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IT'S ALL FUN AND—:
A RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF SPACE IN THE PANDEMIC

By

Erica Von Proctor Lewis
B.F.A. in Studio Arts, 2019
B.A. in English, 2019

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of the
College of Arts and Sciences of the University of Louisville
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of

Master of Fine Arts
in Studio Art & Design

Department of Art & Design
University of Louisville
Louisville, Kentucky

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A Thesis Approved on

15 April 2022

By the following Thesis Committee:

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Professor Rachel Singel

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DEDICATION

To Chelsea, Mom, and Nan,
Who all held my hand through this, no matter the distance.

To Nuri,
For everything.

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I want to thank to my supportive friends in the program. To Katherine, for giving me hope in the art world, making process, and myself. To Katelyn, for taking the time to listen and to teach me so many skills. To Jingshuo, for being a great roommate, listener, studio companion, and late-night model for random projects. To Xin, for being my equally stressed-out friend and giving me solace in the overwhelm over a shared meal. To Xuanyi, for always building me up and helping me to see the value in myself and my work. To Monica, for making a difference in all of our lives and our artwork. I am so proud that I had the opportunity to meet all of these amazing people, and I will cherish how we came together during our most vulnerable and overwhelming moments these past three years. I am so thankful to have shared this experience with them.

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ABSTRACT

*IT'S ALL FUN AND—:
A RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF SPACE IN THE PANDEMIC*

Erica Lewis

April 15, 2022

This exhibition and document explore spatial rhetoric during the pandemic, utilizing materiality and relational aesthetics to reflect on the different ways in which the public and private are made distinct from one another. In doing so, Lewis addresses new cultural navigations of shared spaces, both digital and corporeal, public and private. In addition, the artist also examines the faulty social and institutional systems that the pandemic brought to light, such as socioeconomic dynamics and voter suppression, while utilizing Kenneth Burke's concept of the terministic screen.

Games are a central theme throughout the exhibition, as they are often coded as “home” objects that require a close proximity for participation. They also function as micro-systems in which players agree to an arbitrary set of rules that they did not themselves construct. Lewis expands these ideas into what it means to “gamify” space.

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INTRODUCTION

The pandemic has rippled into nearly every space within our lives, expanding the virtual realms we inhabit and the duration for which we inhabit them, while recontextualizing shared intimacies in our daily life. The title of the exhibition reflects the pandemic's interruption—of time, of space, of norm—as if the inner dialogue of the thought “It’s all fun and games” was itself interrupted, taken from the mouth and left silently within the internal space of implication.

Games thematically punctuate the concepts addressed within this exhibition, as games are rhetorically associated with social interaction, shared spaces, and domestic nostalgia. Further, games function as micro-systems in which the majority of people do not make, but do agree to play by the rules, even though the rules often cater to some and blatantly exclude others. Rhetorically, games carry with them a risk-free sense of frivolity that I have satirically employed in this exhibition to examine how people chose to treat one another during the pandemic, wherein risks and privileges were quite tangible. The artwork conflates the symbols of the pandemic with those of the home and games in order to analyze the new semiotics of the pandemic and its rhetorical impact on space.

CHAPTER 1: MATERIALITY

*“My work is just an honest attempt to reveal something new and interesting...
a sense of humanity in relation to objects...
to get to a place that is exciting and fertile through form, ideas, and process.”*
—Michael Beitz¹

Digital Space

When the world closed its doors, its people opened their devices. At the height of the pandemic, many people turned to online forums to remain connected with each other, whether they chose to shelter in place or had travel options for travel taken from them. In this new fumbling to navigate a virtual landscape, people were able to see each other’s faces, as mediated through a screen, simultaneously occupying different geographic locations by inhabiting a shared online space. Further, this virtual space began to foster a new self-awareness in interactions, as users could literally see themselves as captured by the camera and transmitted to others, becoming aware of and adjusting mannerisms that they may have never otherwise noticed. Alongside this new visual language, people also had the capability to mute their audio and video input on command, withholding their own countenance for a voyeuristic perspective on the conversation.

In *A Paradox of Eye Contact* (2022), I address the visual aspects of these technological interactions that have become a recognizable norm. The piece consists of a muted projection of two users conversing over the Microsoft Teams application,

¹ Hoefflerle. “Michael Beitz: Objects of Communication.” 47–54.

however, the audience can only see their initials, “EL” and “NT,” and the light behind them rhythmically illuminating as they take turns speaking to each other. The experience is purely visual, though, ironically, both users have their cameras off. As a result, the audience is forced to confront the total lack of humanity in an exchange that we have come to rhetorically code as two people talking online, assuming there are faces behind the screens, despite the fact that the visual information totally lacks names, faces, and voices. By using the projector as a medium, the piece echoes the actual mode of communication, thus, making it more recognizable and relatable to audience members who have seen similar interactions themselves as filtered through a screen aesthetic.



Figure 1: EVPL. *A Paradox of Eye Contact*. Video Projection. 2022.
Photographed by Emily Rose Tucker.

Beyond the optical experience of the work, viewers must grapple with the title, *A Paradox of Eye Contact*. When experiencing a video call on a conventional laptop, it is impossible to engage in eye contact with another person. In order to have the appearance of looking at them as transmitted in the application, one must look into the camera above the screen, thus not meeting any real gaze: simply gazing into a small, lifeless, technological lens. Yet, in looking into the digital image of the eyes of others on the screen, the user's eyes fall from the camera's sightline, thus breaking the eye contact again. No matter how we experience each other through technology, even in a face-to-face of sorts, there is an eternal lack of eye contact and a consequential lessening of humanity and intimacy within the medium itself.

When the camera remains on, video calls can offer a glimpse into the lives of others while also calling into question what has become new aesthetic normal. In the same virtual interaction, someone can get a deeply personal glimpse into another person's home living space, seeing certain artworks on the wall or perhaps dishes piled up in the sink, while abruptly confronting the fact that they had all but forgotten what the other person's face looked like outside of a mask. Somehow seeing another person's full face, a known icon of identity, outside of the virtual has become an intimate indicator of trust, during which we decide who is deemed safe enough or home-adjacent enough to share a physical space. Sometimes the decision is easy, like knowing that it is safe to un-mask with a cohabitant because the risk does not change, but for others, one must actively assess and make assumptions of the risk-level and act upon it, thus, creating an intimate physical space of trust, even for simple and previously mundane actions like sharing a meal.

My series of digital drawings, *Our Quarantine* (2020-22), also addresses these intimate spaces through a digital medium that itself reflects upon the shift in virtual spaces. While my drawings normally reside in the physical realm of paper, this series began at the height of the pandemic when I was confined to my home with little to no studio access. As a result, the medium is itself an artifact of the circumstances in which the series began while also ruminating on the means of communicating with one another during that time. These drawings were bound to their own digital landscape, moving from the drawing application on my iPad to the screens of those who view my website and social media accounts. They inhabited the same virtual spaces that we shared with other people. As the world opened up, my drawings also took their first steps into the physical world, finally brought forth physically as canvas prints. However, even as physical, printed documents, they remain contextual artifacts of their creation through their medium.



