RMIT University | June 2024

Creative Mobile Methods

Workshop

Adriana de Souza e Silva, Professor of Communication
NC State University → Northeastern University (USA)

Methods

Critical / Interpretative

historical and textual analysis,
examples, and case studies.

Empirical / qualitative

in-depth interviews, focus groups, and content analysis.

Mobile Methods



- Walk / Ride alongs.
- Shadowing.
- Travel or transport diaries.
- Longitudinal studies with migrants.
- Away studies with tourists.
- Observations of mobility systems.

(Larsen, 2008; Kalir, 2012; Palen & Salzman, 2002; Axhausen, Zimmermann, Schönfelder, Rindsfüser, & Haupt, 2002; Laurier, 2004, Ferguson 2011; Aldred & Jungnickel 2012; Czarniawska, 2007; Jiron, 2011; Kusenbach, 2003; Pink, 2007; Ingold & Vergunst, 2008; Merriman, 2014; Büscher, Büsher & Urry, 2009)

Mobile Methods

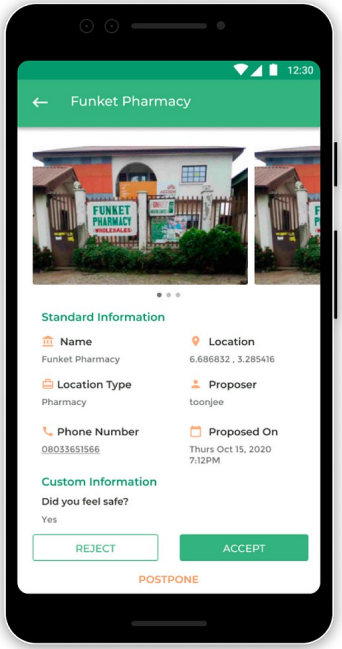
- Mobile ethnography
- Conversation analysis
- Mobile ethnography

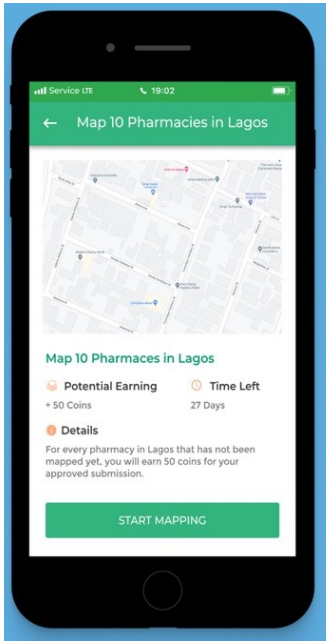


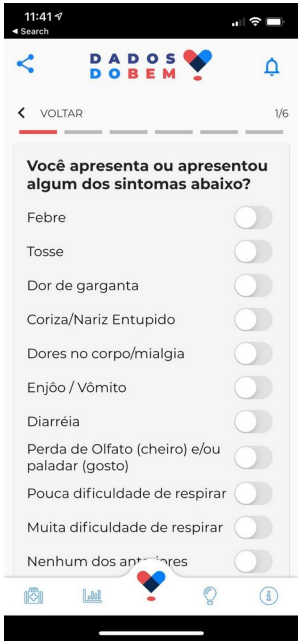
(Hjorth & Goggin, ?; Marler, 2021; Licoppe, 2020)

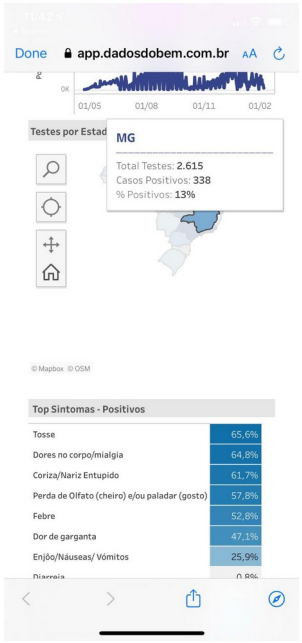
Mobile Methods

- Analysis of mobile phone data (text messages, location logs, etc.)
- Development of apps to collect user data (diaries, biometric data, location)



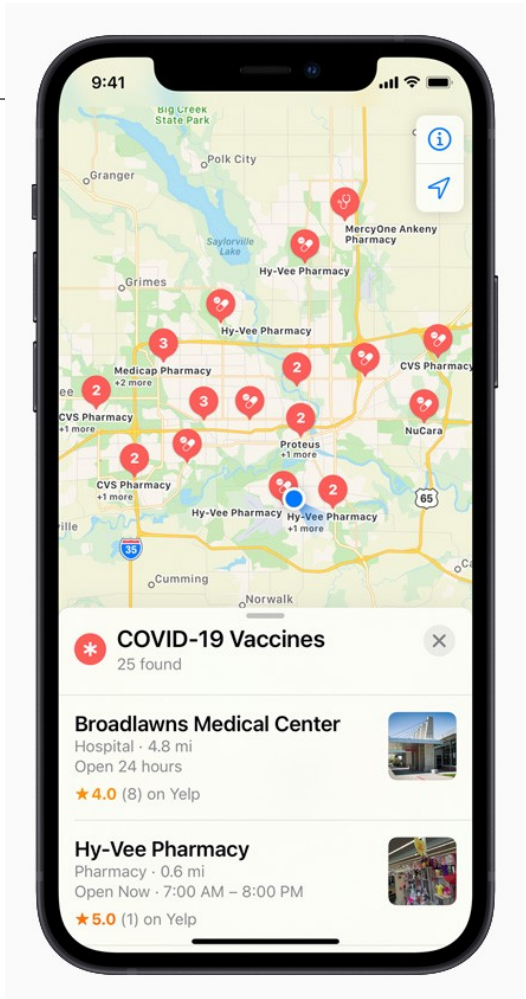






Mobile Methods

- Spatial analysis (mapping/GPS)



Interactive Mapping:
Navigate COVID-19 spread by state, country on our map.



