Co-Production: Creating Social Justice through Research

Working Notes from a Connected Communities Research Symposium

November 4th -6th 2013

Background

The Symposium was convened by Keri Facer, Andrew Miles, Pat Thomson and Tom Wakeford as part of Keri Facer's Leadership Fellowship for the Connected Communities Programme. The aims of the Symposium were:

- To create an opportunity for individuals from community, arts and academic fields to reflect together on the research cultures and practices that might contribute to greater social and economic equality
- To explore the contribution of Connected Communities research projects to creating research cultures capable of addressing longstanding inequalities
- To lay the groundwork for a book and, potentially, an online resource that would support other researchers in community, arts and academic fields, to develop research projects.

Who was there?

There was an open call for participation in the Symposium at the Connected Communities Summit in Edinburgh, July 2013, via the CC Researchers Mailing List and via CC Research project networks. Applicants were invited to participate in the Symposium on the basis of an abstract outlining how their thinking would contribute to these aims and with a view to creating a balance of different disciplines and sectors in the Symposium. All participants were asked to commit to being present for all three days. To ensure financial constraints did not preclude participation, honoraria were offered to participants from community organisations and all T&S expenses were covered for all participants. The final list of participants was:

Andrew Miles
Antonia Layard
Asha Mohamed
Bob Johnston
Dave O'Brien
David Clay
David Studdert
Emma Roe
Gareth Williams
Graham Jeffery
Helen Graham
Hugh Kelly
Jasber Singh
Javier Sanchez
Jenny Pearce
Kate Pahl
Keri Facer
Kimberley Marwood
Lisa Matthews
Lucy Pearson
Michael Buser
Morag McDermont
Owain Jones
Pat Thomson
Steve Pool
Sue Cohen,
Tom Wakeford
Bryony Enright (observer)
Simon Bailey (observer)

Event preparation

Before the event, all participants produced a 1500-2000 word piece exploring their own research experience and practice in relation to the theme of the Symposium. These were circulated two weeks before the meeting for all participants to read to develop a greater shared understanding of each other's' interests and concerns. In addition, the convenors established pairings who would read each other's' pieces in detail and who would have time during the workshop to talk together and work together on these pieces.

Co-Production: Creating Social Justice through Research? 2

Day One 2
Welcome 2
Aims: 2
Concerns and hopes for the group: 2

And some individual hopes… 3

Who's in the room, sharing expertise, principles of working together 4
The objects! 4

Mapping traditions, inspirations and resources 5

Reflections on the maps and timelines: 8
Reflecting on theories of change: 8
Group discussion on theories of change: 8

Day Two 10
1:1 Conversations 10
Paper workshops 10
Feedback from group 1: creativity, arts and co-production 10

Feedback from group 2: empathy, affect, emotion, imagination 11

Feedback from group 3: power, representation, agency, against domination 13

Keri's plea! 14

Contemporary patterns of social and economic inequalities 15
1. How might socioeconomic inequality be challenged today? 15

2. Where does co-production make a distinctive contribution today? 16
3. Building alliances/connections 16

Mini-Manifestos 17

Day Three 21
Reflect, consolidate, move forward 21
Our assets: 21

Open space – next steps 23

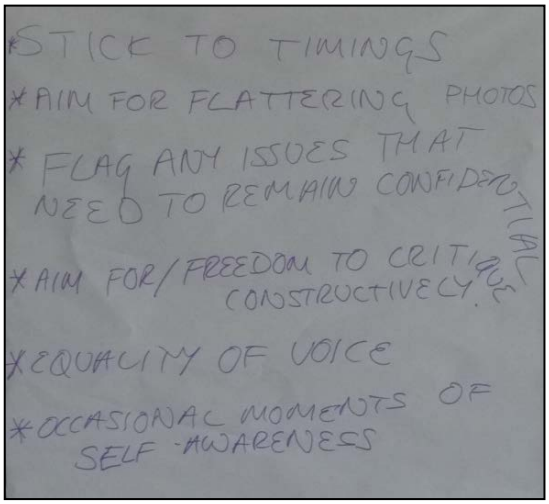
Co-Production: Creating Social Justice through Research?

4th – 6th November

Day One

Welcome

This symposium came from numerous conversations and rants. As leadership fellow for the Connected Communities Programme Keri wanted to address questions about different forms of research and how they take on the significant challenges of our time. Tom, Keri, Andrew and Pat don't all agree on this and have had many conversations (some may call them arguments) about how research, and specifically coproduction, can tackle issues of social justice. As such, they decided they needed more conversations, with more people, from different perspectives and angles and so the symposium was born. This event was an opportunity to provide a safe place to talk and have conversations about coproduced research and social justice and perhaps develop new perspectives.

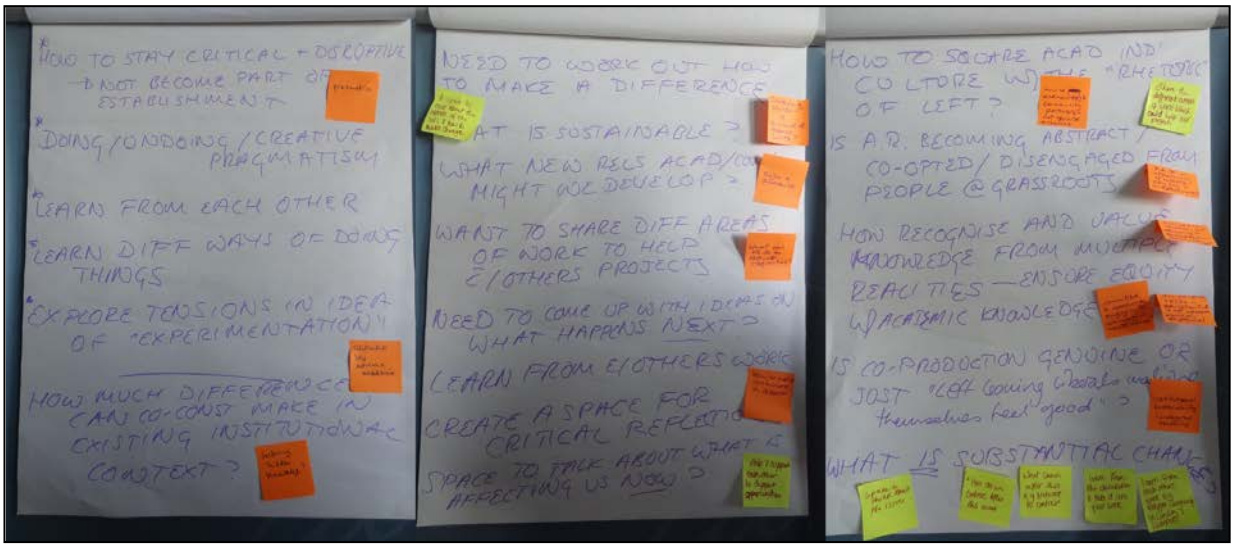


Some Ground Rules

Aims:

- To create an opportunity for individuals from community, arts and academic fields to reflect together on the research cultures and practices that might contribute to greater social and economic equality
- To explore the contribution of Connected Communities research projects to creating research cultures capable of addressing longstanding inequalities
- To lay the groundwork for a book and, potentially, an online resource that would support other researchers in community, arts and academic fields, to develop research projects.

Concerns and hopes for the group:



Retrospectively look back and find commonality between projects – ask specific questions of disparate projects.

- How is knowledge differently constructed with/outside academy – how does community knowledge/research get accredited /legitimated according to those rules and agendas.
- Inequality and social mobility, in/out of academy, everyday participation. Frustration with 'values' (or lack of) in academic research – selfish, individualised mode of operation, reinforcing hierarchies. Unconvinced by co-production – tendency to tokenism, weak social welfarism, can it be 'empowering'?
- Participation with grassroots. Gender, ethnicity, poverty. Structural questions. How do the margins 'liberate themselves'. Working alongside policy makers and academics.
- Dissatisfaction with disconnected academia. Museum work – coproduce with communities. How does change happen, how to challenge inequalities. What does knowing do in terms of political transformation. More/less formalised than traditional academia. Systemic change – transformation.
- Looking for a framework for doing something about difference.
- Fighting back to the abandonment; governments-communities. Academia can help.
- Recognising diverse knowledge sources and perspectives – organic – doing, embodied, it's ours, no one has to think for us. Too much abstract, not enough concrete, community – action research too often tokenism.

And some individual hopes…

Owain: Interested in the ecological consciousness of the CC Programme.

Bob: Wants to learn more about social justice and co-production

Hugh: Wants this think about the principles of why we do things and how this is informed by what we know and don't know by talking to one another

Jenny: Would like to learn how other people are doing co-production in the hope that she can get different perspectives, new food for thought and take some of these ideas back to Bradford.

Gareth: Wants to explore the tension between activism and academia and explore value driven research vs. the limits of the university

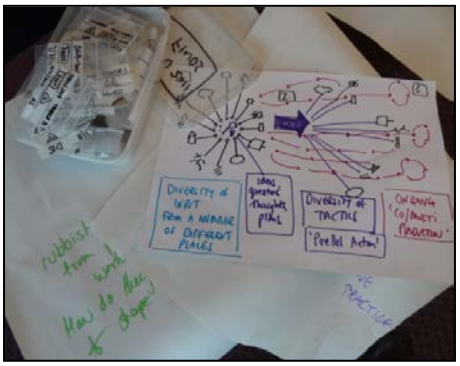
Gareth: Wants to have good conversations and learn about different ways of doing and get fresh ideas.

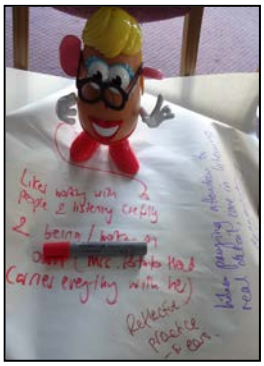
Keri made the point that the CC programme has the potential to do meaningful research and she hoped that this symposium will create a safe space in which we could talk about the methods used in the programme and more widely in other co-production. To explore what participation allows us to do and if these new methods allow us to disrupt inequality. She was aware that she didn't want this to become just an argument about the language of co-production or a reinventing of the wheel but a safe place to discuss new approaches, methods and means of social justice.

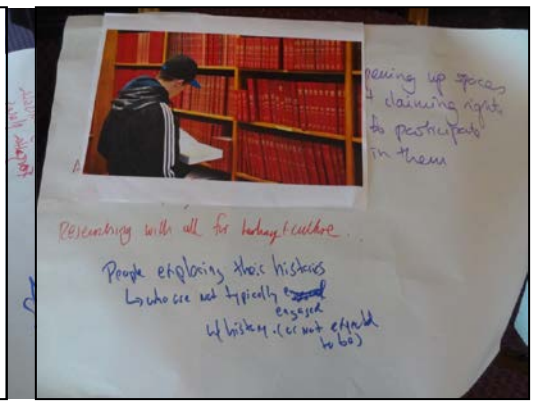
Who's in the room, sharing expertise, principles of working together:

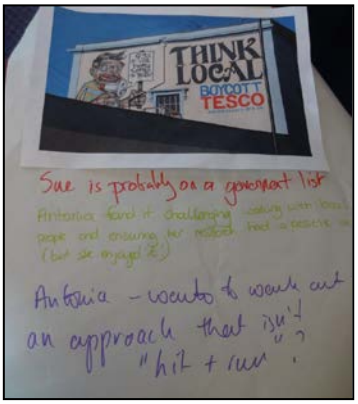
The Objects

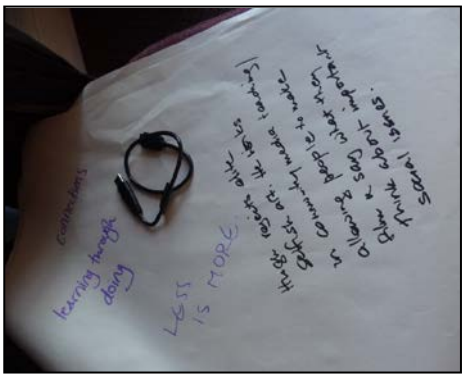
The first activity involved individual objects brought by everyone to the symposium. The object related to their research in some way. Everyone spent time talking to one another and then trying to identify which their object was. They then wrote something about them next to their object.

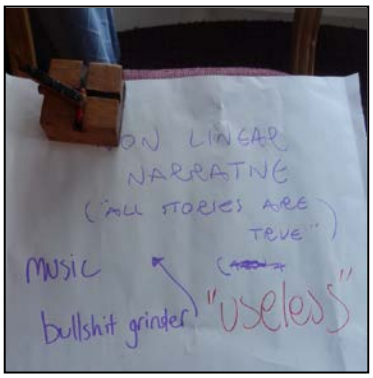












Mapping traditions, inspirations and resources

The aim of this session was to make visible the expertise and experience in the room as well as the resources and traditions that we use to help us in coproduced research. It also helped us to reflect on ideas about social change and power that are at work in these traditions.

Using timelines and (huge) maps we plotted the people, organisations, events, resources etc. that had inspired our thinking and informs our work.

There were hundreds of points and important moments, some of the ones I documents are listed below:

On the Maps:

North America:

Inuit Community Media ● David Suzuki ● Community Organising in Chicago ● The Temptations DC ● Provocative Pragmatism ● Digital Storytelling ● David Harvey ● Rachel Carson ●Ann Sexton ● John Steinbeck; The Pearl, Grapes of Wrath ● Mike Davis

South America:

Brazil: Darrell Posey traditional knowledge of kayapo ● Brazilian Beef Industry ● Funds of knowledge Moll et al ● Werner Herzog films ● Freire ● Porto Alegre Participatory Budgeting ● Indigenous University ● Buenos Aires opening up cities as public space

Atlantic/floating around:

HIV/AIDS movements ● Mid Atlantic Drift ● Over 80 countries where you can be killed or imprisoned for who you love ● Social injustice and religion

Europe:

Marxism ● Richard Hoggart ● Women's Movement ●Foucault ● Third European Poverty Programme with all states involved in EU ● 1974 Portuguese Revolution ● Weber ● CCS ● Education Action Research

Africa:

Sub-Sahara refugees at food bank in Bristol ● My roots and heritage ● Challenging the research that was being done to my community ● Uganda participatory poverty assessment programmes ● Legal resources centre Johannesburg (1989) ● Cathy Kell ● Fanon ●

Middle East:

Teaching English in Iran ● Having half-Israeli Friends

Asia:

Experiences of Religion in Sri Lanka ● My iphone was made

India:

Road building Kabul ● Gandhi ● Shiva ●

Russia:

Boycott Sochi Games ● Trans-Siberian Railway – connecting academics

Australia/New Zealand:

Sorry Day ● Stolen children royal commission ● Wreck the joint (2013) ● Paikea Legend

On the Time Line:

- Aristotle – ideas of Phronesis/Praxis
- 15th Century: Tomas More: Utopia, key concept for imagining future
- 1500s: Pre-enlightenment – ideas of relation between nature/society not separated
- 18th Century: Robert Owen at New Lanark, Scotland; founders of co-operative movement
- 1831: Merthyr Rising
- 1890: William Morris News from Nowhere
- 1900s: Communism in Russia
- 1910: Tonypandy Riots
- 1924: The surrealist Manifest
- 1930s: Critical Legal Studies in US
- 1933: My mother was born
- 1940: My mum was born
- 1940s: Billie Holiday sings 'strange fruit' for the first time to a live audience (LM)
- 1949: Leopold
- 1960's NYC: Jane Jacobs the death and life of cities – resistance to modern/rational planning. Eyes on the Street, people matter.
- 1960s: Second wave feminism – disrupting make knowledge
- 1963/68: E.P. Tompson, Making of the English Working Class – 'cultural Marxism'
- 1960s-1970s: Paulo Freire
- 1960s/1970s: Area based education initiatives: communities and schools collaborating, and its failures
- 1970's: Social Movements on class, ethnicity and gender in the UK
- 1974: I write my first poem about a deckchair
- 1980s: Riots (Toxteth) DC
- 1983:Being displaced by violent conflict from the countryside to a shanty town in Columbia
- 1983: Foucault dies – Anglophone governementality scholarship develops
- 1984:Miners' strike
- 1997: Animals legally recognised as sentient beings in Europe
- 2003: Blair Invades Iraq despite huge protests in London
- 2005 Istanbul Liverpool FC
- 2009: First experience of youth work in Coventry
- 2010: Conservatives voted in
- 2010: Connected Communities Summit
- 2011: Occupy Wall Street and its offshoots
- This weekend: Refuge In Films festival

Reflections on the maps and timelines:

'That 60s business' – our immediate intellectual/political inheritance ● Temporal formation – importance of particular absences ● Activists and social organisations – youth cultures ● Future bleak? Warfare of resources ● Digital transformation ● Increasing inequality ● The map wad difficult: I don't think about my references in terms of geography, individuals challenge that kind of positioning – where do you put Raymond Williams? ● Unacknowledged rules of the map ● Radical pedagogy ● Issues that are 'too global' to plot – refugeeism ● Marxism & The environmental questions – elephants in the room? ● Tension between personal and global historical sweep – how do we think/link the two ● What was omitted? Reflect on the decision making about inclusion/exclusion ● Difficult process – not 'creative'? ● Make up of history depends on the building blocks you start with ● No shared discrete positions – discourse/disjuncture ● Lived experience – tendency to revert to geography/history 'lessons' ● Abstraction – de-personalising ● Importance of cultural shifts as well as political ● More thought needed about what we were doing, where we were placing what, before we did it ● Eurocentrism ● Different tools create different absences ● Not all bottom up – state led ● Absence of the digital – product of non-material/technological resources in our thinking? Taken for granted? ● Conjuncture of theory and politics – praxis ● Tendency to think of space cross-sectionally on the map – static – time becomes fixed to an event, rather than interconnected process – but highlights connections between place and emergence – 1968 ● Timeline seems to encourage documenting of smaller incremental changes – but also the legal-state led shifts – it's not all bottom up, questions assumptions that state is necessarily behind/reactive/detrimental – not all regulation is bad, productive – empowering?

Reflecting on theories of change:

Possible models of change:

Individual change theory
The root cause/justice theory
The institutional development theory
The political elites theory
The grassroots mobilisation theory
The economics theory
The public attitudes theory
Add your own….

Group discussion on theories of change:

Discrimination example – 1965 Race Relations Act, response to moral pressure from individuals and groups – 'things have come a long way' but hasn't got rid of racism, perhaps changed the face of it, or created rhetorical blindness to it. Alinsky: Use the state, legal frameworks. Every action has a reaction. Small change takes place in communities, but racism still plays a massive part in people's lives.

Solidarity of the people – a resource for change. End of trade unionism – need new mechanisms/levers for change

Small impressions – tendency to defeatism? Depends on your understanding of power – the idea of interdependence can be a great force for change and also a great sense of inertia

Research offers grand narratives about rupture and change – what about continuity? How do we theorise that – things change –underlying structures are much more continuous – e.g. the political elite, looks very similar to C19 – "we other Victorians" etc…

Need theory of transformative change. Hope and utopia – positive, imaginative ideals for change. Inclusive. Visions need to be supported by legal-intellectual institutions. New subject positions challenge status quo.

Emotive/affective plain – find meaning among people. Harness collective desire as positive force for creative change.

Change comes from the everyday – significant. But top down theories dominate. How do you translate values, how do you frame spirituality. How do you counter pervasive Eurocentrism – what about the global south. Palestine won't change until it can challenge Western hegemony.

Relation of small changes to big change. There is no 'structural' world, the world and its structures are a process that is continually emerging from layers of everyday actions – change the everyday, change the emergent structure.

Growth of 'southern theory'. Do you have to throw out the Western orthodoxy altogether, or can it be put to use (de)constructively?

What kind of change? What scale? What arena? Eg. Environment in UK – our idea of the environment has been handed down from the romantics – very little changed in view of nature and countryside than that offered by these elite radical visionaries. Mary Midgley – philosophy as plumbing – need to change underlying beliefs.

Social movements have commonalities of embodied experience, mobilised around injustice, but needs allies – complexities of developing solidarity without collective identification and suffering – creates partial (dis)embodied knowledges.

Shifts – people have latent power possessed – labour power.

Arts – why are the margins a source of change? Does change happen when the legislation comes in? 'I refuse to be what I am' – Foucault – mobilisation from above, may not reflect shared values. What is it from the margins that is able to instigate this process?

What kind of change? Gov can change, but material conditions – physical, social, relational, may not change. Things change around you, to you, with you? Is this always a process that is open to participation?

What is my role? Am I a researcher? Am I only there because there is a problem? Concrete issues, community empowerment – can they make that change themselves? Research projects end.

Economics, ideology, state – drive change and make it impossible to develop counter narratives. Large scale is impossible, writers and critics recognise economics has power to shift, cultural change can only work at the limits of an economic 'already there'. Need to find new forms of organisation. What are they? Can research play a part in that?

Organisations need to be open to conjecture and opportunity. Importance of seismic change – World War Two and the welfare state. These institutions we know are changing – how to take up the open spaces.

How to respond to speech that opens possibilities – so much just closes down.

The system's built on inequality – have to engage in analysis/listening/creating spaces for those without power to act.

Need to explore relationships of macro-micro, rural-urban. Spaces created for co-production, 'real' material co-production – eg. Food. In some ways I look at Columbia, and they are rich in comparison to the UK, living in limited square blocks – lacking community and kinship.

The model doesn't have to be a certain way. You can't infiltrate the system – it will destroy attempts, so you need pragmatic creativity – we are taught that if you go up against the monster then you will be killed. So you have to address the monster at different junctures – micro – then to expand to macro level – how? Takes time, years, empowerment is a process. "Slowly slowly catch a monkey".

Day Two

1:1 Conversations

All the participants in the workshop were paired up to discuss their individual papers in detail.

Paper workshops

As Ideas from the day before began to bubble back to the surface we split into three groups to discuss what our individual paper is adding to the history and traditions in the field, what this means for future research, how we can incorporate some of the thinking from the night before and where we go next as a consequence i.e. what outcomes – film, book, further discussions etc.

The Groups:

1. Creativity, arts and co-production – **Andrew**
2. Empathy, affect, emotion, imagination – **Keri**
3. Power, representation, agency, against domination – **Pat**

Feedback from group 1: creativity, arts and co-production

Linking of methods, process, intended influence and creativity.

Change value structures – at what scale are we trying to work? Importance of changing values.

Property rights and ownership – public spaces are cut out and cut off, need to reclaim.

Culture of university, travails of the academy, lofty academic aspirations – 'save the world'. The actively engaged university is a project worth getting behind but you can't ask our project to save the world!

Network, digital – new spaces, need to take more advantage. Importance of 'doing stuff', develop relationship as they are energising, rather than always looking at the next bid.

Need to be savvy about how we represent what we want to say – who cares about 4* journals. Technocrats set agendas but ministers respond to affect – try to speak to both agendas.

Follow the money – who's getting it, who's spending it, public consultations – who is doing that? Why have AHRC decided coproduction is important?

Democratic epistemology – eg PAR – often discredited 'didn't they try that in the 60s'. A method with a toolkit can be very damaging – but PAR is a set of principles, ethics, need to counter assumption that practitioners need a toolkit. There is an activist dynamic in PAR that is not emphasised in co-production. We don't want a blueprint for co-production – is it too vague a term, or usefully vague. It is less politicised than PAR, can 'sneak under the radar'. Sense that PAR implies that it is about an instrumental methodology, which co-prod seeks to subvert – contested.

Not much focus on 'creativity'. But co-prod implies making, inventing, creating together. How might you insert artists into creative economies research?

Search for commonality in the modes of knowledge generation within projects.

Democratic epistemology – not just about academics defining what is legitimate knowledge.

Nervous about tying co-prod down to principles. Broad principles – showing respect. Participation is tricky – possibility of concept of 'gift' work for artists – also connects to output – broaden, special,

reward, exchange – never completely equal, engaged in communities and what communities can give back – not necessarily democratic, but some kind of an exchange.

Feedback from group 2: empathy, affect, emotion, imagination

Keri: Empathy needed between researchers and communities – solidarity. Affect – importance of emotions, de-centring the human, bringing in the non-human. Critiques of whiteness – emotional/affective barriers – getting past the logical/cognitive/rational. Imagination as critical element of research.

Owain: How defining affect and emotion? Emotion is a subset of affect – all systems of the body – a sense of resonance between you and your environment. Thrift (08) relational and circulatory – affecting. Slaby, Free University of Berlin, Critical health studies. Against empathy – we should not be trying to co-produce via empathy, but co-joining agencies. Working with non-humans, working together but not seeking 'empathy' as placing yourself in an other. Complexities of affective life makes empathy impossible – Derridean view. Exercise on affect: stand on one leg and then close your eyes – difficulty balancing – demonstrates the interconnect of all these non-rational systems of which we may not be consciously aware, which make and move us.

Gareth: Example from community project in Welsh town, post-industrial, 'flushed'. Statistics have shown this town to be worst on everything. Talked to a local woman and asked for response to stats: 'rubbish – I love living here'. Draws out the question of representation – 'true' representation. When tells this story to public health officials they usually laugh – 'the stats don't lie', 'this is one woman'. How can we represent more fully, more richly? Policy makers and professionals – very circumscribed views of empiricism. Cultural, affective, forms of representation have power to create different forms of representation, which can be presented to policy makers. Need for us to have a future bound, past referenced, current vision. Stats can be useful, descriptively. But stats as a way of thinking – mathematical modelling – squeezes out all alternative ontologies. Policy makers treat the figurs as the ontological reality. The politician reacts the stories they hear in their communities.

Dave: Empathy – a 'simplistic' view, from the heart. Life experience of mixed African-Liverpool parentage, can empathise with mixed race people – especially in local community in Liverpool. As Gareth said, stats show levels of deprivation, but speak to people and they wouldn't live anywhere else. 60% youth unemployment in Toxteth, 2-3% of national prison population is from there, most researched area. Empathy structures everything I do and say and encounter – it all relates back to own experience.

1981 riots – not 'race riots' but with strong racial representation. Riot against oppressive social conditions. Who participated – youth – more prominent, more active, but the '79 year old Evelyns' also empathised with what those young people were saying, with their cause. An empathy of everything – voicing a particular identity context.

Particularities of culture, language, practice – it is pigmentation that rules. Example of young black girl, aged 7, tried to bleach her skin. Absence of differences of language or culture, only black girl in school – 'if I bleach my skin then there will be no differences'. Identity – she should have been proud

of own identity. Empathy pushes me to push for resources – putting black studies in the curriculum. Empathy opens up possibilities. English literature – 1000 ways of making you feel inferior.

Helen: Drawing together emotional insight. The example of the bleached skin – shocking – opens up long histories of oppression – and can mobilise around producing something different. Objective is to reach a shared understanding. How to link to change? Many different contexts.

Being an activist – anti-war, anti-cuts etc. Very emotionally engaged in what they do, but cut off by this activity from people in different locations. Need to explore the way a human moment between two people can produce new knowledge – what is the status of that knowledge they produce?

I've learnt very slowly – through lots of demonstrations and protests – things that become possible through building for it. Imagination and re-adjustment of own position – change. Brining disparate locations together. Multiple views on design and execution of a project. But we each have a 'home' place which we go back to outside collaborations – self-examination, change those specific places. Structural change has to happen in specific places with specific people.

Co-production of insights has to keep going – there are multiple audiences – have to move and diversify tactics and actions, speaking to multiple locations. Inequality reproduces in myriad ways and forms and shapes and places – have to find languages that resonate with particular groups – might be a story, a statistic, a lived-experience, a confrontation.

Feel like I've failed to produce 'aggregate insights' that can speak to the institution. Everyone speaks to their own concerns. Doesn't have to be a 'big thing' – a small change in a budget – but has to be a targeted message.

Owain: Fighting against sense of the 'structured society' – there is no such thing – it emerges from multiple actions in multiple places – change an action and different structures will emerge.

Jas: Racism and its effects continue. Skin bleaching example. Prompts anger/empathy. Inferiority. Seems like no one cares. Social unrest, critical race theory, and micro aggressions – collation of them, coalesce into an eruption. So much history and change – still hugely disproportionate. Can we separate empathy from anger? How do you balance dispassionate approach to research with anger? A fine balance – Rohan Mistry. Global contexts – local embodiments, minority school girls using 'fair and lovely'.

Research embedded with norms of oppression. Racism becoming an absence – off the agenda – how different is co-produced research? If you use racism as a metric, how does co-produced research measure up? The power to define is still Eurocentric – what is knowledge, truth, beauty, etc.

Political elite thinks racism is over. How far does this inform community and action research? How would Malcolm X do youth work? How much has racism been sanitised out of existence? How do we narrate in a truly post-colonial way – beyond race? Fanon – how possible/difficult is that – sedimentary racism – how can we imagine otherwise?

How can you separate identity from what you produce – so, then, how do you construct that identity? I can accept a 'post-race' self, but then how would I ensure that that history wasn't denied?

Connect and Reflect (Group 2)

Connecting points and thoughts:

- Micro aggressions, instances, and questions of scale
- Paying attention to auto responses and disrupting that
- Heartfelt questions – can a human moment create change
- Becoming unfeeling – you make a choice of where to commit and where not to feel

- What is the powerful knowledge that comes from conversation, and what does it enable?
- It might be a statistic – grab attention, shock tactic

Dave: Communities need to work with research – eg, high exclusion rate of black kids in Liverpool schools, none going into FE. Research more able to draw that out and emphasise areas of need and make particular addresses – adult education resources. Research as an assistant to the community. Difficulty accepting Slaby. Many of the black kids in Liverpool have taken on the free black America slogans – black and proud – solidarity – can't see how that would exist without empathy.

Owain: Think the two positions can co-exist. Slaby is looking philosophically, at the definition, and thinking about positionality and relationality. (I wonder if perhaps you cannot 'define' empathy, and therefore in a sense 'it' doesn't exist, and perhaps isn't the best principle of co-joining, the material to use to try and build, stage by state, a co-production – but 'it' is felt, it opens doors, 'it' can start the conversation)

We need to think about place, locality, network, narrative. How particular messages are woven into stories. Multiple specificities – alternative form of 'scaling'. How do we connect what we know from 'big' scale – stats – to the more specific stories. Does one travel easier – argue against this, some little stories carry across.

Rational philosophical view – generalisability, probabilistic knowledge – nonsense! What it means to generalise from a case study. The mechanisms don't change – generalisable experiences and relations. Still a research practice – challenge of working with communities, listening to stories you generalise from the particular, what is the function of the connection between these different modes of storytelling. Do you need empathy to co-join or is it something different? Researching accountability. Empathy. Eg hate crime panel at university – harassment provokes empathetic response – how sad – no action. How do you couple empathy with accountability?

Richard Rorty, John Dewey, Cornell West – pragmatism. All the community work in London in the C19th – in the end it was Dickens writing amazing novels that made the difference. The outcome – for pragmatics – what have you produced? Entanglement of the person – you are constantly changing, and effecting changes in a creative mix of generating new formulations, this goes on and on in a pluralised process of experimentation. Connect between pragmatics and post-structuralism – very promising. We are still burdened with the ghastly inheritance of rationalism. Emotions are the powerful forces shaping people's lives for good or ill – to get inside you need to narrate this. You need to work <u>with</u>, you can't reproduce, you need to work <u>with</u> a range of people in a range of places, feelings and flows. We're not all Dickens!

Anthropological rationality. Research asked to transform what topics mean in an emotional way – add texture, tone, knowing. They don't want stats, want stories. Paradox – policy gets made on an experience of a politician – then they might draw on stats to cover their backs. We also need to locate stories and stats together, both need validating.

Double consciousness and research. Is research just about multiplying consciousness?

Policy making is anticipated action – need to rope stats in to modelling multiple projections – then people can connect to that. Scenario scoping – some v. badly done – fails to look at who is in the room. The future doesn't exist, you can make guesses, but how to own this together? The weasel word of 'robustness', can just be used by the rationalists to dismiss something they don't like. Need new definition of robust.

Clyde & Mitchell, Soc Review 83, Power and case studies

Pragmatism – Dewey, Pierce, Wright-Mills

Feedback from group 3: power, representation, agency, against domination

Importance of time. The time it takes to do co-production well. Time as a journey – never ending journey of social justice. Everything seems incremental – academic research gets put on a shelf – finished – but it has a heritage. Need to think differently about time, time can be revolutionary. Time can create space for people to challenge issues. Look for incremental change.

Love and passion as motivators, not really spoken about. Distinction between academy/community research; we are all human, essential connection. Academics 'time' to put their humanness first in connecting with communities – but the academy de-humanises.

Turning the university inside out – changing the way the university is. The importance of the things left out, being made too simple, the stats, can be useful but what alternatives are there to that?

We are trained to talk, argue, defend – listening is the key. How does voice fit into this, how do we represent voice and does academic voice keep us separate? Active listening is important.

Public and public-ness – through sharing, can strengthen what can happen in communities. We need to challenge the notion that 'all they need is more resources and money' this is not always what community partners need – this is where academics can come in. We have to find new ways of uncovering how power is operating to control the voice of communities – austerity – certain groups missing out and controlled by austerity and poverty e.g. "oh no I can't resist/rebel/revolutionise or I'll lose by benefits". In the same vain –do academics challenge sufficiently or are they constrained by institution, fear of losing their job, they have to get paid! How does getting paid for co-production influence agency.

Poetry – capacity to create a different space, allow people to think and feel differently. Poets used to record for the whole community in medieval times. Poetry as a Bablefish (Hitch Hikers Guide ref) and antenna in coproduced research, it allows people to pick up and reflect back.

Identifying margins within margins. Self-organisation – difficult – fragmented communities.

Process of co-production. Funders and universities need to recognise the process, not just the results – example from paper of young people becoming researchers – change – an output in itself. Even when it appeared the research wasn't turning up any findings, the process of the research itself was the important thing. But, the funding and bit structures don't always allow us to capture the process.

Danger of the co-option of co-production as 'here's another method'.

'Hard to reach' groups find the scientists the 'hard to reach' group. Grassroots love to meet policy makers, it is the policy makers that find it really difficult to meet grassroots. Also when working with marginalised communities (i.e. productive margins) co-produced research allows us to create new knowledge and findings because you are not bound into the power structures of conventional research; researcher and researched perpetuates power relationships.

The notion of 'the state' is too simplistic, we have to challenge this and reconsider who we are talking about and what we mean when we refer to 'the state'. The local state is very important and we need to consider the relationship of the local state (local government) to the community. Power is not always a negative thing, there is positive power – the power to resist.

