Private Struggles in Public Spaces: Documenting COVID-19 Material Culture and Landscapes

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted nearly every facet of our world, including some of the most fundamental forms of human behavior and our conception of the social. Everyday activities now pose a risk to individuals and to society as a whole. This radical shift in how we live has produced a wide array of material responses across the globe. This photo essay seeks to open up dialogue and ask questions about the numerous forms of COVID-19 materiality and altered landscapes that the authors have chronicled,

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witnessed, documented and cataloged in their communities, using archaeological and ethnographic methods. This materiality includes chalk art, graffiti, painted rocks and signage placed in both public and private spaces within the project authors' communities. In framing our questions, we draw upon theoretical frameworks in the fields of cultural trauma studies, cultural anthropology and contemporary archaeology.

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted nearly every facet of our world, with some of the most fundamental forms of human behavior – gathering, feasting, caring for loved ones – now posing a threat to public health and our conception of the social. Everyday activities like going to the market or meeting a friend at a coffee shop now entail a risk to individuals and to society as a whole (Figure 1). This radical shift in how we live has produced a wide array of material responses across the globe. While much of the anthropological scholarship on COVID-19 to date focuses on environmental impacts, public health injustices, economic and social changes, or archiving this historic time (see Bermant and Ssorin-Chaikov 2020; Chirikure 2020; Ogundiran 2020; Schofield *et al.* 2021), this photo essay strives to understand how our material worlds have transformed social practices and, in turn, have also been transformed by individual and collective action.

Originating from a Twitter session (handle: @covidart4) given at the Contemporary and Historical Archaeology in Theory (CHAT) 2020 virtual conference (Camp *et al.* 2020), this photo essay seeks to open up dialogue and ask questions, rather than pose conclusive findings. Using a mixed-methods approach, the authors have chronicled, witnessed, documented and catalogued COVID-19 materiality and landscapes in our communities. This materiality includes chalk art, graffiti, painted rocks and signage visibly placed in both public and private spaces. This public/private dichotomy is not rigid nor binary, but, rather, fluid and hazy. This has led to more questions than answers about what we have observed, particularly as we are also actors situated within the communities we are researching.

Approaching COVID19: On Methods and Ethical Implications of Studying the Pandemic

Archaeologists and anthropologists rarely have the opportunity to witness and document processes amid the unfolding of an event of such global, historic proportions. Our research team came together spontaneously after finding that we shared similar concerns and questions about what we were experiencing and seeing in our communities. While we recognized the pandemic as an opportunity to learn more about human responses to a traumatic event, we were also aware of the ethical aspects of simply observing this historical process from a perspective of anthropological scrutiny.

Archaeology, as a discipline, is commonly perceived to be related (or relegated) to the study of the distant past through material remains. However, the re-examination of the relationship between humans and material culture (Hodder 1982), the conceptualization of a contemporary past (Buchli and Lucas 2001; González-Ruibal 2005, 2006, 2019; Harrison and Breithoff 2017) and the turn to things – as an epistemological and ontological critique

– gradually expanded archaeology's temporal boundaries, defining it as the discipline of things *par excellence* (Olsen 2010). Situating ourselves within this particular theoretical framework that privileges objects regardless of their antiquity, we pay attention to the material scenarios the pandemic has generated as a contemporary global phenomenon.

Methodological Conundrums

Our project's methods emerged from our inter- and intra-disciplinary discussions about ways of documenting and what to document. We convened around the initiative of one of us (Camp) who, interested in the material culture of COVID-19, had begun documenting artwork expressions that appeared in her neighborhood. We joined forces to contribute our own understanding of the pandemic as an evolving global process from our situated experiences. Drawing on our own expertise and training as three archaeologists and one cultural anthropologist, we decided to conduct an exercise of contemporary archaeology, which relies heavily on the documentation of material remains and ethnographic approaches (Graves-Brown *et al.* 2013; Harrison and Schofield 2010).

Wandering through empty and "ruinous" spaces is probably one of the practices to which archaeologists are particularly accustomed, as much as interacting with people is the realm of ethnographers. However, the lockdowns and movement restrictions imposed in our societies due to the pandemic compelled us to change the usual strategies of "engaging with the field" and collecting data. Our limited options to circulate around our cities and suburban areas prompted us to navigate very specific circuits through which we reflected on ourselves and our settings as sites of analysis (Gupta and Ferguson 1997; Kiddey 2017; McAtackney and Ryzewski 2017). Despite these constraints, we developed field strategies that allowed us to collaborate, collecting information in three different US settings – Haslett in Michigan, Brooklyn in New York and Chapel Hill in North Carolina – and the northern Chilean city of Arica, where we reside (Figure 2).

Building on a notion of multi-sited ethnography that focuses on material remains and expressive culture, we committed to multi-sited research as a "potentially useful approach for juxtaposing relations that transcend conventional spatiotemporal boundaries of archeological sites" (Ryzewski 2012, 241; cf. Lucas 2001; Beaudry 2005). Adopting such an approach enabled us to have a closer understanding of the global–local relationships provoked by the pandemic, while reflecting critically on the application of comparative disciplinary frameworks and ethical implications. Considerations about the practicality of doing fieldwork in conditions of lockdown, which for some of us went on longer than for others, and the fact that we were dealing with dynamic and changing contexts, required us to "radically reconsider" archaeological methodologies (White 2020, 231).

In this sense, our work closely aligns with what Carolyn White terms "active-site archaeology" (White 2020, 229) in her study of the materiality and refuse of the Burning Man festival. Like White, we have observed that space and materiality can change "minute-by-minute" (White 2020, 231). Some COVID-19 materiality we sought to document has been transitory and ephemeral, appearing for days or weeks, while other materiality has endured (Figure 3). Through the systematic cataloging of this materiality as it appeared, disappeared and/or remained in our own respective communities, this project has captured shifting attitudes and changing landscapes in real time.

