• Paper / Proposal Title:
Engaged Photography as Urban Communication Platform in Sustainable Development Context

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• Abstract:
The project takes a value-based approach that examines the public space in terms of relationship, social stability, well-being, empowerment, and sense of community in order to help students better understand, manage, protect and sustainably approach examined public space. By using the method of engaged photography students bring together a range of stakeholders including local inhabitants, businesses, heritage organizations, artists, and communities, in mutual knowledge exchange, to enhance and expand the interdisciplinary conceptual and public policy debates about public space in a particular area.

After participating in this seminar students are able to address the complexity of relations found in public space such as the tension between living heritage (memorialized, apparent or hidden histories of the place) and identity in order to investigate how the perception of, and perspectives towards past and present are created.

Because of increasing demand for a new understanding of social and public place and practice, locality, and community. Professionals and community members are trying to search for new more sustainable models of cultural tourism and heritage practices, rethinking the corporate spectacularism or mass tourism. In the course of
Commodification, a cultural element acquires economic value and is offered for consumption as a product or service. This case study teaching project help uncover the processes by which local communities can become part of mechanisms improving the transformation of public space.

Collaboration between students, experts, and the public is vital for effective community engagement aimed at improving the lives of the most vulnerable and marginalized in society, whether at the local or global level. We explore communities of practice as a means of cultivating sustainability literacy and public engagement, a task that requires diverse cultural perspectives, trans-generational timeframes, and local-to-global connectedness. The results of the research, the visual presentation of the Engaged photography project, is the starting point for new forms of dialogue about the need to regain balance and encourage sustainable practices.

**Author(s) Biography:**

Mgr. Jitka Cirklová, M.A., Ph.D. is a sociologist at the University of Finance and Administration in Prague, Deputy Head of Department of Marketing Communication. She completed her Ph.D. in Sociology at the Charles University in Prague and her M.A. studies at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, Israel. Jitka currently teaches graduate courses in Sociology, Sociological Research, and Consumer Culture. The focus of her research work is in the Sociology of culture, identity and transformation of lifestyles, and intergeneration changes of value models. Jitka is also responsible for the Internal research projects that involve students participations [https://consumesustainablyvsfs.wordpress.com](https://consumesustainablyvsfs.wordpress.com).

Focus of research projects is on value models and business practices of people inspired by sustainability that suggest different preferences and choices these people are making while forming the identities within a community.

Her interest in the theoretical, methodological, and empirical issues of qualitative research is of a prolonged character. She concentrates continually on using the emic perspective of the active participants fortified by the content, narrative, and visual analysis by using the innovative methodology of Engaged Photography and Netnography. She contributes to the research area by exploring the further understanding of adaptation processes and cultural accommodation of new concepts, values, and ideas in our communities.