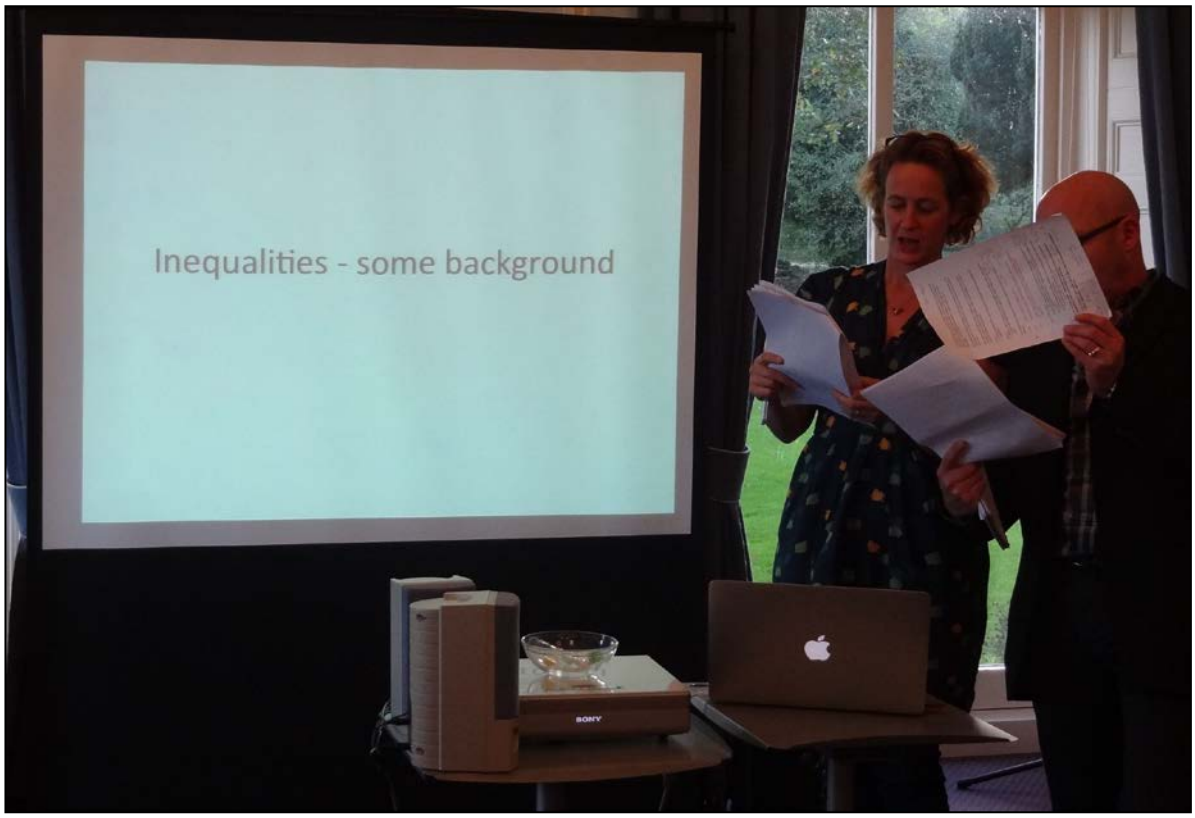
Action research is a process that is never ending, you have to imagine a Utopia, "keep walking".

The group then reconvened for a discussion about the issues raised in the three workshops

Keri's plea!

There is a risk of getting hung up on methodological denomination. Focus on: what are the values we want to mobilise around. Attempt is to not get trapped in extractive research models – but rather make a contribution to social change.

Contemporary patterns of social and economic inequalities



1. **How might socioeconomic inequality be challenged today – what are the theories of change we are working with?**

- Educational opportunities – employment opportunities not enough engagement with party politics
- What your MP might do for you? They are not completely removed, it is possible to work within system as it is
- Politicians won't/can't respond, nothing changes, this gov is even worse than the last, no engagement with people. It is possible to create communities where we participate, but very sceptical of 'the system'
- 'The system' doesn't exist in that singular way – there are many examples of local councils being supportive of grassroots initiatives. The forces blocking are important, but we need to deconstruct the sense of powerless individual vs. all powerful state.
- We don't feel like citizens of this place. There are still forms of participation, some are listening, but no impact on policy
- Different things are possible in different areas/with different individuals. Have had success around specific issues – eg school exclusion, with help of researchers, identified the issue, established committee, got some money, formed committee groups, were able to provide alternative ed opps. Sometimes possible to develop community to help itself – don't go to your councillor go to your community groups.
- The bigger picture can feel oppressive – there is so much to do/change – we have to work in local situated ways, what can I actually do?!
- Aspirations and education are so important – young people need vision.

- Are we prepared to confront the idea that human nature may be fundamentally unequal and conflict could be at the root of what it is that makes us human. Is equality inherently inhuman?
- Class is one of the biggest blockages to equality in the UK – a big problem. Did the satire boom in the late 60s entrench inequality – making fun of the upper classes means we all accept them.
- Coproduction happens in context – how do the politics of the day influence the type of coproduction we are doing and relate to the type of coproduction at the time?
- One hurdle maybe that politicians and elites don't see the arts as political, for example the opening ceremony at the Olympics was a very leftist representation of the UK and its history but because this worked in an artistic context is was not seen as a threat, or overtly political.

2. Where does co-production make a distinctive contribution today?

- Allows joint critical reflection on the limiting conditions of own lives – empower selves through communication, group learning
- Aspects of change – has to become self-help, need to develop different spaces – physical and metaphorical – space and belonging
- Mass shared experience of deprivation and social exclusion; disaffection, alienation from elite structures of education, but no space to challenge hegemony
- Research can block what you are trying to do, it can block your creativity and impose particular timescales and outputs
- If someone says 'I don't what to go to university' that is a product of universities not engaging – showing their relevance – to that person
- People in 'deprived communities' will not necessarily think of themselves that way, can be very difficult to connect to those external narratives and, which can be a barrier to engagement in countering them – areas become essentialised 'never going to change'
- Dangers of research to essentialise barriers, not looking at the possible interventions, solutions, ideas, probes – things to do differently
- Problem of education as a means to employment – instrumental – dominates the agenda. Knowledge for itself, (em)power to change things around you, creating spaces to engaged with ed for itself
- Schools are such a huge untapped resource in this regard, need to create better school community partnerships – arts in school is so depressing!

3. Building alliances/connections

–who else/what other approaches might we have to work with to address larger goals

- School example above. Runs the danger of academia attempting to fulfil provision not provided by the state – you can only do it with one school – essential challenge of working locally

- Getting funding within communities is a challenge, lots of payment in kind, lots of tick-box conditions, clipboard approaches to evaluation, academic requirements
- Micro stuff can be reproduced via a conscious collaboration with people who care in those powerful institutions; 'not everyone is a bastard'!
- Potential for partnering with local businesses – eg Bristol project – allowed us to contest, break down that public/private divide
- Councils might appear distant – but you can always find a caring councillor
- Universities should be taking a more important role in the future of their cities
- Nervous about the dismantling of state support, are universities going to get preoccupied with rushing in to plug the gaps – become social workers and teachers. University must use its energy and authority talking back to these conditions, in partnership with practitioners, not compensating resources.
- It seems that violence prompts change. It is a broken system that leads you to that conclusion.
- You can't always be so literal, you have to be an opportunist and look for the openings that are available to you.

Mini-manifestos

Pat read a manifesto from Yvonne Rainer: http://www.1000manifestos.com/yvonne-rainer-no-manifesto/

No to spectacle.
No to virtuosity.
No to transformations and magic and make-believe.
No to the glamour and transcendency of the star image.
No to the heroic.
No to the anti-heroic.
No to trash imagery.
No to involvement of performer or spectator.
No to style.
No to camp.
No to seduction of spectator by the wiles of the performer.
No to eccentricity.
No to moving or being moved.

The task: Given your group's view of the conditions for disrupting social and economic inequalities and your assessments of coproduced research produce your manifesto. Four manifestos were written. Some common principles and areas for action emerging from these manifestos included:

Knowledge is everywhere: the knowledge, experiences, theories and insights to tackle inequalities are not located solely in the university; and different sorts of knowledge can serve different strategic purposes.

Time matters: time to build relationships, to be people not positions first, to listen, to experiment, fail and try again, to create spaces for dialogue and different ways of expressing ideas

History is a resource: past histories of social action and engaged research, past experiences of failure, old theories that can be revisited, personal experiences and lives, can all provide lessons from the past in imagining new futures

Familiar words alone won't do it: emotion, embodiment, images, poetry, performance create new connections, ideas, relationships, analyses and possibilities

Educated Optimism is needed: this means being aware of the very significant obstacles to social and economic equality, retaining optimism about the possibility that the future might be bright and a having theory of change to inform decisions about action and research in the present

Thinking and action, theory and experience, must be reconnected

Process is Output

Day Three

Reflect, consolidate, move forward

Looking forward: what might next steps be? What do we want to do?

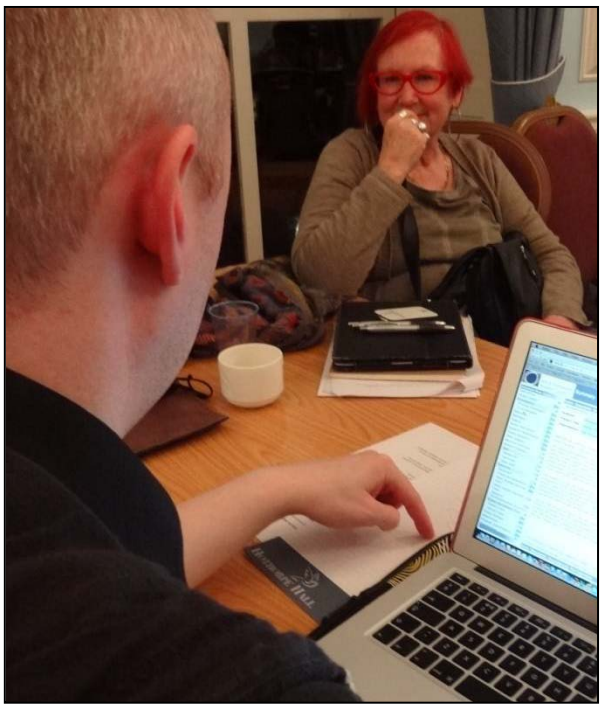
1. Invite everyone to talk about assets each bring to the table – what contribution would you like to make?
2. Open space session – suggesting possible ways forward – publications, performing, networks etc…what might we do together?
3. Next steps and plan of action

Our assets:

- **Andrew** – Research methods – experience of working in and outside universities
- **Antonia** – Some money to work on "methods into policy" – money for one day events – legal info/questions – web sites
- **Simon** – Evaluation expertise – taking forward methods for co-generation – knowledge exchange and situated learning
- **Bryony** – Oversight of CC programme – connect up – knowledge of resources – space on CC fellows sit
- **Emma** – Expertise in food, agriculture, animals – love to work with people in different areas
- **Helen** – Great teams and networks in museums and heritage – likes facilitation – workshops etc
- **Gareth** – Experience of working with powerful people across NHS – lots of PAR experience – sense of humour
- **Sue** – Long experience of working with disadvantaged groups – changing policy – bridging academics and practitioner participation
- **Jas** – GRIP – Hate crime work – need research on this – putting race back on agenda – advice centre
- **Javier** – need resources – offer access to knowledge and experience
- **Morag** – Insights into regulatory structures – legal knowledge
- **Lucy** – different research approach grounded in theory – good at running exciting workshops
- **Asha** – consultation/advice on particular groups
- **Dave O'** – insights on power elites – write quickly – tweet a lot
- **Graham** – building large scale partnerships – learning – radical and critical pedagogy – democratic education – curriculum
- **Jenny** – experiences with grassroots processes – come to Bradford – curriculum for learning – research methods
- **Michael** – participatory arts and arts methods – theorising co-production – post-human/materialisation
- **Owain** – writing academic papers and bids – spotting opportunities for collaboration
- **Lisa** – poetics and creative practice – develop conversation on research and practice
- **Tom** – lots of learning from mistakes – relations with communities
- **Pat** – 'living archive' of engaged community active research
- **Keri** – CC fellow – access to CC networks, potential to mobilise other resources

Whole group

1. Have we learnt anything about doing co-production better – or things we need to do in this regard?
2. What are tensions with co-production that it would be worth exploring more?



- Struggles at the beginning of project are common to many projects – time is a massive issue
- Definitions discussion was very useful. Discussions around open, 'possibility' research journeys, research not owned, helped understand that that is ok
- Helped better understanding of how co-prod might address inequality via critical self-reflection, and how that might happen in practice. Useful clarifying of what changes, and how that happens. This could be a useful lens for thinking about how well co-prod works
- Easy to identify partners, but actual co-prod difficult to talk about, dialogue often too abstract
- Quite a natural, open process of discussion didn't rely on particular words. Engagement about different aspirations, difficult to describe – lots of shared experience of tenuous process, fluid positions, feeling your way through, coming to new positions and questions
- Strong sense of description around what we do. Shifting styles here between those stories and theorising – need better linking between these two registers. Try and work in a more grounded-up way.
- Want more discussion on how power is operating in communities and structurally – more enmeshed conversations between theory and practice – how big theories play out in practice, how change happens
- Good not to have been pushed to consensus, but struggle for common principles. Co-prod as a family of ideas, not hung up on specifics. Manifestos showed some common principles – can these be made more robust?
- Disjuncture between open knowledge approach in projects and material realities of people's lives – need to unpack these challenges to openness for more relevant research
- Time – what can't be seen when you're in the middle of something, can be reflected on later – some of those struggles become learning. Are we in a position to identify some of those new issues – build on what we already know?
- Solidarity – space to share. How to take a different view of your practice to shift and change perspectives, find new angles
- Power dynamics – attempt to invert the funding process. Risk of losing what academics can bring – theorising about power. Not sure about more bottom-up approach
- Social historical theory about how change happens. Some glossing over of different political positions. Need to try and narrate relationships with government and state – the presence and absence of state technologies – do we need to withdraw from these and find something else, or can we work with them? Will find radical different approaches to this within the room, but productive conversation for co-prod

- Should not rush for consensus. Very difficult to position yourself in relation to extraordinary inequality. Social science too professionalised. Prefer talk about praxis to co-prod, less restricted, more politically conscious
- Still unclear about practitioner/non practitioner – who is who? Has to be a relationship between the two, need more explicit statements about positioning – might have had influence on group work and conversations – we should be modelling different possible relationships
- What kinds of methods are suited to co-produced research? Co-interviewing, quant data – more availability of this from government. Maintaining critical reflective lens – how does power operate through networks and gate keepers? These can be productive intermediaries, but still prompts distortions of truth. Worry that we're too concerned about making co-prod 'fluffy' – which means critical methodological assumptions are not always made explicit
- How do we feed into the policy process and political elites?
- Concern that social science becomes the discourse for co-prod. Different ways of learning and knowing, from different places, we need to hold on to this diversity – from an artist's point of view, want to resist questions being framed in social scientific ways
- Praxis – grounds us in reality. Humanness of investigation – via social science. Good research leads to self-examination. Important for grassroots to grasp philosophical concepts on meanings of experience in society. Need to use each other's work to further contemplate our own. How broadly can we relate to each other? Globally?
- Co-prod and methods – subject/object relations – how meaning emerges from this. De-stabilising the distinction by co-creating knowledge and meaning in non-hierarchical ways – very promising
- Unsure about praxis as 'sense-making'. Don't want to study this from above and marginalise practice. If we're just making sense, how much are we able to innovate and think differently?
- I have been pushed to think more about the human dimension. Multiple ideas of co-prod – how do different bodies come together? Affective process of learning – like co-generation
- Theoretical territories – heard lots about Foucault, how about Bourdieu? Surprising absence – we need to make sure we think about the full range of positions available
- Question of grounding and theorising – In the writing many people moved away from the actual practice – now we want to move back to it. Make that grounding more visible in writing.

Open space – next steps

Doctoral training book - **Pat**

- Helping young researchers understand this kind of – engaged, messy, co-produced – research – tackling "well meaningness"
- Edited book, would need to tackle:
    - Formal history of co-prod research – tracing histories, intellectual, methodological and political – grounding in social movements
    - Questioning the usual terms – what is knowledge, data, research design, understanding relationships
    - Ontologies, epistemologies, and methodologies
    - Impacts and public engagements
- Alongside book – doctoral training workshops – 'master classes', supported by book, develop more web-based support around a common framework – possible MOOC. Framework would need to be flexible to local needs and resources.
    - Workshops could be academic/practitioner/community led – regionally based – many people in the room involved in large doctoral training centres – should feed into this process.
    - Curriculum work is absolutely crucial to embedding this methodology – sustainability
    - Expose students to the realities of 'big' project set-up – give them a chance to question the process – mutual learning opportunities
    - Development of project based curriculum for research training
- Other possible publication ideas:
    - special issue of journal (Qual Studies?) about researcher/practitioner collaboration
    - small series of short books (15-20,000 words) about working with specific communities: "So you want to study…"
- Next steps: Pat & Simon to develop proposal for Routledge and send around for potential contributors

Praxis – **Gareth**

- Theory and practice for political struggle
- Absent in the UK since the 1960s (? strongly contested – obscures ongoing work)
- Academy churns out technocrats
- Need to place students/HE learners in the community
- Creating open spaces for engagement
    - What is the process/method?
    - How does it work?
    - Mechanisms?
    - Participant observation at the heart of it – participation is key

Policy – **Andy & Antonia**

Aspiration: A form of activism, barging in and disrupting complacent policy frames that currently dominate

1. Evidence and policy network – across the CC family
2. Literature reviews underway
3. Balance out social science focus with art & humanities generated knowledge frames
4. SNA type network analysis – quant and qual, "ego" mapping, locally and through connections
5. Develop good policy engagement practices – from our own models and practices, capturing attention, developing and placing (counter) narratives
6. Policy briefings
7. Web presence
8. Book

Ways of (un)knowing – **Kate**

- Dissolving 'knowledge'
- Object-subject relations
- Methods as artefacts of social scientific realist paradigms
- Unpack the knowledge generated by particular methodological devices

    1. Enter the methods debate
    2. Challenge the review framework within CC
    3. Link back to questions of explanation – interests in policy

Co-producing something on co-production (Co-Co)

How we produce as research practitioners

1. Utilising/rendering the symposium papers – e-pub in first instance
2. Other avenues for transmission/profiling
3. Resources?
4. Feed into/through/beyond the next AHRC summit – e.g. via festivals, film
5. Engineered by editorial or 'collective curatorial' to disturb traditional academic forms of expression
6. Need to act on the time before space gets closed off/appropriated
7. Fragments approach to putting publication together

Since the symposium

(as of December 12th 2013)

1. A proposal to Policy Press has been made for a book on Connected Communities, Policy and Social Justice, with an event in the New Year open to CC researchers working on the question of research and its impact on policy.
2. Pat Thomson and Simon Bailey are working on the idea of the Companion to Co-Production, in discussions with Routledge
3. Jasber Singh and Morag McDermont are exploring possible collaborations around the law (Please add details)
4. Keri Facer and Jasber Singh are developing plans for a workshop on race, the academy and new ways forward.
5. Pat Thomson has suggested that the EAR journal would be happy to host a Special Issue on Praxis
6. Gareth Williams and Sue Cohen are exploring the development of learning spaces in cities to explore Praxis as part of the Productive Margins project; and exploring possibilities of a Special Issue on this with the E.A.R. Journal
7. Keri is discussing with the AHRC the possibility of support for Co-production as part of Doctoral Training at a national level with the AHRC centres.
8. Owain Jones, Emma Roe, Michael Buser – joint paper submitted to the Royal Geographical Society Annual Conference
9. ADD…?

Appendices

Author: Michael Buser, University of the West of England & Emma Roe, University of Southampton.

Title: Creative material practices as response-abilities: entanglings with food insecurities and vulnerable subjectivities.

There is increasing need to create integrated studies of health, environment and society to address contemporary food policy (Lang, Barling and Caraher 2008). These calls share an interest in understanding the complex connections between agro-food provisioning and production systems, the environment and social justice at a global level (Godfray et al 2010). Morgan (2010) has argued that for these concerns to become politically meaningful will require rethinking of the public spatialities of a politics of care, articulated through the concept of ecological citizenship as opposed to the actions of the ethical consumer in the private sphere. We begin to consider in this paper how co-produced art-based research enquiry can contribute to addressing these connections and commitments.

In the Northern world, it is in the area of local food initiatives where some of these connections are being made, to provide healthy foodstuffs to communities who experience 'hidden hunger', (Kennedy et al 2003) from difficulties accessing fresh foodstuffs or who are particularly vulnerable to becoming food insecure. The plight of people living in the UK who struggle to keep above the food poverty line was outlined this spring in an Oxfam/Church Action on Poverty report (Cooper and Dumbleton 2013) explaining the context for the growth in emergency food aid service-providers to meet this demand. Indeed the two local alternative food initiatives that this research project focuses on in the city of Bristol, UK, addresses 'hidden hunger' and 'food poverty'. The first is a volunteer-run free-food provisioning service that offers local people-in-need a mock shopping experience of food donated by local supermarket shoppers across the major food groups. The second was a community food growing and provisioning project that supplied fresh vegetables, fruit and baked goods to a community living in an area identified as a 'food desert', where local people have no access to fresh foods, where small grocers have been forced out of business, and consumers must drive to distant supermarkets to purchase their foods (Lang and Rayner, 2007).

The important place of the two local food initiatives to those who rely on them cannot be underplayed and yet there has been recent criticism with regards to how they should be studied. The criticism stems from how studies have tended to position these local food projects in opposition to the major corporate-led food provisioning system. Marsden and Franklin (2013) have called this "the local trap", to focus only on the inevitable and infinitesimal heterogeneity, embeddedness and hybridity of alternative re-localised food movements (p. 637), to effectively conceptually marginalize their activities because of their embeddedness and variety in place. They instead make the argument that alternative local food initiatives, rather than be dismissed as irrelevant our interpretations and engagement with them should position them in opposition to conventional food production systems. They should be seen as illustrations of society in transition, transition from ethical consumption towards 'ecological citizenship' (Dobson 2003). For Morgan (2010), ethical consumption – 'the private purchasing power that sustains the products of the ethical foodscape and which signals the private expression of care on the part of the concerned consumer' (ibid: 1860) in the form of buying local food from (super)markets, is a rather narrow definition of how broader society is becoming involved with these initiatives. In contrast 'ecological citizenship ' (Dobson 2003) embodies a political will and the hope of more substantial support if mobilized to address food access and sustainability issues across the globe.

To mobilise ecological citizenship effectively requires providing more than the opportunity to buy ethical foodstuff in food shopping outlets. It means supporting what Morgan calls the development of a new *politics of care* in the public sphere not private consumption of ethical goods, that operates at spatialities of distance rather than just nearest and dearest, and that includes care-receivers in a renewed commitment to democratic processes that shape the politics of care to rethink questions about autonomy and self-sufficiency. As Morgan (2010) explains and argues:

> 'We care for others because this is what being sustainable means in an ecologically-interdependent world. The fact that some citizens may be motivated less by disinterested notions of social justice and more by enlightened self-interest neither diminishes or invalidates the basic argument.' (ibid:1863)

How does one mobilise, generate, and sustain a new politics of care around food that embraces the health of society, the sustainability of the environment and social justice? It is in the interpretative approach to how care is generated and practiced where we differ in thinking with Morgan. Rather than focusing on the evaluative mind of a vulnerable, sentient subject, capable of flourishing and suffering, depending on how people treat us (Sayer 2010), we work with an embodied, fleshy human subject. This human subject entangles, assembles, and becomes caught up in relations with other human and non-human materialities in the world through both thought-through and un-thought - through practices. Consequently, the human subject is not autonomous or self-sufficient but achieves expression as a sentient being through being with others (humans and nonhumans). Ultimately it is what *happens*, what is *performed*, where care practices are actualized, received and felt that matters. In this way a politics of care and how concern for the other generates, occurs through a non-linear process with significant lack of thought and rather more bodily response to the encounters in the world. These ideas on care have developed by material-feminist inspired science and technology scholars such as Karen Barad, Donna Haraway and Annemarie Mol. In interpreting what the project achieved and how it relates to existing literature on the co-production of knowledge and social justice in food studies, we address how cultures of concern arise? How to connect people to the 'other' whose material circumstance is so different to their own? How does self-sufficiency become obsolete as a set of inter-relations is made obvious?

The project created a 10-day art performance installation. Local food initiatives were invited to become active participants in co-designing the art performance installation. Within the art space, the general public were invited into a food-related experience that was composed of different food-related practices – growing, baking, eating, preparing meals, shopping – that carried the traces of these events taking place in different material circumstances across the city. We make some concluding points that draw on material feminist literature to analyze how creative material practices can engage Morgan's 'ecological citizens' in a 'politics of care' that is performative, participatory and embedded in sharing food experiences/practices in the micro-scale entanglings between beings, food and different material circumstances.

Co-producing work with non-academic and non-human participants.

Our Foodscapes project drew on a number of developing approaches across the arts, humanities and social science literature. We focus here on the participatory action research approach we used and developed, and how that can be broadened to include non-human participants. The diverse project team included three academic researchers and three community partners and an artist, and was brought together to provide thinking and expertise around food, food insecurity, community, and art and performance. Informed by post-structural thinking on the embodied subject and performance theory and their relevance in studying human-food relations, the project sought to draw out 'micro'

level engagements with food as a means to consider entanglements between daily practices and sense-making. As such, there was an interest in engaging people in the 'doing' of food practices whether that be shopping, growing, cooking or eating food, for example (among other food practices). To in effect participate as an audience through 'doing' what one would normally do with food. As has been argued in arts-centered material feminist writings, 'knowledge is derived from doing and from the senses' (Barrett and Bolt 2010:1), applying this thinking in relation to food, encourages different consumer/citizen understanding about food. As argued elsewhere (Carolan 2010; Roe *forthcoming*) this must involve experiencing food differently, importantly not solely within the food-eating event but as part of a broader range of events that foodstuff passes through. This means to not solely engage consumer minds, but engage embodied citizens in what other people eat, new understanding about food they eat, yet importantly through the sensory experiences of food practices - handling, creating, cooking, preparing things becoming food, rather than didactic knowledge.

In developing the work, we held a series of group meetings and focus group workshops, volunteered with the food charity, and engaged directly in the activities of our project partners. In time, we began to focus more and more on the volunteers and clients at The Matthew Tree Project as this organization offered us a clear community of interest where food insecurity was paramount. ELM consisted of a handful of small-scale producers, whilst The Matthew Tree encompassed a dozen or so volunteers and staff and over 60 individuals who come to the charity for food aid each Friday. During group discussions, we decided to focus our arts and creative work on *Big Green Week*, a 10-day national sustainability festival held in Bristol, to magnify the project's profile and draw attention to the issues of food insecurity, sustainability and resilience. Our festival space, the Parlour Showrooms, was located right in the centre of Bristol and at the heart of the festival.

Within our artistic programming, it was important to include opportunities for project partners and their stakeholders to feel that the materials and outputs they created reflected their real world experiences. Working with The Matthew Tree Project (TMTP), we needed a non-obtrusive but engaging way of thinking about food, health and nutrition, and the experience of food poverty with volunteers and clients. At TMTP, clients in need are not handed a food parcel. Rather, following an interview with staff, they perform a shopping experience, selecting their items from shelves in the foodstore stocked with food donated to the charity. However, we were also interested to know how clients cooked, supplemented and created meals with these items once they left the foodstore.

Following a few weeks of working as volunteers and speaking with people accessing food through TMTP, we decided photovoice methods would be an ideal mechanism to engage clients in a meaningful but unobtrusive way. Photovoice is a participatory research approach in which people use video and/or photo images to capture aspects of their environment and experiences for sharing with others. Clients and volunteers were provided with disposable cameras and asked to take pictures of each meal they ate during the week, and return them during a de-brief the following week. The pictures were displayed on the walls of our exhibition during Big Green Week. Some of the clients who took photos were able to see their work at the Parlour Showrooms and gave further insights into the experience.

Our other community partner – the Edible Landscapes Movement – donated a range of edible plants. These plants, displayed along the walls off the shop front entrance to the showroom, were responsible for drawing in intrigued passersby's. In total, over 900 people came into our space during Big Green Week. Later, a volunteer from ELM led a chicken-plucking demonstration during

our Summer Solstice event while another conducted a planting workshop. Each of these elements provided unique opportunities for dialogue, sharing and expression.

The participatory action research involved a number of community interest groups to support the direction and activity within the art event, but as important was how the materials of foodstuffs in different forms were not just passive objects but agentive materials generating ideas and practices in the event that unfolded. This follows the thinking of Karen Barad (2003) whose anti-reflexive, pro-intra-active and pro-entangling thinking emphasizes practice as an ability to respond, to shape the becoming of world, to shape bodies in becoming (Dolphijn and van Tuin 2012; Haraway 2008) through our intra-actions with matter itself. As art theorist Bolt puts it:

> *'..the materials are not just passive objects to be used instrumentally by the artist, but rather, the materials and processes of production have their own intelligence that come into play in interaction with the artist's creative intelligence' (Bolt 2010: 29-20).*

This links back to the earlier discussion on developing a 'politics of care' centered around 'care as performed' rather than a moral obligation. It was bread-making that offered us the greatest opportunity to include bread-making materials as participants in how knowledge co-production process and practices could support knowledge sharing in the art-space.

Led by artist-in-residence Paul Hurley, we baked bread with festival-goers, food aid clients, passers-by, friends and family for 10 straight days. All told, we baked with over 60 people, many of whom went home with information about food and food insecurity, new cooking and baking skills, and of course, a loaf of bread.

We invited our community partners to join us – however, the bread-baking effort was also open to the public – and many people who walked into the showroom also took us up on our offer to teach them to bake bread. During these sessions, we found that it was the slowness of the process – even the soda bread takes over an hour to bake – which helped to forge dialogue, communication and exchange.

Hands kneading bread, slowly, rhythmically – sharing ingredients, sharing stories, sharing knowledge. In these moments, we forged new types of connections. We found that research/community barriers – while they did not evaporate – did indeed diminish as we 'co-produced' –bread, knowledge, narratives and histories.

> 'it amazes me you can just mix these two dry ingredients , or three dry ingredients and some water and it's like a sticky mess and then just kneading action with it and then it changes and then you just leave it and it changes again and then put it in the oven and it changes again into bread, […] Even having heard people talk about the science of it, blows their tiny mind' (Paul)

Our project let the materialities 'speak' to the sensual expressions and gestures of the human audience that are established in their everyday food practices of feeding themselves, as opposed to creating text or talk to give clear messages about the politics and ethics of the activities/materialities/presences in the space. A broad array of non-academic participants and non-human participants were important agencies in the research-making process of the art event, through sharing practical experiences and new practices that were forged because of the need to work with them. These practices were responses that democratized the process of knowledge-making, for they were responses to a

world-in-the making/-in-the-unfolding where Barad argues is located ethics and justice. We more concretely explore ideas around ethics and justice in our final points.

Politics of care/ engaging the ecological citizens

Firstly, the experiences of people involved with the local food initiatives had affected us as researchers engendering a responsibility to generate greater understanding of their predicament and politics of their plight.

> "…something that was really striking which we talked about during the process was how I guess our coming into it with that connection with the food bank clients, […] a sort of sense of protectiveness towards them, […] a kind of bond, the care, the duty, because [now] they were volunteering [to be involved in the project]". (Paul the artist)

We wondered how this affect on us, could be mobilized to influence the experiences of the audience-participants through how the materialities of the space intra-acted with their previous food practices and histories. Here following Latour we were enacting ethics and justice through how bodies were marked, or how matter comes to matter as 'matters of concern' (Latour 2005) or 'matters of care' (Puig 2011), the latter a term which includes the tendency for parts of the assemblage to be neglected. This was something which those involved in setting-up, managing and facilitating a food-bank are actively working to avoid and which we as researchers bought-into through our involvement with them. Yet at no point was any single situated food experience connected to the various organisations we were involved with over-stated in the space. As Paul the artist speaking about how the space was composed recognizes, that by actively

> "toning down the profile, dominance of those organisations made for more kind of open and liberated space …. occasionally people would think that Foodscapes was what we were trying to do, what we were trying to sell people, are we trying to tell people about nutrition or are we trying to get people to shop locally or are we trying to, you know expecting that kind of organizational objective or [a] clear set of aims or things that…" (Paul)

Secondly, we argue that the audience was invited to respond not as ethical consumers' but as 'ecological citizens' through the constellation of methods of engagement with the 'audience' and yet from what Paul says this shift in position didn't always happen. Here Paul the artist speaks again:

> […] but then when visitors were coming in and out of the gallery, and I think maybe at first, because it was the nature, and because of where it [was….] [There are] a lot of kind of middleclass Bristol foodie people, you know, which I'm kind of partly one , I guess. But actually reading them to see how much food and ideals or opinions about food are kind of bound up with class prejudice and wealth and poverty and it just becomes so apparent when you're looking at a basket of tinned baked beans and someone's telling you why, where or what people should be eating organic, you know, and its that – this reality is so out of whack. Do you know what I mean?' Paul

Paul articulates the juxtapositions the space offered to him. Juxtapositions as Massumi would express it are 'the direct "pairedness" of pure, open contrast' (2010), from which emerges 'relating'. Massumi argues that it is from the contrasts that a figure of stability can emerge. This appears an interesting way to approach how the art-space engaged audience. How did the juxtapositions support the assembling of a figure of stability, a message assembling from experiences of the space? And where and how did the constellation of juxtapositions fail to deliver a clear message?

Thirdly, this leads us to how creative material practices can support, inform or form ethical relating? Specifically, we think here of Haraway's term 'response-abilities', a capacity to respond (as opposed to expressing a reasoned argument through language) as a starting point for ethical relating. Haraway emphasizes co-presencing for ethical relating as necessary to allow us to 'share suffering' and it is here within the myriad of shared food practices – eating, cooking, shopping, digesting, making a meal, pouring out cereal into a bowl, boiling pasta in a pan etc etc that juxtapositions can emerge through the co-presencing of shared experiences. Thus by foregrounding food practices that are performed across all communities in some sort of fashion and are indeed all central in sustaining our access to food, co-presencing and sharing suffering was made available to those becoming ecological citizens.