In order to accomplish our research, we used open-source data-collection software provided by KoBoToolbox to document our circuits of movement and record images and information regarding time and place. As a smartphone application, KoBoToolbox made it possible to observe and record the piling up of layers of information (see Figure 3), expressing responses to the global situation. Documenting these responses through photographs became a way of engaging with a transient materiality and the things themselves (Pétursdóttir and Olsen 2014) (Figure 4). In doing so, we began to recognize their role in providing comfort and ways to cope with trauma (Figure 5). Collecting and documenting this expressive culture through images rather than through physical objects provided a means to connect these pictures from a local to global perspective to make sense of what we were seeing. While we intend to complement our image-focused research with interviews with our community members, we believe there is much to be learned from centering the objects and materials in our inquiry.

Ethical (Re)considerations

Our project has compelled us to rethink anthropology's ethics and its methodological and disciplinary boundaries. As soon as we began our research, we were confronted with questions of what it means to go to the field and conduct fieldwork during lockdown, restrictions and the pandemic. While some of those questions were merely methodological and pragmatic, others addressed more complex ethical concerns about safety, privacy, vulnerability and, ultimately, privilege. For instance, we discussed how documenting the changes we were witnessing in our communities could be interpreted by some as an act of invading some people's privacy or exposing others' vulnerabilities.

What are the implications of transforming social trauma into a sort of laboratory of academic observations? Is that even possible, if ethical? How can archaeology and anthropology, disciplines whose practice always involves intervention (Castañeda 1996), tackle the ethical aspects of our observations? How could we make this intervention, if ultimately unavoidable, useful? Archaeologist Shannon Dawdy's work (2006) and field experiences engaging in an archaeology of disaster permit us to draw some parallels. Like Dawdy, we were forced to weigh the ethical implications of engaging in a documentation of a health crisis that rapidly escalated to become a social, political and economic disaster worldwide, under conditions of emergency and stress.

Our team spent countless hours ruminating over different ethical conundrums. For instance, working in neighborhoods with strong surveillance and security cameras installed brought up issues that made us aware of how security is constructed and its social and ethical implications. After much debate and consultation with our institutional review boards and other researchers/archaeologists working on similar types of projects (e.g., the #ViralArchive team, pers. comm. to Camp, 2020), we decided that our work was not a burden as long as we focused on staying within our neighborhoods and avoiding the ethnographic tendency to be a voyeur in communities in which we do not reside, especially since our mere presence could pose a threat to other communities' health and welfare. In this regard, our discussions mirrored those going on among anthropologists elsewhere (including Günel *et al*. 2020; Lupton 2020; Dietrich and Rivera-Gonzalez 2021).

We have conducted much of our work through an autoethnographic lens, examining our own environments from within restrictions and opportunities developed out of our own respective positionalities. As university-based researchers, we each were already experienced with work lives bridging offices, home and field sites (cf. Sangren 2020). We weren't, however, as accustomed to the complete absence of choice about where we worked and when, and with the "where" of our work being so totally immersed in questions of ethics – with *not* going to the office or to the field becoming an act of community care (cf. Toro Matuk 2020).

As soon as we began our project, registering images with specific information about the location and geographical positioning of our records posed an ethical dilemma. Sharp distinctions between private and public forms and sites of communication became diluted and smudged: many of the changes in our landscapes were crafted on traditionally "private" household premises or expressed rather intimate feelings of love and caring on traditionally "public" sidewalks and walking paths (Figure 6). Similarly, public spaces became the canvas for simultaneous expressions of both care and protest (Figure 7), prompting us to keep a reflective approach, binding the material with the political through our very specific and situated involvement in the phenomenon.

Our enhanced awareness of the constant surveillance[1] in our communities reminds us, as Martín (2020) observed regarding the experience of urban balconies, that sites of solidarity for some – the window, the porch, the balcony, the sidewalk – are sites of scrutiny and suspicion for others. In addition to observing changes in the material world around us, we have read neighborhood message boards and locally focused social media posts to become aware of discussions and activities around COVID-19 material culture. As Keleman Saxena and Johnson (2020) have written, "[S]ocial media offer platforms to track where meaning-making congeals around particular events and ideas, and how articulations of their significance diverge." Similarly, we saw social media bringing neighbors together both to debate and to produce supportive signs, witty painted rocks and protective masks.

What Is COVID-19 Heritage?

Since the pandemic was declared, our lives began to revolve around specific things and objects as well as certain spaces. Some of these objects and spaces became an intrinsic part of our individual lives while physical distancing restructured our understanding of the social. Is it possible to view the world as pre- and post- COVID-19 pandemic? If so, is there a way to understand as heritage the materiality that surrounds us and sets the backdrop of our societies during these times? How do we recognize COVID-19 heritage and differentiate it from other kinds of heritage?

1. Out of our concern for privacy, in our practice, we blur out the street names when including maps of collected data and/or data clusters in publications. We also erase the address of a household and/or any other identifiable content (e.g., a car license plate, a person in a window, a person standing near the COVID-19 heritage) found in our photographs. In addition, we examine all COVID-19 heritage photographs to ensure they do not capture any illicit or illegal activities; any photos found containing such activities are deleted from KoboToolbox.

Interpreting and defining COVID-19 materiality is complicated by the slow, spiraling passage of time. Just as institutional responses to COVID-19 change depending on the wave of the virus or the phase of reopening, people's response to the trauma via materiality changes, fades or disappears altogether, like the forgotten or thrown-down mask that will probably be swept away in the coming days (Figure 8). Unlike many other slow processes of change that archaeologists do not directly witness or experience, change during COVID-19 is embodied through individual movement, communication, interaction or routines, all altered. Experiencing this change in our lives has placed us on a seemingly slow-motion loop, allowing us to witness and document change individually and collectively (Figure 9).

