, arts are created continuously by talented Chicagoan artists. Street arts in Chicago are explaining to everyone in the city about the emotions, political opinions, and the power of art behind the colorful art world.



Photo by Weihong Qi

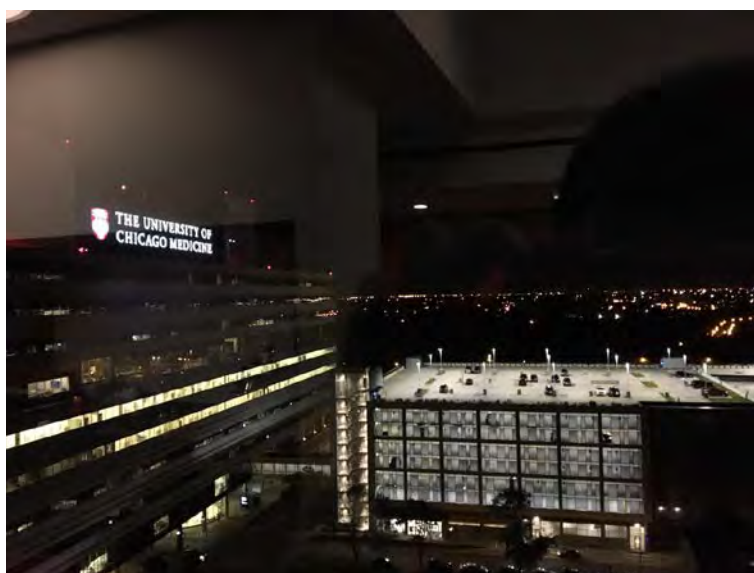
To travel to 1006 S Michigan Ave, One can take a Uber for about 20 minutes with the price of 10-12 dollars. To take CTA 4 Cottage Grove bus can also help to travel there. Get on the bus station Cottage Grove & 58th Street on campus, and get off at Michigan & 11th Street. It takes about 45 minutes to take a bus.

Zeyu Qiao
China
Physical Science Division Chemistry

What a Window Can See



Daylight view from the window in IGSB



Night view from the window in IGSB

Photos are taken by Zeyu Qiao

Mental Health Warning: If you are experiencing troubles with your mental health, feeling depressed, feeling lonely, or feeling suicidal, please be warned that this article may be triggering for you. (If you are not sure, please refrain from reading this article for now and approach an AEPP instructor first.) If you are having any struggles with your mental health, please reach out for help! The best resource is UChicago's Counseling Center, which is a free, confidential, and professional resource for students. You can contact the Counseling Center by calling (773) 702-9800 or after business hours (773) 702-3625. You can also drop in at 5555 S. Woodlawn Avenue. Any AEPP teacher would be happy to talk to you more about mental health resources as well. Please take care of yourself, know that you are important and valued, and seek help if you need it.

Background

From time to time, I am fascinated by the thought: what would happen if windows had minds and could understand human language? That must be amazing since windows have witnessed numerous stories, happy or sad. However, one window, the window of the tenth floor of institute of Genomics and Synthetic Biology (IGSB), is really special for me because it is this window that witnessed my suffering, my frustration, my loneliness and more importantly, my growth. It was the summer, 2016 when I came to UChicago as an exchange student and just a few days before I flew to Chicago, I was told that my grandpa, whom I spent most of my childhood with, passed away. That was the first time when death came to someone I was really close with, and several days later it totally subverted my view about death. With only several days passed, my memory about him obscured and his face faded in my mind. Nevertheless, it wasn't the end but just the beginning of the whole nightmare. Two weeks later, I heard from my friend that one of my classmates committed suicide by jumping from the classroom. In the meantime, my life didn't go smooth either. It was my first time to be in a foreign country but unfortunately, though huge effort put to get accustomed to the life here, I still failed to familiarize myself with the culture here. Without any connections with others, I was overwhelmed by a sense of being forsaken. Moreover, my experiments didn't go as expected. People in my lab began to question my ability. Frustrated and depressed, I spent more and more time with that window. From that window, I could see the rise and fall of the sun, rain and sunshine on the Washington Park, and the coming and going of pedestrians. To the window, I complained of my suffering, expressed my depression, and poured out all my negative feelings. Sometimes, I wished there would have been no window there so that I could jump off to end my life, so in some way, that window saved my life. That window did not only witness my suffering, but also saw my survival and success. After one year's endeavor, I finally stepped out of the storm in my life and was blessed with sunshine. Now by that window, I chat with my friends, enjoy the beautiful landscape and keep making progress in the lab. Moreover, since that storm doesn't beat me, it helps me to be better and makes me know that hard though life sometimes can be, you shall never give up.

Broader Issue

The story with window should not be alone. Actually, lots of people spend considerable time with that window. Some of them have their lunch when enjoying gorgeous scenery, some of them talk to their friends about the TV shows they recently watch while some of them just sit there only for some rest and, therefore, can continue their experiment. That window does not only see the people's everyday life but also hears a lot about the biological science. Researchers discuss their projects with each other, excited about ground-breaking discoveries in biology and confused with hard-to-explain experimental results. If a camera were placed to document everyone's interactions with that window, it must be an interesting and thoughtful movie. Researchers blessed with different cultural backgrounds talk enthusiastically about cultural differences. Students with different nationalities and communities unit together to work on scientific issues. Staff with different languages talked about their lives to their families on the phone. This window is just like a minor United States. From this small window, we can delineate a rough but big picture of the U.S.

This window is on the tenth floor of institute of Genomics and Synthetic Biology (IGSB)
IGSB location is: 5801 South Ellis Avenue, Chicago, IL, 60637

Zhaoyuan Qin
China
Physical Science Division: Financial
Mathematics

Hyde Park Bank – A Community Bank



Hyde Park Bank main location on 53rd Street, Photo by author

When I moved into Hyde Park for the first time, I was attracted instantly by a bank named after it: Hyde Park Bank. It is a community bank, a concept I have never heard before in China. I couldn't help considering what the difference is between a community bank and larger global banks, such as Bank of America and Chase. Can it survive in fierce competition with them? Curiosity drove me to study it.

The Difference between Hyde Park Bank and Large Global Banks

Hyde Park Bank was established in 1928, named as Hyde Park Bank and Trust Company. It is headquartered in 1525 East 53rd Street and has only one branch in 1311 East 57th Street. The

mission of it is to serve its community. That's the reason why it hasn't expanded but run locally. Due to its mission and limited size, Hyde Park Bank formed three key features distinguished them from larger global banks.

The first is better service. Since the main customers of the bank are local residents, it has to form a stronger individual relationship with them by warm-hearted service. As is promised on its website, "when you call", it will "answer the phone and know you by name". One Friday, I visited headquarter of Hyde Park Bank to inquire about the services it offered. Then from the concierge to retail staff, I really received warm welcome and felt like home. A banker who had worked there for 25 years served me, answered my questions very slowly and patiently, offered me plentiful brochures to refer to and double checked my name at last so as to remember me. My experience in the Bank of America was different. Once I was confused by the procedures before the counter and the clerk behind the window served me impatiently. With comparison, Hyde Park Bank seems to have better service which should be the key to winning customers' trust.

The second is more flexible operation. Because Hyde Park Bank is small enough, it can set on-site control over all services, loan approvals, interest rates and products. On the other hand, branches of global banks will have to get approval from corporates somewhere else about some issues such as setting interest rate. More flexible operation can help seize fleeting business opportunities.

The third is capital feedback. Deposits of the bank are invested back into the community in the form of business and residential loans. If it is an over-community bank, deposits might be used to support business in other areas, which will impair local residents' access to loan. By offering loan to where it serve, Hyde Park Bank makes contribution to local economy.

Can Hyde Park Bank Survive in Fierce Competition?

In 2012, Hyde Park Bank was merged into and subsequently operated as part of Beverly Bank & Trust Company, a wholly-owned banking of a much larger public financial corporation, Wintrust Financial Corporation. Now Hyde Park Bank is one of 63 bank brands under Wintrust Community Bank family contributing 2 locations to 150 in total. Although Hyde Park Bank keeps its name and still serves as a community bank, their clients can actually experience the same service in any of its sister banks since mergence. What's more, many of its services are now provided by other professional companies or departments under Wintrust Financial Corporation, such as wealth management, mortgage and international services. Apparently, Hyde Park Bank didn't survive as an independent bank. Below we will analyze the reason behind it.

Actually, before Hyde Park Bank's mergence, Wintrust CEO Edward Wehmar had already predicted two factors which would drive many community banks to give up their independent identity: increasing regulatory burdens and great pressure of making loans (Steve Daniels, 2012). Even though Hyde Park Bank successfully distinguished itself from other global banks, its three features were not necessarily its strength faced with the two challenges above.

On the one hand, compliance expense of small banks could be higher than that of large banks (Cody Boyte, 2013). Then even though small size is enough to serve the community, it may still be unaffordable due to high cost. On the other hand, the strategy of investing locally might hinder bank's development when there is not sufficient opportunities to invest. Actually, it was reported that Hyde Park Bank's loan amount made up only 55% of its deposit in 2012, a low ratio compared with other banks (Steve Daniels, 2012). After mergence, the money of Hyde Park Bank's depositors might be able to find better places to invest through sister banks to achieve higher profit.

Generally speaking, it seems good for Hyde Park Bank to become a part of Wintrust Community Bank so far. However, there exists a potential challenge. One day, when it becomes more profitable to invest in other communities rather than Hyde Park, can Hyde Park Bank still stick to its mission, keeping serving Hyde Park not only by greetings, smiles or even activities, but by loan as well? Only time will tell.



Hyde Park Bank after merged: (Source: <http://www.hydeparkbank.net>)

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Eldi Rahmadan
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Harris School of Public Policy

Celebrate Music in the Windy City



Photo by Author

Background

A few days after I arrived in Chicago for the first time, I went to the Loop and got stuck in a severe traffic jam. I was wondering if that kind of road congestion happens every day in Chicago, but something different actually happened. Streets were blocked, and routes were changed. I asked for information about this condition, and someone told me that Lollapalooza, a big music festival, was happening that day and caused changes in the traffic.

Chicago is one of the biggest cities in the United States, where people work hard and struggle to make a living every day. The breeze of the wind and chilly weather do not reduce the spirit of Chicagoans, developing the city to be one of the business epicenter in the United States. The people of Chicago do not only work hard to make their living, but also know how to celebrate life, and in terms of music, Chicago is arguably one of the best cities where the best musical occasions took place.

Especially in the Summer, Chicago becomes the home of many major musical events, either festivals or individual musical performances. Big names such as the infamous Lollapalooza, Chicago Jazz Festival, Pitchfork Music Festival, Riot Fest, and other major festivals attract so many music listeners from different regions and even countries to come to Chicago, not to forget to mention local music festivals, which are held in smaller scene in more specific neighborhoods. The music festivals and events do not stop in Summer only. They continue to be played throughout the year.

Broader Issue

Musical celebrations in Chicago attract many tourists from all across the country and even the world. They come to witness outstanding performances, to feel the hype that the musicians have brought, and to enjoy the city itself. For example, a major annual music festival such as the Lollapalooza attracts hundreds of thousands of people in a weekend. It provides the attendees a broad range of musical hype, from different genres and style of music. The festival was held at popular places in the city, such as the Grant Park this year. Chicago Open Air, for another example, which offers a more specific music genre, also attracts a massive number of people. It was held at the Toyota Park this year. Economically, those kinds of festival should generate economic gain and profit, as so many people make transactions to experience and to survive the festivals.

As a music festival does, individual concerts by world class musicians also bring the joy to Chicago. One of the concerts in Chicago which was held in the summer this year is Coldplay's A Head Full of Dreams Tour. It was held at the Soldier Field, the home for Chicago Bears football team. World class musical performance, an iconic stage act, fireworks, a massive stadium and crowd as well as the whole direction of the concert brought people together at the moment. Flags from different countries fluttered in the air brought by the audience, indicating different origins represented in the crowd. Considering the number of people filling the capacity of the stadium, we might predict that this kind of event should generate so much profit and economic gain, importantly for the city's tourism as well.

Chicago has become one of the best cities to enjoy and celebrate music. The musical hype in different musical events won't end, and it will keep expanding in the future. As Chicagoans survive, musical celebration will always be growing in the Windy City.

Soldier Field

1410 Museum Campus Dr, Chicago, IL, 60605

Car: 12 minutes

Metra: 30 minutes

Bike: 35 minutes

Vaibhav Rathi
India
Harris School of Public Policy

Economics in the New City

Having been lived in India for all my life, there are some things that are part of set of assumptions I inherit about how the world works. Not all of them are right assumptions to have, but that is usually not a criterion regarding cultural inheritance. In gravely unequal and hierarchal society like India, one of the central assumption tends to be “less fortunate deserve less”.

I had never been to United States. In the weeks leading up to my arrival in Chicago, I was checking out the local prices --things to do, places to go; and what would they cost me. Even though I would have new sets of surprises later on, this early exercise was an useful initiation into a new economy.

Many people do not realize how much information is packed into just the prices (especially price-income ratio): information about social preferences, economic well-being, income distribution and much more. Therefore, I would always advise you, dear Reader, to understand why a thing is priced as it is.

I had often heard about the culture shock that one experiences while going to new places with different culture. Mine came in form of ecstasy when I saw the security guard for Harris School of Public Policy arrive in a car for her shift. It was an entirely novel thing; coming from India where we are much used to inequality and have long assumed that a large section of society does not deserve much. It was, also, an unlikely place to experience a basic tenant of leftist ideology: societal consensus is a prime driver in wage setting.

During my first days in Chicago, I was amazed with the following: the diverse but localized neighborhoods, the number of options available in any shop, the co-existence of big brands and local stores, the high prices of labor intensive tasks, the hint of social anxiety, the fact that people are very fair in their interaction with each other, the great conversational skills of people, and the amount of pride people take in their work.

Being an economist, I tried to understand the society-both in economic and social terms- through the abovementioned (anecdotal) observations.

High prices of stuff seems to co-exist with a decent level of income (decent, as compared to what I was used to in India). If the prices are high to ensure a decent wage or workers, then it is a sign of a healthy economy. This is particularly interesting from a global perspective, as there are some economies where lower the strata is often ignored. Even though racism seems to make news again, there seems to be a strange harmony among people in Chicago, at least from my limited experience.

There seems to be significantly less social friction; people frequently greet each other and seem to be fair in their dealings, which drives the transaction cost of interaction down. This must create a kind of social security which enables people to be active agents and to increase increase their economic activities without hesitation.

However, this essay cannot ignore the current atmosphere which is turning more hostile day by day. As the trust among people decreases, and people tend to become less fair to each other, it might not just have an impact on people's social well-being but also on a general level of economic well-being This will set the exactly opposite events in motion, and an individual will decrease her economic activity and indeed have an effect at macro level.

Outside the Harris School of Public Policy: a short walk from anywhere on Campus

José Francisco Salem Ojeda
Mexico
Law School

Black Barbershops: Short History and a Chronicle



(Photo by author)

“You need a haircut”. Those were the words my wife said to me one week ago while I was getting ready to go to the University. She was right, my hair was way too long for me being able to style it by myself in any presentable and comfortable way, so I made a Google search to find a decent barbershop near our home in Hyde Park and found some great and pretty cool options. I am very used to having my hair and beard cut and trimmed in barbershops; that is actually an activity I enjoy very much. Back in Mexico, I used to visit a different barbershop every month and then compare service quality, prices and results with those of the other barbershops I had visited before. It was decided then: during the week I would walk by each one of the barbershops in Hyde Park that I found on Google and see which one attracted me the most. Then, I would go there and have my very much needed haircut.

I did my homework; during that week I visited each one of the seven closest barber shops I found in Google and most of them seemed great. Clean and professional establishments, with a cool and

trendy look and lots of customers. Awesome barber shops. I also noticed that in each of these barber shops, the astonishing great majority (maybe ninety-nine percent) of the clients and barbers were African-Americans. This was quite a culture shock for me. Here's the thing: back in Mexico, it's not common at all to see any commercial establishment in which there are only customers and employees of one single ethnicity, notwithstanding the neighborhood, but then again, Mexico has never faced a history of segregation and racism as the U.S. has, at least not as institutionalized.

At first, I thought that the lack of ethnic diversity in American barbershops could be a vestige of past segregation and other racist practices, but then it occurred to me that nowadays the reason for this lack of racial diversity could be more attributed to the specific expertise of African-American barbers in cutting a particular type of hair and also, that this "all-black" barbershop thing is more of a cultural, community and "neighborhoody" thing than an actual issue of racism. Notwithstanding what my thoughts were, I was not sure if it would be culturally acceptable for a white outsider to ask for a haircut in any of these awesome barbershops, so I did some quick research before deciding where to have my haircut.

This is what I learned:

Black-owned barbershops were not always the same. Actually, in the 19th century barbershops were very different than the barbershops we know nowadays. It took barbershops almost one hundred years to reach the place in black community life that it occupies in the present (Mills, 2013). Historically, during the 19th century, black-owned (or more accurately, black-run) barbershops would only have white clients. Usually a white patron would not have allowed his barber to use the same shaving and haircutting instruments on him that he would have used on a black man, even in the northern states of the country. On the other hand, slaves or freedmen would run these barbershops and would also represent competition for white barbers, which is quite astonishing taking into account the social context of that time (Harris, 1979). Barbering became a way for some African-Americans "to find some little pockets to sort of figure out how they could at least earn a little bit of money, and control their time -- which of course was what slaves did not have control over" (Mills). This profession was very appealing for black barbers as they could find financial stability for them and their families by shaving and cutting white patrons' hair, and also, the conditions of working inside the shop were much better than working the fields or than any other kind of back-breaking labor (Taylor, 2014). Moreover, barbershops were very influential as businesses that helped develop African-American culture and economy (Harris).

After emancipation, the black-owned barbershops were opened to serve black patrons as well. That was the beginning of the barbershop as a safe haven for black men (Taylor). In the late 1880s and 1890s a younger generation that was born after the emancipation entered barbering. They opened shops in black communities specifically to serve black men (Mills). Since then, the black-owned barbershop became a gathering place for the community and neighborhood. It has functioned since then as a microcosm of a society or community in particular. Nowadays, the

position of black-owned barbershops is well known in American culture; they are more than just places to get a shave and a haircut, they are places where people in general (not just customers) go to talk about the latest news, relax, gossip, and have fun (Ryssdal, 2014).

“It is an environment that can bolster egos and be supportive as well as a place where phony men can be destroyed, or at least highly shamed, from participation in verbal contests and other contests of skill. It is a retreat, a haven, an escape from nagging wives and the cares of the world. It is a place where men can be men. It is a place... to be somebody”. (Harris)

So, after finishing my research I decided to go to “Hyde Park Barber Studio”(HPBS), located at 1431 E. Hyde Park Blvd. It was 10:30 on a Tuesday morning when I arrived at that elegantly and classy decorated commercial establishment, armed with a wall of 5 barber chairs, each one conveniently located in front of its respective mirror. Almost immediately after I crossed the entrance door I was kindly received by a very warm “Good morning sir, what can we do for you today?” from a barber that was taking care of a beautiful black woman’s hair at that moment. “Good morning. Just a quick haircut. Thanks”. I was then told very politely to take a seat and that a guy named Darryl was going to take care of me in just a moment.

Once seated in Darryl’s chair and while he was cutting my hair, I noticed some old newspapers framed and hung to the wall. They were some articles about HPBS which, apparently, used to be located on famous 53rd street. “So Darryl, how long ago did you guys moved here? Was it just after you moved from 53rd?” I inquired. “Ten years ago, and yes, it was just after moving from 53rd.” Suddenly, he was telling me the story of how he became a barber and how he got his job at HPBS. “I met Karim 30 years ago,” he told me while pointing to a man dressed with the HPBS’ barbers uniform who was reading a book seated on the furthest barber chair, next to the credit card terminal. “Since then, I have been barbering with him. He’s the owner of the shop.”

After Darryl finished with my hair, he walked me to Karim and introduced me to him. “José’s new in the neighborhood and has some questions about the shop”. Karim removed his earbuds and then he looked at me. “Well, what’s up?”. I asked him for the full story of the shop; when did he started barbering? when did he became the owner? did he open it or did he purchase it from someone else? Why did they moved from 53rd?, etc. He told me that he started barbering as a side-job while he was waiting to be accepted in a radiologist school. He then invited his brother to start barbering with him and business was good, so he quickly forgot about the radiologist school. HPBS opened in the 1920s as an all-black barbershop, and it remained the same until the 60s. Since then, HPBS has received customers from all ethnicities, but it’s also a fact that until now, the majority of its clients are still African-Americans. Karim says that it may have something to do with the location of the barbershop. Karim told me that he bought HPBS from the the former owner approximately 34 years ago and also told me that they moved from the 53rd due to differences that he and his former partner had some time ago.

Once Karim finished his story I thanked him for his time and paid for my haircut (which, by the way, was cheaper than expected since HPBS offers discounts to UChicago students). Then I left the shop and while walking back home, I started thinking of what Quincy Mills had said about the benefits in these technological times of having a community place, an oasis, where people still gather to talk, debate, and argue about politics or other more mundane issues. Barbershops are one of the most important places in a neighborhood where people do that. I truly agree more than ever with Q. Mills that even now, just as in the past, barbershops help in the creation of community formations that are so very important for local neighborhoods.

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UPC: A Great Place to Live



Photo by Hyde Parkitecture

Background

As a newly admitted international student, I regarded finding a satisfactory apartment as one of the top items on the to-do list. This task is actually very daunting, especially when I could not visit in person. To get myself well prepared, I attended housing webinars hosted by UChicago and explored all management companies' websites I could find. In this process, I gradually got to know more about life in Chicago as well as its difference with my life in China. All these efforts actually formed my first course from University of Chicago.

I first saw the twin buildings of University Park Condominium (UPC) from Google Maps. When I was aimlessly exploring the map, bothered by not being able to find a satisfactory apartment with reasonable rent, a couple of tall building on 55th Street with many windows drew my attention. They are obviously apartment buildings, but I hadn't seen them owned by any

property companies. After searching for more information on Google, I figured out this is a low profile but ideal place to live if you study at University of Chicago. Currently I've already moved in a UPC apartment and am quite satisfied about it. I believe sharing some information I gathered would help future people decide whether to live in this apartment building.

Broader Issues

University Park Condominium was designed by I. M. Pei, a famous Chinese American architect. One of the resident describes it as "a safe island in the middle of a bustling community," and it really is. UPC is located at the 1451 E 55th St, on an island separates 55th Street. The whole island is enclosed by railings. To enter it, one must pass the access control, which is guarded 24/7. The whole system guarantees only residents could enter the building, which makes it a safe place to live. Between the two buildings there is a fountain as well as a garden.

For a UChicago student, UPC will be a convenient place to live. Treasure Island, where you can buy almost all cooking materials, is less than 3 minutes' walk from the apartment. CTA bus 171 passes UPC. It can take you to campus to attend a class, or to Lake Michigan to go for a picnic. And even if you prefer to reach these places on foot, they all are less than a 15 minutes' walk. If you are an Asian person, then you get an extra bonus. Two blocks away from UPC, there is a newly opened Asian restaurant named Eto'o, a good place to treat yourself after a week's hard work.

In addition to common facilities like laundry and basement parking, UPC has a small gym and a swimming pool --- but I'm not sure whether you want to swim in that pool as it's just near the street and you can be seen from every passing car. Pest control service is also provided; if you need help with this issue, you don't need to pay additional bills, as it is included in your management fee.

Finally, what should you do if you are interested in renting or buying a unit in UPC? Because all units in UPC were owned by private landlords, there is no website that can show you all the available units, like properties from management companies. But you can find leasing information on the marketplace from time to time. Leasing information was also exhibited in the management office of UPC, but this information cannot be accessed online.

Shuai Shao
China
Social Science Division

Taller than Taller? A Glimpse of Chicago Skyscrapers



A glimpse of Chicago Skyscrapers from Hyde Park (Photo by author)

The character and quality of any city can be told from a great distance by its skyline, but these buildings do more than advertise a city. They show the faith of many in its destiny, and they create a like faith in others (Shultz and Simmons, 1959, p. 12).

My first glimpse of Chicago will never escape from my mind. I was neither on the top floor of a red big bus, nor standing at the deck of a Chicago river cruise. At that time, I was sitting on a

Boeing-777 over 5000 feet above the sea level, heading to O'Hare international airport at midnight. When the aircraft passed by the loop, the brightly shining skyscrapers outside the window attracted me immediately.

Having travelled around several world-class metropolitans, I thought Chicago is the only one that can combine various architectural styles within a small area but in a harmonious way. For instance, you can find the postmodernism building like Franklin Center North Tower (1007 ft.), and also you can come across a modernism construction like Trump Tower (1388 ft.) or an international style architecture like Willis Tower (still commonly referred to Sears Tower, 1729 ft.). Those skyscrapers compose the skyline of Chicago but you could never feel they look weird together. Every time I jogged along the lakeshore in Hyde Park, I was amazed by the outlook of downtown and I took the picture above in a sunny afternoon.

Later on, I paid a visit to the famous Willis Tower, which is currently the tallest architecture in the city of Chicago. It is said by the guide that in a clear day the tower could be even seen in Indiana and Wisconsin, much beyond my imagination. The most attracting point of Willis Tower is the skydeck located on the 103rd floor, at which you can step on a glass platform as if you are walking in the sky.

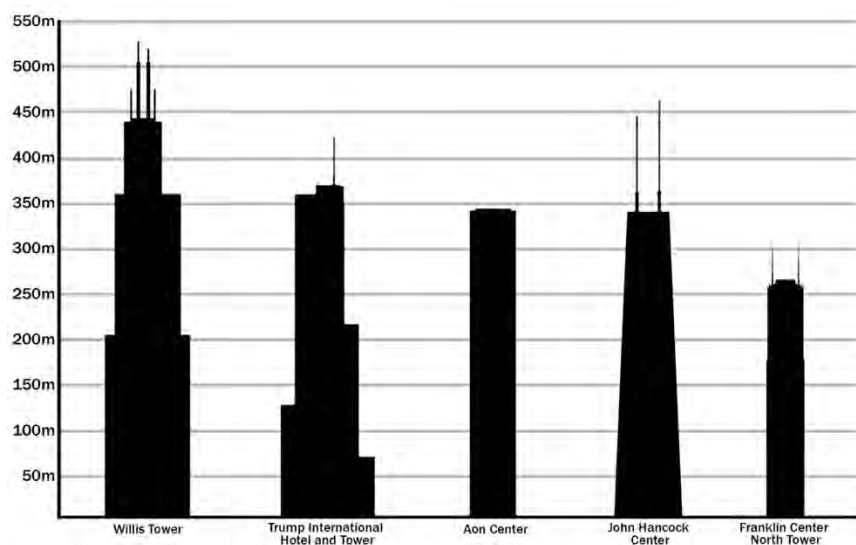
Another time when I was wandering on the North Michigan Avenue, I received a flyer of Chicago 360 Platform, located on the higher level of John Hancock Center. John Hancock Center is now the fourth highest building in Chicago and has similar appearance with Willis Tower. Chicago 360 platform seems similar as the skydeck on the Willis Tower while it offers a special project named TILT Spotlight. The TILT Spotlight is a "thrilling ride", allowing you to extend your body out of the building and face down to the magnificent mile directly in a glass capsule. More and more skyscrapers provide the observation platforms to the public nowadays, but it is not enough to merely open a high place for the tourists to overlook the whole city. They have to think about what is the most special point of their observation decks to attract more tourists.