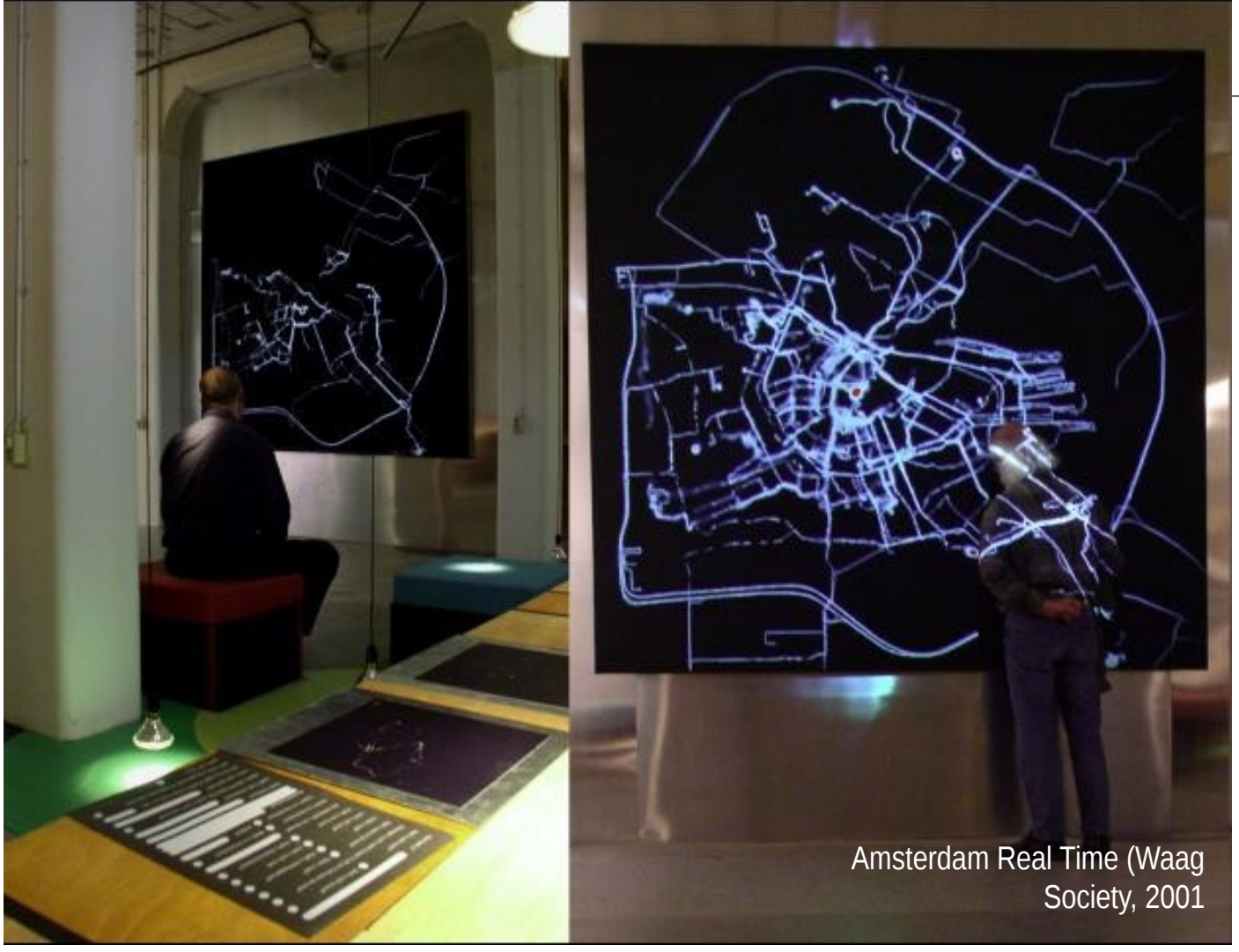
(de Souza e Silva, 2021; Hein, Evans, & Jones, 2008; Ahas, 2011)

Mobile Methods

Using mobile communication technologies and mobility to study social phenomena

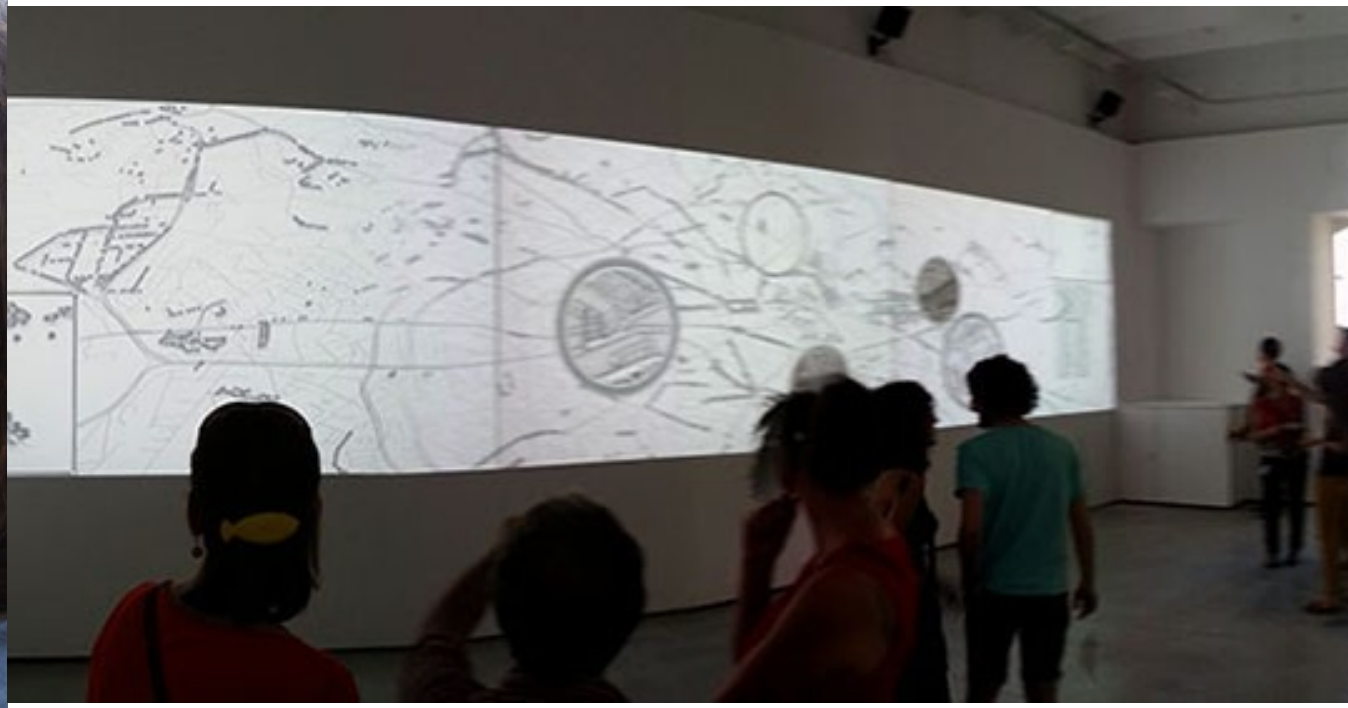
Creative Mobile Methods

Innovative and unorthodox approaches (vs. “traditional” methods) to study new socio-technical configurations.



Amsterdam Real Time (Waag Society, 2001

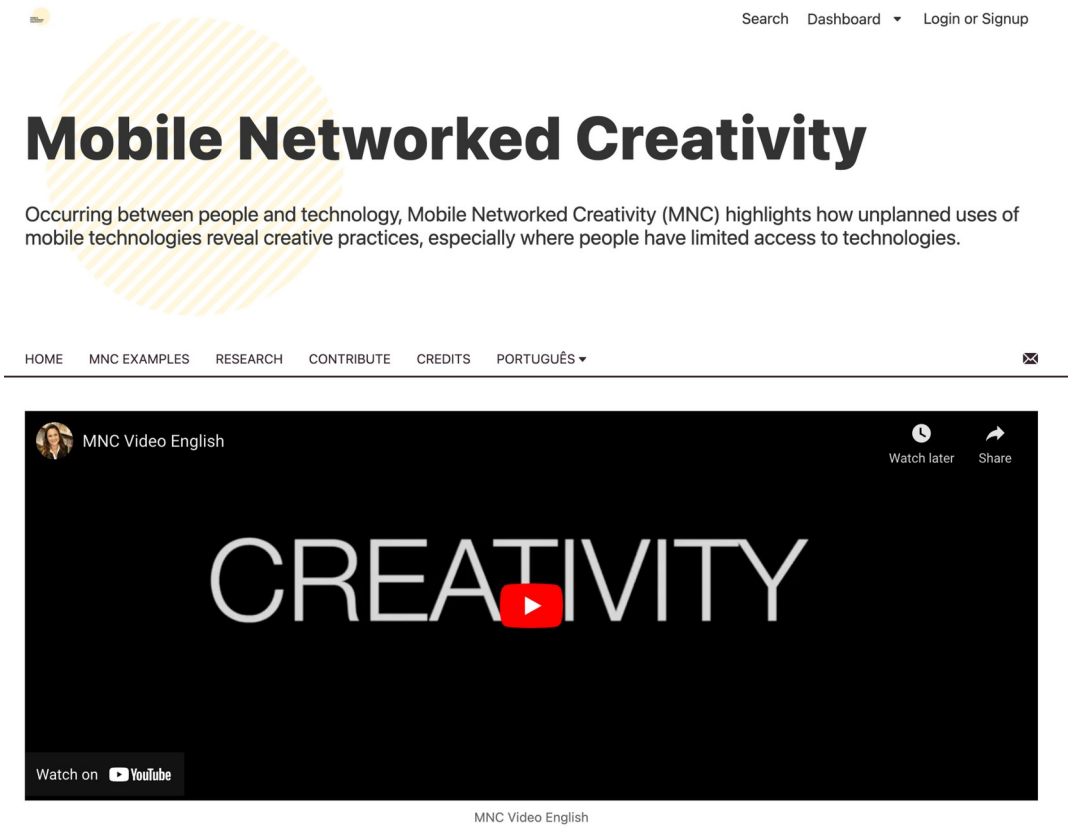




Grimpant (Teri Rueb & Alan Price, 2013)



Using a mobile game to understand the connection between viral spread and urban mobility.