As the world grinds on, our landscape and material world also continue to transform. As noted above, unlike most archaeological research that sees only the material effect of the change, whether slow or abrupt, this is a longer process / longitudinal heritage of which we are in the midst. We are ourselves enmeshed in the entangled meanings behind the ephemeral artwork we observe as we explore private struggles in public spaces.

Objects that some people deemed necessary and even went to extraordinary lengths to hoard are no longer seen as valuable to possess today. COVID-19 has also resulted in the manufacturing of new consumables, such as hand-sanitizer stations in public spaces and businesses (Figure 10). Entire cottage industries have sprouted up to produce hand- and machine-made masks, and Etsy shops produce inspirational yard signs.

Landscapes have also undergone changes, some of which have endured, some of which have come and gone with lockdowns, re-openings and phased openings. Playgrounds and public spaces were cordoned off with bright yellow tape reminiscent of a crime scene during lockdowns; benches were "closed" or declared out of service (Figure 11). In some instances, the government has employed military personnel to monitor public spaces (Figure 12). Water fountains have been covered with trash bags, not to be used during the pandemic.

Defining what type of materiality we are looking at during COVID-19 has not been simple or straightforward and seems to be an ever-evolving task. Much of the materiality we observed seeks some sort of cultural change, either to an imagined past or an idealized future. In some cases, this materiality yokes the present with the past *and* the future. Some of the observed materiality appears to have been designed to persuade or influence action, what Lafrenz Samuels (2015, 2019) has described as a deliberative call to mobilize for change. While some artwork expresses anger, frustration and anxiety about present realities, other materiality communicates love, peace and continuity, evoking a desire to return to pre-COVID-19 life. As other scholars have noted, public and expressive culture is a field of contestation (Cisneros Puebla 2020), and in our study, we likewise found public space is used to voice societal concerns, particularly when actual voices cannot be exchanged in person. In essence, heritage serves as a "'metacultural' tool, as a mirror that society holds up to itself to understand itself, but especially to understand and manage social change" (Lafrenz Samuels 2019, 123–124).

While some spaces contain material that falls within the framework of persuasive or deliberative heritage, others do not fit as neatly into one box; the messages are often messy, and spaces are sometimes unexpected or incongruent (Figure 13). Public spaces

at times displayed institutional or formalized artwork. For example, the *Art On The Grid* series sponsored by New York City was created to promote collective trauma healing by placing commissioned artwork on city infrastructure, such as bus stops (Figure 14). However, this leads to a question: what public are these artworks meant for? For those with little choice during the pandemic but to ride public transportation to work, these bus stop spaces beckon for dialogue, but who is talking in these spaces (cf. Cisneros Puebla 2020)? As one media source questioned, are many of the essential workers "Heroes or Hostages?" (Thorbecke 2020; see also Navuluri *et al.* 2021).

We struggled to give order to the complexity of the stratigraphic layers of COVID-19 heritage. As with any archaeological endeavor, categories and typologies helped us organize our thoughts around themes or types, creating a dialogic approach to understanding these material memories-in-the-making. As we discuss a few of these emergent themes below, we are also aware that these conversations between materiality and COVID-19 are still evolving, as are our discussions about their meanings.

What is Political?

Moments of cultural trauma expose rifts in social cohesion, bringing to the surface latent disagreements about social ideals (Eyerman 2020). Through the different types of materiality emerging in our communities, we observe disparate visions of what community is and can be. While we don't yet have first-person accounts of the motivations and meanings behind the creation of public-facing art, we do have clues from the broader context within which it has been created: the places where we live and work and the interconnected global discourses surrounding us. We raise three possible interpretive frameworks below.

1. In our communities, who is seen as responsible for the suffering caused by COVID-19, what reactions are acceptable and how can the pandemic be addressed in public spaces? Might we be observing examples of "happy washing", a crisis response that celebrates citizen resilience while distracting attention from failures in government systems of support (Su 2020)?

The apparent apoliticality of messages in majority white upper middle class residential communities like those we explored in Michigan and in North Carolina belies their inherent political nature. Demographically, these neighborhoods are characterized by owner-occupied homes inhabited by people with secure jobs that allowed work from home. Here, the materiality tends to evoke a vision of the future on a continuum with a past in which it was possible for community members to disengage from formal political action. The sociopolitical system was mostly working for them pre-pandemic, and they have reason to expect it will work for them again. The "we're all in this together" message of this type of home-based art emphasizes an ideal of community as a non-confrontational space in which expressions of innocence, hope and resilience are prioritized over more disruptive messages of anger and resentment (Sturken 2007). The language of community in these neighborhoods – "Thank you workers!" "We're in this together!" – leans more towards a romantic notion of harmonious community than towards a solidarity-oriented vision that requires sustained, sometimes critical action (Joseph 2002; Martín 2020).

Institutional messaging across all our sites further promotes ideals of individual strength and collective perseverance, minimizing attention to structural issues. In some parts of the United States, town and city governments commissioned local artists to design public service announcement art for public transportation, public bulletin boards, business windows and sidewalks (Figure 15). These official public art projects, with their attributions to specific artists and funders, tended to avoid displays of anger and blame, while highlighting community harmony and individual responsibility. Globally, governments and other institutions, such as churches, universities and non-profit organizations, have also helped circulate and disperse signage with similar messaging (Figures 16–18). Likewise, for-profit enterprises have entered this discourse, maintaining an imagined community of people pulling together who are also shopping together for supplies of masks, hand sanitizers and other health- and safety-focused goods (Figure 19).

