

Copyright
by
Mollie Anna Picha
2018

**The Report Committee for Mollie Anna Picha
Certifies that this is the approved version of the following Report:**

**Planning for Safety in Public Spaces: Efforts and Outcomes Regarding
the Use, Perceptions, and Safety of Women in Plazas in Viña del Mar,
Chile**

**APPROVED BY
SUPERVISING COMMITTEE:**

Bjørn I. Sletto, Supervisor

Edna Ledesma de Leon

**Planning for Safety in Public Spaces: Efforts and Outcomes Regarding
the Use, Perceptions, and Safety of Women in Plazas in Viña del Mar,
Chile**

by

Mollie Anna Picha

Report

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

The University of Texas at Austin

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Master of Science in Community and Regional Planning

The University of Texas at Austin

May 2018

Dedication

I dedicate this work to my parents for their unceasing support, Juan Carlos for his constant encouragement, and the residents of Viña del Mar, Chile

Acknowledgements

With great sincerity, respect, and appreciation, I thank my primary reader and supervisor, Bjørn Sletto for reading, discussion, and encouragement throughout my research and writing process. I would also like to thank Edna Ledesma de Leon for her mentorship, advice, and encouragement during the completion of my report. Finally, I thank the many professionals and residents of Viña del Mar, Chile who shared their thoughts and expertise, contributing to the primary content of this report.

Abstract

Planning for Safety in Public Spaces: Efforts and Outcomes Regarding the Use, Perceptions, and Safety of Women in Plazas in Viña del Mar, Chile

Mollie Anna Picha, M.S.C.R.P.

The University of Texas at Austin, 2018

Supervisor: Bjørn I. Sletto

Although many studies have been conducted on public spaces, safety, and gender worldwide, little has been published on Latin America, much less Viña del Mar, Chile. Additionally, the plaza has played a central role in Latin American societies for centuries, yet few contemporary studies exist. This work examines the use and perceptions of plazas and safety in two main plazas in Viña del Mar: Plaza Vergara and Plaza O'Higgins. I uncover the feelings, motivations, and perceptions underpinning the uses manifested in these plazas with a focus on the differences between men and women. Fear of violence is a common theme among women and is manifested in the ways in which women use plazas, particularly as compared to men. In addition to gaining a fuller understanding of the social life of plazas, my study synthesizes recommendations expressed by female residents of Viña del Mar for improving plazas and other public spaces. My hope is that this study will encourage greater consideration of gender when planning public spaces in Viña del Mar and beyond.

Table of Contents

List of Tables	ix
List of Figures	x
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Chapter 2: Theory	6
2.1. The Plaza.....	6
2.2. Feminist Theory and Gender Studies.....	8
2.3. Safety, Fear, Violence, and Gender in Public Spaces.....	11
2.4. Urban Planning	13
Chapter 3: Research Design.....	17
3.1. Methodology and Limitations.....	17
3.2. Research Methods.....	19
Chapter 4: The Plaza in Chile and Viña del Mar	28
4.1. The Plaza.....	28
4.2. The Chilean Context	29
4.3. Chilean Public Spaces.....	31
4.4. Viña del Mar, Chile	33
4.5. Public Spaces in Viña del Mar.....	39
Chapter 5: Findings and Analysis: Plaza Vergara and Plaza O’Higgins	43
5.1. Plaza Vergara	44
5.2. Plaza O’Higgins	52
5.3 Comparing Plaza Vergara and Plaza O’Higgins.....	58
5.4. Frequency and Preferences	63

5.5. Perceptions of Safety	66
Chapter 6: Recommendations	69
6.1. Recommendations: The Built Environment	69
6.2. Recommendations: Programming.....	75
Chapter 7: Discussion	79
Appendix A	82
Appendix B	85
Appendix C	89
Appendix D	91
Appendix E	94
Bibliography	97

List of Tables

Table 5.1. Plaza Elements	58
Table 5.2. Plaza Use.....	58
Table 5.3. General Plaza Activity	59
Table 5.4. Time Spent in Plaza	59
Table 5.5. Groups vs. Solo Users.....	59
Table 5.6. Gender.....	60
Table 5.7. Age	60
Table 5.8. Top 10 observed activities (combined data from both plazas)	63
Table 5.9. Gender and Groups (plaza observations).....	67

List of Figures

Figure 3.1. Example of record sheet used during plaza observations.....	23
Figure 3.2. Example of route base map used during plaza observations.....	24
Figure 4.1. Homicide Rates. Source: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2013.....	31
Figure 4.2. Original Haciendas of Viña del Mar. City plan (unknown date), source: Vera Yannattiz & Grossi, 1913. Graphic created by author.....	34
Figure 4.3. City Plan of Valparaíso drawn by F.A. Fuentes, 1879. Source: F.A. Fuentes, 1879.	36
Figure 4.4. View of Estero Marga Marga in 1884. Source: Vera Yannattiz & Grossi, 1913.....	37
Figure 5.1. Plazas of Viña del Mar. Graphic created by author.....	43
Figure 5.2. Plaza Vergara. Photo by author.....	45
Figure 5.3. The Pan American Round Table Monument. Photo by author.	47
Figure 5.4. Monument to José Francisco Vergara. Photo by author.....	48
Figure 5.5. Plaza Vergara: Hotspots of Lingerers. Based on observations of 1,902 individuals on multiple dates between July 25, 2017 and August 5, 2017. Graphic created by author.....	51
Figure 5.6. Plaza O’Higgins play structures and exercise stations. Photo by author.	53
Figure 5.7. Plaza O’Higgins: Raised walkway, platform, and statue of Bernardo O’Higgins. Photo by author.	55
Figure 5.8. Plaza O’Higgins: Hotspots of Lingerers. Based on observations of 1,532 individuals on multiple dates between June 15, 2017 and July 21, 2017. Graphic created by author.....	57

Figure 5.9. Despite imperfect weather, people enjoy eating in the plaza. Also, an
event put on by the municipality is taking place within the green tents.
Photo by author.61

Chapter 1: Introduction

There have been many studies regarding gender and safety in public spaces (Blöbaum & Hunecke, 2005; Day, 2001; Macmillan, Nierobisz & Welsh, 2000; Pain, 2001; Whitzman, 2007; etc.), but few have focused on public plazas in Latin America. Brought over from Spain, the plaza is one of the most common public space typologies in Latin America. The plaza's spatial and functional role was dictated through codes in the Law of the Indies and the *Ordenanzas* (Ordinances), which "identified sites for major buildings, arranged streets at right angles, and created plazas" (Scarpaci, 2005, p. 43). Historically, the Latin American plaza has been located near religious and political institutions and served as gathering places where leaders could observe and exert control over the people. Today, many of these traditional plazas still exist. Some contemporary plazas follow the traditional form, function, and location, while others take on different shapes, elements, and surroundings. Contemporary plazas can be found in many different parts of the city, including along the coast, near shopping centers, and in small residential neighborhoods. Despite significant political, economic, and cultural shifts over the last 200 years, the plaza remains an important public space for gatherings, protests, economic activity, and many daily activities.

Chile is one such Latin American country where plazas still play a vital role in economic, political, and social life (MINVU, 2008; Scarpaci, 2005). In recent years, Chilean citizens have used principal streets and plazas as stages for protests, especially regarding issues of education and labor. Formal *ferías* (artisan fairs) and informal

vendors alike find plazas to be places of economic opportunity, inviting passerby to purchase both local and imported products. Families, friends, and romantic partners use plazas as places to spend quality time together or just to meet on their way to other activities and destinations. Plazas are essential to local civic life (Scarpaci, 2005; Low, 1999; Low, 2000b).

The physical features of a plaza, and any other public space, affect the public's use and perception of those public spaces. As can be expected, use is very much influenced by the physical elements present in a space, such as chairs, tables, benches, play structures, ledges, stairs, and more (Whyte, 1980; Abdulkarim & Nasar, 2014). Perceptions of a public space, particularly perceptions of safety, are in turn also shaped by physical elements. The presence of many trees or walls and the absence of lighting or adequate pathways often make these spaces less visible or less navigable, thus more threatening. Although most public spaces are much less dangerous than believed, "in terms of behavior constraints, it is perceived danger that influences behavior" (Blöbaum & Hunecke, 2005, p. 466). Therefore, planners and other public officials must also work towards changing perceptions of safety in public places through physical, programmatic, and educational initiatives.

In addition to physical influences on uses and perceptions of public spaces, biological gender also influences use and perceptions of public space. Chile, like many Latin American countries, has a strong history of *machismo* – a strong sense of masculinity and importance of the male gender. Though this sentiment has lessened in recent years (Kumar, 2014), the history and remnants of machismo play a role, whether

explicitly or implicitly, in women's use and perception of public spaces. Day (2000) writes that "many women's public space behaviors and concerns are characterized by a focus on children, husbands or romantic partners, and/or other friends and family" (p. 103-104). These 'ethic of care' behaviors contrast with men's use of public space that is less relationship-oriented.

My study examines women's use and perception of public spaces in Viña del Mar, Chile. I have spent time living in Viña del Mar and have experienced discomfort and fear in plazas at times. These feelings led me to consider the elements that affect my own discomfort and that of other women. My study centers on the following research questions:

- What past and current initiatives (programs, physical changes/upgrades, etc.) have planning officials and other relevant professionals undertaken to improve safety in public spaces?
 - o From planners' perspectives, what affects safety in public spaces?
 - o From planners' perspectives, have these initiatives been successful?
 - o What future initiatives, if any, are planned for increasing safety in public spaces?
- How does the female population use and interact with public spaces differently than the male population?
 - o What activities do women participate in while in public spaces? When? With who?
 - o Are public spaces destinations or are they merely "on the way" to other destinations?
- What perceptions do women have about safety in public spaces?
 - o Are women aware of planning initiatives to increase safety?
 - o How do the physical elements of public spaces (structures, layout, vegetation, lighting, seating, etc.) affect women's perceptions of safety?
 - o What improvements would women like to see in public spaces?

Viña del Mar is a coastal city approximately 80 miles northwest of the capital of Santiago de Chile. The city has approximately 300,000 residents and is a popular national

and international tourist destination during the summer months. My study took place in the winter months of June, July, and August 2017, which increased the likelihood that most observations were of local citizens and not tourists. The study involved four primary methods, the first being observations of plaza goers and their demographic characteristics, activities, locations, and routes in the city's two principal plazas. The second method was an online survey of both male and female adult residents of Viña del Mar to better understand the differences between the male and female use of and perspectives on plazas. A third element of my research included interviews with planning professionals to understand the city's current initiatives and programs related to safety in public spaces. The fourth and final step of the research was in-depth interviews with adult female residents on their use and perceptions regarding plazas in Viña del Mar.

Many studies have been conducted on public spaces in the capital, Santiago de Chile (Oviedo, 2000; Dammert & Malone, 2003; Mora, et al., 2017), but few have been undertaken, and far fewer published, on public spaces in other Chilean cities. This study aims to fill this gap and provide practical guidance for future public spaces planning in order to make spaces such as plazas more attractive and safer for residents and visitors alike. Links between physical elements and perceptions of safety as well as recommendations from residents on how to improve existing plazas will be discussed in this report.

In this report, I will explore the physical and social elements that contribute to the use and perception of plazas in Viña del Mar. In the following chapter, I will outline important theoretical foundations for my study, including theory and previous studies on

gender, public space, safety, and their interactions. Chapter 3 will include a detailed description of the methods I used throughout my study, including observations, surveys, and interviews. In Chapter 4, I provide important historical and cultural context for the study as well as a discussion of the plaza and its history and importance. I include a discussion of the geographical context, working broadly from Latin America and narrowing down to Viña del Mar, Chile. Chapter 5 details the quantitative and qualitative results of my study. My final chapters include a discussion and synthesis of my results as well as recommendations for the design and programming of public plazas in Viña del Mar.

Chapter 2: Theory

This study draws on three important bodies of theory and literature, namely feminist theory and gender studies; safety, fear, and violence in public spaces; and urban planning theory. These three bodies of literature are explored through the lenses of gender and the plaza. Prior studies and theory help to understand some of the context and concepts that have emerged throughout the present study on plazas in Viña del Mar. First, I present a discussion of the plaza and its role and importance in Latin America.

2.1. THE PLAZA

Throughout the world, but even more so in Latin America, the plaza is an important public space for individual socializing, information sharing, and self-expression, as well as for public events and demonstrations. The plaza, like any other public space, is a social space. Henri Lefebvre (1991) asserts that space is socially produced while at the same time playing a significant role in social relationships. Space is not one dimensional, but it is constantly being shaped by society and itself shapes society. Lefebvre also writes that “like any reality, social space is related methodologically and theoretically to three general concepts: form, structure, function” (1991, p. 147). The typical form of the plaza was – and still is – open and rectangular with a variety of small-scale amenities within its bounds. This form is given by its creators, rooted in history, politics, economics, and culture.

Formalized in codes such as the Law of the Indies¹, the Latin American plaza was located and designed for specific intentions and with pointed specifications. Lefebvre would identify these characteristics as relating to the structure of this particular social space. The plaza was intentionally placed along two major urban axes and its size often dictated the size, orientation, and character of the city grid (Scarpaci, 2005; Low, 1999; Lefebvre, 1991). Early plazas were constructed using Spanish materials and architecture “to impose a uniform appearance and institute town planning, anchored around the original town squares” (Scarpaci, 2005, p. 40). Plazas constituted the center of a political, economic, and social hierarchy, controlled originally by Spanish colonists.

In addition to the form and structure of the plaza, its function is uniquely important. Historically, it was a symbol of control. Today, the plaza serves many political, social, and economic purposes. Recognizing the important work and observations of Setha M. Low, Scarpaci (2005) writes:

Those spaces [plazas] are essential as artistic displays, local historical artifacts, and cultural expressions. For these reasons, their furnishings (benches, playground equipment, light poles) and architectural designs provide the physical settings where informal conversations and other socially meaningful exchanges take place. (p. 49).

Social events and interactions help imbue plazas with important social meaning. At the same time, the plaza and its elements shape social discourse by providing space for social, political, economic, and cultural transactions. The plaza is not only a public space, but also a private space where individuals can go to be alone and/or to be with loved

¹ The Law of the Indies was the body of laws laid out by the Spanish crown for the political, social, economic, and physical organization of its American colonies.

ones. It is important to remember that plazas, like all public spaces, “are not static sites but animated by physical characteristics, history, location, time of day or week, season, or the presence of other people” (Beebeejaun, 2017, p. 324). The plaza is dynamic and its uses and meanings have changed over time.

Colombian social scientist Fernando Guillén Martínez remarked on the unique identity of the Latin American plaza:

The plaza in itself, considered limited in space by its four sides, is the most exquisite expression of social life ever achieved by Man’s city planning and architectural genius... the plaza affirms and resolves all things that are incompatible to pure reason; it preserves them, and gives them a voice and a future. The simplicity of its space is clearly an invitation to the social and moral freedom of the people. But its fortress-like lines are a definitive reminder that life and freedom can be lived only in a concrete and limited location, for a well-defined purpose. If those limits disappeared, there would be nothing left but the naked countryside, in which nature has absorbed and destroyed the essential freedom of human art and ingenuity. (As cited in Low, 2000b, p. 31).

The plaza’s multiple identities and functions provide a platform for people of all backgrounds to pursue social interaction but also solitude and privacy, or sometimes a combination of the two.

2.2. FEMINIST THEORY AND GENDER STUDIES

In all urban environments, public space is fundamentally different from private space. In *The Human Condition*, Hannah Arendt (1958) writes about the distinction between the public and private realms. She posits that the public realm is where one stops thinking about only oneself and has the freedom to participate in thought and activities beyond biological necessities and work. There is greater equality in the public realm than in the private because household hierarchies do not exist (or at least less explicitly

manifested) in the public sphere. Arendt also acknowledges that the public and the private realms are far less distinct at the time she was writing than they were in ancient times. Many geographers, ethnographers, sociologists and others would argue that this distinction is even more blurred than when Arendt's book was published. Sweet and Ortiz Escalante (2015) go so far as to say that there exists a "false division between public and private space" (p. 1826). Kristen Day (2000, 2001), Carolyn Whitzman (2007), and Liz Bondi (1998), among other scholars, study the interconnectedness between the public and private realms and often argue that the dichotomy is not so clear cut.

