

ART AND
SOCIAL PRACTICE
WORKBOOK

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AND TRAVIS NEEL

Portland State University
Art and Social Practice
Reference Points

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PREFACE

Erin Charpentier and Travis Neel

The Art and Social Practice Workbook is a collaborative and interactive project. It is comprised of assignments, handouts, evaluation tools, and other resources to be used as needed in your programs, classes, institutions, and life.

The book is structured in a non-linear way; you do not have to read it from page to page like you would a novel. Instead, use it like you would a cookbook, adapting or revising the assignments to your taste.

The Art and Social Practice workbook is an unfinished experiment, two years in the making and still growing. It remains in a stage of development and its progress depends on you.

Contribute by sending your impressions, suggestions, and assignments to: socialpracticeworkbook@gmail.com.

Collaborate with us!

ASSIGNMENTS

SKILL SHARE

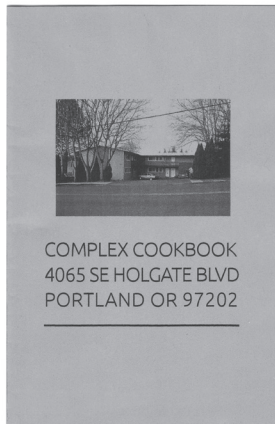
Erin Charpentier and Travis Neel

Choose a skill that you are interested in learning. Find someone in your neighborhood or community that knows the skill and organize a group of interested people to learn together. This could become a regularly scheduled event with rotating teachers and skills.

COMPLEX COOKBOOK

Erin Charpentier and Travis Neel

If you enjoy cooking and you live in an apartment complex, invite all of your neighbors to contribute a recipe to a cookbook. Knock on every door and hand deliver a document that both explains the project and leaves room for a recipe that can be dropped into your mailbox later. Also, bring homemade cookies or some treat as an act of good faith. Once the recipes start rolling in, design a cookbook in whatever capacity you can and distribute a few copies to all neighbors. This assignment can be applied to any residential situation.



FORM A BAND

Jen Delos Reyes

Find three other students from different departments. Regardless of musical training form a band. Together, write a song, and perform live. This assignment must be completed in the course of one semester.



SHARED EXPERIENCES: HOUR REITERATION

Heather Donahue

Have a casual conversation with a friend or family member who lives in a different time zone than yourself. This can take place via phone, video chat, text message, or whatever other means you use to catch up with each other. Give yourself time to reflect on the conversation, but within 24 hours, create a piece that both documents and shares a story that they shared with you.

This piece is to be shared with your collaborator (the storyteller), any mutual acquaintances or participants (friends and family), and made available to a relative broader public.

HAVE A PUBLIC FRUIT JAM

HOW TO MAKE JAM AND FRIENDS

Fallen Fruit

Fruit is both an object and a symbol. It can come from next door or far away, and it always embodies a place. Food connects us to each other, and to the earth. The Public Fruit Jam is an experiment in cities, property, ecology and social relations. We like fruit because it exists in all cultures and for all social classes, and it is always seen as symbol of goodness and bounty. Perhaps because of its beauty or its symbolic value, it is the food that appears most often in art.

Before you start, organize a team of deputies—volunteers to help you manage the participants and the jamming itself. Plan how many people you'd like to have. These instructions are for 150-180 people over three or four hours; shifts of an hour or so for 50-60 participants. Find a suitable location. Community centers, art spaces, even outdoors can work.





Set up four stations

1 — Welcoming

Participants are greeted, given jam basics, and invited to split into new groupings of 3 to 5 people who don't already know each other.

2 — Prep

Tables with knives and cutting boards. Small teams of 3 to 5 negotiate which ingredients they wish to use; deputies check in to give advice.

3 — Cooking

Separate tables with hot plates, in which one or two team members supervise the cooking.

4 — Completion

The jam is spooned into jars and placed on a communal table to cool. Participants may negotiate for other jars and are encouraged to leave some jars behind.

Supplies

200 8 oz glass jars

(you can also ask participants to bring clean, recycled jars)

40 packages of pectin

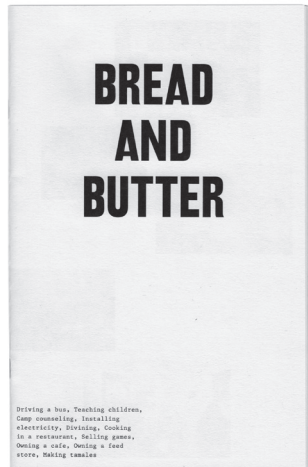
(or 5 lbs of bulk pectin from kitchenkrafts.com)

50 pound bag of sugar

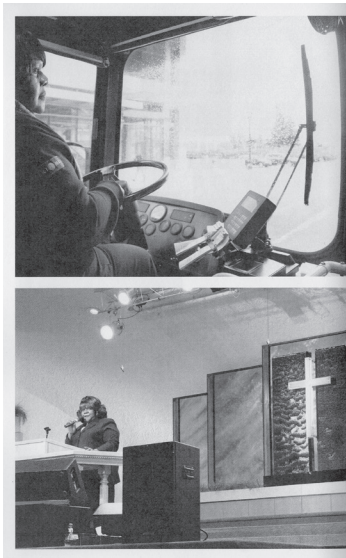
Water, small amounts for the jam making, and larger amounts for cleaning.