References

Barad, K 2003 Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an understanding of how matter comes to matter. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society,* 28 (3) 801-831

Bolt B. 2010, The magic is in the handling. In E. Barrett and B. Bolt, eds, *Practice as research: approaches to creative arts enquiry.* I B Tauris & Co Ltd.

Barrett and Bolt eds. 2010 *Practice as research*: *approaches to creative arts enquiry*. I B Tauris & Co Ltd.

Carolan, M 2010 *Embodied Food Politics*. Ashgate

Cooper, N. and Dumbleton, S. 2013 *Walking the Breadline. The scandal of food poverty in 21st century Britain.* Church Action on Poverty & Oxfam, Manchester.

Dobson, A. 2004, "Ecological citizenship", paper presented to the Annual Meeting of the Western Political Science Association, Portland, Oregon, 11 March; copy available from the author

Dolphijn, R. and van der Tuin, I 2012 'Ch. 3 Interview with Karen Barad'. *New materialism: interviews & cartographies.* http://openhumanitiespress.org/new-materialism.html

Godfray, H et al 2010 Food security: the challenge of feeding 9 billion people. *Science* 327, 812-818

Haraway, D. 2008 *When species meet*. Minnesota University Press. Minneapolis

Latour, B. 2004 'Why has critique run out of steam? From matters of fact to matters of concern'. *Critical Inquiry* 30 (Winter 2004).

Kennedy E. et al 2003 'Alleviating Hidden Hunger. Approaches that work'. IAEA BULLETIN 45/1 54-60

Lang, T., Barling D., and Caraher M. 2008 *Food policy. Integrating health, environment and society*. Oxford University Press. Oxford.

Lang T, Rayner G (2007). Overcoming policy cacophony on obesity: an ecological public health framework for policymakers. *Obesity Reviews*, 8 (s1), 165-181.

Puig, M 2011 Matters of care in technoscience: assembling neglected things. *Social Studies of Science* 41: 85-106

Marsden, T and Franklin, A 2013 'Replacing neoliberalism: theoretical implications of the rise of local food movements. *Local Environment: The international journal of justice and sustainability.* 18:5 636-641

Massumi, B. 2011 *Semblance and event: activist philosophy and the occurent arts (technologies of lived abstraction).* MIT Press, London.

Morgan, K. 2010 'Local and green, global and fair: the ethical foodscape and the politics of care'. *Environment and planning A* 42 1852-1867

Roe, E. *forthcoming* Enriching tacit food knowledges: towards an embodied food policy. *Journal of Rural Studies*

Sayer, A 2010 *Why things matter: Social science, Normativity and Values* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Author: David Clay

Title: What can co-produced research accomplish for Social Justice?

Words like **Social Justice** and **Research** are words that have played a central role in my life and have no doubt had differing impacts on my beliefs of their effectiveness. In this regard it would be useful to give my definition of both words from a grassroots perspective, rather than an academic perspective. By doing this it will enable the reader to understand the impact they have had on many decisions that I have made during my life.

Social Justice: I consider such a term to be an indication of how you are treated in society, or for the purpose of this paper it is how you believe you are treated on the streets, in social situations and as an individual. Your expectations are that you will be treated fairly and have the necessary apparatus to address any treatment that you consider to be unfair, and being able to seek justice through the appropriate channels. I consider such justice to be in contrast to, for example, justice in a court of law.

Research: Is a term that immediately suggests that in order to demonstrate a particular point or belief you have to provide evidence that supports your 'theory'. In many instances an individual, may prove a point with a minimum of input, can carry out such research via a growing number of mediums. This is in contrast to a 'Researcher'. The latter has a specific role, and training, to link with the appropriate 'organisation' to uncover facts/opinions that endeavor to provide evidence to support a view or belief.

As a black person born in the City of Liverpool ' social justice' is a term that you soon question at an early age, without actually being aware of the term or its implications. Why, you first ask yourself, are you treated differently in certain situations? I often try and recall instances during my school days that highlighted this view. There are so many.

There were areas in the city that 'black males or females' went to at their own risk. In most cases gangs were based on the colour of your skin and to a large extent your geographical location determined your experience.

It soon becomes evident that you are 'different'. In my case I was part of a so-called 'coloured' population. Described as such because you are the son or daughter of a mixed marriage. Despite the fact that you only spoke 'English' or in our case 'scouse' you were still finding yourself a victim of your colour rather than the fact that you were born and bred in the city. On a more legislative level the 1965 Race Relations Act was introduced to try and deal with situations of social injustice. Landlords/hotels/employers etc could not discriminate on the grounds of colour. Regardless to its actual impact, it was an admission that social justice was not working.

In the context of Toxteth, in Liverpool, this so-called 'coloured' community started to organise in an effort to bring about social justice in education, employment and within society in general. In many ways we were a race that was not necessarily recognized, a part of Liverpool that found the selves stereotyped and judged on the basis of pigmentation. It was quite clear to 'us' but who was going to believe us?

How could we show the lack of social justice?

There was only one route that would 'prove' our experience. That route was research.

The 1970's onwards were to see individual, organisational and Governmental research demonstrating the lack of social justice for the Liverpool Black community. It painted a picture that

showed social exclusion in most aspects of social participation, from education to employment *(See the Liverpool Black Experience)*. I look back over 40 years of research and still the remnants of social exclusion remain. Yes we have identified how institutionalized racism has ensured that we still have very little involvement in the economic progression in the city. We have no 'voice' that articulates our exclusion. It was this latter fact that encouraged me to try and create a medium that would, albeit at a parochial level, address this gap in our history and give the community a voice that at least will be heard, even if it is only within their own neighbourhood.

The Granby Toxteth Review

I was not new to creating documents/newsletters that highlighted our exclusion. During my time employed by the Merseyside Community Relations Council, both as Liverpool 8 Fieldworker and Public Education Officer, we established a resource center dedicated to literature that concentrated on the Liverpool Black experience. We linked with schools and employers and produced newsletters, lectures and equal opportunity courses. Both within a voluntary and statutory setting all attempts were made to articulate our plight. Still the reality remained the same. So I decided to create my own magazine, despite my lack of knowledge of preparation and producing a print ready document.

It is relevant to outline how I went about turning this 'dream' into reality.

One day in 2003 I sat with a number of friends and told them how I was going to produce a magazine that would have a Liverpool Black perspective. I had called it the *Black Review*. Immediately the conversation turned to the dangers of using that title and expecting to attract funding. We had now been stripped of our identity and found ourselves within the category of 'ethnic minority'. I had to agree that the name might not be a good idea and we discussed a more 'positive' approach. The name Granby Toxteth Review (GTR) seemed more sensible, as it depicted the location were most black people in the city were situated. The Granby area was known throughout the Country, as the 1981 riots had put Toxteth firmly on the map. The name was also less threatening to potential funders. The name was agreed as appropriate to attract sponsorship.

The only problem is that I had never attempted to produce a magazine before and despite having an idea of what I wanted the contents to be, I was unsure as to what mode to use. I nevertheless decided to prepare an outline of the contents. I also decided that all articles should be substantiated with the appropriate research. It was further agreed that the GTR should simply present the facts and let the reader decide. This is why many of the articles ended with What Do You Think? Furthermore regular features were based on the expertise that we had available and the desire to have regular features that locals could relate too. This approach ensured local participation.

The Usual Suspects: A few of the group went to the cinema on a regular basis so it was decided that they could be film critics.

Mrs. Doe from Toxteth*:* An opportunity to comment on news coming from the radio.

Undercover Brother: An opportunity for a 'third party' to comment on events from a grassroots viewpoint without fear of identification.

Toxteth Photo Gallery: An opportunity to portray photographs of people in the community

Now that the format had basically been determined I set off on the road to secure funding. I immediately found myself in the funding maize. You're just an individual they said. You're not a registered charity. You have no equal opportunities policy. You have no bank account. You have no constitution. You have no management committee. You have no annual account. Rejection after rejection. Meanwhile I associated myself with a possible programme that could produce the magazine, namely QuarkXpress. I spent some time working with students from the Liverpool Community College, who were on a journalist course. They initially started to work on the articles I had now prepared. It transpired that they considered it to be 'racist' since it only depicted the black experience in the city. I smiled to myself as I thought of how the local Liverpool Echo had no black journalist's and we only made the paper if it was to do with crime or sport. The reality was that I had to do the magazine myself.

I was ignorant. I put in photographs with little idea of the correct pixels, I made mistake after mistake as I sat in my room trying to realise my dream. I never realized my errors, as I was infatuated that I could see my articles in print and my photographs looked good to me. I decided the only way forward was to try and attract sponsorship.

I got my first opportunity from the Arts Council based in Manchester. Readers should be aware that I had no intentions of making any profit from this venture. The magazine was to be FREE and on a quarterly basis. I was funded by the Arts Council for Issue One. I had 2.000 copies printed. I was blinded by the fact I had actually completed a magazine all by myself, and had scant regard for the quality, but over the moon about the contents. It would take at least four magazines before I actually came to terms with the intricacies of magazine preparation.

The magazine went like hot cakes. They seemed to be everywhere in the community and people would ask 'When's the next one?' A good question. Where was I going to raise the finance for a next magazine? I was eventually to produce eight magazines, with eight different sponsors, but that was all to come.

I decided to turn to my community for help. Although the magazine was FREE I set up a subscription where I would ensure that a magazine was delivered/posted for a fee of 10 pounds for a year (4 magazines). I now have almost 400 subscribers. During these early days of publication I was to find myself under constant pressure from major agencies, operating in the Toxteth area,.

These agencies were the recipients of funding earmarked for the development of the Toxteth community that basically was a result of years of research and riots. We had millions of pounds of European funding in the city, channeled through such programmes, as the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) and the Toxteth Task Force, set up by the former Environment Minister, Michael Heseltine. There was also a growing number of Government aided schemes. Despite all the funding in the area there was little change to the lives of people, although some local people benefited with short-term work that these 'passing through' projects offered. In reality these agencies had to employ local people in order to reach the wider community.

Throughout this period the Granby Toxteth Review acted as a voice that scrutinized every development. This was to culminate in the inventive *Social Exclusion Game*, created by the Granby Toxteth Review team. The Board game depicted the maize of

agencies that had descended on the area. The game showed the difficulties experienced by local people to receive any help. In many ways the GTR observations were not really welcome by the powers that be. The Government Office of Liverpool, for example, refused us funding unless we

refrained from making comments about the aforementioned government agencies. We refused their request, albeit to our own financial detriment.

It soon became more and more difficult to raise the funding to continue the magazine and after Issue 7 I had little choice but finish my mission. I had not been able to publish Issue 8 and felt that I had let a lot of people down, in particular my subscribers. I was fortunate that two or three years later I was able to publish Issue 8.

The magazine had generated a sense of community, as local people were eager to make contributions, either via research or written contributions. All staff worked on a voluntary basis and the office was seen as a safe community haven, where people would drop in for coffee and share information that was relevant to the magazine.

The Granby Toxteth Review highlighted how a local initiative made a community feel part of articulating their own beliefs and many saw the publication as an opportunity to involve themselves with 'community politics'.

In conclusion, in regard to the benefits of co-produced research on social justice, I am in no doubt that without such research many communities, like Toxteth, would find difficulty in having their issues addressed. One only has to look at the amount of research on Toxteth over many years. For example, once the level of deprivation had been identified the city became a major target of Government funding. In reality research is essential in bringing the issues to the attention of the relevant agencies, but there is no guarantee that any action will be taken. The Stephen Lawrence case highlighted the institutional racism of the Metropolitan Police Force but did not necessarily end such racism. It is a difficult task for most researchers to achieve social justice within communities that have experienced countless years of injustice.

There are however many instances where such joint research is beneficial. One would be where the link with established 'community bodies' strengthens there, already, established goals.

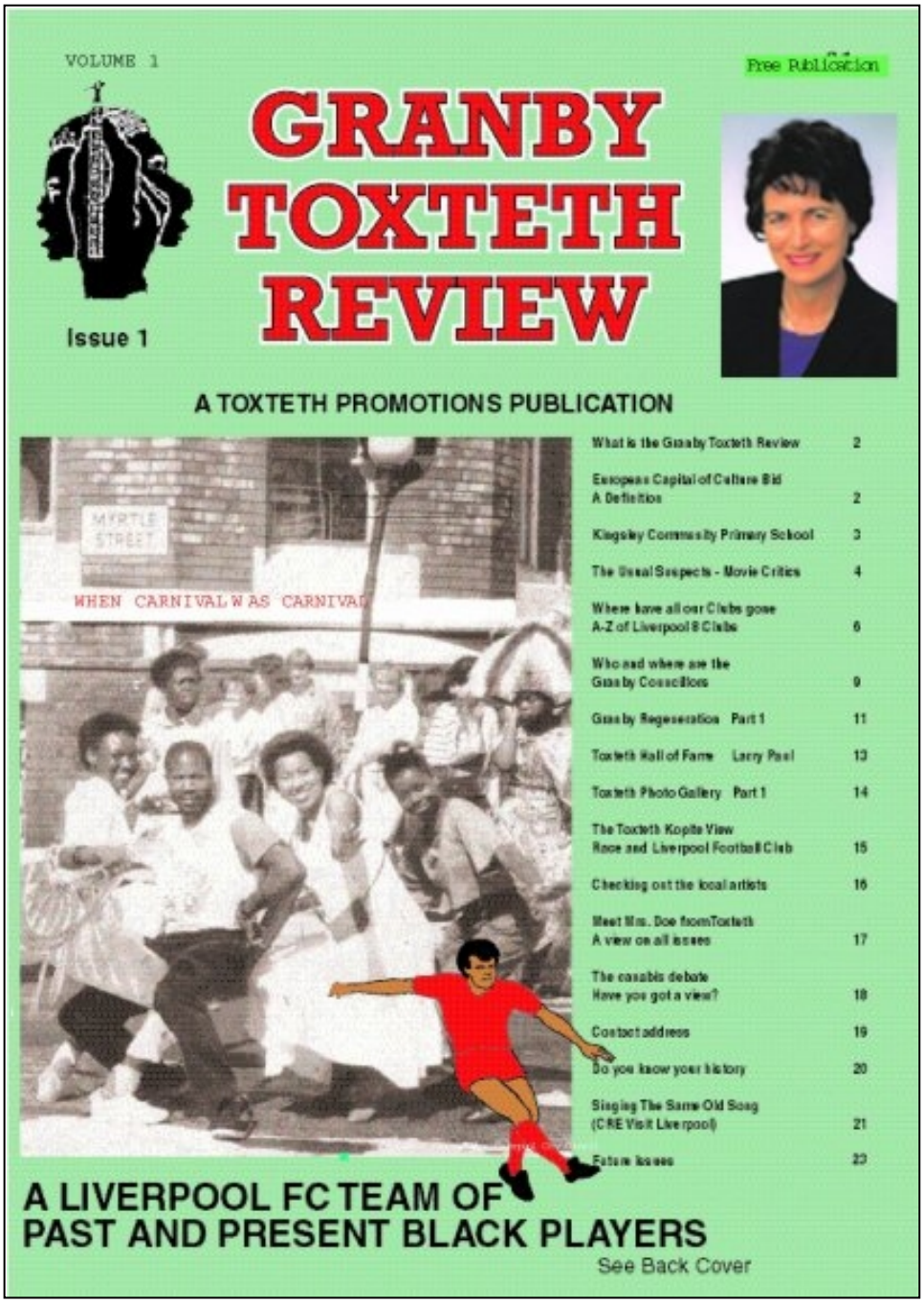
To work with 'professional' bodies, such as a University for example, adds weight to their objectives. The only alternative to this is communities helping themselves. In truth the latter is difficult due to the apathetic nature of many neighbourhoods and many starting from the premise that it is a waste of time and nothing will happen. History has shown us that once an issue has been identified via research there is always a reaction, be it positive or negative. Finally for any co-produced to be successful, there has to be an initial empathy from the researchers, which in turn brings about a confidence that things can happen. I say this because many researchers have a job to do and see no further than getting the job done and leaving the situation as quick as they arrived, regardless to what impact it may have or not have on social justice.

My example of the Granby Toxteth Review, hopefully, shows how working together can bring about a sense of 'its ours' and if we work together we can realise our goals. Imagine if we would have had the support of professional researchers, who knows how far we may have progressed? There is little doubt that co-produced research is a potent weapon to achieving social justice.

Hopefully the days when researchers have little, to no, empathy with the people they link with are well and truly a thing of the past. Personally I used to dwell on the 'class' and 'race' gap and found it difficult to comprehend that a middle class researcher could come to Toxteth and understand the feelings and pain that the community has experienced, over countless years. I now know that gap has been addressed, and it is essential that co-produced research is used as a tool to bring about

social justice within communities that have little to no power or voice to articulate their own frustration or need.

2,500 words



Author: Sue Cohen, Single Parent Action Network and Co-Investigator, Productive Margins & Morag McDermont, University of Bristol, Principal Investigator, Productive Margins

Title: Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold – new theorisations on regulating for engagement

Turning and turning in the widening gyre
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.
W.B. Yeats, The Second Coming

Co-produced research under the *Productive Margins*: *Regulating* for *Engagement* programme is intended to enable communities at the margins in Bristol and south Wales to influence and challenge decisions which affect everyday life; in the words of the anti-Tesco protestors in Stokes Croft, Bristol: 'We demand meaningful consultation in decisions which affect OUR COMMUNITY!'[1] So, whilst this means focusing on the very local, on particular solutions, it cannot mean this alone.

There is a danger in seeing community engagement as a zero sum game: power is taken away from the centre, 'de-regulation' is enacted in the name of giving power to the 'local'. Rather, our understanding is of multi-layered power relations, requiring resources at all levels. Regulating *for* engagement means a focus not simply on regulations that get in the way of engagement, or make participation meaningless. It means finding new forms and institutions for regulation that can give authority to engaged decision-making. It means re-orientating regulation away from only serving the needs of powerful institutions, making regulation a powerful tool *for* social justice. It means regulatory experiments that arise not from the needs of institutions at the centres of regulatory space, but engaging and providing channels for communities at the boundaries of regulatory spaces, at the *margins*, producing new spaces for engagement and decision-making.

[1] Picture credit: Daniel Oliver

In this paper we use the story of Single Parent Action Network (SPAN), a partner in Productive Margins, to explore how research co-produced between academics and communities marginalised to the boundaries of regulatory spaces might rework these spaces so that their primary aim becomes social justice. We approach this first, through thinking about the ways in which regulation from a variety of levels (from Europe to local government) impacts on everyday lives; in these spaces, regulation as a series of technologies and toolkits has frequently ignored social justice. Now, under the banner of 'austerity', drastic budgets cuts make a mockery of claims of a localism agenda as local government, which previously had the potential to be a powerful regulatory resource supporting local communities, is reduced to defensive mode.

Most technologies and toolkits of regulation fail to support us through. We turn to poetry to help us to see things differently, exploring emotion, voice and identity, which are often lost if seen only through a socio-economic lens.

The centre cannot hold - regulatory mechanisms, institutional injustices

SPAN and the University of Bristol came to be working together around a campaign concerning the precarious employment contracts that single parents frequently ended up in as care workers; for single parents the care industry appeared to allow them to utilise their expertise as parent-carers. Through evidence gained from the casework of a Citizens Advice worker based in SPAN, SPAN and the CAB launched a report which described the precarity of the working conditions of single parents, largely women, in the care industry working on what were in effect zero-hours contracts. This was 2010, and the SPAN/CAB report was noted but then disappeared. So Sue and Morag began looking for ways of taking this issue forward as a research programme, initially looking to bid for an EU-funded 'Pilot Project to encourage conversion of precarious work into work with rights' (European Commission 2010). Europe is one 'level' in the regulatory maze, one that has important consequences: many UK regulatory mechanisms originate from the EU; and European funding has proved so important for new research directions and the social justice activities of community organisations when national funds have been pulled away.

In 2010 the EU had identified the precarity of working conditions as an important research and regulatory issue at a time when little attention had been paid to these issues in the UK. In 2013, zero hours contracts have become news (*Guardian 5th* August 2013: 'Zero-hours contracts cover more than 1m UK workers'[2]). This was, and is, an issue of regulation, one that is central to the possibility for single parents and others caught in the zero-hours contract trap of engaging in everyday life – for such contracts, through the insecurity and the dependencies they generate, make it difficult for workers to be in control of their own lives and so to become engaged citizens.

Turning and turning in the widening gyre

Co-produced research would have highlighted the trend to zero-hours contracts that has now become pervasive. However, all too often the voice and experience of those who are more excluded is hidden from view and from public scrutiny. It was against this background that SPAN was established with a significant aim of giving single parents a voice in policy making that affects their lives.

[2] http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2013/aug/05/zero-hours-contracts-cover-1m-uk-workers visited 7th September 2013

SPAN was set up in 1990 under the Third European Poverty Programme, as a multi-racial organization, driven primarily by women living on benefits and low income experiencing the structural discrimination and marginalisation located in the intersection between gender, ethnicity, class and 'women's innovative and practical approaches to motherhood under oppressive conditions' (Collins 1991). SPAN worked to sustain its vision of helping to enable single parents to empower themselves to take control over their lives, by operating in many different social and economic settings, locally, nationally and in Europe, negotiating the complex contradictions this entails, including its own organizational development.

This is challenging at the best of times. Even on the rare occasions when there are government consultations or invitations to the corridors of power, politicians, civil servants and researchers generally come in with their own agendas and interests; what they do learn from people who are more marginalised they take away, giving little back. So the interests of those who have knowledge of the way the world is operating at a grassroots level, including how and why policies are failing, don't get addressed and people remain disempowered.

Political settings continue to exert control over embodied knowledge and experience in ways that reflect existing inequalities (Flax, 1992). In doing so they omit a whole body of knowledge which helps us to make sense of the world – personal experience of ethnicity, class, sexuality and gender as well as the private world of women - domestic, cerebral and emotional - for example the issues for single mothers looking after children living in run-down areas who are expected to get a job and at the same time keep their children safe (Cohen, 1998). In addressing these barriers SPAN has by necessity engaged in multiple struggles and survival strategies exercising power in ways that negotiate with, circumnavigate, protest and protect against the power possessed (Gramsci 1978, Hooks 1994)

Working at the boundaries of regulatory space

The exercise of power through regulatory systems cannot be thought of as an activity remote from each of us. One of the most fruitful developments in the academic study of regulatory systems has been the 'regulatory space' literature. Hancher & Moran (1989) coined the term 'regulatory space' as a way of conceptualising the complex forms of control, relationships and the deployment of resources that occur in these decentred regulatory environments. The main idea of regulatory space as a metaphor is that resources of regulatory power are dispersed and fragmented. Resources are not restricted to formal, state authority that arises from, for example, legislation or contracts; they also include information, wealth and organisational capacities. Relationships in regulatory space are characterised as complex, dynamic and horizontal, involving negotiated interdependence(Scott 2001).

The starting point of *space* makes us think about the ways in which we *appropriate* the spaces we occupy, whether they are metaphorical or physical spaces; and that appropriation is intimately connected with thoughts and ideas about how we govern (e.g. Bourdieu, Latour, Lefebvre). The way we divide up space (for example, into public or private) and the ways we occupy and use it for different functions means that space has become an organising principle for thinking about the exercise of power (see Blomley et al 2001, Cooper 1998)

However, regulatory spaces are *exclusionary* at the same time as inclusionary. For communities at the boundaries or *margins* of regulatory space, the inclusive communication that arises from a need

to be seen to be engaging others can, at times of crisis, quickly turn, as the boundary is pulled tighter. The rationale “austerity” then takes precedence.

Different times – the falcon cannot hear the falconer

Local government and community organisations have not had an easy relationship, but in the decade or so before 2010, relationships were forged, partnerships developed. SPAN spent 8 years in partnership with Bristol Library Service and other stakeholders, leading to the building of a new learning/childcare centre and library, ‘Junction 3’, in a run-down area riven through by the M32 motorway. SPAN raised money for the initial business plan, and worked with the partners on the Library’s successful £2million Lottery bid that would include SPAN delivering training and childcare services in this impoverished area of the inner city. As part of this process, single parent volunteers engaged with neighbourhood residents in developing locally inspired activities to be organised by a newly developing Community Interest Company (CIC).

Yet in the final stretch in 2012, the new leadership of the service withdrew from the partnership with SPAN because we were “in different times". SPAN was to be a “commercial tenant”, required to fill the service’s gaping fiscal hole at a cost of £58,000 per year (that SPAN would pay its share of overhead costs was never in dispute). In addition to this financially unsustainable proposition, a further twist was that SPAN was potentially homeless having moved out of the council owned premises it had occupied for over 17 years in order to move into Junction 3. (Prior to this SPAN had to resort to taking a successful action under the Public Sector Equality Duty to delay eviction, expending energy that could have been better placed if regulations designed to facilitate equality and social justice had been applied in the first place.)

Regulations that underpin the localism agenda can hold little sway when councils are faced with the pressures of government austerity policies. Local government can claim to want local participation, but then use the rhetoric of “different times” to bounce public sector cuts back to communities, closing down many local grassroots organisations in the process.

The turbulence this creates is hard to contain. Yeats' poem resonates here – “things fall apart” and what will take their place? Austerity/different times are leading to amoral decisions - and to anomie? Does Durkheim also resonate? Well not entirely. Theories of social democracy underpinned by notions of organic solidarity would presume that the State negotiates with representative bodies such as SPAN to represent community interests. SPAN’s survival however could not be assured on such a premise, especially when local government services were also experiencing drastic budget cuts handed down by central government

SPAN does not lack conviction, nor will it fall apart. Whatever may be slouching towards the organisation is being resisted – inspired more by liberationist than social democratic strategies. Members exercised their power to circumvent and protect against the power possessed (Lukes 1974). Approached by another grassroots organisation facing a crisis in funding, the organisations have merged under the common ethos of helping to enable disadvantaged women and men, families and groups, to empower themselves and take control over their lives. They now have extensive community premises to run training, empowerment projects, history and arts groups, childcare, children’s activities, and micro businesses. Meanwhile community activists retain the CIC for Junction 3, with a pop-up market and neighbourhood activities, even though the Library Service had originally said that with changing times the CIC was now history and they needed to "wipe the slate clean."

The meaning of we - what could co-produced research accomplish for social justice in this context?

Regulating *for* engagement means seeking out regulatory mechanisms that enable grassroots organisations to challenge existing power structures; and we need to turn to the *margins* if we are to move away from the 'old ways' which see engagement as something contingent and expendable. In regulatory spaces powerful organisations have worked hard to create and defend territories that protect their own interests, rather than the interests of social justice. It will be at the boundaries, where feelings of powerlessness can be turned to creativity, where imaginative experiments can happen.

This is why co-produced research, involving organisations whose members are economically and socially marginalised and discriminated against, can help to uncover ways in which multi-layered power and regulatory controls are operating. Co-produced research could help to uncover ways in which community organisations are engaged in social change activities that are living, dynamic, in process, and that could inform regulatory practices but for the fact that they are hidden from view and therefore from scrutiny. In opening up spaces for deliberation, debate and dissent co-produced research could uncover how embedded ways of working control presence, emotion, voice and identity, marginalising the participation of low-income women, BME communities, and grass roots organisations in the process.

In these years - we turn to poetry

In those years, people will say, we lost track

of the meaning of *we*, of *you*

we found ourselves

reduced to *I*

and the whole thing became

silly, ironic, terrible:

we were trying to live a personal life

and, yes, that was the only life

we could bear witness to

But the great dark birds of history screamed and plunged

into our personal weather

They were headed somewhere else but their beaks and pinions drove

along the shore, through the rags of fog

where we stood, saying *I*

Adrienne Rich (1991)

We have found in working together on the Productive Margins programme that poetry can spark opportunities for expression and analysis that cannot be represented by socio-economic disciplines alone. Social justice movements are driven by passion and emotion triggered by political understandings of inequality and discrimination. Exceptional poets can give voice to embodied knowledge, emotion and the struggle for social justice in a range of settings.

Seamus Heaney's death in August 2013 produced some great writing about the importance and role of poets and poetry. *The Irish Times*,[3] devoted a whole front page to Heaney, in a show of humanism at a time when most news was about the dehumanising nature of human activity. Fintan O'Toole, said of Heaney 'He turned our disgrace into our grace, our petty hatreds into epic generosity…He reminded us that Ireland is a culture before an economy'. Heaney's own words from his Noble Laureate lecture '*Crediting Poetry*' say it better than we can

> I credit it [poetry] ultimately because poetry can make an order as true to the impact of external reality and … sensitive to the inner law's of the poet's being (Heaney 1995, 11).

The arts and poetry in particular, can help us see things we would not otherwise: seeing, expressing emotion, allows us to *be* at the level of the human, or the human in community, in a way that social science rational text-based outputs cannot. Even the bid terminology of 'outputs' is wrong; art allows us to see these as creative possibilities. Heaney allowed people to see that confusion was not ignoble condition (Freil, REF). Poets and poetry can allow us to accept the complex, competing, contradictory narratives that sometimes seem like no narrative at all, reworking them into new systems of regulation from the *human* perspective.

Conclusion

A 'localism' agenda runs the danger of *reinforcing* existing power structures, allowing powerful actors, whether government organisations or multi-national companies, to do what they like, without challenge. Hence our urgency to develop new theorisations of regulatory practices and structures within the Productive Margins research programme, with organisations representing marginalised communities acting not just as brokers but also as potential regulators.

Without regulatory mechanisms, experiments in regulating for engagement will not stick. Whilst we expect 'regulating *for* engagement' to find new ways communities can use power, there are dangers in calls to 'feed the local, starve the centre' (evident in Philip Blond (2010)'s Red Toryism which proposes moving assets from local government to communities), an accentuation of postcode lotteries in services and the dismantling of the welfare state in favour of voluntary activity. This leads to arbitrary decision-making by unaccountable charities unable to provide universal public services and resources. (Levitas 2013, 166). Rather what is needed is a re-formulation of the role of local government and other organisations, opening up spaces for deliberation, debate and dissent, spaces for presence, emotion, voice and identity for those more likely to be excluded, where the political is more than the personal, where the "*I*" becomes "*we*." It requires us to see things differently – a form of seeing we believe which is be helped by turning to poetry and the arts. Emotion, voice and identity can lose their meaning if seen just from a socio-economic perspective.

If we turn again to Yeats, 'things will fall apart; the centre cannot hold' casts a new light. This is not regulation as commanding, controlling and constraining, but regulation as *holding* – holding in the way that parents may 'regulate' their children through holding as an act of caring and minding; and, as Ruth Levitas (2013) encourages, to turn to utopias as our method.

[3] 31st Aug/1st Sept 2013

References

Bourdieu Pierre(1989), 'Social Space and Symbolic Power' *Sociological Theory* 7, 14-25;

Blomley, Nicholas, David Delaney and Richard T. Ford.eds, (2001) *The Legal Geographies Reader: Law, Power and Space.* Oxford: Blackwell

Blond, Philip (2010) *Red Tory*, London: Faber & Faber

Cooper, Davina (12998) *Governing Out of Order: Space, Law and the Politics of Belonging* London: Rivers Oram Press.

Cohen, S. (1998) "Women's Social Exclusion in the Politics of the European Union", in The

European Journal of Women's Studies Vol. 5, London: Sage

Collins, P. (1991) XXXX

European Commission (2010) 'Pilot Project to encourage conversion of precarious work into work with rights', CALL FOR PROPOSALS 2010 VP/2010/016, European Commission – DG EMPL/F

Flax, J. (1992) 'Beyond Equality: Gender, Justice and Difference", in G.Bock and S. James (eds) Beyond Equality and Difference. London: Routledge**.**

Friel Brian.. FIND REF .. in Fintan O'Toole piece

Gramsci, A. (1978) *Selections from Prison Notebooks* Translated by Hoare, Q. and Nowell

Smith, G. London: Lawrence and Wishart

Hancher, Leigh and Michael Moran (1989) ''Organizing Regulatory Space' ', in Hancher and Moran (eds.), *Capitalism, Culture and Economic Regulation,* Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Heaney, Seamus (1995) The Nobel Lecture 1995, (Loughcrew, Co Meath, Ireland: The Gallery Press)

Hooks, B. (1994) *Outlaw Culture – Resisting Representations*, London: Routledge

Latour, Bruno (1986 'Visualisation and Cognition: Thinking with Eyes and Hands') *Knowledge and Society: Studies in the Sociology of Culture, Past and Present*, 6, 1-40;

Lefebvre, Henri (1991), *The Production of Space* Trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford, Blackwell)

Levitas, Ruth (2013)

Lukes, S. (1974) *Power: A Radical View*

Rich, Adrienne (1991) *'*In those years' from *Dark Field of The Republic*

Scott, Colin (2001) 'Analysing Regulatory Space: Fragmented Resources and Institutional Design'', *Public Law,* 329-53

Author: Helen Graham

Title: Affect: Or how change (might, sometimes) happen

A change

Only once in my time attempting to do co-production of research have I seen concrete change take place as a result. A traceable redistribution of resources by a museum towards people often not thought about. There was a research seminar. The research was discussed. Then a senior manager decided to create a new programme.

The project was based at the Smithsonian Institution as part of a Museum Practice Fellowship I held in 2010-2011. And I worked with self-advocates and families with teenagers with intellectual disabilities to explore the museums as a way of understanding how the Smithsonian Institution might become more accessible, exciting and welcoming. Following the seminar, a senior manager decided to use a funding stream to which she had access to set up a summer camp for teenagers for intellectual disabilities which has now been running for three years.

Yet the precise contribution of 'research' and 'knowledge' to this specific change was a bit ambiguous to say the least. Certainly, much more ambiguous than any researcher-ego would like. For all the usual reasons of time, support and money I had not managed to get the twenty different families, schools groups and self-advocates I'd worked with over three months into the same room to develop shared, aggregate insights that we could 'deliver', fully processed to the museum. As a result we decided to make our presentation in a very free form way. In the seminar I spoke, so did two mothers and so did two teenagers with intellectual disabilities. We all spoke in our own way, in our own words and with our own, sometimes quite different, sense of what was important about the visits we'd been on together. For one teenager who had visited the National Museum of Air and Space with his mom, this was expressed through a few key words: leaning (in the air flight simulator), flying, spaceship. For one mother, it was the Caucasian features on the mannequins and the lack of attention to Jazz in the National Museum of American History; the erasure, she strongly argued, of African American experience and contributions. For me, it was probably relatively esoteric, stuff about 'seeing the museum from the outside', the importance of feeling sure in advance you will be welcomed and about the crucial importance of front-of-house staff being open to a whole range of ways of being in the museum (moving around, making noise).