Instead of seeing "happy washing" as something that merely distracts from the failures of government systems, we see it as constitutive of those failed systems. Those systems of formal institutional rules and policies rest on community-level cultural norms – the informal rules that structure our day-to-day lives – making some discussions possible and placing others outside the realm of acceptability (Knight 1992). COVID-19 artwork is one mechanism of drawing those boundaries of acceptability. In this case, the norms being emphasized, in homemade, institutional and commercial art, are those that highlight individual behavior and local "community spirit" as the basis for strength and recovery, decidedly not including discussion of failures in the formal economic or political system (Figure 20). In many instances, governments' own public artwork involves playful displays of authority, drawing on "happy washing" imagery to connect their actions to public health and community spirit (see also Figure 18).

2. Are we observing the material manifestation of the stresses placed by COVID-19 on homebound families? And if so, which stresses are more, or less, likely to be articulated in these public spaces?

Early research conducted during the pandemic indicates women in heterosexual partnerships continue to take on a greater proportion of the burden of household labor and caregiving, even if their male partners have also taken on more domestic work (Hennekam and Shymko 2020; Sevilla and Smith 2020). Might the rainbows and hearts be an expression of struggles *within households*, i.e. representations of frustration by women pushed into taking on more caregiving roles in their day-to-day lives while also working from home? Or might they represent struggles *between households and the state*: an expression by the home-bound – regardless of gender – trying to claim some beauty and sense of fun, or vent frustrations, by expanding the boundaries of home into public space while pushing back against institutional constraints on movement (cf. Casey *et al.* 2019)? Materiality also unveils how structural racism is embedded in public health policies, as studies illustrate the disproportionate effect COVID-19 has had on BIPOC and other historically marginalized communities (COVID Tracking Project 2020; Twose 2020).

Neighborhood message boards and local organizations such as universities and churches encouraged children to participate in what became the global phenomenon of

"going on a bear hunt" and filling their windows with hearts and rainbows (see Figure 13). For some of us in the United States, scavenger hunts took the place of school recess, and the creation of art for windows, sidewalks and yards became essential activities for children (Figure 21). It was widely reported in the media and in online forums that efforts to fill windows with teddy bears and other decorations were intended to distract children from the trauma of the pandemic, including restriction of their social worlds to their homes and neighborhoods (McCluskey 2020). This early COVID-19 creativity might have provided reassuring reminders to (some) children that they live in a community that cares about them. And it raised questions: who is supervising those children? The message on one social media site was signed "Frazzled parents". We also wondered if the intended audience was truly children; objects like teddy bears have long been used as "comfort commodities" in the wake of national crises in the United States, providing an illusion of security for both children and adults (Sturken 2007, 6). In reference to teddy bears at the Oklahoma City National Memorial, Sturken writes that these mass-produced stuffed animals do not "promise to make things better", but rather they promise "to make us feel better about the way things are" (Sturken 2007, 7).

When thinking about material manifestations of household-centered conflict we also have to be mindful of the potential meanings of the *absence* of outward-facing signs. Those experiencing domestic violence or who, for other reasons, could increase their vulnerability by drawing attention to themselves, would need to be especially attentive to the ways their private spaces can be "read" by observers.

3. Where was it acceptable to challenge the focus on personal responsibility and community togetherness and draw attention to a different set of questions and answers? In what types of spaces were anger and conflict the primary messages? The residential and branded institutional art described above are all very different from the anonymous messages displayed in public spaces. On bulletin boards, light posts and public walkways, more aggressive, challenging statements were posted, blaming elected officials, government agencies and failed socioeconomic systems (Figure 22).

In these public spaces, we most frequently found direct expressions of conflict over possible futures. Rocks lining public walkways offered messages of "Hope" and "Peace" and "Love", but were then blacked out. Posters were amended, defaced, torn down and updated (Figure 23; see also Figure 3 above). Who was speaking? Who was answering? Much of this messaging directly challenged established leaders and put anger and blame front and center.

Throughout the pandemic months, tensions about other issues came to the fore, and, in some places, reached boiling point; political protests against authoritarian governments, for instance, continued and escalated. Several weeks into the pandemic, the murder of George Floyd by a police officer in the United States led to a sudden emergence in both public and private spaces of Black Lives Matter signs and other reactions against racist violence. Around the world, lockdowns were often seen as a strategy by governments to suppress social movements and the pandemic became an instrument of reactionary populism worldwide (Figure 24; see also Figures 3 and 7 above). We

documented reactions to these events in the form of materiality in yards and windows and on the sides of buildings. We continue to have ongoing discussions of where to draw boundaries around the varied themes represented in the material culture of the convulsive year of 2020–2021. Is what we are witnessing a material reaction to political instability, social injustices and/or the pandemic? These worlds clearly collided in some of the images we captured.

When will this Project Conclude?

Will the passage of time make the materiality and landscapes we have documented more, or less, intelligible? Chronicling COVID-19 heritage has generated more questions than answers. In terms of archaeology, it reminds us that so much of the material record is elusive. Even as we experience and witness this event, the meanings behind this materiality also remain ambiguous. The more data we have collected, the more we have questioned our ability to offer concrete interpretations of what we have witnessed. Rather, through our extensive data collection we have become aware of the inherent fallibility of our work: we sometimes chose not to record spaces lacking COVID-19 materiality although we know absence can also be a political statement; we have missed transient heritage because we were not able to walk our usual route on a particular day due to weather, lockdown restrictions or other constraints; and we may have simply ignored materiality that did not seem pertinent to the project, but, in hindsight, could have been relevant to discourses around COVID-19.

