

Museum community engagement schemes, austerity and practices of care

Research Seminar, 5.00-6.30pm, Monday 20th June 2016

Room 401, Redmonds Building, Liverpool John Moores University,
Brownlow Hill, Liverpool, L3 5UG

Nuala Morse (University of Manchester/UCL) and Ealasaid Munro
(University of Glasgow)

Drawing on research conducted with two large museum services – one in England, and one in Scotland – **this presentation considers museums' community engagement programmes as spaces of care.** Our focus is on the routine, everyday caring practices of museum community engagement workers, and now how these are changing in the context of austerity. Drawing on empirical material from the two case study sites **and recent approaches to care in geography, we suggest that museums' community engagement programmes could be seen as fitting within a broader landscape of care, and we conceptualise their activities as expressions of 'progressive localism' (after Featherstone et al. 2012).**

From the specific example of museums, in the second part of the paper we broaden out our discussion to explore care in relation to culture work in its widest sense, to include the culture and creative professions, and the ways in which they are placed, and place themselves, in relation to community and community building. Through this thought experiment, we begin to outline a (research) manifesto for care: one that calls for attention to care as practice and ethics, as aesthetics and technologies, and as a lens for investigating place-based politics (the 'taking care of place').

Dr Nuala Morse is a cultural geographer working across the fields of heritage and museum studies, with interests in community engagement, participation and care (as practice and ethics), and participatory methodologies. Her broad research interest lies in the **'social work' of creative and culture professionals**, and in particular the role of museums in health, wellbeing and recovery. Nuala is currently a Research Associate for *Not So Grim Up North*, an Arts Council England funded project looking at the impact of museum encounters for health and wellbeing for a range of audiences, including stroke survivors, mental health and addiction recovery service-users and older people living with dementia.
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Dr Ealasaid Munro is a feminist geographer with interests in culture, creativity, care, immaterial and affective labour and the distinctive (and often precarious) nature of cultural work. Her research to date has largely been concerned with the experience of working within the cultural and creative industries. She also has interests in the organisation of the research economy, and has researched Knowledge Exchange as a practice.
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The seminar will be chaired by Kerry Wilson, Head of Research at the Institute of Cultural Capital, where she leads the Cultural Leadership research programme, designed to explore the value and leadership role of arts and cultural sectors in meeting public policy objectives:
<http://iccliverpool.ac.uk/about/cultural-leadership/>

The seminar is free to attend – if you would like to join us please RSVP to k.m.wilson@ljmu.ac.uk


institute of cultural capital