Figure 2: EVPL. 2020925. Digital Drawing (Edition of 10).
Series: *Our Quarantine*. 2021-2022.

Altering & Casting Found Objects

Found objects also function as artifacts, holding with them the memory of their creation, history of use, and new context within a gallery space. Viewers recognize objects based on the spaces that said objects normally occupy, thus, giving them contextual meaning through cultural expectations of utility and space. For instance, when seeing polypropylene fabric, the material used to make surgical masks, society now codes that fabric as personal protective equipment (PPE) from the global pandemic.

Masks have semiotically blended with how we recognize others outside of private spaces. Further, the knowledge of that object's use will code it as a personal object because it resides directly onto a person's face, cannot be safely shared among people between uses, and literally functions as a means of keeping self in and others out. The materials I have used and referenced throughout this exhibition, such as PPE mask material, conflate the rhetorically coded distinctions between public—masked—and private—unmasked—interactions. In doing so, the exhibition examines the spaces in which people are either recognized with or without masks and which objects interact with those conversation to construct the spatial context of public and private.

My altered found object artwork *Remnants and Receipts* (2022) utilizes this new cultural recognition of certain objects, as it is composed of used surgical masks, COVID-related documents, toilet paper tubes, and delivery packaging that are cut into hexagons and tiled into a Grandmother's Garden quilt pattern. Rhetorically, viewers will code the components of the quilt as COVID items, because of their experience during the pandemic interacting specifically with those objects and aesthetics. While the mask functions as an indicator of the external, public realm, this artwork conflates this

assumption with the visual experience of recognizing as a quilt pattern, a more personal item typically found within the home. For these distinctions to matter, the audience must draw upon their experiences of space interacting with these objects: masks usually denote a sterile approach of holding strangers at a cold distance to avoid exposure, whereas quilts imply a familial sense of hand-crafting and a warm, intimately shared space occupied beneath the textile when in use.

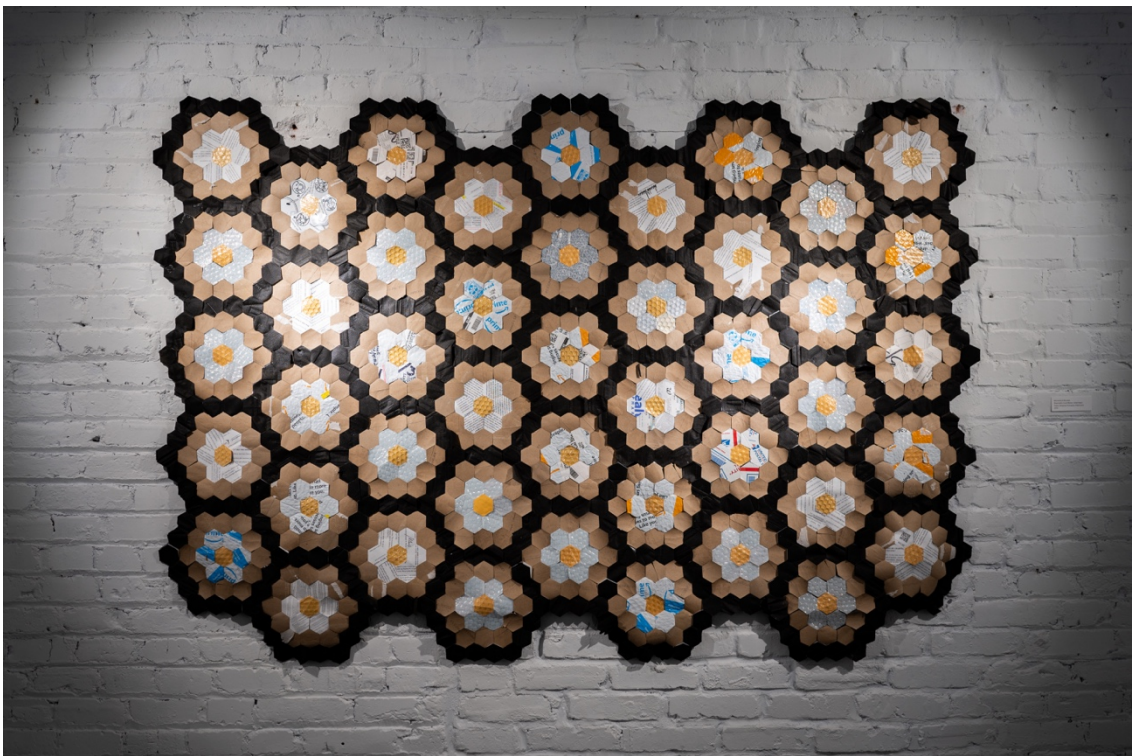


Figure 3a: EVPL. *Remnants & Receipts*. Altered Found Object (COVID-19 masks, toilet paper rolls, paperwork, delivery packaging). 2022.
Photographed by Emily Rose Tucker

As altered found objects, the quilt components diverge from their original forms to construct a new recognizable form in their composite assemblage. Using found objects from my personal time in the pandemic, as the paperwork was all related to me and the masks worn on my face, fosters a visceral response in viewers that a mere copy could not construct in the work. As a result, my physical relationship to the objects does in a way mimic that of a quilt, existing within my home and touching my skin. The object’s history—it’s memory—enriches the concept of the artwork from its mass production in response to the pandemic to its intimate use on people’s faces, consequentially affecting the means in which audiences may navigate the space surrounding it. While many of my works are interactive and tactile, the quilt is not, and viewers would be reluctant to touch it even if invited to do so because of my experience interacting with the object, particularly the masks, by breathing into each one for days. This perception affects the way viewers participate in its space, reflecting the pandemic’s social spatial shift.



Figure 3b: Detail. Photographed by Emily Rose Tucker.

Unlike an altered and appropriated found object, a cast object does not occupy that same history of production and use. However, cast objects function as representations of the original and can be replicated numerous times, generating a multiplicity of the original object, referencing but not quite embodying its personal memory as an object. In the context of COVID, this means that specific objects can become safer to touch without that history of use with while also not depleting resources by appropriating needed supplies into an artwork. For instance, *What Are the Odds* (2022) consists of many resin-cast COVID tests stacked into a Jenga tower formation. To purchase and waste this many tests would be unethical, and sourcing used tests is a bit of a biohazard. By creating castings of my own used tests, I have thus depleting no shared resources and, in doing so, have reiterated what it means to draw line in the sand between what spaces and objects can be shared with myself and by whom.



Figure 4: EVPL. *What Are the Odds?*. Resin. 2022. Photographed by Emily Rose Tucker.

Another cast work, *Confirmation Bias* (2022) is composed of black and white plaster- and glass-cast iPhones with the glass phone being encased in a found object, a white silicone iPhone case. While the silicone phone case itself is reminiscent of the casting process, it also brings forth a sense of believability that is amplified by the black glass aesthetic of a dormant phone screen. As a result, the objects are located at different distances away from reality. The plaster phones are easy to identify as “fake,” existing further from collective understanding of reality, whereas the glass phone in the case is much more reality-adjacent and may appear “real” from some angles. Sifting through the imitations seems to imply a relationship between the objects like that of a literary foil: the plaster phones heighten the realism of the glass phone through their obvious fakery. However, in drawing these comparisons, viewers may incorrectly assume a utility or history of the glass phone as a found object when it is merely cast. As reflected in the title, *Confirmation Bias*, calls viewers to look closer, pay attention to the details, and confront their expectations before drawing conclusions of utility or authenticity.



