The Geography Of Isolation

and a return to public life

BY EVAN O'NEIL

Adults spend an average of 99 more minutes at home each day compared with 2003.

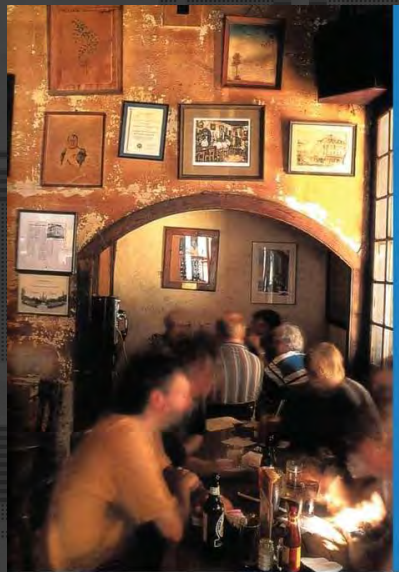
Teens and young adults age 15 to 24 spend 124 more minutes at home than their counterparts two decades ago.

From 2003 to 2023, time spent on in-person socializing plunged by more than 20%.

From 1990 to 2021, there was a decrease of 25 percentage points in the number of Americans who say they have five or more close friends.

SOURCE: American Time Use Survey, BLS

What are Third Places?



THE
GREAT
GOOD
PLACE

CAFES, COFFEE SHOPS, BOOKSTORES, BARS, HAIR SALONS, AND OTHER HANGOUTS AT THE HEART OF A COMMUNITY

RAY OLDENBURG

"Well-written, informative, and often entertaining."
—*Newark Star-Ledger*

What are Third Places?

Personal Connection

What does it mean....

for us to be spending so much time at home?

to not have comfortable places to hang out
and meet up with other families?

to not be able to model normal social interaction
for our daughter?

Third Place Index

Rationale

This project seeks to:

- Look at Third Place access for families with kids
- Ground the topic as a personal experience to convey the emotional side of the topic, and soften the data analysis
- Provide a framework for future studies on the impacts of third place access.

Audience

People with an
interest in public health

Curious

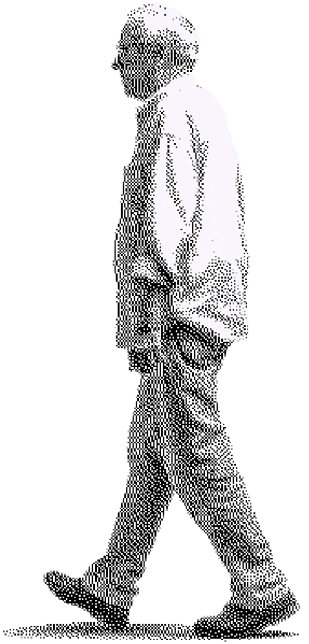
Knowledge-seekers

Interested in other(s)

Prioritize clarity and
understandability

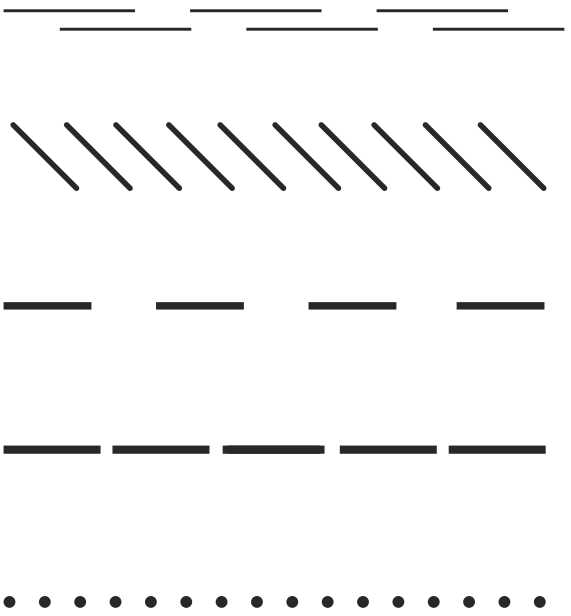
Parents

Design Concept



THE PIXELLATED NOISE OF THE FUTURE

Design Concept



Design/Color

Analysis Categories

Desert < > Oasis

Children Quartiles

Census Density Designation

Urban

Suburban

Rural

General Brand Colors

Design/Type

Icon

H1

The Geography of Isolation

H2

Returning to public life

P

Paragraph text

SPAN

Graphic Style Exploration 1

Accessibility

Accessibility

Accomodations for:

- Screen Reader Users
- Keyboard-Only Users
- Users with Visual Impairments
- Users with Motion Sensitivity
- Mobile and Touch Users

Data Sources

Points of Interest

`OpenStreetMaps`
Accessed through the Overpass API, using R

Demographics

`US Census Bureau`
Used the 5-year 2022 American Community Survey

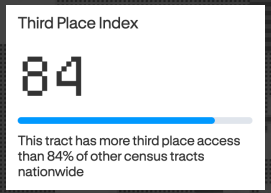
American Life

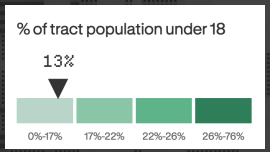
`American Time Use Survey`
Accessed through the Bureau of Labor Statistics 2025 release

Third Place Index

Connecting the relevant Points of Interest locations to a census tract

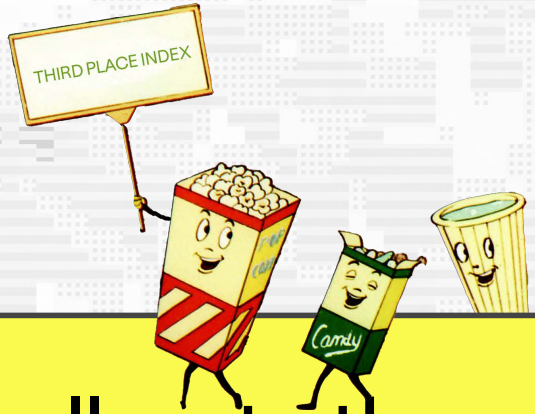
Adding in demographic data from the 5-year ACS to analyze the under 18 population for each tract

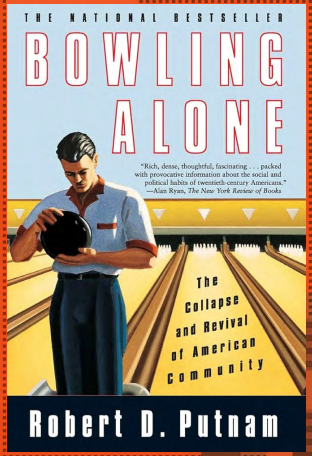
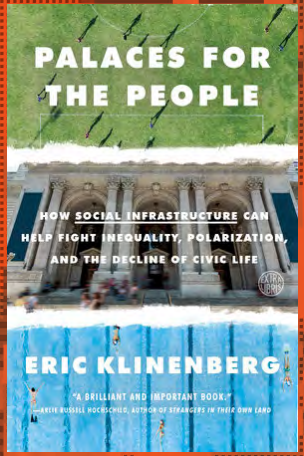
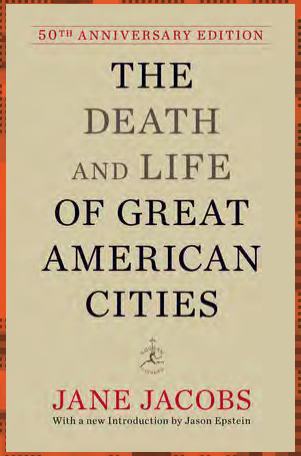
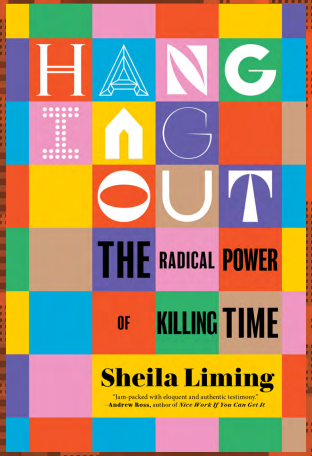




Tech Stack

R	DuckDB	MapLibre
Mapbox Geocoder	PMTiles	Tippecanoe
HTML/CSS/JS	d3	Illustrator
	OpenAI Voice	



Let’s all go to the prototype

Inspiration/Further Reading