

Public Libraries as Social Spaces for Vulnerable Populations

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Abstract : This study explores the role of a public library in the creation of social spaces for vulnerable populations. The data stems from a longitudinal ethnographic study of the Anderson Library community, which included field notes, artifacts, and interview data. Thematic analysis revealed multiple meanings and thematic relationships within and among the data sources - interviews, field notes, and artifacts. Initial analysis suggests the Anderson Library serves as a space for vulnerable populations, with the sub-themes of fostering interpersonal communication to create a social space for children and fostering interpersonal communication to create a social space for parents and adults. These findings are important as they illustrate the potential of public libraries to serve as community empowering institutions.

Keywords : capital, immigrant families, public libraries, space, vulnerable

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