Figure 5: EVPL. *Confirmation Bias*. Plaster, Glass, & Found Object. 2022.
Photographed by Emily Rose Tucker.

My work with altered found objects and cast objects is in communication with several sculptural artists. Artists like Hannes Van Severen, Jaime Pitarch, and Katerina Kamprani are altering objects, particularly objects of the everyday, in order to bring attention to them and comment on their functionality. I am also inspired by artists who use found objects to create installations, like Karen Ryan, Ai Weiwei, Doris Salcedo, and Michael Beitz. My monochromatic sculptures share an aesthetic sensibility with Louise Nevelson who employs a graphic style that utilizes dimensional objects while visually collapsing the space of the object by using only one color.

Interactive & Tactile Objects

Where possible, the artwork included is presented in an interactive manner such that passive viewers can become active participants within the work. For instance, the work *Fluxx* (2022), a jigsaw puzzle, is visually composed of instructions from the CDC, primarily quantities and numbers (such as isolation periods, times between symptoms and boosters, etc.), superimposed onto and into one another with figure-ground ambiguity. As an object, the imagery and the medium of a puzzle illustrate the confusion of having to figure out how to navigate the flood of information and ever-changing rules set forth by the CDC. To reinforce this confusion, the title *Fluxx* references the card game of the same name in which the rules of the game are ever-changing, altering who can win the game and how.

That said, by pushing the piece further and encouraging viewers to interact with the object, the artwork transcends into that of performance, examining the relational aesthetics of the players with the object as well as each other, thus, a physical and literal manifestation of how people will choose to handle space. As time passes, the artwork will

adapt to the shifting social etiquette of shared space. During my opening reception on April 15th, 2022 in which this piece premiered, people were more hesitant to sit down with strangers to play a game, so most of the engagement with the interactive works exemplified this decision-making process of trusting someone to share a close proximity. As a result, most of the people who sat together to interact with the puzzle were people who came into the exhibition together, thus, showing that the current social engagement with objects and space are still distinct from in the height of the pandemic—when people would not have come in the first place—and before the pandemic—when people would have been more inclined to share closer proximities.



Figure 6a: EVPL. *Fluxx*. Jigsaw Puzzle on a Card Table. 2022.
Photographed by Emily Rose Tucker.

While the puzzle artwork leaves room for social engagement, *The American Dream* (2021) demands it. *The American Dream* is an altered found object: a door with three knobs, and as such it cannot be opened alone without difficulty. When confronted

with the reality that the door was simply not made for one person alone, viewers must decide whether to accept futility in their isolated efforts and exclusion from accessing the artwork, to continue struggling for access, or to engage with the people around them to ask for help. Due to the proximity of the doorknobs, collaborators cannot maintain the 6-foot or 3-foot social distancing recommendation, presenting another facet of the choice to engage with the object and those in the gallery. No matter their decision, they are participating in the artwork by deciding how to navigate the space at all. *The American Dream* primarily functions to facilitate an experience of unmet expectations and exclusion, while rhetorically manipulating the way that users interact with the space surrounding it, again, choosing whether to interact, to what capacity, and with whom.



Figure 7: EVPL. *The American Dream*. Altered Found Object (Door). 2021. Photographed by Emily Rose Tucker.

Professor of Design Kristina Niedderer utilizes a similar format of relational aesthetics within what she calls “Performative Objects.” For instance, her *Social Cups* (1999) resemble wine glasses without stems or feet, such that they could not stand upright on their own, yet when three or more of them are linked together, none of them fall or spill. As a result, the art happens more so in the social interactions surrounding the objects than the pieces themselves. Without physical manipulations of the objects, much of their performance would be left to the imagination and assumption of the viewer without active participation as an agent of the work. To explicate this phenomenon, Niedderer depicted a graphic of a triangle with the following three vertices: “human/person,” “human/person,” “object/material.” In the center of these triangulated interactions resides “mediation of social/cultural meaning and interaction,” which is the culmination of the art object as performance.²



Figure 8: Kristina Niedderer. *Social Cups*. Performative Object. 1999.

² Niedderer. “Designing Mindful Interaction...” 4-7.

Niedderer goes on to address the contextual importance of an artwork, explaining how the gallery invites analysis that the everyday does not, which is not to say that the everyday is not rich in aesthetic value, merely that the viewer must actively choose to find and see its value instead of an artist directly presenting it to the viewer. Niedderer uses the example of a glass of water and a broken glass.

In everyday context, one recognizes a disruption of the norm of efficient functionality, for example, in a broken glass. Here the disruption of the pragmatic function causes a disruption of the pattern of action. This is bound to lead the user to some kind of reflection. In the first instance, this will be a reflection on the object; thereafter, it is likely to be a reflection on self as Norman has shown in his psychological analysis of objects. He found that, where design objects do not function how we expect, most of the time we do not first question the object but our own abilities to handle them. Thus, malfunctioning (e.g., of broken or badly designed objects, may cause mindfulness of self). However, since they do not allow the resolution of the disruption, the questioning of self and of the object seems bound to end in resignation or negative feelings.³

While a glass in these two contexts would normally be rhetorically coded for their utility or lack thereof, in a gallery context, audience members are presented with two objects that have been elevated from their use-based context into that of the white cube. The objects themselves are no different and their visual properties remain unchanged, yet the recontextualization of their environment makes the viewer stop and examine the poetry of the everyday that they may have normally overlooked.

The exhibition foundationally relies on viewer assumptions of objects to draw connections between conflated imagery. Many of the sculptural works appropriate found objects associated with domestic life and the pandemic to reflect upon the spatial lines drawn between these public and private spaces and the objects that occupy them. In giving viewers the agency to navigate the space and the objects of their own accord, I am

³ Niedderer. "Designing Mindful Interaction..." 12.

also granting them space to bring that new experiential understanding to their own encounters with the everyday and perhaps apply the metaphor of the object to larger social systems and instances of exclusion.

Medium as Message

In his essay “Medium as ‘Message,’” a critique of Marshall McLuhan’s “The Medium is the Message,” literary theorist Kenneth Burke explains how the medium works in tandem with the content to communicate its message.

The point is not that a given medium (in the sense of a directly communicative form) does its full work upon us *without* the element of “content.” Rather, [Lessing’s] study of the difference between painting (or sculpture) and poetry indicates how expert practitioners of a given medium may resort to the kind of contents that the given medium is best equipped to exploit. Obviously, as so approached, the issue is quite different from the blunt proposition that “the medium is the message.”⁴

The medium does not communicate solely by itself, but it adds layers to the content because viewers will interact with the object differently depending on the medium, be it an artwork that requires circumambulation to experience in full or a work of relational aesthetics that relies on audience participation to complete the living performance. As a result, the medium functions similarly to word choice or syntax in that it changes the delivery of the content, which itself will become part of the message itself.