Through her survey of studies of gender, fear and crime, Whitzman (2007) rebukes the academic community for focusing far too much on public spaces and not enough on private spaces and the interaction between the two. Despite the criticism that the public/private distinction is an oversimplification of urban dynamics, it remains an important framework for research on gender in cities (Franck & Paxson, 1989; Bondi, 1998; Day, 2000). While plazas in Chile are exceedingly public in nature due to their history, location, openness, and physical features, they are also places for activities such as eating, reading, and expressing romantic relationships that are typically associated with private spaces. Women's use of plazas (as elaborated in the following chapters) reflects the complex nature of public spaces with a private twist.

During the late 20th century, scholars (primarily female scholars) awoke to the reality that women have unequal access to the city and experience the city differently than men do. Historically, women have been more closely associated with private spaces (most predominantly the home) and men have been more closely associated with public

spaces. This trend, though less predominant and explicit, continues today (Franck & Paxson, 1989). Low (1999) writes that women, as well as children, minorities and the poor, do not have the same “full and free access to the streets” that men do (p. 9). Karen A. Franck and Lynn Paxson (1989) and Yasminah Beebeejaun (2017) argue that an analysis of everyday life is important to understanding the interactions between women and space. Failure to focus on women’s everyday activities such as working, caring for family and friends, and enjoying simple leisure activities is a failure to recognize the importance of women’s use and perception of space and its difference to men’s use and perception of space.

Reflecting Beebeejaun’s focus on everyday life, Kristen Day (2000) offers the ‘ethic of care’ as one theoretical approach to studies of gender in urban environments. First developed by academics such as Carol Gilligan, the ethic of care “is a model of moral development in which the highest moral imperative requires taking care of needs and sustaining relationships” (Day, 2000, p. 104). Though she acknowledges critiques of the ethic of care, such as inappropriate application to solely women and a view of caring as a subordinate activity, Day views the ethic of care as an important framework for studying and understanding women’s experience of public space. Day (2000) describes the ethic of care as both a constraint and a possibility for women in their use and perception of public space (p. 106). Activities and attitudes regarding caring often act as a constraint on women’s use of public spaces because of responsibilities, stress, fear, and limited time, money, mobility, and opportunities. At the same time, caring can provide opportunities in women’s use of public spaces through caring for friends, family, self,

strangers, and even public spaces (Day, 2000). Through understanding the importance of care in many women's daily lives, public policies and public spaces can be designed in a manner to decrease these constraints and increase opportunities.

2.3. SAFETY, FEAR, VIOLENCE, AND GENDER IN PUBLIC SPACES

Studies have affirmed that women have greater fear in public spaces than men (Blöbaum & Hunecke, 2005; Day, 2001; Macmillan, Nierobisz & Welsh, 2000; Pain, 2001; Whitzman, 2007). This fear results from a combination of factors, including physical features of public spaces, (perceived) physical weakness, time of day, and history of male control of public spaces. Whether at a specific moment or generally over time, the individuals occupying a public space and their activities also influence women's perceptions of safety. Jane Jacobs writes in *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961) that "the bedrock attribute of a successful city district is that a person must feel personally safe and secure on the street among these strangers" (p. 30). Planners and citizens alike play a role in ensuring that men and women alike feel safe in public spaces.

Despite women's fears, they are far less victimized than men (Day, 2000; Franck & Paxson, 1989). Men are much more likely to be victims of all types of crime, except sexual assault (Franck & Paxson, 1989). Women's fear, though not fully grounded in empirical evidence, is nonetheless real. The fear that women experience in public spaces, particularly at night, greatly affects their use of and interaction with the city. Many different studies conclude that "fear and its resultant precautionary behaviors considerably restrict women's freedom of movement" (Franck & Paxson, 1989, p. 128).

Perceptions of safety are important in urban contexts because they prevent ‘full and free access’ to the city. Fear restricts women’s use and enjoyment of public spaces. Blöbaum and Hunecke (2005) detail that “the perception of danger or cognitive appraisals of danger are immediately followed by an anxiety state reaction that may lead to coping mechanisms, avoidance behavior, or psychological defense” (p. 466). Women often cope through isolation in public space or simply avoid visiting certain space they perceive as dangerous. These reactions severely limit women’s true access to public spaces and their political, social, economic, and psychological engagement with the city.

Through their study of a university campus in Germany, Blöbaum and Hunecke identify three primary physical features that greatly affect an individual’s sense of security: concealment, entrapment, and lighting. Concealment refers to areas of elements of public spaces where individuals that potentially pose a threat may be able to hide themselves, whereas entrapment occurs when physical features block a victim’s escape from a potential attacker. Blöbaum and Hunecke found that entrapment was the strongest predictor of perceived danger, followed by biological sex. The third strongest predictor was a combination of concealment and lighting. They urge that these factors be considered at the earliest stages of design of all types of public spaces, including subways, parking garages, and public parks (Blöbaum and Hunecke, 2005, p. 482). Public spaces should ensure clear sightlines, opportunity for unhindered ‘escape,’ and ample and adequately placed lighting.

In addition to planning for physical improvements, social elements must also be considered. Beebejaun (2017) writes that “inclusivity, access, and safety are

dynamically produced through space and negotiated in tandem with other people” (p. 324). *People* are the most important elements of public spaces; without people, public spaces would be obsolete and irrelevant to urban studies. Though Jane Jacobs (1961) is referring to the street and sidewalk, she urges that vibrant dynamic public spaces that attract greater foot traffic will inevitably be safer because “eyes upon the street” provide natural surveillance. Attracting people to public spaces increases not only their social potential, but also positive perceptions of safety.

Blöbaum and Hunecke (2005) and Valentine (1990), as well as many other scholars, emphasize the reality that *perceived* danger influences behavior much more so than actual danger. Therefore, it is essential for planners, designers, and other urban professionals to design public spaces that will not only reduce actual crime, but reduce fear of crime. Efforts should be made to address perceptions of safety, informed by cultural and physical context and residents’ actual experiences and perceptions. Researchers have conducted many studies of women’s fear in public spaces, most of which are comprised of case studies in North American and European cities (Blöbaum & Hunecke, 2005; Day, 2001; Whitzman, 2007). Much fewer studies have been conducted in Latin America and other regions. The present study aims to add to the body of case studies on public spaces in Latin American cities.

2.4. URBAN PLANNING

Public, private, non-profit, and informal planning institutions shape the physical form of the city, including its public spaces, and plazas have always been central to urban

planning in Latin America. However, for decades, urban and regional planning was left to professionals with technical knowledge and training, often ignoring the needs of minority populations. This trend began to change in the mid-1900s, catalyzed by the conflict between Robert Moses and Jane Jacobs in the 50s and 60s (Harvey, 2012). Jane Jacobs fought for disadvantaged populations that would be displaced by Robert Moses' expressways and other large urban projects. Jane Jacobs' love of her own community and other communities she encountered spurred a movement against strictly technocratic planning. Increasingly, inclusive planning became more common, inviting previously ignored stakeholders to take part in conversations about the future of the city, including the design and role of public spaces such as plazas. Today, inclusive processes are one of many tools that urban planners use to foster more equitable planning for public spaces. Low (2000b) warns that "purely aesthetic and macropolitical interpretations, however, are not sufficient for understanding the plaza because they leave out the people who use the plazas and its importance in their everyday lives" (p. 33). Not only should research about plazas include an emphasis on the individuals that frequent them, but so should the planning and design of such spaces.

Furthermore, urban planning practices should focus on accounting for the unique needs and desires of women, along with other minorities. Traditionally, public spaces have been formally and informally controlled by men. Though time is an important ingredient in the evolution of culture to the point where all have equal access to and control of public spaces, planning practices can help facilitate this transition. Gill Valentine (1990) writes that planning and design can facilitate "informal social control"

(p. 291), making women feel more comfortable and less afraid in certain spaces. Planning and design that invite women to share their own ideas for the physical environment of public spaces has the potential to promote even greater ‘informal social control,’ feelings of security, and successful spaces.

Social research and participatory planning are important tools in the creation of vibrant social spaces. Beebeejaun (2017) laments, “though within planning there has been a participatory turn that emphasizes the importance of engaging with citizens, community influence within statutory planning processes remains limited” (p. 324). This is true throughout the world. Despite the increased use of participatory planning methods and a greater awareness of past and present inequalities, the field of urban planning still has many challenges in reaching equality, including gender equality.

Plazas in Latin America have a complex history of control in which authorities have exerted power over the people through formal and informal surveillance. On the other hand, plazas have been used by the public in a range of ways, from activities of daily life to political protests. This multifaceted history provides the potential for the continual growth of plazas as important social spaces for urban communities. The social production of space “includes all those factors - social, economic, ideological, and technological - whose intended goal is the physical creation of the material setting” (Low, 1999, p. 112). Too often a public space is planned and designed with only one factor considered, such as an ideological emphasis on control in the colonial plaza or as a technological solution to the problem of lack of urban green space. Considering the different dimensions of a space, its context, and the people it serves represents progress

towards the planning and design of safer and more enjoyable, accessible, and equitable public spaces.

Chapter 3: Research Design

This study uses a variety of methods to address the central research questions regarding the use and perception of public spaces, particularly plazas, in Viña del Mar, Chile. Through this mixed-methods approach, I was able to gain a deeper understanding of the social processes and relationships present in plazas in Viña del Mar. Though not intentionally testing any specific theory, I was able to ‘test’ different hypotheses and assumptions underlying the theoretical frameworks discussed in Chapter 2 and identify typical and unique phenomenon present in my study site.

3.1. METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS

One important emphasis of my research is a focus on everyday life. Everyday activities and interactions make up an important dimension of social space, as elaborated and expanded upon by Henri Lefebvre, Carolyn Whitzman, Setha M. Low, and many others. Urban ethnographers, such as Setha M. Low in her study on urban plazas in Costa Rica, often use everyday life as an important organizing framework. Beebeejaun (2017) maintains that “refocusing upon everyday tactics sheds light on how planning practices might learn to consider space through the prism of everyday life” (p. 330). My observations and interviews focus on everyday life and everyday activities of the women and men that frequent plazas.

My study is an explanatory case study of two plazas in Viña del Mar, Chile. Yin (1984) describes an explanatory case study as a strategy for when “‘how’ or ‘why’ questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when

the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context” (p. 1). Though my study begins with elements of exploratory and descriptive case studies (Zainal, 2007), the focus is on explaining *why* certain uses and perceptions of plazas currently exist in Viña del Mar.

Conducting case study research brings with it a variety of limitations. This study includes direct observations in only two of many plazas in Viña del Mar and interviews and surveys of residents of the city. Any conclusions drawn from this study may be helpful in understanding other Chilean and Latin American cities and their public spaces, but will, by no means, create a set of rules or theories that apply universally. Additionally, any study, including my own, is often limited by time and resources. A more comprehensive study of *all* plazas in Viña del Mar and further interviews would add robustness to future research.

Having lived in Viña del Mar previously as a foreigner, I duly recognize my own biases and positionality that I bring to this study. Chile is a very racially homogenous country and therefore I was very easily identified as a Caucasian foreigner during this study. As a young white female, I received some unwanted looks and comments from men. These experiences have shaped my own use and perceptions of public space in Chile and increased my interest in other women’s use and perceptions. I recognize that my identity and experiences may be reflected in my research. I have done my best to be objective, while also considering my own thoughts and opinions – as I too am a female user of plazas in Viña del Mar, Chile.

3.2. RESEARCH METHODS

Grounded in historical, theoretical, and cultural context, this study is ultimately a case study of plazas and use and perceptions of plazas in Viña del Mar, Chile. Initial research included a literature review and primary source search using online tools and catalogs as well as library resources, including archival research at the *Biblioteca Municipal* (municipal library) in Viña del Mar. Next, I performed direct field observations in two main plazas in Viña del Mar to generate a fuller understanding of how residents use public spaces. I conducted qualitative interviews with planning professionals and public officials to better understand the context of the city as well as the role of the municipality in planning for, maintaining, and increasing security in public spaces. Additional interviews with female residents of Viña del Mar helped me garner insight into women's reasons behind certain behaviors in public spaces and perceptions about plazas and safety. Finally, a short survey was administered to both men and women to gain a better understanding of the differences between the two genders in their uses and perceptions of plazas in Viña del Mar. By using a combination of different methods, I have been able to gain a more detailed understanding of the relationships between residents, plazas, and the municipality, which allows me to present suggestions voiced by citizens for making plazas more attractive and enjoyable spaces for all.

3.2.1. Case Study

The municipality of Viña del Mar was chosen as the study site for multiple reasons. First, most research on public spaces in Chile focuses on the capital of Santiago, where almost half of the country's population resides. By studying a city outside of the

capital, I hope to fill a geographical gap in research on public spaces. Second, as a medium-sized coastal city, Viña del Mar is illustrative of facets common to Chilean cities, such as its size, hilly topography, beaches, and dense urban center. Finally, I personally spent time living in Viña del Mar prior to this study, providing me with valuable preliminary knowledge and experience about the city and its residents. This previous experience allowed me to make use of my personal contacts to make more connections with professionals and female residents for interviews. My knowledge of the city and its processes also enabled me to complete my research more efficiently without many issues.

Viña del Mar has over a dozen urban plazas as well as many residential plazas, overlooks, and other public spaces. I chose two plazas for direct field observations: Plaza Vergara and Plaza O'Higgins. Both plazas have a traditional form and are located at either end of the main street in the city, Avenida Libertad. Both plazas are large square plazas surrounded by commercial uses. Plaza Vergara is the oldest plaza in the city, has a great deal of greenery, and is a beautiful plaza. Adjacent uses are primary small-scale shops and restaurants and buildings with historical and cultural significance. On the other hand, Plaza O'Higgins is a contemporary plaza that is surrounded by larger, more modern, commercial uses. This plaza is more physically open (with fewer trees) and lacks the aesthetic appeal of Plaza Vergara. I chose these plazas because they are similar in that they are two of the most visited plazas due to their location and prominence yet different in their form and function.

3.2.2. Literature Review

The first phase of my research was comprised of an in-depth history and theory literature review. To answer my research questions, I split my research efforts into three primary categories: general urban planning and public spaces, feminist theory and gender studies, and fear and violence in public spaces. Additional initial research included a survey of the history of plazas and their role more generally in Latin America, and more specifically in Chile and Viña del Mar. This research was essential to understanding the historical, political, and social context of plazas in Viña del Mar. It gave me a deeper understanding of why plazas are situated where they are as well as the importance of their physical elements. The third phase of my literature review included primary and secondary source archival research in the Biblioteca Municipal of Viña del Mar. With the assistance of two historians at the library, I was able to access a small repository of articles and documents on plazas in the city. As a fluent Spanish reader, writer, and speaker, I had to translate much of this research for use in this report as most of the literature I explored on plazas in Latin America was written in Spanish.

3.2.3. Plaza Observations

One of the first intensive direct observation studies in the United States was William H. Whyte's Street Life Project. Whyte and his team of researchers spent over three years studying the plazas, streets, and public spaces in New York City. Their methods were quite simple:

We started by studying how people use plazas. We mounted time-lapse cameras overlooking the plazas and recorded daily patterns. We talked to people to find where they came from, where they worked, how frequently they used the place

and what they thought of it. But, mostly, we watched people to see what they did. (Whyte, 1980, p. 16).

With the aid of time-lapse cameras, Whyte and his colleagues carefully observed and documented patterns of use in the plazas of New York City. Inspired by his methods, I talked to people (mostly women) about their use of plazas, but I also mostly ‘watched people to see what they did.’ I spent a total of 29 hours in Plaza O’Higgins and 22 hours in Plaza Vergara, observing people and their general activities in the plaza. I recorded these observations in an observation sheet that was coded to match points and routes which I drew onto four separate base maps of each plaza: one base map for routes beginning on each of the four sides of the plaza and one base map of points in the plaza. Figure 3.1 shows one example of a record sheet from Plaza Vergara including its coding, basic demographic characteristics (age and gender) observed for each individual, length of stay in the plaza, and any notes about their activity beyond those indicated in the fourth column: sitting (dot), standing (square), walking or running (line) or playing (squiggle). Figure 3.2 illustrates an example base map of routes originating from the western edge of plaza O’Higgins. Examples of blank base maps and observation sheets can be found in Appendix A.

