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Conversations: the socially engaged artist as environmental change agent

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University of Plymouth

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**CONVERSATIONS:
THE SOCIALLY ENGAGED ARTIST
AS ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE AGENT**

Volume I

By

JANEY HUNT

A thesis submitted to the
University of Plymouth
in partial fulfillment for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

School of Art and Media

September 2011

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**Volume Three
Documentation of art practice**

Practice Narrative Book
(booklet with DVD of interactive pdfs)
Conscience Offsets
(Three booklets and postcard)
Eco-Renovation: House Receipts
(two postcards, one Eco-purchase matrix card, one A1 fold-out broad sheet, one booklet with cd)
Collaborative Conversations
(four booklets)
Resolutions Exchanged
(one A4 booklet, five A4 dl leaflets, one form)

NB Should the documentation become detached from the thesis please go to www.escapelane.co.uk for more information.

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Conversations: The socially engaged artist as environmental change agent

Janey Hunt - University of Plymouth 2005- 2011

I use my art practice in conjunction with environmental behaviour research and Michel de Certeau's practice of the everyday, to enable a re-examination of socially engaged art and through art to activate environmental behaviour change.

Questions

Clarify contemporary debate about demonstrable and desirable aspects and issues of socially engaged art practice and through my own practice identify its key characteristics.

Examine the claim for change offered by many socially engaged practitioners.

Context

The socially engaged artist operates outside of the gallery, in everyday lives and real situations, often engaging in issues of meaning to society at large, where participation and facilitation of dialogue are the common characteristics. I identify participation, the ambition of social change, aesthetic representation and a failure to communicate beyond the participative event as key considerations. (Bishop 2004; Bourriaud 2002; Kester 2004; Kwon 2004)

I propose an aesthetic of presence, to recognise community as a creative vernacular and as pooled knowledge. Drawn from Michel de Certeau's research into everyday life (Michel de Certeau 1985; Michel de Certeau et al. 1998a) this also provides a refocusing on participation through conversation and describes rupture events, which signify change occurring.

Method

This thesis compares research in an alternative field, environmental behaviour, which investigates the impediments to change (the value-action gap), how change happens and identifies the change agent, as essential to encourage change at a personal level. (Ballard and Associates 2005b; Darnton et al. 2006)

I use the value-action gap, the tension point between knowing about climate change and failing to make changes in our own behaviour, (Blake 1999; Darnton 2004b; Kollmus and Agyeman 2002) as a direct impetus to make participative artwork that examines the idea of a sustainable lifestyle. My art practice recognises a three-stage process: an admission of my own environmental behaviour; encouraging reciprocal participation and conversation and enabling personal reflection; representing conversation offering shared vernacular knowledge and enabling others' engagement with the artwork and behaviour change.

Equating the socially engaged artist with the environmental change agent, I synthesised the Model for Change Agents (S. Ballard and Ballard 2005a; Ballard and Associates 2005b) with research on participation in the arts (Matarasso 1997), as a basis for understanding *how* participation occurs and *how* change could happen in socially engaged artworks. An analysis of pilot artworks extends this model to identify the *conditions* for change, which also equate to the aesthetic aspects of the artwork, in a new model for Practice, Participation and Progression.

Outcomes

I propose *key characteristics* for socially engaged practice based on analysis of contemporary commentators and the model for practice, participation and progression.

The role of the socially engaged artist is identified as comparable to the *change agent*.

Representing conversation, addresses an issue of socially engaged practice to communicate beyond documentation of the event's provocation and participation. I develop discussion of the *discursive site* beyond participation itself to a community of common sensibility and pooled knowledge as a demonstration of personal agency that is able to redefine the public ideal and challenge dominant culture. Re-presenting conversation is a means of sharing knowledge, stimulating change and expanding community.