Every work of art is an artifact of its creation, through the artist’s individual perspective within their current world as well as the conditions and resources available in said world. The COVID tests cast in *What Are the Odds?* are physical records of the four tests per household shipped from the U.S. government. COVID tests would not otherwise

⁴ Burke. “Medium as ‘Message.’” 416.

exist, and a future audience unfamiliar with the pandemic may mistake the object for something else that they have been rhetorically socialized to identify, like perhaps a pregnancy test. Yet, these objects were easily accessible for me and recognizable to a global audience because of the conditions in which they were made. In this way, the medium can function as message, yet it cannot fully communicate outside of its totality such as the graphic color scheme and installation as a Jenga tower because these aspects also function as message.

CHAPTER 2: NAVIGATING THE PRIVATE

Sheltering-in-Place & the Aesthetics of the Home

Home as its own space was re-coded during the pandemic; as many shared facilities closed their doors and the world went online, homes filled whatever spatial voids were left in our lives. My kitchen table was where I ate, researched, attended class, made art, visited with my family, etc. While confined within my apartment walls without engagements outside of the home, I, like many others, struggled with my mental health. The white noise of a daily route was replaced by endless monotony, isolation, and self-escalation. My series *Our Quarantine* depicts little moments of my time in quarantine with my partner, Nuri, who lived with me throughout the duration of the pandemic because we had come to the crossroads of isolating together or apart for an unknown time period.

The first drawing that I drew was his hair on the tiles of my shower wall. I drew this depiction, titled *Quarantine with Me*, simply because it was the first ever tangible evidence that Nuri had left behind exemplifying our cohabitation. I had only ever seen my straight hair flattened against the tile, and now I was looking at his lovely curls barely clinging to the wall, casting the most interesting shadows. Professor of Philosophy and Women's & Gender Studies Sherri Irvin addresses the aesthetics of private spaces.

In a famous passage from *Walden*, Thoreau claims to have been ‘as much affected by the faint hum of a mosquito making its invisible and unimaginable tour through my apartment at earliest dawn... as I could be by any trumpet that ever sang of fame...’ One can, if Thoreau’s testimony is to be trusted, have very grand

aesthetic experiences of very humble objects. But, in my view, aesthetic experience need not be so very grand. Some that are quiet and subtle may nevertheless be well worth having. All of the ingredients for such experiences are already with us, if only we attend to them the right way.⁵

I chose to see the poetry in our everyday, in the semiotics of our home together, like our hair intimately tangled together in the shower drain, which I also decided to draw. Home is often associated with comfort or in the least familiarity—be it in regards to trust in safety measures or in the knowledge of whose hair is on the shower wall.



Figure 10: EVPL. *Quarantine with Me*. Digital Drawing (Edition of 10).
Series: *Our Quarantine*. 2021-2022.

⁵ Irvin, Sherri. “Aesthetics and the Private Realm.” 230.

Same Storm, Different Boats

While home served as a sanctuary, safe from exposure to the virus, it also brought its own challenges, exacerbated by the pandemic. Mental health was a universal struggle that many people faced due to lack of job security, illness, loss of friends and family members, and harmful rhetoric in the media. The government treated certain individuals as expendable, disregarding those with existing conditions as unimportant to protect especially when compared to the pursuits of money. Even as the world opens more and more, the way that high-risk people navigate the world will remain at odds with others' rising lack of concern for transmission because unlike those other people, they cannot afford the same risks. We are all in the same storm yet navigating it in different boats. As a result, we will all carry our individual experiences into our conceptions of home and the pandemic. Similarly, within the rhetorical conception of home, domestic furniture is relatively universal within a given culture, yet the significance and tones of those objects, like our experiential conceptions of the pandemic and its consequential emphasis on the home, are filtered through our experiences with those objects, as explained by Kenneth Burke's "terministic screens."

Terministic screens describe the ways in which individuals rhetorically perceive the world, visually and linguistically, from their position within it. Burke employs the example a singular object being photographed using different color filters, ruminating on the public perception of a photograph as "factual" yet the various ways in which the object become subject based on individualized perspectives. People are navigating the

same spaces during the same time period, but their past experiences wed to their personal circumstances will change the ways in which that navigation occurs.

We *must* use terministic screens, since we can't say anything without the use of terms; whatever terms we use, they necessarily constitute a corresponding kind of screen; and any such screen necessarily directs the attention to one field rather than another. Within that field there can be different screens, each with its ways of directing the attention and shaping the range of observations implicit in the given terminology.⁶

During the pandemic, this means that while many people were “staying home,” the very definition of home linguistically and circumstantially changes for each person’s concept of home despite the singular word choice of “home.” Further, those who are houseless are often called “homeless,” which itself applies another layer of biased terministic screens so far as the concept of a “home” and where people were instructed to go during isolation and quarantine periods.

In her text “Caring in Times of a Global Pandemic,” Professor for Sociology of Social Change Emma Dowling wrote, “Clear, too, was a reconceptualisation of the public sphere as unsafe and the home as safe, with little acknowledgment of the effects of pandemic-related policies for those people who are houseless, for whom the home is neither the chosen central locale of sociality, intimacy and care, or is not a safe place to be, for example in the case of domestic violence.”⁷ People who face domestic abuse no longer had a refuge outside of the home because isolation and seclusion from others took a major survival resource away from them. If someone physically abuses another person in their household, they may hold back to certain visual indications of harm to avoid raising suspicions externally, so without those outside eyes to judge and offer help, the

⁶ Burke. “Terministic Screens.” 50.

⁷ Dowling. “Caring in Times of a Global Pandemic.” 15.

people experiencing this abuse no longer had a lifeline. Home was certainly not a comfort or haven to them despite the comfort-coded domestic items like soft chairs, colorful boardgames, or fluffy rugs.

Another example of these differences resides in socioeconomic status and access. For instance, with schools turning to online forums, some students did not have access to quiet spaces, video-accessible devices, or even stable internet connection. These students were all offered the same online options, yet their individualized circumstances greatly affected their ability to access these opportunities. The laptop exists as a bridge between the public and the private, simultaneously residing in the home yet serving as a connection to others in their own homes. In that same breath, technology accessibility is a privilege greatly determined by socioeconomic status.

The work *Ode to the Synthetic Tether* (2022), though not fully realized in its current state, is meant to be composed of laptops joined to each other “face-to-face” and suspended in sets of two above a lone desktop monitor with ethernet cords draped throughout the dimensional composition. As its title suggests, the sculpture is indeed an “ode,” extending thanks to the capabilities it opened up for communication, yet virtual spaces themselves will always be “synthetic.” As a result, the work is meant to both celebrate the opportunities while acknowledging the limitations of technology with the visual pun of two laptops “face-to-face” while the desktop sans camera sat alone below them.



Figure 11: EVPL. *Ode to the Synthetic Tether*. Altered Found Object (Desktop Computer). 2022. Photographed by Emily Rose Tucker.

To further ruminate on the “different boats” or circumstances through which we weather the storm, one must acknowledge that alongside privileges and resources, there is the subjective experience of living a life from one’s own perspective and experiences.

Irvin explains this well through the example of an itch.