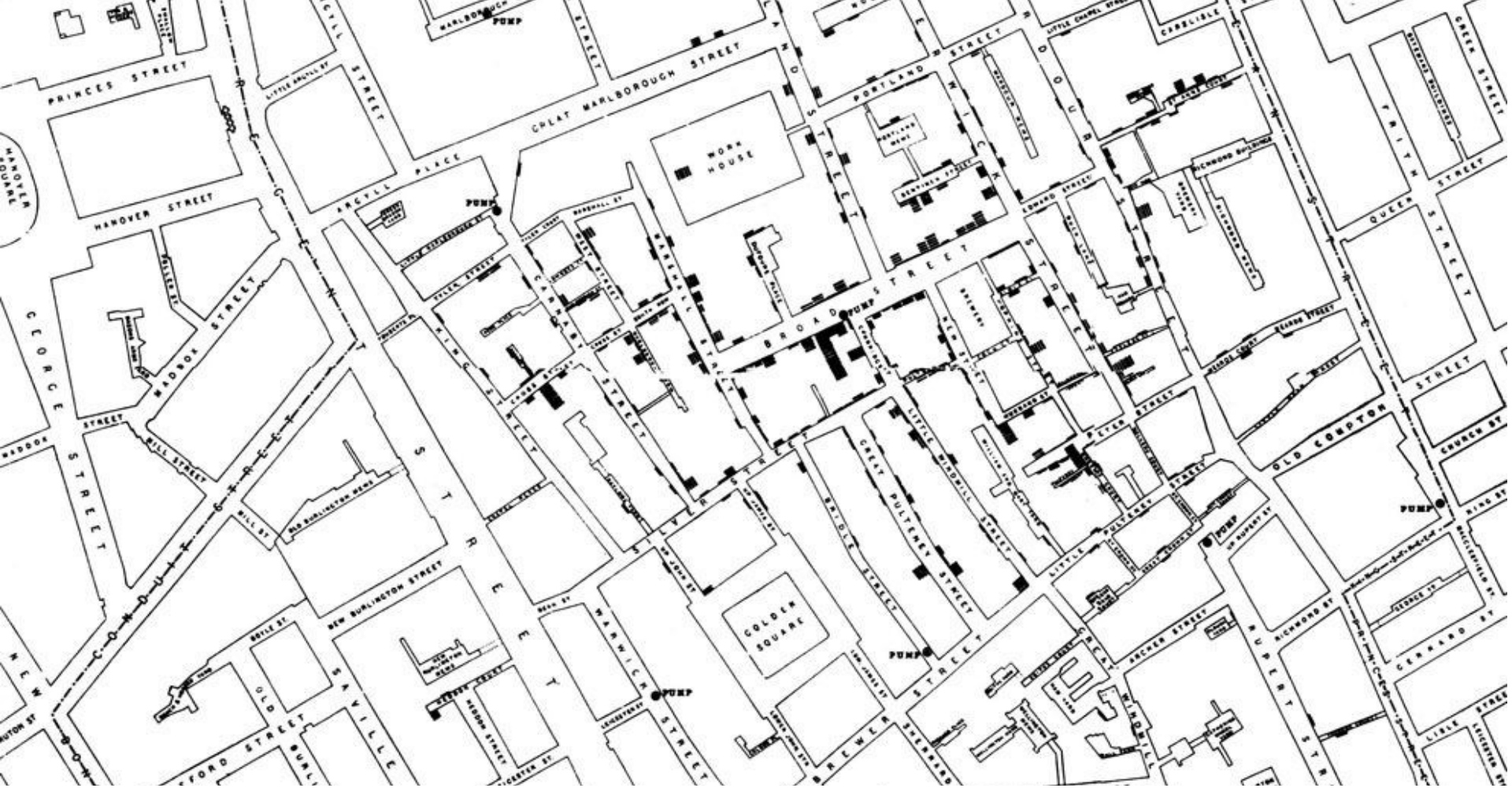


MNC Video English

Crowdsourcing mobile creativity as a survival and networked process.

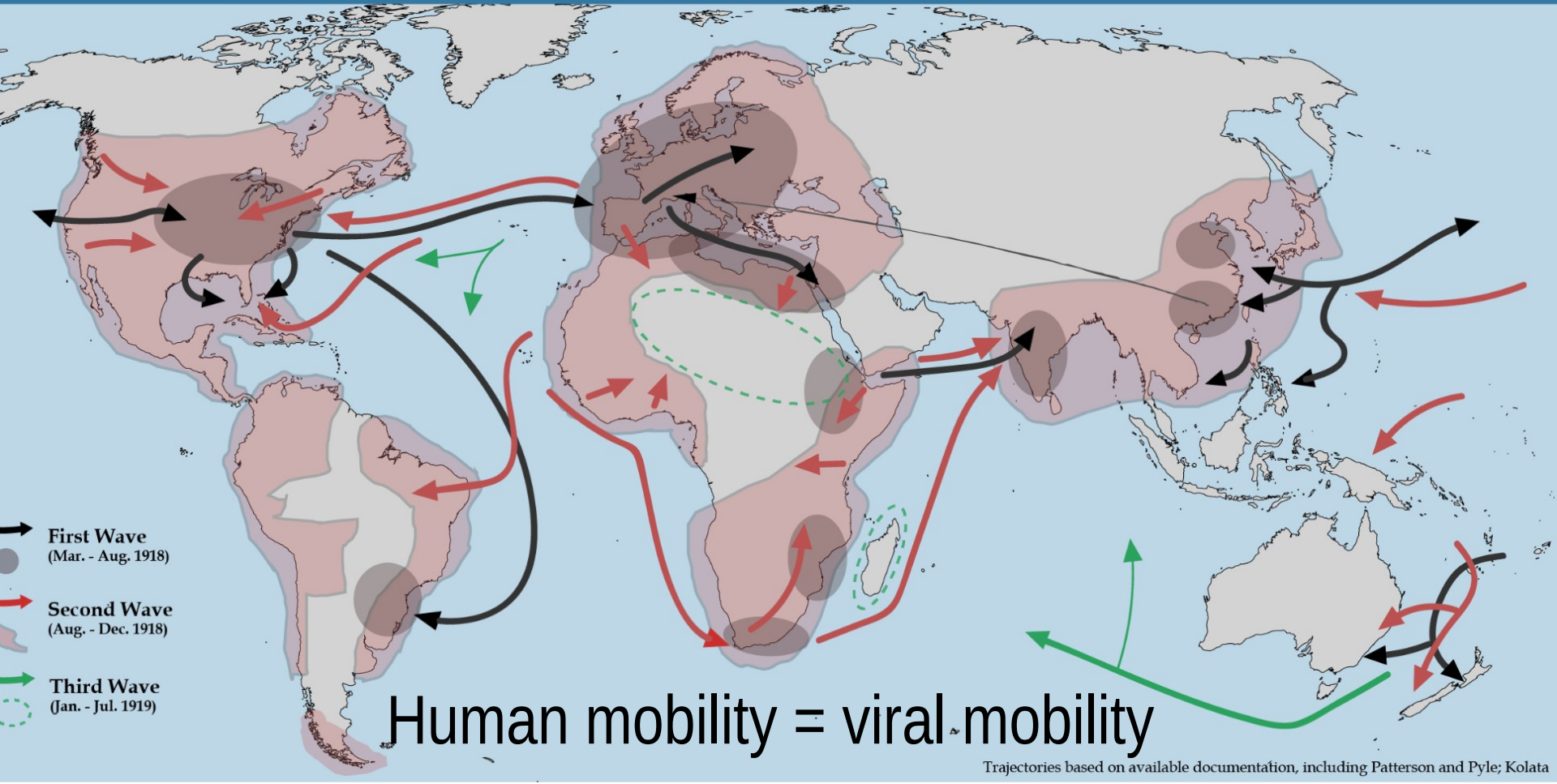
The pandemic (a.k.a. social-distancing) location-based game