W 9

Entry	Time	#	Activity	# person(s)	Children		Young Adult		Adult		Elderly		< 5 min	5-15 min	> 15 min	Head-phones	Cell-phone	Notes
					M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F						
51	5:19	E	•	2			/	/						X				talking
52	5:19	AW	•	2			/	/						X				
53	5:20	BX	•	4			3	1						X				smoking
54	5:20	BT	•	3	/				/	/				X				boy playing
55	5:20	NH	/	1			/						X					
56	5:21	SS	/	1			/						X					
57	5:21	SI	/	1			/						X					
58	5:21	A	•	1			/							X				
59	5:22	A	•	1					/					X				reading newspaper
60	5:22	K	•	2			/		/					X				ice cream
61	5:22	K	•	1			/							X				eating sandwich
62	5:22	L	•	1					/				X			X		talking on phone
63	5:22	SS	/	2		/	/							X				looking at water, plants, playing (2 yr.) old
64	5:22	SI	/	4			4						X					school uniform
65	5:22	N	•	3	/	/			/					X				
66	5:23	N	•	2			/	/						X				
67	5:23	H	•	1					/				X					
68	5:23	H	•	1					/					X				ice cream
69	5:23	I	•	2					/	/			X					
70	5:23	I	•	1			/						X					
71	5:24	L	•	1			/						X					
72	5:24	M	•	1					/					X				
73	5:24	M	•	2			/	/					X					polo hands
74	5:24	E	•	4		2			/	/			X					ice cream
75	5:24	SI	/	1			/						X					

Figure 3.1. Example of record sheet used during plaza observations.

Most of the time, I was successful in recording every individual using the plaza, but there were occasions when the number of plaza users was so high, it was impossible to record all observations. Despite this potential limitation, my recorded observations have a small margin of error (self-estimated at a maximum of 10%) for plaza users during direct observation hours.

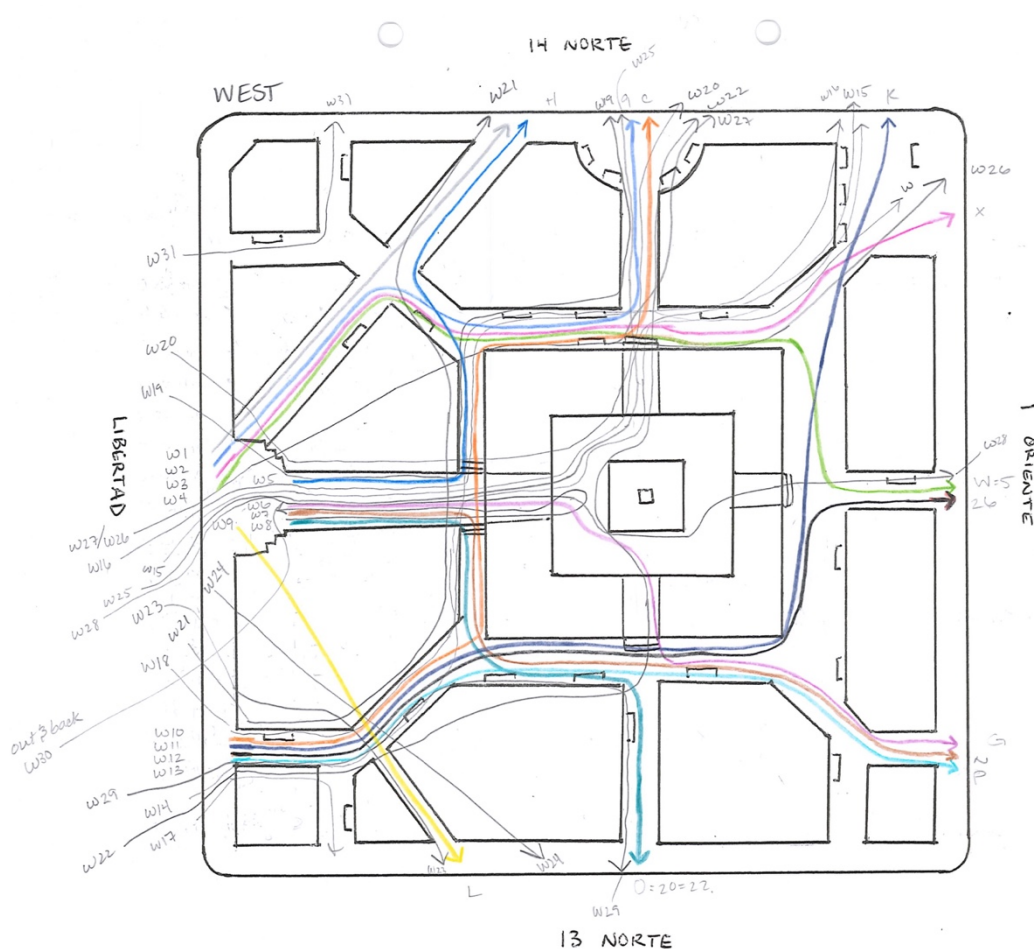


Figure 3.2. Example of route base map used during plaza observations.

3.2.4. Interviews

A central goal of this study was to understand perceptions, feelings, and opinions regarding plazas, in addition to gathering empirical evidence of use patterns in plazas. Interviews for this study were broken into two distinct categories to serve two distinct research purposes: interviews with experts in planning and development-related fields and professions and interviews with female residents of Viña del Mar. In addition to

taking handwritten notes during the interviews, they were recorded with a handheld recording device with the interviewees permission. After completion of the interviews, I transcribed the recordings and deleted the original files. With their consent, full names and titles of experts and first names of female residents are used in this report.

First, interviews with experts serves the research purpose of learning about what the municipality is doing to maintain and enhance safety in plazas and other public spaces. Five different individuals were interviewed, one from each of the following organizations/companies: Viña del Mar Parks and Gardens Department, Viña del Mar Citizen Security Department, Viña del Mar Communal Planning Secretary, Siglo Verde (company responsible for maintenance of plazas), and Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso School of Architecture and Design. These experts were asked questions regarding their roles, issues, concerns, and perceptions regarding the city's public spaces (see Appendix B).

The second group of interviews was with adult (ages 18+) female residents of Viña del Mar. Nine different interviews were conducted for the purpose of understanding more fully what female residents think about plazas and safety in those plazas. Additionally, insights were gained into what female residents would like to see changed or added to plazas to make them more enjoyable, welcoming, and safe places. Women were asked questions about their use and perceptions of public space. I conducted and transcribed interviews for both groups in Spanish and then translated the portions included in this report to English.

3.2.5. Surveys

The final set of qualitative data collected during the study was a survey administered to adult (ages 18+) male and female residents of Viña del Mar. The survey was administered primarily via an online survey tool; a few surveys were conducted in which respondents completed a paper survey. There were a total of 25 responses: 8 male and 17 female. The survey included questions regarding respondents' use and perceptions of safety in the plazas of Viña del Mar. Survey results were used to gain a general understanding of perceptions of plazas and their safety. Data collected through the survey also served to gather individuals' explanations for uses and behaviors that I observed in the plazas.

3.2.6. Content Analysis

After 51 hours of observations, the number of lines of data was in the thousands; dozens of distinct routes and points of lingering were identified within each plaza. In my analysis, I needed to synthesize all these data points and develop representations that would illuminate patterns and trends in uses and activities in the two plazas. Basic descriptive statistics was used to break down the over 5,000 distinct observations of over 8,000 individuals into representative and manageable summary indicators. AutoCAD, ArcGIS, and Adobe Illustrator were used to graphically represent the points at which people lingered in plazas and their relative frequency as compared to other points within each plaza.

Interview transcriptions were analyzed in two groups corresponding to each interview type: experts and female residents. Key statements from each interview were

categorized into three primary ‘buckets’ defined as planning practices, gendered experiences and perspectives, and perceptions of safety, corresponding to my primary research questions. Additional micro-categories were formed as themes and trends presented themselves through reading, rereading, and markup of transcriptions. Survey data was aggregated to create summary statistics and themes representing the results and comparing men’s and women’s responses. Synthesizing results from all data sources (primary and secondary sources, observations, interviews, and surveys), major themes regarding the use, perceptions, and recommendations for improvements in Viña del Mar’s plazas are presented in Chapters 5 and 6.

Chapter 4: The Plaza in Chile and Viña del Mar

The plaza plays an important economic, political, and social role in the Chilean city. Some plazas have been in existence since the Spanish conquistadors arrived in the mid-1500s, while others are being created and constructed today. Viña del Mar is no exception; its plazas have a wide range of ages, sizes, locations, designs, and uses. The number of plazas has increased as the city has grown from a small colonial town to a popular national and international tourist destination. Plaza Vergara and Plaza O'Higgins are two of the most prominent plazas in the city center with high visibility and use. They, along with the other public spaces in the city, are managed by multiple municipal departments.

4.1. THE PLAZA

First established by Spanish colonizers as a way to assert their political, social, and religious control over local populations (Scarpaci, 2005; Gade, 1976), the plaza represented “the production of a social space by political power – that is, by violence in the service of economic goals” (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 151-152). Spanish colonial settlements were intended to accumulate wealth for Europe, and thus the plaza played an important role in providing structure, control, and a gathering place for the city. Daniel W. Gade (1976) notes that “throughout Latin America the central square remains one of the most durable features that the Iberians brought across the Atlantic and one of the most distinctive elements of agglomerated settlement” (16). Location and design of modern plazas are largely reminiscent of the historical plazas created by Spanish colonists: often

rectangular, with available seating, a central statue or other marker, and located near a church, civic office, or cultural center. The central plaza was, and remains to some extent, a place for important civic gatherings and events, as well as an opportunity for policing and surveillance of the citizenry. On one level, it represents power and control. On another level, the plaza is a place for individual expression, liberty, and life.

The plaza is both historical and modern, playing a number of roles in Latin American societies. In her research on plazas in Costa Rica, Setha M. Low (2000b) suggests that “plazas are spatial representations of Latin American society and social hierarchy... centers of cultural expression and artistic display... and finally, plazas are settings for everyday urban life” (p. 33). The political, cultural, and social identities of plazas interact and weave together to create a vibrant and complex urban character. The democratic nature of plazas reflects that of all public spaces: “the distinctive characteristic of public space is its degree of accessibility or its possibility of use without restrictions for any person” (Schlack, 2007, p. 26).

4.2. THE CHILEAN CONTEXT

As a former Spanish colony, Chile has a rich cultural context that includes indigenous, Spanish, and other cultural traditions. The south of Chile was colonized by primarily Germans and the country was also home to a significant population of English settlers. The eclectic mix of names for streets, plazas, and other public infrastructure reflect this mix of cultures. The first government assembly took place in Santiago on September 18, 1810 which is celebrated today as the country’s most cherished national

holiday. In February 1818, after years of war, Chile officially declared independence from Spain (Memoria Chilena, n.d.). Nearly every city in Chile has a main plaza, an inheritance from the Spanish colonial period.

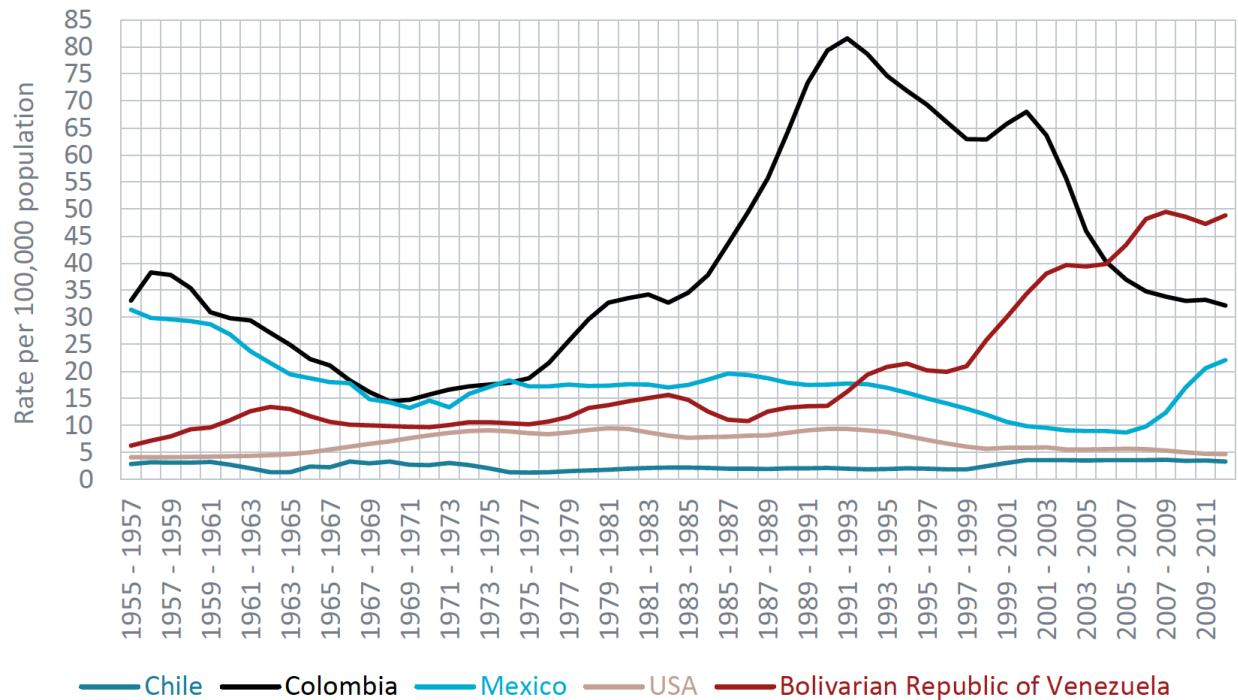
Chile has shifted between socialist and capitalist governments, with the most striking conflict manifested in the 1970s. In 1973, Augusto Pinochet led a military coup in Chile, overthrowing socialist president Salvador Allende. Pinochet remained in power as a military dictator until 1990. Poverty was common for Chileans under both leaders. Pinochet's legacy is one of fear, exiles, and executions, but also one of economic growth for the country. With help from the Chicago Boys, Chilean economists trained at the University of Chicago, Pinochet denationalized many industries and initiated an extreme shift from socialism to capitalism. Once democracy was reinstated in 1990, control of the presidency has consistently switched between right- and left-leaning parties from term to term.²

Chile is one of the most economically stable countries in Latin America and is the only South American country and the second Latin American country (after Mexico) in the OECD. Despite its relative economic success as compared to other Latin American countries, Chile has the second highest income inequality of all OECD nation states as measured by the Gini coefficient (OECD, n.d.). Chile has the lowest homicide rate (3.3 homicides per 100,000 residents in 2017) of any Central or South American country

² In Chile, there are no term limits for presidents, but consecutive terms are not allowed. The last four presidents were Michelle Bachelet, Sebastián Piñera, Michelle Bachelet, and now Sebastián Piñera again.

(Clavel, 2018). This rate is also lower, and always has been, than the homicide rate in the United States.

Fig. 1.18: Homicide rate, selected countries, the Americas (1955-2012, three-year moving average)



Source: UNODC Homicide Statistics (2013) and WHO Mortality Database.

Figure 4.1. Homicide Rates. Source: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2013.

4.3. CHILEAN PUBLIC SPACES

Public space in Chile comes in many forms, including plazas, streets, transit stations, and urban parks, and are formally defined by the Chilean General Ordinance on Urban Planning and Construction as a “national good for public use, intended for circulation and recreation, among other things” (*La Ordenanza General de Urbanismo y*

Construcción). Under this definition, public spaces are owned by the government and used by the public. In recent decades, there has been movement towards more ‘transitional’ spaces that bridge the gap between private property and designated public spaces, such as privately owned walkways and green space that are available for public use (Schlack, 2007). The historical definition of what is ‘public’ has been changing, not only in Chile, but throughout the world. Notwithstanding these important shifts, the Chilean plaza remains a traditional public space owned by the government and used by the public.