How is objectivity with regard to private phenomena possible? Clearly, we learn how to use the word 'itch' to describe certain aspects of our experience, and it seems that uses of this word can be correct or incorrect. A child, claiming that he has an itch, might be instructed that the sensation in question is really a pinch, a burn, or a tickle. The possibility of norms in this domain depends on the assumption that, since we are all physiologically similar creatures, common stimuli produce similar sensations in us.

Although certain standard external stimuli are initially used to anchor the meaning of the word “itch,” once one masters the word one can apply it independently of these standard stimuli. If someone, seeing my poison ivy rash, says, “That must be itchy,” I can reply, “I know that poison ivy causes itching in most people, but I feel a burning sensation.” The fact that no one else can feel what I am feeling, and thus be in a position to judge whether my claim is correct, does not prevent it from being correct or incorrect.⁸

Many people have come to understand what the meaning of the word “home” is, what objects culturally exist within that space, and how to rhetorically communicate about “home.” For instance, while *home* is a place, the head space of *home* is often prioritized over the physical space where people redefine home as a circumstance, vocation, relationship, etc. While everyone, in their subjective experience of life, defines home differently in a personal sense, furniture items themselves will generally denote a familial, domestic space onto which we can project our individual experiences, as previously addressed using Burke’s terministic screens.

Similarly, external spaces will generally share a sense of the public. No matter where individuals stand on the masking laws or social distancing in general, COVID signage and masks will rhetorically communicate a public, shared spaces because those objects do not reside in domestic spaces. As a result, the spaces will be semiotically recognized as public or private no matter the individual subjective experience with said spaces.

⁸ Irvin, Sherri. “Aesthetics and the Private Realm.” 229.

CHAPTER 3: NAVIGATING THE PUBLIC

In the Gallery

Within the gallery, viewers will have to confront my artwork about the pandemic while still in the pandemic. Though many rules are beginning to relax, there are varying perspectives about where we are in the pandemic's timeline, which will affect how audience members will interact with each other within the exhibition space itself. Some people will feel perfectly comfortable interacting with a door or a game together, while others may stay at a distance and merely observe. Without interacting with the door, at first glance, one might not even notice that it has three knobs in a passing gaze. With all of the person's background knowledge of doors and their uses, their assumption would probably be that it is easy to open and leads into another space, yet neither of these thoughts are true.

Either way, as viewers move throughout the space, the artworks themselves will shift. For instance, the quilt work *Remnants and Receipts*, will look more like a real, sewn textile or patterned and solid fabric scraps until viewers approach the assemblage, at which point they will recognize the different textures of the various found objects used. By viewing the object from a different vantage point, it goes from referencing a hand-made family heirloom that resides in the home to touching on semiotics of the pandemic experience through the remnants of toilet paper tubes and mask fragments.

Burke mentions visual art as “all there at once,” as opposed to sequential performances of music, saying that “works such as paintings and sculpture first confront us in their totality, then we impart a kind of temporal order to them by letting the eye rove over them analytically, thus endowing them with many tiny ‘histories’ as we go from one part to another.”⁹ As in the aforementioned quilt example, the object exists in a static state, yet as viewers navigate the space around it and draw conclusions from their changing recognition of its parts. This spatial rhetoric functions as an ongoing theme in my artwork, meditating on the ways in which people come to understand systems and institutions differently based on how they have to navigate them socially.

In a COVID World

During the pandemic, we have come to accept and expect certain visual experiences in our daily lives. Seeing a mask lying on the ground is unfortunately a new normal, and my series of cyanotypes titled *2020 Botanical Prints* (2020-2022) examines this normalcy by playing with the visual history of botanical cyanotype prints. Early cyanotypes used objects instead of photo negatives as a means of making imagery, especially plant life, because they were easy to print, made beautiful images, and recorded exact shapes for identifying and cataloging the plants later. By leaning into this history of taking something from the ground and turning it into a record, a memory, of that object, I am pointing out the prevalence of the masks among our foliage today and how terribly common it is, such that they are included as botanicals themselves in my cyanotypes of 2020. Semiotically, I also find it interesting that “2020” has become nearly

⁹ Burke. “Medium as ‘Message.’” 417.

synonymous with the pandemic, such that as time passed, my series title *2020 Botanical Prints* did not lose any of its meaning, but rather served to reiterate the cultural memory and attachment to the particular visual language of “2020.”



Figure 12: EVPL. *2020 Botanical Prints*. Cyanotype Prints & Collage. 2022.
Photographed by Emily Rose Tucker.

Another recognizable icon of a COVID world is the hand sanitizer dispenser, be it installed on the wall or on a stand. The frequency with which people see, recognize, and interact with these objects has granted a collective level of trust in their visual language of form and location throughout public spaces. Because of this understood trust, many times people habitually use the dispensers without looking at them or even verifying their contents from the start. This interaction with public space facilitates an ironic situation wherein people who are on heightened alert of cleanliness and contact with the external world are executing a Pavlovian action of trust expecting the dispenser to give them hand sanitizer because of the way that the pandemic has rhetorically constructed those objects in external spaces. I was tempted to install an unmarked dispenser at the entrance to the

building housing my exhibition that instead dispensed ink to disrupt the viewer's trust in the spatial systems set forth by our recent culture. Without any denotation that the ink-filled dispenser was hand sanitizer at all, I feel like we would have still seen many stained hands and disgruntled faces navigating the exhibition while questioning their reflexive need to use the dispenser upon entering a social space.

Another phenomenon that emerged was that of the elbow bump; this gestural salutation came at a time in which people were not as afraid to interact under masked circumstances, yet did not want to risk surface-based transmission or contamination. However, at this current time, we seem to be in a transitional phase during which guidelines are easing, yet we are collectively holding our breath waiting for another wave of case from a new strain or the possibility of hope. That is to say that many people are unsure, or in the least, not quite in agreement of how to navigate shared spaces and contact, such as handshakes and elbow bumps, as addressed in my lenticular artwork *Tag! You're It!* (2022).



Figure 13a: EVPL. *Tag! You're It!*. COVID-19 Mask Fabric and Used Mask Strings. 2022. Photographed by Emily Rose Tucker.

Following my monochromatic color scheme, the artwork is composed of PPE mask fabric and used mask strings that form line drawings, with one side depicting an elbow bump and the other showing one outstretched hand and one extended elbow, the latter of which is the inverted color scheme of the former. The piece communicates the visceral feeling of touch, literally depicting this transitional phase in social etiquette of shared space and contact, while also being constructed of mask strings that were worn by my parents in the medical field a year ago. While any germs on the mask strings are gone at this point, it is impactful to know that the found objects themselves were actively present in COVID units, thus, changing the way we inhabit the gallery space around them.



Figure 13b: Detail. Photographed by Emily Rose Tucker.