Will the materiality we have observed become cemented into institutional memory? Since the pandemic began, museums, historical societies, libraries, newspapers and other institutions around the globe have called for the public to contribute materiality and media that embody their experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. Will the types of material we have documented be collected, or will they have disintegrated or been deemed "not archive worthy" by donors or curators? How will the types of everyday, ephemeral material culture we have documented, only in digital photos, be remembered and understood? How will our photos connect to the ubiquitous material objects, such as masks, which are being collected and analyzed?

Capturing images of the fleeting materiality of local responses to a global pandemic is a unique opportunity to document artifacts and expressive culture that may or may not endure in any sort of record (Steenberg and Steenberg Reyhé 2020, 359). It reminds us that "a very small portion of the present is preserved in the past" (White 2020, 232). How will the objects in our collections and in our memories be used in future commemorations, and will institutions even choose to commemorate COVID-19, as events like the 1918 flu have been relatively ignored (Segal 2020)? What practices will become routinized, what landscape modifications will remain and what consumables, such as hand sanitizer and face masks, will become part of our daily, post-COVID lives?

If this research is teaching us anything, it shows the multivalence of materiality and the limits of typologies and classification we often rely on in traditional anthropological work. How will the practices of researchers be affected by the experience of researching the pandemic? These are issues of methods, ethics, politics and disciplinary boundaries that we continue to explore and are being elaborated in forthcoming work.

This project is not finished, because the pandemic is not finished. Even if it concludes soon, archaeologists, anthropologists and historians will continue to deal with the resulting material, historical and social effects of this global phenomenon. Similar to other anthropologists who have shared their personal experiences of lives lived and losses marked through windows and screens (e.g., Wellner 2011; Ashraf and Mol 2020; Bram 2020), we each have also had our own personal emotional paths to travel, which have affected both our movements during the pandemic and our interpretations of the worlds we encounter. We have deliberately chosen the route of "slow archaeology" (Stengers 2018; Caraher 2019), well knowing that the strongest scholarship is one that is reflexive about ethics and mindful that thoughtful and critical interpretations of data, especially in the middle of an ongoing pandemic, can take years to ferment.

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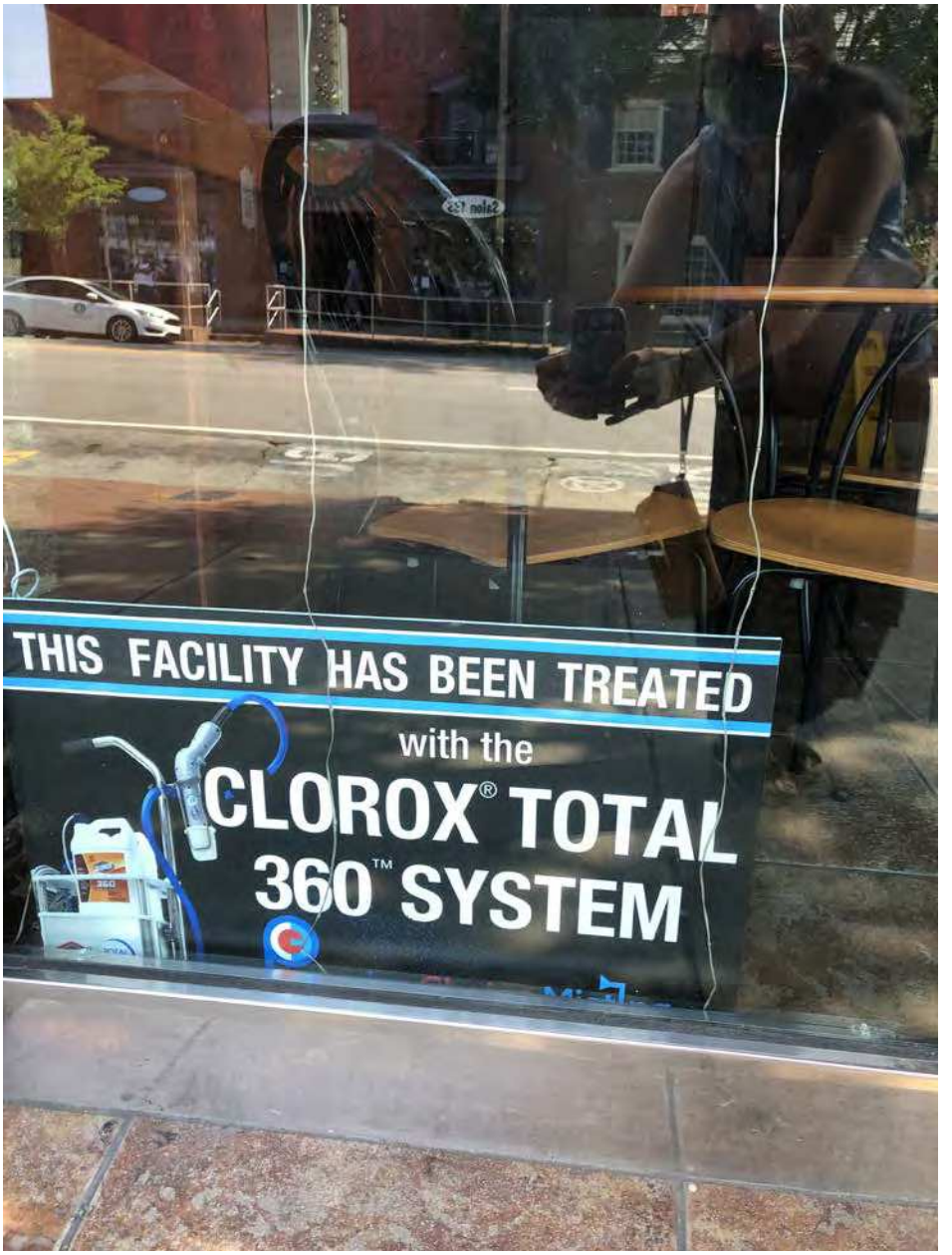

FIGURE 1: Restaurant window: "This Facility Has Been Treated with the Clorox® Total 360™ System", Chapel Hill, NC (July 2020).