Some bread and crackers to taste the jam

(try getting donations of day-old bread from bakeries)



Bread and Butter zine cover.



**I'M ALWAYS
HUMMING
ON THE BUS,
THAT
KEEPS ME
FOCUSED**

Corinna Scott interviewed
Lavern Martin at the Highland
Christian Center in Portland,
Oregon on February 19, 2012.

BREAD AND BUTTER: FOXFIRE REVISITED

Farm School

Bread and Butter is the result of a ten week Chiron Studies course at Portland State University which grew out of an interest to revisit Foxfire, a forty year oral history project. Foxfire is most well known as a book series, however, as a class we discovered it was much more. The Foxfire publications included an educational approach that motivated students to engage in their community and bring a more personal application to their coursework. Few readers realize that the rich stories and folk traditions which made up the content for the Foxfire series were gathered, transcribed, designed, and edited by students in an English class in rural Georgia. Our interest in Foxfire grew out of our own research into progressive education, agrarian life, and a desire to offer a class which connected to the knowledge that exists outside the classroom by drawing upon experiences of real people.

For the Bread and Butter project, the class decided to focus on local workers in Portland, Oregon. We studied the Foxfire approach and students worked on teams to interview a feed store owner, bus driver, union worker, cook, tamale maker, clairvoyant, coffee shop owner, teacher, camp counselor, and game store owner. The interviews were edited into a podcast series and the documentation was included in a class zine which was distributed back to the interviewees.

UNTITLED

Harrell Fletcher

Here is a starting point for a project. Think about what you really like to do in general, not what you think your work should be about or what other artists have done work about, just what you actually like to spend time doing. Maybe it's sleeping, or listening to music, or going for hikes, or whatever. So think about that for a little while and write down a short list of a few areas of interest you have. Then try to figure out a project that will allow you to do one or more of those things. See if there is a way that you can make the project participatory or collaborative, can there be some kind of documentation, can there be some kind of public presentation or display or does the project itself take place in a public way? Once you have done a few of those kinds of projects the next step is trying to figure out how to get paid to do more of them, but don't worry about that at this point.

PLAY-BY-PLAY

Zachary Gough

Make a play-by-play radio show of a municipal council meeting.

UNTITLED

Alexis Hudon

Take a sport that you know well, and make a fundamental modification to the rules. Invite two teams in a league that play the sport to compete with the new rules. This can be done with seniors, kids, or at a community center.

Here's an example, feel free to use it: Set-up a soccer field in the shape of an equilateral triangle, with a goal at each corner. Then, ask the top three teams of any league to play a match together. Or, on a normal rink, play a hockey game with two pucks.

COLOR WHEEL PICNIC

Grace Hwang

Invent a recipe with at least three (preferably natural) ingredients of the same color. Invite friends to do the same. Host a picnic and arrange as a color wheel. Each plate is encouraged to mix tastes, colors, and textures to create new palates. Document each palette.



(GIVE)TAKE COMFORT

Grace Hwang

Make a list of things that bring you comfort. Prepare these things on a day/night as you would for yourself. Walk/drive/bike/travel until you find just the right person to share it with. Give and take comfort.



FOOTPRINTS, POWER AND PRIVILEGE

Betty Marin, Mario Mesquita, and Alysha Shaw

Materials

8.5 x 11" plain paper

Pencils/Pens to write

Scissors

Chalk (if facilitating outside)

Jump Rope (if facilitating inside)

Purpose

An installation and activity that is meant to engage the participants in exploring privilege and inequity in our society and in our everyday relationships. Looking at inequities in all facets of our lives can help us be more critical about our own interactions with others and how that influences our social practice. Total time to do activity approximately 1 hr 30 min.

Identity Footprints

Each participant can remain anonymous but participants will be informed that their answers will comprise the installation and be publicly displayed for all to read. Participants will use their footprints to help compose a floor installation that maps out privilege and inequality amongst participants.

Instructions

Trace your feet together on a sheet of paper.

Cut out the traced footprints that currently look to be butterfly wings.

Fold in half, length-wise.

Write in silence (7-10 minutes):

On the left footprint — aspects describing your identity, considering social, cultural, ethnic/racial, ideological, economic, vocational, geographic, and other aspects.

On the right footprint — reflection on how each of their identities relates to their decision to be an artist or work in their field of interest. (It is unnecessary to respond to each aspect, but use them to reflect.)

Discuss with both sides with a partner sharing as much as you would like.