In other words, the seminar did not present collectively processed knowing. It was 'research' in the sense we'd gone out to find stuff out and because I was only there in Washington D.C. under the guise of 'research'. It was participatory in that we'd done it together. Yet most of what was said was not located in academic or practice literatures. Most people would not describe it as rigorous. It was not *representative*, in either the empirical or political sense. It was personal, idiosyncratic even. And it was reflective and felt. The change happen because something in this poly-vocal discussion *resonated* with the senior manager. She felt some kind of urgency. And pretty much acted straight away. The summer camp was launched six months later.

How things become bigger (substantiate; substance)

I'm not sure how research is supposed to change things but the way it's probably supposed to work is through some form of 'substantiation' (the word used in the generic feedback for this Co-production and Social Justice Symposium). By making claims substantial. Usually this 'substantiation' happens, in the disciplines I work in, through one form of its dictionary definition; 'with proof or

evidence', location within disciplinary or practice knowledge plus rigour of critical insight and argument. There is also another resonance lurking within 'substantiation', in its latin etymology of 'substance', something 'tangible and solid'. In both connotations, a claim grows by enrolment, in Bruno Latour's sense, a making bigger by drawing in other things (previous research, theory, logic).

Yet what is clear in this instant was that the 'substance' was not exactly in the 'what' the assume content of knowledge and research (that doing X, Y and X will make museums more accessible) but more as 'affect'. Affect could be understood as a kind of negative substance, or substance in relief. You can only know it is tangible and solid through 'touching or making a difference to' something or someone. The crucial difference here, to evoke Lawrence Grossberg's work on affect in popular culture, is that affect is substance not through 'what' (what is known) but *how* and *how much;* its ability to enroll lies in its intensities. 'Of substance' in this sense that it is big, urgent and important but not 'substantiated' in the sense of 'with proof or evidence'. I think the content of our stories could easily have been different but if told in a similar way and with a similar tone then they might have had the same affect leading it a similar effect.

'Ontological rationality'

Since that January seminar I've puzzled about this a lot. And so, I guess, I'll now try and substantiate this experience by locating it in some ideas I've since found have helped me make sense of it. One that 'ontological rationality' is becoming a common logic of institutional practice. For example, in the context of the use of ethnography in commercial IT design, Andrew Barry, Georgina Born and Gina Weszkalnys show that the financial investment companies make in this way of knowing represents an investment in socializing the object:

> [Ethnographers working in commercial contexts] express a sense that the justification of the role of the ethnographer is in large part ontological: that s/he must effect an ontological transformation. The rationale for carrying out ethnography, then, is not just that it may impact on design, but that it has the potential to transform the technological object from being merely an object or product into something which, depending on the approach, is locally situated, socially contextualised, emotionally attached or encultured.[i]

While the commercial companies Barry, Born and Weszkalnys describe are quite different from museums with their specific political and technocratic legacies, the significance of the value of non-generalisable knowing ('locally situated') which is also, therefore, not easily coolly or dispassionately managed ('emotionally attached'; 'enculturation') resonates. Indeed, management aims within institutional contexts are themselves often now seen as best facilitated through 'quiet leadership', soft skills, flatter staff structures and there are signs that the power of storytelling is as likely to be valued as useful and effective as the ways of knowing produced through representative sampling and statistics.[ii]

I draw attention to this for two reasons, the first is that it seems that ontological rationalities are becoming compelling in conceptualizing change. The story, the personal account, the resonant phrase, the feeling that grows. So if we want research to challenge inequality then this register for knowing can't be easily ignore. But it is a mode of creating substance which is also a highly compromised, grey and ethically and politically ambiguous register. The slogan 'the personal is political' for the women's liberation movement was often about moving for specific experiences to generalizable insights of politics anyalsis.[iii] The register of knowing in this ontological turn is specific, personal and resolutely not anonymous or aggregated into safer data sets or 'theory'. The change

works because you met the person or heard their story. It is *how* it matters to them which matters, and, of course, *how much*.

How does change happen again?

Now, and directly responding to the generic feedback given to all of us in preparation clearly a few questions are raised by what I've written so far: Does this kind of 'substance' – of affect and of ontological rationality – challenge inequality? Can the meaning of 'substantiation' really be adapted and extended in the way I have tried here? Is any of this 'co-production' anyway?

Clearly how we think change happens really matters in the debate set up by the symposium and relates directly to how we conceptualize power. A couple of ideas associated with theorists such as Foucault, De Certeau and Latour really help here: 1) the idea that power flows through micro-practices[iv] and (therefore) 2) the social is flat and operates through networks. As Latour argues thinking of power in this way is the only way to imagine change:

> Is it not obvious then that only a skein of weak ties, of constructed, artificial, assignable, accountable, and surprising connections is the only way to begin contemplating any kind of fight? . . . I think it would be much safer to claim that action is possible only in a territory that has been opened up, flattened down, and cut to size in a place where formats, structures, globalization, and totalities circulate inside tiny conduits, and where for each of their applications they need to rely on masses of hidden potentialities. If this is not possible, then there is no politics. No battle has ever been won without resorting to new combinations and surprising events. One's own actions 'make a difference' only in a world made of differences.[v]

The key point here then is that change probably only happens in specific places through specific people and specific conversations. Of course sometimes, a story, phrase, slogan or fact aggregates and creates palpable change very quickly. And sometimes it goes no further than that one person. However, one of the reasons I'm committed to the co-production of research is to multiply the number of perspectives, viewpoints and contexts within which the research is being produced and the therefore develop more resonant understandings developed precisely to speak to those contexts. In understanding this potential – of the application of broadly Foucault-type ideas of power and change to co-production of research – I've been very inspired by Danny Burns delineation of systemic approach to action and participatory research. The point here is to be within the system you are seeking to understand, to see change as complex and not linear, to see multiple perspectives within the system as crucial to understanding and changing it. Burns writes:

- Everything is contextually situated, everything is interconnected and everything changes everything else. (p. 1)
- 'each situation is unique and its transformative potential lies in the relationships between interconnected people and organizations'. (p. 32)
- Emotion and sense making are directly connected.

- Sense making is making a whole out of fragments (p. 1)
- Meaning comes from out emotions and our sense (and don't always need concrete evidence). (p. 2)
- Evidence to underpin action needs to be focused more on resonance than representativeness. (p. 53)

Coproduction, research and challenging inequality

If inequality is produced in specific interactions and systems which are maintained by people acting in certain ways, then the research insight of most substance is one which resonates in the place in which it needs to resonant. Research insights are more likely to resonate if those people in those places have been involved in generating the insight. Research is best communicated in conversation so insights can respond to and be tailored to the person listening. There are some networks – academic networks mostly – where to have substance requires the formal definition of 'to substantiate'. The insight can only grow by enrolling the recognizable protocols of rigour, evidence, proof. In almost all other contexts the requirements of substantiation are much less likely to resonant than the right encounter, the right conversation, the right story, the right phrase, the right two people meeting, especially people who wouldn't usually.[vi] This is acknowledged as being as true for law makers and policy makers as it is for anyone else.[vii] This diffusive approach to research doesn't make the insights less powerful, it is simply a recognition an co-production needs to happen all the way along the chain once though of as production *then* communication/consumption (or sender-message-receiver).

But underneath such a diffusive approach is another crucial question in terms of how the practice of co-production of research might address inequality – if we need to multiple perspectives in order for the co-production of knowing, insights and understandings to emerge then there may not be any need for us to exactly agree on the precise nature of these insights. Or think of our 'audience' or constituencies in exactly the same way. The has been a danger in some strands of participatory action research that the primary site of inequality is seen as the university/research/knowledge itself. This has led to co-written academic publications, which for those it makes sense for, of course, makes sense (and is great). However, these readings of power and change also opens up the potential of what Burns calls, 'parallel action' (derived from the anarchist practice of a diversity of tactics). This creates the possibility for only 'partial connection'[viii] between insights developed by and for different people in different contexts and an active cultivate of loosely hanging together multiple energies and outputs rather than everything needing to be brought together, into a single 'voice' and a co-authored in one register. With such a reading of power and change and talking very seriously practices of situated knowledge and proliferating co-production of understandings, we don't need to be research team vanguards.

What this means for universities?

I was asked to say something about this in my specific feedback for this synposium. Universities are themselves complex systems within complex systems. They perpetuate and challenge inequalities in multiple, proliferating ways every day. Within these systems, co-production of research and radical pedagogy can do is to expand the systems the university feels accountable to include people who don't want to or can't pay for higher education. An ethics and politics of academic practice lies in choosing our own 'peers' and 'critical friends'. In many ways, this is what Connected Communities has enabled – for all of us to have the network of non-academic peers who we work with to whom we feel accountable to be valued by Universities via their new link with RCUK monetary value. A strength for creating some forms of institutional change comes with these networks. In terms of teaching, a role for addressing inequality has to come through cultivate a form of knowing which is

informed by 'substantiated' debate in the traditional sense but that also can simultaneously see that as a system produced through a range of enrolled contingencies which don't exist in every context.[ix] To know that you know something and to know this knowing's own limits. And just as power is one thing, can't we also think of universities as a weak skien of ties? And a weaker skien of ties than many other institutions, too.

To Affect

I didn't know at that Smithsonian seminar that what we did would work. In fact, I probably thought it wouldn't really. I am still working with the Smithsonian and can now see that one of means of making the research insights we generating useful within in the institution is to openly discuss everything all the way along, at any opportunity and with as many different people as possible. And crucially to make sure as may of the teenagers on the Camp meet as many members of Smithsonian staff as possible. Elsewhere and elsewhen, I've written about the seminar and the Museums for Us project too, but I've needed to write about it *not* in terms of access to museum exactly. Instead I wrote about it in terms of what it means to know access and it was substantiated in the usual way for cultural studies and critical theory because this was the way of making that time I spent in Washington resonant within this particular academic network. Although everyone was sent a draft and an easier-to-read summary, most people – probably all but one – decided not to read to the article. For them, the meaningful effect of what we'd done was happening somewhere else and meant only partially the same thing. And it might be through this 'parallel action' that the too often parallel lives we live, stratified by inequalities, might become newly connected, if only ever partially.

References

Andrew Barry, Georgina Born, and Gina Weszkalnys, 'Logics of Interdisciplinarity', *Economy and Society*, 37, 1 (2008) 20-49, p35.

Danny Burns, *Systemic Action Research: A strategy for whole systems change*, Bristol, Policy Press, 2007, p53.

'The pattern of development within the small [Consciousness Raising] group is that the more you discuss and analyse, the more appears to be discussed. Gradually a complex and comprehensive picture of social and political structures builds up, in which, as you constantly refer back to your own life and experiences, a basic tension and interaction appear: that between the individual life and that of collective society' (Michelene Wandor, Women's Liberation Movement [1971] 1972).

Michel Foucault on power, 'We should make an ascending analysis of power or in other words begin with its infinitesimal mechanisms, which have their own history, their own trajectory, their own techniques and tactics, and then look at how these mechanisms of power, which have their solidity and, in a sense, their own technology, have been and are invested, colonized, used, inflected, transformed, displaced, extended and so on by increasingly general mechanisms and forms of overall domination', [1975_1976] 2003**'**''Society Must Be Defended'': Lectures at the College de France 1975**-**1976**'**, trans. David Macey, eds. Mauro Berani & Alessandro Fontana,

London, Penguin., p. 30.

Bruno Latour (2005) *Reassembling the Social: An introduction to Actor-Network-Theory.* Oxford Unviersity Press, pp. 252**-**253.

'There are other ways of mobilizing specificities that do not have to do with detail. One is to present cases as not being representative of something larger – into which they neatly fit. It is to take each case as phenomena in their own right, each differing slightly in some (unexpected) way from all the others. Thus a case may still be instructive beyond its specific site and situation, and this tends to be why it is studied, but the lessons it holds always come with the condition that, elsewhere, in other cases, what is different and similar is not to be taken for granted', John Law and Annemarie Mol, 'Complexities: An Introduction' in J. Law and A. Mol (eds), *Complexities: Social Studies of Knowledge Practices*, Durham and London, Duke University Press, 2002, pp1-22, p15.

xv 'New policy-relevant knowledge often comes from collaborative processes that break down the distinction between roles - where technical expertise around data meets other forms of knowing rooted in experience or a sense of the possible'. Huw Davies, 'Five minutes with Huw Davies: "When contextualised, research has the power to animate, inform, empower or infuriate"', LSE Impact Blog, 23 March 2012. Available at:

http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2012/03/23/contextualised-research-policymaking-event/

I've always found helpful Marilyn Strathern**'**s deployment of **'**scale**'** as enabling interpretive shifts which make visible partial and (therefore) non-fully corresponding connections (2004, p. xi), The way I use it here is not exactly as she does, for her connections operate vertically as you change the scale of anaylsis. I think my use of it has a more horizontal sense of partially, connected in one way but not fully and not bound in. Strathern, M. (2004) Partial Connections, Updated Edition, Lanham, MD and

Oxford, AltaMira Press.

Marilyn Strathern in a reflection on the 'transferable skills' agenda for students, argues:

In making transferable skills an objective, one cannot reproduce what makes a skill work, i.e. its embeddedness. Perhaps one should argue for an ecological response - that what is needed is the

very ability to embed oneself in diverse contexts, but that can only be learnt one context at a time.

'Afterword: accountability…and ethnography', in M. Strathern, (ed.) *Audit Cultures: Anthropological studies in accountability, ethics and the academy,* London, Routledge, p282

Author: Graham Jeffery and Hugh Kelly

Title: Re-presenting poverties: the cultural politics of participatory film-making with communities on the edge

There is a 20 minute film: "Remaking Society? Community, change and continuity on North Tyneside" to accompany this brief paper – intended to act as a stimulus for discussion.

Hugh Kelly's film projects within Swingbridge Media span more than three decades of tumultuous change for communities on Tyneside. Starting out as an Fine Art graduate in the late 1970s, making documentary photographs with young people who were experiencing unemployment in Scotswood, his work can be located within a tradition of 'community media': providing the means for people to represent their own situations, stories and neighbourhoods; providing access to media tools; and rooted in a radical politics of participation (Kelly, 1984) that has at its core a critique of hegemonic narratives of 'exclusion' and the tendency of the local (and national) state to reproduce inequalities, even within policies and programmes ostensibly designed to alleviate the effects of poverty (see, for example Home Office Development Unit, 1977).

Hugh's films have chronicled some major changes, becoming documents of significance in the social histories of Gateshead and Tyneside. They have also involved many residents of estates and neighbourhoods in the North East in producing media texts which represent their lives – from *An English Estate* (Channel 4, 1992), *Poverty – it's a crime* (2001), to *Tackling Poverty* (2012) and other recent work which explores participation in cultural activities and the involvement of young people in the spectacular new developments on the Gateshead Quays. Yet alongside official narratives of creative civic participation and international cultural tourism, there remain persistent problems of exclusion, poverty and long-term unemployment – a "combination of deprivation and spectacle" (Jeffery 2005) that is double-edged and complex.

The transition to a post-industrial economy in the North East, with a huge shift within a quarter century from a heavy manufacturing/mining base to services and 'knowledge economy' has forced adaptation and change on working class communities ill-equipped to cope with the consequences of such a rapid shift. Formal education/training systems and community infrastructure have been slow to keep up, and the *lived experience* of this painful transition has tended to be downplayed in official narratives of 'regeneration' and 'neighbourhood renewal'.

Within the *Remaking Society* project (an AHRC Connected Communities funded 'pilot demonstrator') we have explored the 35 –year archive of Hugh's work as a stimulus to debate the role of participatory photography, film and video as a tool for the co-production of research with members of communities often represented as excluded, marginal or disadvantaged. We organised public screenings, each followed by debate/discussion, of selected excerpts from Hugh's archive at the Tyneside Cinema under two titles: *Tackling Poverty,* and *Whose Culture is it Anyway?*

As a third strand of the project Hugh Kelly and Graham Jeffery have been making a short film designed to act as a provocation, in which we discuss the evolution of Hugh's work and revisit some of the filming locations (in particular the site of the Saltmeadows/Old Fold community just south east of Gateshead Quays, which has now been almost entirely demolished). We intercut footage from films made in the early and late 1990s with images from 2013 to demonstrate the scale of the 'remaking'/redevelopment that has been undertaken: a story that is often forgotten in the rush to celebrate the 'regeneration' of Gateshead through an iconic culture-led waterfront development.

Community media as a research method? Issues and problems

An important methodological pre-cursor for 'co-production' of cultural artefacts and texts, even research with communities comes from the work of the community arts and media movement. However, the claims made for community media strategies, which are frequently characterised by inflated narratives of transformation, or of powerful personal or social change, or of large scale 'social impact', need to be unpacked and interrogated. Although there is a growing academic interest in 'socially engaged' arts and media (Kester, 2004, Bishop, 2012), alongside an emerging literature on activism, art and urban change (eg Parry 2012, Buser and Arthurs 2013) the intersections between the fields of participatory arts/media and community-based action research has not yet been fully mapped.

The ideological force-field in which participatory work takes place – in practice and research - is complex and contested, and one of the values of interrogating Hugh's archive has been in opening up a debate about the inherent tensions in making work 'with communities' and dig into the problems of representation, authenticity and power relations in making collaborative work.

The first methodological argument concerns the development of collaborative relationships between the documentary film-maker and communities. At the core of this is the notion of 'empowerment' – fashionable in the 1970s and early '80s, but used less in the lexicon of community media in the present day: empowerment in the sense of providing access to media training, of skills sharing and of providing the means, via media, to represent and transmit stories and points of view. Informed by a radical politics of community as negotiation of co-existence, as a condition of interdependence and as *emergent*, this might even, in the 1970s have been been called 'consciousness raising' or, in Freire's terms, 'conscientization' (Lloyd 1972).

This approach has informed Hugh's work on poverty and exclusion very strongly. Many of the films which deal with issues faced by communities living with poverty have sought to enable the telling "the other side of the story"; and this has partly been achieved by placing participants into positions of power within the film-making process and negotiating with participants about the ways in which stories are told. For example, a young man who was subsequently demonised in the popular press as "Spider Boy", who had undertaken a string of burgalaries and assaults and was eventually convicted of manslaughter, had direct involvement in the process of making *An English Estate* as an interviewer – as the person behind the microphone asking the questions - rather than being represented as a criminal thug. These kinds of role inversions are common within community media practice – and provide counter-narratives as well as practical strategies for 'inclusion'; arguably the notion of 'counter-culture' was very important in the early formation of the community arts movement.

Linked to this approach are *critical pedagogies of participation*, as theorised, for example by Friere (Lloyd, 1972) and Giroux (1992), and developed in practical ways by community media activists who have explored the use of community media as a form of informal adult education – as portals to further training, of skills development and developing what might be called trajectories of participation – building forms of community out of arts and media practices.

A third important influence was identified by Hugh in what he described as "technological determinism" following from Raymond Williams and the emergence of cultural studies/critical media studies; the claim that technology could transform and create a different kind of equality in society by creating a vehicle for different voices to be heard within new forms of mediated democratic participation. There is a lineage of development of modes of access to media tools – through community radio and television, citizen journalism and the shifts in participation enabled through the internet/social media and the rise of more ubiquitous/pervasive media tools.

The emergence of Community Media Access Centres in the 1970s/80s– a tradition within which Hugh situates the work of Swingbridge Media - was tied up with other forms of social activism, attempting to address issues of housing, poverty, racism and unemployment. Hugh characterises this as community action "about what hadn't not been sorted out" – which took a stance against 'top down' solutions -in which media tools were allied to a campaigning/activism function – exposing power relationships – e.g. in directly confronting issues of policing or in drawing attention to the social consequences of unemployment. In the 1990s, with the advent of Single Regeneration Budgets and with the advent of New Labour in 1997, some of these explicitly oppositional media tactics were softened – one can perhaps even say *incorporated* – as government commissioning bodies began to make use of community media techniques as commissioned tools for consultation and neighbourhood planning.

There is insufficient space here to explore this here, but the series of films made by Swingbridge Media in the late 1990s in which young people were involved in 'documenting the changes' to their neighbourhoods, walk more of an ideological/discursive tightrope than the earlier, more campaigning works, which were not commissioned by local government or regeneration agencies. This incorporation of social/community media strategies as a communications, 'audience development' or even marketing tool by government agencies and cultural institutions raises some interesting questions about the extent to which radical, critical forms of participatory practice can survive, especially as they too becomes professionalised, more dependent upon state funding, or scaled up/more ambitious – inevitably less 'independent'? (The same tensions might apply to universities or funding councils seeking to demonstrate 'community enagement' and 'impact'; a way round this dilemma is through explicitly addressing the ethics and ethos of public engagement in practice).

Hugh's later work, in particular some of the commissioned promotional films for the Sage Gateshead and for cultural education programmes in the North East (*NE Generation*, 2009 – 12), mirror some of these contradictions and problems well, despite their continued use of participatory methods in their development and production. One way of examining the profound shifts in the North East economy could be to see the whole process as a huge rebranding and communications exercise – as memorably critiqued in Jonathan Meades' broadside against the regeneration industry in *Abroad Again: On the Brandwagon* (BBC, 2005). To what extent have community media practitioners been complicit in this sort of rebranding? Where is the space for 'independent' or radical media in this landscape/brandscape, of 'capitals of culture' and culture-led regeneration? What is the role of academic/community research in reframing and analysing some of these shifts and ambiguities?

The fourth argument concerns the proliferation of media and the proliferation of cultural production. In the 1970s and 1980s equipment was expensive – now it's relatively cheap, and many – but not all community members - have access to tools, platforms and the potential (if not always the time or inclination) to produce their own content. This raises the question of the space occupied by *critical* social media – the 'cultural turn' combined with social media means everyone can produce, but where are the critical voices? There is also also an increasing blurriness between 'official' and 'alternative' media – as social media tools, swarming conversations, interaction and social journalism becomes the norm. Within these 'big conversations' however, there are many voices that are hardly heard, especially those of the less advantaged.

Peter Stark, one of the cultural architects of the Gateshead Quays development, when asked "what is the Baltic for? What relationship will it have with people in the Old Fold, Saltmeadows etc?" replied absolutely decisively that "This is not going to be a community arts project". It's interesting in this context to see the word community used almost as a term of abuse – as representing poor

quality, inferior, local or parochial forms of culture. Underlying this attitude is perhaps a 'deficit' model of 'community art', standing in contrast to prestigious 'international contemporary art.'

Various aspects of Hugh's films address some of these changes, but one sequence stands out: footage shot in 1998/9 of the massive steel frame of the Millennium Bridge moving gracefully down the Tyne before being craned into place, cut together with a soundtrack of a young woman from East Gateshead singing about 'Hollywood Dreams' in a karaoke session in a working men's club; the club and the streets that surround it has since been demolished; but Newcastle-Gateshead's own "South Bank" is now firmly established. In that single sequence Hugh conjured together many of the complicated issues about the industrial heritage of North East England making way for a different kind of economy; of questions of what all these rhetorics of 'creativity' and cultural participation are *for*; of the value of skilled, craft, manual labour almost evaporating as the so-called new/knowledge/creative economy is superimposed on working class communities, with, arguably, symbolic totems of an industrial past (the Baltic Flour Mills, the entirely symbolic remnants of cranes, docks and quaysides) re-purposed for contemporary art and culture.

Yet the later films also explore the mission of the cultural institutions to promote engagement and participation, and in doing so expose some of the ambiguities in deploying a culture-led strategy for regeneration, especially when the material conditions of many of Tyneside's poorest communities have, arguably, not altered substantially in 30 years.

A further methodological issue concerns the conceptualization of 'audience' for these sorts of community films and videos: what happens in the process of screening and re-screening the films? How does the context in which they are presented affect their reception? For whom are they made? A key element of the technique involves screening the films back to those who are involved in their making – and the use of media to provoke, question and stimulate debate.

But even if the ideologies of community media remain contigent, partial and eminently questionable, we would suggest that some of the techniques and approaches developed through this work retain value:

as a means of opening up dialogues between different sections of the community
as a means of asking questions about the relative value placed on different kinds of cultural production across the communities of the North East
as a means of developing critical dialogue between academics, activists, artists and residents
as a way of creating new public discourses which challenge some of the common orthodoxies of 'regeneration' and 'poverty', including the tendency of mass media (and right wing politicians) to spectacularize or demonise those people living in conditions of deprivation
as a way of bringing to the surface experiential knowledge and accounts of communities living on the edge and validating/representing lived experience in more subtle and nuanced ways.

References

Bishop, C. (2012) Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the politics of spectatorship, London: Verso

Buser, M. and Arthurs, J. (2013) Cultural activism in the community, Swindon: AHRC

Giroux, H. (1992) Border Crossings: cultural workers and the politics of education, London: Routledge

Home Office Development Unity (1977) Gilding the Ghetto: The state and the poverty experiments, London: HMSO

Jeffery, G. (ed.) (2005) The Creative College: building a successful learning culture in the arts, Stoke on Trent: Trentham Books

Kelly, O. (1984) Community, art and the state: storming the citadels, London: Comedia

Kester, G. (2004) Conversation Pieces: community and communication in modern art, Berkeley: University of California Press

Lloyd, A. (1972) 'Freire, Conscientization and Adult Education', Adult Education Quarterly, Sept 1972 Vol 23 no 1, 3- 20

Meades, J. (2005) Abroad Again: on the brandwagon (BBC2 TV, first broadcast 2005)

Parry (2012) Cultural Hijack: rethinking intervention, Liverpool: Liverpool University Press

Author: Bob Johnston & Kimberley Marwood, University of Sheffield

Title: 'Action Heritage' - a discussion paper for Social Justice Symposium, 4-6 November 2013

At the beginning of a heritage project with school children in Rawmarsh, Rotherham, the children were asked the question 'Are you researchers?' All said 'no'. After a week spent finding out about the place where they lived and the people who had lived there, the same class were again asked the question: 'Are you researchers?' Without hesitation, they enthusiastically replied 'yes'.

Sheffield's Researching Community Heritage project has brought together diverse communities of researchers, university and community-based, of all ages and backgrounds. Our journey, as university researchers, has involved working with homeless young people researching the Georgian building where their hostel is located, a well-established local history group in the 'urban village' of Heeley, and a group of school pupils in Rawmarsh learning about the place they live and finding an answer to the question: 'Are you a researcher?'

Reflecting on our experiences working within the AHRC's Research for Community Heritage programme, we are learning that heritage research, as a *practice*, forms and transforms people and communities. By which we mean that the act of *researching* heritage shapes how we, as university and community participants, understand ourselves. In addition to the outputs of the research, the practices and processes of researching are transformative and they have social and cultural impact. The research process can be a means of enfranchisement, of revealing and contesting inequalities, an act of demonstration.

Based on these observations, we have tentatively devised the term 'Action Heritage' to refer to a method of heritage research that privileges process over outcome and is auto-critical. In this discussion paper we will work towards a definition of Action Heritage, explain its meaning and implications and reflect on its future potential. We will consider this in relation to three distinct 'communities' and their involvement with the Heritage Lottery Fund's All Our Stories scheme.

Whilst it is broadly accepted that heritage is 'active' in forming communities, places and identities, the value of participatory research methods in heritage projects has yet to be fully examined. In response, our aims in this article are threefold. Firstly, we will trace the links between heritage, social action and social justice. Secondly, we will explore these links in conversation with our co-researchers from three projects. We conclude by presenting Action Heritage as a method of co-produced research that more successfully addresses issues of social justice than current community heritage models.

Heritage as action

What do we mean by 'heritage'? Many people associate the word with a particular version of the cultural past: nostalgic, institutional, bucolic. That is the heritage of National Trust gardens and tea rooms, of great houses and 'our national story'. While versions of this heritage still exist, and in certain places still predominate, the term 'heritage' has been appropriated in many more settings. For instance, there has been a shift to recognise intangible alongside tangible heritage: the inheritance of language, music and dance are conserved together with books, buildings, and objects. Equally, heritage has become a resource across society, with 'working class heritage', 'community heritage', 'BME heritage', amongst the more fragmented geographies of contemporary heritage discourse. Critically, there is also a stronger representation of the contested nature of heritage and of heritage as a means of acknowledging cultural difference. At Stonehenge, for instance, the free-

festivalers and druids have returned to celebrate mid-summer amongst the stones, more than 25 years after they were excluded at the 'Battle of the Beanfield'.

These changes are important. They recognise and represent heritage throughout society. However, there is a further shift in thinking that interests us. It is a shift that makes sense when you consider some of the examples we have just mentioned: language as heritage, for instance, or contested heritage. What links these ideas is that heritage is not fixed or static; rather than understanding it as a noun, we can instead consider heritage as 'related to human action and agency, and as an instrument of cultural power' (Harvey 2001: 327). Heritage is an active process involving actions such as remembering, commemorating, communicating and passing on knowledge and memories (Smith 2006: 83). 'Doing' heritage does not simply refer to the preservation or celebration of the past, but in negotiating the past in the present. The inherited past is part of political, community and personal discourses in the present, and it is a structuring condition of our future. It is a 'social and cultural process that mediates a sense of cultural, social and political change' (Smith 2006: 84). For these reasons, heritage is often understood as a form of social action: 'if heritage can be a form of cultural capital and a way of connecting people with each other and the environment that surrounds them, the promotion of heritage or involvement in heritage can be considered to be a form of social action.' (Harrison 2010: 245).

One example of heritage research taking this active role is the 'Colorado Coalfield War Project', whose focus was the 'Ludlow massacre' (Ludlow Collective 2001). The massacre took place in 1914 at a temporary encampment housing 1200 workers and their families who had been evicted from their company properties. The camp was attacked, burnt down and looted by the Colorado National Guard; amongst the dead were eleven children and two women who lost their lives in a makeshift cellar that lay beneath one of the burning tents. The archaeological excavations at Ludlow began with the aim to 'exhume the class struggle of the site', and through this to raise awareness of the contemporary struggles of working families (McGuire 2008, 189). The project also used archaeology to teach students the importance of labour rights and class relations, and their own rights as workers.

It is a small step to move from recognising heritage as social action to specifically framing that as action towards social justice. For those who hold an interest in heritage it has been argued that there is a moral imperative to address issues of class and economic and social inequality (Smith et al. 2011: 1). Retrieving and celebrating working class heritage, for example, due to the historical suppression and erasure of these histories, is 'intrinsically linked to projects of protest and social justice' (Smith et al. 2011: 13).

Three conversations

With these ideas in mind, we used the stimulus created by this symposium to have conversations with some of the participants in three heritage projects we are supporting through Researching Community Heritage. Our aim in having these conversations was to 'ground' our ideas and, through people's experiences, draw out the links between research, heritage and social justice.

The conversations took place in August and early September 2013. They were recorded and transcribed. We began the meetings with a brief introduction and then followed a loose structure:

1. Who is doing research and what kind of research are they doing?

2. How, if at all, is heritage different as a framing device or as a theme within these projects?

3. What changed as a result of the project?

Our conversation with the project team at Roundabout included the youth worker, the CEO, the hostel manager and the artist-facilitator employed to produce the film. During the HLF-funded project, one of us (KM) worked with the residents to research the history of their hostel; a Grade II listed building dating to the late 1700s. Together we devised a series of activities that would involve the young people finding out about the building, the people who lived there and the local area. The transient nature of the hostel's clientele meant that there were few young people who participated in more than one activity. These activities, which included a heritage trail, trips to local heritage sites and a visit to the local studies library, remained discrete and were not a continuation of the previous research (Fig.1). As the majority of the young people would not remain in the hostel to see the outputs of the project, the research process itself was privileged above potential outputs.

Fig. 1. Researching 'The Story of St Barnabas Road' in Sheffield's Local Studies Library, Roundabout Ltd © Justine Gaubert, Silent Cities, 2013.

Although Roundabout run a series of activities for young people, this was the first project which encouraged young people to research as Ben, the CEO, noted:

> as an organisation we try and help people with their social skills and just doing things that they wouldn't normally do, going to places they wouldn't normally go to, so you know… going to that library, I don't think any of them had gone to that library before, and certainly not into the local history bit, and you know, they might not go this year or the year after but in ten years' time they might go and say, 'I'm interested in my family'.

In the spirit of Action Research, the research was participatory and reflective and involved marginalised or vulnerable people (Kindon et al 2007: 11). By encouraging participants to do 'things they wouldn't normally do' and enabling access to 'places they wouldn't normally go to', co-production enables equality of opportunity. Guided by academics, the trip to the local studies library involved young people examining census data on microfilm and looking at town maps and trade directories:

> the library was good, it took them to somewhere they hadn't been before - it was personal, some people were researching their area and realised there was old pictures from their area and stuff and the university trip, again they went somewhere where they wouldn't usually go and mix with people they wouldn't usually mix with so they got a lot from that.

By forging personal connections, the young people made the past relevant to their own lives. Their research operated as a means of exploring ways to belong, place making and anchoring in a fluid community and was a means of drawing freshly discovered and deeply set strands back into their personal histories. In order to document these connections, the young people compiled a scrapbook in which material from the library and archives was interwoven with written reflections on their experiences of the hostel:

> I think in the beginning the scrapbook talks about just the hostel and the history of the hostel and what we have found out but then further on it goes into the young people's stories and messages, so hopefully they'll just carry on doing that and then when people come in nearly two, three years' time they'll realise that there was other people in the same situation that have come from the same backgrounds as them…so hopefully it will keep evolving and getting added to.

The focus on storytelling during the scrapbook sessions encouraged the young people to record their experiences using their own symbols, methods and art forms (Kindon et al 2007: 17). These participatory methods, introduced by the academics, foregrounded the links between personal histories and the histories of the building and the community. It also provided a way to continue a reflective conversation between the young people around the theme of heritage and identity. This sense of narrative was absent when different people took part in each of the participatory workshops. The scrapbook, on the other hand, enabled stories to unfold, to be physical layered, and to 'speak' to one another in spite of absences:

> they'll have something long lasting in Roundabout other than just their file that we'll put on the computer, they'll have something that's tangible, you know a letter or something that they produced in the scrapbook…I kind of made a joke to them that I would phone them up in ten years' time and say 'remember when you said you would be doing this by now, what are you doing?' So it just makes them think about what they have got…their future, what they want…

By engaging in research, the young people constructed hopes for the future and reflected, not only on the past but on the present. As Ray (the youth worker) said, the project encouraged the young people to look at 'the past and the present and where they are at in their lives'.

Fig.2. Stepping through a 'portal to the past', Rotherham Youth Service © Steve Pool, 2013.