In recent years, the Chilean government has recognized the need to improve public spaces and neighborhood amenities. Chile’s Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (MINVU) has implemented two large projects aimed at improving its urban public spaces: *Programa de Recuperación de Espacios Públicos* (Program for Reclaiming Public Spaces) and *Quiero mi Barrio* (I Love my Neighborhood). In the Programa de Recuperación de Espacios Públicos, MINVU has taken an active role in planning, financing, and implementing physical improvements in public spaces throughout Chile. The majority of these improvements are to urban plazas and promenades (MINVU, 2008). Conversely, Quiero mi Barrio focuses on participatory engagement with community members in the planning and implementation of neighborhood-level improvements. A recipient of the 2015 United Nations Dubai International Award for Best Practice, Quiero mi Barrio was recognized internationally as one of the top 48 urban best practices worldwide (Martínez Gaete, 2015). Through this program, communities have been able create new public spaces such as plazas,

playgrounds, parks, and sports courts. Projects are concentrated in low-income residential neighborhoods and rarely occur in urban centers. The Programa de Recuperación de Espacios Públicos and Quiero mi Barrio thus represent a commitment by the Chilean government to improve the quality of life of its residents through exceptional public spaces.

4.4. VIÑA DEL MAR, CHILE

Approximately 80 miles northwest of Santiago, Viña del Mar is known as the ‘tourist capital of Chile,’ with beautiful beaches, historic palaces and castles, and ample restaurants and lodging. While Santiago and its public spaces have been studied extensively, coastal cities, such as Viña del Mar, have rarely been the object of in-depth case studies in urban planning research. Viña del Mar is representative of many other coastal cities, being similar in size and geography to cities such as Valparaíso, Concepción, Iquique, Valdivia, and Puerto Montt.

4.4.1. Early History

Settlement in the area now constituted by Viña del Mar, Chile has a long history, dating back to long before the arrival of the conquistadors in the 1500s. The indigenous coastal people, Chamanchacos (or simply, Changos), named this area “Peuco,” meaning “here, there is water” (Basulto, 1954, p. 18). In 1543, conquistador Pedro de Valdivia arrived in Peuco where he founded two haciendas. Over time, the two haciendas were combined and changed hands on many occasions. After owning the land for approximately 30 years, in 1692 the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) divided it into two

haciendas, naming them “Las Siete Hermanas” (south of Estero Marga Marga) and “la viña de la mar” (Basulto, 1954, p. 18).

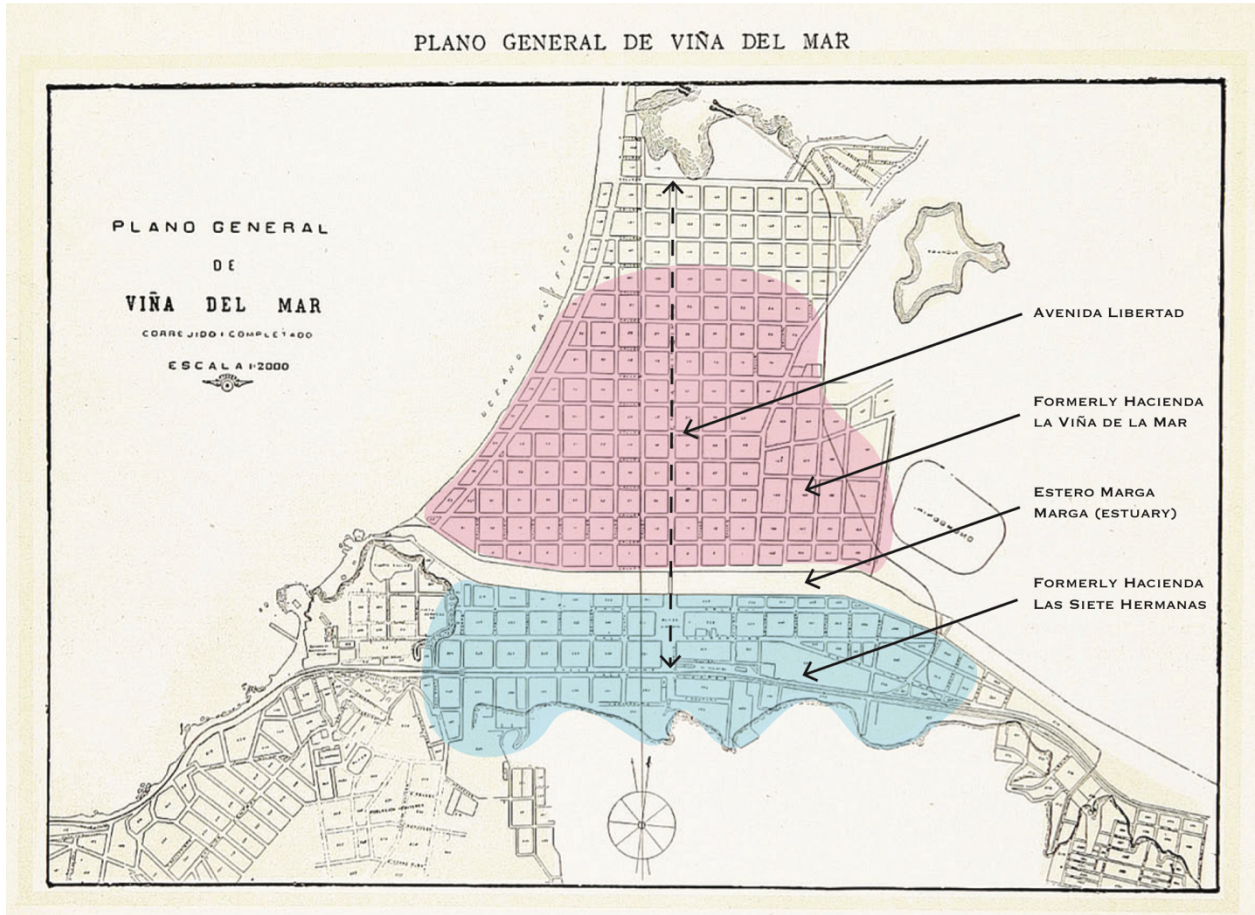


Figure 4.2. Original Haciendas of Viña del Mar. City plan (unknown date), source: Vera Yannattiz & Grossi, 1913. Graphic created by author.

After many more changes in ownership, the land once again had the same owner in Francisco Álvares, who purchased the two haciendas in 1840. After his death, his son, Francisco Slavador Álvares, attempted to start a true city by selling lots and building streets. Unfortunately, Mr. Álvares did not have legal authority to found a city, and his

attempts were thwarted by Francisco Echaurren, the *Intendente* (“supervisor,” akin to a governor) of the Valparaíso Region. Despite his own failure, Francisco Salvador Álvares’s dreams of an independent municipality were soon realized. Only 34 years after Álvares’s illegal attempts, José Francisco Vergara Echevers successfully founded Viña del Mar in 1874, which became an official Chilean municipality in 1878 (Miranda San Martín, 2002; Basulto, 1954). At the time, Vergara was an engineer, directing the construction of the railway from Valparaíso to Quillota, which passes through the southern portion of present-day Viña del Mar (Basulto, 1954; Vicuña Mackenna, 1931). Many of the city’s elements, including its main plaza and a main street, owe their existence, namesake, and importance to its founder, José Francisco Vergara Echevers.

4.4.2. Viña del Mar’s City Form and Growth

Since Conquistador Pedro de Valdivia’s arrival in Viña del Mar, the city has been growing into its present form. Originally, only a few families called Viña del Mar home, while many more were living in its sister city, Valparaíso. Bordering Viña del Mar to the south, Valparaíso played a crucial role in Chile’s history and economic development as an important port for ships traveling between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans in the 1800s, before the construction of the Panama Canal. A much older and historic city, Valparaíso is home to many universities, historical buildings, and the country’s congressional building. Despite its proximity to Valparaíso, Viña del Mar had a different path towards urban development.

Valparaíso owes much of its identity and growth to its status as a port city.

Shipping businesses, industries, and civic buildings are located near the coast. Sailors, industrial workers, and port officials made their residences further inland, moving up into the hills as the city grew and expanded. Today, Valparaíso is recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, attracting tourists from all over the world to admire its colorful buildings that are rich in history.



Figure 4.3. City Plan of Valparaíso drawn by F.A. Fuentes, 1879. Source: F.A. Fuentes, 1879.

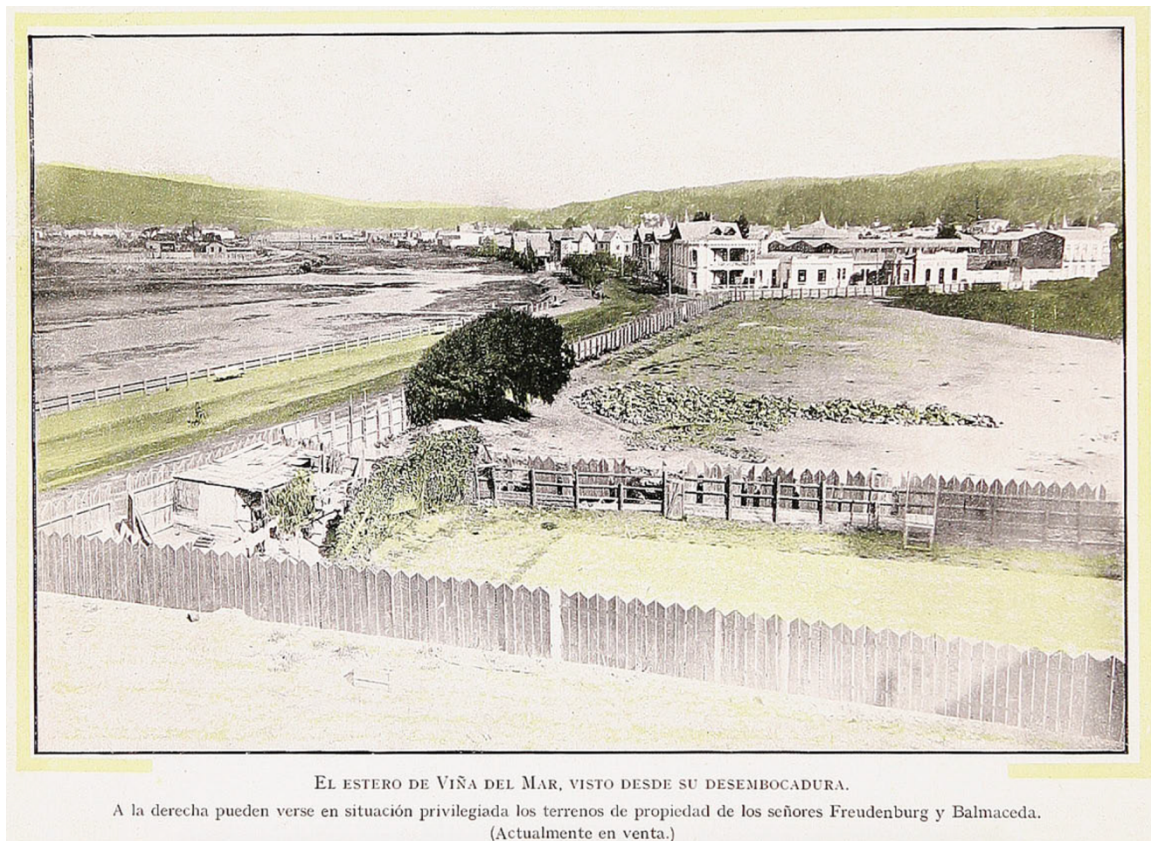


Figure 4.4. View of Estero Marga Marga in 1884. Source: Vera Yannattiz & Grossi, 1913.

Also a popular tourist destination, Viña del Mar's roots are vastly different from those of Valparaíso. Although its proximity to the coast was a desirable quality, Viña del Mar never became an important port city like Valparaíso. Rather, the city initially attracted wealthy families in search of clean air and summer homes. José Francisco Vergara's founding of the city owes much of its success to "the requests of various families from Valparaíso and Santiago that wished to purchase property, with the intention of using the land for vacation homes because everyone was enamored with the

beauty of the landscape – rich flowers and incomparably pure air” (Basulto, 1954, p. 20). The city was originally comprised of a handful of grandiose houses, but soon more modest housing was built to accommodate a wider variety of residents.

Though Viña del Mar began as city of vacation homes, during the 1870s it grew to over 2,000 residents and important services were added such as a police station, market, streets, public lighting, and a health clinic. In the 1880s, the city grew to include a sugar refinery, school, church, the Gran Hotel, and Sporting Club (horse track). By 1885, there were 25 beautiful vacation homes, over 20 tall houses, 34 one-story houses, and 40 ranches (Basulto, 1954). In 1892, General Salvador Vergara Alvarez, the son of José Francisco Vergara, subdivided his land and opened up a corridor creating Avenida Libertad, the main thoroughfare through Viña del Mar running parallel to the coast. The city’s growth during the late 1800s was concentrated to the east of Avenida Libertad because the land to the west was primarily sand. By the early 1900s, construction began on this sandy land and the city began to take its current form. An earthquake in 1906 destroyed at least 30 homes and killed 117 people (Basulto, 1954). Following this earthquake, the city took more precautions and strengthened building code requirements. Many of the buildings erected during this time still stand today.

A prominent resident and the first mayor of Viña del Mar, Manuel Ossa Sainte Marie, imagined the city as much more than a picturesque vacation spot for wealthy Chileans. Ossa pushed for the establishment of a modern hotel and casino that would transform Viña del Mar into a coastal resort town and provide funds for the municipality, especially through visits from foreign tourists. He made plans to improve streets, build a

new bridge (extending Avenida Libertad across the estuary), complete construction of the municipal theater and more. Mr. Ossa urged for a plan “that allows us to transform, in little time, Viña del Mar into one of the premier coastal resort towns of Latin America” (Basulto, 1954, p. 23-24). The project was quickly approved and income from the casino was used to fund improvements throughout the city. Today, the Casino de Viña del Mar remains an important tourist attraction, situated next to the beach, a large public plaza, countless restaurants, and many hotels.

4.5. PUBLIC SPACES IN VIÑA DEL MAR

The primary public spaces in Viña del Mar are plazas. Plaza Vergara and Plaza O’Higgins are two of the most-used plazas in the city and the focus of this case study. Beyond these two plazas, there are at least a dozen other plazas spread throughout the city. Some are along the coast, others in the city grid, and still others in more residential areas. Other important public spaces include the beaches and boardwalks, streets, and the Quinta Vergara, a large public park that used to be part of José Francisco Vergara’s estate.³

The *Secretario Comunal de Planificación* (Communal Planning Secretary; SECPLA) and *Departamento de Parques y Jardines* (Parks and Gardens Department), are the principal municipal entities responsible for planning, design, and improvements of plazas. As the municipal planning department, SECPLA initiates plans for new public spaces, usually as a part of a larger, more comprehensive, plan for a sector of the city.

³ Additional recreational areas include the botanical gardens and Sporting Club. The botanical gardens charges a small entrance fee and Sporting Club charges a small fee for vehicle entry as well as for the reservation of sport fields.

Soledad Monsalves, a landscape architect at SECPLA, indicated that these new public spaces are typically of a larger scale, such as the oceanfront boardwalk. SECPLA has also become increasingly involved in improving existing public spaces. Any design produced by SECPLA must be approved by the Parks and Gardens Department, while lighting improvements must be coordinated with the *Departamento de Infraestructura y Utilidad Pública* (Public Infrastructure and Utilities Department). SECPLA is currently working on the design of public spaces in Recreo and Forestal, two residential hill communities. Smaller projects, on the other hand, are usually initiated and managed by local formal and informal organizations and receive occasional support from the Parks and Gardens Department and Citizen Security (S. Monsalves, personal communication, August 2, 2017).

The city's public green spaces are managed primarily by the Parks and Gardens Department, with assistance from other municipal departments and bodies such as the planning department. In an interview with Julio Delgado, an artist/designer for the Parks and Gardens Department, I learned about the role of the department in planning for and managing plazas. The maintenance of the plazas is contracted out to two primary companies: Alto Jardín and Siglo Verde. These companies are responsible for landscaping, watering, cleaning and general maintenance of the plazas. Siglo Verde is the company that maintains both Plaza Vergara and Plaza O'Higgins. The Department of Parks and Gardens, on the other hand, is responsible for overall management of public green spaces, including technical and monitoring services. The department does design, vegetation planning, field monitoring and observations, and improvements planning.