Power and Privilege

Drawing from anti-oppressions workshops, this group activity allows participants to leave their footprints at the end of a collaborative performance meant to visually highlight how power and privilege, whether chosen or not, impacts our ability to succeed in society and helps maintain inequity.

Instructions

Facilitator Choose a quiet space, i.e. a classroom or space outdoors where students have enough room to line up horizontally and move back and forth several feet. If outside, use chalk to draw a line and label with “We are all equal here.” Inside, use a jump rope or other prop that can be used to divide the space with the same label on paper.

Instruct participants to:

- 1 — Line up along the line and hold hands.
- 2 — Take one step back or forth according to the following prompts and try to hold hands as long as possible.
- 3 — When the activity is complete, look around and see where you are in relation to others.
- 4 — Place your footprints at your feet.

The footprints are intended to remain installed on the floor for the duration of the class while a facilitated discussion will follow using some of the questions from the prompts.

Prompts (20-30 min)

- 01 — If you feel that your primary identity is “American,” take one step forward.
- 02 — If you have immediate family members who are doctors, lawyers, or other professionals, one step forward.
- 03 — If one of your parents was ever laid off, unemployed or underemployed not by choice, one step backward.
- 04 — If you studied the history and culture of your ethnic ancestors in elementary/secondary school, one step forward.
- 05 — If some part of your ethnic ancestry was studied during historical and cultural studies in elementary/secondary school, one step back.
- 06 — If you were ever called names or ridiculed because of your race, ethnicity, class background sexual orientation, or gender presentation take one step back.
- 07 — If you ever tried to change your physical appearance, mannerisms, language or behavior to avoid being judged or ridiculed, take one step backward.
- 08 — If your family had more than 50 books and/or the newspaper was read daily in the house where you were growing up, take one step forward.
- 09 — If you ever attended a private school or summer camp, take one step forward.
- 10 — If you generally think of police as people you can call on for help in times of emergency, one step forward.
- 11 — All those whose ancestors lost a war with the U.S. and whose land was made part of the U.S., one step back.
- 12 — If you ever got a good paying job or a promotion because of a friend or family member, one step forward.
- 13 — Those who have ever been harassed by police because of their ethnicity/race, take one step back.
- 14 — Those who have been taken to art galleries or museums by their parents, take one step forward.

- 15 — If you received less encouragement in academics or sports from your family or from teachers because of your gender, take one step backward.
- 16 — If the following is true for you, take one step forward: “I can criticize our government and talk about how I fear its policies without being seen as a cultural outsider and/or a terrorist.”
- 17 — If the following is true for you, take one step forward: I can go on vacation as a foreigner in another country and expect to be treated as an honored guest.
- 18 — All those who were raised in a community where the vast majority of police, politicians and government workers were not of their ethnic or racial group, take one step back.
- 19 — All those who can walk into a store without having clerks assume by your appearance that you are going to steal something, take one step forward.
- 20 — All those whose parents spoke English as a first language, take one step forward.
- 21 — All those whose parent or parents have completed college, take one step forward.
- 22 — All those who have never been told that someone hated them because of their race, ethnic group, religion, sexual orientation or gender presentation take one step forward.
- 23 — If due to a disability, whether mental or physical, your livelihood was threatened, take one step back.
- 24 — If the following is true for you, take one step forward: “I am never asked to, or feel the pressure, to speak for all the people of my race or ethnicity.”
- 25 — If your parents encouraged you to go to college, take one step forward.
- 26 — If you have a parent who did not complete high school, take one step back.
- 27 — If your parent(s) owned their own house, take one step forward.

PSU ART AND SOCIAL PRACTICE REFERENCE POINTS

- 28 — All those who went to or currently attend a school where the majority of the teachers are of your same race or ethnicity, take one step forward.
- 29 — If you were ever denied a job because of your race or ethnicity, take one step backward.
- 30 — If, as a white person, you ever worked in a job where people of color held more menial jobs, were paid less or otherwise harassed or discriminated against, take one step forward. If you were ever paid less, treated less fairly, or given harder work than a white person in a similar position because of your race or ethnicity, take one step backward.
- 31 — If, as a man, you ever worked in a job where women held more menial jobs, were paid less or otherwise harassed or discriminated against, take one step forward.
- 32 — If you were ever paid less, treated less fairly, or given harder work than a man in a similar position because of your gender, take one step backward.
- 33 — If you primarily use public transportation to get where you need to go, take one step backward.
- 34 — If the following statement is true for you, take one step forward: I do not have to educate my children to be aware of systemic racism for their own daily physical protection.
- 35 — All those who commonly see people of their race or ethnicity as heroes/heroines on television programs or movies, take one step forward. All those who commonly see people of their race or ethnicity on television or movies in roles you consider degrading, take one step back.
- 36 — If the following is true for you, take one step forward: I can choose to participate in environmentally friendly sustainable practices without financially jeopardizing my family.
- 37 — If you ever inherited money or property, take one step forward.

Thank you. Everyone place your footprints down where you are and go back to your seats in the big circle.