A skyline is the outline of land and buildings defined against the sky and is regarded as the symbol of a city. Moreover, the number of skyscrapers is a significant indicator of economy for scholars (Barr et al., 2016). Lawrence (1999) found a correlation between establishing a record-breaking skyscraper and local economy change and firstly established the skyscraper index. Since then, the skyscraper has become a hot issue in academia.

A skyscraper could hardly live without a prosperous market. My tour guide at Willis Tower explained that it was previously known as Sears Tower, was the headquarter of Sears Holdings Corporation. Sears was one of the leading retailers in the world. In the 1960s, Sears wanted to establish a single construction that could hold all the employees, but the whole group was too large for a normal size building. Finally, they created the tallest building in North America at that time to meet their requirement. Sears Tower was built in 1974 when the economy was

developing rapidly in Chicago.

After the construction of Sears Tower, New York City and Chicago competed for tallest building. In the past decades, these two cities have never ceased their steps to build taller buildings, and they had the tallest buildings in North America alternately. “Yet skyscraper rivalry between these cities is a part of U.S. historiography”, and the competition eventually became a positive interaction between the cities (Barr, 2013). In the following years several skyscrapers will be completed in New York City, while Chicago government has not approved any construction higher than Willis Tower yet. Many people are wondering whether Chicago will grow taller and taller in the future? I am pretty sure that she will since she is such a young and energetic lady.



The tallest building in Chicago (Photo by Wikipedia)

From Campus to Willis Tower:

By CTA: 45min

By Uber: 30min

From Campus to John Hancock Center:

By CTA: 50min

By Uber: 30min

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How to Survive with a Chinese Stomach



Photo by author

Background

Before I came to Chicago, I read a saying: University of Chicago, where all good food goes to die, which haunted me for four months. And now the nightmare becomes true. As a typical Chinese person, I have to admit neither the size nor the taste of the food here in Chicago fits my picky Chinese stomach. In the last three weeks, I have tried various cuisines in and out of Hyde Park, and I am getting used to lowering my expectation for food. Through frustrated, I am learning to draw lessons from the past and to determine some tips for survival in the future. From these tips, we can tell some differences in diet between Chinese and American people.

Broader Issue

“Do not worry about the size of the dish. ”

Chinese, especially those from southern China, could be astonished by the size of dishes here in the U.S. If you have poor appetite or you are used to eating little, share food with your friends or get ready to wrap it up.

“Do not order too much meat, even though meat is cheaper than vegetables.”

Another astonishing fact in Chicago is that in general, meat is cheaper than most vegetables, while in most cities in China, the opposite is true. That is why we could find more meat than vegetables in a dish. This fact also leads to the point mentioned above – the large amount of meat exceeds Chinese stomach capacity. The difference is generated by the different rate of urbanization. China has relatively lower rate of urbanization (55.6% in 2015)[1], so vegetables that acquire more agricultural labor and rely on short distance transportation tend to be cheaper in China. On the other hand, the rate of urbanization in U.S. was 81.6% early in 2015[2], Thus, the cost to plant and transport vegetables is high in the U.S., resulting in higher vegetable price.

“Do lower your expectation for any spicy food. ”

In some Chinese, Japanese and Thai restaurants, spicy food is provided. But don't be cheated by the menu. All you can taste is creamy, oily, and sweet. This kind of food has been recreated to adapt to American's taste, which deeply hurts Chinese's nostalgic somach.

“Do not be shy to ask for hot water. Take care of your Chinese stomach!”

Most Chinese are used to drinking hot and warm water, while almost all restaurants in Chicago only offer icy water, which could make Chinese stomachs uncomfortable. What's worse, waiters might not understand what is “warm water”. What can you do about it? The secret password is “for tea”. Then you can enjoy your first cup of hot water in Chicago!

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Younghun Shim
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Social Science Division: Economic

Finding Trendy Beer in America



Photo by Katherine Amara, <http://www.katherineamaraltd.com/goose-island-beer-company/>

Background

Beer is one of the most wonderful beverages over the world. It tastes good, cool, not too strong, and fits with almost all kinds of food. Among many kinds of beer, Goose Island beer is one of my favorite beer. I was quite shocked when I found that the company is located in Chicago because I always have thought that it is European beer. I am familiar with this beer because in Korea, there are many markets which sell Goose Island beer and there is also a brewery shop in Seoul.

Therefore, I applied for brewery tour & tasting and visited there. There is a small bar which sells draft beer and it has a large factory and storage behind the bar. I was surprised at first because there were so many people in the bar. Even though it was 4:00 pm, many people were drinking

beer in a small bar. Some people said that they wanted to taste the beer in the best quality so they came to try the freshest Goose Island beer in the world.

As the tour started, I could learn about the history of Goose Island beer, production process, ingredients of different kinds of products. Also, I could see some workers actually making the beer. It was 1-hour tour which is totally not boring. In the tour, we could taste 3 kinds of beer which were really good.

Broader Issue

Goose Island beer is not only popular in domestic market but also in international market such as China, Canada, and Korea. Their key business success factor is the diversity of products. It has 252 kinds of beer which taste different and 42 kinds of beer which is retired. Also, it has seasonal beer which only sells in specific seasons. It meets the desire of young people who want to try new beer. Although there are still many people who enjoy lager beer such as Miller, Budweiser, or Pabst Blue Ribbon, there are also considerable consumers who want different styles including IPA, ale, or stout. Even though Goose Island beer is franchise company and it is not classified as a craft beer anymore, it still has an image of trendy beer. This is because it has followed the latest trend and it has satisfied diverse needs of consumers.

In addition, it distributes its products to the market while keeping a great condition. It is shown from the fact that the taste of beer in the tour is not that different from that of bottle beer which can be bought in a supermarket. Usually, beer tastes best right after it is produced and then it loses its freshness during the distribution process. However, Goose Island beer has a great system which makes it possible to convey its products without decreasing the quality. Lastly, the success of Goose Island beer comes from its taste itself. There are many IPA or ale beer companies in these days but Goose Island beer company is making the products more delicious and its taste is stable. Since there are many kinds of products from this company, some of the products could be very bad. However, most of the products which are sold in supermarket have the same quality level, and similarly popular. Thus, consumers do not have to hesitate to try new product lines, which motivates the company developing new and trendy products.



Goose Island beer company is located in 1800 W Fulton St, Chicago. It takes 25 minutes to go there by car if there is no traffic jam.

Amine Sijilmassi
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Social Science Division

“Don’t Go Past 63rd”



Picture by author on Sept 10th, 2017. 64th Street & Kimbark

Most new students at the University of Chicago have probably heard this sententious phrase: “Don’t go past 63rd”, usually followed by, “There’s nothing there to see anyway.” This advice is grounded in well-meaning common sense: the South Side is a dangerous place, therefore it is better not to go.

According to some, 63rd Street is the unofficial line which separates the South Side from the rest of the city. This provoked me to think: if 63rd Street is some kind of border; what does it look like? Is the divide as blatant as one might expect? Moreover, I happen to live in Hyde Park, with its prestige, leafiness, and the University’s spectacular Gothic-clad facades—yet so close to the South Side of the city. Can an urban landscape change so drastically in the space of just a few blocks?

Call it curiosity or reverse psychology, I made the decision to go past 63rd and elucidate the mystery. In my mind, this 15-minute walk was akin to visiting a forbidden fortress, opening the front door to a new world. To experience the transition at its fullest, I planned to roam 63rd street between the two avenues that bookend the University of Chicago campus: Blackstone and Ellis, thereby enabling me to compare the neighborhood I know with what I would discover.

I commenced my journey. I was walking on Blackstone, in the neighborhood I had become so accustomed to. Things started to change as soon as I went south of Midway Plaisance for the first time. Progressively, the landscapes were transforming. Hyde Park's meticulously maintained leafiness gave way to scattered vegetation and large stretches of weeds. In lieu of the distant view of the University's buildings, what stood out on the horizon southward was the power poles and their loosely-hanging broken lines.

Past 63rd Street, the landscape became strikingly spacious, due to the presence of empty lots and basketball courts. However, unlike the freshly cut grass on the University campus or on Midway Plaisance, this spaciousness gave off nothing but the unsettling feeling of abandonment.

The streets were near-to empty. This state seemed all the more true as I walked southward and arrived to 66th. People seemed to prefer moving about by car rather than on foot, which contrasts Hyde Park's walkable urbanism. And—need I say it?—the racial diversity that characterizes my neighborhood utterly faded away in this peculiar place. For the first time, I was facing segregation with my own eyes.

All in all, 63rd Street (and even Midway Plaisance) is a blatant racial and economic border. The divide is easily perceptible. This is the entrance to an underserved neighborhood. But is this all? No, it is not: such a conclusion would be too reductive. The places I visited, from 63rd to 66th were still lively and pleasant to walk by. The streets were empty, but the place was packed with families having barbecues, friends playing basketball and children running in parks. The area also displayed a hectic community life. One example of this is the Woodlawn Community Garden on 65th, which provides several surrounding blocks with high quality produce. Lastly, abandonment doesn't systematically rhyme with ugliness. The Shrine of Christ Catholic Church on 64th & Woodlawn, for instance, is one of the most beautiful monuments I have seen in Chicago.

I am no expert about the South Side: I have merely visited its fringes that are closest to my comfort zone and are not even the most impoverished or dangerous areas. But what I will remember from this experience is this: 63rd is a front door, but not to doom and gloom. It simply introduces a culturally wealthy yet impoverished and segregated neighborhood, the difficulties of which force its inhabitants to develop new forms of sociability and solidarity.

Experiencing the passage to the South Side is a reminder of the dramatic social and racial divide plaguing Chicago – and more generally the United States. Around 95% of the population is African American. The racial divide overlaps the economic one: predominantly black neighborhoods are more than ten times less likely to have fewer than 10% of families in poverty than predominantly white ones. Moreover, since the 1990's, the average household income has increased by 35% for white people, but it has decreased by 4% in the African American community.

These figures ought to silence anyone tempted to uphold the sadly famous “separate but equal” theory which posits that racial segregation doesn’t run counter to equality if each community has equal facilities at its disposal. Because of its deep historical roots, and catastrophic effects on crime, poverty, and social cohesion, segregation is a prime public policy issue in contemporary Chicago.

However, this experience also warns about the dangers of exaggerated stigmas imposed upon certain areas. All evidence confirms that the South Side is one of the most dangerous places in Chicago. But the emphasis put on this sole aspect hides the richness of many underestimated neighborhoods. The South Side is also a tremendous cultural hub, a hotbed for many underground music genres, as well as a central place in African American history. If this cultural wealth were highlighted more, the South Side would benefit from the tourism and commerce it would entail. In lieu of this, stigmatization condemns an entire zone to remain feared, poor and enclosed. Many of those who unabashedly tell students “not to go past 63rd” ought to reflect on this.



Picture by author, Sept 9th, 2017. 63rd & Blackstone.



Picture by author, Sept 9th, 2017. 64th & Woodlawn. Shrine of Christ the King Catholic Church.

Natalie Stauber
Switzerland
LL.M.

Why is Chicago Called “Windy City”?



Photo by the Budapest Beacon

Chicago – The Windy City is on a lot of postcards for tourists. Even back home, I have heard this phrase several times. Since I have also been told about the really cold weather in Chicago, I automatically assumed a connection to the weather. Only after several days in the city, a Chicago resident told me, this is a common misconception of tourists. In fact, the origins of Chicago’s famous nickname are in no way clear and the obvious answer – the freezing wind – seems like the less likely explanation as other cities (e.g. Boston, New York and San Francisco) have higher average wind speeds.[1]

The most popular theory actually states that it is a reference to the corruption in Chicago: the politicians are said to be “windbags” or “full of hot air”. However, this explanation only leads to more questions. Is the corruption in Chicago actually worse than in other cities? What might be the reasons for the extraordinary corruption? And why do even Chicagoans commonly refer to their city as The Windy City? Are they proud of their history of corruption or is it a sign of resignation?

On a closer glance, the answer to the first question seems to be a definite yes. The Chicago Tribune refers to Chicago as the political corruption capital of the United States. Last December, Alderman Willie Cochran was indicted on federal corruption charges. If he were found guilty, he would be the thirtieth alderman convicted of crimes related to his official position since 1972. In addition, state and Cook County officials, inspectors, cops, patronage workers, patronage

bosses, judges and state law makers have been convicted. Most importantly, six Illinois governors have been charged with crimes during or after their time in office and four have been convicted. Rod Blagojevich was even impeached in January 2009 and removed from office. In fact, the only group that has not been touched by corruption, seems to be the Chicago mayors - the dark explanation being, that they have layers to protect them of being charged directly.[2] Corruption is even a subject-matter in the popular TV series "The Good Wife", which revolves around a lawyer and a politician in Cook county.

In contrast to the first answer, the second one does not have a clear answer. Most theories only provide reasons for the corruption as such but not for the difference in the amount compared to other cities. The most plausible explanation lies in the history of the city. While other cities had reform movements, which led to a more open and honest government as well as a smaller "machine", Chicago has never had equal ambitions. As a large population of immigrants (Irish, German, Jewish, etc.) arrived, they needed help in finding housing and jobs in exchange for payment. This population had certainly no interest in cutting off their source.[3]

There also seems to be an agreement, that Chicagoans take a perverse pride in the bravado of the corrupt politicians. Dick Simpson, University of Illinois political scientist, even said, that "[i]n the city of Chicago, corruption is a spectator sport".[4] For outsiders, especially foreigners, this pride seems difficult to understand. One possible explanation might be that the pride is rather due to the system, which deals with corruption, than to the corruption itself. Another reason might be, that with Chicago being one of the most segregated cities in the country, the corruption and the entertainment gained from it is actually one of the very few things that unites everybody.

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Yang Su
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Chicago: The City of Crime



Photo by Jose M. Osorio / Chicago Tribune

Background

Yesterday there was a man, probably drunk, wandering around below my window. I heard him shouting, see him attempt to open a door with some keys but door just wouldn't open. It was midnight. I thought he would be gone soon, but when he remained there for almost two hours, I got afraid. Earlier in the afternoon, there was a handgun robbery several blocks away. I called the police, but after I finished the call and looked outside, he was nowhere to be found. He was probably too drunk to open the door. I wouldn't have been that paranoid if I were not in Chicago, the place where Al Capone made his blood way to fame, whose legacy is nothing but violence.

Crimes Historically High

According to Chicago Police Department (CPD), the year 2016 was the bloodiest one in the past 20 years. It shocked the whole country with 762 homicides, an increase of 57% compared to 2015, and 3,550 shootings with 4,331 victims, exceeding the total of New York and Las Angeles, the biggest two cities in U.S.. Chicago well deserves the title as "the City of Crime"!

Many things are to blame for the chaos, especially a regulation change. After each investigative stop, officers used to fill out a "contact card" which took just a few minutes to complete. But from Jan. 1,

2016, they must fill out a two-page report for each stop. The change is due to the increased scrutinization on police after the release of the McDonald video, in which a white officer fired 16 shots to kill a black teen at Laquan McDonald in 2014. Besides the increased paper work, officers are afraid to create another McDonald video and end their career. As a result, the number of investigative stops decreased dramatically in 2016 compared to 2015.

Geographical Facts of Crimes

Putting police force aside, let's look at some basic facts about crimes across the 77 communities in Chicago. CPD developed an application called Citizen and Law Enforcement Analysis and Reporting (CLEAR) which provides a geographical display of crimes in Chicago. Figure 1 shows that most of the blood was shed on the western and southern communities. Austin (25) is the most deadly with 77 homicides during the past 12 months. Hyde Park (41) had only two homicides. Most north communities are very safe. The most deadly community north to the W North Ave is Belmont Cragin (19) with only 6 homicides during the past 12 months.

The story is different when it comes to property crimes. Figure 1 shows that it is downtown and Austin (25) where most of the property crimes are committed. The north and south communities have similar level of property crimes. This makes sense because the north has more valuable properties to steal or destroy but also more safeguards as the residents can afford them, while the south has less properties as targets but less protections. The downtown, however, has more properties compared to the south and less protections compared to the north.

Racial Segregation

Chicago is notorious for both crime rates and the racial segregation. Using data from the 2010 American Community Survey, I calculate for each community the percentage of white, African American, Hispanic or Latino and Asian residents. The average percentage is 27.8% for the white, 38.5% for the black, 26.0% for the Hispanic or Latino, and 6.0% for the Asian.

Without racial aggregation, the percentage of residents across communities should be similar, and the distribution should be centred around the mean. However, Figure 2 shows quite the opposite. White people and black people do not live in the same community. 31 out of the 77 communities have white presence less than 10%, and an average black presence of 77%. In the other 46 communities, white people have an average presence of 31%, while black people 12%. Also, black people live together, with either zero presence or dominates a community.

Asian people and Hispanic and Latino people also tend to live together, but they also live with the white. Therefore, the racial segregation is mainly between the African American people and other races. African American dominates a few communities and have almost zero presence in the other communities, where the white, Hispanic and Latino and Asian live together.

Black Presence, Income and Crimes

There is a possible link between crimes and community demographics. I differentiate between physical-harm crimes and money-gain crimes because they are caused by different motives. Physical-harm crimes include homicide 1st & 2nd degree, criminal sexual assault, aggravated assault and aggravated battery, while money-gain crimes include motor vehicle theft, larceny, burglary and robbery. I calculate the number of crimes per 1,000 residents to take the community population into account.

Figure 3 shows a significant positive relation between crime rate and black presence. Black presence explains 62% variation of physical-harm crime rate across communities but only 21% variation of money-gain crime rate across communities. This is because, as I argue above, that money-gain crimes are also likely to occur in non-black communities with more properties to steal or rob. Physical-harm crimes, however, only need violent people to commit.

Many would argue that black people commit crimes simply because they are poor. This is supported by Figure 4, which shows a clear positive relationship between crime rate and the poverty rate. Poverty rate alone explains 59% variation of physical-harm crime rate across the communities and 13% variation of money-gain crime rate across communities.

So what is the real driving factor behind crimes, black presence or poverty rate? To answer this question, we need to apply multivariate analysis approach. I run Ordinary Least Square (OLS) regression of crime rate on black presence and poverty rate. The results show that both black presence and poverty rate are important and significant drivers for physical-harm crimes. One standard deviation increase in black presence (poverty rate) increases physical-harm crime rate by 0.50 (0.44) standard deviation. However, after controlling for black presence, poverty rate has no significant effect on money-gain crime rate, while one standard deviation increase in black presence increases money-gain crime rate by 0.40 standard deviation. In other words, black presence and poverty rate are equally important factors in driving physical-harm crime rate, while black presence is the only factor that drives money-gain crime rate.

Of course, the results are far from conclusive. First, the observed crime rate is an equilibrium result affected by both the intrinsic crime impulse and the safeguards (protection approaches and police force), and a multivariate analysis including more factors is needed. Second, both black presence and poverty rate are endogenous. Another factor may both affect black presence or poverty rate and drive up crime rate. Third, the mechanism is unclear. Does the black presence affect the crime rate through genetic combination, education, culture or something else? No matter what, we should be aware of the observed relationship between black presence and crime rate but also be careful not to draw any discriminative and wrong judgements about our black friends.

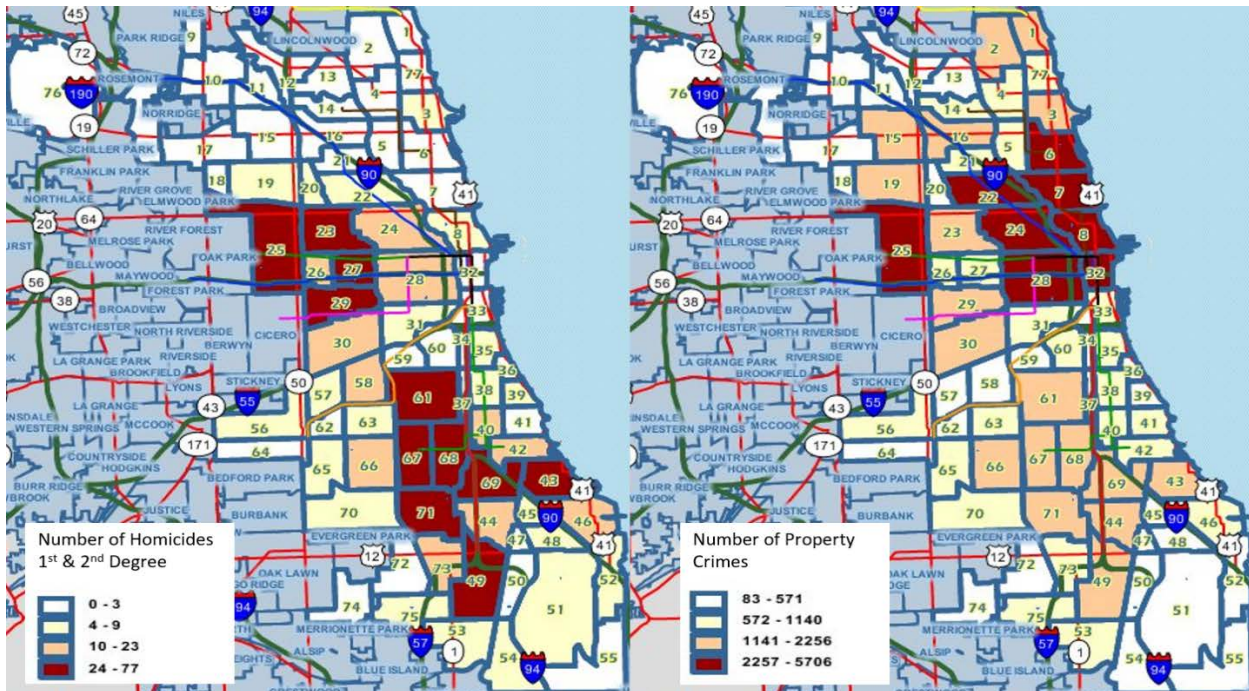


Figure 1: Number of Homicides & Property Crimes during past 12 months (Source: CPD CLEAR)

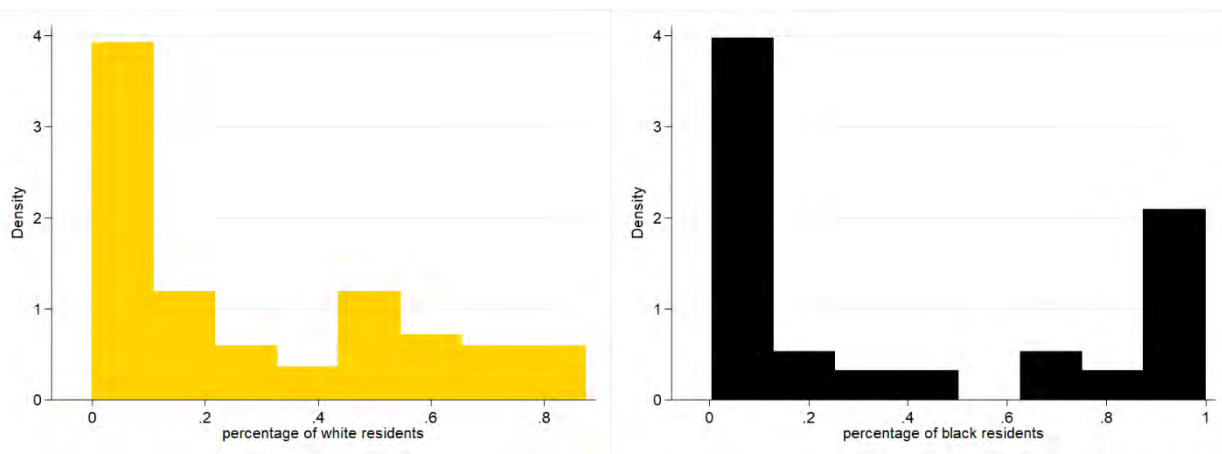


Figure 2: Distribution of resident percentage for different races (Source: American Community Survey 2010)

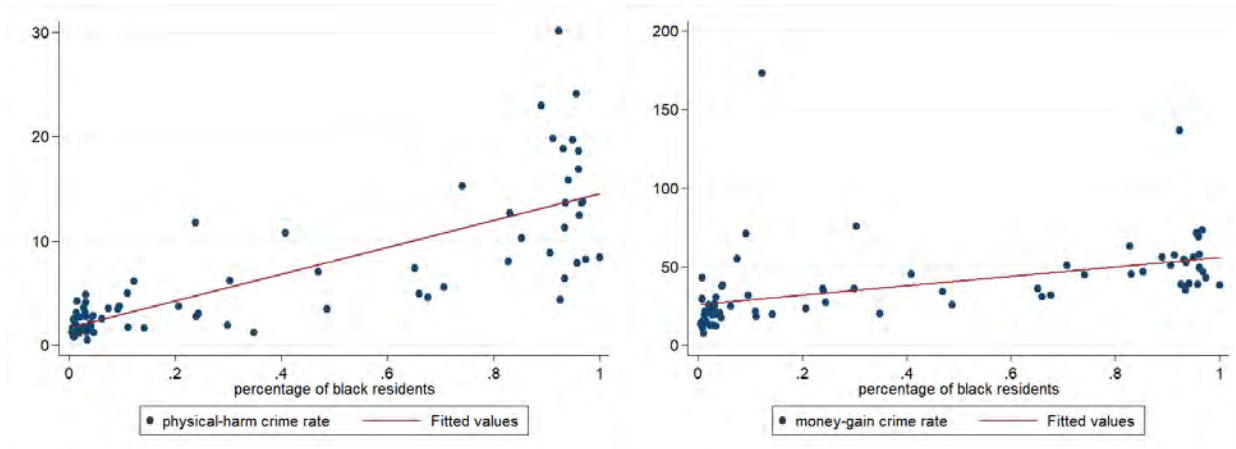


Figure 3: Physical-harm crime rate and money-gain crime rate vs. black presence

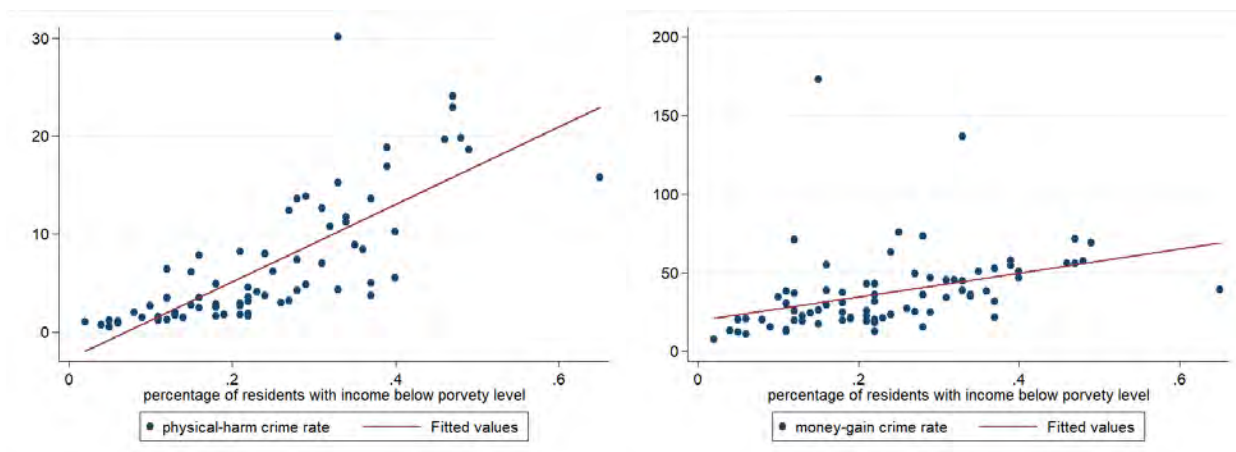


Figure 4: Physical-harm crime rate and money-gain crime rate vs. poverty rate

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Why is Everything Refrigerated?