Within the municipality of Viña del Mar, five institutions are concerned with ensuring safety in public spaces: Parks and Gardens Department, Citizen Security Department, Communal Planning Secretary, *Carabineros* (police), and the PDI (Investigative Police). Occasionally these departments work together to make spaces safer and prevent and respond to crime, but they are typically charged with distinct responsibilities. For example, the Parks and Gardens Department focuses solely on the physical environment such as ensuring visibility through lighting and trimmed trees and placing playgrounds far from streets (J. Delgado, personal communication, June 27, 2017). The *Carabineros* sometimes wander through the plazas ensuring that no illicit activity is taking place, but they, along with the PDI, are primarily responsible for responding to crime and situations, not preventing them.

The Citizen Security Department is actively involved in preventing and responding to crime in Viña del Mar. In an interview with David Stevenson, the director of Citizen Security, I learned about the three primary areas of the department: remote surveillance, operations, and community neighborhood organizations. Viña del Mar already has 122 remote surveillance kiosks with cameras. These kiosks include a button that when pressed connects the user to the operator of the cameras in the Department of Citizen Security (D. Stevenson, personal communication, August 1, 2017). In the operations branch, Citizen Security has 16 vehicles with ‘inspectors’ that are dispatched for inspections, response to calls, and security support for certain events. Each vehicle has an assigned geography of Viña del Mar, enabling the Citizen Security team to become familiar with the environment, residents, activities, needs, and overall context of

that area. Inspectors do not have police powers. Instead, their purpose is primarily to attend to community concerns and support local organizations and other municipal departments. The third and final branch of Citizen Security is that of neighborhood organizations. The department works with each of the 200+ neighborhood organizations to address issues of safety through presentations, trainings, and other kinds of support. Mr. Stevenson asserted that “citizen security is constructed – with the sensation of the people in terms of security and with hard facts” (D. Stevenson, personal communication, August 1, 2017). The department places importance on citizen participation and ownership and the preventative role of Citizen Security.

Such historical, political, economic, cultural, and social context is essential for researchers to understand interactions with and perceptions of public spaces. At the same time, such context is also necessary for public officials to adequately plan for and design such spaces. Despite its advances in areas such as social equality and macroeconomic growth, remnants of machismo remain in many Chilean cities. As in many other places worldwide, women struggle to gain equal access to and control over public spaces. A richer understanding of women’s experiences, perceptions, and suggestions can continue to drive processes and outcomes towards equality.

Chapter 5: Findings and Analysis: Plaza Vergara and Plaza O’Higgins

The two largest and possibly most visited plazas in Viña del Mar are Plaza José Francisco Vergara and Plaza Libertador Bernardo O’Higgins.⁴ These two plazas are located at the two ends of Avenida Libertad, the backbone of downtown Viña del Mar, just north of Calles Álvarez and Viana which connect the city to Valparaíso and approximately six city blocks from the coast (Figure 5.1).



Figure 5.1. Plazas of Viña del Mar. Graphic created by author.

⁴ In the adjacent city, Valparaíso, there is another Plaza Libertador Bernardo O’Higgins, which is known by all as Plaza O’Higgins. Most residents are unaware of the official name of Plaza O’Higgins in Viña del Mar. Most people know the Viña del Mar Plaza O’Higgins as ‘the plaza between 13 Norte and 14 Norte.’

Plaza Vergara sits at the origin of Avenida Libertad, just south of the *Estero Marga-Marga* (Marga-Marga estuary), where the original city center was located. More commonly known as ‘Plaza Viña,’ Plaza Vergara is the oldest plaza in the city alongside Plaza Sucre, a linear plaza adjacent to Plaza Vergara. Located at another, newer, focal point of the city, Plaza O’Higgins sits at the northern end of Avenida Libertad in front of the Mall Marina Arauco.

5.1. PLAZA VERGARA

José Francisco Vergara, the founder of Viña del Mar, donated the land for both Plaza Vergara and Plaza Sucre in the city’s foundational decree in 1874 (Gil, 2005). José Francisco Vergara intended the larger of the two plazas (present-day Plaza Vergara) to be named Plaza Sucre, after Antonio José de Sucre, one of the prominent leaders during the Latin American wars of independence from Spain (Gil, 2005; Miranda San Martín, 2002). Construction of the two plazas began in 1882 and the plazas received their current official names in 1923 (Gil, 2005). Historically, both Plaza Vergara and Plaza Sucre have been used heavily because of their proximity to social and cultural buildings such as the historic *Hotel O’Higgins*, *Teatro Municipal* (Municipal Theater), and *Club de Viña* (Viña Club).

In addition to being surrounded by important cultural buildings, Plaza Vergara is located near many businesses and public transportation infrastructure. Calle Valparaíso, which runs east-west and defines the line between Plaza Vergara and Plaza Sucre, was one of the first streets in Viña del Mar and remains very important to city life and

business. The portion of the street to the west of the plazas is a popular tourist destination, lined with countless small-scale local shops selling anything from empanadas to athletic shoes and artisan craft items. Other surrounding commercial uses include a grocery store, department store, restaurants, and many small retailers. Hotel O'Higgins often hosts conferences, events, and conventions in its ballrooms, making it a popular destination as well.



Figure 5.2. Plaza Vergara. Photo by author.

Because this area is situated in the original city center, parking is limited. During the summer months, the Marga-Marga estuary is completely dry in this part of the city so

it is used for parking. During winter months, it is increasingly difficult for drivers to find adequate parking. In addition to personal vehicle use, this area is highly accessible by public transit. Many small buses, called *micros*, that serve Valparaíso, Concón, Viña del Mar, and Quilpué pass through this area. Many routes have stops within one block of Plaza Vergara. In addition to these micros, the metro, which connects the port of Valparaíso to Limache (east of Viña del Mar) has a primary stop as well as its central offices one block from Plaza Vergara. Finally, taxi cabs and *colectivos* (shared cars with a designated route/area) also heavily service this area.

5.1.1. Plaza Elements

Plaza Vergara is a beautiful plaza with many different tree species, benches, sculptures, flowers, paved pathways, lawn areas and a large water feature. There are 46 benches throughout the plaza where people often stop to eat lunch, read the newspaper, rest for a few minutes, or meet friends or family. There are many light posts throughout the plaza and along the surrounding streets, though some lights are burnt out. Tree species include cedar, pomegranate and natives such as Chilean acorn, canelo (also known as winter's bark), and Chilean palm. Though there are some smaller trees and plants, the majority of the vegetation in the plaza is large trees providing good visibility throughout and through the plaza. Many plants in this plaza also include identification tags so visitors can learn about the plant species.

Plaza Vergara also includes many different monuments. There is a small monument in recognition of the women's organization The Pan American Round Table

and its founder, Florence Terry Griswold. Another monument includes a message in recognition of the people of Rapa Nui (Easter Island). The largest and most prominent monument is, appropriately, a large sculpture of José Francisco Vergara. The sculpture is placed near the center of the plaza on concrete platform raised a couple steps above the plaza, overlooking the large water feature that occupies much of the western half of the plaza. The water feature includes two large pools connected by a small canal which crosses under one of the plazas many paths. It also includes a tall spout of water near the statue of José Francisco Vergara. Even during the winter, the ponds are usually full and the fountain is running.



Figure 5.3. The Pan American Round Table Monument. Photo by author.



Figure 5.4. Monument to José Francisco Vergara. Photo by author.

5.1.2. Observations

Plaza Vergara is a very busy plaza in Viña del Mar. Its proximity to so many places of work and other amenities makes it a popular location for tourists and passerby alike. During daylight hours, an average of 240 people use Plaza Vergara each hour, whether just passing through, stopping for a few minutes, or staying a while. The majority of people are just passing through the plaza or stopping for a very short period with 71% of people spending less than five minutes in Plaza Vergara. Thirteen percent spend between five and fifteen minutes in the plaza and 16% have stays of longer than

fifteen minutes. Thirty percent of people are seated while using the plaza, 1% are standing, 68% are walking, and 1% are playing.

On average, women use plazas in Viña del Mar slightly less than men do: 56% of observed users in Plaza Vergara were male, while 44% were female. Women tend to spend less time in plazas as men do as well. Those people spending less than 5 minutes in Plaza Vergara closely reflect plaza users in general with 54% male and 46% female. These numbers become somewhat more elevated when looking at those people who use the plaza for more than just 5 minutes. Only 40% of those staying in the plaza for 5-15 minutes are female and 39% of people staying in the plaza for more than 15 minutes are female.

Like in many Latin American countries, chess, checkers, backgammon and other games are common social activities among adult men in Chile. Around 5pm, men begin setting up a few folding tables and chairs near the center of the plaza to start playing these games. They often play for hours and men, and occasionally a few women, come and go throughout the evening. Street vendors with little carts selling sandwiches and coffee stop by the group to offer refreshments. In recent years, the municipality installed two chess/checker tables and chairs at the northwest corner of Plaza Vergara. This was done in part to discourage large groups near the center of the plaza, where formal and informal surveillance is more difficult because of distance from the road and less lighting (Julio Delgado, personal interview, June, 27, 2017). Interesting, the two concrete chess/checker tables have not been used as intended, although I observed people using them for eating lunch.

There are also a few street vendors in Plaza Vergara. At the northwest corner of the plaza, there is a man who sells flowers from a cart. In the northeast corner, another man sells snacks from a large mobile cart. Occasionally, there is a street vendor who displays jewelry or other small souvenirs on a blanket in the grass. People also sometimes play music or sing in the plaza, whether for tips or just for enjoyment. One Saturday, two women were offering face painting for 500 Chilean Pesos (just under \$1 USD). Despite the winter weather (temperatures averaged about 53°F during my observations), there was still significant activity in the plaza. During the summer, even more people would be in the plaza selling goods, visiting friends, enjoying the fountain and greenery, and just passing through. The most common places to linger (sitting or standing) in the plaza were benches and ledges near the center of the plaza; benches facing the street were less popular (Figure 5.5).

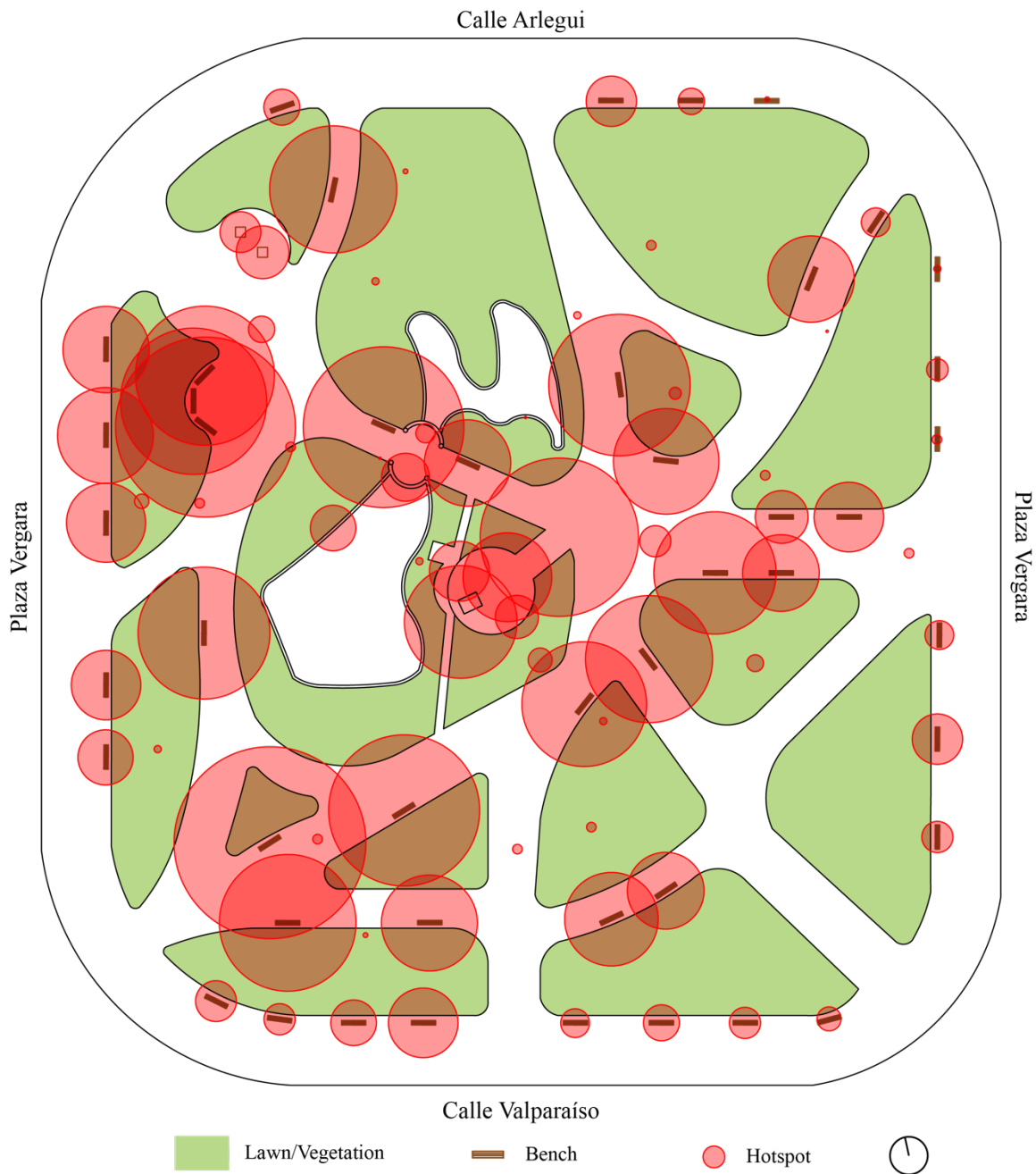


Figure 5.5. Plaza Vergara: Hotspots of Lingerers. Based on observations of 1,902 individuals on multiple dates between July 25, 2017 and August 5, 2017. Graphic created by author.

5.2. PLAZA O'HIGGINS

Plaza O'Higgins has a much shorter history than that of Plaza Vergara. Before its development as a plaza in the late 20th century, this land housed an athletic and boxing facility (Soledad Monsalves, personal interview, June 13, 2017) in addition to a theater (vinadelmar.cl, n.d.). Just to the north of this area was *regimento coraceros*, an old horse training and racing area. Plaza O'Higgins was constructed during the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet and opened in 1981 (vinadelmar.cl, n.d.). At the time, the surrounding area was primarily residential and a very calm and quiet part of the city (Soledad Monsalves, personal interview, June, 13, 2017). Today, the area surrounding the plaza is primarily dense commercial with some residential buildings. The plaza is located between the streets 13 Norte and 14 Norte at the north end of Avenida Libertad in front of the main shopping mall in the city.

Avenida Libertad forms the western border of Plaza O'Higgins and is very heavily trafficked. On this edge of the plaza, there is a bus stop that is used by at least 20 micros connecting Viña del Mar, Concón, Valparaíso, and Quilpué. Anyone living in Viña del Mar or surrounding areas can easily get to the plaza using public transportation. There is also a designated taxi and colectivo stop along the northern edge of the plaza on 14 Norte. The plaza is only two and a half city blocks from the coast, including white sand beaches and a long boardwalk.

5.2.1. Plaza Elements

Plaza O'Higgins has many distinct spaces and elements. Overall, the plaza has various dirt (unpaved) pathways, 27 benches, mediocre lighting, grassy areas, playground

toys and exercise stations. The playground toys and exercise stations are located towards the ‘back’ of the plaza along its eastern edge. Palm trees and some low shrubs are the primary plants in the plaza.



Figure 5.6. Plaza O'Higgins play structures and exercise stations. Photo by author.

In the very center is a large statue of Bernardo O'Higgins on a raised square platform. Previously, there had been a large water feature in the center of the plaza. During winter months, it was often drained and young people would use it as a place to skate and skateboard. The municipality received many complaints about the skaters and decided to fill in the water feature and replace it with a large platform and statue of

Bernardo O'Higgins (J. Delgado, personal communication, June 27, 2017). At the time of observation, there were large flower pots lining the edge of the platform, possibly to prevent skateboarding tricks being done there. This also cut down dramatically the amount of usable infrastructure in the plaza as this ledge could easily be used as seating.

There is also a wide, raised pathway starting at the bus stop on Avenida Libertad and leading to the center of the plaza. This raised area is used throughout the year, though more frequently in the summer months (December through March), for small craft fairs and other events. Unfortunately, it is inaccessible to wheel chairs because there are no ramps, only stairs, leading up to this raised area. The municipality usually provides a large covered awning where vendors can set up their booths. During field observations, the Department of Citizen Security, along with the police department and other agencies, had a few booths set up promoting child wellness. Any type of event or fair set up at this location often draws large numbers of visitors.