Discussion questions (20-30 min)

How did that feel? Comments/reflections?

How did it feel to release hands? Anything that surprised you?

How do you think it would have been different with people from other backgrounds?

What forms of privilege were missing?

What was the focus? (Race/ethnicity/class).

Why was this the focus? (How are questions of race or ethnicity linked to questions of class and wealth inequity globally?)

Did the activity help you reflect on how your identity and privilege influence how you experience and interact with others in this field? In what ways?

How might these relations and recognitions help us navigate our relationships with each other and in the work we do?

This discussion is meant to be a starting conversation and will hopefully elicit ongoing conversation throughout the duration of the class.

UNTITLED

Carmen Papalia

Get to know someone who identifies as having a disability. The relationship should be meaningful, long-term, and reciprocal. If you have trouble finding someone, e-mail: carmen.papalia@gmail.com.

BENEFIT SOCIETY, HAVE FUN; PROVIDE FOOD, CLOTHING, WAGE, AND ATTRACT A MATE

Douglas Paulson

I would like to submit a 3-email exchange I had with a man who I met while doing a project in Copenhagen. He wrote me years later, in response to another project I was part of, and essentially asked: What good does this do anyone? I responded, attempting to establish my own criteria for what the purpose of my work was, and he responded, challenging me to do a project that combats “the crime and growing ugliness that seems to plague the city at the moment” and “improve the living conditions for families with children” by creating “a project which benefits society in some way...allows you to have fun in the process and which can also assist you by providing some type of food, clothing or a wage to sustain your creative capacity and future development of projects!”

While I think he began our exchange to be antagonistic, I do think his critique should be taken seriously, and ultimately his challenge—to make art that improves the world—raises important questions about the way in which we frame the goals and possibilities of social practice work.

A little background

In 2008, JC approached Parfyme during their 6 month project “Everyone Can Use The Harbor.” He was organizing a team-building kayak excursion for a Danish bank, and wanted permission to use one of Parfyme’s floating docks at The Harbor Laboratory as a rest point. JC asked Parfyme to have coffee and cookies ready for his clients, which he would provide. Parfyme agreed to serve coffee to the bankers, if JC would agree to provide coffee and cookies for the next 100 people who came to the Harbor Laboratory. JC did not agree.

You will find our correspondence on the following pages.

Hello Douglas,

I have been on your mailing list for a few years now and I must say your most recent act is quite possibly one of the most silly and useless things you have ever been a part of.

What good does any of this do for anyone?

I mean...I completely understand that its fun for you and your friends to run around and act silly but at some point you must stop and ask yourself if what you're doing has any contribution towards humanity in some way???

I do not understand your reasoning behind any of this. Are you for the "environment," "anti-fur," "pro-guns," "free-speech," "radical Amish," "animal-lovers???"

Are you trying to create something that resembles art?

I met you when you had the floating water exhibit in the Copenhagen canals and I thought you were on to something cool and unique. It turns out that someone saw your idea and took it to the next level by actually making a successful floating kayak rental and cafe right in the very spot you were in.

If you were a part of that team...then congrats! It was a cool idea... but if you are not...then I gotta ask why not follow through with some of your ideas and make them profitable? (to create a living-wage).

I tried to go out and do the "Save The World" thing for a while...but I always ended up broke in the end.

My new motto is: "Profit For A Purpose." I gotta eat afterall.

However...I can't help but see so much creativity go to waste when I see your video or art exhibits. If only you could incorporate more of the community in your projects or something practical and real and a little less artsy or senseless.

I am irritated today...which is why I wrote you...because normally I would just ignore your links and emails. However this video link was just so stupid and quite possibly damaging to future generations if watched.

Sincerely,

JC

Hello [JC]!

I'm glad you wrote. At first I was quite confounded by your letter. I must admit, I felt parts are somewhat petty, but as a whole I think it's a legitimate criticism and I'm invigorated by the thought of responding.

I'm not sure if I should go through it point by point, or rather try to get to the heart of the matter. I'll probably chew it from both ends.

No, I am not motivated by "profit," though to be genuinely honest I'm not exactly sure how you measure that – you mention both profit and living wage. Myself, I wouldn't consider financial "profit" equivalent to a living wage. I must eat too, and have been eating quite well since we first met. Of course, I don't eat out much, and prefer to cook at home, often from food gleaned from dumpsters.

This is not necessarily a value judgement of people who choose to live a more expensive life than me. I currently am, and have been thoroughly broke since well before I met you, which I find difficult, frustrating, and tedious. However, I choose living like this because I like it, and find it intensely rewarding.

But I think you can see that. I only point this out to show that we are coming from pretty different perspectives on "profit."

Another small note:

To be honest, I almost never describe my work as "art." This is for many reasons, I prefer to see my work as simply "cultural." Sometimes it's probably art, often it's probably not.