So far as handshakes, I personally feel that I will always have the socialization of a handshake in my subconscious reflexes, yet I do not know if I will ever totally relax to my previous state of just accepting hand-to-hand contact from every stranger who wants to exchange a pleasantry. I find it hard to remember and understand the proximity we used to share with others in social spaces, so far as how close we stood to each other, insisting on touching hands and breathing into one another's faces. That is to say that we will all come out of this experience, having faced this same storm in our different boats, with individualized experiences that will carry into future social situations. Burke describes this saying, "For, strictly speaking, there will be as many different world views in human history as there are people."¹⁰ Everyone experienced a different pandemic. Beyond public infrastructure and contextual objects, individuals had to live their through the often-unseen spectrum of circumstance and disproportionate risk, upheld by many social and institutional systems that valued, and still value, money over individual people.

¹⁰ Burke. "Terministic Screens." 52.

CHAPTER 4: SYSTEMS & SYSTEM FAILURE

“...However important to us is the tiny sliver of reality each of us has experiences firsthand, the whole overall ‘picture’ is but a construct of our symbol systems. To meditate on this fact until one sees its full implications is much like peering over the edge of things into an ultimate abyss.”

—Kenneth Burke¹¹

Expectations of Functionality

From positions of privilege, it is hard to recognize that systems are failing until one steps back to examine the systems from someone else’s perspective, which is one reason I am interested in works that change as you view them from different vantage points and/or interact with in various ways.

In my work *Parable of Privilege*, I present three locks, each one representing a means of exclusion set forth by altering the object. At first glance, you appear to have everything you need, especially through the keys: keys open locks. However, the first lock does not have a keyhole, the second is a combination lock, and the third is a deadbolt that does not fit the keys. As the viewer takes a step closer to the work, shifting their literal location and perspective within the space, they come to the realization that the utility and functionality of the objects are merely feigned. After facilitating a sense of hope in their utility and then an exclusion from participating, the audience realizes that none of the locks are accessible to them.

¹¹ Burke. “Terministic Screens.” 48.

Each lock represents different levels of exclusion respectively: lacking the appropriate resources, lacking the information of how to access, and lacking an invitation to open the door at all. All of these locks imply that others were able to get in because they either had different locks, different means of opening these same locks, or even no locks at all, depending on how society has structured itself to react to their intersectional identities.



Figure 14: EVPL. *A Parable of Privilege*. Found Object (Key Lock, Combination Lock, Deadbolt, Doorknob). 2022. Photographed by Emily Rose Tucker.

The pandemic did not so much *cause* our structural social imbalances as much as it unearthed what has always been present. Dowling goes on to explain these dynamics in her text “Caring in Times of a Global Pandemic.”

The COVID-19 pandemic revealed just who exactly keeps life going by doing the jobs that no society can do without. These jobs include the work of caring for others: whether this is unpaid care work raising children, looking after relatives, or looking out for a friend with a disability; and whether this is paid care work in hospitals, care homes, day centres, or in the home. Care workers include some of the most precarious and lowest paid workers there are – most of whom are women, many of whom are migrant workers... In the wake of the pandemic, a spotlight has been shone on the acute difficulties that have beset the health and social care sector for a long time, raising awareness of the lack of resources and equipment available to health and other care workers while also bringing issues of understaffing, long hours, and low pay to the fore (UNI Global Union 2021). The inability to sufficiently protect not only the staff but, tragically, so many of the residents of care homes, is also symptomatic of the lack of value attributed to care recipients.¹²

The pandemic illuminated who society truly needed in a time of crisis while institutions simultaneously treated them as expendable. Further, certain groups of people are disproportionately affected by the pandemic because of the systems currently in place. Not only are these people, particularly those of intersectional identities, put into positions of higher exposure, but they are less likely to receive the same quality care as those for whom the system was built. For instance, pain reported by female patients, particularly by women of color, is not taken as seriously as their male counterparts. Beyond this, the entire handling of the pandemic was built against people with disabilities because of their higher risks for complications or severe symptoms of the virus. In this sense, the “game” is rigged.

When entire groups of people revolted against the mask mandate, they were telling their peers at higher risk that their personal discomfort and annoyance of wearing the mask outweighed the possibility of protecting those who were more vulnerable. On Good Morning America, when the CDC Director Rochelle Walensky said that over 75%

¹² Dowling. “Caring in Times of a Global Pandemic.” 12.

of those vaccinated who died of COVID also had at least four comorbidities, she gave space for others to rule the deaths of people with disabilities as acceptable, as if their bodies and conditions excused the loss of their lives, when the system itself was already built to exclude them.

Additionally, distinctions were made visible between those households where mothers in particular and parents in general were able to stay at home and take advantage of flexible home office conditions to incorporate caring responsibilities, and those who could not do so and still had to work outside of the home...

The COVID-19 pandemic highlights the differentials and inequalities of care that exist within and across societies; not only is it the case that there are hierarchies of care along the intersecting axes of gender, race, and class; it is also the case that the lives of some were protected at the expense of the lives of others.¹³

Dowling continues to explain how the pandemic illuminated existing issues, and while those intersectional identities will stack the deck more and more against certain groups of people, everything will come back to money—who has it and how that affects being able to opt in or out of certain experiences. In instances like COVID, opting out of a situation can mean avoid risk altogether, whereas opting can put someone directly into instances of exposure to provide the very services that allow for others, those who can *afford* it, to stay at home.

Money Keeps the World Going Round

The pandemic has served as an interruption—of schedules and conveniences for some—of livelihood and health for others. However, this time has not been a mere reflection of the virus itself, in so much as it is an exposure of what our society values. At

¹³ Dowling. “Caring in Times of a Global Pandemic.” 15, 17.

the height of the pandemic, people worked to stay alive, only leaving home to spend that same money they had earned to continue just staying alive. Life itself became a waiting game between instances of transaction. A socioeconomic dynamic emerged, not into existence, but into recognition, within the divide of those who could afford to shelter-in-place and order deliveries and those who financially had to face risk of exposure to deliver the same goods and services. The pandemic did not so much cause this transactional existence as allow for capitalism to strip away what and who it deemed as unnecessary.

Analyzing money, Dowling notes, “While [the United States and the United Kingdom] have been able to vaccinate their populations relatively quickly, they have displayed less capacity to care sufficiently for their populations in the pandemic. This is only a seeming paradox if we look closer at the tensions between profitability, cost, and care: The care sector is labour intensive and hence costly and not very profitable industry.”¹⁴

When the majority needed it—when companies needed it—the world made accommodations. The same accommodations that from the beginning could have helped people across identities, particularly those that intersect with a spectrum of disabilities, to have better access to employment, health care, education, socialization, etc. Even then, as the world opened up, society pushed onward as cases surged, broadening the abyss between public and private spaces, especially for those who remained in high-risk situations. The public brought with it opportunities for normalcy as well as risk for

¹⁴ Dowling. “Caring in Times of a Global Pandemic.” 13-14.

exposure, while the private provided individualized space as well as a binding to whatever living situation, healthy or not, awaited at home.

Though much of my work addresses systems, most of which themselves seem to be connected to money, the most blatant example is the participatory work *Who Makes the Rules? Who Plays the Game?* (2022), which consists of a found object chess/checkerboard with cast nickels and dimes as the game pieces. Building off the idiom “nickel and dime,” this work examines the impact of socioeconomic status on social systems. Oftentimes, those who make the rules are not the ones who have to play by them. Further, when certain laws are met with financial consequences, it becomes a matter of who can and cannot *afford* to break the law in the same manner that I previously addressed who could *afford* to avoid exposure during the pandemic.



