

## Panel 21

### IVSA Conference 2009

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

Panel Title	
<b>Topographies of Work 2: Working and Workers in Global Cities</b>	
Description	
<p>The theme of these panels is work, employment and the visual. Work and workers have long been and continue to be configured photographically by states, corporations, workers' organisations and individual photographers, whose output can be read as symbols of difference and division – especially through the intersection of class with 'race', gender and age – or as symbols of social solidarity and heroic status. More recently, social researchers have sought photographic data representing the views of workers themselves, and this is leading to further research on the relationship between photography, work and employment, and photography's contribution as research method and data source. The panel will address these themes by focusing on topographies of work, considering work and employment in terms of their relationship with the landscape and environment, broadly defined.</p>	
Panel Chair Name:	Phil Mizen
E-mail address:	P.A.Mizen@warwick.ac.uk

Final Selected Papers

Name:	Les Back & Dawn Lyon, Goldsmiths, University of London
E-mail address:	<a href="mailto:soa04lb@gold.ac.uk">soa04lb@gold.ac.uk</a>
Paper Title	<b>Fish and Fishmongers in a Global City: Socio-economy, Craft, and Social Relations on a London Market</b>
Description	<p>This research takes fishmongers as pivotal actors in the socio-economic process of bringing fish 'from sea to table'. It looks at how global connections are threaded through local economies and their social relations. From the vantage point of fishmongers, we argue that it is possible to see 'up' and 'down' the socio-economic process of 'production', distribution, exchange and consumption, and perceive the interconnections between these activities, and the key actors and relationships that underpin them. We explore these relations within a landscape of cultural change and increasing cultural and racial diversity.</p> <p>At the same time, the research focuses on the micro-level of the everyday forms of work that take place when the fishmongers sell to the public from their market stall and shop. The craft of their labour, embodied in their fingers and through their handling of the fish, transforms fish into food for public consumption.</p> <p>Part of the process whereby 'fish' becomes food also entails negotiations with cultural difference and diversity. The research is based on observations of fishmongers at work on a London market, recording interactions and different aspects of their work in audio and visual forms. This is paralleled by 'conversations' with the fishmongers and their customers about their work, their lives, the communities they serve and see themselves connected to or estranged from, and the fish they sell.</p>

Name:	Lorena Munoz, University of Southern California
E-mail address:	<a href="mailto:l.munoz.vazquez@gmail.com">l.munoz.vazquez@gmail.com</a>
Paper Title	<b>'Brown' and Gendered: Latina Immigrant Street-Vendors (Re)create Informal Economic Landscapes in Los Angeles.</b>
Description	<p>Street vending in Los Angeles is reconfigured, organized, and supported through the daily practices of Mexican and Central American immigrant women street vendors. Their style - such as dress, behavior, and language and what they sell and how they sell it—transforms the space they occupy. Their embodied practices, as well as the physical transformation of space, are place-making strategies used by immigrants to carve out their 'place' in the urban landscape. In this sense, place, is enacted through social and cultural displays as well as through interactions informed by collective nostalgic imaginaries tied to 'back-home'. These 'place-making' strategies are vital to the process of landscape creation. Latina immigrants recreate cultural landscapes while constantly reinventing and reconfiguring vending practices, and simultaneously negotiating gendered and queer identities on the street. These gendered and queer identities are informed by heteronormative constructed imaginaries that are articulated in space. That is, the vendors and customers organize the street to sell and consume a particular nostalgic narrative of vending landscapes that is rooted in their country of origin. This research is based on 'field' ethnographies using photo-documentation and photo-elicitation, as well as oral histories, participatory observation, and interviews. In this paper, I examine they way Latina immigrant women as street vendors, embody, perform and negotiate identities in space that visually create immigrant economic landscapes in and across trans-border spaces in the city.</p>

Name:	Phil Mizen, Warwick University
E-mail address:	P.A.Mizen@warwick.ac.uk
Paper Title	
<b>The Topography of the Informal Economy: Child Workers In and Through An African City</b>	
Description	
<p>This paper examines the working lives of children of the urban poor as they move in and through the informal economy of Ghana's capital city, Accra. It draws upon research with children who live and work on the street and those who inhabit a large informal settlement, and considers their working lives through their photographs and spoken reflections upon these images. The paper develops my interest in photography's possession of magnitude and direction capable of creating lines of communication between the lives of those separated by time and place, the creation of intimate connections with the everyday reality of a group of workers whose labour goes largely unrecognised. It is the contention of this paper that photographs bring to our understanding and knowledge of the working lives of poor children a hitherto unavailable topographical quality, accounts of working life that possess graphic detail of the nature of informal working, its configuration and the positioning of child workers.</p>	

Name:	Liz Murphy Thomas, University of Illinois
E-mail address:	lizmurphythomas@gmail.com
Paper Title	
<b>Uniformity: a Photographic Examination of Projected/Perceived identity</b>	
Description	
<p>What evidence is needed to determine one's identity? The German portrait photographer August Sander, a member of the Neue Sachlichkeit (New Objectivity) movement, believed in photographing only what "was" evident. His seminal work, <i>People of the 20th Century</i>, is full of images with titles such as <i>Notary</i>, <i>Secretary at a Radio Station</i>, and <i>Pastry Chef</i>. Photographer Richard Avedon had the alternative approach with his portraits. In his series, <i>In The American West</i>, he photographed drifters, miners, cowboys and others from the western United States in his characteristic style – always against a solid white backdrop with all context removed. These two photographers approached the medium with completely different philosophies. Sander believed that objective information revealed truth, while Avedon presented individual characteristics as revelation. Liz Murphy Thomas' photographic series <i>Uniformity</i> series deals with the psychological impact uniforms have both on projected and perceived identity. How much does what we do affect who we are? While we control our public "face" through our appearance, what happens when we can no longer control how we present ourselves to the world? The <i>Uniformity</i> series attempts to address this rift in perception and projection. The work is a series of diptychs of various subjects with a wide range of professions. Two full body shots (one in uniform, the other in "street" clothes) are mounted on opposing walls keeping the viewer constantly turning their back on one likeness in order to view the other. Which version becomes the "real" version of the subject? Are both true? Are both a lie? A presentation of the artwork along with the contextual examination of these aesthetic schools will engage the audience in a discourse of the role that work plays in projected and perceived identities</p>	