Photo by author, Chen Sui

Shopping is one of the most attractive activities for me, especially in grocery stores. It is fascinating to find fresh food that is never seen before. Truly, I have found some interesting food in Treasure Island and Whole Foods near my apartment. However, the most awkward phenomenon I have noticed is that all of the fresh fruits, vegetables, meat and fish in the grocery stores are refrigerated. In other words, there is no fresh food that is “warm”. In China, almost all the fresh food sold in the markets was always just picked from the farms several days ago, and unrefrigerated. Even the fish is alive, and meat including beef, pork, lamb is also newly cut and unrefrigerated. People are used to buying these fresh foods from morning and evening community markets every day in China.

Actually, the low temperature in the fresh food zone in grocery stores is a symbol of using cold chain logistics, and supermarkets are the last stop of the chain. Logistics is the management of

the flow of goods from origin to destination to meet customer requirements. The goal of this process is making sure that the goods arrive at the right time and right place with minimum cost. Cold chain logistics refers to logistics with high control of low temperature. The major sectors that use cold chains include food, beverages, and biopharmaceutical. Cold chain logistics normally has five main parts: supply procurement, transport, storage at warehouses, transport again, and end customer. Pre-cooling system, refrigerated trucks and railway wagons, cold storage and retail places with air conditioning are all important components in the cold chain logistics (Sapra & Joshi, 2011).

The United States has been improving the cold chain logistics since the 1950s so it is not surprising that there is almost no un-refrigerated food can be seen in the grocery stores today. In European and American developed countries, the rate of refrigerated transport is 80% to 90%, pre-cooling reservation is up to 80% to 100% and the loss rate is below 5% (Pune, 2016). Although the cold chain logistics seems to improve the effectiveness and make it possible for large industrial company farms to produce and transport food easily, it may not be a healthy way to go in my opinion. Lots of family farms have lost their business because of the popularity of cold chain logistics and the industrial farms, and thus lots of families were forced to become low-income ones. Also, people may not be healthier by eating the refrigerated food and even kids may have never seen a real catfish or chicken but only the fillets and nuggets.

In some developing countries including China, the development of cold chain logistics has just started. Large amounts of meat and frozen food are produced every year in China. To ensure perishable foods' freshness and quality, cold chain logistics is developing. With the sustained economic development, fast increase in demand for food, drugs, and cosmetics, cold chain logistics industry in China may undergo a rapid growth in the future. However, I do not prefer that China going the same path as the US since the number of family farms is so big and the cost of these people losing their job cannot be estimated. Additionally, people are used to un-refrigerated fresh food in China, and I think it is unnecessary to change the habit just to follow the footsteps of the US.

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Why Are Sirens Frequent and Loud in the Chicago Area?



Source: Photo by author

Background

One night last week, I was on the phone with my parents, and we talked about Chicago safety issues. While I was comforting and persuading them that nothing has happened surrounding me, two fire engines and an ambulance roared across my window. The siren was so loud that it deeply scared my parents. That was not the first time my parents heard them through my phone calls. Although I told them a fire station was just five blocks away from my apartment, they just thought my comforting words were pale and unconvincing.

The reason why my parents were extremely anxious was that my family also lives near a fire station. However, the frequency of hearing the fire engine was twice a month on average. Thus, from my parents' perspective, numerous sirens represent the dangerous environment.

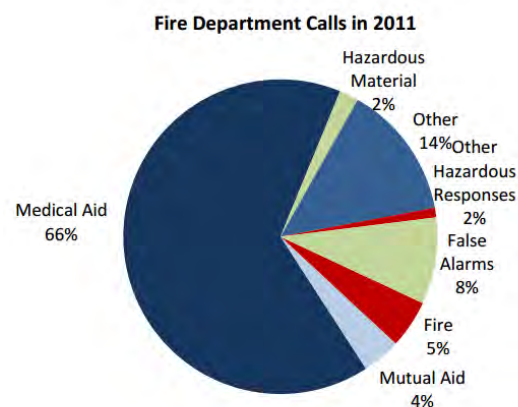
This incredible frequency difference has attracted my attention. After that, I started to record the times I became aware of the sirens around the Hyde Park Neighborhood. The result was astonishing. On a weekday night, I stayed at home and heard at least two distinct sirens. Not to mention that the maximum times I found was five times in one night. I decided to find some reasons to explain the difference in siren occurrences between Hyde Park and my hometown in China.

Border Issues

Currently, 92 fire stations are located in Chicago's 77 neighborhoods. The Bureau of Fire Station in Chicago consists of four divisions: Fire Suppression and Rescue, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), Special Operations and the Office of Fire Investigations (OFI). According to the data from the National Fire Production Associate, the Emergency Medical Services has been more frequently used than others. Actually, in 2011, two-thirds of fire department responses were medical aid calls, and only 5% of fire department calls were due to actual fires. So obviously, the frequent sirens don't mean the numerous real fires.

Also, the first responders' sirens in U.S are regulated to have an intrusive sound intonation to be effective for its purpose. Even ambulances in the middle of the night when there is no traffic to contend with, their sirens are also mandated to be noisy. Moreover, Chicago's municipal code requires that sirens for all emergency vehicles, both public and private, must be at a certain decibel level that is somewhat higher than other municipalities. Further, fire stations in U.S must assign four units vehicles together at least and send more if they feel needed.

In brief conclusion, we do not need to be worried by the sirens surrounding us. However, it does not mean we can be off guard. Be alert at all times.



Source: The United States Fire Service Fact Sheet

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Greetings from Chicago: Where can You Find Postcards and Letters in Chicago?



Fig. 1 Postcards and Letters available in Chicago

Source: Photo by author

People often write letters to communicate their daily or special thoughts. For instance, in case of Japan, my home country, people have a habit of sending New Year's greeting cards. Most of their pictures are nowadays printed, but people still write their personalized messages and share news about their recent lives with one another. Although it is an age of emails and smartphones—or more like because it is such an age—hand-written warm messages express their special and heartfelt feelings to receivers. You can also tell others' lives via SNS posts like Facebook and Twitter, but a special message devoted only to one person certainly has a special impact, and it will be truer if you are living in a foreign country.

So, I decided to write letters to my precious people in Japan when I came to Chicago one month ago. Then, where can I get postcards in Chicago? This is my initial question, and the results of my field research tour are shown in the following.

1. Venue

(1) Stores in Hyde Park

The best store to get nice postcards in Hyde Park is apparently Modern Cooperative, where you can purchase various sophisticated letters as well as modern unique furniture and glasses.

Other than Modern Cooperative, the easiest way to buy postcards in Hyde Park is going to daily stores such as Walgreens, CVS Pharmacy, and Marshalls. I found small corners of ready-made and reasonably-priced gift letter cards in such stores. You need to consider, however, that most of them are for birthdays, some do not include envelopes, and many have words already written inside them as well. At Michaels, I got a blank letter set as well as decorative seals. Although most of them are for invitation letters and packed in groups, you could use them for your normal letter. At Office Depot, I also found plain letter papers and envelopes. They are business-suited and might not fit personal use.

(2) Tourist Spots in Chicago

If you would like to write a very Chicagoan letter, the most recommended way is visiting the gift shops in tourist spots. Note that most postcards and letters sold there are blank.

In the Chicago Architecture Foundation Shop, I discovered various kinds of Chicagoan postcards and letters that feature famous buildings, spots, and scenes in Chicago. They are so Chicago. There are also a huge number of Chicagoan products such as teacups, photo books, and toys in the shop. In the Art Institute of Chicago Store, I encountered many artistic postcards and letters. Most of them are related to the famous paintings of the Institute, and the rest are just artistic ones. A lot of art goods and books are sold in the store. The store is located just next to the museum entrance and you can enter the store for free. In the Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) Chicago Store, I was astonished by abundant modern stylish letters. Basically, they are not related to Chicago. Instead, they are designed by contemporary artists. If you want smart and fashionable letters, MCA Chicago Store is a good option. This store is also just near the entrance and you can visit without any charge. In the Field Museum Main Store, you can find a small postcard corner starring the museum. Also, there is small letter corner, which is not related to the museum. Since the store is inside the museum and you need to the entrance fee, which is 12 dollars even with a UChicago pass, it will be good for you to visit the store when you visit the museum itself.

(3) Stationery Stores in Chicago

In Chicago, you can find attractive stationery stores that provide qualified postcards and letters.

Foursided Card + Gift is a small but wonderful local store in Lake View East, teeming with tremendous amounts of fancy message cards (letters) and postcards. Their letters are to express and celebrate special feelings and events such as love, friends, graduation, wedding, and birthday. Most cards are blank. I also found a small portion of Chicago postcards in the store, but their main product is definitely its beautiful letter cards. By the way, please note that 90% of customers are female. Papyrus is a wide-nation greeting card store based in California. It is not unique to Chicago, but its quality is enough to send a heartfelt letter. There are three Papyrus stores in Chicago: in the Water Tower Place, the Shops at North Bridge, and LaSalle Street.

2. Price

In general, postcards are highly cost-efficient. Their prices, including fascinatedly-designated ones', are \$ 0.50 – 2.00 per one postcard. In contrast, letters' prices vary on products and shops, ranging from \$ 2.00 to \$ 7.00. Letters in bulk are likely to be much more reasonable than a single one.

United States Postal Service (USPS) (2015) reports that the volume of First-Class Mail, which is regularly utilized for sending postcards and letters has been declining. During 2005 and 2014, "total volume has declined by more than 56 billion pieces (or 26%), First-Class Mail volume has declined 34.5 billion pieces (or 35%), and single-piece First-Class Mail (primarily letters bearing postage stamps) has declined 24.4 billion pieces (or more than 50%)." It is noticeable that it happened while the economy and population of the United States and the world expanded during that period. It is inferred that more and more mails have come to be sent not physically but electrically and the demand of physical letter has decreased.

However, when you look into the data in detail, you can tell that the speed of the decrease is weakening, which implies that there is a certain amount of basic demands for physical letters. Those would include business letters such as paying bills for utilities or credit cards, delivery of magazines, and greeting cards. However convenient our world will become, the goodness of physical hand-written letters will remain.

In order to keep the First-Class Mail service, USPS needs to be more profitable in other areas, that is package delivery. During the period above, the total revenue of USPS also fell in spite of rising demand for tele-order services' package delivery. It should invest more in package domain and earn a profit that could support postal services. At the same time, they should strive to enhance their service quality. When I went to USPS office in Hyde Park, officers' attitude was not so friendly. Just improving such things could contribute to strengthening their

competitiveness towards other companies such as UPS, FedEx.

In addition, USPS should also put priority in advertising the goodness of handwritten letters especially for young people who mainly communicate with others via mobile phones. It is undeniable that “education” for young people will have a large impact in the future, but I rarely see such PRs in the US. USPS needs to consider their promotion strategy; otherwise, the great culture of writing might cease.

Reference:

United States Postal Service. (2015), USPS Delivery Standards and Statistics | FACT SHEET

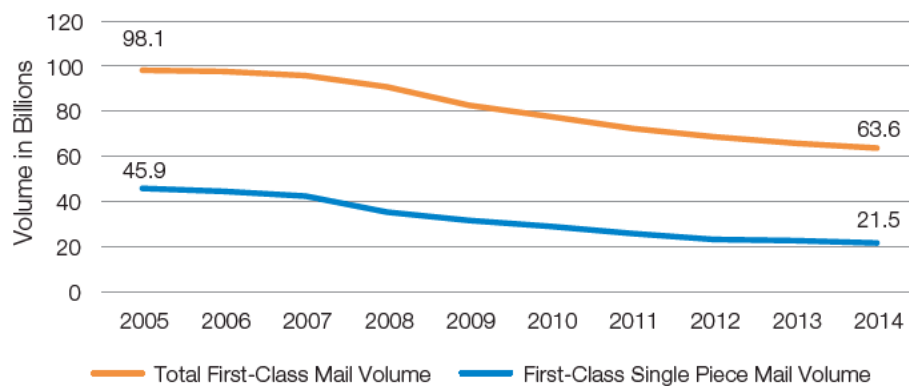


Fig. 2 First-Class Mail Volume Trends

Source: United States Postal Service. 2015. USPS Delivery Standards and Statistics | FACT SHEET

1. In Hyde Park

Modern Cooperative	CTA 10 minutes / Car 4 minutes / Bike 7 minutes
Walgreens	CTA 5 minutes / Car 3 minutes / Bike 7 minutes
CVS Pharmacy	CTA 3 minutes / Car 8 minutes / Bike 5 minutes
Marshalls	CTA 15 minutes / Car 5 minutes / Bike 9 minutes
Michaels	CTA 15 minutes / Car 5 minutes / Bike 9 minutes
Office Depot	CTA 7 minutes / Car 4 minutes / Bike 8 minutes

2. Out of Hyde Park

Chicago Architecture Foundation Shop	CTA 40 minutes / Car 14 minutes / Bike 45 minutes
Art Institute of Chicago Store	CTA 40 minutes / Car 14 minutes / Bike 45 minutes

Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) Chicago Store

CTA 30 minutes / Car 20 minutes / Bike 53 minutes

Field Museum Main Store

CTA 36 minutes / Car 12 minutes / Bike 37 minutes

Foursided Card + Gift CTA 42 minutes / Car 24 minutes / Bike 69 minutes

Papyrus Water Tower Place CTA 33 minutes / Car 21 minutes / Bike 55 minutes

Papyrus Shops at North Bridge

CTA 46 minutes / Car 19 minutes / Bike 50 minutes

Papyrus LaSalle Street

CTA 43 minutes / Car 19 minutes / Bike 49 minutes

Note: Time for CTA includes walking time.

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“Better Garden, Better Life”: Chicago Botanic Garden

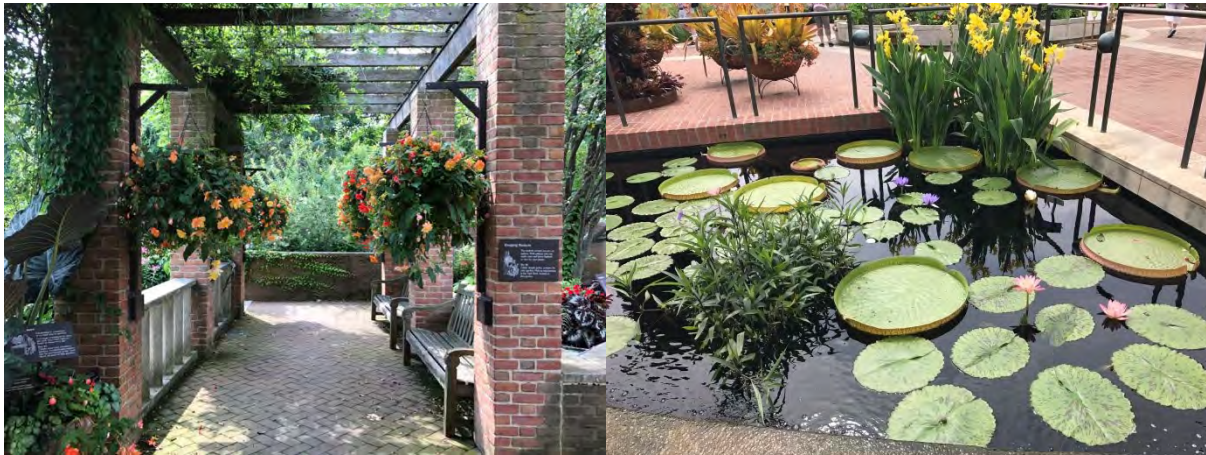


Photo by Chenhui Sun

Background

Gardens in different countries or cities can show diverse and glorious cultures of the world. Chinese, British, Japanese, and American: people all around the world mix their culture into their gardens. So if you want to know more about a city or country, visit local gardens first. Therefore, from the first day I arrived to Chicago, I was planning to visit gardens there.

Luckily, last Sunday, I visited Chicago Botanic Garden, a museum of plants and multi-cultural garden styles in the United States. It is a 385-acre gorgeous place with 31 separate gardens showing all kinds of botanies from different zones and continents, as well as diverse garden styles from different nations around the world. The museum is subdivided into several gardens of different themes. If you want to know more about rare plants, you can visit the Sensory Garden to have a look at the corpse flower, which is the largest unbranched inflorescent plant in the world with a 2-meter tall body, single purple petal, and an odor that smells like rotting flesh. If you want to enjoy garden styles of different cultures, you should never miss the Heritage Garden (Italian style), Bonsai Collection (Chinese style), English Walled Garden (English style) and Japanese Garden (Japanese style). These amazing gardens can tell you how richly diverse Chicago is.

More impressively, Chicago Botanic Garden is more than just an exhibition of amazing plants and diverse exotic garden styles. It also teaches citizens how to enrich their life in gardens. The weekend I visited Chicago Botanic Garden, I saw families learning cooking skills with Chef David Esau, a famous Chef in Chicago. They will learn how to pick up and store fresh vegetables, how to slice or chop food materials, and even got the opportunity to enjoy a free dessert made by Chef David Esau. By cooking together, family members will understand the meaning of family and learn to cherish each other. In Children's Growing Garden, I saw children planting their favorite flowers or vegetables on an open land. By watching their plant growing up day by day, children will understand the meaning of life and achieve a sense of fulfillment.

Thus, I realized that the word "garden" in the U.S. not only means a beautiful area decorated with flowers and green plants, but also represents a field in which family members can work together to enjoy the beauty of nature and the beauty of life.

Broader Issues

Plants are the most gorgeous masterpiece of God. They stand on the ground, seem to be quiet and still. By only one light, magic can happen. From moment to moment, plants stretch, mature, turning to a new look and providing amazing gifts to human beings. People can feel the pulse of nature and feel young and energetic when living with plants. Maybe that's why people invented gardens.

Better garden, better life: gardens are the best proof of the harmonious relationship between human being and nature. In gardens, we nourish plants, prune branches, and remove pests. Plants decorate our land, enrich our spiritual life and can even help us solve social problems. For example, nowadays in the U.S., gardening can become the best therapy for poor citizens. In industrialized metropolises like LA and Chicago, for citizens, especially for poor citizens, it is hard to find fresh food in their neighborhoods. By frequently eating fast food, they suffer from obesity, hypertension, and cardiac diseases. Feeling trapped in misery, they start to abandon themselves. Gardening can really help the poor in U.S. get rid of the food insecurity problem. If the poor can get the right to use a small yard to plant vegetables and fruits, they will not only get sufficient organic food to eat healthier and be healthier but also have a sense of connection with the nature and the land, and they may have a better time with their families. The government really needs to find methods to provide the poor with gardening therapy.

To sum up, gardens in Chicago not only show us the harmonious relationship between human beings and nature and the vibrant and variegated American culture, but also can enrich people's lives. In Chicago, you can find a lot of lovely gardens to visit, such as Chicago Botanic Garden and Garfield Park Conservatory. Also, you can find community gardens to plant your favorite vegetation on your own. So, please visit gardens and enrich your life in gardens. Better garden, better life.



Photo by Chenhui Sun

Location and visiting time:

Chicago Botanic Garden is located in Glencoe, a small town to the north of Chicago. I visited Chicago Botanic Garden by Uber on Aug 20, a beautiful sunny Sunday. It takes only 1 hour from The University of Chicago to Chicago Botanic Garden.

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Black People in The South



Outside of the Walmart, in West Chatham. Photo by Qiyao Zhou

Background

I went to the 8331 S Stewart Avenue, a distant area located in southern Chicago, by chance. One of my friends wanted to buy mattress and appliances for her unfurnished apartment. We came to the Walmart at 4712 S Cottage Grove Avenue first, and was told that what we were looking for were all served at the biggest Walmart supercenter, located at 8331 S Stewart Avenue. After careful consideration, we finally decided to go to the place we would never thought of going alone, but I still felt nervous before going to the south. Hyde park is such a quiet and nice place, while the Southern parts are thought to be noisy and full of violence, with frequent gun shootings and gang crimes. I comforted myself by the number of people with me and how safe it would be if we took the Uber. As we passed from the north to the south, houses became shabby and worn out. People drive cheap cars instead of luscious limousines in the Loop. When we entered the Walmart, almost all customers and staff members were African Americans.

There was no white people, no Asians, or no Latinos. To our surprise as well as relief, people were quiet shy and curious about the only 5 Asian students there, instead of showing rudeness as what we thought they could be. They dared not to talk or to ask. When I asked the shop assistant that where the lamp was, he felt quite honored that I talked to him. At that time, I realized that the truth is about what you see with your eyes, and fear vanishes confronting kindness and respect. However, I also realized sadly that the racial discrimination does exist for African Americans. Even for African Americans, they consider Asians to be possessing a higher social status than themselves unconsciously.

Broader Issues

“Don’t go south.” Southern Chicago are generally considered as remote and dangerous areas for the mass, where incoming students are likely to be warned by seniors that never enter those districts. Black equals to violence, black equals to poverty. It is arguable, statistically, but is it really reasonable? Probably not.

African American people have a long history in Chicago, throughout which they have been pursuing freedom on this promising land and have been struggling for equal rights as other racial groups in the United State. But they are still confronting discrimination with respect to education, housing, and civic rights today. Except for high crime rate and poverty, African American people are leading a life that may not be known by the public. What we do not know is that they have their own blue music, that they promote the flowering of Chicago literature and art, and they share the same willing to live a better life. The truth is that, apart from the color of their skins, African American people are the same as us.

Distinguishing between safe areas and unsafe areas seems to be conflicting with such truth. Nevertheless, the so called relatively safe areas account for only a small fraction of Chicago. If you remain in the “safe zone” and make prior assumptions in your mind, you may probably be misled in finding the truth. If you could make the initial step on the territory you have hesitated to go to, you may explore the unknown areas in the city and in your mind. Examples of such unrenowned districts are Garfield garden, Beverly neighborhood, South Shore, etc. After all, when approaching to the truth, you would probably see an unprecedented bigger and brighter rainbow appeared in the stereotypically “notorious” district.

Travel Times:

The Walmart Supercenter, 8331 S Stewart Avenue, Chicago.
By Uber/Lyft: 22 minutes from Hyde Park to the Walmart

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Master of Public Policy (Harris)

Chicago Parking Meters: Burden or Blessing?



Photo by Author

Background

When you drive a car and park on the street, you have to be aware of parking restrictions. In Chicago, it is easy to get parking tickets. Restrictions typically have to do with weather, time limits, and street cleaning. Chicago has a long history of a public parking system, at least it started from 1951. Even though it plays an important role both for the city and for citizens, it is an important source of revenue for the city and, at the same time, it provides affordable parking for citizens. Unfortunately, Chicago has got a big challenge handling this complicated system.

Broader Issues

Even though some people think the price of Chicago parking is expensive, it is cheaper than my hometown of Tokyo. In Tokyo, Japan, since streets are narrow, there are few streets with parking, so people usually use private parking, which will cost you approximately \$10/hour. However, in Chicago, the price is \$6.5/hour inside the loop and was \$3/hour until 2008, which is much cheaper than I thought. Compared to other international cities, the price of street parking in Chicago is low. Maintaining nearly 36,000 parking meters with affordable price is not an easy

job for the city. Especially, operating cost of checking receipts on one's dashboard 24/7 kept putting pressure on city's tight budget. The city sought out options and what it did was leasing its parking system to a private company. This type of long-term lease, typically less than 20 years, of public assets is known as a "public-private partnership (PPP or P3)". This scheme is popular all over the world because it is cost effective and provides higher quality service. The city made a deal in 2008, and it seemed that the problem has resolved.

Actually, the agreement was miserable for the city. The company who has got a deal is called "Chicago Parking Meters L.L.C. (CPM)", which is invested by Morgan Stanley and Abu Dhabi Investment Authority. They have agreed unusually long 75-year lease of all 36,000 Chicago parking meters with \$1.16 billion (Fisher, M. (2010)). At least, this deal is good because CPM made the App called "Chicago Parking Meters", allowing you to know where you can park, to pay for parking and to extend your time remotely. This app has made complicated parking rules visible in a simple way and it is gradually replacing pay box and dashboard receipt.

When you know more about the detail, you realize how strange it is. The investors paid \$1.16 billion to the City, which many people believe this amount is far below market value. In fact, CPM earned \$121.7 million in 2015 and in 2020, they may be made back what it paid and still have another 63 years lease period. Even worse, the City has to compensate for CPM when the City blocks their parking spaces, such as street repairs, public events and free parking for the disabled.

One official report (Hoffman, D.H. 2009) concluded this contract as a complete failure in two ways. First, the City failed to review the costs and benefits of the contract before deciding to lease their assets, mainly because of time limitation. Second, the City bowed to the temptation of entering into PPPs in order to receive large, upfront payments that solve short-term financial problems, without properly considering the long-term implications of the deal. So, roughly speaking, all they really did was to sell future revenue for money today, creating tougher budgets for the next generation in exchange for a one-time fix.

Measuring the performance of PPP has always been a problematic discussion. One study says that the keys of successful PPPs are "Commitment and responsibility between public and private sector" and "Appropriate risk allocation, risk sharing, and risk transfer", based on their quantitative analysis on 140 PPP projects (Yuan, J., Wang, C., Skibniewski, M. J., & Li, Q. (2011)). The City's failure tells us the importance of social responsibility on using public property. It is not a money game, nor a political purpose.