Figure 15: EVPL. *Who Makes the Rules? Who Plays the Game?*. Resin & Found Object (Chess/Checkerboard with Cast Nickels and Dimes). 2022. Photographed by Emily Rose Tucker.

The pandemic did not create the connection of money to health and well-being by any means—surviving has always been a checkers match of survival of the richest wherein the truly rich do not even have to play. Instead, they sit cloaked in the safety net of systems built to protect their capital, not even occupying a space in the game while looming over the board as a spectator, all the while feeding off of those who are competing—those for whom incessant nickel-and-diming could be the difference in having a home, going hungry, or receiving medical care.

Access & Exclusion

To reiterate the pandemic's role in faulty systems, one must acknowledge that COVID did not further system failures, like voter suppression, but rather laid them bare. As with online communication, the promotion of and accommodations for mail-in ballots were instances of access that should have been just as available before the majority needed them, especially for people without access to public transportation, thus, disenfranchising people of low socioeconomic status and people with disabilities.

In the 2020 election for President of the United States, Georgia was a pivotal state so far as combatting voter suppression, helping new voters to get registered and have their voices heard. The often red-leaning state flipped blue, which helped Joe Biden to defeat Donald Trump in the election, thus, the not-so-subtle title of my artwork addressing voter suppression *Blue Peaches Taste the Sweetest* (2022).

The work is constructed of seven mailboxes, eerily assembled into a smiley face, and as viewers interact with the objects by opening the mailboxes, they will see that the bottoms have been removed. By installing the work a bit lower than the gallery-standard 58- to 60-inch midpoint, the majority of viewers will not be able to see the missing bottoms of the mailboxes, thus, assuming their functionality based on previous interactions with mailboxes. However, like systems, upon actual use, the mailboxes are exposed to be faulty and futile as the audience members navigate the space and choose whether or not to touch the objects.



Figure 16a: EVPL. *Blue Peaches Taste the Sweetest*. Altered Found Object (Mailboxes). 2022. Photographed by Emily Rose Tucker.

Many times, people in privileged positions assume that systems work because that is what they have been taught, but for many groups of people, the systems have been built against them, as with the examples of voter suppression addressed above. To reflect on this example, I used mailboxes to directly point to the 2020 attempt to discredit mail-in ballots. I arranged them into a smiley face to reference the appearance of equity and also to loosely address the chilling concept of America being “great again” when it has never been great for all of its people.



Figure 16b: Side View. Photographed by Emily Rose Tucker.

CHAPTER 5: GAMIFYING SPACE

“If life is a game we are playing, it must be a game which most of us, at any rate, do not know we are playing. One might, therefore, wonder whether it is at all possible for life to be a game, since it may be thought strange, if not absurd, to suppose that anyone could play a game and not know it.”
—Bernard Suits¹⁵

Domestic & Social

In considering the contexts in which games are played, people often think of childhood memories, eliciting two major themes demonstrated in this exhibition: the domestic and the social. A game of checkers, whether played with nickels and dimes or regular game pieces, cannot be played alone, thus invoking a shared space tethered together by the singular board on which the game is played. Though many games are offered in online landscapes, especially in response to the pandemic, even those digital realms are visually constructed to mimic the spatial setup of playing a physical game with another person. Board games and card games in particular are frequently thought of in relation to childhood memories, thus, connected to the home.

The artwork *I Didn't Say "Simon Says"* (2022), a Twister mat constructed out of “Stand Here, Maintain 6 Feet” stickers, plays upon this reference to home by comparing it with a visual literacy of the public signage. The work illuminates the semiotic differences in these locations and how people are being instructed by rules of the text and the Twister dots to navigate the space in vastly different ways, echoing both a shift in spatial awareness across time—before and during COVID—and across space—in and outside of the home. In addition, by appealing to a nostalgia sensibility through a

¹⁵ Suits. “Is Life a Game...” 209–13.

childhood game, the audience may also feel a sense of longing for a time before the social distancing altogether. Even outside of the pandemic era, it is probable that without explicit instructions for *how* to interact, most people will only step on the Twister mat and not be inclined to put themselves into precarious positions within a populated and public gallery setting.



Figure 17: EVPL. *I Didn't Say, "Simon Says."* Digital Print. 2021.
Photographed by Emily Rose Tucker.

Rules in Games & Systems

In general, games require players to adhere to a certain set of rules in order to advance the game to a completion, usually to win or lose. Even if certain examples challenge this thought by encouraging fluctuation of rules or the disregard for rules in general, those rejections of standard rules themselves *become* the rules of that particular

game. When paralleled to society, much of life, as it pertains to institutions, is composed of rule sets that determine how players are able to advance based on their navigation of that structure.

In game play, some games are built to privilege some and complete exclude others, whether they are founded in physical ability, mental agility, financial stability, or sheer luck. In life, these same advantages and exclusions still occur, but in larger and far more direct discriminatory means, as seen in systemic oppression. In both games and life, people can cheat, or pursue advancement outside of the rules, yet there are very real consequences if exposed—whether or not the rules were just or fair from the start.

In the jigsaw puzzle, *Fluxx*, I intentionally created the puzzle so that the straight edges would align together on the internal portions of the image. Culturally and traditionally, people assemble the straight edges of a puzzle first with the expectation that it will follow the unwritten rule of being contained by straight edges. However, in subverting this visual and functional expectation, I am urging viewers to reexamine why certain rules are in effect, especially when they are as arbitrary as the external boundaries of a puzzle, and applying this inquisition to systems in society.

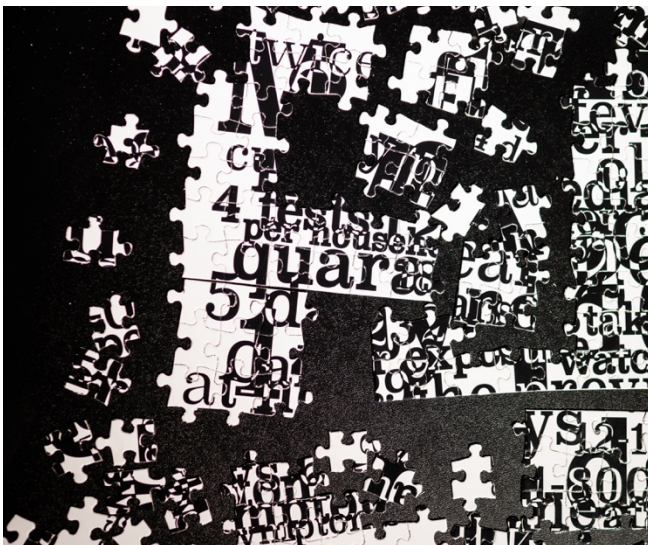


Figure 6b: Detail.
Photographed by Emily
Rose Tucker.