I find that the word "art," and the prejudices and pretensions that are attached are divisive and exclusive. Incidentally, this exclusionary elitism is precisely because the "art game" as we conventionally understand it is ultimately about "profit."

Often what I do is not "art". But it is "cultural." Culture is a wonderful set of stuff that brings people together, gets people to think about things, interact with each other, and generally makes life better. Who doesn't love talking about a great movie with a friend? Or a good book? Often, the bad ones are rewarding too—perhaps you didn't like it, but it made your wheels turn when you considered its faults.

One good thing about art:

In an art context, there is room for failure. There is room for mistakes. There is room for the trivial, the silly, the ridiculous, the absurd, the dumb, the smart, the innovative, room for things that don't help humanity in anyway, things that do, and on and on.

But I think I'm chewing around the edges. What good does this do for anyone?

Well, these cultural experiments are unpredictable. Sometimes they have a huge impact—like Everyone Can Use The Harbor. Sometimes they have little or no impact. Sometimes they go wrong.

I can also tell you that these projects are not designed to save the world, and I'm happy to say I've never felt burdened with a task of such biblical proportions!

I can say, however, that I feel a deep compassion and love for all, and genuinely work at living that, and treating all whom I meet openly and compassionately. Not to go on about this, because I'm sure you're not asking for my beliefs, but I do believe in the transformative power of fun.

Fun is like a glue that holds people together. It attracts people, and can bring out the wonderful good in people. I trust that with kindness, openness and fun, people come together and that same kindness, openness and fun spreads.

Yes, in many ways the world is hardwired to stop these wonderful moments almost as fast as they're born. That's why my projects are just moments—people come together, people-to-people, share something, and are left happier and more open than before.

That is, if I do my job right. (and it's a tall order!)

Yes, in the spot that Everyone Can Use The Harbor was there is now a kayak rental place. Across the harbor from that, another artist named FOS has made a floating bar and radio station. Our boats were free, our drinks were cheaper, our radio was underwater, and that's the very beginning of what was happening at the harbor.

That project was an enormous success, and as I said before these kind of successes (and failures) are not motivated by profit. To make the permanent—or “real”—would certainly ruin them.

But that's my feeling on the matter.

Again, thanks for writing.

Sincerely,

Doug

WORKBOOK

Hey Douglas,

Actually you and I have more in common then you think. I just think that my perspective is a slightly more futuristic version of yours...If I can say that without seeming arrogant.

You see...I did all my projects for free and I was not profit driven in the past.

Yet the fact of the matter is that people will eventually take advantage of you and steal your ideas in order to make a living for themselves. This is all very exhausting to constantly come up with new ideas and plan and run a project...it really wears you down after a while.

Sure...I too "dumpster dived" and lived out of a backpack for 10 years and traveled and believed that I didn't need much to enjoy life. NOW...My perspective is changing. I want to create a nest and settle down and attract a mate.

My mate won't like it if I gather food from the dumpster to feed our children nor will she like that I have no real home. Therefore...I must find a way to use my energy wisely and to create something that is both satisfying to me and which is also rewarding for other people (family, community, city, country, world).

I too can see that your project did make the children happy for that brief moment in time however...I am seeking people with your creative capacity to use their energy for larger more long-lasting purposes.

Imagine being able to do what you love but also make a living wage from it (able to support a family without having to dumpster dive) and which provides an immediate and positive impact in the process.

You are correct!!! Selling your concept to the city is a really great way to turn your project into a sustainable one :)

You and I really should talk because you mentioned some key words that link to a project I am currently creating for Copenhagen. I no longer give my ideas away for "free" I trade them for something that I need or I intend to sell them to live.

So my Copenhagen project deals with targeting the crime and growing ugliness that seems to plague the city at the moment. I also want to improve the living conditions for families with children...as each year the number of families that leave Copenhagen because they want a safe place for their children to grow up in...is rising :(

Therefore...I challenge you to create a project which benefits society in some way...allows you to have fun in the process and which can also assist you by providing some type of food, clothing or a wage to sustain your creative capacity and future development of projects!

Sincerely,

JC

DEAR CLASS,

Paul Ramirez Jonas

In this hat are folded pieces of paper, each has written on it a type of situation in this city where the public comes in contact with some kind of art: visual, music, theater, memorial, public. Pull one piece out, you can trade it with someone else. By next class go and observe people looking at art for an hour. Bring in a 10 minute report that includes, photographs, your observations, number of people attending, how long people looked at the art, what else did they do, etc, etc. Be an anthropologist!