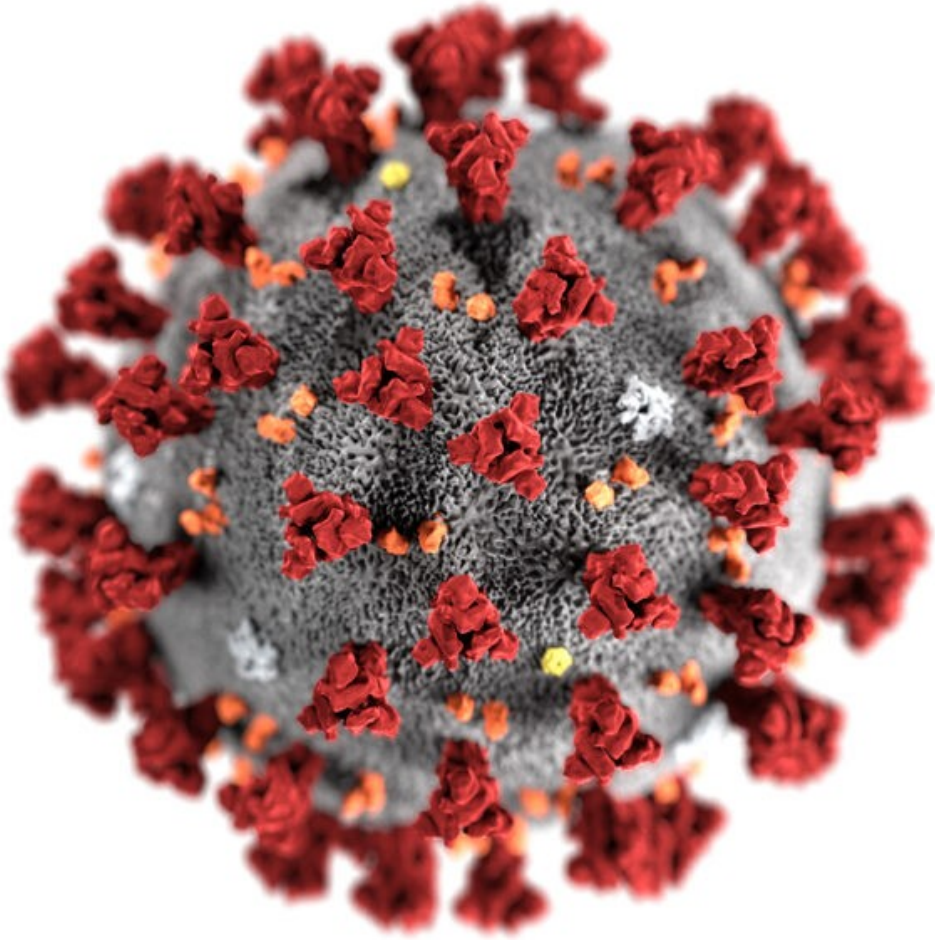
How can location-based games help us understand the connection between viral spread and urban mobility?


PRINCES STREET
GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET
ARGYLL PLACE
ARGYLL STREET
HANOVER STREET
HANOVER SQUARE
GEORGE STREET
MADDOX STREET
MADDOX STREET
MILL STREET
OLD BURLINGTON HOUSE
NEW BURLINGTON STREET
BOYLE ST
OLD BURLINGTON STREET
SAVILLE
WORK HOUSE
BROAD STREET
PUMP
POLAND STREET
BROAD STREET
BROAD STREET
BROAD

AFRICA CENTER
OR STRATEGIC STUDIES

Global Trajectories of the Spanish Flu





COVID-19 Pandemic

Poor public health communication

MAINTAIN
6 FOOT DISTANCE

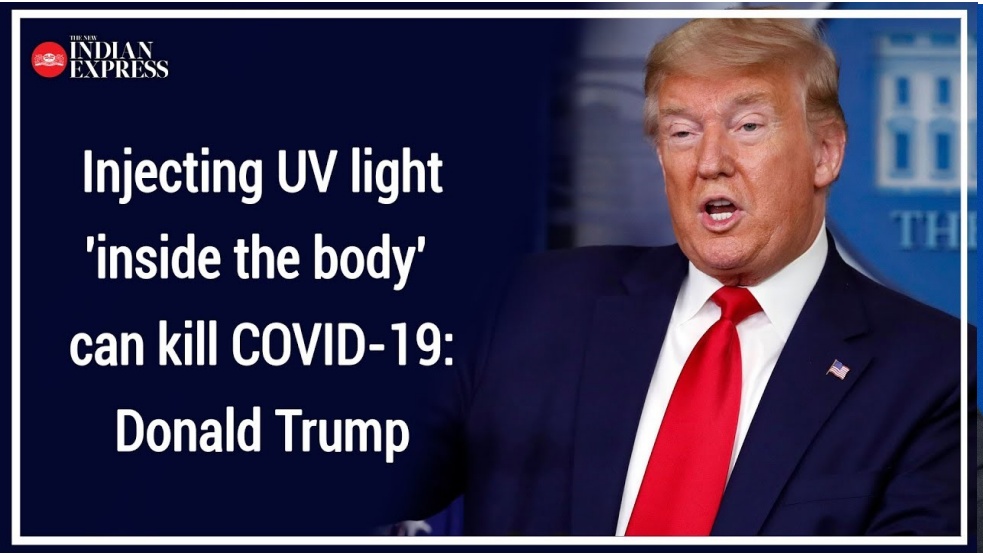


PLEASE FOLLOW
SOCIAL DISTANCING STANDARDS



SIX FEET


3M
CE 2797
3M
3M


THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS
Injecting UV light 'inside the body' can kill COVID-19: Donald Trump