We still have many years to fix the problem of street parking in the city. It is not the problem of pricing, but how to use this huge property in a more public way. The company has a responsibility to be social, and it is our responsibility as a member of the city, to make them change.

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Travel Times: You can see this anywhere inside the city of Chicago!

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Chicago, A Dog Friendly City



(Photo by author)

Background

When I arrived at Chicago, I saw many kinds of animals. Especially, I saw many cute dogs with owners walking along the lake side. These dogs and their owners are all so nice and friendly. In this AEPP I interviewed those dog owners, they were willing to talk and teach us about Chicago. They looked so happy and enjoyed the time with dogs. I was very impressed by that, so I was interested in dogs in Chicago. In Tokyo, my hometown, it is difficult to breed pets at my house because of space. I don't own dog in my home, but my grandparents own dog at their home and I loved them.

Chicago has many green spaces. You can see green spaces in Chicago everywhere. There are many nice and large parks in Chicago, such as Lincoln Park, Millennium Park, and Jackson Park. For this, you can easily find the places for dog-walking. Also, there are some dog beaches in Chicago. One of the most famous beaches is Montrose Beach Dog Friendly Area, it is as large as about 4 acres. If you bring your dog to those dog beaches, they may feel happy and relaxed. I believe Chicago has pretty good environment for dogs. Chicago is a dog friendly city.

However, you can find only 3 of 23 dog friendly areas in more south area than the Loop (Chicago Park District website, n.d.). Furthermore, you can't find dog beach in the southern part of Chicago. Why not?

Broader Issue

I can point out the correlation of economic situation and the location of dog friendly area. Owning dog sometimes costs a lot of money, so owning dog can reflect the economic situation of owners. As a matter of fact, Chicago is one of the most segregated cities in the United States. There is a large wealth gap between races in Chicago. Rich people (most of them are white people) generally live in northern part of the city, and poor people (most of them are black people) generally live in western of southern part of the city. The imbalance of location of dog friendly areas reflects the segregation to some extent. And this problem of segregation is one of the most problematic issue to solve in Chicago.

I think that one of the most effective way to solve this segregation is decreasing inequality of education. It is pretty natural thing that parents want to give their children good education. Under this natural intention of parents, rich parents try to live in rich area. On the other hand, poor parents can't live in those area and need to live in poor area. As a result, only rich students can receive better education and get higher income jobs. The next generation, that is children of those students encounter the same problem. This problem is a systematic problem, then segregation never ends. So, in my opinion, it is better that public schools be funded equally for example depends on number of students, not on wealth of the area. Drastic policy change can have also bad effect, so at first we can take gradual change such as coordinating system to absorb gap of revenue of each school. It may take so long time to solve segregation by this policy because it is systematic problem inherited to next generation. I think the government need to take action as early as possible to solve this problem



Photo of Motrose beach (Source: <http://www.mondog.org/>)

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Yinzhan Tang
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The Harris School of Public Policy

A Bit of Craft Beer Culture



Photo from <https://www.craftbeer.com>.

Background

If you are a beer lover, I am sure you will fall in love with American craft beer just like me. Last week, I had several drinks in Horse Thief Hollow, an Irish style pub in Beverly, Chicago. I ordered a flight of 4-ounce glasses of different handcrafted beer to sample what's on the tap. 18th Rebellion was the winner. It is a refreshing, unfiltered German ale with a lemony, slightly sweet nose and peppery finish. This Kolsch style ale is considered the pride of this Irish pub, not only because it received a Bronze medal at the 2014 Great American Beer Festival, but also because it represents the spirit and passion of a small but close-knit group of people in Beverly who truly care about beer.

Craft beer is mainly produced by independent microbreweries like Horse Thief Hollow. Compared to large-scale corporate breweries, these microbreweries are generally characterized by their emphasis on quality, flavor and brewing technique. Craft brewers there see themselves as artists. They create recipes, experiment with ingredients, fabricate names and bottle designs so as to develop new beer styles. So, craft beer is not a commodity produced by emotionless factories but artwork born from brewers' love. This love of beer is contagious, bringing more and more people into the world of craft beer. Craft beer has now completed its transition from counterculture to mainstream. According to Nicks (2016), the retail dollar value of the craft beer industry now is now \$22.3 billion, out of a total \$105.9 billion spent on beer in the U.S.

U.S. is probably the best nation for beer lover in the world. Back in China, we don't have this fascinating beer culture. Most people just buy canned beer from supermarkets. However, I do believe the same revolution would take place in my country one day. Because people's pursuit of high-quality life is unstoppable.

Broader Issues

Craft breweries and pubs have been long regarded as one of the first signs of gentrification by many scholars. While according to Barajas, Boeing and Wartell(2017), "craft breweries are more like the harbingers or even the instigators, rather than respondents, of neighborhood changes." (p.19) Craft breweries and pubs tend to bring positive changes to their disinvested communities. New breweries are often built in inexpensive industrial spaces near urban centers and residential districts. Craft brewers take over abandoned old buildings in these areas, renovate them with tanks, kettles and casks. These breweries provide more job opportunities with higher salaries, attract new small business and investment to their communities and boost the development of tourism. Young people are moving in, too, making the communities more vibrant and attractive. The brewers usually take pride in their contributions in the revitalization of their neighborhoods. They consider themselves as pioneers and catalyst in the resurrection of these neglected areas. But the question is, are these changes really encouraging news for local people?

The answers might be "no". The improvements brought by craft breweries are actually first steps of gentrification. Deserted warehouses and factories are torn down and replaced by modern apartments buildings, fancy restaurants and trendy bars in these areas, making it expensive to live in. Poor people are kicked out of their home because they couldn't afford the rents. Whiter, wealthier and more educated people become the majority of residents. Breweries are also feeling the heat from rising real estate costs because most of them are also renters, too. Their landlords might want to build something more lucrative, like apartments. Many of them are forced to exit the trendy scenes they jump-started. Yes, craft breweries, which is said to be the initiator of gentrification, now become its victims. Just like what Curran, a geography professor at DePaul University in Chicago said (2013), "They are trying to kill the goose that laid the golden eggs".

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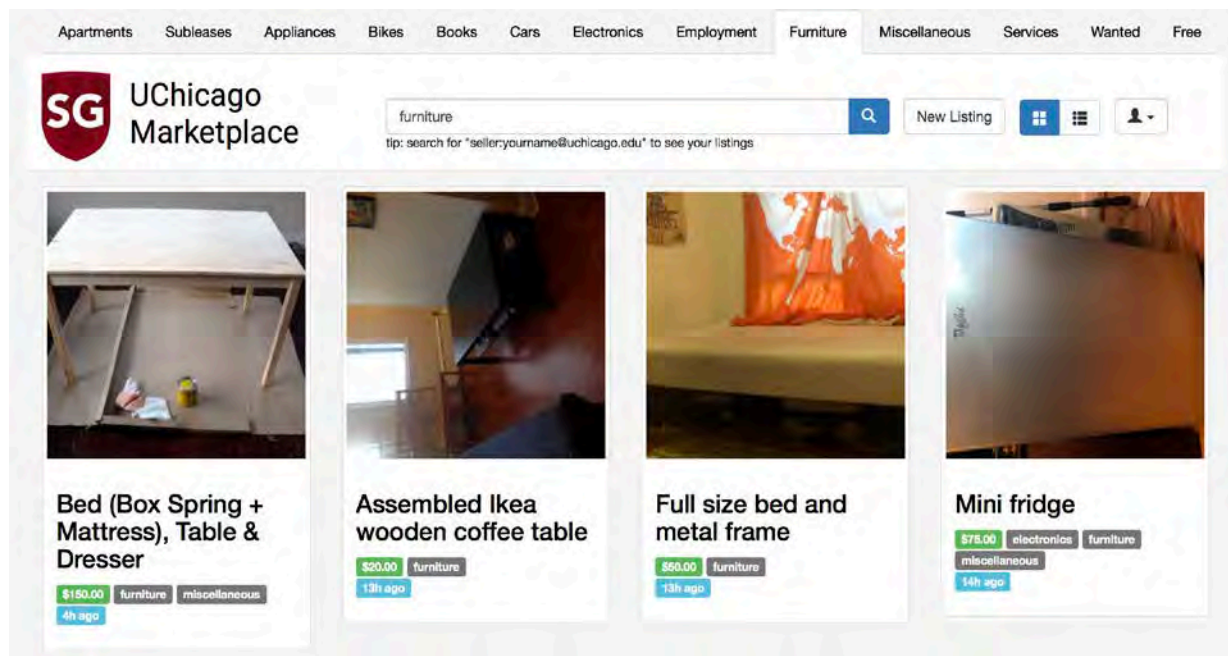
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Peer-to-peer Marketplaces



Homepage of marketplace.uchicago.edu accessed August 23 2017.

Moving to a foreign country is an exciting adventure. This experience is more challenging if you decide to rent an apartment and buy pieces of furniture by yourself. Fortunately, Chicago has many options that help you to furnish your home, particularly in Hyde Park you will find plenty of them. As a graduate student, one of the things that caught my attention was the peer-to-peer marketplace. This is an initiative of the Student Government of the University of Chicago, widely known as Marketplace.

Marketplace is a website that allow the University community to buy or sell goods, from textbooks to furniture. You would find items at accessible price and according to your budget. Before you decide to go to the Ikea store or to the Amazon website, check out Marketplace not only because this is good for your wallet, but also because you have the chance to meet people from the University of Chicago. In fact, while I was purchasing a coffee table and lamps I met a couple of MPP second-year students.

A peer-to-peer (P2P) economy is a model where people buy or sell goods and services directly with each other, without intermediation of a third party. This is an alternative to traditional transactions and it is opening new markets rather than compete with existing ones. For instances, services such as Uber and Airbnb serves as alternatives to taxi or hotels.

Marketplace is just an application of the P2P economy to the second-hand goods and services. Apparently, community do not publish this website to the students and does not show enough information about the amount of expected savings. Encouraging people to sell and buy through Marketplace will develop a deep and efficient market for newcomer students.

Compare to Colombian Universities, the American Universities have an extensive population of students who come for short period. This helps to create a liquid market for second-hand goods. Adopting a Marketplace in Colombian Universities would be a challenge because student usually settle down in the city where he/she studies.

Marketplace also comes with a caveat, storing and loading the furniture. In that sense, it is essential being prepared to ask someone to help you to store and move your purchases. Storing is not a usual practice. However, you could find something that you really like before moving in. Students sell their products in a short time period. For instances, international students usually sell their products between two and three weeks before travel back to their home countries. In the moving day, Uber services is a quick option, nevertheless check that the cost of this services could increase unreasonable the final price of the purchase.

You do not need to worry about bargain skills. Marketplace is full of good-quality products at fire sale prices. Interestingly, you would find people that give you their household furniture free with the only condition of moving them out of their homes.

As Marketplace is getting more publicity, student could access to a wider and more range of products and services. Let us make the most of Marketplace and spread the word

To access to Marketplace, type in your internet browser <https://marketplace.uchicago.edu/>.

You will find a top menu bar that help you to look for specific items. Then, you have to scroll down to look the different items. Click in the picture and send a message. Easy-peasy.

Yung-Hsu Tsui
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MA Program in Social Science

Who Wrote Behind the Gate? Historical Linkage Between Chinatown in Chicago and Turmoil in China



The Chinatown Archway. Photo by Author

Chinatown, a place that attracts not only Chinese, but also people from many different kinds of ethnic groups. Every time someone mentions Chinatown, the first thing pops up would be delicious Chinese food, unique Chinese ingredients or Chinese style buildings. At Chinatown in Chicago, it is just the case: authentic restaurants, such as Lao Beijing and Qing Xiang Yuan; traditional Chinese supermarket, such as Chinatown Market; and the landmark of Chinatown in Chicago, the Chinatown Archway.

The Chinatown Archway is the gate of Chinatown. It stands at the corner of Cermak Road and Wentworth Avenue. With its unique Chinese style design, people would realize they are in Chinatown at first sight. There are four Chinese characters, “Tian Hsia Wei Gong”, listed horizontally at top of the front-side of the archway. These four characters in Chinese mean that “the world belongs to the commonwealth”, and they are famous as they were once a slogan for

Chinese revolution in 1911, a revolution overthrew last imperial dynasty and established Republic of China, leading by Dr. Sun Yat-sen, who was latter known as the founding father of China. Because he came to Chicago looking for help from the oversea Chinese when planning for the revolution, to commemorate his contribution to China and his linkage with Chicago, residents of Chinatown in Chicago built this archway and put these four characters, copied from Dr. Sun's handwriting, at the front side of the gate.

Most Chinese are familiar with this part of story and assume that the other four characters at the back side of this archway share the same story. In fact, they are different.

The four characters at the back side of this archway are "Li, Yi, Lian, Chi", which represent four different anchors in Chinese culture: manners, justice, incorrupt and shame. Although these anchors were created thousand years ago, they were re-proposed in 1934 by Chiang Kai-Shek, who later became the president of Republic of China, to promote the Chinese culture for Chinese people (Thompson, 1969).

Even though Chiang had never been to Chicago, he did contribute to the Chinatown in a different way. Around 1930's, the great depression harmed the economy of the United States severely ("The Great Depression", 2009). This national wide recession also cut back the income for most residents in Chinatown, and this poor living condition lasted for more than 20 years. In 1943, the Civil War in China began. Chiang, as the president of Republic of China and leader of Nationalist Party by that time, fought against the Communist Army. In the end, however, Chiang lost control of the army and then decided to abandon the territory of mainland China. This decision not only set the Nationalist's Army into turmoil, but also made a lot of Chinese civilian into refugee.

As one of the ally of Republic of China, the United States decided to accommodate some Chinese refugee. The US council then repealed the Geary Act (Chinese Exclusion Act of 1892), a law prohibited Chinese immigrants since 1892, and allow Chinese immigrants move to US. With the change of government policy, thousands of new Chinese immigrants flooded into United States.

These new immigrants brought not only labor forces, but also new demand. Around 1960's there were about 14,000 residents lived in Chinatown, whereas there were only about 600 people in 1930's ("Landmark in Chinatown of Chicago", 2009).

Due to the "Renaissance" of the Chinatown, the oversea Chinese community in Chicago, which was supported by "Republic of China", the Chinese government that controlled by Chiang, and the government of Chicago installed this archway in 1975 ("The Chinatown Gate", n.d.).



Upper: The back-side of the Archway. Lower: The calligraphy of Chiang Kai-Shek

Photo from: <https://goo.gl/pUcn3i> and <https://goo.gl/YUPzTt>

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The Chinatown Archway

2206 S. Wentworth Avenue, Chicago, IL, 60616

Car: 15 min

CTA: 55 > Cermak-Chinatown(Red Line) 25min

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2017

For Men May Come and Men May Go, But I Go On Forever



Source: "Photograph by Raymond Boyd — Getty Images")

After being in the States for over a week, I decided to learn tennis. My quest for the best and the cheapest tennis racket brought me to the Dick's Sporting Goods shop downtown. The excitement of having a tennis racket raised my adrenaline level, and I decided to walk to the lake. While I was walking to my destination, I came across a structure, a building that gave way to the Downtown traffic underneath and housed the historic Chicago Stock Exchange. A rendition of modern architecture, the juxtaposition of glass and steel, arches – a reminiscent of the original design by Adler and Sullivan. The economist and the architect in me were filled with testosterone at seeing this magnificent space. Without wasting a moment, I decided to take a picture. However, my excitement was short lived. Suddenly, a dog stroller came to me and informed me the building no longer functioned as the stock exchange, but was rather a gym now. I just stood still like a child, as if my toy has been snatched from me. With mixed feelings in my heart, the adult in me decided to move on.

Today, the Chicago Exchange has the largest number of outstanding future and options contracts in the world. But, what made Chicago such an important hub for futures market? After the construction of the Illinois-Michigan canal in 1848, Chicago emerged as a dominant grain hub in the late 1850s (Pierce, 1957). The merchants accumulated, stored and then shipped grain to this city. As the cumulative quantity in Chicago increased, a need was felt by

these traders to secure a firm price and quantity commitments from their buyers. Hence, merchants started to engage in forward contracts. The first such forward contract was signed in the very heart of the city of Chicago on March 13, 1851 (Hieronymus, 1977). (Note: In a forward contract one party agrees to sell a specified grade and quantity of the good to the counterparty at a future date, at a pre-decided price).

Several exchanges in different cities sprung up around the river and the lake. The largest and most prominent of the exchanges was the Board of Trade of the City of Chicago, a grain and provisions exchange established in 1848; known today as the Chicago Board of Trade (CBT). CBT institutionalized its first set of rules and procedures for forward contracts in 1863. By 1865, CBT started to standardize commonly traded forward contracts, and hence the futures market was born. The most significant moment was when CBT began to function as a clearing house, exchange.

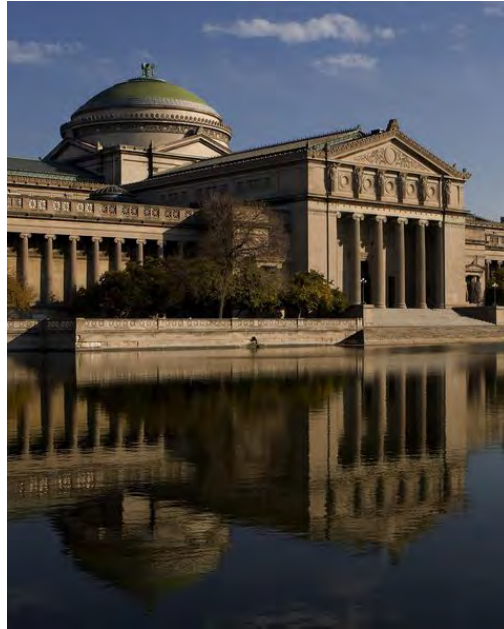
Many argue that Chicago was also the birthplace of the stock market greed and manipulation which finally result in the Global Financial Crisis of 2008. Frank Norris, explores the one such market manipulation of prices in his book *The Pitt: A Story of Chicago*. The book is based on the Leiter corner of 1898 which is considered to among the three big corners that occurred throughout the century.

Like other designed spaces the Chicago Stock Exchange has the story of its own. The exchange has now moved to a modern building, the only element that has remained is the banner saying – “Chicago Stock Exchange”. The energy has however not moved. The structure houses a gym now. Full of energetic men and women trying to sweat themselves out. This is just like the past days when brokers would sweat themselves out in the trading pit shouting, jumping and at times cussing to find the most appropriate trade. Ironically, when you visit the building today you find similar people, but the pit has now been replaced by modern body-building and cardio machines. People are still jumping, sometimes shouting while lifting weights. This defines the continuity of the initial intent of the space. Space was originally designed as a large hall, pushing its inhabitants to exert as much energy as they can to achieve their goal. The space is still pushing people as it was earlier. The exchange has now moved to a quieter place where the pit has disappeared, but trading hasn’t. This reminds me of the Tennysons’ poem – “The Brook” where he compares how secondary elements display temporal changes, but the primary underlying remains constant.

CTA: 32 min/Car: 16 min/Bike: 40 min

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Physical Science Division

How Human Create Their World?



Museum of Science and Industry. Photo from www.msichicago.org

Background

We are experiencing a great technology revolution. Thanks to the pilot technology and industry development, our life is totally different from that of the past. With the implementation of Cloud, machines around the world are connected to contribute to the same goal. With modern transportation and communication technology, distance is never a problem for people to share their ideas. With the in-depth understanding of genes, humans are changing the biological traits of other creatures to meet their needs. We travel up into space and down into the ocean trench. We utilize all the science we studied, all the technology we proposed, and the all the industry we created. Finally, we have reached this amazing era.

It is no longer appropriate to say that humans are changing the world. Instead, humans are creating their own world, a wonderful homeland for humans.

As a graduate student, I'm always interested in technology and how it be applied to industry. Museum of Science and Industry is a famous cultural attraction of Chicago. So I paid a visit to it with my friends the first week we arrived at Chicago. The museum is housed in the Palace of Fine Arts, a special building designed for the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition. This beautiful palace locates near Lake Michigan and Columbia Basin, which gives it a great view.

Museum of Science and Industry exhibits some cutting edge science and its combination with industry. The exhibition theme enjoys a great diversity, including gene, assembly line, railway, and navy. When I walked into the museum, I was suprised by its similarity to Shanghai Science & Technology Museum, which is also a famous attraction in my hometown. Both two museums use experiments and models to explain science concepts and facts. Kids love the interaction with models, while adults also can learn something from it. However, Shanghai Science & Technology Museum has 4-D theater and focus less on industry. During the visit, I also found an interesting thing: the museum use color to name and decorate the four stairs. It's a good way for children to locate themselves.

Broader Issue

It has become a hot topic whether science and industry actually protect human. Many people are concerned about the war issues, ethical problems, and environmental protection. And thus, they stand on the opposite side to science and industry. It is hard to say whether they are afraid of change or just want a perfect solution.

While blaming all bad issues aroused by Internet, humans still could not separate themselves from WI-FI. The sound never stops that stopping wasting money on aviation engineering and other research unrelated to daily life. Animal protection organizations oppose all animal experiments, including medical research. Environmental protection organizations resist heavy industry, regardless that human also need weapon the protect themselves against nature. "Let them eat cake!" Queen Mary I of England said.

"Why don't they eat meat porridge?" Emperor Sima Zhong of Jin Dynasty said. About two hundred years ago, even the civilized kingdoms suffered starvation. The Irish Potato Famine decreased the Irish population by 20%-25%(Kinealy, 1994). About one hundred years ago, even industrialized countries were not able to feed their citizens. The Soviet famine of 1932-33 led millions of deaths. Even until now, starvation is still a big problem remaining to solve. How could people blame GM technology when transgenic crops protect them from starvation?

The nightmare of world-wide plague continued several century. As described in “Ming History”, “People got sick at morning and died at night. ... The roads were covered with coffins. The sound of crying fulfilled the city.” Besides plague, Ebola, AIDS, Hepatitis C, CJD, and many other infectious diseases are threatening human beings. It seems ridiculous to tell the suffering people that their diseases cannot be cured for we should protect animals from medical research.

Although we must admit that the revolution in military science cast a shadow over global security. War is the theme of human history. It is the desire for land, wealth, and power that takes the blame. It is the fear of hunger, homeless, and death that brings the second rider of red horse. While humanities and science stand on its opposite.

So don't be afraid of science. Instead, study it, accept it, and utilized it. The oceans are our fishing grounds. The sky is our pavement. We humans are turning the world into what best suits our existence.



A glider in Museum of Science and Industry. Photo from www.msichicago.org

Museum of Science and Industry is located at 5700 S Lake Shore Dr. It's 1 mile away from UChicag. It takes about 20 minutes by walking, and 5 minutes by driving. Aonther choice is to take bus 171, which takes approximately 13 minutes.

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Air Quality in Chicago



Photo by Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory

Background

Recently, air quality is one of the most widely discussed topics in China. Some northern Chinese cities have been harshly criticized because of their air pollution, Beijing included. Last winter, I stayed in Beijing, taking an internship in a start-up company. The air quality of winter is the worst during this season in Beijing. So, I was so worried about pharyngitis that might be caused by the widely-criticized air pollution that I bought a lot of haze protection masks to reduce the harm. And this experience made me pay more attention to air quality. Since I arrived in Chicago, I have been wondering how the air quality is here. Good news to know is that the air quality in Chicago is OK, according to the index of overall AQI. The average daily overall AQI in 2016 is about 60.0. According to the chart quoted below, 60.0 can be considered Moderate, which means no negative health effects. And this chart also shows us the way to understand how different AQIs affect our health. An interesting finding is that it seems the air quality of Chicago is relatively poorer in June and July, with average daily overall AQIs throughout the month 85.4 and 73.2 separately. This is just the opposite of Beijing where the air quality there is poorer in winter.

Broader Issues

Actually, in retrospect to the history, we find that air pollution is nearly inevitable during the process of modernization. Then, there is a debate in academia on which is better, to pollute the environment first and then to cure the problems or curing while polluting. Scholars of each side do have their own reasons and it is a complicated and vexed question. I have attended an academic session of this question during college and one idea impressed me a lot was that although some scholars argue that it could be better for our economy and environment to pollute the environment first and then to cure the problems, the countries which follow this strategy may face public censure and thus suffer interests losses.

AQI Ranges and Descriptor Categories	Health Effects	Cautionary Statements
0 - 50 Good		
51 - 100 Moderate		
101 - 150 Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	Increased likelihood of respiratory symptoms and breathing discomfort in sensitive groups.	Active children and adults, and people with respiratory disease, such as asthma, should limit prolonged outdoor activity.
151 - 200 Unhealthy	Greater likelihood of respiratory symptoms and breathing difficulty in sensitive groups.	Active children and adults, and people with respiratory disease, such as asthma, should avoid heavy outdoor exertion; everyone else, especially children, should limit heavy outdoor exertion.
201 - 300 Very Unhealthy	Increasingly severe symptoms and impaired breathing likely in sensitive groups.	Active children and adults, and people with respiratory disease, such as asthma, should avoid all outdoor exertion; everyone else, especially children, should limit outdoor exertion.
301 - 500 Hazardous	Severe respiratory effects and impaired breathing likely in sensitive groups.	Everyone should avoid all outdoor exertion.

Chart from Illinois Environmental Protection Agency

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Never Cold with Coldplay



Photo credits to author.

One of the most exciting things about moving to Chicago is that now I have more access to different kinds of music. Local jazz clubs have wonderful performances every week to keep jazz music alive in Chicago, and at the same time, musicians from all around the world include Chicago in their tour schedule. On August 17th, my friends and I, who met each other at the AEPP Friday picnic, went to Soldier Field and enjoyed an unforgettable night with thousands of fans and the awesome Coldplay. Even though it rained that night, the whole field was always warmed up by familiar exciting music and excitement of audience.

Although we all enjoyed the night very much, honestly it was not perfect. The ticket and official website said that their performance began at 7 o'clock. While what we experienced was two hours of guest performance presented by Izzy Bizu and AlunaGeorge after we sat on our seats on time. Coldplay simply didn't show up until 9 o'clock. We all agreed that these two guests were real artists who gave wonderful performances. However, we were so disappointed while sitting there without seeing Coldplay for two whole hours.

American audience seems to know the "arriving late" rule well. The whole field was largely empty at 7 o'clock. However, most of them didn't expect the guest performance to be so long, since almost everyone came before 8:30. Similar things happened in AMC theater as well. After the starting time of a movie, the lights were turned off and half an hour of advertisements were played.

