

Nicole Agusti - Artist Statement

My work examines conceptions of space, place, and the social world within traditional fields of urban development, economics and public policy in order to identify and expose symbolic and structural violence. Much of the discourse within these fields clings to ideologies which serve only to lament a fantastical notion of the past and ignore the impact of technology and globalization on the aforementioned realms. These fields employ 'change' that resists change and in turn oppresses. Contrasting the current ideological basis for much governmental action today, I seek to reframe these conceptions through the exploration of the psychogeographical implications of urban development and representation, the notion of the privatization and de-privatization of social capital, and the implications of social behavior and behavioral economic theories like subjective well-being.

Currently I am working on a project that examines the ways in which the 'privatization of the social world', and social capital, has in fact expanded previous notions of social connectedness as well as changed its nature. Individual perception, experience, and emotion have become the fabric of a public identity constructed in the expanse of a multimedia social space. Those privy to this aspects of individual and collective experience include more than simply the mother, the lover, and the therapist. It includes the whole of this social space, of cyber space. It has become abstracted from the context in which it was created. With this, however, has come the extension of the commodification of emotional release. Paying for therapy or paying for the space to express these aspects of ones experience in a public manner. In this vein I seek to reconnect physical public space with these new conceptions of social space through public projections of collected material from blogs and the collection of 'life lessons'. Further, the creation of purchasable "life lessons walls" in the form of digital frames that present the owners with a collection of individual thoughts and statements about their

lives available for a fee. Complimentary to this piece I will employ traditional empirical social scientific methodologies to perform a comparative analysis of current examinations of social capital and social capital building within urban environments and one that incorporates a larger conception of social connectedness.

In the future I will to continue to incorporate multimedia artwork, theoretical analysis and traditional social scientific methodology to explore the impact of structured society both its physical and social manifestations impact individual and group perception and experience. Through these forms of inquiry I hope to promote community dialogue and action as well as inform policy discourse.