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| — Public art in buses | — Large theaters |
| — Street musicians | — Small concert halls |
| — Graffiti anywhere | — Small theaters |
| — Monuments in parks. | — Museum |
| — Gravestones in cemeteries | — Commercial galleries |
| — Art in lobbies | — Non-commercial galleries |
| — Art in cafes | — Poster shops |
| — Art in churches | — Music stores |
| — Libraries | — Street performers (non-music) |
| — Large concert halls | |

** Depending on where you give this assignment you can name specific venues or leave it general.*

SUBLET: EXERCISES IN SHARED RESIDENCY FOR URBAN ARTISTS

Sean Schumacher

Marcel Proust once said that “the real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes.” Proust, as a bookish shut-in, spoke from experience: he very rarely left his home and instead voyaged through it almost exclusively via the printed word. Both cost and work have kept me from traveling for pleasure for nearly my entire working life as an artist, so like Proust, I must on occasion find a fresh pair of eyes with which to venture out from my cork-lined room into an urban environment already familiar to me. If you are wondering where to find fresh eyes in the city, may I suggest a small, local market? You can really tell the difference when they’re organic.

1 — Shared space

Perhaps one of the greatest fallacies of the urban resident is that they are alone in their apartment. For some, this makes the space far lonelier, while for others, this is the only thing that keeps them from screaming in equal parts horror and disgust all the time. In either case, this is a fallacy. Apartments are never lonely spaces—they always bustle with the energy of hundreds of different lives, some of which occur only in the present, but in far greater quantities across the fuller spectrum of that building's time line. Even in your personal space, the shadows cast by these people still shape many of your everyday movements.

Examine your walls. Look for dents you didn't make, bumps and bruises in windows and doors you didn't leave, wallpaper wrapping the room like an onion skin put up by hundreds of different hands. How much different in size is this room today because of these actions? The walls themselves even hold pieces of these people. See if you can find a hair stuck in paint and covered over by successive layers; a residual element of a prior resident projecting into your present living space. Celebrate these little monuments to past lives if you find them, rather than covering them up with pictures as if they're flaws. If, however, you find a hair on the top layer of paint and it is not your own, then you should probably be worried, as your landlord is more than likely subletting your apartment while you are away at work.

Perhaps now you want to know these past residents with whom you share your space more. To start, visit your local library's reference section and look to see if your city has a city directory—one that can be referenced by street address rather than name is preferable. From there, it's easy to find out not only the prior names your building had, but also the prior residents of your specific room. Find one of them and write down their name. Then, write their name beside your own on the mailbox label for your apartment. Perhaps you should right them a letter, welcoming them to your apartment. Maybe you could even invite them to a welcome party. Address the letter to their address (which is to say, your address) and, when it arrives, hold onto it for them. (note: if they are presently deceased, you may be holding onto the letter for a considerable time).

2 — Vacation, condensed edition

Cities are by and large collaborations by people who often have no want to collaborate, with dozens of parts as fundamental as the grids on which they are based stitched together through successive additions and re-drawings. The fact that many architects, planners, and building owners are from other places can leave parts of the city looking unique, unfamiliar, or transporting. Often, these are where two parts of the city unrelated in design—places where the grids shift—come together unevenly. Ideally, this is a place where the buildings or the road width seems out of scale with what you know of your city. Find one of these and approach it in a way you haven't before, maybe even from a different direction or around a different corner.

Perhaps when you go there, you'll be struck by how similar that place is to a very specific place in your memory. Pull up a street-side view of that other place online while you are in the present space and compare them. What features are similar to your memory? What features are different? Can you imagine the people photographed in that space pictured in front of you here? Can you imagine anyone from your memory that might cross into the shared space of the photo and its local stand-in?

Connect these two places (or three, if your memory of the other place is particularly vivid) in your memory through these similarities and revisit every time you need to get away. Perhaps even write your roommate-across-time a postcard from your cross-locational vacation, telling them about how much fun you're having on your not-present vacation. One piece of advice based on learned experience: do not ask them to water your plants for you. They are total slackers. That is why they were kicked out to begin with.

PSU ART AND SOCIAL PRACTICE REFERENCE POINTS



Students conducting interviews.



Northwest 21st Avenue T-shirt.

NORTHWEST 21ST AVENUE, PORTLAND, OREGON

Molly Sherman and Adam Moser

Each student in the Art and Social Practice elective at the Metropolitan Learning Center interviewed a community member who works on 21st Avenue including Jon at Nob Hill Shoe Repair, Mary Lee at Rough Cut Barber Shop, Cathy at Plaza Cleaners, Ike at Anna Bananas, Sandy at 21st Avenue Quick Stop, Sean at 21st Avenue Bicycles, and Martha at the Laura Russo Gallery. Students drew portraits and wrote bios for each person interviewed. The portraits were screen printed on T-shirts and given to the interviewees on the last day of class.



Bike Punk T-shirt printing demo.

EVALUATION

Temporary Services

We propose some questions to help in evaluating an artistic project that includes other people who are not the artists, or in some way relies on its meaning being generated from the production of social experience. These terms are used as shorthand to describe work like this: socially engaged art, participatory, social practices, “relational aesthetics”, or commodified social experience. Each of these terms carries a set of ethical assumptions and outwardly expressed value systems. They don’t provide us with an in depth way of assessing art works. We think the following questions can help in thinking through the complex interaction of ethics and aesthetics particularly if one is interested in empowering others or making art work that does not create abusive power relationships.

