



Words to Live By:

How Experience Shapes our Information World at Work, Play and in Everyday Life

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Purpose



Method

The purpose of this study is to explore familiar and quotidian experiences of everyday life in one specific context, to recognize and understand the ambiguities in those experiences, and to elevate their relevance above the trivial. *RQ: What is the nature of experience as an information source in the village of Whitney, Ontario?*



Fieldwork: interviews in the community and salvage photography



Grounded Theory analysis

Results

Experiential Information is...

Acquired by spending time with someone who knows how

Participants frequently spoke of information learned by doing, and information passed from parents to children, or passed between neighbours.

Acquired by 'doing'

Participants related many stories of learning how to do things by trial and error – or simply by buckling down and doing the task .

Acquired by trickery or consequence

Occurrences where they learned something through trickery or consequence were also common. In all cases, the information gained came at the price of a loss of some sort: a loss of face, a loss of time, a loss of energy, or a loss of resources.

Undervalued by outside visitors

The participants I interviewed placed a high value on their skill set, and understand very well that it sets them apart from at least some visitors from the city. Tourists, however, are sometimes less aware of the value of the skill set and the experiential information held by the residents.

Experience crosses the boundaries between work, play and everyday life

One of the most interesting characteristics emerging from the data is how experiential information crosses the boundaries between work, play and everyday life.