DO BRASIL
1889

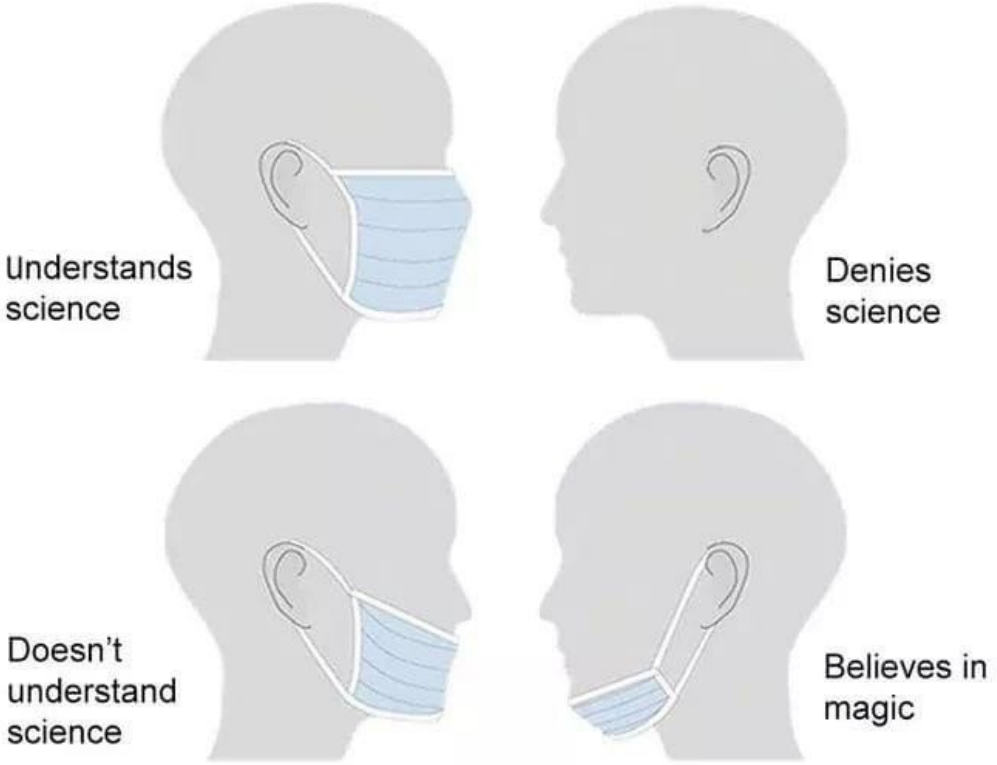


misinformation


DEAD
But not a SHEEP!
1983 - 2021
I did my OWN Research!
Believed it was ONLY THE FLU
1967 -2021
Not smarter than SCIENCE
1980- 2021
DARWINISM at its FINEST.
1952- 2020
"I don't know what's in it though..."
RIP
Thought FACEBOOK was a RELIABLE resource.
1955-2021
Trusted Ivermectin more than SCIENCE.
RIP
Aunty Vaxx
Refused to live AFRAID!
RIP
1971-2021
MY Body MY Choice MY Coffin

The Four COVID Personality Types

(*spotted at the local grocery store*)




Pre-Covid Choke Hold


Safe Social Distance
Choke Hold


Working From Home
Choke Hold

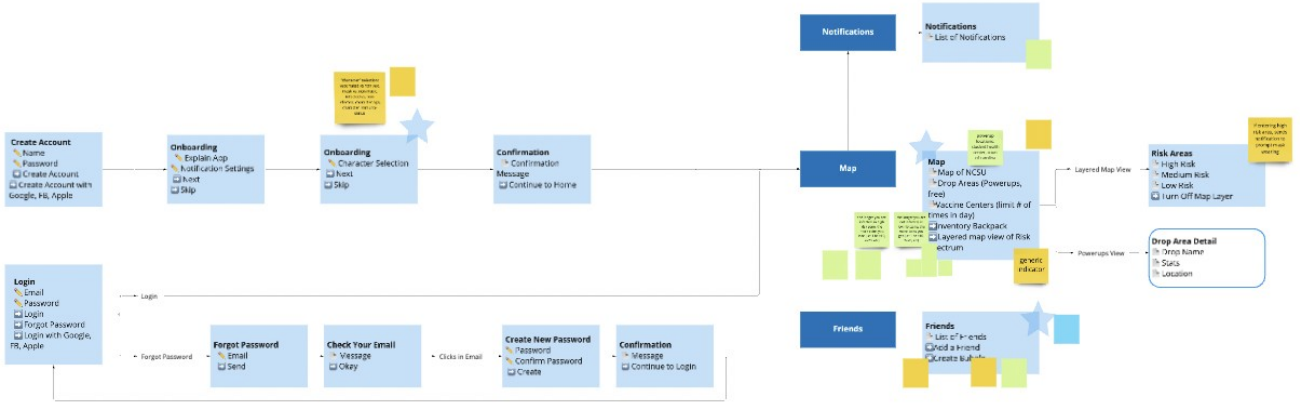
The “social distancing” / pandemic game



Help people understand viral mobility in public spaces in a playful way that is integrated with people’s ordinary lives.


Posto 9
Ipanema
Rio de Janeiro - State ...
Brazil
22.98°S, 43.20°W
Goals:
1. Maintain social distance.
2. Be less mobile.
3. Visit less crowded areas.
Paróquia Nossa Senhora da Paz
The Museum of Yoga
Praça Nossa Senhora da Paz
Landscaped park with a large monument
2D