- Does the work empower more people than just the authors of the work?
- Does the work foster egalitarian relationships, access to resources, a shift in thinking, or surplus for a larger group of people?
- Does the work abate competition, abusive power and class structures, or other barriers typically found in gallery or museum settings?
- Does the work seek broader audiences than just those educated about and familiar with contemporary art?
- Does the work trigger a collective imagination that can dream of other possible worlds while it understands the current one with eyes wide open?

AN ASSIGNMENT

Temporary Services

Take three projects that have been described as social practice, participatory art, or similarly. Assess the three projects based on our questions. Get together in groups of at least three. Discuss your assessments and propose additional questions that come out of your discussion.

For the purpose of an example, here are three projects to discuss. You can use these suggestions or assess other work. Modify as needed.

Flood: a volunteer network for active participation in health care

Initiated by the group Haha

1992-1995, Chicago, IL

<http://www.hahahaha.org/projflood.html>

Untitled work (cooking Thai food for visitors on-site)

Rirkrit tiravanija

various dates and places including 1992 303 Gallery, NYC

1995, Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, PA

<http://arts.columbia.edu/visual-arts/rirkrit-tiravanija>

160 cm line tattooed on 4 people

Santiago Sierra

December 2000, El Gallo Arte Contemporáneo.

Salamanca, Spain.

http://www.santiago-sierra.com/index_1024.php

SO YOU WANT TO MAKE AN ART PROJECT IN YOUR TOWN?

Transformazium

When you move from one place to another it is important to inventory the things you leave behind, the things you bring with you, and the things you hope to find.

These questions are meant as a guide for the artist who chooses to define his or her context.

Who?

Who are you?
Who is (your town)?
Who do you think (your town) thinks you are?

Who is your project intended for?
Who else might encounter it?
Who will critique your work?

Who gave you permission?
Who gave them permission to give permission?
Who else could give or refuse permission if asked?

What?

What does asking for permission do?
What relationships does your project depend on?
What are you agreeing to by working in this place?

What does “community” mean to you?
What does “public” mean to you?
What does “art” mean to you?

What resources are you taking?
What resources do you bring?

Where?

Where are you?
Where are you coming from?
Where else could this project be?

Why?

Why this place?
Why not another place?
Why is your project an art project?

How?

How does the context you define inform the content of your project?

How would your project be different (or the same) if it was in your neighborhood?

How do you designate value to art / the artistic process?

How do you think the individuals and communities that make up this neighborhood value your work?

How does the location in which your project exists compare with the location in which critique of your project occurs?

How does your choice of context engage in social discourse?

WORD MATCH

Transformazium

Below is a list of words that we find ourselves using a lot. Match words on the left with words on the right. Some words may match because they are opposite instead of similar. Sometimes you learn more from people you have less in common with than those who are similar. People tend to spend more time with those who are similar. Just saying.

value	art
resources	power structures
local	money
engage	ideas
privilege	neighbor
community	listen
transform	economy
communication	waste
challenge	options
gentrification	assumptions
repurpose	class
demolish	build
	foundation



WHAT DO YOU NEED?

Transformazium

Choose artistic process or economic system.

- 01 _____ defines distance between you and me, and bridges that distance with a mediated relationship.
- 02 _____ is an area for making choices.
- 03 _____ is participated in unequally by women, people of color, and people without money.
- 04 _____ creates value.
- 05 _____ utilizes resources at hand.
- 06 _____ adapts.
- 07 _____ connects people.
- 08 _____ reflects privilege.
- 09 _____ is a tool for increasing individual autonomy and self realization.
- 10 _____ results in gentrification and displacement.

TROPHIES

Lexa Walsh

Trophies are for winners, runners up, honorable mentions or losers. Trophies come in all shapes and sizes. They are freestanding, wall hanging, medals. They are abstract, figurative, literal vessels. They often have a base. They are made of precious metals, fake look-a-likes, or materials that reveal the nature of the award.

Make a trophy for someone you think deserves it. For the project to be finished, you must present the trophy to the recipient and document the process with photography, posting on the blog by the due date. Bring the finished trophy in for critique—you can give it back to the recipient that day.

Please use you a material/method you feel serves the work best, but that you have not yet used in a project. A successful project will consider the imagery, if any, method and material, which may indicate, clearly or vaguely, who/what the trophy is for.

TOURS

Lexa Walsh

Students are put into groups of 2-3. You have 30 minutes to search the building and surrounding area for something that can become interesting and tour-worthy. This may be a sink, an architectural detail, a poster on the wall...anything. Research or invent a narrative for this tour. Take turns giving 10 minute tours/lectures for the other students, and answer questions about the site.

SOLIDARITY, JUSTICE, AND COOPERATION, OH MY! ECONOMICS FOR THE REST OF US.