Figure 5.7. Plaza O'Higgins: Raised walkway, platform, and statue of Bernardo O'Higgins. Photo by author.

In addition to Mall Marina Arauco, the Boulevard Mall, Líder (a supermarket), and other intensive commercial uses, a new mall is currently being built just to the east of the Boulevard Mall, one block east of Plaza O'Higgins. Developers have tried many times to get approval to create underground parking under the plaza but the municipality has not allowed it. Soledad Monsalves, a landscape architect for the Municipality of Viña del Mar, is unsure how long the city will be able to keep refusing (especially with the new mall going in) and what this area will look like in the future (Soledad Monsalves, personal interview, June, 13, 2017).

5.2.2. Observations

Like Plaza Vergara, Plaza O'Higgins is a very busy plaza because of its proximity to commercial businesses, workplaces, restaurants, and public transportation. Unlike Plaza Vergara, the surrounding uses are larger in scale: the shopping mall, large grocery stores, a movie theater, large apartment buildings, office buildings, and car dealerships. There are also some small and local retailers in this area, but far fewer than surrounding Plaza Vergara. This difference in surroundings may contribute to the differences in uses as compared to Plaza Vergara.

At Plaza O'Higgins, there is a wide path that cuts the northwest corner of the plaza connecting the bus stop on Avenida Libertad to the street, 14 Norte, where the mall and other commercial enterprises are located. There is extremely heavy foot traffic along this short path with an average of 232 people taking this route each hour. Though this route has been observed and measured, the data is not used in any plaza averages because of the minimal interaction with the plaza as a result of the short distance.

During daylight hours, Plaza O'Higgins had an average of 118 visitors per hour. Of all observed plaza users, 64% spent less than five minutes in the plaza, 17% spent between five and fifteen minutes in the plaza, and 20% spent more than fifteen minutes in the plaza. While in the plaza, 33% stayed seated, 3% were standing, 60% were walking, and 4% were playing. Like in Plaza Vergara, men tend to frequent Plaza O'Higgins slightly more than women do. At Plaza O'Higgins, 52% of users were male and 48% were female. Hotspots of lingerers (sitting or standing) in the plaza were located at

benches and ledges near the center of the plaza and the two playground areas; benches around the periphery of the plaza were less popular (Figure 5.8).



Figure 5.8. Plaza O'Higgins: Hotspots of Lingerers. Based on observations of 1,532 individuals on multiple dates between June 15, 2017 and July 21, 2017. Graphic created by author.

5.3 COMPARING PLAZA VERGARA AND PLAZA O’HIGGINS

Plaza Vergara and Plaza O’Higgins are quite similar in their form and use. They are both approximately the size of one square city block with multiple pathways, green spaces, and important statues. They are both very busy plazas and most users are simply passing through on their way from or to other destinations [see Tables 5.2. & 5.4.]. Most users are also in groups when they visit the plaza [see Table 5.5.]. Both plazas also have many public transportation stops and routes within a one-block radius, making them easily accessible.

Element	Plaza Vergara	Plaza O’Higgins
Benches	46	27
Trees	127	70
Light posts	44	43
Water Feature	1	0
Statue	1	1
Other monuments	3	0
Playgrounds	0	2
Paved	YES	NO
Stairs	NO	YES
Outdoor gym equipment	NO	YES

Table 5.1. Plaza Elements

	Plaza Vergara	Plaza O’Higgins ⁵
Hours of Observation	22	29
Total Users Observed	5287	3416
Users/Hour	240	118

Table 5.2. Plaza Use

⁵ Note: Plaza O’Higgins data does not include those people cutting the northwest corner of the plaza.

	Plaza Vergara	Plaza O’Higgins	Total/Average
Seated	30%	33%	31%
Standing	1%	3%	2%
Walking	68%	60%	65%
Playing	1%	4%	2%

Table 5.3. General Plaza Activity

	Plaza Vergara	Plaza O’Higgins	Total/Average
< 5 Minutes	71%	64%	68%
5 – 15 Minutes	13%	17%	14%
> 15 Minutes	16%	20%	17%

Table 5.4. Time Spent in Plaza

	Plaza Vergara	Plaza O’Higgins	Total/Average
People Alone	36%	33%	35%
People in Groups	64%	67%	65%
Average Group Size	2.48	2.33	2.50

Table 5.5. Groups vs. Solo Users

In both plazas, men tend to frequent the plazas more than women [see Table 5.6]. This may be because, as my interviews suggest, women perceive Plaza O’Higgins to be somewhat safer than Plaza Vergara. In the evening, larger groups tend to form towards the center of the plaza. Some people in these groups are drinking, smoking, or using drugs. I, personally, felt unsafe once the daylight began to fade because of these groups and activities, as well as some inappropriate comments from other people in the plaza. Plaza O’Higgins has a larger share of children using the plaza [see Table 5.7]. This is

most likely due to the play structures located in the plaza. Plaza O’Higgins also has larger areas of grass that allow children to play more freely.

	Plaza Vergara	Plaza O’Higgins	Total/Average
Male	56%	52%	54%
Female	44%	48%	46%

Table 5.6. Gender

	Plaza Vergara	Plaza O’Higgins	Total/Average
Child	6%	11%	8%
Adolescent	46%	47%	46%
Adult	39%	37%	38%
Elderly	9%	5%	8%

Table 5.7. Age

Though many activities are equally common in both plazas, more people in Plaza O’Higgins smoke, eat, and show affection in a romantic relationship than in Plaza Vergara. Julio Delgado, a designer in Viña del Mar’s Parks and Gardens Department, expressed his opinion that the most common activities in Plaza O’Higgins are enjoying the plaza itself, meeting a romantic partner, and eating lunch (Personal Interview, June 27, 2017). Many people were observed eating snacks and lunch in Plaza O’Higgins – approximately 10% of all people staying in the plaza (not just passing through) were eating. Many were also wearing work uniforms, suggesting that the plazas proximity to places of business provides an amenable option to have lunch outside the workplace. Even when the weather was cloudy and cold, many people were having lunch in the

plaza. The plaza is also a very common place for couples to spend time together. Approximately 4% of total visitors to the plaza are with a romantic partner. This percentage jumps to 9% if we consider only those to spend significant time in the plaza, either seated or standing instead of simply passing through.



Figure 5.9. Despite imperfect weather, people enjoy eating in the plaza. Also, an event put on by the municipality is taking place within the green tents. Photo by author.

Just across the street from Plaza Vergara is a McDonald's ice cream shop that sells ice cream at very low prices, making it accessible for many people. People often

cross the street to the plaza to enjoy their ice cream in a more pleasant environment. Therefore, in Plaza Vergara, people are more likely to eat ice cream: approximately 10% of people lingering in Plaza Vergara were eating ice cream. Exhibiting a very different use of the plaza, approximately 8% of people lingering in Plaza Vergara were roller-skating or skateboarding. Skateboarding and roller-skating are very common activities in Viña del Mar, especially on the boardwalk along the coast. Plaza O'Higgins used to be a common locating for skaters, but its dirt pathways and the installation of the raised platform and statue now make it almost impossible to skate in the plaza. Skaters of all ages use Plaza Vergara as a place to practice and hang out with friends and family.

Besides conversing, the three most common activities in both Plaza Vergara and Plaza O'Higgins are, in order, playing, showing affection in a romantic relationship, and smoking [see Table 5.8]. Most activities are equally participated in by men and women, though there are a few significant gender differences. More women spend time viewing areas of interest and taking photos than men. On the other hand, more men participate in skateboarding, reading, riding bicycles, and smoking than women. Additionally, children are accompanied more often by women than by men.

Activity	Total People	Male	Female
Conversing	2,123	54%	46%
Playing	365	49%	51%
Affection	267	50%	50%
Smoking	170	62%	38%
Eating a meal	108	53%	47%
Eating ice cream	89	51%	49%
Skating/Skateboarding	62	74%	36%
Talking on the phone	59	63%	37%
Shopping	57	53%	47%
Reading	32	75%	25%

Table 5.8. Top 10 observed activities (combined data from both plazas)

Despite being large plazas near commercial centers, Plaza Vergara and Plaza O'Higgins have significantly different physical features and patterns of use. The general feel of each plaza is different. I felt that the atmosphere was much more relaxed and welcoming in Plaza Vergara, while Plaza O'Higgins gives off a fast-paced and task-oriented feeling. My extensive observations support this view. Surveys and interviews, provide more insight into these nuances and the thoughts and feelings behind experiences and interactions with plazas in Viña del Mar.

5.4. FREQUENCY AND PREFERENCES

Through the survey and interviews, respondents were able to provide thoughts on their use and perceptions of *all* plazas in Viña del Mar. Survey results indicate that Plaza O'Higgins and Plaza Vergara are two of the three most frequented plazas in Viña del Mar, in addition to Plaza Sucre. In my survey, 64% of individuals ranked Plaza Vergara in their top three most visited plazas and 48% of individuals ranked Plaza O'Higgins in

their top three. Another popular plaza is Plaza Sucre (adjacent to Plaza Vergara) with 56% of respondents ranking it in their top three. Observations support this preference for Plaza Vergara with just over double the number of visitors per hour as compared to Plaza O'Higgins.

An overwhelming majority of men responded that they visit plazas because they are just passing through *en route* to another destination. Less than half of men indicated that they also visit plazas to take public transportation or meet a significant other. The most common reason for women to visit plazas was to meet friends, followed closely by taking public transportation at an adjacent transit stop. For the entire study period, there were a total of 5,697 people observed in 2,280 distinct groups with an average group size of 2.50 people. People in groups represented 65% of the total people observed in the two plazas, indicating a preference for visiting plazas with others.

Plaza O'Higgins could be described as a 'functional' plaza, while Plaza Vergara could be described as a 'destination' plaza. Despite the frequency of which people visit plaza O'Higgins, 32% of survey respondents ranked it in their three *least* favorite plazas.⁶ Significantly more people visit Plaza Vergara than Plaza O'Higgins [see Table 5.2]. Interview and survey data support this preference for Plaza Vergara over Plaza O'Higgins, with one interviewee describing Plaza Vergara as an "oasis" (Elizabeth, personal communication, October 10, 2017). Others described a dislike of Plaza O'Higgins because people passing through the plaza are always in a hurry, there are many street dogs, it is "ugly," and there are many traveling street vendors, such as tarot

⁶ No other plaza was more frequently ranked as a 'least favorite plaza.'

card readers, that make it difficult to relax. In comparison, women tended to enjoy Plaza Vergara much more because it has better-kept gardens, a water feature, plenty of benches, and shade. Though both plazas are located in important commercial centers of the city, Plaza Vergara is located near smaller-scale and more culturally and historically significant buildings. This setting, combined with Plaza Vergara's history, significance, and physical features, makes it a much more attractive plaza for recreation and relaxation.

Despite the frequency of visitors to Plazas Vergara, Sucre, and O'Higgins, survey respondents indicated Plaza Colombia as their favorite plaza in the city. Located adjacent to the Casino de Viña del Mar along the coastal boardwalk, Plaza Colombia is a popular destination, especially for families. The large plaza has many trees, a small café and ice cream parlor, a large play structure, toy cars and bicycles for rent, and occasional food and craft vendors. One interviewee, Jacqueline, remarked that Plaza Colombia was her favorite plaza "because when my kids were little and we lived in an apartment, we always went – we took them there. There were jungle gyms, people renting out little cars, lots of fun things to do for the children" (Jacqueline, personal communication, November 15, 2017). In another interview, Teresa indicated that Plaza Colombia was her favorite because "every time I pass by there, it is well kept, well located, and there are always children playing" (Teresa, personal communication, October 10, 2017).

William H. Whyte (1980) made the simple yet powerful observation that, through his extensive studies of public plazas in New York City, "what attracts people most, it would appear, is other people" (p. 19). Whyte's conclusion holds true in Viña del Mar.

Plaza observations indicate that Plaza Vergara is frequented by many people and survey results indicate the same preference. People like to go where there are other people.

5.5. PERCEPTIONS OF SAFETY

All nine of the women interviewed for this study expressed a fear of crime in plazas at night. Surveyed women expressed the same fears. Most women feel comfortable being in plazas during daylight hours, and even more so if visiting plazas in groups. Of the women surveyed, 59% responded that they feel ‘safe’ or ‘very safe’ being in a plaza during the day, while 0% responded feeling ‘safe’ or ‘very safe’ in plazas at night. The most common fear women expressed was theft, followed by physical assault, verbal assault, and sexual assault. The majority (59%) of women surveyed responded that they feel ‘safe’ or ‘very safe’ being in a plaza in a group, versus only 6% responded feeling ‘safe’ or ‘very safe’ alone in a plaza. Perceptions of safety are crucial in affecting behavior in public spaces. Many women are deterred from visiting public spaces because of their fear of crime such as robbery, assault, and sexual advances.

Through surveys and interviews, women expressed feeling more comfortable in plazas when in groups. Observations indicated that although members of groups are just as likely to be male as female, unaccompanied males frequent plazas significantly more than unaccompanied females. For the complete period of plaza observations, 54% of observed individuals were male while 46% were female. Additionally, many people visited plazas in groups, with an average group size of 2.50 people [see Table 5.5.]. Whether in single-gender (all female) or mixed-gender (some male and some female)

groups, 51% of the total people in groups were female [see Table 5.9]. There is no significant difference between the percentage of women (51%) and the percentage of men (49%) that visit plazas in groups. In contrast, for the entire study period, 3,006 people were observed alone – 65% of whom were male and 35% were female. This is a much more marked difference and reflects women’s discomfort with being alone in plazas.

	Male	Female
Total (8,703)	54%	46%
Alone (3,006)	65%	35%
In Groups (5,697)	49%	51%

Table 5.9. Gender and Groups (plaza observations)

Despite expressing fears about being in plazas at night, observations indicate no significant deviation from the overall observations of gender in the two plazas. Between 6:00pm and 8:00pm, 43% of observed users were female, only slightly below the overall of 46%. It is important to note that I did not feel comfortable continuing observations past 8:00pm because it was often around this time that I began observing more individuals smoking marijuana, drinking alcohol, and participating in other behaviors that made me uncomfortable being in the plaza alone as a young woman.

Evidenced through observations and conversations with residents, each public space in Viña del Mar has a distinct character. As a ‘functional’ plaza, Plaza O’Higgins is frequented often by people accessing transit, passing through, and eating lunch. On the other hand, Plaza Vergara has the character of a ‘destination,’ where people enjoy the lush greenery, flowers, and water feature. Residents of Viña del Mar use these and other

plazas in a variety of ways and benefit from their location and design. Differences in uses and perceptions of these plazas by men and women indicate that gender must be considered when planning and designing public spaces. The following chapter discusses recommendations by residents of Viña del Mar on improving the city's plazas.

Chapter 6: Recommendations

The data collected shows that Chilean women feel less comfortable in public spaces than men, affecting their behavior and access to plazas and other public spaces. These women also have insightful recommendations about ways to make plazas more amenable and safer for all.

6.1. RECOMMENDATIONS: THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

My survey and interview data collected include opinions on what improvements, changes, and programs could make plazas more attractive destinations. The following recommendations address issues of safety and provide suggestions for attracting visitors through programs and installations. My analysis here is informed, in part, by Franck and Paxson's (1989) directions for design of public spaces to address women's concerns in particular. These include:

- Reduce the distance between public and private spaces (locate public spaces closer to residential areas)
- Provide "more and better seating facilities, visual amenities, and provision of information on community events or other topics" (p. 141)
- Improve visual access and sightlines
- Improve physical access and more enjoyable for people with children
- "Finally, public spaces both indoors and outdoors can make particular women and women in general more visible and more respected through public art,

monuments, and preservation of buildings and spaces that reflect women's cultural and social contributions" (p. 142)

While residents of Viña del Mar reflected these suggestions, they also recommended additional steps in order to make the current or future plazas in Viña del Mar more appealing spaces to visit. Through surveys and interviews, individuals expressed an appreciation and desire for water features, playing structures and other amenities for children, seating, and cleanliness. Other improvements such as lighting, security cameras, and less obstructed views in plazas would increase feelings of safety and comfort.