Links between the past, present and future were similarly drawn by participants in the project in Rawmarsh, Rotherham. In this project children explored the past by stepping through a portal, built from timber by the project's artist, Steve (Fig.2). Classroom sessions, led by academics, explored mining heritage through the texts of local author Arthur Eaglestone and Anglo Saxon writing and culture. They were combined with play and improvisation outside in which the children devised their own short films to be screened in the classroom. The central premise of the project, designed in collaboration with Rotherham Youth Service, was to introduce children to the imaginative possibilities that history presents. Although academic 'experts' led the sessions, the children were invited to draw upon their existing knowledge of history and heritage. The portal, as Steve described, was a 'proposition', a threshold which marked the boundary between past and present, fact and fiction:

> the portal grew from the idea that the past wasn't fixed. The idea of history was kind of under question because we weren't looking for reality we were looking for the idea of time travelling – you could travel to the future or you could travel to the past.

Although prompted by academics and aided, in part, by classroom resources, the children were free to select their own period from history:

> it's critical that they found their own area of enquiry and then researched it themselves and that doesn't necessarily mean that they went in books it could mean that they asked each-other what it could feel like to go down the pit or what it would be like to be in the war or what it would feel like to win the world cup, so it was a very personally-centred research process. But I do think that the idea of heritage and history is probably something that we were trying to subvert.

Kate, the academic lead on the project, explained why it was important that the children were co-researchers in the project. It made it possible for them to appreciate heritage as open, as a place of possibilities, as something creative in the present and for the future:

> the children were finding their own heritage and their own past and what came out was a very imaginative space of practice and having watched children look up on the internet in the past it has the effect of closing down the 'as if', the site of possibility. And my interest in the project has always been this idea of the past as almost like a 'not yet' future – it's a real kind of challenge to this concept of what history is.

In Rawmarsh, research is empowering young people as they become discoverers of their community's heritage. The project targeted key age groups, or 'future clients' as the youth worker described them, before social and behavioural problems become manifest.

Fig.3. A 'social fellowship', The Heeley History Workshop © Gemma Thorpe, 2013.

For our final conversation we visited the Heeley History Workshop, a local history group that meets weekly to discuss memories and stories relating to Heeley parish in Sheffield (Fig.3). Their project, 'Social Life in Heeley and Thereabouts' documented the recreational activities of people in Heeley over the twentieth century. Memories of church life, Boys' and Girls' Brigades and street parties were explored through photographs, documents and oral histories. Working with a filmmaker and photographer, the group produced a short film that not only communicated their findings but portrayed their research processes. The film revealed how shared histories combined with a passion for research creates networks and friendships or what Lilian, the group's chairperson, refers to in the film as a 'social fellowship' (Thorpe 2013).

Although some members use the local archives for their research, their research is largely gathered by the participants who collect material from the community, as Lilian describes:

> it's amazing when you are doing research you'll find out something that links up with something, either that somebody else knew about or they were interested in and they got the chance to link with somebody else to get some more information and sometimes you can find almost that you are related to each other.

Lilian proposed that participants return to the group for two reasons: 'because they enjoy the social contact' and 'because they are interested in what we are finding and that they might have a link with more of the research that somebody might be doing.' Although they are different people, they have built a community founded on an interest in and an attachment to place, and in asking and answering questions about that place. The process of co-production (working with academics, filmmakers and students) and experimenting with new methods, such as filmmaking, storytelling and recording oral histories revealed that although they were seeking to document a time when a sense of community was central to the social life of working people, that process forged a new 'community' or 'fellowship' of researchers.

Action heritage

Our conversations were meant to help us 'ground' our ideas and, through people's experiences, draw out the links between research, heritage and social justice. We think they have succeeded in unpacking some of the reasons why researching is socially active and empowering: it personally connects the participants with the heritage that forms the focus of the projects (at Roundabout, the young people's stories in the scrapbook became as important (more important, perhaps?) than the story of the hostel); researching opened up new (future) versions of the past for the children in Rotherham, and critically it was a heritage they controlled and created; and the local history group in Heeley found connections with one another, making and remaking their community in the present through their research into Heeley's past. These are preliminary thoughts based on a loosely structured set of conversations. Yet they reaffirm for us that the practices and processes of researching are transformative and create social and cultural capital.

Fig.4. Action Heritage

In existing models of community heritage, academics, policy-makers and heritage organisations often focus on the 'outputs': the places, things and stories. Community participation is not embedded in the process and co-production is not always prioritised. As a result, the 'yoking' together of 'community' and 'heritage' has been far less effective than originally hoped (Smith et al 2009: 11). Despite recent acknowledgements that community involvement with heritage has the potential to change 'attitudes and/or behaviour', make an area 'a better place to live, work or visit', as well as boost the local economy (HLF 2013), a model responsive to these advancements has not been proposed.

We are tentatively offering Action Heritage as a response. By assimilating the concept of 'Action Heritage' with 'Action Research', we are making it explicit that heritage is active through research. In adopting the term 'Action Heritage' we are seeking to link heritage for social justice and action research methods. We have represented this relationship as a triangle, with Action Heritage defined by linking together (1) heritage (as action), (2) researching, and (3) a commitment to social justice (Fig.4).

This tripartite model establishes reciprocal relationships between each category. It is sensitive to the fact that heritage can work to ameliorate inequalities as well as serve to reinforce prejudices within society. It acknowledges that addressing issues of social justice requires taking into account not only class based economic inequalities, but those relating to culture, ethnicity, race, gender and sexuality, categories which can be used to both empower and disenfranchise in the dual contexts of heritage and social justice.

Action Research is founded on a commitment to working with members of communities that have traditionally been exploited or oppressed in an effort to bring about social change. This process foregrounds the research process as a means of enabling social action. Variations and developments of this model, including Participatory Action Research and co-production, bring together people with different knowledge and skills based on lived experience and professional learning (Kindon et al 2007).

The future potential of Action Heritage, as a method of co-production, lies in the necessary contribution of individuals and communities, whose heritage is theirs and is composed of personal and collective memories. We must therefore question if it is possible to co-produce research which is particular to individuals and communities. How appropriate is action research in the context of heritage research? What is the role of the academic in researching community heritage? What can the co-production of heritage research achieve? We look forward to discussing these questions and, more importantly, the ones we haven't yet considered at the symposium.

References

Byrne, D. 2008. Heritage as social action. *The Heritage Reader,* eds. Fairclough, G., Harrison, R.,

Jameson, J.H. Jr and Schofield, J. (Abingdon: Routledge): 209-218.

Dorling, D. 2011. *Injustice: Why Social Inequality Persists* (Bristol: Policy Press).

Fraser, N. 2000. Rethinking Recognition. *New Left Review* 3, May – June, 107-120.

Harrison, R. 2010. Heritage as social action. *Understanding Heritage in Practice,* ed. West, S. (Manchester: Manchester University Press): 240-276.

Harvey, D. 2001. Heritage Pasts and Heritage Presents: temporality, meaning and the scope of heritage studies. *International Journal of Heritage Studies.* 7:4, 319-338.

Kindon, S. Pain, R. and Kesby, M. 2007. Participatory Action Research: Origins, Approaches and Methods. *Participatory Action Research Approaches and Methods: Connecting people, participation and place,* eds. Kindon, S. Pain, R. and Kesby, M. (London: Routledge): 9-18.

Lister, R. 2008. Recognition and voice: the challenge for social justice. *Social Justice and Public Policy: Seeking fairness in diverse societies*, eds. Craig, G, Burchardt, T and Gordon, D. (Bristol: The Policy Press): 105-122.

McGuire, R. 2008. *Archaeology as Political Action* (California. University of California Press).

Newman, A. and McLean, F. 1998. Heritage builds communities: the application of heritage resources to the problems of social exclusion. *International Journal of Heritage Studies*. 4: 3-4, 143-153.

Pool, S. 2013. *Portals to the Past*. Available online at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IWC41_D_w9o

Smith, L. 2006. *The Uses of Heritage* (Abingdon: Routledge).

Smith, L and Waterton E. 2009. *Heritage, Communities and Archaeology* (London: Duckworth).

Smith, L. and Waterton E. 2010. The recognition and misrecognition of community heritage. *International Journal of Heritage Studies,* 16:1-2, 4-15.

Smith, L., Shackel, P.A., Campbell, G. 2011. Introduction: class still matters. *Heritage, Labour and the Working Classes*, eds Smith, L., Shackel, P.A., Campbell, G. (Abingdon: Routledge): 1-16.

Thorpe, G. 2013. *Living Heritage.* Available online at: http://vimeo.com/68523096

Wilkinson, R. and Pickett, K. 2009. *The Spirit Level: Why Equality is Better for Everyone* (London: Penguin, 2010).

Heritage Lottery Fund. 2013. Sharing Heritage Outcomes. Available online at: http://www.hlf.org.uk/HowToApply/programmes/Pages/SharingHeritage.aspx#.Ukgl6dK-pSL

Author: Owain Jones

Title: Co-production of knowledge and social justice symposium
Ecological and material demands.

Submitted abstract

We can't have social justice without a radical re-imagining and re-practicing of what the social is. And we can't move towards social justice, be it co-produced or otherwise, without ecological justice. The interdependencies between the social and the ecological are writ large in the current era of 'ecocide', and recognizing these interdependences and realigning them from toxic to therapeutic forms is essential to the flourishing of life on earth as we currently know it. How can we generate eco-social knowledge justice? This contribution draws upon two connected community projects; "In Conversations with…Non Humans" (Bastian PI), and 'Towards Hydrocitizenship" (Jones PI); to explore this and the possibilities of co-working with non-humans. In sympathy with the materialist ecologicalisation of politics and ethics (Latour, Bennett, Barad), we (in these projects) are seeking to bring the non-human (animals, plants, elements, processes) into the business of co-production of knowledge. Thus far key steps seem to be; a) attentive listening, watching and participating with non-humans, drawing upon scientific, craft, and art expertise from those who work with, and know particular non-humans; b) seeking to decentre the human as a Cartesian knowing self to a more ecological form of self as collective/network. This second step is critical because it resists the more disabling aspects on anthropomorphism.

Expanded version

Thanks for the thoughtful comments.

Let's get real here - the "elephant in the room" has now died. It is rotting – stinking the place out, flies are a'buzzing, putrid oozings are seeping into the fabric of the building, down the drains out into the city and the land beyond.

The basic premise I have offered is that there can be no social justice without ecological justice. To expand on that a bit – I think – in principle social justice is a *relatively* recognizable ideal (to some) (as in the universal declaration of human rights) – even if achieving it is very tricky, and a host of countervailing forces drive social injustice (as the context paper sets out - current economic, technological and political developments – various global trends.

Ecological justice – well, let's just say this sort of means that biodiversity – the complexity of the biosphere and all the habitats, species, and individuals that comprise it - flourishes into the future rather that degrades. There are nailed on – profound - ethical and aesthetic imperatives as to why that should be so. But, to move to newly dominant 'policy discourses' currently at large, in the end ecosystem services which underpin the social (water supply, food supply, atmosphere supply, resource supply, (etc), various forms of supporting, provisioning and regulating 'services', rest on healthy, flourishing and dynamic ecosystems and biodiversity. Dynamic means that things are always on the move, e.g. climate wise. The healthier and more diverse systems are the more chance there is of resilience in the face of change. For example food security rests upon the complex ecology of soil production and soil life and how that goes on into the future. If ecological justice is not achieved, or at least is ongoing as a process – an aim, existing degrees of social justice will be eroded and new forms emerge.

A simple example. More than half the world's populations now live in cities. Old and new injustices are writ large in cities (and rural areas too of course). A lot of great social justice work goes

on in cities. Co-production of knowledge is a move to change the dynamic of knowledge production so such injustices are affected in new ways. That is all well and good. Nearly. Recent authoritative summaries of climate change scenarios (e.g. ref??) suggest that cities such as London and New York might become unworkable in the summer months due to heat levels, if even medium term climate change scenarios play out as expected.

In the UK some 3.2 million people will be at severe flood risk in urban areas by 2050. The social justice implications are not only severe for the cities directly affected, but for society more widely as migrations and relative and deepening economic advantage and disadvantage mobilize. Water, food, energy, health securities are all at risk due to the pressures coming from ecological degradation of the biosphere.

A number of reports and commentaries are now pointing out that the numbers of 'environmental refugees' are exceeding those from conflict and economic crisis.

> "There is a new phenomenon in the global arena: environmental refugees. These are people who can no longer gain a secure livelihood in their homelands because of drought, soil erosion, desertification, deforestation and other environmental problems, together with associated problems of population pressures and profound poverty" (Myers 2005)

The trauma and injustice of these current and future environmental scenarios will a) undo progress toward 'social justice' which ignores the environment, and, b) have the potential to exacerbate existing, and generate new and chronic social injustices on a grand scale.

This is a basic fact about social justice – it is no good having ethical social justice systems which ignore and devalue (the former leads to the latter) the ecological foundations of society itself.

But beyond the rather obvious (but still avoided) notion that is it pointless looking after the crew of 'spaceship earth', without paying attention to the functionality of the craft itself, there are a number of other reasons why social and ecological justice have to go hand in hand if progress in either is to be made.

Latour (1993) memorably said (more or less) that the division of nature and culture had released all sorts of monsters on the world which are now on destructive planetary rampages. Of course, the notion of the "social" in narrowly human terms is one on the more spectacular monsters of all. The product of a certain set of philosophical, scientist, religious and ideological constructs, (the enlightenment, rationalism (Cartesian self), reductionist science, the Abrahamic religions) the Modern that we have never really been is a grossly destructive paradigm that marks its era as the Dark Ages.

To try to 'read' and act up the social without taking into account the material, technological and ecological is a) a nonsense, b) doomed to failure and c) is in fact part of the problem and not part of the solution. But that is what the vast bulk of politics, the media and social sciences does. Tony Juniper (2011) stated

> There is no narrative as yet which is challenging that major momentum that is coming from the quest for ever more economic growth, and I think we have to find the narrative based upon sufficiency and sustainability and justice and living within the ecological means of the planet. I don't see that coming [ ] from the governments, it is not coming from the media, it is not coming from elected politicians I have spoken to recently, it is not coming from the major corporations, it is not coming from the scientists, so where is this narrative going to come

from? [] It think if we are to get through the next period, the ecological crunch that is upon us, I think we are going to have a collectively different world view.

This echoes many other such statements (I could produce a long list of them) which have come from various forms of ecological thinking since (at least) the mid 20th century – notably ecofemism, deep ecology, ecological economics, ecological citizenship movements and beyond.

In the original articulations of "sustainable development" and important statements which underpinned their development (e.g. the Brandt Report 1980) it was asserted that the any move to social formations which did not degrade ecological systems, biodiversity, etc. rested in large part in addressing global poverty and injustice. Many instances of ecological destruction (such as deforestation, desertification) were driven as much by poverty and injustice as they were by consumption and capitalist forms of production. Of course these two forces are always in tandem and generate what Tehral (1992) termed 'the unsustainability of poverty and the unsustainability of affluence'.

The biosphere and those that rely on it (all living things) is thus in a double bind – or multiple bind. The environmental movement, which was a clearly defined by it political marginality in the late 20th century has become less distinctive as mainstream political and bureaucratic systems have sought to respond to the environment question in fragmented, piecemeal, rhetorical, reactionary hotchpotches of "technocentric" tinkering . But this response is totally inadequate thus far. Nearly all indicators of ecological planetary health show a body in deep and worsening crisis, climate change is the most glaring symptom, but biodiversity loss (inc of soil life, ocean life), pollution of other kinds are also critical.

What has received less attention is the reverse of the idea that ecological justice (ecological sustainability) rests in part on addressing social justice issues – that *addressing social justice issues rests on addressing ecological justice*. This challenge is highly complex and is only beginning to be untangled in a range of ways and approaches as in effect I means trying to stop the globalized capitsalised world, and the ruins in and around it, spinning in one direction and set it spinning in another.

A few key points I would like to make (but run out of time right now) are as follows

The nature culture split is a chronic disillusion. as many thinkers of differing hues point out (Tim Ingold, Bruno Latour, Val Plumwood) This division thrives however in all areas or organized knowledge. It is only this that allows the notion of 'social justice' to be considered in the fisrt instance. To consider the social in human terms alone is – to repeat the point – a destructive nonsense

The material nature of justice and injustice. How is the social reproduced? how is space and time generated in going practices of relational becoming? The material, technological and ecological are key to how these formations unfold. They have agency. Thus to rule them out of the analysis is to hamstring ones efforts from the start. This is why Thrift, Massumi, Latour, Guattari , Badiou and many others more or less feel that conventional politics (and social science) are dead in the water as useful mediums of action and progress

The three ecologies. Guattari's notion of the stripping out of social (cultural collective), individual (psychological); and ecological diversity from life is a interrelated programe of globalized capitalism

Shifting the ground of co-production of life! There is great work going in in the US and elsewhere under political ecology flags which is addressing food poverty (one of the great social injustices) particularly in disadvantaged urban neighborhood. This is being done through activist co-designed projects which are working with individuals and communities in ways which allow them to grow and share local produce. These projects also serve to address multiple environmental issues such as urban green space, (urban) biodiversity, food quality, alternative food networks, caring for urban waterways, animal welfare. The triangulations of co designed action and social and environmental issues gives these project a depth and energy that is very striking.

Another example are projects in the UK where community groups are working with youth not in education, employment, or training (NEETS) on environmental programmes (such as waterway restoration).

There seems to be an energy that comes from the idea that those (disadvantaged) involved in the work are put into a different position in society, in terms of identity (individual and community) and in terms of self and power by being in projects where they are not the focus of help but rather become the ones doing the helping. The process of 'healing' relationships between society and environment can become therapeutic for other more narrowly social issues and conflicts.

The comments on the above abstract reasonably asked – amongst other things; Are there risks in this perspective? To what extent might an aspiration to ecological justice that decentres the human serve as 'cover' for policies that continue to disadvantage the poorest and most vulnerable in global societies?

To answer the first question I turn to Serres's famous quote in his book The Natural Contract - this echoing Rousseau's famous 'social contract' one of the great cries for social justice –

> Through exclusively social contracts, we have abandoned the bond that connected us to the world … What language do the things of the world speak that we might come to an understanding of them contractually? … In fact the Earth speaks to us in terms of forces, bonds and interactions … each of the partners in symbiosis thus owes … life to the other, on pain of death. (Serres, 1995).

The risks are with the current conditions.

The second question, of course, always to be asked. There are many examples where 'ecological justice' has been sought at the expense of basic social justice, for example the clearing of indigenous populations from areas in Africa and elsewhere to make 'wildlife parks.

In one of his seminal later works *Spaces of Hope* , David Harvey, whose primary focus was social justice, declared that it was only ever worth talking about and acting for socio-ecological justice. To separate out either the socio or the eco was an inevitable failure for both. What is encouraging is that some new approaches to conservation (EU Landscape Convention, UN Unesco biospheres) see that social and cultural flourishing can and do go hand in hand with ecological flourishing (ecology is taken in a bread sense). The one depends on the other. This is the conservation movement bringing social justice into its purview because it recognizes the integrated production of life. I hope to convince people the same should be occurring in concerns for the social – the ecological imperative is always there.

Author: Antonia Layard

Title: What can co-produced research accomplish for social Justice? Insights from Creative Participation (AHRC Connected Communities Project AH/J501553/1) on 'socially just place-making'.

The Research Question: This paper suggests that legal consciousness research can contribute 'to disrupting or challenging longstanding social and economic inequalities'. Proceeding from an assumption that both places and understandings of places are co-produced, it suggests that we can use legal research practices both to understand the effect of legal provisions (on property ownership, planning, conservation, highways etc) and individual and collective legal consciousnesses towards place-making.

These approaches enable us to identify different understandings of legality (and hegemony) that might produce more or less equal and socially just places. They allow us to ask how and when citizens feel empowered to engage with land use practices to produce more socially just landscapes *if* and this is clearly the key question, there is any such consensus (whether locally or nationally given the scales of legal practice) about what 'socially just places' might look like. Part of this discussion would include formulating changes in textual legal rules as well as in legal practice.

Theoretical Traditions: From a legal point of view, this project is theoretically located in critical legal studies, and specifically in work on legal consciousness. Legal consciousness, as formulated in the canonical book, *The Common Place of Law* by Ewick and Silbey (1998), follows in the traditions of humanist Marxism (though these are only implicitly acknowledged) and Gramsci's ideas on hegemony, trying to understand how unequal legal experiences have been made to seem normal and natural, even though it would be possible to organise society differently. The *Common Place of Law* begins with the story of Millie, a poorly paid black domestic housekeeper charged with a hit and run accident, caused while it was being driven by a friend of her son without permission. The book starts by tracking Millie's experience of legal practices, and the loss of her driving licence, with her employers' experience of these legal practices when they intervene to help her, challenging the 'offence' and, ultimately, getting the situation resolved.

The central idea here is that while the legal provisions are the same, the different participants reach different outcomes because of their consciousness: the assumption by Millie's employers is that they are entitled and able to intervene, while Millie feels helpless in the process. Certainly, there is a long critiqued question underlying Silbey and Ewick's work about how legal consciousness differs from other forms of consciousness, but there is an attempt here to get at the distinctiveness of legal procedures and practices. For the purposes of legal consciousness however, consciousness is understood as 'the way people conceive of the 'natural' and normal way of doing things, their habitual patterns of talk and action, and their commonsense understanding of the world' (Merry 1990, 5). So legal consciousness would express the way in which people 'understand and use the law' (Merry 1990, 5) or construct legality (Ewick and Silbey 1998, 35).

At the heart of Ewick and Silbey's argument lies a tripartite analysis of the way in which non-lawyers (assuming there is such a thing) engage with legality: *Before the law* (law is an abstract entity removed from everyday life), *With the law* (the legal system is 'an arena of contest') and *Against the law* (law is perceived as a commodity of power, subjective in its application and broadly useless, people may decide to 'lump it' instead). These heuristics have provided a much-used template to explore the hegemonic forces of law and the ways in which law and legality reproduce existing power hierarchies. In an important paper, Fritsvold (2009) has added a fourth category, *Under the*

law, where participants perceive 'the law as fundamentally illegitimate because it is created by and embedded in a social order that is fundamentally illegitimate' (at 810).

These four frameworks or heuristics, analyzing how people engage with legal practices, themselves pick up then on the central theme in critical theory that 'dominant groups exercise power over subordinate groups, and that these accept their subordination through the influence about ideological ideas about their place in society' (Travers 2010, 75). This may draw on Marxist thinking, that social and/or economic class is the line of division, or it may premise race, sexuality or gender. Applied to place-making, the question becomes how the (legal) production of space is affected not only by text-based legal provisions but also by differing legal consciousnesses of participants in continual and everyday place-making.

This work also then draws on Foucault and de Certeau's work suggesting that 'investigations of law's power are most fruitful not at the level of legal institutions and the state but at the level of lived experience, where we can see how power is exercised, understood and sometimes, resisted' (Mezey 2001, 145). It is not particularly concerned with textual analyses of legal decisions handed down by courts or other sites of privilege although there is a growing concern that challenges to hegemony should embrace both text and understandings of consciousness (Lobel 2007). For these reasons, there is here a relationship between legal activism and protest groups and 'the everyday', which is increasingly brought together in the literature (particularly by Fritsvold, 2009). In trying to understand when people engage and how, in this context in trying to make 'their' places better, or more socially just (however defined) legal consciousness provides a useful lens to understand land use.

Findings: The *Creative Participation* project explored how three 'pioneer communities' use creativity to involve themselves in place-making and planning practices after initial struggles to have a voice in the process. The three groups that participated in the project, and co-produced the findings, were the Newcastle Elders Forum, Young Cumbria and the People's Republic of Stokes Croft (PRSC) in Bristol, all of whom are working creatively to improve their locality.

While *Creative Participation's* findings were broadranging, focusing on creativity in place-making, types of involvement and gatekeeping, in terms of legal consciousness, some claims can be made. From talking with participants, it is, for example, possible to characterise the Elders of Newcastle, a highly technical, competent group of older people, often ex-professionals, as engaging 'with the law' in technical, albeit non-litigious, ways. The young people in Cumbria, in contrast, given the context of their funding arrangements and the short time for which one is young (15-18), fell broadly into the 'against the law' grouping, disinclined to engage with legal processes relating to the built environment, feeling they had no ability to influence land use in their locality. The People's Republic of Stokes Croft (PRSC) meanwhile, is a group of engaged local activists aiming to transform a neglected area into a cultural quarter. They fall rather neatly into Fritsvold's category of 'under the law', believing planning control to be contrary to sustainable place-making and consequently acting without obtaining official local authority permission in their 'beautification' projects.

These differences were well explored in the project in relation to supermarkets. The Newcastle Elders, for instance, have engaged with supermarket developers (including Tescos) at the design stage to make their stores 'elder friendly', even travelling to Berlin to make comparative proposals. While the exercise was successful in producing proposals, ultimately the participants have been frustrated that these details could not be confirmed through the outline planning permission process (a technicality they understood well). Yet throughout they acted 'with the law', engaging in the (non-litigious) arenas. The participants from Young Cumbria, in contrast, felt that there were no

alternatives to supermarkets in their town. While, consequently, they worked hard to develop a collective garden, they felt this was the most they could do. They were 'against the law', putting up with the apparent reality of their situation. PRSC, in contrast, mounted a large, graphic campaign against the development of a Tescos store in Stokes Croft, selling Banksy prints of a Molotov cocktail in a Tesco bottle. They acted under the law, undertaking artistic projects even if they were illegitimate (primarily graffiti) on the basis that a legal system that allowed the development of a Tescos against local people's wishes was itself an illegitimate act.

In these ways then, *Creative Participation* found that well accepted heuristics on legal consciousness could be identified in participatory projects in creative place-making, with participants could very broadly be categorized as acting 'against', 'with' or 'under' the law. The project also illustrated how urban spaces are co-produced, not just socially but legally. When creative acts are undertaken by negotiation with property owners and the local authority, as for example in Newcastle by the Elders Forum, they clearly construct the city legally as well as spatially and socially. Once persuaded by local theatre and cartoons as well as documents and reports, the Local Authority collaborated with property owners to provide public use of lavatories, while another developer included slip-proof mats in the shopping centre. Newcastle City Council now regularly takes on Elders' concerns when commissioning new buses or providing additional housing through its regulatory practices.

Similarly, acts can also change a place even if when they are made they are undertaken illegally or 'under the law', as in the case of graffiti. If criminal consequences follow (as they did for painting the 'Welcome to Stokes Croft' sign and some graffiti) street art may decline. Where, however, as later happened in Stokes Croft, the street art continues and is of a high quality, adding aesthetically to the neighbourhood, this may persuade decision-makers that they improve the fabric of the neighbourhood, changing the context within which governance decisions are made. This has led to graffiti being widely allowed with designated 'free walls' and with the Arts Council and Bristol City Council commissioning new street art. Decision- makers in Bristol accept graffiti's 'cultural value' throughout the city, including in Stokes Croft. It confirms 'commonsense' understandings that places are (il)legally, socially and spatially produced and that informed participants often understand these interactions very well indeed.

However, this research also confirms a point emphasized by Engel (1998) that legal consciousness is not static and varies over time and place. Again this seems intuitively obvious yet what was striking here was that when national planning rules were applied, even the most interventionist groups (either the Newcastle Elders who acted 'with the law' or PRSC who acted 'under the law') saw that their efforts, either at negotiating or litigation, were fruitless and there was no point in continuing. They became more resigned to the situation, more 'against the law'.

This is perhaps particularly prevalent in the context of the built environment where local and national scales of legal governance, coupled with nationally legally protected property rights, give local individuals and groups, and sometimes local councils, no room for manouevre. Particularly in planning law, there are legal constraints enacted at the national scale that are practically impossible to challenge at a local level. For example, as local participants understood well, planning applications are determined in accordance with national guidance (currently the National Planning Policy Framework, the NPPF) as well as the local plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

This has implications for legal consciousness. For even if participants have been 'with' or 'under' the law, the planning system is currently so stacked in favour of developers, with the assumption of

'sustainable' development, that negotiations or 'everyday acts of resistance' (Scott 1987, Ewick and Silbey 1998) can take place only at the margins (negotiating to introduce signs or slip mats, for example, or engaging in illegal street 'improvement' projects or squatting). When challenging the application for 'change of use' in planning law to transform a Jongleurs comedy club into a Tescos, PRSC were very well informed and prepared to engage, even selling mugs adorned with 'I paid the fine' to raise money for defendants' court costs. They were clearly 'with the law'. Yet seeing the limits of such legal action, and the reality of costs, the group became less likely to engage in these formal legal battles in future. Their experience appears to have underlined their consciousness of being 'under the law', seeing planning law as fundamentally illegitimate and so continuing with their own neighbourhood and street beautification projects instead. Their resultant legal consciousness produces local urban space in very particular ways, focusing on graffiti, squatting and street 'improvement' projects rather than engaging in formal (legal) collaboration.

Such intervention projects by those with a more engaged legal consciousness (in Newcastle or Stokes Croft, for example) also raise broader questions of what might be considered a 'socially just' place, both how we might legally define it and how different participants, with varying legal consciousness, might be enabled to achieve such places. This raises questions of gatekeeping, which resonated at the project workshop. Here participants broadly accepted that public art projects involved subjective judgments, 'that one person's Banksy might be another person's vandalism'. Similarly, there was a clear understanding of the ability of national companies (specifically in Stokes Croft, Tescos and Costa) to open stores or cafés in neighbourhoods despite significant local opposition. Yet this raises important questions of legitimacy and responses to perceived illegitimacy in place-making.

Perhaps most tantalizingly, this project raised the question of the impact of the national legal provisions, and the scalar application of principles of legal consciousness when national rules inhibit local action. These differential understandings of what can be achieved locally depending on whether acts are governed by local or national rules begin to engage with the puzzle of how consciousness and text interrelate (Lobel 2007). They raise a series of questions including: Can we motivate people to bring about change or are there limits to legal provisions that immobilize even the most empowered? Are there limits to legal consciousness? How do we develop a theory of change in studies of law in society? What kind of research (co-produced or otherwise) might best help us to understand a theory of change in land use? The indications from this project indicate that legal consciousness can take us so far but once property rights and the presumption in favour of sustainable development apply, there is very little that even the most legally conscious (even if there were to be a sliding scale) could do. Ultimately, any reform must include both text and practice, acknowledging the differential limits imposed at different scales of governance.

Can these research practices meaningfully disrupt or challenge social and economic inequalities?
In current formulations of co-produced services, co-production has been defined as being about how services 'work with rather than do unto users' (Cummins and Miller, 2007). We can adapt this understanding to research, that research works with rather being done to (or on) users'. The Connected Communities programme has clearly supported these ideas of co-production. In the context of legal research this does not require participants to have knowledge of the legal provisions themselves (though individuals frequently understand provisions related to their issue of concern extremely well). All participants will have understandings about their attitudes to legality and how they engage (or apparently do not engage) with legal processes and practices. Legal consciousness fits in particularly well with these types of work.

Given this convergence, two strands of co-production resonate in this project and this paper, one positively, one perhaps less so. The first concerns **knowledge and expertise**. Arguments in favour of co-production build on assumptions that that both parties have a central role to play in the process as they each contribute different and essential knowledge (Cahn, 2000). Ostrom has similarly argued for the utilization of the knowledge, skills, and time of residents co-producing outcomes by both regular (professional) producers and 'citizen producers' (Ostrom 1996).

In the context of academic research, these processes of coming together have been critiqued and problematized by academics. There may be real concerns arising from 'a long-standing epistemological debate about the nature of knowledge and expertise between dominant positivist and alternative non-positivist approaches to research' yet as DuRose notes, even framing the concerns in these terms is itself 'indicative of the hidden power dynamics within the research process' (Du Rose et al, 2012). When concerned with land use, what constitutes 'knowledge' about land or place, or the extent to which planning is a 'technical' expertise remains an important, thought not always acknowledged, question. Studies of legal consciousness relating to land use could be a very productive site of coproduced research, particularly in light of the current Government commitment to neighbourhood planning.

Yet the second strand here is the relevance of **cost**. When co-production first emerged in these terms in the 1970s was 'a time when movements to challenge professional power and increase citizen participation in community affairs coincided with efforts to reduce public spending' (Needham and Carr, 2009). The current framing of austerity has provided a renewed interest in the co-production of public services, of getting social policy 'done' better, for less, focusing primarily on output legitimacy (see, for example, Penny, 2013 and NEF webpages generally).

This is significant for academia since a further aspect of co-production as conventionally formulated is that it 'relates to the generation of social capital – the reciprocal relationships that build trust, peer support and social activism within communities' (Needham and Carr, 2009). In other words, formulations of co-production (or co-creation or parallel production) in public and social policy, requires consistency. One of the real problems inherent in co-produced research is that once the grant has finished most projects are not continued. There are very few ongoing projects where 'citizen research producers' continue to engage with 'professional research producers'.

Understandings of legal consciousness lie then at the heart of co-produced research on law and legality and how these practices and understandings contribute to many areas of research, including place-making. They are a valuable and insightful means to understand how to foster spatial justice. Certainly, in land use, participants are often exceptionally well versed in legal provisions and formal policies, bringing 'formal' knowledge as well as a range of expertise and consciousness to any research project. This work is rich and productive. Nevertheless, while the co-production of public services aims to save money, co-produced research is often time intensive and geared to different research ouputs from those academics are conventionally required to achieve. It can be done, but we need to think clearly about structure and sustainability, from the outset.

References

Cahn, E. (2000) No more throw away people: the co-production imperative, Washington: Essential Books

Cummins, J. and Miller, C. (2007) Co-production, social capital and service effectiveness, London: OPM.

Du Rose, C. et al (2012) Towards Co-Production in Research with Communities, AHRC

Engel, D. (1988) 'How does law matter in the constitution of legal consciousness' in B. Garth and A. Sarat (eds), How Does Law Matter? Evanston, Ill: Northwestern UP

Ewick, P. and Silbey, S. (1998) The Common Place of Law: Stories from Everyday Life, Chicago, Chicago UP.