These things never happened in China. Chinese theaters also play advertisements, but they always end at the printed starting time. Concerts held in Beijing also invited some guest performers, or the so-called warmup performers. However, people can always expect to see the main characters that they come for showing up on time.

After knowing and getting used to the rule, people may choose to be late next time, even though they risk missing the exciting opening.

Travel Times:

By Line ME: 30 min

By car: 15 min

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What Chicago Means for a Physics Student: From Chicago Pile-1 to Tevatron, and Beyond



Nuclear Energy, sculpture by Henry Moore commemorates the first controlled nuclear chain reaction, the Chicago Pile-1. (Blanche H. Schroer, National Park Service, May 1975)

Background

When I was taking the interview for the US visa, the consulate officer asked me, “Would you be conducting research on nuclear physics?” Back then I did not think much on the seemingly random question—after all, as my potential research field did not really exist until a few decades ago, I never imagined that the question could be specifically related to Chicago. But again, perhaps Chicago was not a place for publicity in terms of its role in the history and development of nuclear energy, as well as the later particle physics. It took quite a few days after I arrived at Chicago, that I started to get those revealing moments when the prominent figures and events were connected to their physical locations.

Indeed, in Chicago you could easily hear those names mentioned by people, arising from corners all around the city: Michelson, Fermi, Chandrasekha, Wilson, and many others. When passing by the sculpture commemorating the first nuclear reactor, the Chicago-Pile 1, along Ellis

Avenue, sometimes you could hear discussions about it. For me, Chicago was the missing piece that finally found its right place among the chronicle narrating this great story: Fermi, along with many other prominent physicists at that time, created the first artificial nuclear reactor under some viewing stands of a football field, and it was the Stagg Field of the University of Chicago (UChicago). It was not surprising to see that physicists from all around the world came here and made their contributions in this adopted city.

Personally, I think Fermi for physics is like the 1893 World's Fair for American history. Still, this level of prestige and grandeur did not last, and from the Chicago Pile-1, to the Tevatron at Fermilab, to the more recent large particle colliders built at other locations, we could see a shift of geographical center for research. It is interesting to consider why that is the case, and to understand physics research in the modern area of and surrounding Chicago.

Broader Issue

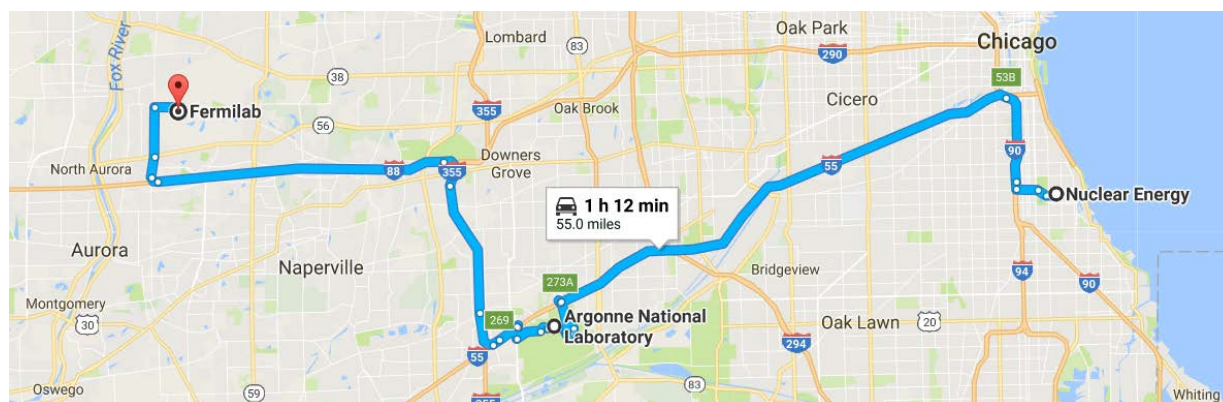
Despite his milestone achievements in nuclear energy studies, Fermi is perhaps better remembered in physics today for his work on the foundation of quantum mechanics. Every physics student would learn of the Fermi-Dirac statistics at some point of his or hers education, not to mention the universal concept of “fermion” in quantum mechanics. In the light of rising public sentiments against nuclear power plants in many regions of the modern world, this may never be more true. It might be difficult for the Millennial generation (and those even younger) to imagine the time when people developed nuclear reactors and performed research on those reactors with protection that was as good as none at all. Still, it is precisely because of the work done by those forerunners that people nowadays have the luxury to have guidance concerning safety procedures for radiation exposure.

Fermi, however, is definitely not the first “big name” in physics that became to some extent associated with Chicago. Michelson, head of the department of physics when the University of Chicago was first established, was the first American to receive the Nobel prize in physics and would be remembered for the famous Michelson-Morley experiment on ether. In fact, Chicago was also among the cities that Albert Einstein visited during his first trip to the US in 1921. It is interesting to note, in his speeches during that period, Einstein's mentioning of the Michelson-Morley experiment and its impact on his special theory of relativity, which posts a striking contrast with his accounts on that matter during the later years, when he moved to the US permanently. Dr. Jeroen van Dongen, professor of History of Science at the University of Amsterdam and associate editor of the Collected Papers of Albert Einstein at the California Institute of Technology, believed that Einstein shifted from his “empiricist philosophical position” around 1921 to becoming a “believing rationalist,” for whom the experiments were no longer the gold standard to test validity of a theory. As becoming a pilgrim in pursuit of a

unified theory for fields in the subsequent years of his life, Einstein would reject the idea that forming of his theory was based on previous experimental evidence, including the Michelson-Morley experiment.

The lesson for now seems to be that people might perceive the world in ways fitting their own objectives. With his mysterious but fascinating theory that few people could understand, Einstein would be made one of the first modern celebrities created by the US media ever since the 1920s. Matching the public enthusiasm was probably the lack of genuine understanding of his work by the laypeople. Still, there is more to the story at Chicago. Since nuclear reactor was not really appropriate for a densely populated major city, Chicago Pile-1 was soon moved to what is now known as the Argonne National Laboratory, for “cooperative research in nucleonics.” At Argonne, the world's first nuclear-generated electricity was achieved in 1951, and research projects that followed were done to determine safe exposure levels for worker at power plants. Another noteworthy research institution related to UChicago is the Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory (Fermilab) founded in 1967. Known for its once world's fourth-largest particle accelerator, Tevatron, Fermilab celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2017 and is now jointly operated by various institutions including UChicago.

Chicago Pile-1 may never gain the popularity, as the first nuclear chain reactor, that would become comparable to that of Einstein in the popular culture. Still, its legacy is richly present, through the research institutes like Argonne and Fermilab, taking up its place in exploration on nuclear energy and the subatomic world respectively. Its impact may even get extended to the accelerators around the world, through the close partnerships and collaborations between high energy experimentalists in modern physics research. People may lose sight of the conspicuous truth, yet it is through the subtle places where we may detect the most profound influences of the half-century long endeavor, starting at Chicago Pile-1, towards controllable nuclear energy, subatomic world revealed by the Tevatron, and beyond into the future.



Driving route from the *Nuclear Energy* sculpture to Argonne National Laboratory, and the Fermilab. Screenshot of Google Map. Retrieved 10 Sep 2017.

Travel Times

Driving: about 1 hour and 12 minutes car ride

Route: starting from the Nuclear Energy sculpture at UChicago campus, via Argonne National Laboratory, to Fermilab (see the Google Map screenshot)

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An Art to Freeze Time



Photo by author

Though I heard about how fantastic the Chicago architecture style is, I was shocked by the architectures in Old Town. However, I was not shocked by the fine arts, but by the combination and infusion of the two contrasting building styles—historic and modern.

As it can be seen from the picture above, a historic structure is just in front of the modern one. The context of this picture seems contrary, but it also gives me a feeling of harmony.

Old Town is a historic neighborhood and was originally settled in the mid 1800s by German-Catholic immigrants. There are so many historic buildings, such as St. Michael Roman Catholic Church and Germania Club Building. Architecture is a type of art that can freeze time, and, different ones freeze different time period and can be seen as the witnesses of history. In Old Town, there are “senior witnesses” and “young witnesses,” and senior witnesses are not forgotten by the society. However, more and more young witnesses displace senior witnesses in other areas of the world, including my hometown, Anhui Province, China. With the decline of

the number of senior witnesses, the specific historical time they represented is endangered because such areas lose one important thing that can recall the past time.

The city my grandmother lives in is a historic city. There is one historically scenic spot called Liuchixiang, and it is a narrow alley built by two neighbors in Qing Dynasty. At first the two neighbors fought for the land between the two houses; however, they thought harmony in neighborhoods was more important than anything, so they expanded and shared the alley between them. And Liuchixiang, the alley, was established. Liuchixiang and old houses owned by neighbors mentioned above can be seen as a symbol not only for the architecture style of that time, but also for the relationship between people and culture of that time. However, the first time I saw them, they were not the original ones. The original ones were destroyed and the government made replicas instead. The Liuchixiang is just one of so many buildings which were not protected well. What a pity!

Historic buildings are more than architecture; they are symbols and memories of culture and should be protected appropriately. According to Loew and Sebastian (1998), “[Historic buildings] have well established and continuous positions at the center of ... culture, both as a means to unite the country internally and to promote its value externally. As a result historic buildings have long been part of the cherished urban environment (209).” So, conservation is necessary. However, cities also face the pressure from development. It seems that there is no direct relationship between development, sustainability and conservation. However, these three are not separate. In fact, sustainable development is an important part in urban planning. The buildings I saw in Old Town reflect the conservation and sustainability well. The senior witnesses sit alongside the young witnesses and witness the development together. China is a country with long history and has quite a lot of historic buildings, so to avoid the destruction like Liuchixiang mentioned above, the relationship among development, sustainability and conservation should be handled better.

The distance between UChicago and Old Town is 18 kilometers and it takes about 26 minutes to drive. One can also get there by public transportation system. After taking Bus No.55, get off at Garfield Red Line Station and get on Red line (toward Howard) to Clark/Division.

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When the River Turns Green



The Chicago River, Source: Knowledge Seeker

Background

Each year when spring is coming, thousands of Chicagoans come out from office buildings, schools and construction sites, gathering along the Chicago River and celebrate Saint Patrick's Day. It is a religious celebration held in memory of Saint Patrick, who was the most prestigious bishop in the 5th century in Ireland. Irish built this magnificent city to some extent and had great influence on the culture of Chicago.

Here in Chicago, it is a crazy day. Organizers dye the Chicago River Irish green, and it has been a tradition for about half a century. According to Bill King, the administrator of Chicago's St. Patrick's Day committee, the process of dyeing only takes five minutes now. "Two boats go out with volunteers one hour before the parade begins and they each do one stretch between the bridges." The transformation is considered magical because it remains green for only several hours, and then change back to the original. How wonderful this chemical is! Besides, it is worth mentioning that the dye itself is orange and it turns vivid green once it meets with water. How magical the chemistry is!

Fifty years ago, when the green dye was first used in the River, it worked as one kind of

indicators to detect the source of illegal waste disposal in the River. Then next year, Stephen Bailey, a business manager for the plumber's union dump 100 pounds of fluorescein into Chicago River with the permission of administrative staff. "The River remained green for more than a week that time." However, fluorescein is not environmentally friendly in most cases. The parade committee decided to switch to one kind of vegetable-based dyes, the exact components of which are almost secret. They insist, "The formula has been thoroughly tested by independent chemists and has been proven safe for the environment."

Broader Issue

It is truly an exciting activity to dye river green and light the passion of this city. Though the organizers claim the vegetable-based dye is nonharmful, it still needs to be considered cautiously because the chemical composition of the dye is not open to us, which takes us farther from the truth. Besides, considering that the river is a complex ecosystem with dozens of species of fish and plants, some invisible harm may already occur. Now the Illinois Department of Public Health advises against dining too much fish from the River because it may contain much cancerogenic substance. What's more, no official permit has been issued for the event.

There comes another question. Is the event of dyeing river a necessary part for the celebration considering the potential harm? It has become a tradition for Chicagoans, and it does make crowd crazy and enjoy the festival. However, can we find other ways replacing dyeing. Maybe we can float huge clover on the lake or let off fireworks. In China, we would be in red and put up red paper to celebrate the Spring Festival, but we never dye river red.



Pour Orange Dye, Source: Carole Kuhrt Brewer

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How Can We Defend Ourselves Legally?



Photo from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Castle_doctrine

In the United States, most citizens without criminal records and mental illness have the right of gun possession. Compared to countries where guns are banned, like China, the degree of violence like robbery, battery and conflict rises up, concomitantly. For this reason, the definition of justifiable defence is largely different between America and China. In China, there is no variance of laws from province to province. Wherever you are, only when you are suffering from a crime, you have the right to take reasonable self-defence, but you can only take fatal or lethal force to deter a felony. Compared to China having a prevalent and unique law, the statute of the U.S varies from state to state. When it comes to self defence, some states like Florida, Texas, and Ohio enacted Stand Your Ground Law; some legitimized Castle Doctrine (home defense) like Minnesota; some validated Duty to Retreat like Vermont. When considering Chicago, how can we defend ourselves legally?

When Florida first put Stand Your Ground Law into enactment in 2005, as of January 2017, there were approximately twenty-six states legitimating this controversial law. From this law, American citizens can enjoy absolute safety in the place they have right to be, which is different from Castle Doctrine, in which people can only use fatal force at their home. Therefore, people can take deadly action whenever they perceive threat and danger even in public places. This law is discussed nationwide since the tragedy of a black teen, Trayvon Martin, who was shot by his neighbor and the murderer was acquitted for lack of evidence, which made his self-defence invalid. At that time, plenty of people were shocked by this law and the cases like Trayvon for this law potentially forces people to escalate their level of violence during a conflict and a little quarrel may result in gunfight because of the fear of being shot preemptively. Hence, many critics protested this Stand Your Ground Law as a dangerous “shoot first” law.

Contemporarily, Illinois practices the Stand Your Ground Law, a kind of combination of Stand Your Ground Law with Castle Doctrine. People in Illinois can also use justifiable force to defend their dwelling or other property and the use of justifiable force can defeat both criminal and civil liability in the event of bodily harm or death. Nonetheless, what exactly constitutes “justifiable force” under Illinois state law? In China, only when the crime begins, people are legally permitted to take self defence action and are not supposed to use lethal force until confronting a felony such as sexual assault, battery, murder, robbery or arson. Hence, it’s a little complicated in China to accurately determine whether a defence is justifiable or not. Besides, the protection of self defence by law is limited and restricted, which makes people tend to retreat in confrontation of crime. However, in Illinois, are determinants of justifiable defence the same as China? Of course not. These are the five key elements to justify self defence in Illinois: A. Defend yourself or another person from unlawful force; B. Prevent bodily harm or death of yourself or another person; C. Prevent a forcible felony from being committed such as sexual assault, battery, murder, robbery or arson; D. Prevent a break-in or attack on a dwelling; E. Protect property in your own or a family member’s property or household. From the statute, people in Illinois can wield reasonable force to prevent themselves from danger before a crime begins and are empowered with deadly force against aggressors. Nevertheless, in public places if possible, people are also supposed to retreat rather than be involved in a conflict.

As for international students who are prohibited from gun possession, it’s easy to come into a disadvantageous situation during a conflict. For this reason, when international students confront unexpected crime, retreating immediately is the wisest reaction and calling the police after ensuring personal safety. What if the situation is extremely tense and there is no chance to retreat? Students should follow criminals’ orders and seek chance to escape. If necessary, take some actions to distract criminals. When serious injuries are inevitable, take whatever extreme measures are available to defend yourself.

Xueyan Xie
China
Harris School of Public Policy

German Shepherd in Michigan Avenue



Photo by author

Background

Last week I went shopping downtown. When I walked in Michigan Avenue, a unique statue drew my attention. It was a blue police dog statue wearing a bulletproof vest. I looked around and found that there were hundreds of life-size police dog statues in this avenue with various kinds of pattern. And all of them are German shepherd. It seemed that many pedestrians liked them very much and they all stopped to appreciate these artworks. I wondered about these statues and decided to find out more information about them. After search some news about this, I knew that these statues were set up to mourn for Chicago police officers who have died as well as honor police dogs. In fact, this activity was organized by the Chicago Police Memorial Foundation as part of the K9s for Corps Campaign. Moreover, these statues are sponsored by

local companies or individuals and we can see their names carved on the statues. Many local artists also participated in this meaningful activity and they devoted to use their creativity to make these dog sculptures wear “beautiful clothes”. In September, these artworks will be auctioned and the money raised will be donated to support the Chicago Police Memorial Foundation and animal charity PAWS Chicago animal shelter.

Broader Issue

Learning more about this art project made me think about people’s perspective on Chicago’s police officers. I am touched that people can use this meaningful method to respect and commemorate police officers who sacrificed lives to protect residents’ safety. Chicago is famous for its high crime rate and I also have been reminded many times to pay attention to safety before arriving here. Chicago police officers have been clearly devoted a lot to arrest the suspect and provide a stable environment for local residents. However, these years the reputation of Chicago Police Department is not so positive and many people worried about the problem of police brutality in Chicago. According to the U.S. Department of Justice in January, the police officers in the Chicago Police Department were poorly trained and quick to turn to excessive and even deadly force, most often against blacks and Latino residents, without facing consequences. In this case, people may lose confidence in Chicago Police Department’s ability and justice.

Police Supt. Eddie Johnson said now is a "difficult time for law enforcement" across the country and it takes "the whole city" to support the police department (citation). Although many police officers in Chicago are conscientious and do their best to protect the city and serve people, the difficulty of law enforcement has negative influence on their performance. By exhibiting these painted German shepherd statues, Chicago Police Memorial Foundation (CPMF) is trying to appeal to more residents to have a better understanding of police officers’ sacrifices and their canine units. I think CPMF is really creative. This organization wants to use these dog sculptures as a symbol of police officers to show support towards police department in Chicago. It seems that this campaign has a positive effect and helped the Chicago Police Department create a better image for the public and these sculptures are also beautiful art in Chicago.

Travel Details (from UChicago):

By CTA: 35 min

By Car: 15 min

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Yueren Xing
China
Physical Sciences Division

Lakefront Trail: An Epitome of Bike-Friendliness or A Path of Unanticipated Hidden Dangers



Photo by Yueren Xing

Background

Lakefront Trail, a walking and cycling lane which is almost perfectly insulated from the most horrendous nightmare for cyclists---reckless drivers who seem quite reluctant to lift their feet glued onto the gas pedal and dismiss every blind spot in Chicago's grid of narrow streets and avenues, and where there is evidently no such thing as conveniently parked vehicles looming up in your way when you just pick up speed to a record high after a long downhill sprint while riding the tailwind, seems to be an instinctively persuasive place, especially for every new-comer

to this city who plans to connect his or her stops at pristine beaches, skyscraping downtown buildings and glamorous parks with cycling. So, that being said, what could possibly go wrong for a careful cyclist, especially one having been optimistic about a brave new world where he can cycle on a scenic path distinctly different from the hazardous streets which resemble a dystopian flowing museum of unscrupulous violation of traffic rules in the developing country where he comes from?

The answer, however, is that there are despondently too many problems for him to enumerate; therefore, only the most significant risks will be mentioned.

Broader Issues

After topping NYC in 2016 as the most bike-friendly city in the US according to the Bicycling Magazine, Chicago maintains its relentless ambition to build even 50 more miles of bike lanes in the following years.[1] But for cyclists, especially who are heavy users of one of the city's most prestigious cyclist attraction, the Lakefront Trail, the potential risks and safety matters while cycling on the lanes rather than abstract construction plans with astronomical budget figures have always been their greater concern. An obvious problem that requires immediate resolution is that cyclists must share most segments of the 18-mile-long, two-way, two-lane trail with runners, joggers, pedestrians and even roller-skaters and skateboarders. As if the aforementioned situation is not bad enough, a significant part of non-cyclist users tends to wear earbuds or headphones and pay little attention to their surroundings. Though the basic rules of using the path includes an extremely plain piece: pedestrians yield to joggers who yield to cyclists, which seems to emphasize that the slower users yield to the faster ones, there are so many people walking leisurely in groups who occupy the entire lane and are immersed in loud conversations while they remain oblivious to the cyclist approaching from behind even when cyclists keep ringing their bells and shouting at them in a distance of just several meters. What's even more terrifying is the astonishing phenomenon that there are occasionally some children reckless playing unattended and unaccompanied by any adults as well as unarmored "superheroes" who take pleasure in crossing the trail with their eyes stay staring at their cellphone screens and their earbuds on (effectively blind and deaf). So, as for us cyclists, even if you just manage to squeeze through a seemingly endless congestion, please do not give yourself immediately an adrenaline pump.

If you can't help being furious at the sad truth that all these situations will probably hinder you from accomplishing a Tour-de-France-like trip with an average speed above 30kph, please just lump it by slowing down and focusing on navigating them. Much to the cyclists' relief, a Lakefront Trail construction aiming at separate cyclists from anyone else, which includes a \$60 million project to build a "flyover" bridge spanning the Chicago River and the congested

downtown area near Navy Pier, has already gone into full steam at this very moment. For cyclists, just cross your fingers to wish the pervasive corruption and notorious low-efficiency which prevail in the local politics of the Windy City not strain your patience too far to complete the construction work as you have to make numerous detours around construction sites.[2]

With regard to cyclists' misdemeanor, though provided the fact that cyclists are generally more inclined to protect themselves better with their cycling protective gears and have more awareness of preventing potential accidents, definitely there are still plenty of their violations of safety rules on Lakefront Trail posing imminent dangers to others. From the perspective of many cyclists, a couple riding two abreast slowly in a lane designed for fast cycling which has only about 12-inch width is always annoying, since it usually means that you have to overtake while intruding onto the opposite lane if you don't possess a ring on the handlebar or don't want to suddenly brake and shift down the gear in order to start picking up speed again. Also, so many cyclists just don't stop at a red light where the trail intersects with a street near downtown if they feel there are no incoming cars and walkers nearby, even though one overconfident and perfunctory observation of the traffic can possibly claim his or her own life.

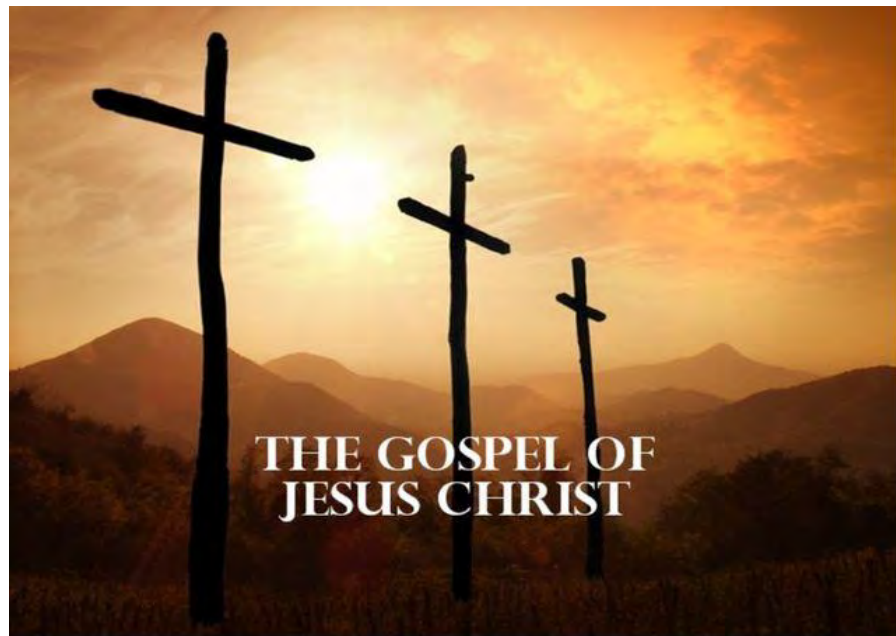
Building brand new bike lanes and expanding existing construction plans is only the outward asset and physical foundation for a bike-friendly city. From my own perspective, what is always of more importance and effectively having a ubiquitous and extensive influence on tens of thousands of peoples using Lakefront Trail every day is the intangible individual consciousness and the social capital, namely, basic etiquette and awareness of safety issues, automatic conformity with traffic rules, and cooperation as well as understanding among cyclists, walkers and joggers, all of which constitute the genuine soul of bike-friendliness and in which Chicagoans still need to make sustaining progress.



Photo by Yueren Xing

Qianqian Xiong
China
Harris School of Public Policy

Being Kind — My Religion



Picture#1 <http://uchicago-ccf.org/>

Background

I've never had any knowledge of Christianity before. A group of warm and friendly Chinese Christian seniors of UChicago helped me upon my arrival in Chicago which made me want to learn more about their association and their religion. When I first arrived at O'Hare International airport with a feeling of home sick and foreign, there were 3 senior volunteers of UChicago picked me and my friend up. Once I arrived my department, they kindly helped me move my furniture into my room. They left after we all settled down. I was extremely touched by their kindness and couldn't help expressing my gratitude. At last, we talked about their association and I even attended one of their Bible teaching classes. That's why I'm familiar with Chinese Christian Fellowship.

Chinese Christian Fellowship is a nonprofit religious organization that helps Chinese students adapt to the environment of UChicago, improve their English and introduces the Gospel,

Christian life of faith to them so that they can have a comprehensive understanding of Christianity. It also provides a warm home for the Christian friends, where they will find the brothers and sisters in the Lord, who encourage each other, pray for each other and grow together. What impressed me the most is the good deeds they do. They volunteer to pick up new students of UChicago every year. Moreover, they collect second-hand furniture and daily necessities in good condition and give them to UChicago's newcomers for free.

From my point of view, I really appreciate the way they carry out their religious believes in daily life. I believe that the core of Christianity is not merely learning the knowledge of Bible, but to put the kindness into practice from their innermost heart and influence more people in this way.

American religious status is more open than that in China. Even though China is a multi-religious country, Chinese law forbids spreading any religion idea in public schools and public places. Thus, those who are Christian and believe in some other kind of religion need to hold religious activities in secret places.

Broader issue

People often believe that people who have religious believes are more likely to be kind. However, a study conducted by Prof. Jean Decety of the University of Chicago has found that children raised in nonreligious households are kinder and more altruistic than those raised with religion. This finding definitely contradicts the common sense.

According to Decety, "religiosity, as indexed by three different measures, is not associated with increased altruism in young children. Our findings robustly demonstrate that children from households identifying as either of the two major world religions (Christianity and Islam) were less altruistic than children from non-religious households" (2015, p. 2955). Therefore, being kind doesn't require have religious belief. People who don't have religious beliefs can also be kind and generous. Those senior Christian volunteers, admittedly, lend helping hands to others sincerely without asking for return. I was touched by their kindness, but not because they are Christians. Thus, having religious beliefs is not an end, instead, it is just a way to achieve being kind and making the world better. For people who don't have religious beliefs, they can still pursue kindness in their own ways.