6.1.1. For Use and Enjoyment

Of the 1,050 people that lingered in the plaza (were not simply passing through), 350 individuals did so within 10 meters of the water feature. These locations included a few benches, but also ledges, the small bridge crossing the water feature, as well as lawn areas with a direct view of the water feature. Apart from Plaza Vergara, Plaza México is the only other plaza in central Viña del Mar with a water feature. A much smaller plaza next to a busy road, Plaza México is a less frequented plaza but is nonetheless a popular and well-liked plaza because it has a nice fountain, benches, and lawn space. Plaza O'Higgins previously had a large water feature in the center of the space. It was removed recently (exact date unknown to interviewees) primarily because in the winter months the basin was drained and skateboarders would use it to practice. Complaints led to removal

of the water feature and replacement with a raised platform and statue of Bernardo O'Higgins (J. Delgado, personal communication, June 27, 2017). A handful of interviewees lamented the loss of the water feature because it added a sense of calmness to the space.

Multiple survey and interview respondents indicated that water features would encourage them to visit plazas more often. William H. Whyte (1980) encouraged water features in public spaces because they attract people and interactions between those people by allowing them to touch and hear the water. Though the beach is only a few blocks away from the center of the city, including water features in plazas would greatly improve their use and enjoyment – especially if such water features are accessible and safe for children.

Many women surveyed and interviewed suggested more amenities for children in plazas. Day (2000) wrote, “the ethic of care constrains women’s experience of public spaces, when women prioritize caring for others over caring for themselves” (p. 109). Through interviews, women who are mothers expressed that they only visited plazas when their children were younger so that they could play. These mothers prioritized their children’s needs over their own recreational/leisure needs, much as Day suggested. Some of the plazas, including Plaza O'Higgins currently have play structures. As mentioned before, Plaza Colombia is a popular plaza with families because not only does it have a large play structure, but it also has bicycles and cars for rent and is large, allowing children ample space to run around and play. In addition to having typical play structures

for children, including open space for running, playing soccer, roller-skating, and other games would encourage more use by families.

In addition to child-friendly infrastructure, many plazas in Viña del Mar need improvements to make them more accessible to people with different abilities. One survey respondent wrote that they would like to see “more access and spaces for people with different abilities so they also feel safe.” Plaza O’Higgins especially presents many problems for people with disabilities. The pathways are dirt, which means they are often uneven and in times of rain become pockmarked by large puddles. Even able-bodied individuals avoid the plaza during or after rain. Additionally, the central raised platform and walkway are only accessible via stairs. The elderly and individuals with physical disabilities find it difficult to navigate Plaza O’Higgins. The inclusion of wide paved pathways and the elimination of stairs within plazas are necessary to promoting inclusion. Lowering informational signs would make them easier to read for people in wheelchairs and even children. Simple infrastructural changes such as these would show the city’s commitment to creating accessible public spaces for all.

With little effort and investment, the landscaping in plazas could be greatly improved. Plaza Vergara has many trees, grassy areas, flowers, and other plants that make it attractive to visitors. Many different species are present and are planted in different arrangements, giving each part of the plaza its own unique identity. In comparison, Plaza O’Higgins’ landscaping is primarily grass with a few tall trees and some sparsely placed shrubs. Survey and interview respondents prefer plazas with plenty greenery. One interviewee, Natalia suggested that “another thing that might make them

[plazas] nicer is putting in more flowers and other plants – not just grass and trees” (Natalia, personal correspondence, November 19, 2017). Another interviewee, Denisse, wishes that more plazas had shade trees like Plaza Vergara so that she, and others, could enjoy them more fully in the summer months (Denisse, personal communication, November 16, 2017). Viña del Mar has a very dense and compact city center with very little open space – plazas are some of the few public green spaces within the city. These plazas should provide opportunity for residents and tourists alike to take a break from the concrete and buildings to pause and relax in a green and attractive space.

Simple infrastructural improvements could go a long way in many of the plazas in Viña del Mar. Many interview and survey respondents expressed a disappointment in the cleanliness of some plazas and inadequate lighting in the evenings. Plaza O’Higgins and Plaza Vergara are both cleaned daily, though often not very well. Respondents indicated that the cleanliness and maintenance of plazas was very uneven, with some being very clean and others off-putting. In addition to improved cleaning processes, many survey respondents suggested adding more trashcans as a simple solution. Surprisingly, there are few – if any – trash receptacles in many plazas. Their inclusion may go a long way in improving public spaces by encouraging ownership and care of the plaza that has been missing for so many years. Additional and varied seating, such as benches, chairs, and ledges, was another common suggestion for improving plazas in Viña del Mar.

Not every plaza needs to include all the mentioned physical improvements. Each plaza should have its own identity and should “respond to the needs of its surroundings” (S. Monsalves, personal communication, August 2, 2017). Plazas further from the beach

may benefit more from interactive water features. Plazas near schools, grocery stores, churches, residential areas and community centers would benefit more from play structures and other child-friendly amenities. Plazas near large employment and commercial centers should include attractive landscaping and ample seating for employees as they take breaks and have lunch.

6.1.2. For Safety

Many of the suggested improvements for increased use and enjoyment of the plazas also serve to increase safety and perceptions of safety. More seating options, shade, and attractive landscaping will encourage people to stay for longer periods of time. Increased cleanliness and amenities will attract more visitors, increasing informal surveillance of plazas. In terms of promoting safety in plazas through physical interventions, the Parks and Gardens Department “thins bushes and trims low tree branches to increase visibility, improves lighting, and places playground structures far from streets” (J. Delgado, personal correspondence, June 27, 2017). Adequate lighting is especially important: 40% of survey respondents and seven of the nine female interviewees suggested more and better lighting as a means of improving safety in plazas.

Another common suggestion for improving safety was the installation of security cameras. Though Viña del Mar currently has 122 remote surveillance kiosks equipped with cameras (D. Stevenson, personal communication, August 1, 2017), most residents are completely unaware of this service. Also, most plazas, including Plaza Vergara and Plaza O’Higgins do not have one of these kiosks. Increasing the number of kiosks located

in plazas would make many residents feel more comfortable being in plazas alone and/or at night.

The presence of children also results in greater informal surveillance and perceptions of safety. One interviewee, Natalia, expressed her feelings about Plaza Vergara:

I feel most safe in the Plaza Vergara because there are always people there – there are always people sitting and talking. So you feel like there are people around you and you aren't alone. I think another thing that makes me feel safe in this plaza is that there are always families – families with children. If parents bring their children to this plaza, it must be because it is a safe place and nothing would happen to them. (Natalia, personal correspondence, November 19, 2017).

When spaces are more accessible to children, they are in turn, more accessible to women. Franck and Paxon (1989) remark, “ease of physical access by virtue of the design of the space or the route to it makes spaces more available to women especially when accompanied by children” (p. 135). If women feel comfortable taking their younger siblings, children, or grandchildren to a certain public space, they will also feel more comfortable visiting that space on their own.

6.2. RECOMMENDATIONS: PROGRAMMING

Nearly all respondents, in both surveys and interviews, wanted to see more formal activities and programs in the plazas, such as art, music, craft, and food events. Respondents saw the potential for such activities to promote community, fill a programmatic hole within the municipality, encourage plaza use, and improve safety.

6.2.1. For Use and Enjoyment

Cultural programming such as music and theater performances, art expositions, artisan fairs and food events were recommended by residents of Viña del Mar. Plaza O'Higgins hosts an artisan fair a few times a year that attracts many visitors and encourages them to stop and interact with the vendors and the plaza. The plaza near the Biblioteca Municipal has been known to host musical events upon occasion, but without any consistency. The municipality recognizes the importance of these types of events, but has yet to find a way to incorporate them more regularly into the daily life of the city.

Cultural activities in plazas would not only draw in visitors during those specific times, but could also open people's eyes to the plazas themselves and encourage use at other times. Residents expressed an interest in musical events, artisan fairs, urban gardens, and even lighting displays. Interview respondents shared some of their experiences with public spaces programming and their desires to see those types of activities realized in the plazas in Viña del Mar.

In Santa Cruz, they always have mini-artisan fairs where people can buy an ice cream and wander around seeing the different booths. Sometimes they also put up a small stage and groups from the region go to play music or sometimes a DJ puts some background music. Another thing that might make them nicer is putting in more flowers and other plants – not just grass and trees. (Natalia, personal correspondence, November 19, 2017).

For example, in Villa Alemana, the governor puts on a cultural fair with different stands with food from different countries. And when it is September 18th [Chilean national holiday], they put stands with typical Chilean food. These things make people go to the plaza, hang out there, and be with their families. (Denisse, personal correspondence, November 16, 2017).

These types of activities attract many different people and promote conversation and community among families, friends, and strangers.

Respondents also expressed a desire for art, theater, music, and other events directed towards children. During my time spent observing in the plaza, the only children's event I observed was an informal event where a few young women were dressed up in costumes offering face painting. In addition to the beach and boardwalk, plazas are the primary public spaces in Viña del Mar. They should be used to encourage community togetherness and engage children with the city and its environment. Through collaborations between the municipality and private organizations and groups, there could be lots of attractive family events in Viña del Mar.

6.2.2. For Safety

One of the top responses on how to improve safety in plazas was, as expected, increased police presence and enforcement of laws. A few respondents expressed concern that laws were not being enforced. For example, they saw a failure on the part of the Carabineros to enforce laws against public drinking, drug use, and vandalism. Respondents also stated that a general increase in police presence and the possible addition of plaza guards or caretakers would make them feel more comfortable in public plazas. Some municipal employees also expressed a desire to have more surveillance of this type but a financial inability to do so.

Much like with physical improvements to plazas, programmatic improvements to encourage residents to visit the plazas would also have a positive effect on perceptions of

safety. More people in the plazas means more “eyes upon the street” (Jacobs, 1961) and a greater collective sense of security. Children’s activities in particular promote a ‘healthier’ use of plazas and greater overall safety.

Well, more activities for children. That draws a lot of attention in the parks... and so more people go, more children go, and it is healthier. Seeing moms or nannies or whoever with children... calls more attention to people. When you see children, many people who go to the plazas to smoke, drink, or do drugs might not go anymore because those activities would not be allowed and they would be totally rejected – I think there would be more people who would ask them to leave if they came to do those things in a plaza where there are lots of children. (Jacqueline, personal communication, November 15, 2017).

Respondents thus recognized the responsibility that average citizens have in promoting safe and enjoyable public spaces. Together with municipal and police officials, residents are willing to provide surveillance and encourage collective care of public spaces and their users. By collaborating with residents, municipal officials can better ensure enjoyable, accessible, and safe public spaces.

Chapter 7: Discussion

A key finding from my research is the significant social nature of plazas in Viña del Mar. Many people visited plazas to meet friends, family, or significant others. At the same time, from a critical gender perspective, it was also clear that women feel safest in places where there are other people. Whyte's (1980) conclusion is thus salient in Viña del Mar: "what attracts people most, it would appear, is other people" (p. 19). Through interviews and surveys, respondents showed a preference for increased and improved programming in plazas over physical changes. They expressed a belief that programming would cause a cascade effect in which activities attract certain people, but then those people attract other people and so on and so forth. People attract people. People want to know what other people are looking at, listening to, and enjoying. Organized activities present a low-pressure situation for casual conversations with strangers, building up trust between individuals and entire communities. This trust can positively impact perceptions of safety in public spaces.

My research also found that women of all ages expressed interest in considering children in the planning of public spaces, whether they had children themselves or not. This interest presents an opportunity for creating plazas that are not only accessible to children, but to all potential visitors. In this case, the 'ethic of care' provides possibilities "for practicing and receiving caring, and for sustaining relationships with friends, family, strangers, and public spaces" (Day, 2000, p. 110). Of the adults accompanying children in plazas during this study, 63% were female, indicating that women are more likely to care

for children in this capacity. As women care for their children, families, friends, and even strangers by visiting public spaces, they are also secondarily (and oftentimes unintentionally) caring for themselves by enjoying leisure.

The plazas of Viña del Mar are unique in their context, but not very different in design and intended function from plazas throughout Latin America. Setha M. Low's study of plazas in Costa Rica indicated many similar experiences, preferences, and perceptions of plaza goers to those of plaza goers in Viña del Mar. Her public spaces of interest were Parque Central and Plaza de la Cultura, both of which are located in the dense city center, much like Plaza Vergara and Plaza O'Higgins. This local context affects the identity and culture of a plaza, just as the macro context on a country- or regional-level. The dense urban context is very different from the context of residential or edge communities. Plazas in areas outside of the city center of Viña del Mar may result in very different observations and themes than those in this study. As municipalities are planning new public spaces and remodeling existing ones, they must do their due diligence to research the context, needs, and desires of both the immediate and wider communities.

My study fills a geographical gap in the literature on gender and safety in public spaces. Few studies have been done in the global south as compared to Europe and North America. The history of Chile, machismo, and the Latin American plaza make this study unique in its context. My study shows that, in Viña del Mar, gendered differences are much more pronounced in terms of perceptions (both generally and regarding safety), rather than use of plazas. Therefore, it becomes clear that throughout the planning and

design process of plazas and other public spaces, efforts must be made to consider perceptions and preferences of both genders. Through a mixed-methods approach, I was able to understand not only patterns of use, but also the underlying reasons behind those patterns. Using a similar approach, researchers throughout Latin America and the world can gain a fuller understanding of the social life of plazas and public spaces.

Appendix A

Observation sheet and base maps.

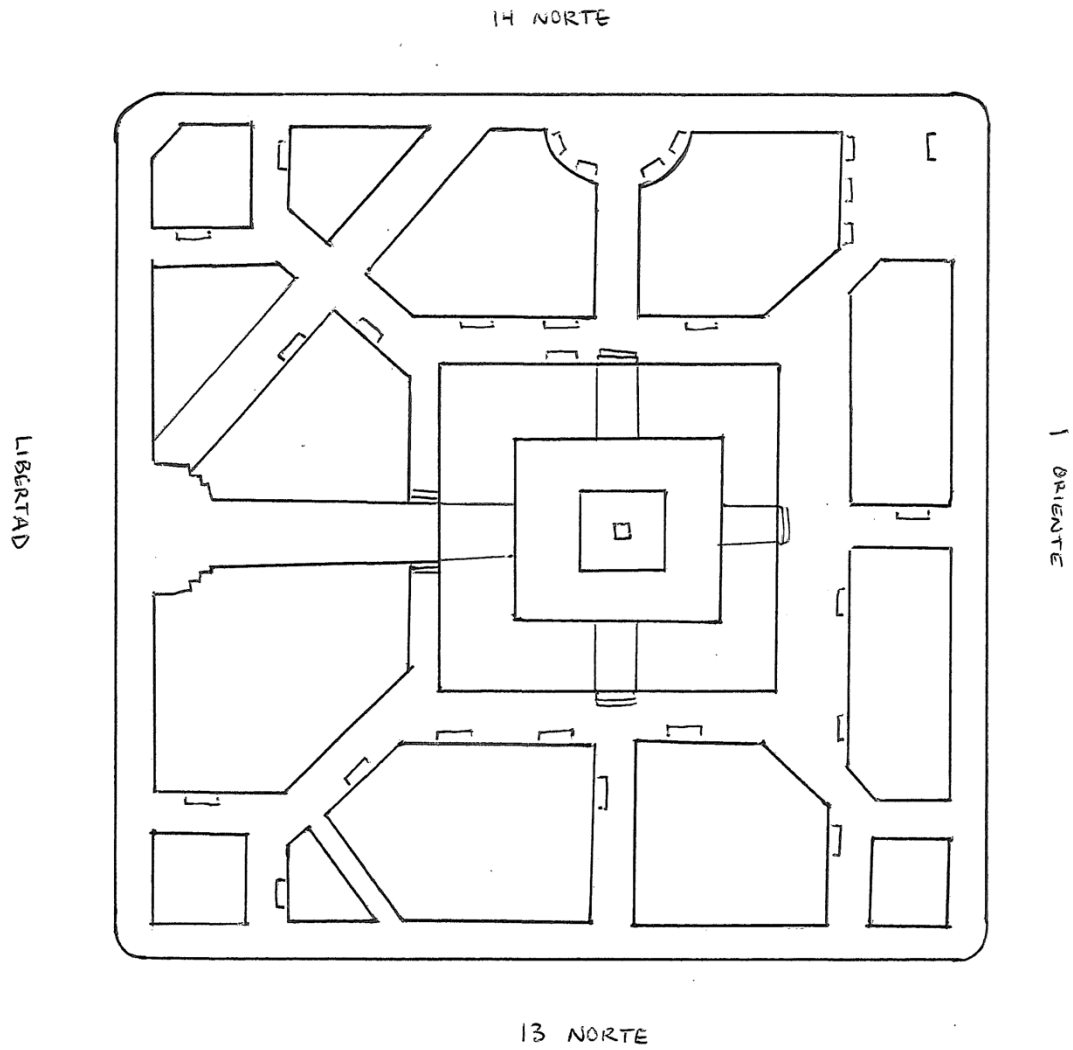
Observation Sheet

Entry	Time	#	Activity ■ ■ ●	# person(s)	Children		Young Adult		Adult		Elderly		5-15 min	> 15 min	Head-phones	Cell-phone	Notes
					M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F					
1	:																
2	:																
3	:																
4	:																
5	:																
6	:																
7	:																
8	:																
9	:																
10	:																
11	:																
12	:																
13	:																
14	:																
15	:																
16	:																
17	:																
18	:																
19	:																
20	:																
21	:																
22	:																
23	:																
24	:																
25	:																

Plaza Vergara Base Map



Plaza O'Higgins Base Map



Appendix B

Interview and survey questions.