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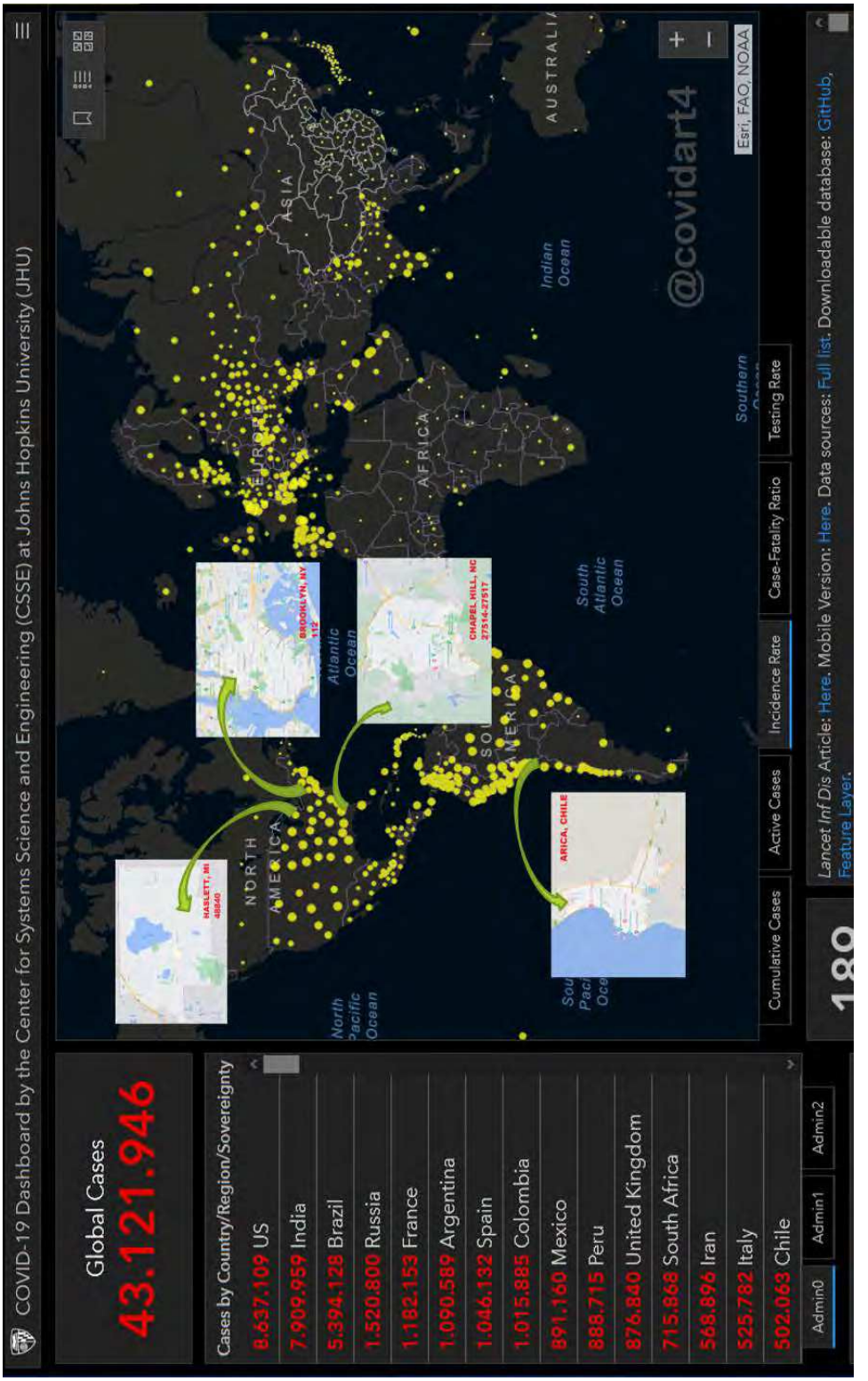

FIGURE 2: Map of project site locations.

FIGURE 3: Stratigraphy of a community bulletin board, Carrboro, NC (May 2020).

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FIGURE 4: Evolution of "Thank You Essential Workers" sign from June 2020 through January 2021, Brooklyn, NY (January 2021).

