

# Exploring the Link Between Co-Design and Our Everyday Practice

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Kate Mytty, MIT D-Lab & MIT CREATE  
10 November 2016

1. What participatory practices have you tried?  
Process? Outcome? Challenges?
2. What role can participation serve in your work? What design processes are currently in use?
3. Do you have an idea for how/where/when a co-design process can be used?

**Questions for the end...**





Image: <http://bostonbikeparty.com/page/5/>



PROJECT BY: Boston Area  
Research Initiative, 2014

<https://www.boston.com/news/local-news/2014/06/19/cyclists-bew-are-this-new-map-shows-bike-crash-hotspots-across-boston>

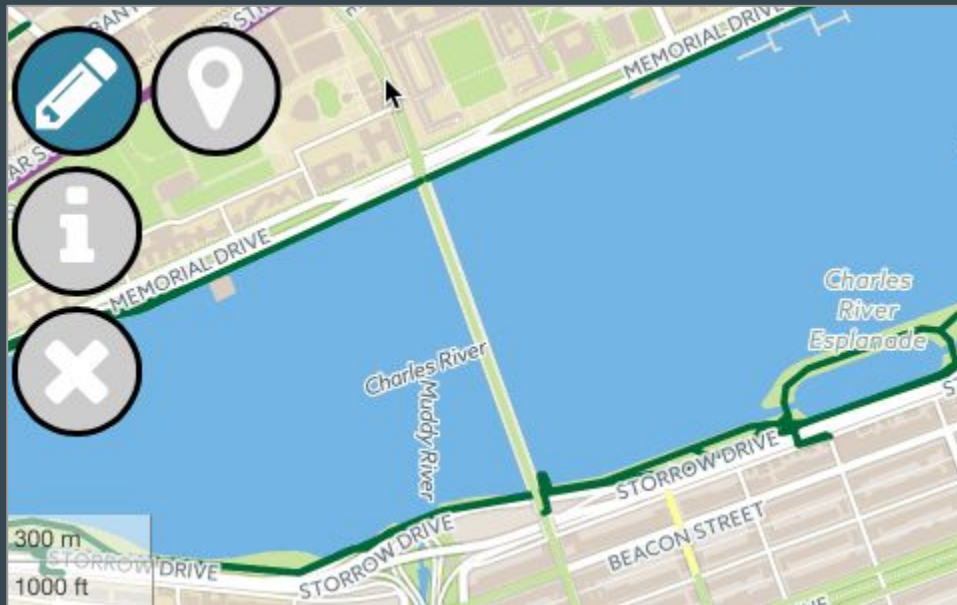
# Where do you want better biking infrastructure in Boston?

Published on February 22, 2016



**Raphael Dumas**

Research Analyst at City of Toronto Big Data Innovation Team



Project by: Raphael  
Dumas with the  
Boston Cyclists'  
Union: (2016)

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/where-do-you-want-better-biking-infrastructure-boston-raphael-dumas>

# Modes of Participation



Less

More

## Top Down

No input from users.  
Design expertise is king.

## User-Centered Design

Design for users with  
user input.  
Users as consultants.

## Co-Design

Design with users.  
Users as designers.

# Co-Design

- Design that builds from stakeholder feedback throughout design process.
- Users become designers and partners in the design process.
- Designers serve to facilitate the design process.

## WHY?

Users have the right to be involved in designing tools, spaces, rules, cultures, etc. that affect their lives.

Users help shape outcomes relevant to them; their input encourages innovation through new perspectives.





People need not only to obtain things, they need above all the freedom to make things among which they can live, to give shape to them according to their own tastes, and to put them to use in caring for and about others.

- Ivan Illich, Philosopher, Priest, Social Critic. Quote: 1970s

Source: Sanders, Elizabeth. "Design serving people." *Cumulus Working Papers*(2006): 28-33.

Image: <http://www.centerforneweconomics.org/publications/lectures/illich/ivan/the-wisdom-of-leopold-kohr>

## Slightly updated version:



People need not only to obtain things, they need above all the freedom to make things, spaces, policies/rules, culture... among which they can live, to give shape to them according to their own tastes, and to put them to use in caring for and about others.

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**Where/When to get community involved in design process?**

# How to engage people?

Numerous ways that you can suggest and/or people can also suggest. These include:

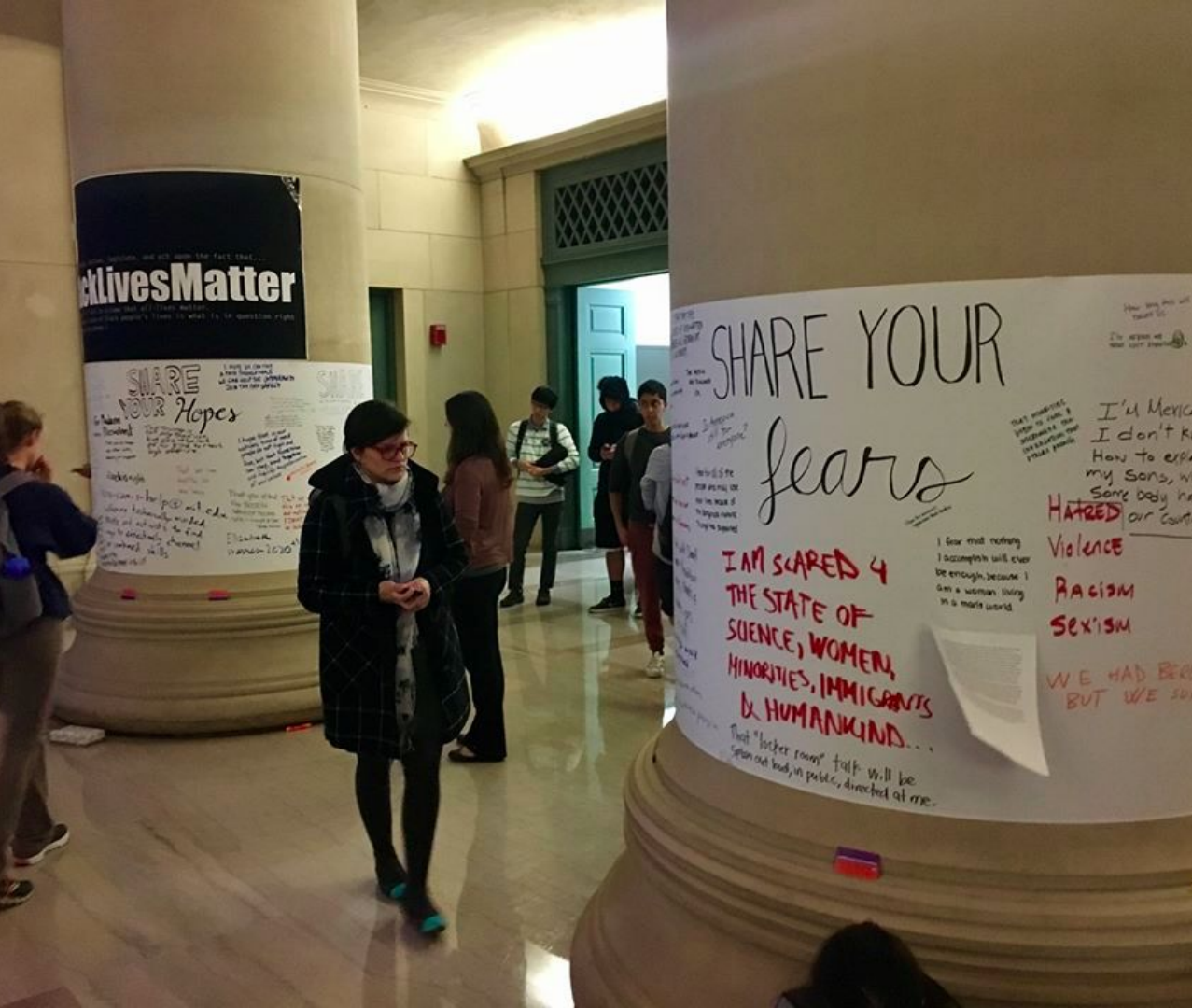
- Participatory budgeting
  - Crowdsourcing information (like Raphael's map)
  - Hands-on activities like prototyping
  - User-collected or directed media
  - User journey
  - Games
  - Participatory action research (PAR)
  - Storytelling/Mapping
  - Monitoring & Evaluation
-

# Why co-design?

- People have a right to be involved in shaping things that affect them.
- Users are experts.
- Reveal tacit information.
- Outcome is more relevant, creative, and meaningful question and solution.
- Teach community to be designers.
- Increased likelihood of relevance (or stakeholder buy-in).
- Encourage empathy.

Long-term:

- Openness to new ideas
  - Community trust
-



# Student installation in MIT's Main Lobby in response to 2016 US Election.

Photo by Jason McKnight. 9 Nov 2016.

# Reflections

1. Do no harm.
2. Many scales of use for participation.
3. Participation takes time, space and (sometimes) money. What is possible?
4. Context is key.
5. If implementing technology, need to understand extra dimensions of appropriateness, access, and security.

## *Stakeholders*

6. What is stakeholder representation?
7. Not all stakeholders are the same.
8. Stakeholder knowledge may vary.
9. What preparation needs to be happen so stakeholders are prepared?



# RESOURCES

**Make Tools** - <http://www.maketools.com>

Liz Sanders has an excellent selection of academic research alongside with resources that can help provide a deeper introduction into participatory design and how it compares to other designs.

**Service Design Tools** - <http://www.servicedesigntools.org>

Roberta Tassi provides an overview of some tools that can be used to engage people in design.

**I Think...I Design** -

<https://ithinkidesign.wordpress.com/category/user-centered-design>

This post is a useful overview of UCD history by Stephanie Di Russo.

Build Peace Project Database. List of Peace-building projects. Add yours.

<http://www.buildpeacedatabase.org/data>



**If everyone is creative, then what is the role of the designer?**

Designers will learn to use their own creativity to amplify the creativity of other people. In the future, designers will be the creators of scaffolds upon which everyday people express their creativity

- Dr Elizabeth Sanders, 2006

Source: Sanders, Elizabeth. "Design serving people." *Cumulus Working Papers*(2006): 28-33.

Image Credit: Mary Roberts Nakamarra Yalka Tjukurrpa (Bush Onion) 2011

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**Questions?**

Test the process. Report  
back. Share your experiences  
and outcomes.



**Thank you.**

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