

Panel 16

IVSA Conference 2009

Appreciating the views: How we're looking at the social and visual landscape

Panel Title	
How we're looking at the social and visual landscape of schools (2)	
Description	
<p>"Schools" include anything from pre-kindergarten to graduate school. Studies of "alternative" schools: reform schools, orphanages, and schools for adjudicated persons are meant to be included. Emphasis may be on the social landscape(s) as seen by administrators, teachers, students. Presentations may also focus on the built environment: school grounds, playing fields, buildings, classroom ecology, or furniture, for instance. Studies of "Virtual schools" will also be welcome. "Looking at" is intended to encompass the entire range of visual methods. Sources of data may include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· subject or researcher produced photographs or videos,· photo elicitation,· satellite or "Google Earth" images,· GIS and/or ethnographic mapping incorporating images,· historical photo analysis,· repeat photography,· visual ethnography,· subject produced drawings or models,· cartoons, films, television programs or other images from popular culture,· propaganda and advertising produced by schools,· student visual productions,· Virtual environments (a la Second Life?) or visualizations...	
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Final Selected Papers

Name:	Jacqueline A. Gibbons, York University, Toronto
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Paper Title	
Education and Islam: Girl Orphans in Egypt	
Description	
<p>This research is part of a larger and longitudinal project which addresses the role of girl orphans in Egypt. The current thrust explores the nature of public education in Cairo, a city of 15 million, where classes are large and learning by rote is the norm.</p> <p>We look at styles of learning where individualism, analytic thought, reflection and critical processes are contrasted with rote methods of learning. We ask what are the pros and cons of these educational philosophies as they grow from Western and Other traditions.</p> <p>Girls in Egypt are groomed for marriage which normally occurs in their late teens or early 20's. This means particular assumptions about curriculum subjects preferred in high school and often university. The ideal of sexual chastity is a virtue which can supersede educational goals, especially where a girl comes from a lower socioeconomic status. To be an orphan is to be of low social status, despite the relative privilege of secondary education. Orphaned girls are assigned to the lower occupational possibilities for marriageable mates.</p> <p>This paper explores the nature of the educational enterprise as coloured by market value and local gendered norms.</p> <p>The methodology comprises in-depth field research at several orphanages, and involves school visits at kindergarten, primary and secondary levels.</p>	

Name:	Valentina Anzoise, University of Milano-Bicocca
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Paper Title	Phenomenology of the greening of Universities: A case for native image making
Description	<p>During the last decades many international declarations (Talloires 1990, Copernicus 1993 and Lüneburg 2001) recommended that Higher Education Institutions should take the lead in institutionalizing sustainability as an ongoing process, which must consider the environmental, as well as the social and economical dimensions.</p> <p>Universities have the opportunity to develop a “fully integrated learning environment”, which promote research, teaching and management in the perspective of sustainability, and they could also represent “labs” and “windows” for the design, testing and dissemination of sustainable innovative solutions for the community and society at large.</p> <p>A first hypothesis is the possibility (and utility) to explore Universities’ commitment for sustainability from the point of view of their most peculiar “population”: the students; the second one is that this cultural shift is (or can be) successfully projected, perceived and perpetuated through objects, living environments and initiatives that have different visual dimensions, which influence and facilitate environmentally significant behaviours. Semiotically and ergonomically, iconicity is the primary dimension of an object, which influences the relationship between the individual and the objects, and between the individual and the space.</p> <p>The achievement of more sustainable places depends, increasingly, on a systemic approach in which creativity and R&D, as well as green, clean and creative environment are becoming important resources and distinctive factors also for the competitiveness and attractiveness of the city at large.</p> <p>I will illustrate two case-studies: the University of Milano-Bicocca (Italy) and the Universidad Autonoma de Madrid (Spain), explored adopting direct photographic observation on the field and native image making (students).</p> <p>The native image making has been followed by some focus groups in which the students had to show and discuss the photos (visual data) they had taken, sharing with the others what they see and interpret as sustainable or unsustainable.</p> <p>People asked to talk visually about an environment are forced to reflect on what they normally take for granted, so on the one hand, researchers have access to people’s imaginaries, values and habits, and on the other, these information become crucial in order to properly plan or re-think educational institution in a more responsible and forward thinking way.</p>

Name:	Jenni Karlsson, University of KwaZulu-Natal
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Paper Title	But is it social transformation? Looking at a revised school crest
Description	<p>Slow social change in the everyday life of a neighbourhood school doesn't have quite the same drama and cachet as revolutionary marches and protests in the streets. Often it is difficult to find the correlation of South Africa's sweeping policy changes in the dull routine of school life. As a result education researchers and policy makers often fall back on the quantitative strategies of counting heads, comparing academic achievements and per learner allocations.</p> <p>My purpose in this paper runs counter to that trend; I look at a school crest belonging to a primary school in one of South Africa's working class townships. As a widely displayed representation of school identity and local aspirations, I was intrigued in 2005 to find the original crest had been revised. By exploring the icons, texts and composition of the school crest I try to understand the social implications of the changes in this visual artefact and how such changes relate to the national social transformation project</p>

Name:	Joyce van Walsum, Arizona State University
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Description	
Stop looking out the window: visually understanding school grounds as place	
Description	
<p>We exist in space, and it becomes the canvas on which we play out the stories of our lives. Some spaces may exist in our imagination, designed to carry out some stories that don't exist in our waking lives. Other spaces are designed by others, for purposes we may or may not like.</p> <p>Schools are real spaces, and become embedded with meanings for those who encounter them in the myriad of ways that school integrates into human lives. They are workspaces for some, political spaces for others. They are neighborhood spaces, creative spaces, learning spaces, and safe havens for some; they are spaces of shame, or pain, for others. They are the spaces where children go to work and play for the majority of their waking hours after age 5 or so. Each child's lived experiences are different, and individual meanings are constructed within those contexts. Space, embedded with meaning, becomes Place.</p> <p>This study is about schoolyards as places that have meaning for elementary school children's sense of identity and possibility. The goal of this study was to look into children's worlds at their intersections with the socio-political communities woven into and through schooling. Using images of playground spaces and neighborhoods at four elementary schools in one rapidly growing city in Arizona, I look at ways built environments, outside the windows of school, reflect demographic and social change associated with that recent growth. I also use maps as alternative representations of demographic characteristics that we typically try to understand through charts and tables.</p>	