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The Negative Association between Religiousness and Children's Altruism across the World. Retrieved from <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0960982215011677>

Jue Xu
China
Division of Physical Sciences

Frugal, But not Cheap Lifestyle in Chicago



Photo by the author

Before I left China for Chicago, my parents told me, “Do not care too much about money. Do not save money in your daily life because health is the top priority.” However, as a Master’s student from China, who has to afford the majority of tuition and living expense, money is still a big issue to think over because of the high commodity prices in the U.S. compared with their counterparts in China.

Although I knew the high prices of food in the U.S. before coming, I was still surprised by them during my first week. I tried food trucks, the undergraduate coffee shop and Reynolds Club in the university. They are not very expensive and I can easily make myself full within 10 dollars, but the flavors cannot satisfied me, a Chinese person. Then, I was fulfilled by a bowl of noodle in Chinatown. It was pretty delicious and Chinese-flavored, though it cost me more than 10 dollars, which may be just 2 dollars in China. Yet, “Every cloud has a silver lining.” After I explored Treasure Island in Hyde Park several times, I found a “New World.” The cooked foods, like beef brisket, pork chop and fried chicken, in Treasure Island are quite delicious with very low prices. I have a student discount and I do need to pay tips to Treasure Island. It is awesome!

More importantly, milk and juice, which are nutritious and healthy, are of almost the same prices as the ones in China. Now, as a man who does not like do housework, I am able to

prepare a nice dinner at a low cost without cooking by myself.

In addition, shopping online is also a good option to buy essential items, especially weighing its convenience. At first, register for an Amazon Prime account with the university email address. It offers special discounts, quick delivery and no shipping fee. We can buy almost everything on Amazon with very low prices by just clicking the mouse, so it simultaneously saves me much time and money. To my surprise, the service of online shopping is incredibly good in the U.S. I bought a pair of shoes on the Nike website and I had to return them because they were oversized. What I needed to return them, I just stuck a prepaid shipping receipt outside the package and dropped the package at a nearby UPS store, which is much more convenient than in China.

On a larger scale, many differences in food and shopping between China and the U.S. originated from the historical discrepancies and current national conditions. Even though China and the U.S. are huge countries in the world, it is hard to deny that China is a developing country while the U.S. is a developed country. So, it is reasonable that the living expense in the U.S. is higher due to the higher GDP and average salary. However, why are some meat products in the U.S. even cheaper than in China?

I think that there are two main reasons. The first reason is culture. Most white people in the U.S. nowadays are the descendant of immigrants from Northern and Western Europe, where there are more suitable conditions for animal husbandry than agriculture due to weather and geographical conditions. Americans maintain their ancestors' diets, in which meat is the main element and vegetables are secondary. For this reason, the supply of meat products is always sufficient and prices are kept low. The second reason is that vegetables are more expensive than meat in terms of production, transportation and retail cost. All of these aspects require much labor that is plentiful and cheap in China, but scarce and dear in the U.S.

Labor is also a very important factor in many other ways. Sufficient labor sometimes brings about high-efficiency, but sometimes not. An obvious example is returning a package, which I mentioned in the background section. In China, express delivery is much quicker and cheaper than in the U.S. because there are enough laborers to do this work, even on weekends. However, the return procedures are not efficient in China. It must be done by human employees, whereas in the U.S., I can accomplish these tasks online.

Every coin has two sides. It is hard to define which life is better in China or in America. For instance, meat is expensive in China while vegetables are dear in the U.S. I think there is just a difference, no superiority. A frugal, but not cheap lifestyle is to take full advantages of the benefits of a society to have a better life while spending less money.

Ke Xu
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Harris School of Public Policy:
Environmental Science and Policy

Subterranean Labyrinth: The Pedway in Chicago



Photo from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chicago_Pedway

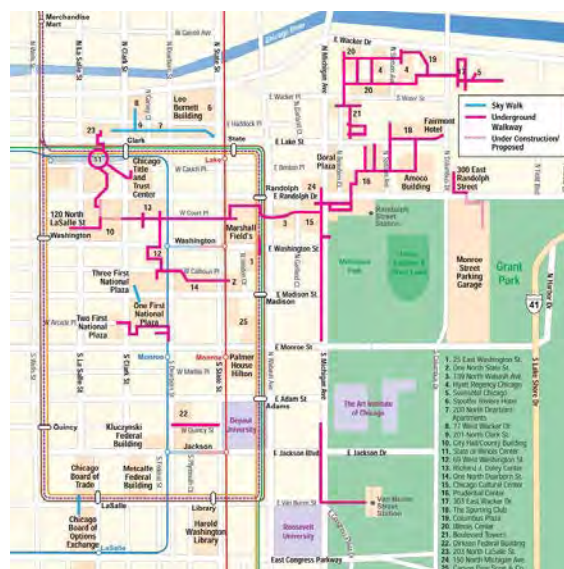


Photo from <http://www.spiegl.org/pedway/pedway.html>

Background

It was an occasional encounter when I transited from Blue Line to Red Line. The sign caught my eyes with its unique black and yellow compass, just like a mysterious symbol in The Da Vinci Code. As I walked in, a marvelous subterranean city below the city came into sight. It is well-lit and populated with hundreds of restaurants, public arts and shops.

The wonderful tour did not last long, but stimulated my interest about the underground system that I found a map to learn more. The Pedway doesn't cover the whole Chicago. It is an elaborate network lying in the heart of the city. It connects CTA stations, commuter rail facilities, parking lots, as well as government offices, private buildings and cultural centers. The tunnels are arterial like and can be divided into two types. Some are independent pedestrian tunnels sponsored by government, while others, such as Macy's Pedway, are attached underground constructions managed by property developers.

Pedway enjoys obvious advantages. First and foremost, Pedway works as a secret weapon, providing a convenient escape from harsh weather in Chicago in spite of horrifically hot summer, snowy winter and a heavy downpour. Moreover, there is no better way to alleviate traffic jams and prevent traffic accidents than separate passengers from vehicle with the help of underground systems. Last not but least, the establishment of subterranean city would be conducive to central district, where land resource is scarce.

Broader Issues

What contributes to the success of Pedway? There are numerous reasons to name and this part would explore only a few primary ones here, from which other cities can learn.

To begin with, it is hard to overstate the significance of rail transit. In fact, it was initially built to connect the Red Line and Blue Line subways. Rail transit plays a pivotal role in increasing passage rate in underground tunnels, bringing more customers. The point can also be confirmed by the example of Japan and Hong Kong. In a nutshell, without a well-planned subway system, underground passage would never be able to maximize its business value.

Furthermore, another crucial perspective we should never overlook is that Pedway is a multifunctional compound system. The government fund investment is extremely limited to meet so huge need. Besides, Pedway has difficulty in recouping some of the cost through ticket sales, giving rise to long investment cycle. Therefore, Chicago government has been stimulating private funds into construction by both financial support and favorable policies. Consequently, both government and private sectors will benefit drastically from the win-win situation.

However, a security guard at one stop once told me that some Chicagoan don't even know such an amenity. Indeed, Pedway still has some limitations that deserve a deeper thought. Why is pedway not given much publicity? Why do some areas seem deserted without lights and air conditioners? Why are maps not enough to help unfamiliar user navigate the system? Pedway could be a lot better than it's current state. Promotion and expansion of Pedway would be brought to our attention in the future.

Travel Times from UChicago:

Car: 21 min

Train: 57 min

Muyao Xu
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Social Sciences Division

Why is Tanned Skin So Popular in the US?



Photo from Internet

When I first went shopping in Chicago at the Macy's, I tried really hard to find some skincare products that aimed to whiten my skin, because my skin color is rather dark and this is marked as "not beautiful" in China. However, nothing related to "whiten" was found. And then I saw a survey on the website showing that in the US people tend to think tanned skin is hotter and healthier, even when dermatologists suggest that tanned skin may have higher risks in skin cancer. So I started to wonder why tanned skin is so popular in the US, when it is the opposite in many Asian countries.

Since the preference for tanned skin is not universal, it has nothing to do with aesthetics, and may in fact have to do with American socio-cultural issues. The relationship between beauty and skin color has changed over time. For example, in the description of Scarlet's first appearance in the novel, *Gone with the Wind* set during the American Civil War, her nose

“[cuts] a startling oblique line in her magnolia-white skin--that skin so prized by Southern women and so carefully guarded with bonnets, veils and mittens against hot Georgia suns” (Mitchell, 1936, p. XX). This shows how Americans used to prefer white skin and to protect them like the Asians do now. If it is not deeply rooted in Americans’ mindsets, then it probably has something to do with the process of modernization.

In ancient China, most people were poor and had to work outside all day, and only women in the rich families could avoid being tanned by the sun. As a result, white skin is a symbol of wealth and high social status, and the same is true for the aristocratic times of America when slaves did everything for the sirs and madams. Staying inside and doing nothing means prestige and wealth. However, after modernization has begun, the middle class people are becoming predominant in the US society. Together with the rise of middle class comes the emergence of their Weltanschauung and lifestyle. In order to fight against the alienation process, in which everyone is standardized and deprived of human nature and individual features (Marx, 1845), they have developed strong affections for the nature and would love to be in the nature to feel the sun, the wind and the rain. Thus it is popular to go hiking or lie on the beach in their leisure time (Lofgren, 2011).

Also, most people work under roof now, only those who have time and money are able to go on vacation and get tanned in the nature. Therefore, just like old times, the preference of appearance is related to wealth and social status.

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Zunda Xu
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Social Science Division

Chinatown in Chicago: A Booming Neighborhood



Photo by Zunda Xu

Background

August 1, 2017, on my flight to Chicago, my friend sat beside me and said to me that she was loathing to part with our country just because of the delicious food in China. To be honest, I didn't take note of it at that moment, since I always thought I could easily adapt to any taste in

the world; just like my previous travel experiences, I was always passionate about enjoying local cuisine and never missed Chinese food.

Ten days later, I start to believe my friend's words after tasting almost all kinds of food around campus including traditional American hamburgers, Chicago pizza, Mexico tacos. Also Asian cuisines are not hard to try here, whatever Thai food or Japanese food, all can be easily found on the streets. However, the point is that we Chinese have our own special taste and also demanding requirement about the dishes. When seeing those tempting photos of traditional Chinese cuisine posted by your friends who just satisfied their appetites in Chinatown's restaurants, it's impossible for you not to start missing your hometown delicacy. After all, you are still a Chinese.

Under such circumstance, I decided to visit Chicago's Chinatown. The Chinatown neighborhood in Chicago is located on the South Side, centered on Cermak and Wentworth Avenues, and the neighborhood is said to be an example of American Chinatown. Stopped by a huge plaque hung over the gate of Chinatown with four striking Chinese characters 'Tian Xia Wei Gong' written on it, which means the whole world is one community, I finally arrived at my destination and felt ineffable familiarity immediately. Walking past the gateway, I entered into one of the most prosperous areas in this neighborhood. Shops with traditional Chinese items, such as silk and china that can be purchased as gifts, or souvenirs are nestled on both sides of Cermak Avenue. Not only are these shops available, but other shops can also been found along the avenue, such as grocers in which you can get almost all the ingredients for your own Dim Sum and herb stores where you can try traditional Chinese Medicine and so on.

Continuing walking forward, I saw another landmark of Chinatown—Pui Tak Center, which has a history of 90 years and was informally referred to as Chinatown's city hall. On the other side of the street stood a really popular restaurant which is famous for Sichuan Cuisine, so I decided to have my dinner here. The experience proved that my decision was right: the flavors were really hot and spicy, while the seasonings used were also various and genuine. Whatever grilled fish or Mapo Tofu, you can all taste the original Sichuan taste. Going out of the restaurant after dinner, the night fell, while the Cermak Avenue was still bustling. Youngers gathered in different bars enjoy their night life, while elders also had their own leisure life, like dancing and singing in the open air. All of these have helped to shape such a harmonious, energetic, multiple and prosperous Chinatown.



Photo by Zunda Xu

Broader Issue

To some extent, the Chinatown's prosperity in Chicago really shocked me, especially noticing that many Chinatowns in the U.S. are gradually diminishing nowadays, like that of Washington D.C. are now identifiable by just an ornate welcome gate or pocket of Chinese restaurants. And in the last few years, the large, traditional Chinatowns in San Francisco and Manhattan have decreased as well. Why is the Chinatown in Chicago still booming?

From my point of view, the main factor is that Chinatown in Chicago has successfully avoided gentrification. At a time when traditional urban Chinatowns in Manhattan, San Francisco and Boston are fading due to gentrification and changing cultural landscapes, while in Chicago, though several neighborhoods are no longer defined by the immigrant or ethnic groups that once occupied them, Chinatown is an exception, having anchored the area centered around Cermak and Wentworth Avenue since 1912. The reason why Chicago's Chinatown could become a model for Chinatown survival in the U.S. is that Chinese-Americans in Chicago value a sense of belonging and choose to stay in the neighborhood. Few Chinese move out and if they do, they sell their homes and go back to China. Because of this, this neighborhood allows some old Chinese people and new-immigrants who could not speak English well to live comfortably in Chicago, and this convenience in living continues to strengthen the connection between residents here and also increasing their sense of belonging.

Meanwhile, the government's investment is also something we should not omit. Recognizing the national decline of Chinatowns, the city planners and local organizations in Chicago are committed to investing in it, which definitely contribute to this neighborhood's prosperity. In 2013, the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning announced a plan to preserve Chinatown's cultural identity by improving public education and elderly care, bolstering transportation infrastructure and creating more public parking lots. All of these policies have boosted the further development of this specific neighborhood.

To put it in a nutshell, the Chinatown is such a unique element in Chicago city. For Chinese people, it's their best overseas hometown, while for others, it's also one of the best places to experience genuine Chinese culture.

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Department of Chemistry

Nobody Understands: Abstract Sculptures in Chicago



Fleming From <http://chicagotonight.wttw.com>

Background

One day I went to Social Security Office in the loop to apply the SSN card, and I saw a large strange sculpture on the way. It is a large red sculpture, consisting of some elegant caves. When I came back home, I searched this strange sculpture on the internet and found that the name of this sculpture is “Fleming,” designed by Alexander Calder. It is hard to connect this sculpture with the real flamingo at the first glance, but I admire the ingenuity of the sculptor after pondering. The curves represents the long neck of the flamingo, the slant pillars stand for the flamingo’s legs, and the red surface is just the color of the flamingo. The sculptor included the essential characteristics of the real flamingo and then reconstructed these elements, leading to a graceful sculpture.

Nevertheless, “Flamingo” is not the most opaque sculpture in Chicago. At Daley Plaza, there is a famous untitled sculpture designed by Pablo Picasso, but most people call it “Chicago Picasso” or “The Picasso” today. Actually, people have controverted the meaning of “The Picasso” since its establishment. Some people believe that it represents a dog or some other animal, but others think that it is a statue of a lady. Besides “The Picasso,” there are many other abstract sculptures in Chicago, such as “Agora,” which consists of numerous bronze statues without heads. Although hardly understandable, abstract sculptures have unique charm. Abstract sculptures are carriers of the creativity and the imagination of the sculptors. Though the abstract sculpture, I could see the imagination of the artist.

Broader Issue

Flamingo

Location: 50 W Adams St

Author: Alexander Calder

Year: 1974

Located at Federal Plaza, Flamingo is a large steel sculpture. It is 53 foot tall and weighs more than 50 tons. In 1974, the United States General Services Administration commissioned Alexander Calder to design a sculpture in the center of Chicago. And “Flamingo” was Calder’s reply. The sculpture was covered by the bright vermilion paint. This kind of red is special, which called “Calder Red,” for Calder made this color unfading. Therefore, the sculpture remained its vivid color for several decades. In 2012, the sculpture was re-printed the historic “Calder Red.” Calder believed that the vermilion surface of the sculpture could offset the surrounding black buildings.

The Picasso

Location: 50 W Washington St

Author: Pablo Picasso

Year: 1967

“The Picasso,” also called “Chicago Picasso,” is located in Daley Plaza. “The Picasso” shares a similar size with “Flamingo.” It is 50 feet tall and weighs 147 tons. Most sculptures in Chicago depict historic pictures of a long time ago, such as figure sculptures. “Statue of the Republic” in Jackson Park is an example. But some architects sought change in 1960s. Much architecture in American started to reflect the modern change of culture at that time. The Daley Center’s architects decided to commission Pablo Picasso to create a monumental sculpture for their

plaza. By combining and modifying some of his previous works and sketches, Picasso finally determined the design of the sculpture after 2-years of working. On August 15th, 1967, thousands of people gathered in Daley Center and witnessed the unveiling of the sculpture. Picasso donated this sculpture to Chicago people, without receiving any reward. However, Picasso never explain the connotation of the sculpture.

Agora

Location: 1135 S Michigan Ave.

Author: Magdalena Abakanowicz

Year: 2006

Much more modern than the previous two sculptures, “Agora” was built in 2006 and is located at southwest side of Grant Park . Magdalena Abakanowicz designed this sculpture. As its name, “Agora” is not a single statue, but consists of numerous (109) headless torsos made of cast iron. These figures are posed walking in different directs or just standing by. Unlike Picasso, Abakanowicz explained the meaning of her work. Born in Poland, Abakanowicz was deeply influenced by Soviet domination. In her journal, she wrote that she once lived “...in times which were extraordinary by their various forms of collective hate and collective adulation. Marches and parades worshipped leaders, great and good, who soon turned out to be mass murderers. I was obsessed by the image of the crowd... I suspected that under the human skull, instincts and emotions overpower the intellect without us being aware of it. ” (from <https://www.cityofchicago.org>)



The Picasso, From <http://loopchicago.com/blog/artists-corner-the-chicago-picasso>



Agora, From <https://idiotphotographer.wordpress.com/tag/agora/>

Qiaohong Yan (Nicole)
China
Divinity School: Master of Divinity

Ivy on Walls: Beyond the Prestigious Symbol



Photo by Author

The first time I walked to the campus, I marveled at the beautiful ivy climbing on buildings. Some walls are densely covered with green vines, and some are decorated in nice shapes. I can't help stopping and staring at these vines, indulging in its beauty, also wondering how it will look like in winter. University of Chicago has a reputation of being extremely rigorous in academia standards, but for me the beautiful ivy attached on classical architecture provides a uniquely soothing atmosphere.

I was intrigued by the questions why there is so much ivy on campus. My English teacher, Christine, mentioned that it is because Ivy is a symbol of Ivy league schools which are the best universities in the world. Campus buildings covered with ivy indeed reminds me of the architectural style and atmosphere in other prestigious universities like Oxford and Cambridge. However, I feel more impressed by its natural beauty rather than the prestigious symbol, and wonder since ivy is so pretty, why we cannot see it so often elsewhere.

After some research, I learnt that ivy is considered a destructive plant to walls as they can easily creep into cracks and damage wall surface. It takes a lot of effort to control its growth. A proper selection of ivy type and right side of wall need to be considered in advance; ivy needs to be

watered timely, space of plants, mulch and direction of ivy growth all require special attention. Ivy may attract insects and even mice (Amelia Allonsy, n.d.). On the other hand, ivy has some practical benefits too. A study concludes that ivy can keep wall dry and provide some insulation, preventing moisture damage on the wall. Green leaves also can protect against harm from pollution. While ivy finds its way into cracks and holes, the effect on brickwork is superficial, and ivy can be safely taken off leaving walls intact (Fiona Macrae, 2010).

I guess the problem lies on where people are willing to embrace the benefits of ivy and dedicate the time and labor to grow a well controlled ivy on their wall. The university may have a good budget to make the building nicely covered with ivy. I believe the beauty of architecture and its intimate relationship with plants is very important for the environment of society. The beauty of the campus here makes me feel pleasant and I appreciate being able to study here. As a newcomer in the US, many things I see here are fresh and easily bring me some thoughts of my home country. In China, naturally every university strives to be better; however, it seems the focus is more prevalently on building larger new campus with high-rise modern buildings in suburban area, and I do not remember seeing any ivy covered walls in Chinese campuses. Obviously ivy is not a symbol of prestige in China.

Thinking about Shanghai, where I lived for many years, I remember seeing a few ivy covered walls in the former French concession, where the French settlement was established more than a century ago. Despite huge social reform and transition, the area retains many of its original character with European style low storied buildings, tree-lined avenues, various hip café, bars, restaurants, antique shops and historic sites. It has become a trendy tourist attraction, pretty and cozy, mainly resided by wealthy Chinese people and expats. I wonder why elsewhere in Shanghai the buildings are uniformly modern and boring, with trees sparsely distributed on the roads. Nobody bothers to grow ivy.

I find it hard to find a traditional style house sufficiently surrounded by plants in my hometown either. Many old houses and big trees were razed, giving way to the surging demand of high-rise apartment buildings, as people from country side rush in town for better opportunity of jobs and education. I started to search for natural ivy covered traditional style square courtyard building in the country side where my grandma lives, and which used to exist when I was a child; however, I was astonished to find that the buildings become uniformly the same modern ones, old houses all step down from the stage of history. Villagers are only interested to dedicate their time to grow vegetables and crops. I guess people everywhere all go for practical and efficient use of housing, no time for aesthetic or environmental consideration.

It is nice for the university to have such nicely designed and maintained landscape. As a person

super sensitive to the environment and green space, I wish more people out of campus can be more aware of the importance of beauty of architecture and environment as well, so that the world will become more pretty, pleasant and livable.



Photo by Author

Location: on campus

Travel time: walking distance

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Jieyan Yang
China
Physical Science Department

Immersed in the Ocean of Art



Art Institute of Chicago Lion Statue (Taken from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Art_Institute_of_Chicago_Lion_Statue_\(2-D\).jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Art_Institute_of_Chicago_Lion_Statue_(2-D).jpg))

Background

The Art Institute of Chicago is founded in 1879 and located in Chicago's Grant Park, which is connected with the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, a leading art school in the United States. As one of the oldest and largest art museums in the United States, the Art Institute attracts me deeply and it is the first place I want to visit in Chicago. From my childhood, I was captivated by arts, especially oil paintings. After learning painting for about 10 years, I fell in love with the impressionism. Neither be too realistic nor be too abstract, the impressionism is just enough for me to understand. I may not make sense of what impressionists want to convey

through their way, but I have my own way to appreciate them. Luckily, in the Art Institute of Chicago, there is a very good collection of a wide range of art, including the impressionism.

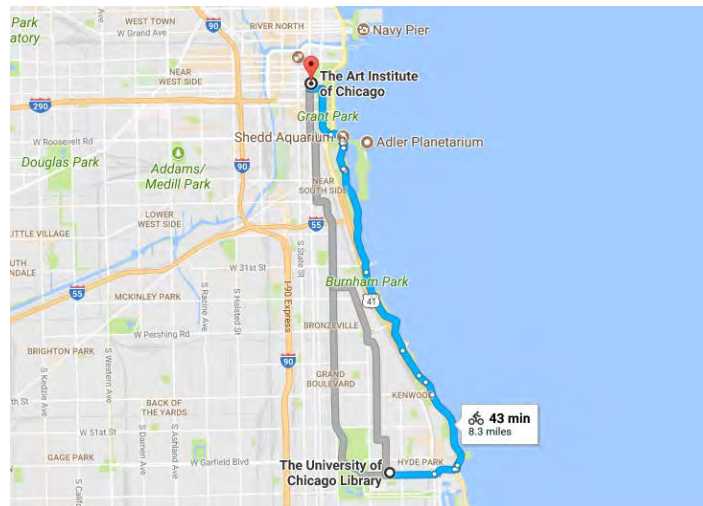
Recognized for its incredible collection of arts, the Art Institute hosts millions of guests every year. When I got to my destination, I found that the amount to see, like many such museums, was daunting or overwhelming. After looking through the catalogue before setting off, I decided what I must see. Of course, Impressionism and Post-Impressionism, which is in European Painting and Sculpture is included. However, I spent around 4 hours and just briefly walked through the European stuff pre-1920, which proves that there is much more for me to explore. Each painting has a placard that tells some about the artist, the piece, or the both. Other than Vincent van Gogh or Edouard Manet, I appreciated my favorite Claude Monet, having a huge exhibit, for about an hour. It is a real treasure! I would love to spend every my weekend here to visit the whole Art Institute of Chicago.

The collection of the Art Institute of Chicago encompasses more than 5,000 years of human expression from cultures around the world and contains more than 300,000 works of art in 11 curatorial departments. The museum holds works of art ranging from early Japanese prints to the art of the Byzantine Empire to contemporary American art. In my memory, I have not seen such a spectacular museum before. It's such a shock for me and I am still a little dizzy.

Broader Issue

The museum itself is awesome, but the cost for guests is expensive. Although general admission is free to Illinois residents every Thursday evening throughout the year, yet it is only to Illinois residents. How about the tourists who want to visit the museum for three or more times? It is impossible to see all collections at one time and they have to pay a lot to get the admission. Also, the price is not affordable for the people who are really poor.

What's more, the affliction of some collections as permanent collections in the Art Institute of Chicago is always under debate. There are a lot of social and historical reasons which gave rise to it. But it is a true problem to be solved. Whether should these collections be given back to the place they came from or be preserved in the museum forever? People always have much discrimination on it.



Routes from Uchicago to the Art Institution of Chicago by Bicycle (Screenshot by Google Map)

Transit time from Uchicago to the Art Institute of Chicago:

CTA: About 40 min

Car: About 20 min

Bike: about 40 min

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4. https://www.tripadvisor.com/Attraction_Review-g35805-d103239-Reviews-or10-The_Art_Institute_of_Chicago-Chicago_Illinois.html
5. <https://www.facebook.com/artic/>

Reo Yasuda
Japan
Harris School of Public Policy

American Ballpark: American VS Japanese style



Wrigley Field. Source: Photo by author

Background

I love baseball. I had played baseball for 10 years and watched baseball games many times at lots of stadiums in my school days. Even after I started working, I often went to stadiums to watch games. After only a few days of my arriving at Chicago, I went to watch a Cubs game at Wrigley Field. From my perspective, I feel how people enjoy baseball games has differences between the U.S. and Japan.

The surprising thing I noticed immediately when I arrived at Chicago and walked around downtown is that there were many people wearing Cubs T-shirts or jerseys despite that they didn't have a Cubs' game to attend on that day. Although I know baseball is one of the most popular sports in the United States, I was astonished that baseball has more popularity than I had expected. In Japan, Japanese people rarely put on some regalia of their favorite baseball team in their daily life.

