

Tracy Nordstrom

Who am I?

- 54 years old
- Female (she/hers)
- White
- Pedestrian
- Bike commuter
- Placemaker
- Writer
- Urban dweller - Minneapolis
- Educated (BA, MPA)
- Mother / Spouse
- Former elected official
- Extrovert
- Granddaughter of immigrants
- Homeowner



BUILDING GREAT PLACES FOR PEOPLE

<https://verve.place>

safe·ty

\ sāf-tē

- protection; to be free from harm, injury, or loss
- condition or feeling of welfare, well-being, security



Social Determinants of Health & Domains of Safety



Neighborhood and Built Environment

- Exposure to violence
- Clean air, water
 - trees, greenspace, working infrastructure
- Access to recreation, transit, healthy foods, housing, childcare, health practitioners & services
- Pedestrian crossings
- Lighting, sightlines
- Gathering spaces, seating
 - Eyes & ears, respite



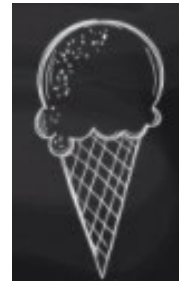
Social and Community Context

- Agency for self, others
- Discrimination, historical trauma
- Community resilience
- Adult/Child/Elder relations
 - Multi-generational: care, heritage, trust, storytelling
- Literacy and language
- Programming for learning, culture, creativity, democracy, joy!
- Opportunities for connection, people watching, sense of community

What is Placemaking?

Built Environment + Social Environment = Safety = Health

- Pedestrian access, mobile seating, green space and gardens, public art and streets bursting with visual interest are examples of ***physical amenities*** of placemaking.
- ***Programming*** and ***activities*** invite citizens to interpret history of place, explore culture, sustain a local economy, interact with others, participate in health, and experience joy *within the public realm*.





Place Matters!





The Popsicle Index

“The percentage of people who feel it is safe for a child to leave home, get a popsicle in the neighborhood, and return home safely by herself.” - Catherine Austin Fitts

Barriers to safety are ALSO barriers to personal and population health



8-80 Cities

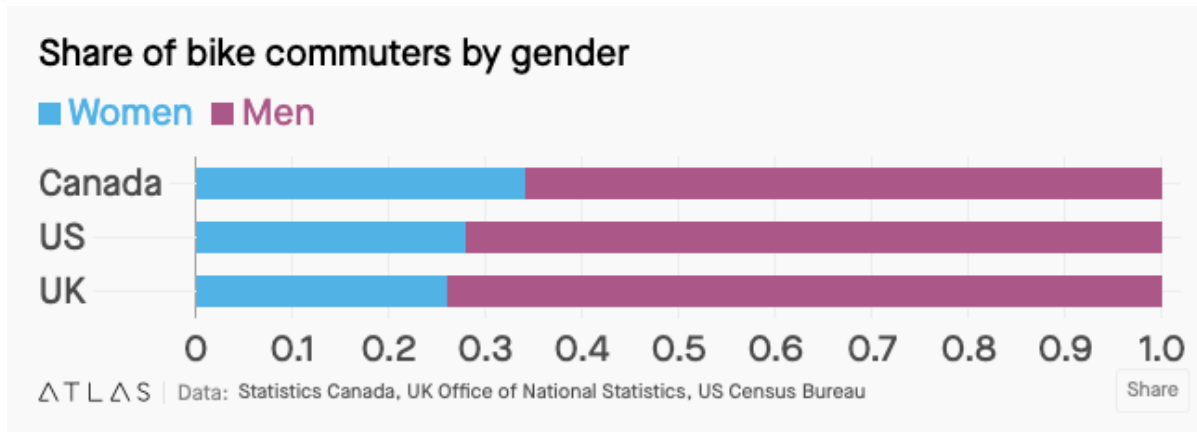
<https://www.880cities.org/>

- Our cities prioritize cars rather than pedestrians getting around safely
- Car-culture has helped us engineer physical activity OUT of our lives
- For the first time ever, our children may live shorter lives than we do
- Resilience (and life expectancy) is dependent on built **and** social environment in community
- The US is expected to grow by 100 million people in the next 50 years, mainly in cities
- Improve cities to benefit safety, health and well-being. We need to create communities in which "we all can grow up in, and can all grow old in"

Research connecting Place to Safety to Health

Cycling = Health

While women in the US own about 60% of all bicycles, less than 30% of bike commuters are women.



WHY?

Survey after survey finds that one concern trumps all others: **safety**. Women are more likely than men to say they want safer cycling, with dedicated, buffered bike lanes. Many US cities have failed to deliver on this score.

Research connecting Place to Safety to Health

Social Connection = Health

Feeling unsafe in one's neighborhood can lead to chronic isolation and loneliness, increasing health risks, including:

- Stress / Heightened “fight or flight” response
- Insomnia / Restlessness
- Depression & Anxiety
- Risk of Dementia
- Inflammation & Infection
- Cardiovascular Disease & Stroke
- Premature Death
- Poor & BIPOC communities have worse health outcomes over white, wealthier neighbors

Interventions: **Choir!** **Mixed-generation housing!** **Public gathering spaces with seating!** **Libraries!** **Opportunities to volunteer!** **Crosswalks & longer crossing times!**

How YOU can help

Ask: What barriers affect your patient / member / employee safety & health outcomes?



Financially responsible for the health of a population

- Select interventions that remove barriers, where intervention costs less \$\$ than cost of care
 - Long, medium, and short-term solutions



Community health leader

- Leverage community position to advocate / fund safety improvements to improve your patient / member / employee health
 - Policies, partnerships, pilots



Individual

- Serve on committee or community advocacy group
- Write letter-to-editor, opinion piece, host conversation
- Vote for candidates who understand safety = better health

Resources

- **The Popsicle Index:** Catherine Austin Fitts: <https://home.solari.com/the-popsicle-index/>
- **US Department of Health, Social Determinants of Health:** <https://health.gov/healthypeople/objectives-and-data/social-determinants-health>
- **8-80 Cities:** <https://www.880cities.org/>
- **Project for Public Spaces:** <https://www.pps.org/>
- **Verve.Place:** <https://verve.place/>





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Thank you
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Pidamaya