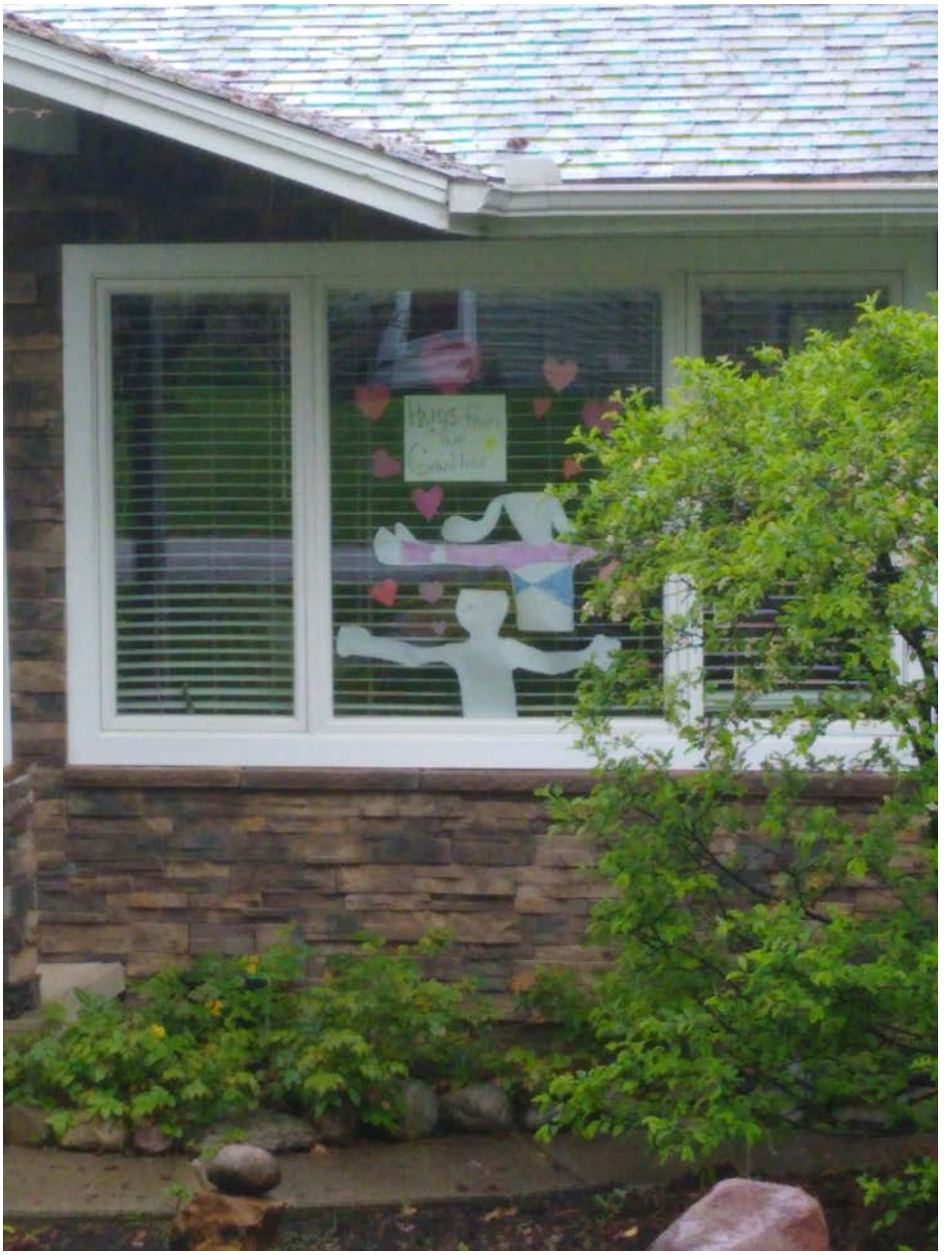

FIGURE 5: Paper cut-outs of two children extending their arms in a hug encircled with paper hearts, and a sign stating "Hugs from our Grandkids", Haslett, MI (May 2020).

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Figure 6: Left: chalk artwork in driveway reading "EVERDAY NO/MATTER/What I face/I can SMILE/& LOVE others!" with a blooming flower, Haslett, MI (May 2020). Right: chalk artwork with hearts and writing stating "We're all in this together!", Haslett, MI (May 2020).

Figure 7: Left: Graffiti artwork "Trump is the Virus", Brooklyn, NY (May 2020). Right: Graffiti artwork "Fuck CVD-19", "ODS", Arica, Chile (December 2020).

FIGURE 8: An abandoned/discarded mask lying in the beach, Arica, Chile (December 2020).

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FIGURE 9: Homemade map in watercolor by one of the authors, Brooklyn, NY (May 2020).

FIGURE 10: Hand-crafted sanitizer station, Arica, Chile (December 2020).