Moreover, I was amazed at the atmosphere of the Cubs game that covered the Wrigley Field, which is the Cubs home stadium and located in the Lake View neighborhood. This is a unique atmosphere which mixes baseball fever and relaxation. I was excited at the game and at the same time felt comfortable in the stadium. Many American people come to the stadium with their family. Also, people enjoy not only watching the game but also spending their time with their family in the relaxing mood at the stadium. There are many concessions and much entertainment not only in the stadium but also outside the stadium. Most of MLB teams provide box seats where families and groups can have small parties. Therefore, family can have fun by eating foods and talking with their family other than by watching a baseball game. On the other hand, most of Japanese people just concentrate on watching a game intently. Also, although we drink alcohol beverages and eat some snacks in the stadium, there are only a few food stores and little space to relax. In addition, Japanese spectators don't talk with others too much because they cheer their favorite teams by singing team songs and chants with musical instrumentals.

Lastly, the distance between players and spectators, and that between the stadium and residents are very close in the U.S., which makes teams rooted in people's daily life and makes unity. Most stadiums have narrow foul zones and little fences. Also, they are located in residential areas. In Japan, there are many high fences and wide foul zones in most stadiums. Also, they usually are located far from residential areas.

Broder Issue

People in the U.S. usually call a stadium a **ballpark**. MLB teams construct their stadiums for people to be able to enjoy not only baseball games but also stadiums themselves like parks. Thus, MLB teams provide many food stores, restaurants, entertainments, events, places to relax and so on in their stadiums. MLB teams are trying to entertain people by the stadiums themselves. Economically, thanks to such ballpark projects, MLB teams are able to make more people come to their stadiums and increase the number of fans and spectators, which makes more profits.

In Japan, the popularity of baseball is decreasing. In this hard situation, one professional baseball team is eagerly making a plan to make its stadium **ballpark** like MLB teams. Though its plan is continuing, the team succeeded in increasing the total amount of annual spectators in 2016 by about 38.8% compared to that in 2011. The number of families and women who visit its stadium seems to be increasing for this team.

In such sports as popularity is reducing, changing team stadiums into **ballparks** may be one of the crucial keys to recovering its popularity and gaining revenue. How to entertain customers

will be an important concept even in sports and an established evaluation technique to measure customer satisfaction will be needed. Anyway, let's go to a **Ballpark** and feel the atmosphere from firsthand experience.

Travel Time from the University of Chicago

Neighborhood: Lake View (Wrigley Field)

- 50 minutes by 55 and 6 bus, and CTA train

- 30 minutes by Uber

Keisuke Yokota
Japan
Harris School of Public Policy

Weekend Cardio Along the Lake



View from the lakefront trail from Hyde Park, Photo by author

I love the lake views in Chicago because I have lived in cities near or along the seas of Japan, an island country, and Lake Michigan is so large that I mistake it for the real sea, which reminds me of my hometown. Now I live in an apartment located along the lake and I am always enjoying the scenery of the lake from my room.

While walking around my apartment, I found there is a walkway extending along the lake and lots of people enjoying jogging and cycling. I like getting some exercise and have the habit of jogging for ten kilometers or about six miles on weekends. When I was a child, I got injured in a traffic accident and I could not walk on my own feet—or even stand either—for one year. That is why I believe it is fantastic to have bodies that enable us to get involved with physical activities freely and always appreciate it.

I would like to introduce one of my favorite routes to you. Assume that you live in Hyde Park;

go out of your room and head east to the lakefront trail. You can see the marvelous blue of Lake Michigan from the road. Then, head west along the route. You have options to go north or south. I recommend going north because you can enjoy nice spectacular skyscrapers of Chicago as if they are floating over the lake when you are jogging or cycling. If you are confident of your stamina, you can go for more than ten kilometers or six miles to Adler Planetarium, from which you can enjoy great panoramic views of almost all famous buildings in Chicago' downtown. It will take you less than one hour to get there if you are a good runner. After running, you can eat a Chicago hot dog sold at refreshments stand or go back home by riding a bike share (Divvy) or jogging for another ten kilometers or six miles.

My country Japan faces a rapidly aging society, and the government secures one third of the national budget, about 300 billion dollars in social welfare, for the 2017 fiscal year and the amount will be increasing from now on if things continue the way they are. [1] The government of Japan encourages its people to take control of their own healthcare and trying to prevent the health of elderly people from worsening through preventive care. One of the key means is to extend healthy life expectancy by encouraging behavioral changes that are beneficial to health, such as cardio exercise.

According to guidelines made by Japanese Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare, some physical activities reduce a risk of diseases such as diabetes, cancer and apoplexy. Its instruction also indicates that one hour of exercise twice a week helps keep your body healthy. Besides, exercise can be useful for mental refreshment and can allow us to get sound sleep. Continuous physical activities also help senior citizens to enjoy their lives without any limitations resulting from health problems. [2]

I think it important to have easy access to attractive places that give people motivations to get some exercise like lakefront trail in Chicago. You can see not only young people but also lots of elderly people are engaged in physical activities on the sidewalk along the lake. If there were such a beautiful road close to the city center in Japan, more people would have enthusiasm for cardio exercise.

[1] <http://www.mof.go.jp/english/budget/budget/fy2017/01.pdf>

[2] <http://www.smartlife.go.jp/disease/exercise/>

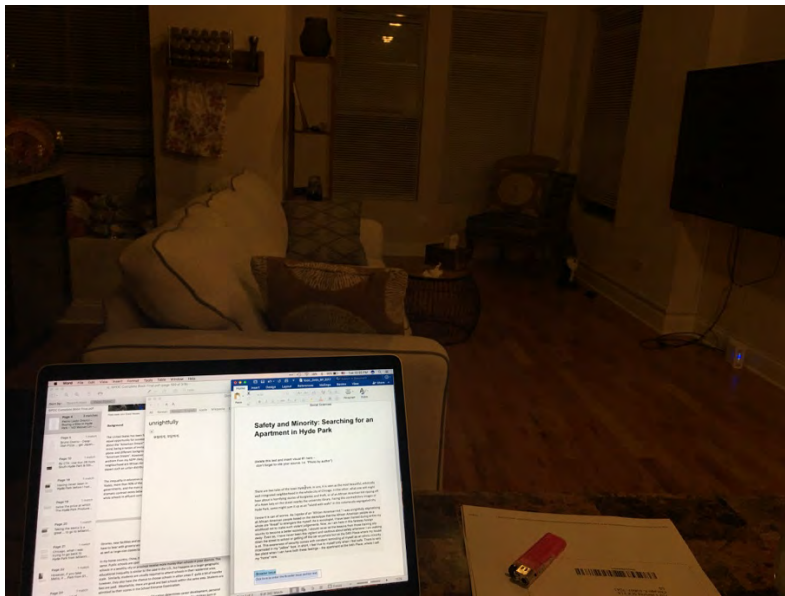


Panoramic View from Adler Planetarium, Photo by author

Less than 60 minutes by jogging or cycling from Hyde Park

Jimin Yoon
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Social Sciences

Safety, Minority, and Stereotype: Personal Experience During Searching for a Home in Hyde Park



My Home, Photo by Author

There are two tales about the town called Hyde Park. In one, it is seen as the most beautiful, diverse, and ethnically well-integrated neighborhood in the whole city of Chicago. In the other, what one will might hear about is several horrifying stories of burglaries and theft, or of an African American kid ripping off of an Asian lady on the street. Facing this contradictory images of Hyde Park, some might sum it up as an “island with walls” in this notoriously segregated city.

I know that the topic of safety and crime might be a can of worms. As I was speaking of an “African American kid,” I was unrightfully stigmatizing him based on the stereotype that the African American people as a whole are “threat” to strangers like myself. As a sociologist, I have been trained during entire my adulthood not to make such biased judgements. Now, as I am here in this faraway foreign

country to become a better sociologist, I should never let the lessons from those training slip away. Even so, I have never been this vigilant and cautious whenever I am walking down the street to school or getting off my car at many places that I am not familiar with. This awareness of security comes with constant reminding of myself as an ethnic minority with a “yellow” face. I, as an Asian guy, might be an “easy target.” In short, I feel true to myself and not as a minority, only when I feel safe. There is very few place in the U.S. where I can have both these feelings, and one of them is the apartment at the 54th Place, where I am supposed to call my “home” now.

Finding this new “home” was not easy. Technically speaking, this is my second home in Chicago. This means that I had to sign a lease, cancel the lease, and make a new one in only 3-4 weeks since I came to this city. Cancelling the lease alone cost me \$450 “non-refendable move-in fee” and the time and labor spent in arduous search for the new apartment were enormous. Was I sad? No, because \$450 was actually \$3,000 less in total from what they were going to charge me for cancelling the lease. In fact, the day the agent from the company told me and my wife that they are not going to charge us the \$3,000 “buyout fee” was the happiest day since our life in Chicago had begun. I still have a vivid image of that moment I and my wife were hugging each other after hearing the news and I am very confident that our couple will going to talk about the day even after 10 years from now.

Why did I go through all this trouble from cancelling the lease and why do I have happy memory about it? It comes down to the topic of safety and minority. The first apartment was located at the South Drexel Avenue and we fell in love with the unit at the first time we saw it. It was fully renovated, had spacious two bedrooms, and was within a reasonable price range. So we foolishly signed the lease right after the tour. However, one day later one of my friends told us that Drexel might not be a wise choice. “You should not go further South from the Ellis Avenue,” he said. “I had a friend who rented a apartment there and was burglarized.” After talking to him, the long research of safety and crime rate in the neighborhood consumed all of our time and energy. The more we dig, the more we had encountered horrifying experiences from victims and long records of police alerts until we finally decided to cancel the lease and to find a new apartment.

Until this day, I am still wondering whether I was needlessly wary. Then I shake my head immediately, having in my mind the image of my wife left alone in the house while somebody breaking into the apartment. To my shame, this guy in my imagination is African American. Then I shake again, thinking I should not let myself have such images. I feel guilty of being a bad sociologist, who unconsciously and uncritically adopts and reproduces the most abhorrent stereotypes. I know that the origin of segregation and crimes exists at the level of socio-historical structure. At the same time, I am just an individual and all the social structural effect is beyond my control. Should I had choose sociology over safety of my family? I realize the problem is much complex than I previously thought. Then again thist is the reason I choose to study sociology.

Boyuan Yu
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Institute for Molecular Engineering

Behind the Popularity of Garrett Popcorn: Americans Are Made of Corn



Garrett Mix (Photo by the author)

Background

Before I came to Chicago, I had heard that besides Deep-Dish Pizza and the Bean, Garrett popcorn was also a symbol of Chicago. In fact, for many of my friends, when they visit downtown, one of the must-go places is Garrett Popcorn Shop. In addition, when I had a chance to walk around at Millennium Park, I noticed that many people were carrying a bag of Garrett popcorn with them and some of them even were even eating popcorn while chatting in the bench. This was surprising to me because in China, popcorn is not even a popular snack at the movie theaters, let alone a daily snack.

I decided to visit Garrett Popcorn Shop to find out the secret of its popularity. I tried its famous flavor:

Garrett Mix. The popcorn was delicious with a combination of salt and sweet taste, and it was special to me since I had never tried salt popcorn before. However, I do not think that the taste alone could explain the extreme popularity of popcorn in not only Chicago, but the entire America. There must be some deep reasons behind it.

Broader Issue

Represented by Garrett popcorn, the popcorn favor can be explained by many different reasons. For example, it can be attributed to the prevalence of American movies after the Second World War. Because Americans eat popcorn while watching movies, the popularity of movies made the popcorn an icon of pop-culture (NAL, 2017). However, from a broader view, especially when considering the huge production and consumption of corn in America, Americans love popcorn maybe simply because they cannot live without corn.

Corn is the dominated crop in America and Americans consume much more corn in per capita than any other countries (Nathan, 2017). An interesting test also showed that for typical Americans, the carbon in their hair mostly comes from corn (Gupta, n.d.). Thus, to some extent, we can say that Americans are made of corn.

The corn industry plays an irreplaceable role in American economy providing Americans with food, fuel (ethanol), fodder and much more. However, because of the close relationship between corn and the development of America, corn farming also witnessed the dark side of American history. At the beginning, corn was introduced to the settlers by native Americans. Nonetheless, with the demanding for lands to plant crops including corn, the conflicts between settlers and native Americans led to the Indian War and the massacre of American Indians. Moreover, although corn was not the staple crop in the plantations, corn was indeed raised there and was the major food for slaves. Thus, corn symbolized the suffering experiences of black slaves as well (PBS, 2004).

Currently, it has become increasingly difficult for Americans to avoid intaking corn since they consume a large amount of corn indirectly as sweeteners. One of the sweeteners made from corn is high fructose corn syrup. It has been added to different foods and soft drinks as a cheap replacement of sugar. Many researchers believe that the overconsumption of sugar, especially the high fructose corn syrup causes the severe problem of obesity and diabetes among Americans (Gupta, n.d.). This concern as part of the reasons, leads to the sugar tax for sugary or sweetened beverages which arouses controversy in many cities including Chicago.

As the major crop in America, corn was an important part of American history and it still influences today's American society. In this context, "we are what we eat" (Gupta, n.d., n.p.).

Location

Garrett Popcorn Shop, 151 Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60601

Travel Time from UChicago

By CTA: 30 mins By car: 14 mins

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Chong Yu
China
Social Sciences Division: MAPSS
program

Loyalty to Team or Loyalty to Place?



"HOME of CHICAGO CUBS WIN!", Author unknown, Source: Google Image

Background

"You should 'train' yourself to be a fan of Chicago Bulls when you go to Chicago," Dad said jokingly. At that time, it indeed was a joke to me. However, I gradually found that loyalty to home team in Chicago was even stronger than I expected before.

There are many professional major-league sports teams in Chicago, including the Bears for American football, the Cubs for baseball, the Blackhawks for ice hockey and the Bulls for basketball. With all these home teams, Chicago residents show great loyalty and enthusiasm. For example, November 5th, 2016 must be an unforgettable day for Cubs fans because that day the Chicago Cubs won the World Series after 108 years drought (Witz, 2016). Thousands of fans waiting outside Wrigley Field burst into an uproar. Even though I didn't witness the victory and knew little about baseball, I felt excited when I saw the reaction on video. I saw old people crying, heard screaming and yelling, and I could feel what the championship meant to those loyal fans who never gave up on the Cubs. The same

thing goes for the Bears, Blackhawks and Bulls. This weekend, on my way to the Shedd Aquarium, I saw flocks of Chicagoans with Bears team jerseys heading to the Soldier Field to support home team with their families or friends. The loyalty to home teams seems inborn with them that the concept of “community” is has been internalized in sports.

On the other hand, when watching basketball games in China, fans from the same city usually don’t hold the same team preferences. Take China Basketball Association (CBA) for example. A friend of mine from Liaoning province is a crazy fan of Guangdong basketball club because of some star players in Guangdong. My dad used to be a fan of Beijing club but changed his loyalty to Xinjiang club due to his favorite player transferring. I guess if the same thing happened in U.S., the player transfer would be regarded as a “betrayal” to the city.

Broader Issue

In Chicago, loyalty to home team is deeply rooted in people’s hearts. The victory of Cubs proved that the city never gave up on the Cubs despite of its 108-year drought. It seems that professional sports team preferences are closely connected with the identification of people and the place where they live. In other words, in Chicago, loyalty to place is even stronger than loyalty to team. People like a specific team mostly because it is in their home, not because of star players or team itself. Based on the love for the community, the enthusiasm for stars and home team will then be developed.

However, things are different in China. Loyalty to team is more powerful than loyalty to place. In most cases, people become fans of a team due to its star players and team superior performance. They rarely love a team because of the given geographical area.

From the perspective of cultural psychology, the above difference is consistent with previous findings regarding group collectivism. The group collectivism is defined as "the degree to which individuals express pride, loyalty, and cohesiveness in their organizations or families" (House et al, 2004, p. 30). U.S. is one of the high in-group collectivism societies that people emphasize social connections and draw distinct boundaries between in-groups and out-groups (Brewer & Chen, 2007; House et al, 2004, p. 454). People from the same community usually have something in common, like values and identity. These social ties shorten the distance between people and finally generate loyalty to place and thus loyalty to other derivatives, such as home team. As for China, it’s usually a typical low in-group collectivism society (Brewer & Chen, 2007; House et al, 2004). The differences between in-groups and out-groups are not so obvious as in U.S. and less distinction is made between various groups or neighborhoods. The above findings are surprising because people usually regard U.S. as individualistic while identify China as collectivistic. It seems that sports may have some magical power in the U.S.

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Liqiang Yu
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Social Sciences Division

Housing 101



Photo by Yanfei Hu, a Chicago real estate agent

I was told several months before my AEPP program began that I should lease an apartment as early as possible or the rental price could be very high. For example, some senior students told me that it could rise by \$200 just from June to September. And UChicago does not provide enough housing for its graduate students, so the majority of us who have not rented an apartment in the States before have to finish their prerequisite before taking classes, which is Housing 101: Intro to renting an apartment.

Chinese graduate students in UChicago, who comprise a large percent of UChicago Graduate School, tend not to find a long-term broker from Chicago or to search housing information online such as through Zillow or Trulia. For example, in China, before coming here, I was trying to contact a local broker by email but considering the fact that I could not visit the apartment on my own and because I was afraid of fraud or unequal items in the lease, I gave up. There are

some items such as if we do not inform the landlord 2 months before moving, a tenant is supposed to pay a penalty of 2-months' rent. On the other hand, although school provides us some information about housing, we were told that school has been selling its graduate housing to other property management companies in recent years. Last year, a senior graduate Chinese student was forced to move out because her building was sold by the school. As a consequence, most of us rent through others' recommendations, e.g. a popular building that a bunch of senior students rent or a Chinese broker, Linda, who has a lot of housing resources in this area and who can also use a popular Chinese instant messaging app - Wechat.

Our trust in this sole real estate broker leads to monopoly of some extent. Take the UPC for example. Usually, students who rent from Linda pay an extra rental price of \$100-200 per month to directly lease from landlords. Moreover, these students will recommend Linda to next year's students, as she is the only person using Wechat. It is unfair for international students who have already paid a huge amount of tuition fee and health insurance to be treated unequally when leasing.

So, how can we deal with this monopoly? Here are my suggestions. Firstly, UChicago can negotiate with nearby property management companies to secure lower rental prices. As a reward, this would be a free, trustworthy advertising for these companies. For the students, the property management companies can directly contact incoming students, which can save agent fees for both renters and tenants. Secondly, students can create a non-profit renting organization to provide useful lease information directly from landlords to incoming students to minimize the information asymmetry. By doing these, we can relieve the financial burden on UChicago graduate students. Also, they would have more choice to spend this amount of money on improving their life quality.

Jiangnan Zeng
China
Harris School of Public policy

Art Institute of Chicago --- An Epitome of the Whole City

Background

The first day when I arrived in Chicago, I wanted to visit the Art Institute of Chicago. I dreamed of hanging around Art Institute before coming to Chicago since it is the second largest art museum in the United States, only after the Metropolitan Museum. When I studied in Europe as an exchange student, I've been to Le Louvre 4 times, le musée d'Orsay 3 times, and I spent all day long in Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam and the Uffitz Gallery Museum in Florence. Having already seen enough classics, and impressionism. I'm looking forward to encountering Contemporary & Modern arts in The US. On a radiant and enchanting Sunday morning, I visited the Art Institute of Chicago. Source: <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/millennium-park-shooting-chicago-670019>

The Art Institute of Chicago consists of two parts, including a classical beaux-arts building built in 1879 and a modern wing opened in 2009, standing on the east side of Michigan Avenue. The buildings themselves appear to show us its diversity, history, and modernity. The Art Institute is simple, graceful outside and delicate inside, always preparing for visitors all over the world.

The first floor of the Art Institute encompasses ancient artworks from East Asia, South Asia, Native Americans, Africans, Greeks and Byzantines, etc. And then, when you climb up to the 2nd floor, it seems like that, all of the sudden, we are coming through the age of Renaissance. And then at the end of 19th Century, we encountered Monet, Gauguin and Pissarro. Those masters tried to rebel from the classics, created illogical works, dug out individualism and summoned modernity in the future. No matter they wanted it or not, the time of modernity and post modernity just came. People are confused about Andy Warhol's commercialism in front of Liz #3, or feel the coldness and the silent moment frozen in Hopper's nighthawks.

From the perspective of an international student, this is the best place for me to understand more about the western world. I highly recommend it to all of the international students, besides it's free for all of the University of Chicago students.

Broader Issue

In The Art Institute, One of the most arresting master pieces is Albino. Source:

http://www.artic.edu/aic/collections/artwork/160222?search_no=1&index=0 Albino was created by Marlene Dumas--- a white woman who was raised under Apartheid rule in South Africa. This work presents us a black African albino whose skin tone and hair color was transferred into a sickly green hue. Dumas tends to expose the division between black and white, raises provocative questions about race, gender and beauty. This work visualizes such a complicated race conflict into a boy's face. Actually, the whole Art Institute itself is such a great artwork that visualizes our big city Chicago, and also conceptualizes people's vivid daily life from the 19th Century until now. People living in Chicago can always find something promoting them to identify or reflect themselves in this museum, no matter consciously or not. For example, The three-colored glazed pottery set on the first floor triggered me to imagine the Tang Dynasty---a great and magnificent time in China 1000 years away from now. And perhaps, Monet, Van Gogh and Picasso kept reminding those European immigrants here of the movable feast---Paris, and the gold old times of the Europe.

The Art Institute is an epitome of the whole city. Both the institute and the city encompass collision and conflict existing all the time, as well as great works produced by diverse ethnic groups from different times. People in different communities in Chicago try to commemorate their origins and create their own culture by building churches in different styles, using their own languages on road signs or restaurant names. Like Chinatown, Wicker Park, Boys' town, Little Italy and so on, harmony coexists with conflicts. Sometimes different communities struggle against each other for limited public resources. In somewhere, invisible discrimination still exists under politically correct slogans. This is Chicago people and Chicago life. Art Institute of Chicago is an artwork, which passes through various times and spaces, and so does Chicago.

Location

Downtown

111 S Michigan Ave, Chicago, IL 60603

How to get there

Uber: 13 min.

Bus: Line 6, 23 min.

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Chao Zhang
China
Institute of Molecular Engineering

A Mix of Mystery and Fancy: Alchemy



It was an accident that I found this fancy store. I was doing my neighborhood project in Edgewater and I saw a store which looked pretty old. I thought it should be a antique store which was famous in that neighborhood. I walked in only to find those fascinating, magic and mysterious things.

As you can see in the picture, there are all kinds of magic powder, magic stones and fantastic

equipment. There are even a statue of cynocephalus, the dog-headed man. They did not have magic broomsticks or wands like in 'Harry Potter'. Instead, the 'alchemists' seemed to try mixing different stones and powder and burning them into gold. Actually, Alchemy, the name of the store, is the predecessor of chemistry.

It was really new to me because I had never seen this kind of things before. I thought they should be put into museums rather than in a way-side store. I love this kind of things. It was the combination of magic and science, but different from both. This store gave me a beautiful imaginary frame of the work of ancient alchemists.

There was a dark room, where the only light came from a flame, which was green. A man in a dark robe walked to the fire and threw some shining powder into the flame. The flame blew up, turned into golden, and then died out. The man picked up a stone from the ash and wiped off the dust on it. The stone became golden and shining! 'I succeeded!' he cheered with tears. Of course this story was totally imaginary. A stone can never be transformed into gold according to modern chemistry. Alchemy might seem to be just fun and jokes to modern people who admire science. It is not.

Alchemy is mother to modern science, not only because it was an attempt to transform one kind of matter into the other, but also because it was an attempt to remodel the world basing on observations. When ancient people saw wood burned into black and limestone burned into white, it was reasonable for them to look for something to be burned into golden. Modern science is kind of the same. Scientists propose all kinds of hypothesis based on observations, and then test them, and then apply them if tests were successful.

In the world of science, humanbeings are so tiny that we need to do observations and testings for thousands of years to reach the level of today. What's more, we are keeping accumulating.

You can get on #6 or #55 bus, transship to red line, and then get off at Bryn Mawr station. The Alchemy store is just near the station. The total trip will cost you about 80 minutes.

Lefan Zhang
China
Physical Science Division:
Computer Science

Sweetened Beverage Tax in Illinois



Photo by Author

Background

Although I had heard that the U.S. had a huge amount of sugar consumption per capita when I was in China, I never considered that as a fact that really mattered. To me, it was only an insignificant story that happened in a far and away nation until I saw the signs in U.S. markets. After arriving in Chicago in early August, I realized that there were signs in nearly every groceries, supermarkets and convenience stores saying that some beverages would be charged a certain amount of tax because they were sweetened. It really shocked me, because in my view, only the “harmful” commodities like cigarettes and alcohol need an extra tax on them. It seems that too much consumption of sugar is considered as a same severe issue in this country.

Sweetened beverage tax is a recent thing in Illinois. The state decided to begin charging extra

tax on sweet drinks on August 2, 2017 which is a few days before my arrival. The tax affects most sweetened beverages, but there are some exclusions, such as milk, 100% juice, beverages for medical use, etc. An interesting thing for the tax is that it includes not only beverages with actual sugar, but also sweetened ones without sugar such as diet coke and zero coke. It is not calculated according to Calories, but to volume of drink bottles, which is one cent per ounce. As far as I am concerned, this indicates that the tax means more than reducing sugar consumption of people. It tries to influence people's tastes and living style.

Broader Issue

However, will the so-called "soda tax" be able to control the sugar consumption and finally reduce the obese population? There might be some issues that can weaken the influence of the tax. The desire of consuming sugar is different from person to person. Some might be addicted to sugar, and some might be neutral about taking sugar. The price increasement will only affect those without strong desire of consuming sugar because for the heavy sugar consumers, the attraction of sugar is so strong that they don't care to pay an extra cent for one ounce of sweetened beverage.

Certainly, the tax itself may not be enough to solve all the problems caused by sugar consuming, but it will surely have a strong impact on customers' behavior.

Lingfan Zhang
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Harris: Public Policy

Beyond Bus Stops



Chicago in Smoke of Air and Water Show 2017, source: Photo by author

I always enjoys taking public transportation, especially in unfamiliar cities. This is my way to get some feel of atmosphere in neighborhoods. It is always surprising and interesting to overserve other passengers, street sights and vehicles I am in. Among all type of public transportation, bus is my favorite. Bus can give me a better view and understanding of the city. As it always travel along the street, I can know my relative location based on each stop and therefore I would not miss any place of interests. Once spot anything interests me, I can hop off at next stop and walk back according to bus routes. Subway, in contrast, fail to provide such convince for unanticipated encounter to me.

Before coming to USA, I was told not most people drive to work and the bus system is not that

reliable. On arriving Chicago, I soon notice some difference in bus system here compared to the bus system where I live. Far less distance between each stops, Less noticeable bus stops and more accessible vehicle designs are just three examples.