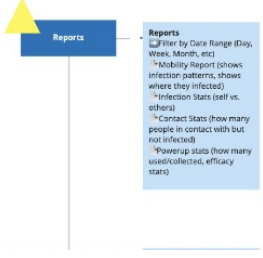
Player



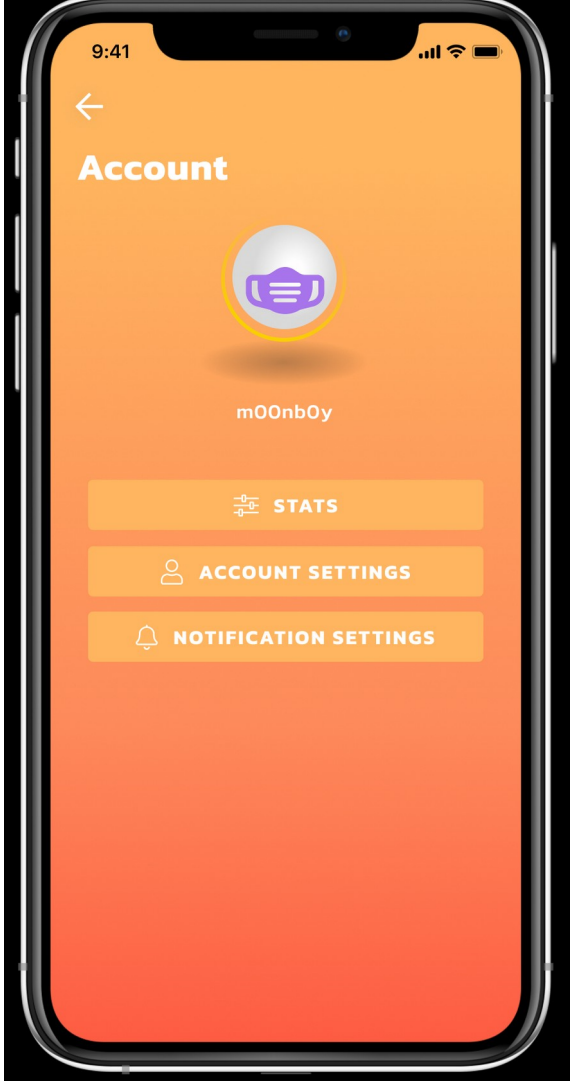


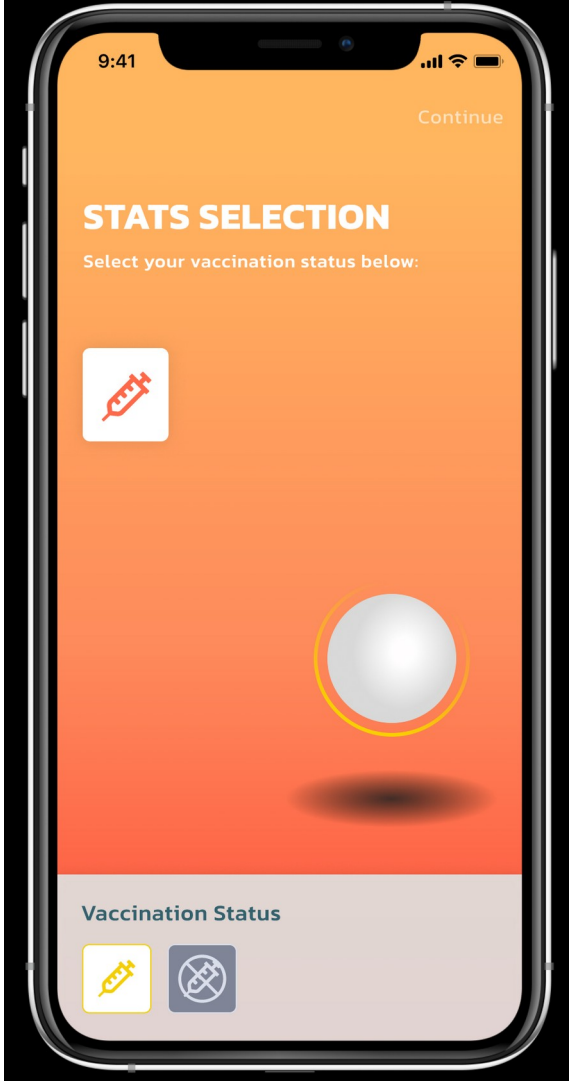
UX Design Flow



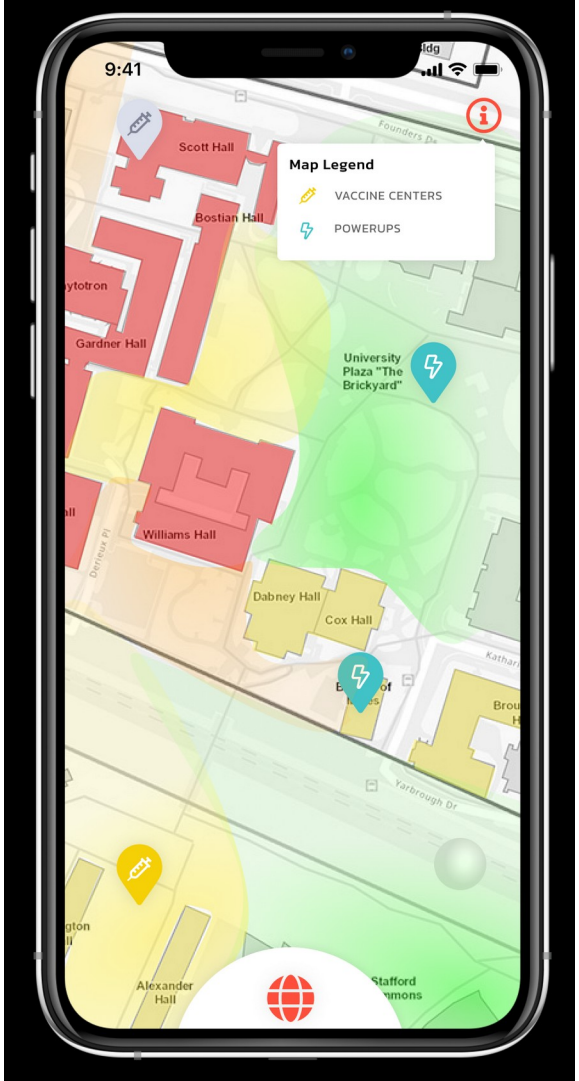


Mobile Prototype

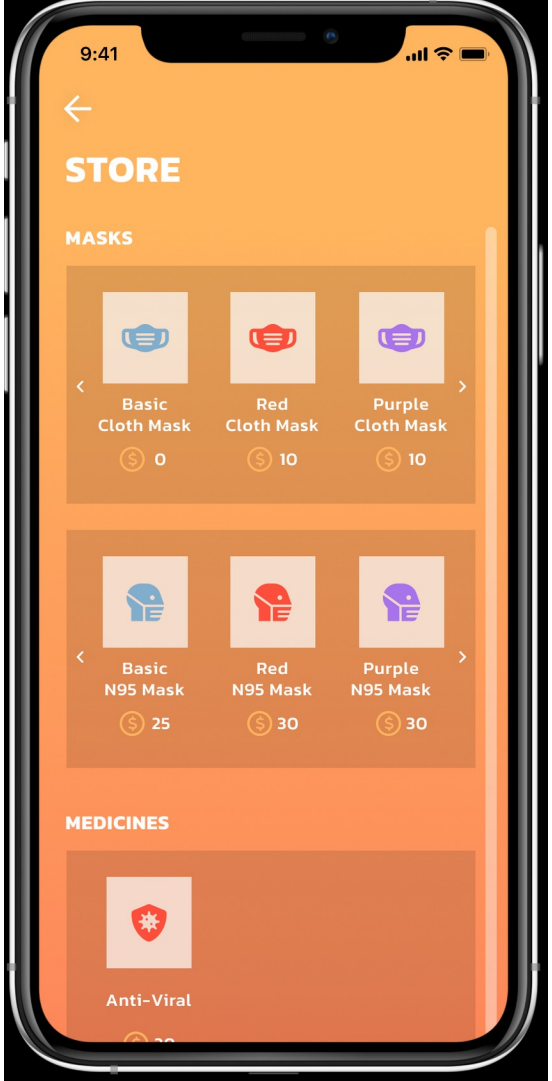


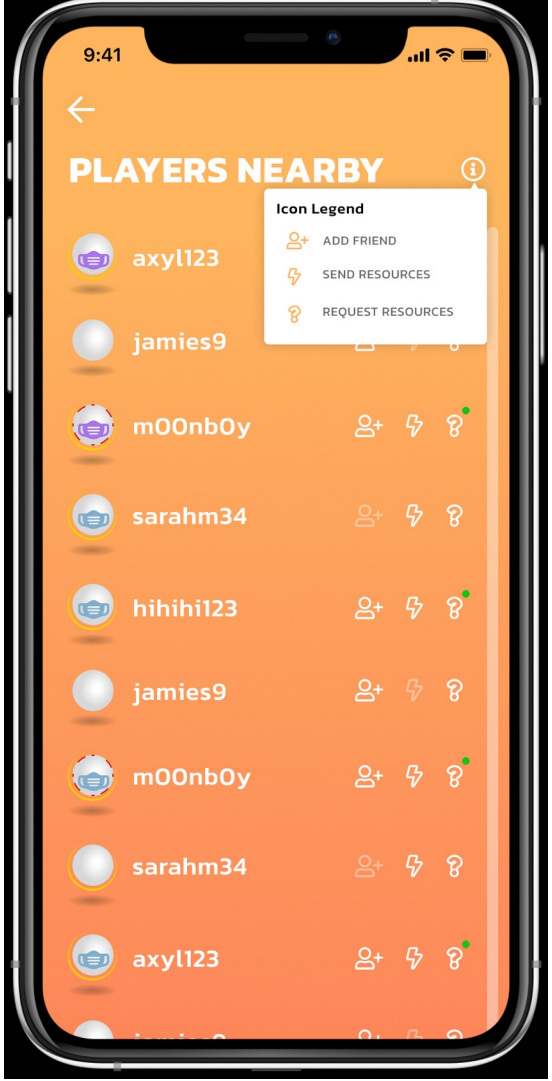


Mobile Prototype



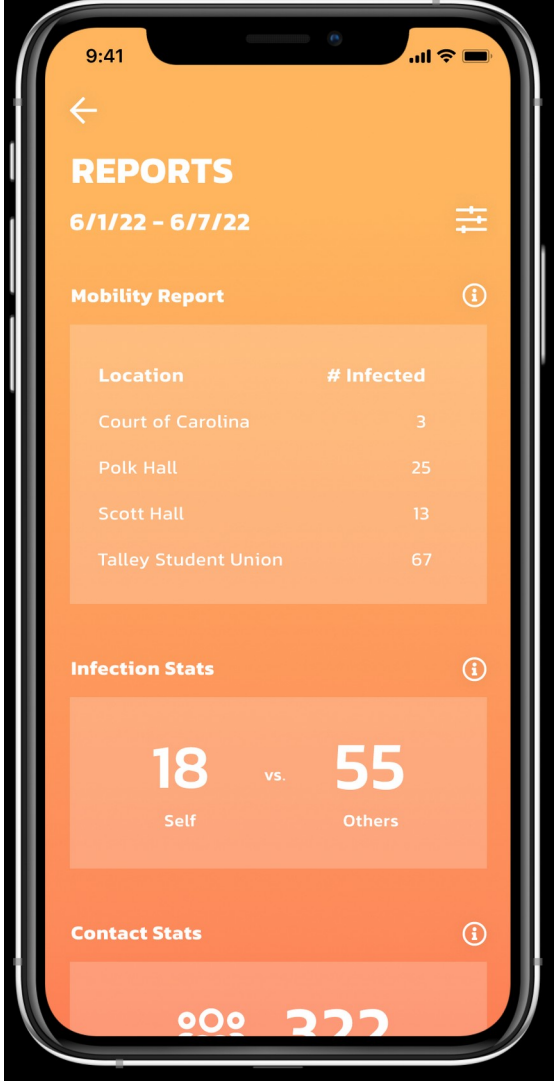
Mobile Prototype





Mobile Prototype





Reports Class

Desktop Prototype

REPORTS

SIMULATION #2 6/1/22 – 6/7/22 **Participants: 26**

Mobility Report

Location	# Infected
Court of Carolina	3
Polk Hall	25
Scott Hall	13
Talley Student Union	67

Powerup Stats

Powerup	# Used
Cloth Mask	23
Vaccines	5
Test Kit	7
N95 Mask	12

Infection Stats

18 Group vs. 55 Others

Mask Stats

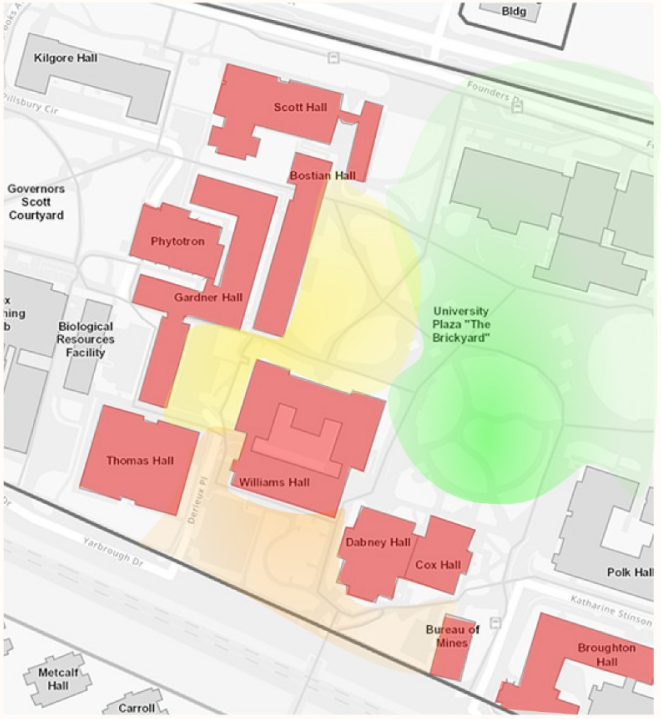
12 Mask vs. 4 No Mask

Close Contacts

322

Vaccination Stats

16 Vaxxed vs. 2 Not Vaxxed



Next Steps

- Implement the rest of the game.
- Pilot-test in University campi / schools.
- Work with different levels of governments to implement new public health campaigns.
- Translate the game into different languages / platforms for use in other non-English speaking countries.

Activity #1

1. Choose a group
2. Choose a topic from the next slide
3. Discuss with your group (15 min.)
4. Present your groups' ideas (15 min.)

Activity #1

Imagine your group is a game development company with the task of finishing up the “pandemic game”. Choose one of the follow to work on:

1. **Marketing team**: Make a competitive analysis of the game, comparing it with existing apps and present the similarities and differences (pros and cons) or this app and existing apps.
2. **Designer team:** Propose screen designs to fill in the game gaps. How would you design the missing screens based on the UX flow? Based on the competitive analysis on #1, would you add any missing screen / functionality?
3. **Researcher team:** Propose new ways of adding more data collections methods to the app design. What other types of data could be collected to help answer new research questions? Design those screens.

Mobile Networked Creativity