Interview questions for planning and development-related professionals:

- What is your role in planning and public spaces?
- What physical improvements or projects in plazas and other public spaces is your organization currently involved in?
 - Do you know of any other initiatives by other organizations?
- What are the main issues and concerns you encounter regarding plazas? Is safety one such issue?
 - How do you feel that women and men experience plazas differently?
 - What has been your office/organization/department's role in increasing safety in plazas?
 - What initiatives would you like to see to improve safety in plazas?
 - What challenges exist regarding implementation of these initiatives?
- What is your favorite plaza in Viña del Mar? Why?
- What is your least favorite plaza in Viña del Mar? Why?
- What plaza or plazas are the safest in Viña del Mar? Why? Which are least safe? Why?
- What plaza do you visit most often? Why?
- What time of day do you usually visit plazas? Why?
- What risks are associated with being in plazas?
- Do you feel safe in plazas? Why or why not? What risks or threats do *you* feel in plazas?
- What changes could be made to plazas to encourage you to visit them more often?
- Is there anything else about plazas that you would like me to know as I continue to study plazas and public safety?

Interview questions for adult female residents of Viña del Mar:

- What is your favorite plaza in Viña del Mar? Why?
- What is your least favorite plaza in Viña del Mar? Why?
- What plaza do you visit most often? Why?
- What time of day do you usually visit plazas? Why?
- What do you like most about the plazas in Viña del Mar?
- What do you like least about the plazas in Viña del Mar?
- Do you feel safe in plazas? Why or why not? What risks or threats do *you* feel in plazas?
 - What about other women? Do they feel the same risks/threats?
 - Do you think the risks are the same for men in plazas? Why or why not?
 - In which plaza or plazas do you feel most/least safe?
- What initiatives are you aware of that exist to increase safety in plazas and other public spaces?
- What changes could be made to plazas to increase safety?
- What changes could be made to plazas to encourage you to visit them more often?
- Is there anything else you would like to tell me about your experience in plazas?

Survey questions for adult (male and female) residents of Viña del Mar:

- What is your age?
- What is your gender?
- Which plazas do you visit most often? Rank your top 3.
 - Plaza O'Higgins
 - Plaza Viña (Plaza Vergara)
 - Plaza Sucre
 - Plaza México
 - Plaza Colombia
 - Plaza Parroquia
 - Plaza Latorre
 - Plaza Los Héroes
 - Plaza en 8 Norte con Calle San Martín
 - Plaza Carraszo (Libertad, entre 3 y 4 Norte)
 - Other _____ / Otra: _____
- What are your favorite plazas in Viña del Mar? Rank your top 3.
 - Plaza O'Higgins
 - Plaza Viña (Plaza Vergara)
 - Plaza Sucre
 - Plaza México
 - Plaza Colombia
 - Plaza Parroquia
 - Plaza Latorre
 - Plaza Los Héroes
 - Plaza en 8 Norte con Calle San Martín
 - Plaza Carraszo (Libertad, entre 3 y 4 Norte)
 - Other _____ / Otra: _____
- Why do you visit plazas? Mark all that apply.
 - To meet friends
 - To meet family
 - To meet a significant other
 - To take the bus
 - To take a colectivo or taxi
 - To purchase something
 - To relax
 - To play

- Other: _____
- On a scale of 1-5 with 1 being very safe and 5 being very unsafe, how safe do you feel:
 - Being in a plaza alone.
 - Being in a plaza in a group.
 - Being in a plaza during the day.
 - Being in a plaza at night.
- What are some risks associated with being in plazas? Mark all that apply.
 - Sun exposure
 - Accidents (due to inadequate physical infrastructure such as deteriorating curbs or steps causing you to trip)
 - Pickpocketing
 - Catcalls
 - Verbal assault
 - Physical assault
 - Sexual assault
 - Other: _____
- Are you aware of any city initiatives to increase safety in plazas and other public spaces? If so, which one(s)?
- What changes could be made to plazas to encourage you to visit them more often?
- What changes could be made to plazas to increase safety?
- Any additional comments about plazas in Viña del Mar?

Appendix C

Responses to Selected Survey Questions

The following are responses from selected open-ended (open response box) survey questions. Numbers in parenthesis () following a response indicate the number of individuals who expressed that same thought, if more than 1.

Q9. What changes could be made to plazas to encourage you to visit them more often?

- Promote cultural activities that are free and open to the public
- That homeless individuals would have a dignified place to sleep
- Greater surveillance
- A place to enjoy water features
- Improved security (8)
- Free wifi
- Games, play structures, and attractions for children (4)
- Greater police presence (2)
- More lighting (7)
- Family spaces
- Clean water in water features
- Improved maintenance (2)
- Family events
- More seating
- More trees
- Improved spaces
- Security cameras
- Guard or caretaker of the plaza (2)
- Improved cleanliness (2)

Q11. What changes could be made to plazas to increase safety?

- Improved lighting at night (10)
- Greater police presence (7)
- Greater surveillance by Citizen Security (2)
- Installation of security cameras
- Plaza design: so they are more open and not as closed off
- Good design

- More spaces for gatherings
- Constant security (2)
- That people feel less insecure/unsafe
- More access and spaces for people with different abilities so they also feel safe
- Greater enforcement of laws (ex: no drinking alcohol in public) (2)
- Guard or caretaker of the plaza
- More security cameras
- Improved cleanliness

Q12. Any additional comments about plazas in Viña del Mar?

- They are beautiful, but are not used sufficiently as public spaces that are necessary to social gatherings/meetings and cultural diffusion.
- It would be nice to plant more trees that add coolness. Also, an automated watering system would be nice.
- Motivate the people to inhabit and enjoy these spaces more. Create free activities in the plazas, such as urban gardens or playgrounds.
- Only some of the plazas are well maintained, while in others, such as the one next to the mall, it is clear that there is not the same care – only some are clean and pretty.
- In general, they are well maintained. I work in another city and I can tell which ones are well maintained and which are not.
- More garbage receptacles are needed (2)
- Lighting has improved some, but items such as garbage cans and benches are lacking.
- Better inclusion of persons with different abilities.
- In general, I find them well maintained (infrastructure, gardens)
- I would visit plazas more often if there were better security and cleanliness.

Appendix D

Additional photos of Plaza Vergara; photos by author.







Appendix E

Additional photos of Plaza O'Higgins; photos by author.







Bibliography

- Abdulkarim, D. & Nasar, J.L. (2014). Do Seats, Food Vendors, and Sculptures Improve Plaza Visibility? *Environment and Behavior*, 46(7), 805-825.
- Altman, I. & Churchman, A. (Eds.). (1994). *Women and the Environment*. New York, NY: Plenum Press.
- Altman, I. & Zube, E.H. (Eds.). (1989). *Public Places and Spaces*. New York, NY: Plenum Press.
- Basulto, R. (1954) *75 años de Viña del Mar: 1879-1954*. Viña del Mar, Chile: Imprenta y Litografía Sánchez.
- Beebeejaun, Y. (2017). Gender, urban space, and the right to everyday life. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 39(3), 323-334.
- Benhabib, S. (1993). Feminist theory and Hannah Arendt's concept of public space. *History of the Human Sciences*, 6(2), 97-114.
- Blöbaum, A. & Hunecke, M. (2005). Perceived Danger in Urban Public Space: The Impacts of Physical Features and Personal Factors. *Environment and Behavior*, 37(4), 465-486.
- Bondi, L. (1998). Gender, Class, and Urban Space: Public and Private Space in Contemporary Urban Landscapes. *Urban Geography*, 19(2), 160-185.
- Clavel, T. (2018, January 19). InSight Crime's 2017 Homicide Round-Up. *InSight Crime*. Retrieved from: <https://www.insightcrime.org/news/analysis/2017-homicide-round-up/>
- Dammert, L. & Malone, M.F.T. (2003). Fear of Crime or Fear of Life? Public Insecurities in Chile. *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, 22(1), 79-101.
- Day, K. (2000). The Ethic of Care and Women's Experiences of Public Space. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 20, 103-124.
- Day, K. (2001). Constructing Masculinity and Women's Fear in Public Space in Irvine, California. *Gender, Place & Culture*, 8(2), 109-127.

- Day, K., Stump, C. & Carreon, D. (2003). Confrontation and loss of control: Masculinity and men's fear in public space. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 23, 311-322.
- Fenster, T. (2005). The Right to the Gendered City: Different Formations of Belonging in Everyday Life. *Journal of Gender Studies*, 14(3), 217-231.
- Franck, K.A. & Paxson, L. (1989). Women and Urban Public Space: Research, Design, and Policy Issues. In I. Altman & E.H. Zube (Eds.), *Public Places and Spaces* - (121-146). New York, NY: Plenum Press.
- Fuentes, F.A. (1879). Plano de Valparaíso. Retrieved from: <http://www.memoriachilena.cl/602/w3-article-79719.html>
- Finney, N. & Rishbeth, C. (2006). Engaging with Marginalised Groups in Public Open Space Research: The Potential of Collaboration and Combined Methods. *Planning Theory & Practice*, 7(1), 27-46.
- Gade, D.W. (1976). The Latin American Central Plaza as a Functional Space. *Publication Series (Conference of Latin American Geographers)*, 5, 16-23.
- Garcia-Ramon, M.D., Ortiz, A. & Prats, M. (2004). Urban planning, gender and the use of public space in a peripheral neighbourhood of Barcelona. *Cities*, 21(3), 215-223.
- Gil Z., J.M. (2005, March). Plazas: Sucre y José Francisco Vergara. *Tell Magazine: Empresa & Sociedad*, 10.
- Harvey, D. (2012). *Rebel Cities*. London, UK: Verso.
- Jacobs, J. (1961). *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. New York, NY: Vintage Books, A Division of Random House, Inc.
- Karsten, L. (2003). Children's Use of Public Space: The gendered world of the playground. *Childhood*, 10(4), 457-473.
- Krenichyn, K. (2004). Women and physical activity in an urban park: Enrichment and support through an ethic of care. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 24, 117-130.
- Kumar, N. (2014, April 30). The Machismo Paradox: Latin America's Struggles with Feminism and Patriarchy. *Brown Political Review*. Retrieved from:

- <http://www.brownpoliticalreview.org/2014/04/the-machismo-paradox-latin-americas-struggles-with-feminism-and-patriarchy/>
- Kwan, S. (2010). Navigating Public Spaces: Gender, Race, and Body Privilege in Everyday Life. *Feminist Formations*, 22(2), 144-166.
- Lefebvre, H. (1991). *The Production of Space*. (D. Nicholson-Smith, Trans.) Oxford, UK: Basil Blackwell Ltd.
- Low, S.M. (1996). Spatializing Culture: The Social Production and Social Construction of Public Space in Costa Rica. *American Ethnologist*, 23(4), 861-879.
- Low, S.M. (1999). *Theorizing the City: The New Urban Anthropology Reader*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Low, S.M. (2000a). Cultura in the Modern City: The Microgeographies of Gender, Class, and Generation in the Costa Rican Plaza. *Horizontes Antropológicos*, 6(13), 31-64.
- Low, S.M. (2000b). *On the Plaza: The Politics of Public Space and Culture*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.
- Macmillan, R., Nierobisz, A. & Welsh, S. (2000). Experiencing the Streets: Harassment and Perceptions of Safety Among Women. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 37(3), 306-322.
- Manolache, E. (2013). Transforming the Gendered Social Relations of Urban Space. *Journal of Research in Gender Studies*, 3(1), 125-130.
- Martínez Gaete, C. (2015, August 10). Programa “Quiero mi Barrio” es premiado por la ONU como una de las mejores prácticas del mundo. *Plataforma Urbana*. Retrieved from: <http://www.plataformaurbana.cl/archive/2015/08/10/programa-quiero-mi-barrio-es-premiado-por-la-onu-como-una-de-las-mejores-practicas-del-mundo/>
- Memoria Chilena. (N.d.). Guerra de la Independencia (1810-1818). Retrieved from: <http://www.memoriachilena.cl/602/w3-article-692.html>
- MINVU. (2008). *Programa de Recuperación de Espacios Públicos: Proyectos 2002-2007*. Santiago, Chile: Impresión Gráfica Lom.
- MINVU. (2009). Quiero mi Barrio. *Gobierno de Chile Ministerio de Viviendas y Urbanismo & Quiero mi Barrio Programa de Recuperación de Barrios*.

- MINVU. (2018). Quiero mi Barrio. *Gobierno de Chile Ministerio de Viviendas y Urbanismo*. Retrieved from: <http://quieromibarrío.cl>.
- Miranda San Martín, C. (2002). Antecedentes sobre la configuración urbana de Viña del Mar, 1874-1892. *Archivum, revista del Archivo Histórico de Viña del Mar*, 3(4), 185-197.
- Mora, R., Weisstaub, G., Greene, M., & Herrmann, G. (2017). Outdoor gyms in Santiago: urban distribution and effects on physical activity. *Motriz*, 23(3), 1-7.
- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2013). *Global Study on Homicide*. Vienna: UNODC.
- OECD. (N.d.). Inequality. Retrieved from: <http://www.oecd.org/social/inequality.htm>
- Ordenanza General de Urbanismo y Construcción. D.S. N°47. (2018).
- Oviedo, E. (2000). Santiago, violencia, delitos e inseguridad. *SUR*.
- Pain, R. (2001). Gender, Race, Age and Fear in the City. *Urban Studies*, 38(5-6), 899-913.
- Scarpaci, J.L. (2005). *Plazas and Barrios: Heritage Tourism and Globalization in the Latin American Centro Histórico*. Tuscan, AZ: The University of Arizona Press.
- Schlack, E. (2007). Espacio público. *ARQ (Santiago)*, (65), 25-27.
- Sweet, E.L. & Ortiz Escalante, S. (2015). Bringing bodies into planning: Visceral methods, fear and gender violence. *Urban Studies*, 52(10), 1826-1845.
- Valentine, G. (1990). Women's Fear and the Design of Public Space. *Built Environment*, 16(4), 288-303.
- Vera Yannattiz, A. & Grossi, J. (1913). *Album de Viña del Mar*. Valparaíso, Chile: Sociedad Imprenta y Litografía Universo.
- Vicuña Mackenna, B. (1931). *Crónicas Viñamarinas*. Valparaíso, Chile: Talleres Gráficos Salesianos.
- Vinadelmar.cl. (N.d.). Plaza Viña del Mar. Retrieved from: <http://www.visitevinadelmar.cl/articulos/4/0/plazas.html>

- Whitzman, C. (2007). Stuck at the front door: gender, fear of crime and the challenge of creating safer space. *Environment and Planning*, 39, 2715-2732.
- Whyte, W.H. (1980). *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces*. Washington, D.C.: Conservation Foundation.
- Yin, R.K. (1984). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. Beverly Hills, Calif: Sage Publications.
- Zainal, Z. (2007). Case Study as a research method. *Jurnal Kemanusiann*, 9, 1-6.