Fritsvold, E. D. (2009) Under the Law: Legal Consciousness and Radical Environmental Activism 34 Law & Soc Inquiry 799-824

Lobel, O. (2007) 'The Paradox of Extralegal Activism: Critical Legal Consciousness and Transformative Politics' (120) Harvard Law Review 937-988

Merry, S. (1990) Getting Justice and Getting Even: Legal Consciousness Among Working-Class Americans, Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Mezey, N. (2001) 'Out of the Ordinary: Law, Power, Culture and the Commonplace' 26 Law & Soc Inquiry 145-167

Needham, C. and Carr, S. (2012) SCIE Research Briefing 31: Co-production: an emerging evidence base for adult social care transformation, Social Care Institute for Excellence

Ostrom, E. (1996) 'Crossing the Great Divide: Coproduction, Synergy, and Development' 24 (6) World Development 1073-1087

Penny, J. (2013) Public Services and (In)equality in an Age of Austerity, London: NEF

Scott, J. (1987) Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance, New Haven: Yale UP.

More information on the AHRC project can be found at Creativeparticipation.com

Author: Lisa Matthews

Title: ?

Introduction
This contribution explores the witnessing and articulatory roles of poetry in co-produced research and argues that poetry can function as a resource to open up different spaces and to enable different voices to speak.

The contribution is practice-led and draws upon over a decade of experience working as a professional writer in public engagement co-inquiry and participatory action research projects. I will use two original poems to illustrate my argument – both of them written in collaborative research contexts – and this contribution will highlight some of the strengths and challenges of this creative approach.

The context for my work as a writer-researcher
For the past 15 years I have been a professional freelance writer. I am an established mid-career poet who writes and publishes short stories/fiction, as well as journalistic writing around poetics, creative writing, contemporary popular music and queer culture.

As a creative entrepreneur, I own/manage a commercial business called *The/Poetry/Fold*, run a small not-for-profit literary press called *Literal Fish*, and collaborate with a variety of creative/professional clients and partners in the UK. In the second year of part-time doctoral research, my practice, work and research streams are diverse. I have been involved in many participatory and/or engagement research projects: as Writer in Residence/Lead Artist, as Research Associate/Assistant, as participant, as tutor/facilitator, as programme manager, as fundraiser, as a rapporteur/scribe/observer and as a performer/speaker (sometimes occupying several of these positions simultaneously).
Poetry as witness and reflection

During desk-based research for this contribution I was able to identify several strands of related poetic/artistic practice:

The poetry of witness – an event, usually a traumatic event, happens and is witnessed and written about by a non-writer.

The poet as a witness – a poet writes about an event and reflects, in poetic form, on what they have experienced.

Poetry (literary texts) as historical documents and primary evidence – a witness to history.

Poetry expressing things that cannot easily be articulated: a witness to traumatic and/or obfuscated events; giving voice to survivors silenced by internal or external forces and experiences.

Poetry as a therapeutic, healing resource for survivors of traumatic events in medical or healthcare contexts.

The poetic witnessing as defined by the poet, activist and academic Carolyn Forché. Forché coined the term “poetry of witness.” In her anthology, Against Forgetting: Twentieth-Century Poetry of Witness (1993), Forché described the difficulties of politically-engaged poetry: “We are accustomed to rather easy categories: we distinguish between ‘personal’ and ‘political’ poems…The distinction…gives the political realm too much and too little scope; at the same time, it renders the

personal too important and not important enough. If we give up the dimension of the personal, we risk relinquishing one of the most powerful sites of resistance. The celebration of the personal, however, can indicate a myopia, an inability to see how larger structures of the economy and the state circumscribe, if not determine, the fragile realm of the individual."

Poets have acted as mirrors to and commentators on society since ancient times. The Ancient Greek poet Homer and the Persian poet Omar Khayyám created the narratives of empires and the lived lives within them. Troubadours, balladeers and court poets were the spokespeople of their day, and in a contemporary context the writing of UK poets such as Sean O'Brien and Tony Harrison serve a political purpose in presenting a version of modern day life in poetic form. Poems never exist in a vacuum, and poetry, even in its purest form, can be interpreted as a mirror to the world, an expression of the deeply personal *and* the deeply political. The concept of a poem as a research tool has a long history and context. Art therapy, reportage and documentary utilise creative processes and techniques; inter-disciplinary research and Knowledge Exchange initiatives all facilitate the marriage of disparate research methodologies together.

My practice of using poetry as a collaborative research tool continues the poetic traditions outlined above. However, where it differs is that the collaborative poems I produce are not perfect reflections: perhaps it would be better to say they are heuristic, mercurial, flawed, part-reflection, part-refraction and partly a different and less familiar or comfortable articulation of voice. The poems *are* subjective – and openly so – i.e. this subjectivity is discussed with participants while we workshop ideas and my developing poems. The participants are, and should always be, an ongoing part of this creative research process.

Poetry is not simply documentary. My role as the poet is a distinct one and it relies on my creative expertise and experience. Poetry is a profession, not a set of steps that can be distilled onto an A4 hand-out so that non-poets can write poems with their project participants (I have been asked to do this in this past and always refuse as it negates the roles of the poet and the distinctiveness of creativity in this collaborative research process).

The wider academic context of poetry & Creative Writing

In the UK, Creative Writing is a relatively young discipline, and debate continues around whether writing has any place in a seminar room, let alone in wider research paradigms and methodologies. In the series *New Writing Viewpoints*, edited by Graeme Harper, there are a variety of essays and papers that address what Creative Writing is and is not. This contribution will not dwell on these on-going pedagogical and theoretical debates. However I feel it is important to contextualise my argument in the wider academic developments happening within Creative Writing.

My writing practice – even when I was not aware of it – was/is my research and vice versa. I self-identify as writer, as a writer-researcher and as a collaborative artist specialising in engagement, co-inquiry and participatory contexts: all things my discipline is only really beginning to engage with and all things I carry with me into my collaborative research work.

Finally, and in line with Forché's exploration of the position of the writer, it is important to me that my writing practice does not "get lost" in this huge and challenging research terrain. I advocate as much for my writing practice as I do for its place and effectiveness within robust and effective research.

Sample poem 1

The collaborative poem "Creative engagement triptych" is a hybrid witnessing piece, its content derived from working with research project participants who took part in a science engagement project called "Stemistry" that involved writing and discussion workshops and residential art-science engagement events. While I am the sole author of the poem, the poem would not exist without the project participants.

Before I discuss the poem as a witnessing and creative collaboration process and resource it would be useful to reproduce it in full.

Creative engagement triptych

2.0 | The Ballad of Public Engagement

In time you will contribute
In time your voice will count
But until then you need to trust
Your views we will not flout.

There is a time to deliberate
And a time for taking stock
But until then, leave it up to us
To carve opinion from the block.

For what is truth if it is not true,
What is a fact it if is not seen?
To write the map once we've walked
The path and recorded where we've been?

Then take your feet and place them
Where ours have already trod
And say we asked you what you thought
Once it's all been put to bed.

2.1 | The creative researcher

The cacophony of voices, the long list of choices, the Tower of Babel, the horse bolting the stable, the moment of illumination when all that the centre can and cannot hold becomes unstable, the calm before the storm, the dark before the dawn, the cryptic question unravelling like thread from a spool, Hockney's diver emerges glistening from the pool, a proto man and his proto tan taking in the rays from all the things he thinks he knows: like community is somehow over there and we're here, like sitting with the notion that the hard to reach a really just hard to hear. And art knows no more than science, all methodologies flawed and beholden to both subject and observer. Creativity is no torch and no fore bearer it is just a means to an end – all we have to decide it is where we want to go.

2.2 | Ask Us

We've been asked what we think,

but we don't know why and we don't know
who is asking.

Decisions are not solely yours to make –
nor are they ours,
decisions should belong to everyone.

Where are our voices, our faces –
lost in the crowd, appended as footnotes,
touched up in Photoshop
or played as the soundtrack to a silent film?

We can tell you we think an expert is:
a starched white coat,
a string of acronyms on an office door
tweed trouser turn-ups over patent leather
shoes, an assured step walking the line
of efficacy & consent,
someone with a plan, or a graph, or a PA
someone who knows their indices,
someone we want to trust and be trusted by,
but
influence and power are inside and we are
out.
That's what we'd say – *can you hear us?*

The poem is in three distinct parts and is a "hybrid" because it is an amalgam of phrases, ideas and sentiments belonging to engagement project participants, together with my own reflections on the discussions I initiated, facilitated and/or witnessed as part of Stemistry's engagement strategy and programme. The poem has been presented to and work shopped with project participants, and as a collaborative group consisting of participants and artist we have ratified it.

Within engagement and research many participants testify to feeling unable, or shy of, articulating how they feel – they have the ideas, but neither the means nor the perceived permission to voice their thoughts. In the art-science engagement project Stemistry, funded by NESCI, BBSRC, MRC and AHRC, we tried to use poetry to encourage and facilitate this sense of voice. Stemistry aimed at connecting with *hard-to-reach* communities and engage with them about stem cell research and biotechnologies. We felt creative writing might be good way to do this (I was resident at the PEALS Research Institute, Newcastle University at the time). A group of North East creative writers were recruited (they were not classed as *hard-to-reach* but would be familiar with the creative writing element of the project), together with a group of black and minority ethnic (BME) girls and young women (13-21 year olds) who meet at the Angelou Centre in the west end of Newcastle upon Tyne.

The Stemistry project asked people how they felt about advancing stem cell technology. However, one of the project's other important remits was to contribute to and affect policy.

From the outset we discussed the *hard-to-reach* label and from the outset we tried to make clear the engagement agendas of funding bodies and participating institutions, including our own – which is a challenge in itself. One of the main questions I get asked (from participants) as a creative engagement researcher is: "WHY are we/you doing this research?" On one feedback sheet a

participant in the Wellcome Trust funded project "How Gay Are Your Genes?" wrote the A4-size word WHY in capital letters on either side of the paper.

When we asked the Stemistry participants if they felt they had, or could, affect policy we received a two-fold response. The positive part of the answer is not reflected in the first part of poem (*why not?* is a point for discussion!), but their resounding "no" is represented in the first part of the creative engagement triptych.

Most of the project participants felt that while the project had been worthwhile and intellectually stimulating in the short term, that nonetheless no one in a position to influence policy would be interested in what they had to say. The first part of the triptych "2.0 | The Ballad of Public Engagement" is an attempt to reflect the participants' response to the question of whether they felt their engagement could affect policy. The project groups split into small cohorts and came up with a short list of feedback bullet points; when we reconvened as one large group they picked their most important point. They all agreed that most policy decisions are made first and the engagement and/or consultation comes afterwards, if at all. One participant talked about how she felt she was simply walking in the footsteps of the policy makers towards a decision that had already been made. This image, as a poetic conceit, is a powerful one and it was the main impetus for the *2.0 | The Ballad of Public Engagement*.

The third part of the triptych *2.2 | Ask Us* was inspired by the same set of project participants but in another part of the Stremistry project. Over several sessions we work shopped the idea of "expertise" and what *they* thought constituted an expert in a scientific context. In an open discussion workshop participants shared the things they associated with an expert. These were some of their responses:

white coat – lab coat with pens in the top pocket – someone with an office (probably with their name and qualifications on it) – someone holding a chart – graphs and formulas – someone who will use a photograph of us in their annual report – someone who has never spoken to us – someone with an assistant or who manages a team – tweed trousers and leather elbow patches

Starting from these responses I elaborated and expanded the participants' idea of expertise. Again, this section of the poem was shared, work shopped and ratified by us all as a representation of what happened in our project. We all agreed the poem did not tell the full story; however, participants said they felt satisfied that they had been listened to, although they had no sense of how the poem would affect policy, which was a big concern for them.

The middle section of the engagement triptych *2.1 | The Creative Researcher* is a recent addition to this growing poetic sequence and was written for presentation at the Connected Communities Showcase event in March 2013. This part of the poem differs in that it is my sole reflection on being a poetic witness. A number of years ago a BME activist from the Angelou Centre told me she did not think her community was at all *hard-to-reach* but they were actually *hard-to-hear*. For her this was hugely significant and I always wanted to write the idea into a poem. The Showcase event was the opportunity to do this and share this piece of "community wisdom" with a wider research audience.

The image of the "proto man" was inspired by the third part of the triptych (the participants perceptions of scientific expertise) and it has always puzzled me how researchers - me included - see "community" as something outside and/or beyond the academic research community. Are we not ALL part of the same complex and diverse community?

Sample poem 2

Anticipated Grief was written during a staff training/CPD module I delivered at Northumbria University. Working with healthcare professionals and nursing educators, my role was to facilitate the sharing of professional anecdote with a view to producing a *Handbook of Good Advice* that could be used as a teaching and learning resource. While delivering the module I was struck by the specialist terminology that some researchers used and specifically how one Research Fellow described her work into Alzheimer's and how the condition affects carers. She spoke of a concept called "anticipated grief" and shared some interesting and moving research experiences that triggered this poem:

Anticipated Grief

There is a door in the river where all the water's running out
There is a hole in the future

And I know what is going to happen

All the tables and chairs will lose a leg
All the pens will begin to write backwards
All the slates on the roof will fall and let the rain come in
All the dishes will break in the butler sink

And I know what will happen then

We will become something new
Something neither of us will recognise
You because you cannot and me because
I'll have already had years to mourn

You'll disappear from photographs,
the oversize clothes in the wardrobe will leave,
one by one, so this is all that I can tell you
of how I feel, of how it is

There is a hole in the future
There is a door in the river where all the water's running out

The member of staff commented on the metaphors in this poem and testified that they had helped her to see her research from a new perspective. This poem also elicits a wide range of responses when I read/perform it: audience members have come to me in tears and have told me that the poem "put into words" what they were struggling to feel and understand, others have suggested I send it to the Alzheimer's Society; others have commented that is was too painful to listen to.

Conclusion

This contribution has used only a fraction of the poems I have written in collaborative contexts and as poetry is a spoken medium I hope to be able to read aloud some of the pieces explored at the forthcoming symposium. Much of my work to date has been experiential with little space for

reflection on the poetic processes, and in the wider context of Creative Writing as an academic discipline the use of poetry as a collaborative research resource needs to be further explored and examined. I hope this piece will provide the starting point for some engaging discussion that will go towards addressing the event's aims and objectives.

Discussion points

Poetry can:

- put into words that which we otherwise struggle to articulate;
- create a new kind of space for dialogue and reflection as upon hearing it we must re-think what we know;
- make us question our beliefs and preconceptions;
- adopt a mercurial role in research, moving with expertise between different registers, as a resource to encourage others to find their voice;
- level the playing field, as no-one (unless they are a poet themselves) is an "expert" in a writing workshop;
- allow participants to express difficult concepts in new ways;
- expose difficult and challenging emotional terrain, the ethics of which has to continue to be questioned and explored;
- cannot stand alone as a research resource but must fit into a bigger research strategy;
- reflect the preoccupations and assumptions of the writer(s)/artists and the project they are representing/working for.

Author: Asha Mohamed, Lucy Pearson & Janvier Sanchez

Title: This paper proposes a process for writing a paper that investigates why the proposed paper was not written.

Back in July we, all members of the AHRC-funded Web of Connections project, were invited to write a 500 word abstract to propose a paper we would write about our experience of what co-produced research can achieve for social justice. In rather a rush, Lucy and Asha wrote these 500 words, which everyone who read and responded seemed to be happy with:

We knocked around some ideas about creating a reading group, and we shared some reading via email, but then we ran out of time and got confused about what we were doing and why…. And as a result, Asha, Lucy, Javier, Ros and Tom spend a weekend trying to get our heads round it.

We picked a paper written by Peter Reason (Reason 2006 -), which explores how we can judge 'quality' in action research. We read this paper together and used it to help us to talk about our experiences of the work we have been doing, and to help us to find new ways to think about the problems and challenges we have faced, and the areas of the work that make us confused, angry and hurt, as well as the areas that make us feel hopeful, inspired and motivated.

Through this process we realised that we felt discomfort about writing a paper about our project and we started to understand why – that's how we came up with our title:

"This paper proposes a process for writing a paper that investigates why the proposed paper was not written".

This title can be broken down into two key questions that we wanted to address:

- Why did we feel uncomfortable about writing the paper?
- What are the ingredients we need to enable a process where we can write a paper in a way which reflects our methodology/values/beliefs/vision?

But we also realised that these are not two separate questions, because in fact the reasons why we didn't write it are also the ingredients that we feel need to inform our processes.

In our 500 word abstract we said that our contribution would be created by everyone in our project working collectively. This is an exploration of why we have not got to that point yet; a reflection on and response to the issues that are alive within the project.

- **Why did we feel uncomfortable about writing the paper?**

We felt nervous about just going ahead and writing the paper on other people's behalf, or writing *about* other people. Who were we to try and represent the learning of the whole network? We were trying to understand the legitimacy of what we were doing. But the approach we were taking made us feel like we were in danger of doing the thing that we are against.

Looking back at the first six months of Web of Connections we realised that we hadn't always managed to create a process that people could understand and engage with. Maybe people weren't engaging because the process wasn't legitimate? People were sending clear messages by opting out of a writing process that was meant to involve everyone. We didn't act on those messages because the project became driven by deadlines and action plans, not leaving time for exploratory dialogue.

When we co-designed Web of Connections, there were many different agendas and many different partners. Everyone was coming into it with widely varying perspectives, different levels of relationship intensity and a range of needs that they expected the project to be able to meet.

The original plan for Web of Connections underestimated the time that it takes to build the relationships necessary for a communicative space for genuine dialogue. We had limited time and big ambitions. We thought we could make the project work through structures and teams and roles.

> "the process of drawing people together and creating a framework for collaborative work always takes longer than one imagines. At times building collaboration will seem to get in the way of directly addressing practical problems" (Reason, 2006:7)

For many people involved in the project the idea of undertaking participatory action research (PAR) as the core of the project became separated task from the work they were undertaking and from people's ambitions for the project. This is the opposite of what we understand to be the principles behind PAR. In our view, the project will not be fully legitimate until we build authentic engagement with the critical and conscious dimension of the project across the network.

We feel reluctant to write because we think it likely that the way each of us sees the issue will be different. As soon as you commit something to paper it feels like you are saying ' this is the truth', 'this is how it is', whereas we know that there are many truths, and that the work, and the way that we see it, is constantly changing. Therefore it's useful to think of inquiry as something which uses our different perspectives on reality, rather than something that seeks to represent a single reality (Rorty, 1999, p.33). 'Living knowledge' is more useful to us, and perhaps for contributing towards greater social justice, than something that claims one truth. This is reflected in the fact that we have found that dialogue processes are much more productive when we genuinely listen to what each other is saying and try to learn from it, rather than each of us simply trying to argue the truth of our own point of view.

- **What are the ingredients we need to enable a process where we can write the paper in a way which reflects our methodology/values/beliefs/vision so that we don't recreate the world that we are trying to change?**

Through reflecting on the ups and downs of our work we have learnt something about the ingredients we need to create authentic processes for working together. We summarise seven of these here.

i) Creating a communicative space for dialogue

> "This formation of communicative space is in itself a form of action. It may well be that the most important thing we can do in certain situations is to open, develop, maintain, encourage new and better forms of communication and dialogue" (Reason, 2006:6)

Sometimes we feel the need to use particular processes to help us create a dialogic space. For example, the 'people's circle', which gives everyone equal space to respond to a question or issue, without interruption, one at a time. This can be very useful, because it helps to break the normal dynamics of a group where some people talk too much and some people never talk.

Through the project we have been able to take these 'tools' that we have experienced together back to our own local groups, and they have helped us to create an inclusive environment where we feel we can express ourselves genuinely. We have become more proactive and aware.

However, sometimes we get stuck with the tools, paying too much attention to designing processes rather than making inquiry a way of living. Sometimes if we are in a structured session or workshop we end up saying what we think people want to hear, and we don't feel comfortable to say what we really think and feel. We've found that it has been important for us to pay attention to the informal dialogue which takes place outside of our structured activities (such as when some of us go outside for a cigarette), where people often say what they really think. This is recognised in the fact that often even the non-smokers go outside with the smokers! Sometimes people are seeking reassurance which gives them the confidence to go back inside and say what they really think.

However, it's also important to try and make sure that these informal dialogues don't undermine the more structured spaces we have for collective decision making. There is a danger that those people who don't go outside for a cigarette become excluded from key elements of the dialogue. It's then that our processes become illegitimate. Our challenge is always to try to bring the cigarette conversations into the people's circle. We've found it important to remind ourselves that the purpose of techniques such as the people's circle should be to make them no longer necessary. We should try to learn how to make authentic engagement and embed it in the way we live and work.

ii) Finding legitimacy through authentic engagement

Web of Connections is made up of a wide variety of people. Almost everyone has experienced suffering at some point in their lives. Yet, in dialogue processes there is a danger that we only react to the suffering that we can relate to our own lives. That is because we can often see ourselves as different and unconnected. When we find ways of creating common ground – perhaps a theme in common between us - it enables us to engage with each other as humans, and to understand each other's suffering. A great example of this was the Women's Circle residential last month, which brought together a diverse group of young women from London and Middlesbrough for a residential weekend; a powerful experience which had a great impact on those involved. Through a mix of informal and structured processes, women from very different backgrounds and experiences came together and built relationships and learnt about and understood each others' struggles.

We do a lot of planning for our workshops and residentials, but we have learnt that sometimes NOT sticking to the plan is really important; in order for engagement to be genuine, we have to change the plan in response to what emerges through our work.

We felt we didn't want to write a paper about our work yet because we don't feel that we have yet created enough communicative spaces where we can have authentic engagement. People need to WANT to engage with critical reflection on their work. We need to feel that this is relevant and useful to our lives.

We looked back at Becoming a Londoner (RefugeeYouth, 2009), and reflected on the process that developed that publication. We felt there was authentic engagement at the heart of it. This is reflected in the back cover which lists all the different people who were involved in different ways at different stages of the process. What was written emerged through an on-going process which did not end when the book was finished. The writing served as a way of capturing the learning from different aspects of the work, helping us to understand it better ourselves and enabling us to share it with others.

iii) Being aware about our choices and their consequences (Reason, 2006:3).

We need to be aware of the choices we are making and consider their consequences. Authentic engagement means engaging people in making choices and thinking about the consequences. Consensus isn't just about everyone saying YES, people need to understand and express why they are saying YES or, potentially, NO.

> "The legitimacy of any conclusions and decisions reached by participants will be proportional to the degree of authentic engagement of those concerned" (Kemmis, 2001:100)

Sometimes it felt like we lost that legitimacy. For example, on the final day of the 2nd National Gathering we rushed the process of getting everyone to sign up to teams and roles within the project, and everyone said YES to things without being aware what they were signing up to. As a result the decision making was not fully 'conscious',in the sense used by Paulo Freire. The lack of time also meant that people weren't able to make choices to which they knew the consequences.

At other times, we have felt that we are becoming more aware of our choices and their consequences. This is demonstrated in a comment from Humanah Youth, the project partner in Middlesbrough:

"Another great thing is that we have started to bring conscious learning into action; for example we are more conscious around ourselves I have seen this in a few people in Humanah. Like we are stepping back and looking at our lives and seeing why are we doing something and how can we do things differently. "

iii) Making sure both Agency and Communion are present (Bakan 1966, Marshall 1984)

> "agency is the expression of independence through self-protection, self-assertion and self-expansion; communion seeks union and cooperation as its way of coming to terms with uncertainty" (Marshall, 1984)

The mainstream culture we are operating in is driven by agency – the individualistic, capitalist approach, where success is measured by individual achievement and wealth. We are trying to make communality central to our working processes, as we see all around us the inequality and oppression that this agentic approach creates.

However, we also recognise that agency is important – being the individual's ability to act and make change to their own situation. In fact, agency and communion are "potential compliments rather than alternatives" (Marshall 1984). Can we expect people to act on the problems of the world until their own survival needs are met? Until people feel they have 'agency' at an individual level, how can they take the step to work in 'communion' with others?

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1943) maps out the order in which our needs must be met in order for us to have agency, or 'self actualisation', however, there is also some interesting criticism of this model which opposes the idea of a hierarchical order for these needs (Max-Neef et al., 1989, Wahba and Bridwell, 1976).

We need to be invested in the struggle for social justice on a personal level, rather than making it about 'helping others'. For example, if we view the people we work with as 'clients' rather than

fellow human beings, we detach ourselves from our world (Josephine Klein (1984) talks about this need for attachment as 'Empathic Imagination').

Martin Luther King reminds us of the importance not to separate the individual from the wider world;

> "We must be concerned not merely about who murdered them, but about the system, the way of life, the philosophy which produced the murderers" (MLK, Eulogy for the martyred children, 1963).

To co-produce knowledge that contributes to social justice an important question we need to ask ourselves is whether our individual and collective beliefs provide a reliable guide to getting what we want? (Rorty, 1999). Before we can answer that we need to find out what are our shared beliefs. We also must share a picture of where we want to be. To build a shared vision we need to engage in collective dreaming – the 'communion' mentioned by Marshall (see above). In order to do this we must all bring ourselves – our individual 'agency'- to the table. We can't and should not expect to be the same, feel the same, act the same – indeed we are powerful when we act together precisely because we are NOT the same. In this process agency and communion are not merely complimentary, but actually interdependent.

iv) Understanding the interdependence of 'Me', 'Us' and 'The world'

In his discussion of different approaches to action research Reason talks about researchers operating at 1st, 2nd and 3rd person levels (Reason, 2006:1). He talks about these as separate concepts. However, reflecting on our work, we see these levels as reflecting 'me', 'us' and the 'wider world' as part of the same concept of PAR. To achieve authentic engagement we need to be consciously operating at all three levels.

We need to understand our own reality in order to connect to our communities, and then to connect ourselves to the wider world. We need to understand our own privileges before we can engage with other people's suffering. A humane world can only happen when we can all connect to suffering which does not have the same face as ours.

If I try to help before I understand who I am in the situation, then I am not likely to help. There is a danger of "'helping' in a way that isn't helpful because it is controlling or patronising or suffocating, or just doesn't understand." (Reason, 2006:7) If you don't bring your own reality to the table, and I don't bring mine, and if we don't acknowledge and explore them, how can we expect to work together let alone help anyone else?

Equally, if we try to make change for ourselves, without understanding the wider world context we are operating within, and the power structures and dynamics that impact on us, then we are unlikely to achieve much.

We need to be constantly reflect on our own reality, the reality of the people we are working with, and the realities of the wider world. We can only define ourselves in relation to others. The discourses around us are what help us to figure out what we believe.

One of the strengths of RefugeeYouth is that we are constantly moving between those 3 levels. The July 2013 AHRC Showcase event in Edinburgh demonstrated the power of this approach. Through drama, dance, poetry and music young people from London, Middlesbrough, Birmingham and Scotland came together to share their experiences, and formulate a collective piece which was a

powerful representation of individual and collective experience. By learning about other people's experiences we were better able to reflect on our own experiences, and through pooling our knowledge we were able to better understand the context we are living in.

We realised that if there is a gap between what is written and the people and communities who are written about, then what is written loses its legitimacy (if we are coming, as *we* are, from the perspective of wanting to use research to achieve social justice). Separating 'me', 'us' and the 'wider world' can end up reinforcing the divisions and power dynamics that already exist.

v) Turning feelings into learning

Dewey, Kolb and many others have theorised about experiential learning. We know that learning doesn't just happen in the classroom (in fact, sometimes it doesn't happen there at all), and that some of the most important and powerful learning comes from lived experience. One of the most powerful aspects of working together through this project is that we all bring so much different knowledge, because we have all had such different life experiences.

However, experiences generate feelings and feelings can either enable or block learning.

> "we collect… information through our senses, and then hold the knowing inside ourselves as feelings. In some instances we are able to translate these feelings into conceptual knowledge that gives insight into the ways which our oppression is maintained. But often this translation work is not done, and nevertheless we walk around potent with this knowledge" (Douglas, 2002:250)

We have found that sometimes the feelings burn inside us and make us angry and stop us from acting. Negative feelings can be really destructive in this way. Listening is so important to this. If we don't listen to each other – really listen – then we get angry and frustrated and these feelings block our learning, and stop us from taking action.

But we can be even less likely to evaluate the positive feelings. We enjoy when something works well, and we forget to analyse how and why it worked – what were the ingredients?

In fact, in typing up our discussions we realised we reflected far more on the negative experiences and feelings than the positive. We also need to write also about what has worked – the moments where we have felt that we ARE doing what we say, and where there IS authentic engagement.

vi) Recognising Emergence

We sense that there is often a gap between the way we say things are and the way they actually are. This can lead us to feel that we are just 'talking the talk', 'bullshitting' or just 'talking rubbish'. We must acknowledge this gap, and engage in constant critical reflection on what we aspire things to be and what they are. We need a balance between being self-critical but not too critical that it's self-destructive.

> "The process of inquiry is as important as specific outcomes. Good action research emerges over time in an evolutionary and developmental process, as individuals develop skills of inquiry and as communities of inquiry develop within communities of practice" (Reason and Bradbury, 2001)

In conclusion, the opportunity to write for this symposium has helped us to think about how we write, who writes, and why. The theory we have read has helped us reflect and understand, and what we have written has already started a deeper and more honest dialogue amongst the Web of Connection. We would like to build on this learning and develop a collective process, which incorporates the ingredients listed above, to capture and share the learning from our project in an authentic way.

References

Bakan, D. (1966). *The Duality of Human Existence - Isolation and communion in Western man*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Douglas, C. (2002). Using Co-operative Inquiry with Black Women Managers: Exploring possibilities for moving from surviving to thriving. *Systemic Practice and Action Research, 15*(3).

Kemmis, S. (2001). Exploring the Relevance of Critical Theory for Action Research: Emancipatory action research in the footsteps of Jürgen Habermas. In P. Reason & H. Bradbury (Eds.), *Handbook of Action Research: Participative inquiry and practice* (pp. 91-102). London: Sage Publications.

Klein, J. (1984) *Imagination in Adult Education,* Goldsmiths College

Marshall, J. (1984). *Women Managers: Travellers in a male world*. Chichester: Wiley.

Maslow, A.H. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Psychological Review, 50*(4), 370–96.

Manfred A. Max-Neef with Antonio Elizalde, Martin Hopenhayn. (1989). Human scale development: conception, application and further reflections. New York: Apex. Chpt. 2. "Development and Human Needs", p. 18.

Reason, P., & Bradbury, H. (2001). Inquiry and Participation in Search of a World Worthy of Human Aspiration. In P. Reason & H. Bradbury (Eds.), *Handbook of Action Research: Participative inquiry and practice* (pp. 1-14). London: Sage Publications.

Reason, P (2006) Choice and Quality in Action Research Practice, Journal of Management Inquiry, 15:187-203

RefugeeYouth (2009) *Becoming A Londoner,* RefugeeYouth

Rorty, R. (1999). *Philosophy and Social Hope*. London: Penguin Books.

Wahba, M. A., & Bridwell, L. G. (1976). Maslow reconsidered: A review of research on the need hierarchy theory. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance, 15*(2), 212–240. doi: 10.1016/0030-5073(76)90038-6

Author: Dave O'Brien

Title: Intermediations between research and social justice.

Introduction

The creative economy, which is the subject of the Cultural Intermediation project, is a site for promises and contradictions. It has been bound up with a definition that has its roosts in a policy agenda that sought to move away from the industrial activities that characterised the political imagination of much of left wing thinking in the UK, towards an economy grounded in cultural practices. However the reality did not live up to the rhetoric. In doing so the potential for exclusion was replicated in the spatially and socially stratified forms that characterise the creative economy. This paper considers these issues by outlining the contradictions, suggesting how these have played out in one of our case study sites and then finally concluding by thinking about how the creative economy's structures of ownership and control can limit academic research's attempts to intervene into that economy.

The creative economy: Promises and contradictions

Initially creative industries were associated with 13 sectors identified by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. The 13 were contentious and owed much to a definition of the economic aspects of culture that are related to intellectual property:

> *"...those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent which have a potential for job and wealth creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property" (DCMS 1998)*

However this was a definition that is at the root of the difficulty of connecting culture and economy. The initial 13 had an overreliance on software as the basis for grand claims about the economic potential for creative industries. The focus on intellectual property was also bound up with the inclusion of areas of activity that would seem to be essential to cultural life, in particular heritage and tourism which are an important part of many cultural institutions.

Policy discourses about creative industries often assert that the creation of cultural artefacts, in whatever form, will be part of a new economy to replace the old model of Fordist manufacturing that is, in mainstream political constructions, no longer a competitive option for nations like the UK. This narrative has a powerful status in much cultural policy, especially as British models of creative industries have been exported to cultural policies across the globe.

The idea that creative work might be an ideal form of labour for the 20th, and into the 21st, century is embedded in a range of strategic policy dilemmas around the post-Fordist, supposedly post-industrial, Western economy. It is embedded, from the political left, as it offers a vision of work that moves beyond forms of exploitation associated with manual forms of production and is closer to Marx's vision of the worker in communism, but it also offers a type of entrepreneurial subject that is hailed by the political right as an alternative to state run forms of employment.

Oakely (2009) pins this down by referring to the pains and pleasures of cultural work, whereby there are potentially many more pains than there are pleasures, alongside a great deal of ambivalence that surrounding cultural work. These include issues of geography, issues of networks, issues of how people get jobs and how they keep them and how they make a living. These question have appeared in mainstream policy discussions, for example campaigns, policy documents (ACE 2012) and legislation (for an excellent overview see Hope and Figiel 2011) and there is also an extensive

literature by a range of academics (Gill and Pratt 2008, Hesmondhalgh 2012 and Oakely 2009 all provide good introductions). Debates over internships (Perlin 2012) as the primary way to access forms of cultural production are not just about creative industries but reflect much more widely about questions of the longer term social exclusion of specific social groups. Thus the debates have crossed over to focus on individuals trying to get into professions such as law or medicine, or getting into politics as well as getting into important areas of cultural activity, particularly television and journalism.

Creativity's apple pie banality has been especially useful in government discourses as it has enabled cultural policy to branch out into areas of policy beyond the arts, such as economic, social and health policy (Garnham 2005, Galloway 2008). At the same time creativity is a capacity or personal quality that everybody possesses and so includes us all. Creativity is potentially a quality that we all carry around with us and can be, through the application of the right technologies of *governmentality*, be liberated or unfettered, tapped into, and developed in a way that free us all for the utopian visions of work that are not about the factory, but rather about self-expression. These visions of work will provide labour that will not demand the same forms of protection and remuneration as the labourers of industrial forms of economic organisation, but will achieve a different kind of status and distinction as compared with that section of the workforce (McRobbie 2010). This is especially important within Western narratives of competition with states, particularly those in Asia, who offer seeming cheaper labour for transnational corporations to produce the material objects underpinning the very creative practices that are seen as liberating (e.g. Hutton 2008, Jaques 2012, Froud et al 2012).