Understanding creative technological appropriations via crowdsourcing.

Adriana de Souza e Silva & Mai Nou Xiong-Gum

Context

Communication Theory ISSN 1050–3293

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Mobile Networked Creativity: Developing a Theoretical Framework for Understanding Creativity as Survival

Adriana de Souza e Silva [1] **& Mai Nou Xiong-Gum**[2]

[1]North Carolina State University, Department of Communication, Raleigh, NC 27695-8104, USA
[2]Furman University, Communication Studies Department, Greenville, SC 29613, USA

Mobile networked creativity is an emergent practice that arises from the ongoing relationships among people and people with technologies—or networked resources. In this article, we propose a concept of creativity as emerging from networked connections, (im)mobility, and situations of hardship. We, thus, make a connection between mobility and space as networked elements of creativity as opposed to individual agent models. We focus on how unplanned or emergent uses of digital technologies reveal how creative practices emerge, particularly in the context of mobile technology use where people are physically mobile and yet connected via the Internet. We define the concept of creativity as a constant process of becoming, a "recursive organization" that can be seen in groups such as migrants, or people living in disenfranchised communities that survive in makeshift locations such refugee camps or slums. Contrary to the affluent and capitalistic-embedded traditional ideas of creativity, mobile networked creativity is a practice that is found mostly in situations of economic hardship, power imbalances, and (im)mobilities.



Creativity as Artistic Practice



Used to define Shakespeare's work (1875)

…. Later on used to describe all forms of artistic creations.







(Weiner, 2000; Gahan, Minahan, & Glow, 2007)

Creativity as Individual Process







Genetically inherited.
Connected with the idea Greek idea of the genius.

(Isaacson, 2014; Bilton, 2006)

Creativity as Innovation

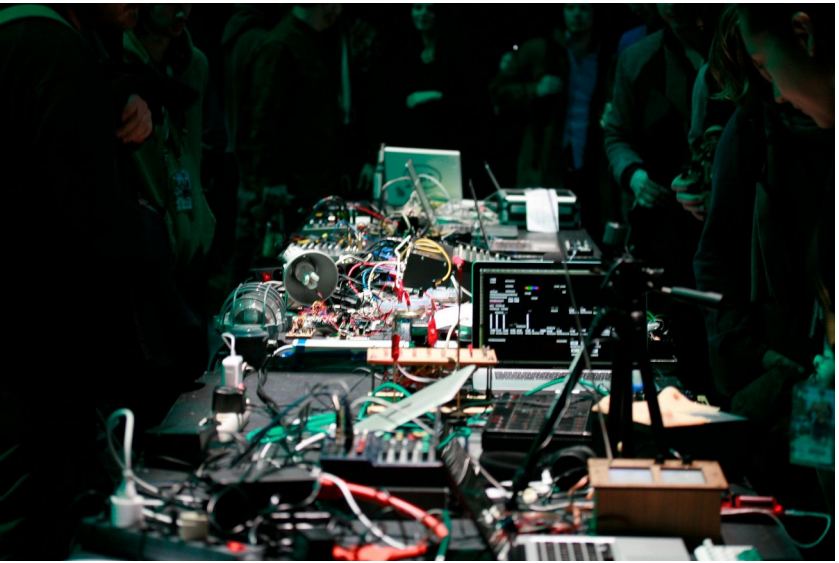
Individuals can be coaxed into being creative.

