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# The Sociological Significance of Designed Space: Identity, Representation, and Reflexivity

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## Abstract

This paper explores how space is constructed and how such a construction interacts with and molds the identities of social actors, who use the space. As reflexivity is a crucial element of qualitative methodological analysis, visual sociologists must reflect upon their personal identities and subjectivities as they "see" the social world through their own visual lens. To see space as a social construction that is continuously produced through everyday life requires researchers to dig deeper into the meanings of variant social positions and identities such as gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, and abilities. To carry out this project, I draw on examples from an on-going project, which is an undergraduate travel course to Japan I led in January 2018. The course was taught in collaboration with a design professor. I will present how visual sociology allows individuals to examine their own cultural identity and how it impacts what they see. Thus, the study offers an opportunity to explore social identity and the relationship between a viewer, an image they observe, and the significance of this relationship in the analysis of constructed space.

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