Thus creativity, as it gathered pace over the last ten years, became a kind of palliative and panacea to not just Western competitiveness, especially in the UK model of creative industries as it was globally exported, but to other things like the problems of urban regeneration, problems of unemployment and the problems associated with the sorts of social pressures felt by Western societies as they reconfigured their social models away from universal welfare states and full employment (models that were, ironically, dependent on the parts of the globe that the West now constructs as competition). For example, the specific problem, of Western labour markets inability to integrate populations into forms of manufacturing that had previously been able to absorb large numbers of young people leaving education without tertiary qualifications, could be addressed by those same people realising their creativity.

The 'problem' of Birmingham

The previous section has indicated the seductive, but problematic, nature of creativity within policy discourses. The remainder of this paper will show how this plays out in one of the sites of study for the Cultural Intermediation project, in Birmingham.

Once a major industrial centre, Birmingham has experienced significant social and physical changes attended by a decline resultant of the economic turbulence of the 1970s. Founded upon an extensive manufacturing base, 'The City of a Thousand Trades' was unable to maintain export levels and between 1971 and 1976 alone, upwards of 50,000 jobs were lost. This decline impacted heavily on the inner city, as many the many industries found there, reliant upon semi or unskilled labour, closed or relocated. Inevitably this process exacerbated housing, environmental and intractable social problems. General disillusionment, urban unrest and decay met with ongoing turmoil in surviving industries, famously symbolised by British Leyland and the media's favourite shop steward 'Red Robbo'.

Its citizens encumbered with that accent, Birmingham was perceived as a cultural wasteland, whose identifying icon was the execrable television soap opera Crossroads. If it was not the sound of us it was the very name of the city that invited insult and injury. The shoddiness implied in the label

‘Brummagem made’, which always tempered civic pride, indicated a hostility directed at the city with a long pedigree. As early as 1816 Jane Austen wrote that this was not a place to promise much: 'One has no great hopes from Birmingham. I always say there is something direful in the sound'. In an age of decline the problem is that pride could no longer be inured with reference to the brute yet prodigious industry that facilitated the city's might and very existence.

Contemporary anxieties have thus been both ameliorated and intensified by the manner of the ongoing attempt to rejuvenate, if not reinvent, Birmingham and its image.
In spite of the long process of regeneration along the lineaments of high culture – attracting Royal Ballet, a Symphony Hall, NIA etc, as well as becoming a destination for one form of cultural consumption in the form of a rejuvenated Bullring and Selfridges, the negative image still proves hard to shift.

At the micro, local level, cultural projects are often employed in order to engender a variety of qualities that might aid in overcoming this negative image and dismissal by dealing with a various malaises in the social and economic structure of the city.

Cultural work, whether authorised as part of structural regeneration projects or independently of them, seeks to generate community spirit, mutual respect and equivalence between cultures (viewed anthropologically) and aid in well-being. In true Arnoldian spirit, cultural projects are also tasked with elevating individuals through the aesthetic and in more instrumental fashion cultivate skills and that (lost?) sense of creativity manifest in the totemic idea of a ‘City of a Thousand Trades’ and visualised in the feminine artist who stands beside the male proletarian in the city’s coat of arms.

Certainly, Birmingham faces a number of considerable challenges around which a formidable array of resources has been enlisted amongst which cultural projects form but a small part.
Tackling inequality and deprivation and promoting social cohesion has been identified as a key priority of city council and its partners, notably through questions of participation. The nature of this lack of participation is underlined by dispiriting data:

- Birmingham ranks as the 9th most deprived local authority in the UK, with significant pockets in the top 1% most deprived areas nationally.
- 35% of children are classified as living in child poverty (2010). In some wards this is as high as 52%.
- Unemployment rates are twice the national average.
- Whilst education results have improved, there are significant gaps for many groups.
- There is a life expectancy gap of over 10 years between the worst and best wards.

The broad framework for any action in this area is captured in the document ‘Big City Culture 2010-2015 - A Cultural Strategy for Birmingham’ produced by the Birmingham Cultural Partnership. The Birmingham Cultural Partnership (BCP) is made up of representatives from the museums, galleries, heritage, libraries, arts, events and sports sectors as well related regional bodies Its objectives are to:

- Raise the external perception of Birmingham as a cultural destination
- Raise cultural participation (sport, arts, libraries, museums and galleries)
- Increase the use of Birmingham’s world-class cultural facilities by local residents
- Increase engagement with the most disadvantaged communities in the city
- Fulfil the desire of residents for cultural activities at a local level

The strategy document draws attention to the importance of the creative economy, claiming that:

Our main strengths are in partnerships and organisational capacity. The creative and cultural sector in Birmingham is underpinned by a strong partnership designed to maximise resources and build capacity in a sector that is nationally recognised as being fragmented and difficult to nurture. Partnership support goes beyond single issue, single agency engagement to support individual and industry growth, infrastructure, audience and market development. A new creative industries strategy for the city is needed to include development plans for the identifiedgrowth sub-sectors, fashion, jewellery, music and gaming. (p. 20).

Whilst at the same time grounding the creative economy in narratives of participation:
Participation in culture is inherently a good thing – it challenges perceptions, prompts feelings of happiness, sadness, anger and excitement, creates moments of personal reflection and enables people to understand the world they live in, its possibilities and the cultures of others more profoundly. Cultural activities encourage self and group expression and provoke reactions at an emotional, spiritual and intellectual level, improving the quality of life in the city and a sense of identity and belonging. Cultural activities can also deliver a range of other outcomes including health and wellbeing, social and community cohesion, civic engagement, economic impact, development of transferable skills and improved environment.

Balsall Heath

How do these policy goals play out in the everyday practices of local areas? A key geographical site for WP 4 focus in Cultural Intermediation is the Balsall Heath Area – once inner-city white working-class, site of waves of post-war migration from Ireland, commonwealth, more recently Somalia etc. In April 2011, Balsall Heath was chosen by the Government as one of the first areas in the country to pilot Neighbourhood Planning, one of over 200 pilots.

A key project in the area is the Balsall Heath Biennale which crytalises a number of themes around cultural intermediation projects, the policy that informs them as well as suggesting the kind of questions one might ask about their impact with those who are the objects of such work.

The Biennale is an art project that went 'live' between July and September 2013. It was conceived and co-ordinated by artists and Balsall Heath residents Elizabeth Rowe and Chris Poolman. This delivery is born of a two-year commitment to a specific geographical.

Since March 2012 the artists have been researching Balsall Heath, meeting residents, exploring the local area and developing outcomes. Between March and August 2012, we ran a consultation with local people and organisations in Balsall Heath.

The consultation also had unexpected outcomes such as establishing a community garden, taking part in Balsall in Bloom and being involved in the organising of a street party.

The consultation process is captured in the A-Z Colouring in Book, with the projects developed for the summer of 2013 emerging from this period of research.

The project website addresses its constituents directly, articulating the way in which audiences are conceived as active participants, potentially co-creators of cultural works and the values that might accrue from such activity:

The Balsall Heath Biennale is made up of a number of different elements. Many of these invite you, the local residents, to take part - be it in a competition, an exhibition or a performance. The

newspaper (delivered to all 6000 homes in the local area) and website contains information on all of these activities and how to get involved. This element of participation is important - underpinning the biennale project is an interest in the 'common'. Put simply, the common is concerned with sharing. Historically, this idea can be related to how people have (or haven't as the case may be) shared 'common ground'

[…]

Today, the common has relevance in terms of the selling of natural resources (such as oil) to private enterprises. In the era of the internet we can think of the 'creative commons'; open access to cultural products such as information and ideas. The common therefore, is about the politics of sharing - be that space, a community, information or natural resources. In light of this, and in relation to Balsall Heath, we might ask the following questions: how do people from many different cultures and faiths share a common public space? How do these different cultures function as a community?

The consciousness about the nature of this kind of work is demonstrated in an explanation that it's starting point and framing approach is a proposition put forward by Lucy Lippard at the 2010 Falmouth convention: the 'community biennial'. Lippard asked: 'What about a Community Biennial, subverting the notion of high art by inserting a practice often scorned by the global art world. Curators could consult with various agencies and non-profits to discover the root social issues in the location, the community and activist organizations dealing with them, and seek out artists who could provide models for thinking and acting about these issues.'

The biennale project also explores what it means for an artist to work 'locally'. As is suggested on the project website, Francis Frascina argues that the remoteness of the practice of the modern biennale is captured in the image of Roman Abramovich's 377ft super yacht moored at the 2011 Venice Biennale: as 'members of the recent global-traveling elite, they are opaque to the particularities of locality - a phenomenon associated with the *biennialisation of the contemporary art world'. As a consequence of such instances, the* Balsall Heath Biennale is conceived in response to the 'particularities of locality', with the projects developed for the summer of 2013 emerging directly from the idiosyncracies of the local area.

Thus, the artists make claim to the idea of Balsall Heath as 'an area renowned for its strong community infrastructure and modern history of community activism'. Virtues are mitigated by its many problems, including 'the abuse of shared common public spaces' in the form of repeated fly-tipping, dumping and littering.

Some of the Biennale projects aim to contribute towards Balsall Heath's community infrastructure, providing opportunities for local people as well as prompting thought about how locales use shared public space and how they might re-imagine how this space might be used differently - and creatively. This last aspect suggests of course that creativity might of necessity be something absent in Balsall Heath and in need of importation, or at least in need of unlocking according to some formulae determined by those behind the project.

Conclusion:

This paper opened by outlining the roots of the creative economy in intellectual property. These roots have been influential in shaping how our project will present the data, findings and impact that it has had. Translating the on-going findings into multiplatform content to create an integrated web,

smartphone and multi-touch table experience is currently a key issue that the project team are grappling with, partially related to questions of ownership of software code. The differential power relationships embedded within software, particularly the limitations of what can, and cannot be done to code that is not open source has long been a subject of academic interest and debate (see Beer 2013 for a summary). However in the case of this project, the promise of the creative economy has again been unfulfilled as the team struggle to work out ways of translating the original aims of touch-table, web and smartphone friendly findings into the reality of a closed software system. That closed system in many way parallels the issues identified in this paper, characterised not by the openness promised in ideas of creativity, but rather by the exclusions associated with the darker side of processes and practices of intermediation.

Author: Kate Pahl & Steve Pool

Title: The work of art in the age of mechanical co-production

Interdisciplinary activity, valued today as an important aspect of research, cannot be accomplished by simple confrontations between various specialized branches of knowledge. Interdisciplinary work is not a peaceful operation: it begins effectively when the solidarity of the old disciplines breaks down--a process made more violent, perhaps, by the jolts of fashion--to the benefit of a new object and a new language, neither of which is in the domain of those branches of knowledge that one calmly sought to confront. (R Barthes.)

In a world full of injustice the idea of what could seen as socially "just" is an "Object" obscured by a heavy fog. For us the idea of justice is closely linked to the idea of opportunity, not an opportunity of access-to but an opportunity to participate-in.

In this paper we explore how our respective disciplines of Ethnography and Visual art have broken down to enable a place for co-production to take root. We hope to acknowledge how experience, practice and time are critical elements for promoting opportunities for change yet there are no mechanical approaches to co-production. We bring no tool kits, codes of practice, top tips, idiot guides or basic steps. We suggest that a process of co-production which opens up new opportunities has to start at the point of been lost in the fog together and a realization that it may never lift.

Co-production requires a mode of closeness to the everyday and a recognition of different ways of being, modes of expression and forms of meaning making. It involves recognizing issues of power and control. In community contexts it might mean shifting attention away from preferred ways of knowing and being to unfamiliar ways of knowing and being for all participants.

Co-produced knowledge is not about finding consensus it recognizes the vast potential that lies beneath the surface of things. Rather than cultivating fruit, it identifies and promotes the conditions for growth. (Steve Pool 2012)

How do we enable Connected Communities projects to foster these conditions for growth where co-production is enacted? Here we explore the process of knowledge construction, we reflect on shared outcomes and the interrelationship between the two.

In a co-produced space, the silos around disciplinary knowledge, so visible within the University, can lose their relevance. However, for many letting go of the safety net which a disciplinary framework provides can be difficult. Developing enquiry teams requires us to consider what is useful, with each situation requiring a different set of skills and approaches. For example a particular role and identifiable set of skills which we can label as 'expert' can provide useful starting points. It is essential however to question the impact of the expert person, whether, "Ethnographer" or "Artist" or "social scientist" has on emerging co-produced knowledge. We argue that consensus is not co-production. By 'tracing the epistemological unconscious' (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992) the researchers can make sense of the disciplines she or he is in but also can acknowledge the limitations of that discipline. What counts as knowledge is being questioned through this process and the new knowledge can grow and evolve spatially rather than be fixed and contained.

Co-production in process

We will now present an example. We suggest a project which, we feel, created moments of co-production. One outcome of this project was a film. We suggest that in this project co-production took place through a set of moments. It is dangerous to see co-production as the joint manufacture

of a product – we consider co-production as continually in process. We trace the journey that we took through to thinking about the relationship between co-production, power and ethics.

The film was made as part of a project commissioned by AHRC for DCLG called 'Making Meaning Differently'. Marcus, who works in youth services, was keen for us to work with a group of young people he had identified as needing a framework of support. Every Monday for 8 weeks, the research team came to see them in a community centre. We began with a long discussion about the government, power and ethics and what we would like to do. One young person suggested we use shadow puppets. Another said drama. A few wanted to go to London to meet the government. Over time, Steve filmed aspects of their practice. The girls had choreographed a dance, which Steve filmed.

The young people scripted a play based on their experience. In the central story of the film, they recounted a real life incident of being threatened at knife point, a story they felt would inform government and provide the message that they are ignored and their community does not offer a place which feels safe. The short clip of footage did not hold together as a coherent film with a readable message. We decided that the young people could focus some of their ideas about political representation in text, we could scan them and lay these on top of the film. Steve went away, and put the film together and after some discussion with the young people it was presented to the DCLG in London. The effect on the DCLG was strong and they responded well to the project overall. The head of Rotherham youth service was attended, and she agreed after seeing the film to support a new project to re-claim a Carnegie library for the young people.

The process of shaping the film could be broken down as follows:

	Young people	**Adult mediators**
Week 1	Discussion about politics and shaping of stuff. Decision to express ideas using shadow puppets	Kate, Steve and Marcus were there to listen to the young people and discuss with them
	Nana danced the dance.	Kate recorded it in ethnographic fieldnotes. Steve recorded it on film
Week 3	Discussion of the neighbourhood with young people. Young people suggested film of area.	Kate and Marcus went on a series of walks to observe the neighbourhood
Week 4	Young people were absent for day of film	Steve made the film of the area, led by Marcus
Week 5	Scripting of shadow puppet story using flip charts by young people	Young people did this with Marcus's support
Week 6	Shadow puppet story enacted by young people	Steve recorded this on film
Week 7		Steve and Martin edited the film, suggested putting words over the top

Week 8	Showing of film with no words on to the young people – they thought of ideas to put on paper	Youth workers scripted what the young people said
Week 9		Steve and Martin edited the film again.
Week 10		Showing of film to DCLG
Week 11	Showing of film to young people	

Within this period a number of conversations developed into what we identified as a co-produced space. The group included some young people who articulated affiliations with racist parties as well as those who were passionate about drama. They were living on an estate where Jamie Oliver had made negative and damaging comments. The group began to share understandings of what was shaping this wider political framing. The story of being at knife point and not feeling safe was a way of crystallizing their feelings, but also was supported by the youth service as a legitimate political statement. At the heart of their message was their need to feel safe and have a place to meet.

The project was considered a success. But we continued to argue about the film. Part of the concern was the nature of the film – where it could be shown, how it could be read. Below we explore this issue first through our own research diary blog posts at the time, and then retrospectively.

Blog posts

Rawarsh film

So the Rawmarsh film before we show it. It felt like we were getting somewhere but it needs firming up or at least writing down before we use it in the talk next week - I will be short and to the point- I'm making assumptions so be good if you corrected them or better still used the same format to write it from your perspective which would be really helpful.

You like it because.

You saw the process unfold.

I went to Romania to study shadow puppets - this is part of the narrative.

I said the film drew from my arts practice.

the young people just got on with it on their own using the materials -

the shadow play and the dancing are crystallization points for you- they represent a way of being in the world.

The film does not have a standard Narrative

The film does not show people - it does not follow a standard genre so it is hard to see it from this perspective.

The young people like the film

Marcus likes the film.

The film is useful in introducing ideas of how film and ethnography come together.

And the big one I suppose is that the film feels authentic and situated.

It is problematic for me because.

The project was so difficult

I worry that it represents the young people in a certain way

The young people's voice is to an extent obscured through the medium.

The film looks like it was made by young people and wasn't.

The film is in no way accidental.

We made the film for you to use.

Thz film is not an example of what I would call arts practice it just draws on it.

I struggle to let go of it as I think it's dangerous - we could be asked questions of it that I would not feel comfortable answering.

I had so much to do on the project I didn't have time to do this bit as well as I would have liked it was almost another project within itself.

I Like the fact

It worked as a way to send a message to government

It captures a sense of place - it is spatial

it was a reductive process drawn from spending time in a place.

It is very visual and sensory

The young people can see themselves in it they are proud of it.

I managed to craft something from the fragments

I like the shadow puppets and the idea that there is a barrier between the worlds of politics and the world in Rotherham.

it was fit for purpose.

It is a starting point for what may come next in terms of a more ethnographic approach to film - it has promoted a lot of useful conversation between us. (Steve June 2013)

Reflections from Kate September 2013

I read your bit (above) in Rotherham library which was really nice. I was thinking how co-production is about power, and ethics and control, which is what Marcus thinks.

…

1. They didn't make the film but the film did reflect the bumpy ride we all had last year. It was very much our impressions of them. But the film still works in the space, and they love seeing it again.

2. They can do things. They chose to do shadow puppets, and wanted to do drama.

3. We matter in the space. They can't co-produce on their own if they are to interact with the adult world and get jobs.

Part of the process of doing co-production is to recognize we have to give up existing ways of communicating in order to create these poly-vocal spaces. In the Rawmarsh film, the young people inserted some modal choices into the film. The scripted messages were in the main, scribed by youth workers. The ways we work have to be with not against modal choices, and with, not against shared strategic priorities, in this case, the youth service. We can't co-produce without this shared set of priorities. As an artist and an ethnographer therefore, our practice is quite peripheral to the space. We did, however, begin a process, of the making of a new, safe space in the Carnegie library down the road.

We therefore argue that co-production as a process is continually fracturing and splitting but at the same time, this requires an understanding of those fracturing moments. There needs to be a commitment to the moment when co-production goes well in the space. Following the logic of community partners requires a giving up of practice but also a re-making of practice that is continually in flux and in-process.

September 29th 2013

Author: Jenny Pearce

Title: Comm-Uni-ty: Co-Producing Knowledge for Social and Political Change

Introduction

In May 2013 the International Centre for Participation Studies (ICPS) and the Programme for a Peaceful City (PPC) in Peace Studies, University of Bradford, launched a Community University: 'Comm-**Uni**-ty'. This is a year long project financed by the ESRC and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, with a series of stated goals, namely to:

- Offer **structured opportunities for knowledge exchange** between academic knowledge around participation and social change, and the knowledge and the experiences of residents in communities in the north of England (initially Sheffield and Bradford) who are trying to make change (and who we call 'community activists').
- Develop **new methodologies and pedagogies for this exchange of knowledges,** aimed at enhancing the analytical skills, political understanding, and self-reflection of community activists, which in turn will contribute to more effective practice for change.
- Test the wider potential of an approach which gives **equal value to academic and community knowledges, and which involves participants in co-designing curricula as the foundation of a distinct approach to Community-University engagement**. This proposal was itself developed through a participatory process.
- **Encourage access to academic knowledge** amongst communities at a time when this is becoming more difficult.
- **Address the divide between people and representative politics,** which is particularly problematic in areas of poverty and deprivation such as the north of England.
- Build **new approaches to poverty, power and participation in our northern cities** in collaboration with the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, and through an emerging partnership between Bradford and Salford Universities.
- **Foster change in the way state and statutory bodies engage with communities** by demonstrating how, with appropriate support and co-design, grassroots community participants can themselves deliver change responsibly and productively.

The project is the outcome of a previous research project. This is the AHRC 'Connecting Communities' Scoping Study on'Power in Community'. Mostly a literature review, this study was complemented by 'Power Talks' with 8 community activist groups in the north of England (mostly Bradford but also Sheffield). This study generated a proposition which emerged out of a surprising finding that most of these activist groups did not conceive of power as about domination. Indeed, they rejected the power of the 'powerful', or rather the kind of power the 'powerful' exercised. Instead, the power that they considered meaningful and acceptable was about 'sharing, enabling, listening and cooperating'' (Pearce, 2012). This kind of power could be called 'non dominating power' and the proposition was: 'how can non dominating power be effective without reproducing dominating power'? This proposition reflected the challenge that came from the experiences of the community activists. They had come to accept that their contribution was mostly about 'ripples' and 'drips' (Pearce, 2013: 659); They were uncomfortable with power that distanced them from the communities they were part of.

It meant that it was very difficult for them to achieve some of their goals, or to sustain their achievement. One of the groups, for instance, was attempting to democratise the Mosque. For a brief period, they won control of the Mosque committee and they used their time in power to encourage women and young people to participate, and having found a library covered in dust they

restocked it and reopened it. However, not only were they reluctant to 'hang' onto power, rejecting the way the Elders had manipulated control of the Mosque in the past, but they did not have the skills of manipulation to outwit the Elders for long, and the latter regained control.

This group however came to the feedback session for the final report in February 2012, and it was one of them who coined the term 'Comm-Uni-ty' when we discussed how to follow up on the Power in Community study. It was with them and most of the other groups that we co-designed the funding proposal.

This paper will first address the question for this workshop on what kind of social justice this experiment of co-constructing a Community University is addressing, the ways it is trying to address it and the challenges emerging and envisaged on the way.

What kind of Social Justice is this Experiment in Co-Production Aiming to Promote?

Social justice is inevitably a contested concept. Hayek, often considered the founder of neoliberalism was scathing about what he called a "hollow incantation" like "open sesame" (quoted in Lister, 2011:3). Any attempt to implement distributive justice would lead to a totalitarian state, undermining the fundamental principal of individual freedom, he believed. The debate has ebbed and flowed over the years around what kind of distribution of rights and opportunities, income and wealth, goods and services is just? In the meantime, data shows that social background remains a major indicator of educational achievement. If levels of inequality relate to the question of justice, then those levels have risen in many parts of the world, even as the world's middle classes have gained more access to wealth. In Bradford, the metropolitan district where we are co-developing the Community University with a number of community activists and groups, levels of inequality are amongst the highest in the UK. Two of Bradford District's wards (Ilkley and Wharfedale) were ranked in the 15% least deprived in the country in 2010, while Manningham was ranked amongst the 5% most deprived wards (Bujra and Pearce, 2011:204).

We have been asked to reflect in this paper on what kind of social justice we think that we are contributing to through co-constructing the Community University. Clearly the context of Bradford raises many issues around social justice. Inequality is just one. There are issues of educational achievement, access to the job market, the impact of welfare cuts, the role of food banks and the differential opportunities according to gender, ethnicity, generation and class in a city with a 26% minority ethnic population who live in some of the poorest inner city wards. Bradford has quite a vibrant history of community activism, but at the same time a palpable distance between the population and decision makers. In some cases, this distance is mediated by local community leaders, notably in the Asian community. In the white estates that ring the inner city, the distance remains a gaping void.

The background to this project is certainly rooted in this context of social deprivation and what some would also call social injustice. However, it is not straightforwardly about social justice as generally understood. The groups involved in our Power Talks, come from a varied range of communities. While some were from the poorest inner city areas, others were from Queensbury, an area noted for its lower middle class population. There we talked, for instance, with a couple who were building a campaign against 'smelly wagons' which were dropping animal waste as they transported it to a processing plant near the village. One of the few political allies they found was the local UKIP candidate for the Council.

These are not community activists with a unified sense of 'social justice'. A few do have a strongly articulated commitment to social justice already, however many do not think much beyond their

neighbourhoods and/or particular campaigns. They all share a commitment to changing something, even if changing something is not necessarily part of any broader worldview or connections to what might be understood as social movements or social justice campaigns.Nevertheless, they reflect the diverse and fragmented character of social change in the UK today. The 'Times of Disengagement' of the state (Baumann, 2001) from society, the rise of neoliberalism and the loss of faith in articulating ideologies and political parties, have had an atomising impact on movements for change, but at the same time has given space for autonomous and creative organising at the margins of society. However, this does not necessarily translate into any desire to engage with 'big issues'. I visited the Community Garden set up by some of the Community University participants shortly before the arrival of a renewed provocation to the City by the English Defence League on 12 October. One of the participants, a Muslim originally from the Swat Valley in Pakistan, stated that despite loathing what they stand for, it is not 'his thing' to do anything. He is motivated by place, his community and efforts to improve it through community participation.

In developing with the original participants in the Power Talks the funding proposal for the ESRC/JRF, it was evident that while issues of power and participation resonated, real enthusiasm centred on creativity in change processes. This emerged in a workshop to co-design the curriculum, in which the academics presented a menu of options which were then discussed amongst community participants and the themes ranked (see appendix 1). People are focussed on their everyday lives, even more so as welfare cuts bite and services diminish, and have to be encouraged to think it is worth reflecting beyond the everyday with academics. We academics are challenged to think about what we offer in this context.

At our first Evening Session with participants (17 October) participants were asked to discuss: What they are Doing? What they want to Achieve? Why are they doing it? and How they are doing it? The outcome confirmed this range of agendas from 'Revolution' to 'Getting kids to pick up the Litter'. Everyone shared a concern with poverty, hunger their neighbourhood, their community and connecting with others. People, make change in different ways and at different levels of action and activism, we might conclude.

Nevertheless, it would be wrong to suggest that this project has nothing to do with social justice. It expresses concerns with how communities manage to find voice in order to lever changes which might improve their environment and their everyday lives. In finding and building voice in ways which aim to enhance influence and impact rather than power over others, community activists are redressing the asymmetries around who makes decisions and on what grounds. They are also putting issues on the table for public discussion which otherwise might not be. At the same time, they are learning from each other as well as from the academics. A number of participants and one of the academics have a particular interest in permaculture, for instance, while some have never heard of this environmentally sensitive approach to growing food sustainably and building community. Many of the participants are not part of the first cohort that helped design the curriculum, and the importance of 'power' and different kinds of power has not registered with everyone. At the residential, some acknowledged without prompting that there could be something in this word that does have impacts on the issues that matter to them. Comm-Uni-ty thus provides a space for community activists to select from a menu of ideas what resonates with their lives, and to feed back to academics their own priorities. At the same time, there is space for judgements to change and activists and academics to grow closer in their mutual understanding of what matters when discussing power and participation.

But this project goes a little further. The University is a very powerful institution in any urban context. By co-producing knowledge with citizens, and particularly but not only, with citizens in very deprived communities, this project aims to rebalance the distribution of power behind particular

knowledges. Without denying the importance of academic knowledge emerging from years of study, systematic reflection and engagement with a vast array of debates, this project is based on the view that the University does not harbour the only kind of knowledge that matters. The experiential knowledge within communities, the creative presentational knowledges which abound within community settings, combined with the more propositional academic knowledge (which also exists within communities of course, as well as in the University) could help address problems of urban living in ways which ensure that solutions are owned and developed by those effected by them. In this sense, co producing knowledge with communities through the Community University addresses the deficits that face societies where power and wealth are more and more concentrated, where the distance between decisions makers has grown, and where Universities are encouraged to be driven more by markets than societal needs.

Building Comm-Uni-Ty

Comm-Uni-ty is thus a challenge to the way Universities understand their role and their connections to their urban hinterlands. It is a challenge to academics, who no matter how committed we are to co-producing knowledge, fall back easily upon our sense that the themes and ideas we are often passionately wedded to are going to be embraced by others. Our communication skills are not always up to the task of working with community activists highly sensitive to being patronised, or who are not used to protracted exposition of ideas, and who are mostly concerned with the here and now. Language and vocabulary can exclude and dissuade people from participating. At the same time, there are also many community activists who are actually very comfortable with analysing the 'big issues' of society, and who have ample knowledge, confidence and experience in sharing their ideas. Some community activists might also gain from the self discipline of having to persuade others rather than declare opinions. With such a diverse group of people, there is need for deep attention to individual participants and their particular experiences, motivations, aptitudes and anxieties.

Many community activists are interested in ideas, with some feeling however that limited education inhibits them from engaging more deeply or articulating opinions. There are many outcomes of our socialisation and educational processes to overcome in this kind of dialogue of knowledges. A project such as this cannot aim to develop a 'one size fits all' curriculum. The participants are diverse in their backgrounds, beliefs, interests and motivations and there is no automatic reason why they would want to give up valuable spare time to work with a group of academics. This means that to be truly open to finding the appropriate point at which exchange of knowledges is possible, requires a constant critical self reflection. One of our team is an Impact Adviser, who will be gauging responses to each event, feeding back to the academics and the community activists and ensuring that we really do adapt and adjust. This is a challenge for academics and activists, but as the academics 'hold the purse strings', it is particularly incumbent on us. In this process of adapting, we also hope that our openness will further encourage activists to want to learn more from the academic knowledge which does resonate with their lives. Given that this is a 'University', the learning journeys remain an important component of our process. Co-production, if it is to retain the commitment of community activists, has to be capable of directing and redirecting this learning journey according to the evolving emotional, everyday and political experiences of participants.

We have been particularly fortunate in having two members of the team with long experience of working in communities but also with strong connections to academia and deep commitment to ideas and intellectual life. Programme for a Peaceful City (PPC) officer in Peace Studies, has built relationships with Bradford's communities over many years but has also generated innovative methods for facilitating dialogue, encouraging debate on contentious issues and building resilience in times of stress (eg the provocations by the EDL in 2010, 2012 and 2013). Another member of the team, is an experienced community development worker from Sheffield, who has also spent many

years systematising and articulating her experience and knowledge and works at a national as well as local level. These members of the team have been vital bridges between the assumptions that academics can make about the world around them and the reality of lived experience in communities. Our first realisation of the importance of their role came on the issue of recruitment to the Community University.

The project took a long time to gain approval from the ESRC. By the time it did, many of our original activists were in a different phase in their lives. The Manningham Sports Coaching group, which had turned up in numbers to our feedback and curriculum development planning, were tied up with sporting events when it came to organising Com-**Uni-**ty. Other original participants had suffered family illnesses, had left their communities, or had other things to do. Our first task, therefore was to rekindle interest outside the original cohort, and with the help of those who remained and who are part of the Community University Council of academics and community participants. We went out to speak to groups, such as the homeless (interested but no-one signed up), the tenants federation (two recruited), the Community Organisers Programme (three recruited) and individuals we heard about who might be interested. We got 13 to our Kickstarter Day in July 2013, which we used to give potential participants a 'Power Walk' around the University, explaining something of the hierarchical knowledge production process and the increasing securitisation of the institution. We organised a Pop -Up shop in the centre of Bradford and spent two days meeting people and offering short talks on contentious subjects (food banks, and drugs). The PPC Programme Office spent many long hours on the phone talking to individuals, getting to know them and encouraging them. There is no doubt that deep knowledge of inner city Bradford and the challenges faced by its communities, experience and understanding of individual needs (eg disability) and interests were essential to overcoming the asymmetries between activists and academics in terms of social backgrounds, world views and goals.

In the end, our residential was fully booked up (20 people, with three people dropping out for health and child care reasons). The residential taught us many things. It taught us first that building a comfortable space for community activists and academics to engage with each other on relatively equal terms requires a great deal of thought, preparation and flexibility. Our community activists came from varied backgrounds across Bradford, with different levels of experience, knowledge and expectations. There was as much interest (if not more) in hearing from each other as from the academics. The residential worked because of the varied menu of activities which meant that everyone could find something useful and relevant even if not everything was equally useful. People valued in particular telling their stories to others, many discovering they really did have a 'life story' of interest. The 'openness' is what people found most attractive, the idea that they could shape the process and that it was not unduly fixed in advance. Indeed, a participant recruited at the Pop-Up shop (who did not attend the residential due to an accident) had remarked 'being there at the beginning of something is very empowering'.

Maintaining the openness and being transparent about what is fixed in the proposal and what can be shaped, is one of the key issues which came out of the residential. The activists are particularly interested in what they can learn from each other around community organising and participation. Not all are clear what the academics can offer. This is a challenge to the academics, but the academics are also keen to challenge the participants and see that as part of their role, opening people up to new ideas for instance. A few participants were very cynical about the prospects for real change in society, for instance, tending to see conspiracies which would always block community aspirations. By the end of the residential, however, they were asking for reading lists.

Trust and confidence are two vital aspects of the process. Indeed, no mutual learning can take place without them. We had also been aware from the first curriculum development process that our encounters had to be fun. The Director of the University Theatre in the Mill, made an important

contribution to generating interest in the creative aspects of the Community University amongst participants. These involve 'Acts of Communication'. With such a varied group, the form in which people will learn and record learning will inevitably vary great deal. For us academics, our learning from the participants takes place in writing papers such as this, an opportunity to recognise that we too have been learning continuously from the process of building Comm-Uni-ty about everyday experiences amongst people who do not spend their life in rigorous introspection and abstract thought. But for community participants, learning will rarely involve the kind of written articulation of experience that academics do as a matter of course and then expect their students to do, for instance. Here, the aim is to encourage recording of learning in multiple forms which suit participants, even speaking a few words to a friend, or taking a photograph or being interviewed briefly by Ian during the forthcoming evening sessions and field trips we are organising. These will then act as input into the creative weekend towards the end of the process, in which the Theatre Director will work with participants around their individual and/or collective Acts of Communication. These will be shared in the final celebration evening of the Community University in February 2014 with friends and associates who are interested in rethinking the meaning of Universities or in finding new ways to understand communities, and/or in supporting voice and participation for change generated by community activists. At this final event, participants will be awarded a CommHons (Community Honours).

The evening sessions and field trips are very loosely organised around power, participation, community organising, and specific themes which participants express interest in. But participants have already told us that they are interested in process as much as content and learning how to engage people in discussion. Many face difficulties of involving more people from their communities in community action. Some have specific interests in aspects of power and participation, or in particular themes , but others are mostly focussed on change and improvement in their localities. Participants showed a great capacity for self organising and mutual support. The challenge is to sustain this and to continue to be relevant to participants to the extent that they not only give up valuable time to Comm-Uni-ty, but that that time is used to shape and reshape their understanding of the world around them and how to change it for broader social goals. At the same time we hope to interest participants in new and challenging ideas from other parts of the country and the world. In the end, we are hoping to have at least moved some way towards showing that this dialogue of knowledges can contribute to new approaches to building agency for change in our inner cities. In that sense, this project hopes to build interest amongst community activists in linking their everyday concerns for their communities to broader social justice questions or at least seeing the connections.