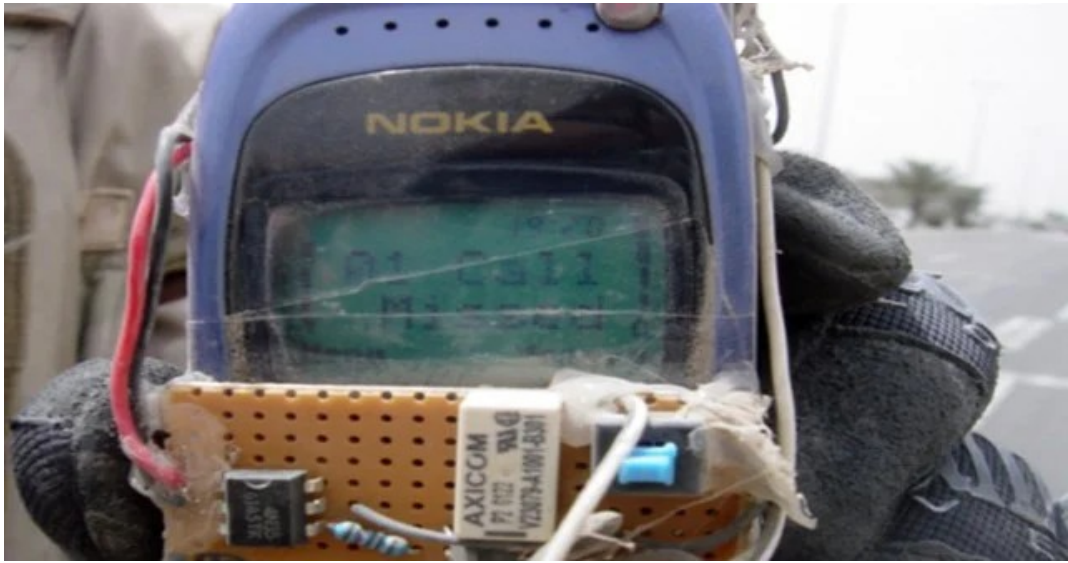


Development of ideas about products, practices, services or procedures that are novel and potentially useful to the organization.

(Steiber & Alänge, 2013; Anderson, Potočnik, & Zhou, 2014; Amabile, 1996; Mumford & Gustafson, 1988; Shalley et al., 2004)

What about non-artistic practices?
What about power dynamics?
Is creativity always “good”?





(Glăveanu et al., 2019; Runco, 2007; Sternberg, 2018)

It is easier to measure aesthetic creativity in an individual (IQ, memory, attention tests) than to understand when a group of favela dwellers or refugees are “creative.”





(Amabile, 1996; Shalley, Zhou, & Oldham, 2004; Runco & Richards, 1997; Abbate, 2000; Hafner & Lyon, 1998; Johnson, 2010)

Mobile Networked Creativity

A practice that arises from the networked and recursive relationships that involve mobile technologies and displaced / emplaced communities, in situations of hardship.

Mobile
dynamic

Networked
social networks / digital networks

Spatial
contextual

Mobile Networked Creativity



Nzolantima Swasisa's Digital Library

Published: Jun 08, 2022

Nzolantima Swasisa constructed a digital library, called Bibliothèque Lokole Numérique Zero Mega (or Zero Data Digital Lokole Library)



Pedala Queimados

Published: Jun 07, 2022

Pedala Queimados is an bike sharing system in the municipality of Queimados, Rio de Janeiro (Brazil), where community volunteers build bamboo bikes and rent them via WhatsApp



Mobile Cinema in Pakistan

by Khawar Latif Khan

Published: Apr 19, 2022

Mobile Cinema is an initiative to take films to remote areas of Pakistan with the aim to educate and entertain people.



Truck Art Childfinder

by Khawar Latif Khan

Published: Apr 19, 2022

Truck Art Childfinder is a campaign run in Pakistan to find missing children with the help of trucks that go on long routes and touch remote corners of the country.



Safwan Harb's electric bike/wheelchair

by Adriana de Souza e Silva

Published: Feb 08, 2022

Safwan Harb, a disabled refugee in the Zaatari Camp, used spare parts to produce an "electric



Bus 581 WhatsApp Group

by Adriana de Souza e Silva

Published: Feb 08, 2022

A WhatsApp group created by the bus driver of bus line 581, that goes from Cosme Velho to Gávea neighborhoods in Rio de Janeiro.

Next Steps

- Collect as many examples as possible, from different parts of the world.
- Add more languages to the website to make it more inclusive.
- Develop a mobile-friendly version.
- Display the examples in curated exhibitions.

Activity #2

1. With your group…
2. Choose a scenario
3. Discuss with your group (10 min.)
4. Present your groups' ideas (5 min.)



Scenario 1: You and a committee have organized a 2-day academic symposium on your area of research. The symposium consists of a series of panel presentations, break-out workshops, and all-hands events. The symposium is scheduled to take place on-site; however COVID has mutated in a way that is once again hindering travel and in-person events. The event is one week away, and your committee is charged with shifting the event to accommodate a fully digital/online format. How would you approach this, and which tools would you use, and how, to address issues such as attendance, participation, intellectual enrichment, potential disparities, etc.?

Scenario 2: During a severe storm utility lines are downed throughout your community and the surrounding area. Everyone has lost electricity and it could be several days before getting it back. You and a few neighbors decide to come up with a plan for providing gas-generated community charging stations and communicating that plan to people in need. How would you go about this? How would you work with other people, and what types of resources might be involved in coming up with and carrying out the plan?

Scenario 3: The women living in a highly patriarchal society find it hard to use ridesharing apps because of the rampant issue of harassment. You plan to address this problem, but a major concern for you is that the leading ridesharing apps are way ahead of the competition. This means that you cannot launch a new app only for women and meet their needs. What can you do to use the existing infrastructures in a creative way in order to make ridesharing a safe practice for women? What are some other important concerns that might come up along the way?

Scenario 4: You normally commute to work by bus, but over the course of a month, the bus line you are used to taking becomes very unpredictable. You've waited for over an hour at the bus stop several times during the past week. You cannot use Moovit because it never displays the correct departure and arrival times of buses in your city due to severe traffic jams, making it impossible to know when the next bus will come. Talking to other passengers in the bus, you find out that everyone is experiencing the same problem. The bus driver overhears the conversations and explains that because of a funding issue, all other drivers were laid off and there is just one bus in that line circulating in town. Is there any way to address the situation from a mobile networked

Scenario 5: Mobile networked creativity (MNC) at the base level refers to the relationship among people, technologies, and spaces. On another level, MNC also refers to the practices that procure access to these elements. For instance, organizations such as World Relief will arrange mobile phones and plans for an initial period of time as newly resettled refugees try to acclimate to their new homes. These mobile phones serve as a connection among other resettled refugees that they might already know and the organization and its liaisons, which can help refugees to navigate the new cultural practices and new spaces. However, access to these mobile devices are secure only during the resettlement period. It will be up to resettled refugees to start securing their own access. In addition, based on where refugees are resettled, their access to mobile communication can be precarious, as in the case of "dead zones" due to the lack of infrastructure such as broadband or due to competing service provider coverage.

In this scenario, we ask you to work backwards to see what else might be an obstacle to having a balanced relationship among each other, technologies, and our spaces if we are 1) especially new to a location, 2) may not understand the language or customs, and 3) must rely on mobile communication to remain within our networks. Next, what could be done to address these obstacles?

Scenario 6: Your government has banned online access to a type of information or an information* channel that is critical to your community. Your community must work creatively to communicate and share critical information. How would you use "mobile networked creativity" to problem-solve around the information access ban? What resources are needed and what are the affordances of those resources? Does the "mobile" aspect of your solution offer any unique affordances? Who will be included/excluded by your solution? What protections, if any, will be in place for those who use your solution?

*PS: You can decide on the kind of information access ban that your government has put into place. It might include: information about a particular health service, information about political opposition groups, access to a particular information-sharing platform, or something else.

Activity #3

With your group:

1. Choose one “real” example of MNC that you or others encountered in their lives, or lives of communities they know (10 min).
2. Add the example to the MNC site by clicking on the QR code (10 min.)
3. Present your groups’ ideas (5 min.)