Back in China, bus also plays an important role. Yet, the biggest difference is that, though bus would drive out its start station based on schedule, it doesn't have a time setting for each stop. As a result, people couldn't know exactly how long to wait in the past. Once, I waited for a line for a hour before 3 buses of that line arrived at the same time because of traffic jam! With continuous development in past years, bus system in China has improved a lot. In my hometown, Nanjing, most lines install gps locator on their bus and people can learn when will the next bus arrive and the distance of that bus. Nowadays, facing the rise of sharing bikes and light rail transportation, less people take bus than before and it remains a popular choice for elders in China.

Bus stops, along with guardrails and traffic cones, pictures out a monotonous image of urban infrastructure. Most people just take bus stops for granted and during waiting, their minds float away thinking about things to do when they get off. Yet, bus stop, just like any other infrastructure that keep city rotating, have designs to study with. A well design one can shelter passengers from weather and make waiting enjoyable while a simple stop sign on top of a pole may make passenger feel that they are second-class citizens.

To begin with, the bus stops designs are verified. A ride on a random line can be a tour of bus stops. Some stops are very basic – only a metal plate on a metal pole, some stops are quite cozy – a shelter with bench and lights, and some stops in certain neighborhood are even adorable. Besides, how advertisement displayed can win attention. There are plenty of details of design for people to discover. For example, some shelter have curved roof to keep off snows. In addition, there might be a relationship between neighborhood and stop designs.

Another aspect to notice is the designs in stop pacing. This is to say, the location of stops have careful designs behind them. Tradeoffs are always parts of Transit system designing - placing bus stops is a study of service frequency and coverage. On talking about a particulate bus stop, its relative location of an intersection falls into two categories: a far side stop or a near side stop. Generally speaking, a far side stop is safer for pedestrians while it requires complex timing system to work effectively and a near side stop is easier for passengers to disembark. Also, the distance between stops need attention. Bus system in USA tends to have close stops for the convenience of passengers who have difficulties walking on their own, bus system in China spreads stops to achieve faster services time.

About 5-7minutes of walk from the center of campus to the nearest bus stop to elsewhere.

Shiyu Zhang
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Social Science:
MA Program in the Social Science

Tar Spot of Maples: How Unsightliness Fights Invasive Species



Photo by Shiyu Zhang

On my way to campus, I was trying to find the most beautiful leaf to make a pressed leaf bookmark. Suddenly, a diseased maple tree caught my attention—all its leaves were covered with black spots. Simply looking at that tree sent shivers down my spine. Even since then, I have noticed a large number of maple trees in Hyde Park being infected by this hideous disease. I decide to figure out what happens to them.

Finding out what happened to these maple trees was easy. This is a common disease of maples in Great Lakes region of eastern North America (Hsiang & Tian, 2007) and there are many online resources introducing it to the general public. What is causing the problem is a genus of fungus *Rhytisma* (Hsiang & Tian, 2007). Every spring, a new cycle of disease occurs when the overwintered spores infect the new leaves (Cornell Corporate Extension, n.d.). As the picture demonstrates, multiple tar-droplet-liked black spots are developed on the leaves, which gives the disease the name of tar spot (Cornell Corporate Extension, n.d.).

Many of the online articles encourage people not to mind tar spot too much because it is mainly a cosmetic problem and has no real consequence on the health of the trees. However, this is not the full story. A deeper looking into the literature reveals a far more interesting side.

Many of the maple trees I saw in Hyde Park area are Norway maples; pretty as they are, the Norway maple is actually an invasive species. Originating from eastern and central Europe and western Asia, they are widely planted in eastern and north central United States as street trees because they grow vigorously and tolerate poor soil well (Norwak & Rowntree, 1990). The Norway maple also serves a desirable ornamental purpose because indigenous fungi and pests are less likely to prey on this exotic species (Cincotta, Adams & Holzapfel, 2009). According to the City of Chicago Bureau of Forestry (2013), Norway maples comprises 21% of the street tree population, much higher than the goal established by the city—no more than 15% for a single tree species. The weed spread of Norway maples, reinforced by large-scale of intentional planting, is exerting a toll on the local flora. Studies demonstrated that the Norway maple outcompetes indigenous species (e.g., sugar maple) and leads to a reduction of local biodiversity (Galbraith-Kent & Handel, 2008; Reinhart, Greene & Callaway, 2005).

This is where hideous tar spot become a protector of the local flora. While Norway maples are often not affected by local fungi and pests, this adventive fungus, also originating from Europe, made its way to the United States and infected the spreading Norway maples (Lapointe & Brisson, 2011). Unlike what is commonly believed, tar spot is not harmless. Although the influence mainly focuses on appearance of the leaves, previous studies have suggested that this disease may cause premature defoliation, which in turn results in a decrease in growth (Phillips & Burdekin, 1992; Webster, Nelson & Wangen, 2005). Therefore, it seems that the epidemics of tar spot that specifically affects the Norway maple has important negative impact on controlling spreading of this invasive species (Lapointe & Brisson, 2011).

Turns out the tree diseases I have always hated are significant for keeping natural balance and preserving biodiversity. It is fascinating how a curse on the trees can turn out to be a blessing to the local flora.

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Xiang Zhang
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Division of Social Sciences:
Computational Social Science

Green Land Along the Lake Michigan – the Paradise in Chicago



Photo by Xiang Zhang

Background

Lake view community is a colorful and wonderful community lying in the north part of Chicago. You could think of many words to describe it, as for its diversity, you can think of Boystown within it; as for its convenience, you can think of a plenty of fantastic restaurants and stores there. But what makes Lake View unique? What makes it a peaceful place and generally regarded as the best place to live in? Personally, I would say it is because of the parks along the shore.

I went there at a sunny afternoon; I saw families having picnic on the grass; I saw young adults running and biking in the park; I saw elders on the wheelchair moving around; I saw old couples walked slowly hand in hand; I also saw mommies with baby carriages enjoying their free time.

The peaceful scenarios here make everyone feel that it's like a paradise. It's just a paradise, all residents here enjoy their time along the shore, within the park.

Broader Issue

If we look back at Chicago's history, we all know that the Great Lake Michigan is a key factor that makes Chicago great. And till now, it still instills peaceful component to Chicago. Along shore of the Great Lake Michigan, there are miles of green land. From the north part to the south, Lake View, Lincoln Park, Downtown, and to Hyde Park, all residents in corresponding area love green land there.

How can human beings live in harmony with nature? I think Chicago city can serve as a paradigm for us. Better city, better life. In the past, human beings are always thinking about taking controls over nature. In the great city of Chicago, Chicagoans have also tried to do something to change the landscape and ecosystem along Lake Michigan. However, the building of parks long the shore is actually the right way to show respect for nature. Live in harmony with nature, enjoy the paradise created by it, and citizens will have more happiness.



Photo by Xiang Zhang

Lake View
30 min by car

Zhi Zhang
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School of Social Service
Administration

Hey, You Are Beautiful



Lakeshore Drive, Oakwood Exit, Chicago Parks District for The City of Chicago, IL. 11' x 15'. 2014-2015.
Photo retrieved from <https://you-are-beautiful.com/pages/public-art>.

Background

My smile in the city of Chicago starts here. When I was picked up from the airport and taken to my new residence for my two-year journey, I noticed this installation by accident on the Lakeshore Drive. Having a dozens hours of exhausted flight on my own, I was kind of upset and lost in this different world. However, as I saw the words “you are beautiful”, I felt suddenly relieved, and confident to my life in this strange city. The sign outside the window passed so fast, but the positivity it brought to me will last forever.

Now I know that it is actually an interesting public art movement originated from Chicago. According to the You Are Beautiful Website, “You Are Beautiful is a community of people that believes in building each other up and spreading positivity every day”. At the beginning, they made a small batch of 100 “You Are Beautiful” stickers and gave them out in 2002. It started as a sticker, but the You Are Beautiful message has grown into large scale installations, murals, and collaborations with designers and artists from around the world. What I saw on the road is one of their masterpieces. When the phrase You Are Beautiful is integrated into a place, community, or city, it creates an immediate positive dialogue, and unmeasurable amount of people come across this phrase will be affected by this positive message. I feel so lucky and thankful to see this magical piece in a hard time, so I’d like to share this positivity with you, and encourage you to find your own “You Are Beautiful” in the city of Chicago, and around the world.

Broader Issue

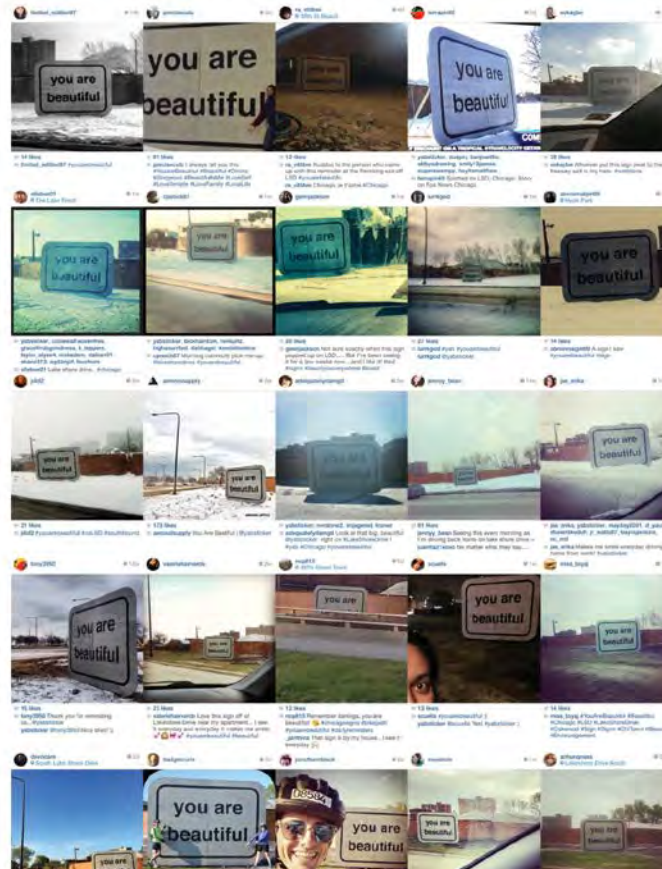
“Art influences society by changing opinions, instilling values and translating experiences across space and time.” Research has shown art affects the fundamental sense of self (Reference.com). That’s an important reason that why art therapy has developed so fast as one of our clinical social work methods.

On the other hand, it also has great economical and social benefits. Public art, as its name shows, occupies a unique position within both the art world and the public society. Compared with big-name art work, it’s free and easy to access for everyone. That creates more interaction opportunities between public artwork and the public. Once the public art project been built in the neighbourhood, it brightens people’s day and activate some underutilized places into invaluable community assets, and generate positive presence and interaction along the street. The public artwork brings refreshing financial benefit to the old community places.

As You Are Beautiful says, “we can remind each other that we are all beautiful people, our neighborhoods can be beautiful places and beautiful things can be found in the places we least

expect.” People get inspired by the message, or involved in the community by the feelings. Public art plays an important role in creating vibrant and healthy communities for all in an unexpected but pleasant way.

Community Engagement



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Pei Zhou
China
Harris School of Public Policy

United We Are, Divided It Is



Photo by the author, the gathering in Millennium Monument in 13 August against Trump for his speech relating to the Charlottesville's riot.

Background

The first time I went to Millennium Park, the heart of Chicago, I saw a large crowd of gathering in purpose of protesting the President Trump's vague response to the Charlottesville's riot. The gathering showed strength, energy, and unity. Curiously, that big scenario actually brought me back to 2015, when I was a research assistant working in Stanford. At that time, Donald Trump was still a joke and no one on earth would have imagined that he could one day be sitting in the Oval Office and acting like a son of a bitch. I remember all polls' outcomes were in favor of Hilary Clinton and eventually Mr. Trump won the electoral college. And now, this gathering show a lot of things that occurred on the media but don't occur in the real world. What I mean is, those people were great. There was this nice man who was spreading papers. There were also great speakers roaring about Trump's sins. The funniest thing was that they even set up Trump and Pence doll puppets to mock them. As much as they did, they still couldn't shorten the distance between the progressive and the alt-right. What they were doing, as a lot of other people at other gatherings in other places do, was enlarging the gap and dividing a country that has suffered racial conflict for more than two centuries.

Broader Issue

Chicago is an epitome of America's racial conflict. The city had a long history of segregation. From the early 1960s, the white residents began to move to the suburbs area, and the south side became a mostly African American neighborhood with the suffering of high crime and underperforming economically. The famous R.J. Daley, Mayor of Chicago for more than two decades, was in favor of keeping the segregation, which broadened the gap between the majority and minority, politically and economically. Though this great city tried many methods, the high crime rate and racial conflict is still in an enlarging tendency.

The thing happened in Chicago was not a single place. America used to be a racially segregated nation. The southern part are even still culturally segregated among neighborhoods. And most states had precise laws to protect segregation. This situation changed during the 1960's Civil Right Movement. With the moral sentiment among white elite, the movement changed the landscape of America's racial landscape. However, it didn't change peoples' hearts. Those racists were growing up in a racially biased environment. As an old Chinese saying goes: You can see a man's youth when he is three and you can see his maturity when he is seven. The Civil Right Movement used a revolutionary way to ensure a better minorities' right. However, the threat remains because the racists' views were strongly protected by the First Amendment and thus they can always be revived.

It is important to change peoples' minds. This might sound unbelievable in the American ideology, but look at Germany, Hitler didn't take the power by violence; he took it by the rightful process of democracy. German and people around the world suffered thanks to "Democracy". It is necessary, in some degree, to prohibit some certain speech and minds, which could damage the institution of democracy that eventually would likely damage peoples' freedom of speech. Therefore, to looking at the First Amendment from a new angle is vital for America's future. It is time to learn the German's way of how they dealt with the Nazis after the War.



Photo by the author, the doll puppets of Trump and Pence.

Travel Times

CTA: 23 minutes

Bike: 40 minutes

Car: 15 minutes

Qiyao Zhou
China
Harris School of Public Policy

The Idealism in Chinatown: The Whole World as One Society



The Whole world as One Society; Photo was taken by author

When I was in my secondary school, I learned the sentence “The Whole world as One Society” from my textbook. This sentence firstly appeared in Chinese classics and later became the motto of Sun Yat-Sen—the first prime minister of the Republic of China, often called the “father” of China. I was totally impressed by the ambition hidden behind this concise sentence: everyone has the rights to live an equal life regardless of their race, nationality and background.

Last Friday, I went to Chinatown, and my first impression of Chinatown was a big plaque with “The Whole world as One Society” written on its entrance. From the way calligraphy appeared, I saw Sun Yat-Sen’s strong desire to accomplish his ideals. I then went into one of the shops in Chinatown and asked the shopkeeper why they put that big plaque at the entrance. He told me that his ancestors came from Guangzhou and went to the U.S. in the 1920s (Sun’s period), and they were all inspired and encouraged by the spirit of Sun Yat-Sen and put this plaque to commemorate him. What is more, they also hope that they could live in the society without discrimination and violence, where everyone could be regarded equally. However, he told me

that the public infrastructure in Chinatown is poor compared with some other communities. The public high school in Chinatown is bad, and their next generations cannot get well-educated.

Chicago is facing severe segregation problems nowadays. Although all kinds of legal segregation were abolished by Civil Rights Act of 1964, the segregation in fact still persists. Even while living in the same city, black, white and Asian people live in different communities, where the security service, transportation, public service and education resources are quite different. People seem to live in separate cities, and the idealism of “The Whole world as One Society” are not likely to come true in Chicago.

This segregation may have several negative effects, and this effect may form a negative loop, which in turn deteriorates the conditions further. The relatively poorer economic conditions of black and Asian people may account for the segregation, and because of this segregation, they cannot share good public services and their children cannot enjoy the well-qualified educational resources, and then their next generation will be even poorer. Besides, from the perspective of economics, segregation will block people to communicate and share ideas with others, and thus block economic growth in the long run.

The value behind “The Whole world as One Society” is quite similar to the universal value in the Western culture: equality, liberty and fraternity. All men are born equal, people should not be discriminated against because of their race, color or nationality. Breaking down the segregation, promoting the integration and communication between different ethnic groups, enabling different races possess the equal rights are quite essential for Chicago City.

CTA: 40 minutes; Car: 15 minutes; Bike: 40 minutes

Mingjie Zhu
China
Social Sciences: Economics

Chicago Hot Dog Festival



Photo by author

Background

During the visit to Lincoln Park, I happened to know Chicago Hot Dog Festival – celebrating one of the most famous and beloved Chicago’s local food, which is sponsored by Chicago History Museum. At the festival, there are traditional Chicago-style hot dogs, cold beer and perfect bands which promotes this great family-friendly atmosphere. This is in addition to interesting facts and fantastic presentations provided by hot dog historians, epicureans and authors. Local people walk their dogs and have fun with family. Tourists are excited about everything new here. There’s always something great for you.

As an international student, I regard hot dog as a symbol of Chicago as well as a mark of American life. Actually, in Chicago area, there are more hot dog restaurants than Wendy’s, McDonalds, and Burger King combined.

Chicago hot dog is topped with yellow mustard, white onions, green pickle, and tomato slices which is said to be “dragged through the garden”. Remember, there is no ketchup for Chicago

hot dog! Due to the strong taste of opinion, many Chicagoans think that ketchup is unacceptable.

Broader Issue

An interesting thing I want to mention here is that people need to buy hot dog dollars (shown below the title) to pay for whatever they want at the festival. I regard it a great commercial strategy, especially for kids and tourists, because it can make them more engaged in the activity. Also, I think the virtual “money” is a cool Instagram thing which will attract more people to the festival, even without the advertisement or publicity from the sponsor. Moreover, tourists including me could collect the hot dog dollars as a souvenir.



Photo by author

Location:

Lincoln Park, 1701 N. Stockton Dr., Chicago, IL 60614

Travel times from UChicago:

CTA—50min car—20min bike—1h

Sunny Zhu
China
Booth School of Business

Everyone's Picasso



Photo by John W. Iwanski

If you take the red/blue line and get off at Washington Station, you will meet with a very strange sculpture. It looks like so many things. A horse, fox, dog, women face, or bird? Actually, it is the most famous sculpture in Chicago, Picasso, which is also the biggest sculpture designed by Picasso ever.

Picasso was designed and constructed in 1960s. In early 1960s, mayor of Chicago, Richard J. Daley, decided to build a Richard J. Daley Center in downtown. He successfully invited Pablo Picasso to design a sculpture for the center. When he first saw Picasso's draft, he thought that 'it looks like the wings of justice'. Chicago's government decided to pay Picasso \$100,000 for his master design. However, after confirming that he received an effective paycheck, Picasso returned the paycheck and said that 'This is my gift to the people of Chicago'.

Chicagoans were indeed very excited about this gift. Hundreds of thousands of people gathered around Daley Center on August 15, 1967 to celebrate the completion of Picasso. But when they actually saw the appearance of it, they felt puzzled, disappointed and even angry. They couldn't understand such kind of 'abstract art' and would choose to take a detour so that they could avoid seeing this 'ugly' thing. As years goes by, more and more passengers have their lunch beside it, more and more kids slide through it and more and more photographers take picture of it from different angles.



Photo by Stephen Raskauskas

According to the well-known architectural firm, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, "The Chicago Picasso has left an enduring impact, not just on its hometown, but also globally. The debut of the sculpture in 1967 was a pivotal moment in the public acceptance of modern art" (SOM). Before it, sculptures in Chicago were mostly created to memorialize a great person or historical event, such as Lincoln Monument and Buckingham memorial fountain. After Picasso, more and more modern artistic sculptures, including Flamingo, and Cloud Gate, have been on display in Chicago's streets and attract tourists from all around the world. Chicago has become a superstar city of modern art.

In my opinion, one reason that help people accept Picasso is because it has no fence around it. People can really enjoy themselves by spending some time with it. People called Picasso as 'everyone's Picasso' in its 50th birthday, instead of 'Chicago City's Picasso' or 'Mayor's Picasso'. In China, we treat public sculptures in a different way. We also have many fabulous sculptures,

but we usually set fences. Our government think that fences could help protect those sculptures from human hands so that sculptures can stand longer time and more generations in future can benefit from seeing them, while government in Chicago think that it should hand public sculptures to people's hands, no matter how long those sculptures might stand, in their existing years, people can benefit from touching them in their daily life. On the other hand, people in United States and China also treat arts differently. Chicagoans feel arts as a basic need. Not only can they play with a famous sculpture, they can also enjoy themselves listening to classical or rock music on the grasslands in Millennium Park, eating homemade food, drinking beers or simply lying in leisure chairs. I was very surprised when I first saw such kind of scenes. In China, people are used to pay for a concert. They will dress formally and leave their food at home. Whether a government need to protect or provide a public art and whether an individual feels free or respectful with a public art is an interesting cultural difference between United States and China, I wish I could learn more in later days.

Location :

In front of Richard J. Daley Center
50 W Washington St, Chicago, IL 60602

Travel times from UChicago:

By CTA: 31min

By bike: 45min

By car: 22min

Reference

Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLP (SOM). Art + Som: The Chicago Picasso, From Dream to Reality. Retrieved from http://www.som.com/ideas/slideshows/chicago_picasso

The Legendary Windy City



Anyone who has experienced the freezing, pervasive North-East gusts in a typical Chicago's winter season might believe that there is no need to question why this city gained its attractive nickname of 'The Windy City'. But despite its famous appellation, Chicago is neither the breeziest city in the U.S. nor does the wind in Chicago blow faster than it does in other comparable energetic towns across the country.

According to the records stored in the database of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the highest wind average speed can be observed in Mount Washington, NH with 35.1 mph in one year, followed by Blue Hill, MA (15.2 mph), and Dodge City, KS (13.9 mph). The same database shows that the wind blows fiercely across the buildings of Chicago pretty much as it does in New York, Boston, and San Francisco.

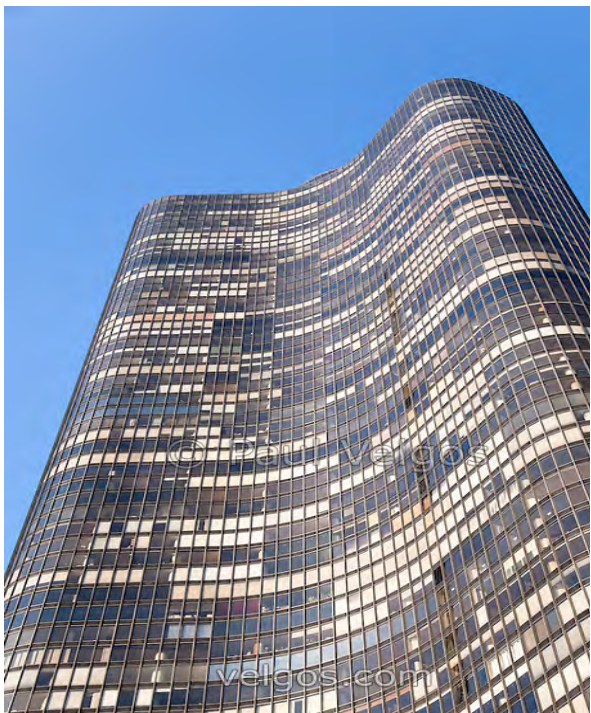
In fact, there are more than one thesis as to why Chicago earned its famous appellation.

Surprisingly enough, the traditional version of the story tells that the celebrated moniker became popular after it appeared in an article of *The New York Sun* edited by Charles Dana during the 1870s. At that time, Chicago was dueling with New York to host the Columbian World Fair and,

in this context, the tag of 'windy city' was picked up ironically to represent the idea of people 'full of hot air', with reference to Chicago's politicians who liked to brag about the magnitude of their achievements. However, Dana's article has never been found and its exact date of publication is mysterious. What is known is that Chicago eventually held the World Fair in 1893 while of course politicians' inclination for showing off their accomplishments goes as far as it does pay some premium over the electorate.

Thanks to the curiosity of a parking-ticket judge from New York, the true origin of the expression was found in an article of the *Cincinnati Enquirer* of May 9, 1876 titled "*That Windy City. Some of the Freaks of the Last Chicago Tornado*". The article referred to a match between the two baseball teams, *Cincinnati Red Stockings* and *Chicago White Stockings*, which were at that time engaged in a strong rivalry (likely an echo of the economically more significant battle between the two cities for the primacy in the meatpacking market).

Undoubtedly, the metaphor of the 'The Windy City' pulls some sort of leverage on me. It conveys the essence of a powerful, vibrant metropolis, crossed by this unstoppable violent freezing wind coming from Lake Michigan. The Hawk (as Chicago wind is often referred to) dominates Chicago lake shore as well as the materials, shapes and curvatures of its most prominent buildings.



Lake Point Tower at 505 North Lake Shore Drive



The 9-modules Willis Tower

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<https://www.chicagoreader.com/Bleader/archives/2008/11/21/the-origins-of-the-term-windy-city-have-been-misreported-again>
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Shakoh Zulqurnain
Pakistan
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18-Year Olds Can Die in Wars, But Can't Drink?



Photo by Peter Dinch

My friend, Ali and I landed in Chicago from Pakistan. Ali is an alcohol enthusiast. However, in Pakistan, because of alcohol ban, he could never drink in public. Even the acquisition of alcohol is no less than a Herculean task. One would call the dealer, ferociously negotiate the price, determine a pick-up location in some dark and shady area and rush back to some safe haven as fast as possible. Unsurprisingly, our first visit was to a liquor shop after we had dropped our luggage. Wasim picked up a bottle of his favorite whiskey and rushed to the counter. He was

clueless of the fact that only disappointment awaited him there. The lady at the counter asked him for some document that proved he was 21 years or older. Unfortunately, he had none. His Pakistani ID card was not in English and, therefore, not legible to the counter lady. We argued with the lady for some time but to no avail. Then, we headed out of the store with our heads held low.

Alcohol has been one of the major issues surrounding the American politics. Eighteenth amendment to the constitution of United States banned alcohol nationwide. However, it soon became apparent that implementation of such a ban could not be made effective. The amendment was later repealed by twenty first amendment to the constitution of America. Eighteenth amendment is unique in the sense that it is the only amendment that has been repealed so far.

Drinking age is another controversial topic in American politics. The minimum legal age to purchase alcohol is 21 years in all states. One argument in favor of 21 year age requirement is that alcohol affects an adolescent brain differently than an adult one. However, the medical research on this point is not conclusive. Additionally, there are many countries which permit drinking at age of 18 years. Are the brains of Americans different from people in those countries? Another argument is that a person is not mature at the age of 18. However, this argument could not be more ill-founded. 18 year old can go to war, kill people and get killed, vote in the election for his or her president, governor and legislators but somehow his or her mental faculties fail when it comes to choose between drinking and not drinking. America is a country which cherishes the notion of freedom above everything else. It is surprising that America has such a law on its books which prohibits a major person from drinking and purchasing alcohol. Sooner or later, this law will change and lower the age for drinking to 18 years to be consistent.