APPENDIX 1

Ranking of Themes in Community Activist/Academic Workship to Construct Proposal for Community University

Theme and Sub Themes	**Prioritisation**
Voice not Violence	3
• The Art of Participation	8
• Nonviolent Action	9
• Talking and Listening (dialogue)	6
• Creativity and Change	24

Theme and Sub Themes	Prioritisation
Why bother with Politics? • What is Politics • Politics in Everyday Life • Representing Others • The Art and Science of Making Decision	7 6 9 8 5
How does Change Take Place? • Revolution, Riot and Rebellion • Acting Together: Trade Unions to Social Movements • Campaigning • Street Politics and Community Organising • Having a Party	3 15 0 7 15 20
The Hidden Side of Communities • Understanding Conflict • Our Differences • Power in the Home • Radical disagreement	1 8 11 3 5
Who Rules and Why? • Power in Community • Dominating and Non Dominating • Is there such a thing as powerlessness? • Effective power and community organising	1 15 0 6 9

References

Bauman, Z. (2001) *Community* Cambridge: Polity Press

Bujra J. and Pearce J.(2011)*Saturday Night and Sunday Morning: The Bradford Riot and Beyond* Bradford: Vertical Press

Lister (2011) *The 'Mirage of Social Justice: Hayek against (and for) Rawls* Oxford Centre for Social Justice, CSSJ Working Paper Series, SJ017, June. http://social-justice.politics.ox.ac.uk/materials/SJ017_Lister_MirageofSocialJustice.pdf Downloaded 4/10/2013

Pearce, J. (2012) 'Power in Community: A Research and Social Action Scoping Review'. http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/Funding-Opportunities/Pages/Connected-Communities-Scoping-Studies-and-Research-Reviews.aspx

Pearce, J. (2013) Power and the 21st Century Activist: From the Neighbourhood to the Square *Development and Change 44(3) 639-663*

Author: Jasber Singh

Title: Action Research and the Post Race Society

1 - Introduction

This paper will look into the idea of the post race society and suggest that some action research is influenced by it. It will show how the post race society denies the existence of racism and how action research could respond to it. One way to do that is to reclaim racism and decolonize action research. I also encourage the action research community to work collectively to reflect on anti-racism and other forms of oppressions with social justice as the objective.

It is worth noting that this paper is not a scholarly document. It offers a series of reflections of my lived experiences of doing action research alongside learning from the anti-racist movement.

Racism and post race society

Arguably, racism has been around from the 16th century. Many commentators in recent times have reported that we live in age that is beyond race; that is a post-racial society (Sian, Sayyid and Law: 2013). How we arrived at this point can be explained historically. Hesse (2010) has written about three different horizons that can be used as a tool to understand and characterise different historical stages of racism.

The first one he calls the 'racist' horizon, a period of overt racism. This horizon was based on false science that ascribed a biological notion of race and was linked to the justification of slavery and colonialism. Slave rebellions, anti-colonial struggles, as well as civil rights movements in the west rejected these explicitly racist ideas. In the 1930s to1940s major western powers joined in and rejected Nazis and Fascist ideologies, despite clinging on to colonies (Hesse, 2010; Sayyid 2010).

The second horizon, termed the 'anti-racist' horizon, describes the period around the 1970s to 1990s. In this period anti-racist struggles forced western governments to condemn abject racism. For example skin heads beating up people of colour, or enforced virginity test for South Asian women on arrival to the UK to prove that they were not already married, were directly challenged by anti-racists. Many western governments, including the UK, distanced themselves from such racist practices. Racism constructed through the state was marginalised. However, inequalities and power imbalances were often still linked to race and gender (Hesse, 2010; Sayyid 2010).

The third horizon, the one that we are in now, is termed post-race. This is characterized by the ideas that racism no long matters, its over. The apartheid system in South Africa has gone, Mandela is celebrated as a global statesman, Obama is in power for a second term and there is better representation of people of colour in public life. The post race society gives an impression that the white hegemonic power structures are being challenged. In the words of Sayyid (2010):

' The post racial is announced explicitly or implicitly by reference to a new cultural disposition in which the representation of people of colour is seen as transforming the whiteness hegmonically associated with Europeans. The splash of colour becomes a metaphor for a landscape no longer polluted by the horrors of racism'.

The post race society in the UK has been associated with cuts to equality funding across the country. At the heart of the post-racial argument is the perspective that Britain celebrates diversity and racism is in the past. Post-racial advocates thus argue that the policies and legislation currently in place around race equality are adequate enough to tackle discrimination. If racism is aired it is found in the head of a few rogue individuals rather than through structural instruments.

Conversely, activists and anti-racist scholars that challenge the post-racial position argue that racism remains embedded within society through structural processes. A clear example would be the long and arduous Stephen Lawrence campaign which exposed institutional racism in the police force. The relentless rise of stop and search; the rise of the far right in the form of the English Defense League, BNP, UKIP; wide-spread Islamophobia; race-based violence, and the recent 'go home' campaign on immigration, together illuminate the embeddedness of racism. The anti-racist seem to make a compelling argument: race still matters.

Action research and the post race society

Action research is influenced and emerges from the post race society. So does action research deny racism in the same way as post race advocates do? I believe that some action research could potentially fall within colonial framework; tend towards orientalist assertions; casually follow neocolonial ideas; and does little to counter hegemonic power structures which privileges the European.

Research has been critiqued from an anti-racist and a feminist standpoint because the perspective of women and people of colour are often disempowered by it. Historically, conventional social research was used to strengthen colonial structures in attempts to

subjugate, classify and narrate the 'other'. For example, anthropological research in it's attempt to understand 'other' cultures, both past and present, tends to reproduce essentialist views, for example the exotic 'other' read through and narrated by a European framework (Spivak, 1990). The power of the European to narrate the other from its perspective is crucial to understand. Edward Said describes this as Orientalism - an ideological discourse based upon a power/knowledge relationship denying the voice of the other or subaltern and privileging the European (Said, 1977; Spivak, 1990).

Arguably, research today still remains locked within these frameworks, for example constructs of black muggers as illustrated in Stuart Halls pioneering work *Policing the crisis.* (Hall: 1978). Orientalist assertions in contemporary research could be described as a form of 'imperial nostalgia', or what some have described as neocolonialism. It is difficult to claim that all action research is neocolonial. However, it is fair to assume that there is an imperial potential.

2 - Responding to the challenges of the post-race society

Action research builds a platform for communities to speak, listen, inquire and formulate new knowledge based on their experiences. Whilst imperfect, the power to narrate is in the hands of the community and practitioners together. Does this mean that action research is undoing neocolonialism associated with traditional research? There is certainly the potential for this to be achieved however that potential continues to be short-lived through its attachment to imperial nostalgia and the post race idea that denies racism.

Action Research Reclaiming Racism

The post racial age with splashes of colour being represented in key areas of public life gives the impression that white-neocolonial hegemony is over. Rather than signify the end of racism, Sayyid (2010) has stated that 'the post racial society arises not through the elimination of racism, but through a discursive re-configuration which makes it increasingly difficult to locate racism in western societies except historically or exceptionally'. Perhaps this is the reason why anti-racism

conversations within action research circles are awkwardly absent and becoming increasingly normalized.

It is time for the action research community to reclaim racism and to start talking seriously about it as a significant issue, especially in a post-racial landscape that seeks to deny its very existence (Sian, Sayyid and Law: 2013). Expanding our conversations to explore the ideas underpinning racism, such as white privilege and neocolonialism, can help develop our subject positions in the direction of a politically conscious anti-racist stance. Action research can therefore become a significant and transformative force for social justice. In absence of this critical reflexivity, action research runs the risk of suffering from imperial nostalgia and following the normative neocolonial path.

Recognize Race as Experience

How do we ensure that action research takes a thoroughly anti-racist and post-colonial position? On a basic level the answer is quite simple: It has to be framed and conducted in an anti-racist way. It is more difficult however, to put this in practice. To achieve this requires a critical reflection on how racism has affected our thinking and our *being*, that is, we need engage with an ontological position. Sayyid (2010) has stated that in the post race society 'racism has been reconfigured through the abandonment of 'race' as a explicit ontology of the social'. Critical reflection around race as the social is the beginning of the journey for action researchers to interrupt, decentre and dismantle white hegemonic narratives.

Action research does well at creating an alternative way of knowing. However, it could do more to plug the gap between the ontological and the epistemological. That is, often the questions of who we are and what factors and systems influence our thinking are brushed aside to make room for immediate practice. The need for immediate practice can often leave unquestioned the positions we take for granted. This in turn inevitably influences the research and at worst reaffirms the post race idea.

Decolonizing our minds

Moving away from post race ideas requires engaging with racism and decolonizing our thinking and the positions we hold. In *The Post-Colonial Critique,* Spivak (1990) writes:

'What we are asking for is that the hegemonic discourses, and the holders of the hegemonic discourse, should dehegemonize their position and themselves and learn how to occupy the subject position of the other'.

With this in mind I ask, am I as an action researcher doing this rigorously? And more importantly, how would I do this? In *Black Skins, White Masks,* Frantz Fanon has shown how the majority of us in the West have imbued colonial thinking through the language we use and education we have attained. His seminal work has arguably shown how difficult it is to decolonise a subject position as we cannot erase the colonial influences from our minds so easily. In spite of the challenge, decolonising our thinking or at least disrupting colonial mindset is a crucial part of action research.

3 Reflections from Practice

For a youth work project I secured funds that stipulated that the Black and Asian young men I worked with made a film about 'multiculturalism'. The funders wanted to see multicultural Britain through the eyes of these 'other' young men. They had good intentions, the voice of minorities in the town was well hidden and these resources were aimed at redressing that, to celebrate cultural diversity in the post race society.

The way the funding was framed made me feel uncomfortable. It trapped minority groups into telling a story from a multicultural perspective. The framing effectively essentialised them. I started to think about how I could approach the work in an anti-racist way whilst using action research. Anti-racist discourse suggests that I had to reframe the questions to avoid entrapping the young men within a culturalist lens. In other words, I did not want them to be trapped in purely 'ethnic' or 'religious' frameworks. I was confident that if the young men decided what the film was about and narrated it in the way they wanted, their minoritised perspective would come through as their identity shapes how they experience the world.

We started an action research process to make the film. We organised a number of workshops to think through what their story was about. They wanted to make a film about boredom and the subculture around that. The film the 'longest day', highlighted how there was nothing to do and the days as a result became 'long'.

In the workshops we watched films to inspire our creativity. After watching *Boyz in da Hood* by John Singleton, I organised a group discussion to find out what we learnt and how we could apply this knowledge to the film that we were making. The discussions, as always, were sharp. One of the young men explained how the film neither represented Black young men in Los Angeles in a negative or in a positive way- but rather it told their story. We discussed how many films and programmes on TV depicted Black or Asian young men in a negative way – the violent gang member, the terrorist, and so on. The youth group were adamant that their film would not draw upon these stereotypes or reinforce essentialist positions, but would rather storify their life through their eyes – both positive and negative – as Singleton aimed too. The young men discussed with passion, composed a storyboard and made the film. They made a film that subtly resisted the anthropology of Black and Asian culture. It also showed how the young men faced racism in their everyday life, being followed by security guards and cameras and being subjected to verbal racism.

Action research within a youth work setting has to deal with contradictions. For example, providing space to celebrate marganilised cultures whilst being aware of funders who can tend towards fetishing and essentialising people through cultural lenses. It also has to be framed in an open way so that people can talk about the lived realities. But this open framing should not be so open that it quietly accepts the post race society position where racism is denied. These complicated ideas, in situ, often feel like a fine line and the tension are not so easy to tease out when working with the pressure of deadlines.

In my experience there are moments when anti-racism starts to matter. Knowing when those moments occur seems more like a 'feeling', an art, rather than a science. In the contemporary context ethnically marked communities continue to be monitored, othered, attacked, criminalized, denied services, and experience poorer life chances. Action research needs to find way to accommodate that reality rather than deny it.

4 Conclusions

The post race society narrates that racism happens inside the head of a few peripheral people. It denies that racism has structural nature. The post-racial presents a serious and daunting challenge because we are captured in a society that declares that overt racism is over. Despite these claims racism has reformed and has become harder to locate and challenge. Action research will have to respond to this challenge and become more reflexive so that it can follow the contours of racism that remain embedded within society.

The political positions we take are important analytical tools. For action research to become effective it has to understand that Britain is institutionally racist. It will also have to go further and recognize and deal with white hegemonic power and neocolonialism- the engines of racism. These political standpoints make it easier to locate and find racism in our practice.

Whilst imperfect, action research does have the potential to challenge racialised discourses. It can generate knowledge that actively embraces different perspectives and positions. However, we cannot be complacent, as this alone does not guarantee an anti-racist stance. Practically, therefore, a prerequisite of action research is reclaim racism and to radically reflect on white hegemony and its associated colonial legacies; recognize the social importance of race as an experience; and work towards decolonizing our minds, our subject positions. These steps would place action research within the anti-racist struggle. Being part of the struggle allows a space to broaden the political horizon to include the intersections between gender, class, sexuality, age, disability and literacy.

I hope to see action researcher come together as a collective and take part in critical discussion around anti-racism as long as it leads to an alternative. Visioning that alternative is the big challenge. And if I'm honest I've reached a conceptual block. Through discussion, thinking, innovative theory and practice alongside being creative we can start to challenge ourselves and imagine what an anti-racist world would looks like. This imaginative leap is one way in which we can start to make new just worlds.

5 - References

Fanon, F (1952). Black Skin, White Mask. *Grove Press*

Hall, S (1978). Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State and Law and Order.

Hesse, B (2010). Self-Fulfilling Prophecy: The Post-Racial Horizon. *South Atlantic Quaterly.*

Said, E (1977). Orientalism. *Penguin*

Sayyid, S (2010). Do Post-racial Dream of White Sheep? *Centre for Ethnicity and Racism Study.*

Sian, K; Sayyid, S; Law, I (2013). Racism, Governance and Public Policy: Beyond Human Rights. *Routledge.*

Spivak, G (1990). The Post-Colonial Critic: Interviews, Strategies, Dialogues. Routledge

Author: Gareth Williams, Clare Barker, Ellie Byrne, Eva Elliott, Qulsom Fazil, Sarah-Anne Munoz, Roiyah Saltus, Pete Seaman

Title: What Can Co-Produced Research Achieve for Social Justice? Health and social justice: developing co-productive approaches

Background

The impact of large-scale social and economic developments on health and well-being has been documented since at least the middle of the 19th century, and with increasing precision. The garrets of Manchester and the wynds of Glasgow observed by Engels in 1844 (2009 [1845]), have their counterparts today in blasted housing estates in the centres and on the peripheries of large English and Scottish cities, in the redundant coal mining and steel communities in the Heads of the Valleys of south Wales, in rural areas with ageing populations, and amongst migrant diasporas whose members have made Britain their home at different times under changing conditions (Hoggett, 1997; Power, 1999). All of these communities may find themselves disconnected from wider social networks and services, living with varying degrees of disruption and distress. The social and economic inequalities underlying these disconnections are creating cultural and experiential differences which are both vertiginously unjust and have multiple consequences for health and well-being. In this context, shared representations and narratives of community, history and the processes of representing them may take on a particular role, for example, within the creation of feelings of belonging, social capital and well-being (Chamlee-Wright and Storr, 2011).

Introduction

The debate about health inequalities has quite properly taken place in relation to statistical evidence, focussing on the size, proportion and distribution of health inequalities, in research driven by the interests of social epidemiologists. Much of the sociological literature on health inequalities has struggled to move beyond a 'social factors' approach that mimics epidemiology and brackets out any broader reflection on either social structures or the meanings that people give to the situations of inequality they experience (Popay and Williams, 2009). Nonetheless, it was recognised, as long ago as the celebrated 'Black Report' of 1980[4] that: '…sociology is concerned with the social production of understanding, meanings, knowledge; with social structure and process; and with the behaviour of people' (1980: 4), a statement which at least hints at the possibility of interpretative approaches working in dialogue with epidemiological analysis.

Existing social epidemiology (e.g. Wilkinson and Pickett, 2010) takes the debate into the sphere of ethical and political argument, but primarily through looking at statistical patterns rather than engaging with other forms of representation such as narrative or mediated experiences (Brent, 2009). However, developments arising out of the sociological dialogue with epidemiology emphasise the gains to be made from exploring lay perceptions of, and narratives about, health inequalities (Popay et al 1998) in order to help explain why individuals and groups behave the way they do in relation to wider social structures - to link agency and structure through a detailed examination of contexts. We argue that this approach complements epidemiological research on

[4] Commissioned by the Labour Government in 1978, the report gained the status of samizdat literature when it was published by the neophyte Conservative Government of Margaret Thatcher over a Bank Holiday in 1980 in the form of 260 cheap photocopies (see Williams, 2007).

health inequalities by illuminating 'the hidden injuries of class' rooted in history and social conditions (Sennett and Cobb 1972). What people know is not simply data for epidemiological or sociological extraction. It co-constitutes the world as it is, and helps social and health scientists to understand how structures determine health and well being in relation to where people live and what they do – the relationship between people and places, or 'composition' and 'context', draws a line of sight which connects epidemiology to geography, sociology and, we would argue, the humanities.

Place

Within the field of medical humanities the extent of humanities-based expertise in narrative analysis has not yet been brought to bear on everyday experiences of community health and well-being (Charon, 2006). Place is one of the fundamental concepts of geography and encompasses both physical (e.g. landscape and built environment) and psycho-social characteristics (e.g. social relationships and emotional ties). From the perspective of medical sociology, Macintyre et al (2002) suggest that there are five characteristics of place that are associated with health: physical characteristics (such as air and water quality); availability of 'healthy' features (such as adequate housing); provision of services (such as education and healthcare); socio-cultural features (e.g. community cohesion, social capital); and the 'perception' or 'reputation' of the area. These relationships have been shown to persist at different levels, with diverse spaces performing a role within individual and community health and well-being (Cattell et al 2008; Curtis and Riva, 2010).

The way in which human geographers have conceptualised place has changed over time, from being something 'objective and mappable' to a socially constructed concept: 'spaces which people have made meaningful' (Creswell, 2004: 7). Relational thinking, as we have indicated in the opening section, has implications for conceptualisations of place – seeing places as intersections of networks and flows (that extend beyond traditional notions of the 'local'), intimately tied to identity, experience and situated not only within physical space but also within time (Massey, 2005). Thus, places are ever changing and never static. Experiences of place can also be shared by trans-locational communities with social imaginaries being rooted in local, regional, national and international realities. Mapping and exploring the creative power of different community groupings allows us to challenge the ways in which community identities become fixed in policy; present new knowledge of the contexts in which everyday health practices are shaped; and propose actions and ways of working which better link to the lives that people in particular places actually live and wish to lead.

Much of the place-based work on the health of communities remains biomedical in orientation and dominated methodologically by various forms of positivism. We argue that there is a need to move beyond sophisticated epidemiological analyses and targeted health promotion interventions, to forms of data and analysis that allow for the inclusion of those views from everyday life, culture and art that allow us to connect socioeconomic inequalities with communities' 'emplaced' experiences of health and illness and beliefs about well-being.

Representations

Developments emerging from dialogue between public health and more interpretive approaches from the humanities and social sciences emphasise the gains to be made from exploring lay forms of

representation of health and health inequalities (Williams, 2004; Fazil et al, 2006) in order to link agency and structure through a detailed examination of contexts, both 'real' and 'imagined'. This approach illuminates those 'hidden injuries' (Sennett and Cobb, 1972), and resilience and resistance rooted in history and social conditions and in the cultural politics of marginalization and silence (Jordan and Weedon, 1994). Studies have attempted to develop forms of understanding through auto-ethnography, observation, interviewing and the analysis of documents (Hanley, 2008; Rogaly and Taylor, 2011). This project takes such approaches further through its emphasis on the creative imagination and its use of participatory community artworks. It takes as its research ethic the notion of researchers working alongside 'subjects [who] are themselves surveying, analysing and theorising the turbulent [locations] in which they live' (Sandhu, 2011: 7).

Good qualitative research makes some things less hidden than they would otherwise be. And it begins to represent them in interesting ways, through 'knowledgeable narratives' (Williams 2000) and descriptions, the analysis of which involves the identification of key meaning-points, or what the philosopher Charles Taylor (1985) refers to as 'matters of significance' in what people say.

Take this quotation from an interview with a man in an inner-city area who was asked what he thought about the main health risks facing him (Williams et al, 1995):

> 'I think the biggest health risk is mentally [he says]…'cause it's a lot of pressure and there's nothing really for you to do… you're sort of segregated all the time' (123).

These kinds of data are important for a number of reasons. First, people's own words thicken and enrich the thin but precise accounts of health inequalities characteristic of social epidemiology. They reveal things about how inequalities connect to the structural damage and hurt found in people's everyday lives. Secondly, they are full of meaning and their words critique and subvert our easy, professional, sociological or epidemiological ways of saying things. Thirdly, as Andrew Sayer (2011) has argued, too much sociology, and social science more generally, '...tends to produce bland accounts of social life, in which it is difficult to assess the *import* of things for people' (6) or to understand what is significant to them or what matters. You could say that they embody an 'emotional intelligence' and a certain kind of 'phronesis' or practical reason, to draw on Aristotle, reasoning which requires, as Sayer puts it, '...extensive experience of *different* situations and their *particulars*' (Sayer 2011, 71).

However, they are particulars from which we can and must make theoretical connections to more general ideas about structures and processes. Indeed, we can see in the examples I have used ideas about injustice which frame the individualistic approaches to poor health in a much fuller, less condescending and more generous sociological way; connecting the 'series of traps' which everyday life can sometimes set for us (Mills, 1970: 9) to the large-scale economic, social and political dimensions of inequality and injustice analysed in political philosophy (Fraser, 2008).

Perhaps because of this very depth of concern and the strength of emotion – sadness, anger, fear – people sometimes find it difficult express what they feel and say what they think: 'We know so much more than we can tell', as Sayer puts it (2011: 74). Take this extract from an interview with a single mother living on a housing estate with what, at the time, was a really bad reputation for anti-social behaviour – a place which she found frightening:

> 'The doctor put me on Prozac a few months back, for living here, because it's depressing. You get up, you look around, and all you see is junkies…I know one day I will come off, I will get off here. I mean I started drinking a hell of a lot more since I've been on here. I drink

every night. I have a drink every night just to get to sleep. I smoke more as well. There's a lot of things…' (Popay et al, 2003: 68).

In addition to the knowledge she gave us of the material and social particulars of her situation, the phrase 'there's a lot of things' was particularly striking because she repeated exactly the same phrase several times in the course of the interview, and always with this sense that there was so much more going on in her life than she was able recount. Saying this could lead to the criticism that the analysis is moving beyond the limits of what we can say about the data, but it seems to me that without an *imaginative* engagement with what things might mean and how people might feel we restrict ourselves to quasi-objective descriptions which mimic the worst aspects of positivism. In the extract above there is an implicit point of *resistance* to the construction of her problem as one of individual depression requiring psychoactive medication. Instead she presents us with some important perspectives on her relationship to the place in which she lives.

Negative representations in statistics and media, which often remain fixed long after the realities they purport to describe have changed, have a considerable impact on community identity and on the self-worth and self-efficacy of people living in those communities (Brent, 2009). So, for example, each of the devolved nations of the UK publishes and uses an 'Index of Multiple Deprivation' that ranks 'places' in terms of how poorly the people in communities are faring in relation to health, education, employment and other key indicators. Although such statistical representations are often designed to draw attention to areas of 'need' and guide policy development and government investment, they have the additional, unintended consequence of creating 'geographies of lack' (Rose, 2006), 'non-places' (Augé, 1995), places that are not 'proper' (Popay et al, 2003), and communities that are mythologized in ways that perpetuate negative imaginings of people as 'passive, stuck and disconnected' (Hanley, 2008: ix). Such 'reputational geographies [...] defining an area as "good" or "bad", safe or volatile, "no-go" or peaceful' have the effect of drawing 'symbolic and material boundaries [...] around places as indicators of social status, sites of memories and repositories of affect that can have profound socio-economic as well as emotional consequences for local residents' (Parker and Karner, 2010: 1452).

The 'Representing Communities' Project

This project starts from the conviction that the creative arts, along with modes of analysis and critique derived from the humanities, can play a transformative role in this process of improving communication, dialogue and knowledge exchange. We will develop methods for using creative art forms as a mode of communication and knowledge exchange. Through analysis of existing representations of disadvantaged and stigmatised communities in literature, film, music, and so on, and the production of new community self representations in arts-based workshops, it will explore the relationship between 'official' representations of community health and well-being (e.g. in statistical data, traditional media etc) and how communities understand and present their own health and wellbeing.

There will be a focus on the accumulated assets and resources that allow individuals and communities to cope with and navigate real and perceived structural barriers, and on the possibilities of resilience to upheaval, resistance to reputational damage, and the alternative representations that these can stimulate. The project will take place across five distinct case-study communities in Wales, Scotland and England and connect these to relevant policy makers, researchers and arts practitioners in each country. Although we define communities in terms of spaces that are shared, we fully recognise that the meaning of those spaces will not necessarily be shared. The project will consider how perceptions and experiences of community vary across time

and changing circumstances, and how communities and the people living in them are represented in relation to key differences and divisions relating to gender, class, ethnicity and age.

Following an inventory and analysis of existing representations of each community, both artistic (e.g. in literature[5]) and 'formal' (e.g. in deprivation indices), each case study will use creative engagement methods (including life mapping, drama, storytelling, and photography) to generate new community self-representations, working in partnership with local arts and health organisations. The engagement process will be documented in ways that allow all participants, though diaries, blogs, or digital soap boxes, to reflect on the process and the dynamics of engagement. In all case studies the final creative representations themselves will be co-authored by the community participants and they will have the final decision on how their own accounts are presented. These new 'data' will be presented to relevant local or national policy makers and service development officials through exhibitions, performances, and digital media.

Concluding Thoughts

As well as action to alleviate the material dimensions of living in poverty, there is growing recognition of the fact that health inequalities continue to increase despite decades of 'downstream' spend and ever more accurate statistical representations of inequality and its consequences. The Marmot Review (2010: 15) states: 'Effective local delivery requires effective participatory decision-making at local levels. This can only happen by empowering individuals and local communities.'

It is questionable the degree to which empirical research that focuses on deficits achieves this, although vital in outlining the scope and trends in inequality in society, typically communities are 'seen from the perspective of its largest deficit' (GCPH 2011). Our approach looks to build-in capacity for communities to provide a more rounded picture, not shying away from problems and challenges but allowing communities to have ownership of how they are presented.

The project aims to foster positive relationships within communities which in turn may foster mutual solidarity helping overcome stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination. There is considerable potential for developing methodologies and research tools within new knowledge spaces which connect communities, researchers and policy makers and maximise impact. The project also seeks to identify ways in which communities can collaborate with policy and public service representatives to contribute to the promotion of resilience, health and well-being, and develop, in dialogue, alongside members of communities, the tools to explore how better to make improvements for themselves and build on existing assets, often against the considerable 'weight of the world' (Bourdieu et al, 1999).

---

[5] For example: Alasdair Gray's 'magic realist' representation of Glasgow in his classic novel *Lanark*. Writing in the *London Review of Books* on February 25th 2013, Jennie Turner argued: 'From the beginning, *Lanark* was a piece of prophecy, though not in the sense that it tried to see the future. The author, you felt, had observed the life he writes about so closely, cared about it so deeply and thought about its cosmic place so hard that the absurd conceit of the project – the idea that one man can claim to speak for a whole city – came to make the strangest sense. And thirty years on it still does. A couple of months ago, the news was full of what epidemiologists call 'the Glasgow effect': more deaths from drugs and alcohol, strokes and cancer and heart disease, violence and suicide than you find even in the poorest parts of English cities, or other parts of Scotland (though a more diluted 'Scottish effect' also seems to exist)....'The links between deprivation and mortality are well researched and uncontroversial,' the authors of a report published by the Glasgow Centre for Population Health wrote in 2011, 'although there remains uncertainty [about] how deprivation gets "under the skin".' Well, *Lanark* made the link quite clear.'

Unlike being passively involved in research as research subjects, artistic engagement practices, with participants as producers, assist the development of 'intangible' assets as well as the 'tangible' assets that lend themselves well to empirical measurement – physical resources, financial assets and credit, human capitals of education and health, environmental and natural resources (Moser, 2009). Burnell (2013) writes: '…dreams, hopes and ambitions can be defined as intangible assets… [they] embody important human, cultural and social capital essential to building resilience…cultural action expressed through the arts can assist in unlocking these (p.139).

Further, we are *challenging and disrupting* forms of narrative used by policy makers that are framed by quantitative representations of communities and often deficit based. This can make new understandings of community futures possible, in which communities themselves are involved in the authorship. The forms of engagement in and of themselves build capacity for individuals and communities to achieve this. Through its rigorous analysis, its development of arts-based research methods, and its conviction that literature and the arts form a valid form of 'evidence' in policy discussions, the research offers innovative thinking about, and will make a distinctive contribution to, the study and development of 'community health and well-being'.

References

Augé, M. (1995) *Non-places: Introduction to Anthropology of Supermodernity*, London: Verso.

Black Report (1980) *Inequalities in Health: Report of a Working Group* (Chair, Douglas Black), London: DHSS

Brent, J. (2009) *Searching for Community: Representation, Power and Action on an Urban Estate*, Bristol: The Policy Press

Burnell, J. (2013) Small change: understanding cultural action as a resource for unlocking assets and building resilience in communities, *Community Development Journal*, 48, 134-150

Cattell, V., Dines, N., Gesler, W., Curtis, S., (2008) 'Mingling, observing and lingering: everyday public spaces and their implications for well-being and social relations', *Health and Place,* 14, pp. 544 – 561

Chamlee-Wright, E., Storr, V., H., (2011) 'Social capital as collective narratives and post-disaster community recovery', *The Sociological Review, 59 (2), pp. 266 – 282*

Charon, R. (2006) *Narrative Medicine: Honouring the Stories of Illness*, Oxford: OUP.

Creswell T (2004) *Place: A Short Introduction,* Oxford: Blackwell

Curtis, S., Riva, M., (2010) 'Health geographies II: complexity and health care systems and policy', *Progress in Human Geography,* 34 (4), pp. 513 – 520

Engels, F. (2009) *The Conditions of the Working Class in England*, Oxford University Press

Fazil Q., Wallace, L., Hussain A. (2006) An exploration of the explanatory models of illness amongst Pushtuun families who are high attenders in General Practice living in the U.K. *Diversity in Health and Social Care* 3,3. pp 171-181

Fraser, N. (2008) *Scales of Justice: Reimagining Political Space in a Globalizing World*, Cambridge: Polity Press

Glasgow Centre for Population Health (2011) *Building Understanding, New Evidence and New Thinking for a Healthier Future*, GCPH.

Hanley, L. (2008) *Estates: An Intimate History*, London: Granta Books

Hoggett, P. (1997) *Contested communities: Experiences, struggles, policies*, Bristol: The Policy Press

Jordan, G. and Weedon, C. (1994) *Cultural Politics*, Blackwell

Macintyre S, Ellaway A, Cummins, S, (2002) 'Place effects on health: how can we conceptualise and measure them?', *Social Science and Medicine,* 55, pp. 125 – 139

Marmot, M. (2010) *Fair Society, Healthy Lives*. The Marmot Review Executive Summary, http://www.instituteofhealthequity.org/projects/fair-society-healthy-lives-the-marmot-review

Massey, D., (2005) *For Space,* London: Sage

Mills, C.W. (1970) *The Sociological Imagination*, Harmondsworth: Penguin

Moser, C. (2009) *Ordinary Families, Extraordinary Lives*, Washington: The Brookings Institution

Parker, David, and Christian Karner (2010) 'Reputational Geographies and Urban Social Cohesion', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 33, 1451-70.

Popay, J., Williams, G., Thomas, C and Gatrell, A (1998) Theorising inequalities in health: the place of lay knowledge, *Sociology of Health and Illness*, 20, 619-644

Popay, J.M., Thomas C, Williams G, Bennett S, Gatrell AC, Bostock L. (2003) 'A proper place to live: health inequalities, agency and the normative dimensions of space', *Social Science and Medicine*, 57, 55-59

Popay, J., Williams, G. (2009). Equalizing the people's health: a sociological perspective. In J. Gabe & M. Calnan (Eds.), *The New Sociology of the Health Service.* 222- 244 London: Routledge.

Power, A. (1999) *Estates on the Edge: The Social Consequences of Mass Housing in Europe*, Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Rogaly, B. and Taylor, B. (2011) *Moving Histories of Class and Community: Identity, Place and Belonging in Contemporary England*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Rose, G. (2006) Spatialities of 'community', power and change: The imagined geographies of community arts projects. *Cultural Studies* 11, no 1:1-16.

Sandhu, S. (2011) 'Tales of the city', review of: C. Taylor, Londoners, London: Granta, in *The Guardian,* 5th November

Sayer, A. (2011) *Why Things Matter to People: Social Science, Values and Ethical Life*, Cambridge University Press.

Sennett, R. and Cobb, J. (1972) *The Hidden Injuries of Class*, New York: Vintage Books

Taylor, C. (1985), 'The concept of a person', *Philosophical Papers, Volume 1,* Cambridge University Press, 97-114

Wilkinson, R. and Pickett, K. (2010) *The Spirit Level*, London: Penguin

Williams, G. (2000) 'Knowledgeable narratives', *Anthropology and Medicine*, 7, 35-40

Williams, G. (2004) 'Narratives of health inequality: interpreting the determinants of health; in: B. Hurwitz et al (Eds.) *Narrative Research in Health and Illness*, BMA/Blackwell: Oxford

Williams, G., Popay, J. and Bissell, P. (1995) 'Public health risks in the material world: barriers to social movements in health', in J. Gabe (Ed.) *Medicine, Health and Risk: Sociological Approaches*, Oxford Blackwell, 113-132

Williams, G. (2007) Health inequalities in their place, In S. Cropper et al, *Community Health and Wellbeing: Action Research on Health Inequalities*, Bristol: The Policy Press