Caroline Woolard

We don't need to wait for the revolution or the apocalypse. We can build and strengthen grassroots practices of mutual aid, direct democracy, ecological sustainability, and cooperation right now. In this workshop, we will talk about an economy that recognizes our inherent interdependence. Known as the solidarity economy in the anti-globalization moment, this is an economy where we meet our needs together with integrity.

Solidarity Economics in 15 seconds...

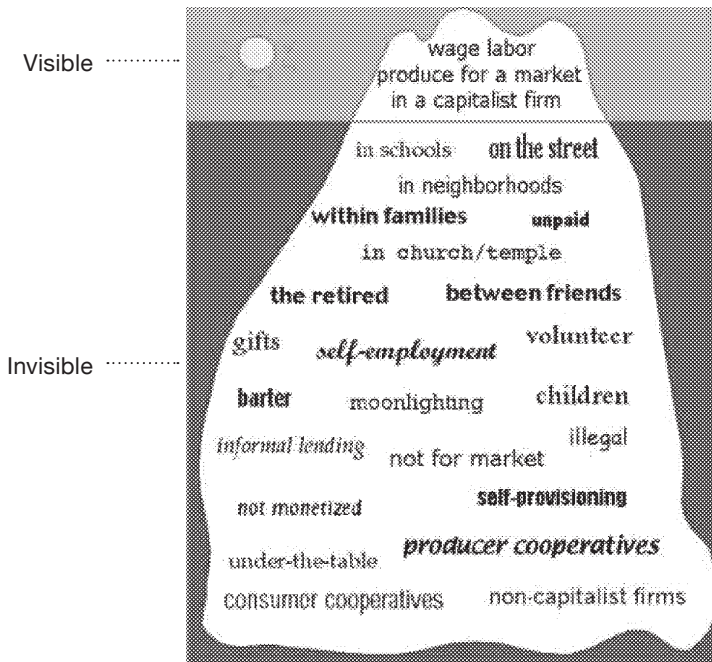
- 1 — you don't have to wait for the revolution or the apocalypse.
- 2 — link practices of grassroots work together now.
- 3 — build more networks of support to meet (y)our needs via cooperation and direct democracy.
- 4 — join other parts of the social justice movement to build solidarity economies in the here and now.

Agenda (*2 hour workshop*)

- 1 — Introductions.
(Why are you here for this workshop?)
- 2 — What is the economy?
(What is invisible?)
- 3 — Solidarity economics.
(Basics, why is it called solidarity economics?)
- 4 — What it looks like right here!
(What are we already doing? Get to know each other.)
- 5 — Global, local.
(How does this work tie in to larger movements?)
- 6 — Where do we go?
(Next steps and closing...)

Solidarity Economics

- A framework for viewing and connecting economic practices
- A process of working together to meet our needs while utilizing values of pluralism, direct democracy, sustainability, cooperation, and justice through a lens of interdependence that sidesteps the notion of a single Big Model economic system.



The economy in our collective imagination

Many solidarity economy practices are framed as the commons, or the sharing economy, or an alternative economy, collaborative consumption or the new economy.

We say “solidarity economics” because:

- 1 — We stand with the global justice (anti-globalization) movement.
- 2 — We refuse to reify the dominant economy.
- 3 — We reject phrases that brand ideas and privatize them.
- 4 — It is the economy of the commons.

Solidarity Economics

Meeting our needs together while taking active responsibility for our inter-relationships.

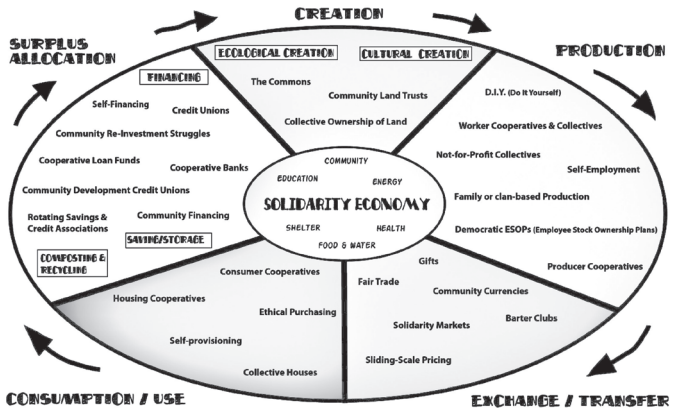
a.k.a.

Using values of pluralism, justice, democracy, cooperation, and sustainability.

a.k.a.

Grassroots economic justice

WORKBOOK



AMERICA

Anonymous

Four parties are to be invited to a one-day workshop.

Round 1

- Each party will be asked to create a image of their ideal America.
- *At end of round 1 have each party share the meaning of each image.*
- Break for lunch.

Round 2

- Open round. Parties are allowed to work on one another's drawings.
- At the end of round 2 have each party share their experience of round 2.
- Break for dinner.

Round 3

- Parties return to their original drawings and can make changes.
- Continue cycle until consensus is reached or until all parties quit.

PSU ART AND SOCIAL PRACTICE REFERENCE POINTS

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