

Public Abstract

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Title:Finding Their Place in Pictures: Reflecting on Images of International Women's Lives in State College, PA

The purpose of the study was to learn about State College, Pennsylvania through the lens of immigrant and international women, and explore the range of emotions they experience in different places. Participants identified and reflected on the places they encountered in their daily lives through photography and mapping exercises, interviews, and focus groups. Women were also asked to consider questions regarding their perceptions of safety, comfort, and belonging when they photographed the community. There were numerous factors that influenced how women experienced different places in State College, including but not limited to time of day, seasons and weather, positionality as an international woman, and visa status as student, worker, or dependent. Additionally, participants experienced various levels of adaptation to life in State College depending on how much time they had lived in the area, how proficiently they spoke English, and the ways in which they connected to social groups in State College. As a result, the women experienced emotions and connections to locations that were diverse, fluid, and at times discordant as factors relating to these locations or to the women themselves changed during their time in State College.