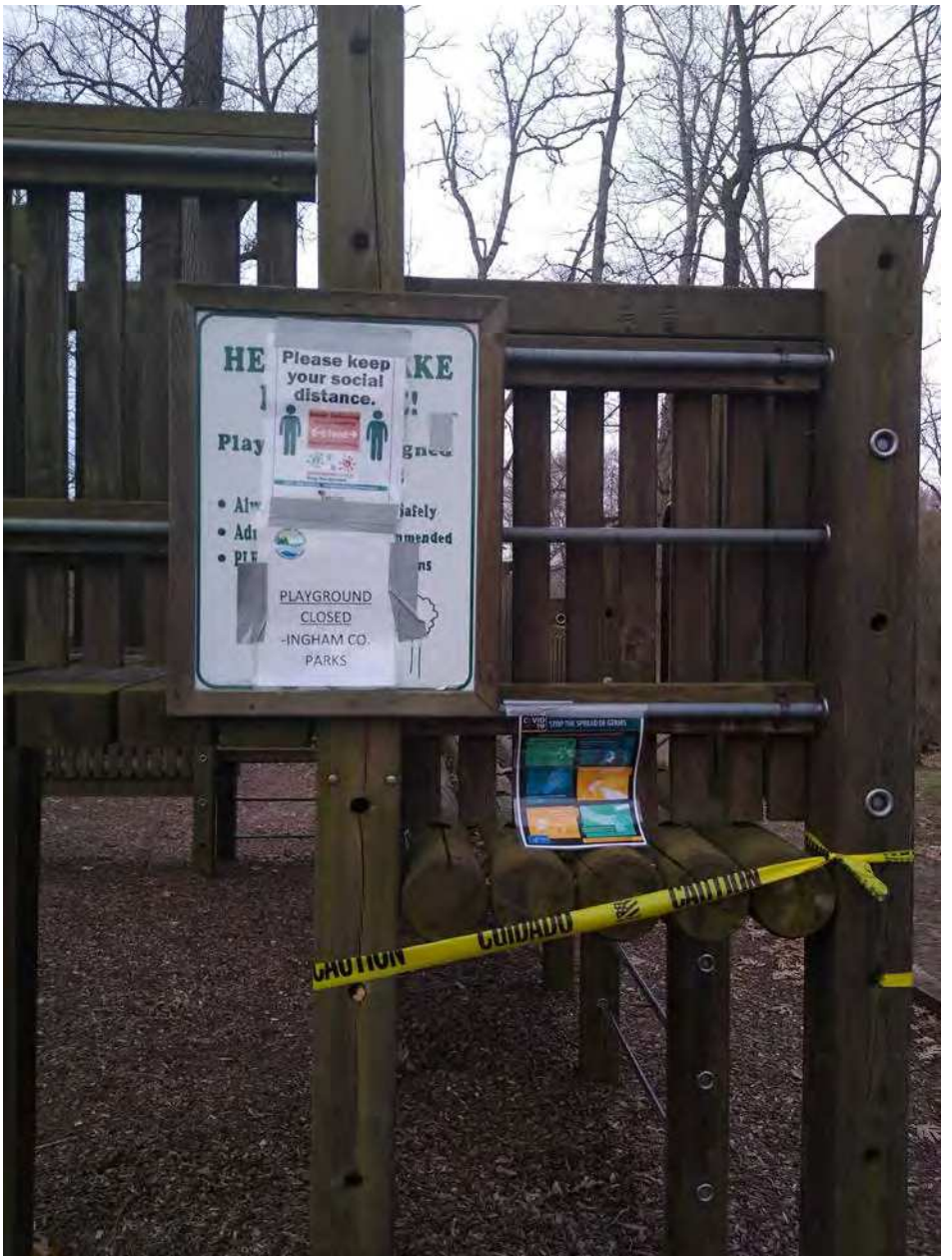

FIGURE 11: Playground closed due to COVID-19, Haslett, MI (April 2020).

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FIGURE 12: Militarized control of social distancing in a supermarket, Arica, Chile (September 2020).

FIGURE 13: Hearts and rainbows of hope and signs of protest Left: Chapel Hill, NC (June 2020). Right: Brooklyn, NY (July 2020).

FIGURE 14: ***Art On The Grid*** **series created by New York City-based non-profit organization Public Art Fund to promote collective trauma healing, Brooklyn, NY (September 2020).**

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FIGURE 15: Vinyl window art by artist Gina Franco in downtown Chapel Hill, NC, part of the town's initiative "to highlight local artists, enliven downtown, and lift community spirit in these difficult times" (Town of Chapel Hill 2020) (October 2020).

FIGURE 16: Church-sponsored yard sign, Carrboro, NC (December 2020).

FIGURE 17: A call for caretakers to participate in a "Social Distance Scavenger Hunt" run by Michigan State University Extension and 4H program targeting youth. The call for artwork was made after Michigan went into its first lockdown of the pandemic in March 2020.

FIGURE 18: Topiary ducks with socially distanced markers between them, Arica, Chile (September 2020).

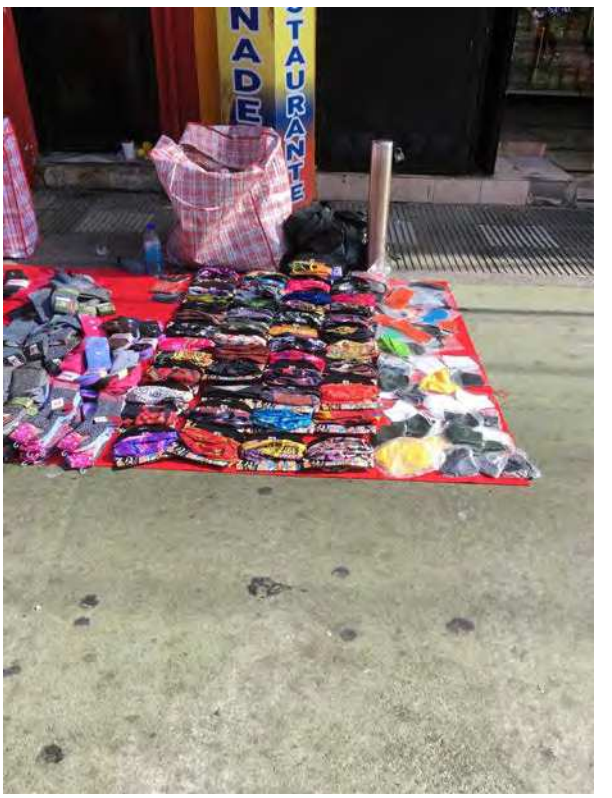

FIGURE 19: Masks for sale in the streets of Arica, Chile (June 2020).

FIGURE 20: Chalk art that reads "BE THE CAUSE OF KINDNESS/SPREAD KINDNESS NOT GERMS/ALWAYS LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE OF LIFE," Haslett, MI (May 2020).

FIGURE 21: A stuffed bear looks out a bay window as part of a community scavenger hunt, Haslett, MI (May 2020).

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FIGURE 22: Graffiti stating "Truth Matters. Thank you Dr. Fauci", New York City (August 2020).

FIGURE 23: Rocks along Carolina North Trail, Chapel Hill, NC (July and August 2020).

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FIGURE 24: Political protest graffiti, spelling out "COVID19" as an acrostic: "Corrupción / Opresión / Violación / Injusticia / Desigualdad [Inequality] / 19-10-19 [19 October, 2019]". The date refers to social protested that erupted in Chile at that time. At its right, on the next wall, the symbols of the Andean Southern Cross and the Kultrun, related to indigenous Aymara and Mapuche indigenous cosmologies, are depicted alongside a message that reads "Aymara, join the fight", Arica, Chile (July 2020).