While the metaphor of a game appears the most obviously in my works that reference gameplay directly, like a puzzle or checkers, my critique of faulty systems extends the same metaphor to works like *The American Dream*. To gamify the object, the form itself sets forth the situation rule of having three knobs while the functional expectation that most viewers will bring with them implies the challenge of opening the door to “win.” Single players and teams will experience this interactive object differently because its structure was literally built against and for them respectively, but in the same breath, one could argue that both have equal *opportunity* to “win,” despite the obvious disadvantage in practice.

Central to the pandemic, rules set up expectations for use, be it wearing a mask in a specific area or how far of a distance people should maintain. To gamify these rules, one could examine the rate at which people broke them. Speaking from a personal perspective, I remember the militant obedience I originally had to the arrows on the grocery store floor. On one hand, we were all struggling to understand what was and was not safe, so many of us aired on the side of caution. On the other hand, the grocery stores of 2020 were often packed full of frantic people panic-buying toilet paper, such that the circumstance of the crowded space called for more rules to maintain an actual 6-foot distance. As the pandemic became normalized and the grocery stores dwindled back to normal quantities of people, the arrows faded in importance. If I am the only person in a section, should I loop around to the next aisle like I am maneuvering a series of one-way streets? However, the public symbols of the arrows and the “Maintain 6 Feet” decals remained even when they faded into the visual white noise of a new normal. When the

CDC changed the social distancing measurement to 3 feet, the “6 feet” signage remained for the most part.

My piece *Red Rover. Red Rover?* (2021) touches on this concept by placing two red arrow decals pointed at one another at each entrance to the gallery. In directing traffic both ways in and out of the space, the antithesis of the arrow’s intended semiotics, the installation asks the audience to simultaneously abide by and break the rule in order to access the exhibition. The work *Tag! You’re It!* illustrates a similar confusion, not in regards to mandates, but the social rules for interactions moving forward. In these instances, the rules themselves become subjective based on the individual’s perception of the pandemic and its status of being “over” or “ongoing,” gamifying how people will engage with one another and their shared spaces.

CONCLUSION

It's All Fun & Games, Until Someone Gets Hurt...

Rhetorically, games bring with them a sense of frivolity. The saying referenced in the exhibition title reiterates this culturally connotation: “It’s all fun and games, until someone gets hurt.” The quote implies that an interaction is no longer a game once people experience harm. In conflating this idea with the pandemic, I am critiquing those who flippantly disregarded other’s safety by themselves viewing the pandemic as a game, whether in regards to gambling on their immune system or spectating the game of chess played by media outlets. The artworks that resemble games satirically function based on rhetorical experiences with games as concepts and in spatial actions.

Only those profiting off of the pandemic could be considered to have “won” in a sense, while many people have *lost*, especially those disproportionately affected based on factors like race, disability, and socioeconomic status. Some people have lost stability in the form of mental health or reliable income, while others lost relatives or their own lives. In addition, many people have lost trust—in their government, in its systemics, and in their peers. Even if the pandemic is actually coming to an end, the impact that it has made in terms what the rules were, who followed them, and what was won/lost as a result of both will last for much longer than many people are ready to accept, particularly as it pertains to the rhetorical navigation of public and spaces.

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Attended the Foundations in Art: Theory & Education (FATE) Conference Virtually
2021

Presented “The Power Suit: A Rhetorical Examination of Gendered Professional Attire” in the Southeast Regional Undergraduate Research, Scholarly, and Creative Activity Conference at Georgia College & State University
2019

PUBLICATIONS: *Message *Special C-19 Issue*. University of Plymouth Press, Message Graphic Communication Design Research, Online, Online, Spring 2022. Available at: <http://hdl.handle.net/10026.1/18929>

Cover Artwork. *Unsettling Archival Research: Engaging Critical, Communal, and Digital Archives*. Edited by Gesa Kirsch, Romeo García, Caitlin Burns, and Walker P. Smith. Under advanced contract at Southern Illinois University Press. Expected Spring 2022.

Sanctuary Literary and Arts Journal, Southern Regional Honors Council, Print, 2018-2019 Edition.

The Tower, University of Montevallo, Print, 2019.

The Tower's 2018 Winter Online Release, University of Montevallo, Online, Winter 2018.

EXHIBITIONS:

JURIED

Art in the Time of Corona (Vol. 2) A Global Project, Dab Art Co. Available at: dabart.me/atc-exhibit-page-2021

REENTRY, Webster Arts (Webster Groves, MO), 14 Sept
2021 - 31 October 2021

2021 Black & White Show, KORE Gallery (Louisville, KY),
1 Sept 2021 - 25 Sept 2021

Black and White, Cultural Center of Cape Cod (South
Yarmouth, MA), online, May 2021

TOGETHER, Old Court House Arts Center (Woodstock, IL),
7 May 2021 - 29 May 2021

FATE: Infrastructure 2021 Juried Members (Virtual)
Exhibition, Foundations in Art: Theory & Education
Conference, 7 April 2021

The Best of Open Studio Weekend - A Retrospective,
Cressman Center for Visual Arts (Louisville, KY), 6 Nov
2020 - 12 Dec 2020

Stand Up, Highpoint Center for Printmaking (Minneapolis,
MN), 23 October 2020 - 21 November 2020

Cell Phone Art Exhibit, Jag Gallery (Key West, FL), 6 Nov
2020 - 23 Nov 2020

Open Studio Weekend Juried Exhibition, Cressman Center
for Visual Arts (Louisville, KY), 1 Nov 2019 - 14 Dec 2019

Ink Only II, UAB Department of Art's Project Space,
Paperworkers Local (Birmingham, AL), 7 Sept 2019 - 5 Oct
2019

Juried Foundation Show, University of Montevallo
(Montevallo, AL), Spring 2019 — Honorable Mention

Juried Foundation Show, University of Montevallo
(Montevallo, AL), Spring 2018 — Honorable Mention

Juried Foundation Show, University of Montevallo
(Montevallo, AL), Spring 2017

GROUP

Ekphrasis, The University Writing Center, University of Louisville (Louisville, KY), 22 April 2022 - 3 May 2022.

New Beginnings Appalachia: Emerging Artist Exhibition, Appalachian Artisan Center (Hindman, KY), 16 Oct 2020 - 15 Jan 2021

Portland Museum Digital Exhibition in Response to COVID-19, Portland Museum (Louisville, KY), 24 Aug 2020 - present, online/social media

Time Identity, MFA Building, University of Louisville (Louisville, KY), 13 Feb 2020 - 4 Mar 2020

MFA Student Showcase, MFA Building, University of Louisville (Louisville, KY), 2 Nov 2019 - Dec 2019

The University of Montevallo Printmaking, Hoover Public Library (Hoover, AL), 5 Feb 2018 - 31 March 2018

SOLO

It's All Fun And—: A Rhetorical Analysis of Space in the Pandemic, M.F.A. Thesis Show, UofL M.F.A. Building (Louisville, KY), 15 April 2022 - 26 April 2022

Our Quarantine, Appalachian Artisan Center (Hindman, KY), 1 Sept 2021 - 23 Oct 2021

Our Quarantine, B3 Gallery (Nashville, IN), 23 June 2021 - 18 July 2021

The Nothing That Is., B.F.A. Thesis show, University of Montevallo (Montevallo, AL), 22 April 2019 - 25 April 2019