Contributing to environmental behaviour research my art practice reveals our ability to abstract behaviour, identifies our main areas of concern within lifestyle, our motivations for making change and the importance of the preservation of personal agency. I also comment on de Certeau, identifying the problems with individual resistance through the everyday, exploring mini-rupture events signaling change and proposing a reversal of the aesthetic of absence to an aesthetic of presence creating a new narrative that utilises personal agency.

Acknowledgements

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With many thanks to my essential network of PhD good buddies without whom I could not have completed this PhD: Patricia Cain, Souxsie Cooper, Diana Pilcher and Karen Smith. I'd also like to thanks my poor friends who've had to put up with me during the last five years and who have rarely failed to give me support and the occasional good talking to including Jan O'Highway, Harriet Posner, Suzanne and Peter Redstone, and many others.

And finally thanks also to all of the unnamed participants represented herein, without whom there would be no artwork.

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

At no time during the registration for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy has the author been registered for any other University award without prior agreement of the Graduate Committee.

This study was self-financed.

All of the written thesis and artwork has been at the instigation of the candidate, however the many nameless participants in my artwork must also be acknowledged as essential to the outcome of the artwork and the thesis.

Research training undertaken

- Postgraduate research programme (Dartington College of the Arts) : Introduction, 26-28 September 2005; The research question, 7-8 December 2005; Research project proposal, 20-21 February 2006; Practice in research, 4-5 April 2006;
- Postgraduate research programme (University of Plymouth): Anecdotes and ethics, 15-16 February 2006; Originality 17-18 May 2006; Originality 18 & 19 May 2006
- Critical Spaces Reading Group (Plymouth University): Nature, utopia, aesthetics 16 March 2006;
- Cross-college research seminar series (bi-monthly), Dartington College of the Arts
- Rapid Reading, University of Plymouth 19 January 2005
- Dartington Research Skills Programme Part One 2005, Part Two 2006
- Plymouth University Arts and Humanities Research Skills programme 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009

Conferences, seminars and talks

Presentations

- 11 October 2006, *Critical Spaces reading group* Plymouth University (Malcolm Miles) I proposed a paper for discussion
- 17 November 2006, Falmouth RANE Symposium presentation of *Eco-renovation: House Receipts*
- 13 March, Aberdeen 2007, *Working in Public* series with Suzanne Lacy and On the Edge, introduction, participation in core group
- 27-28 March 2007, Aberdeen, *Working in Public Ethics and Aesthetics* with Grant Kester and Suzanne Lacy, participation in core group
- 22-23 May 2007, Glasgow, *Working in Public Representation and Power*, with Tom Trevor and Suzanne Lacy, participation in core group
- Worked with Plymouth Arts Centre and Barbara Holub on audience participation in site specific project October to December 2007;
- 9/10 September 2008 *Behaviour Change and the art of Conversations: the power of the collective individual* All Our Futures University of Plymouth
- 3 December 2008 *Behaviour Change and the art of Conversations: the power of the collective individual* Centre for Sustainable Futures, Plymouth
- 5 March 2009 *Presentation of web site and use of tag cloud* at Research Skills workshop
- 29 April 2009, VC Research and Enterprise Conference, PGR Funding Application *Dartmoor Stability Domain*

- July 2007 - Cacophonous voices, conflicted purposes, Conversations: Investigating the value-action gap through socially engaged art practice' at <http://ocs.ilrt.org/viewabstract.php?id=86&cf=8>
All Singing, All Dancing Arts Based Educational Research Conference, Bristol University

Talks organised

- *Greenhouse Britain* talk and workshop with Helen Mayer Harrison and Newton Harrison for Transition Town Totnes 29/2/08
- Helen Mayer Harrison and Newton Harrison *Dartmoor 3 Stability Domains*, Week workshop acting as Project Manager 1-9/6/08 including prior organisation;
- Lynne Hull, *Walking the Talk, art and Ecology projects*, Transition Town Totnes and Schumacher College talk and workshop, facilitator 4/6/08

Attended

- *Ecology and artistic practice* symposium, RSA 28 April 2005
- *Arts and Ecology* conference, Dartington 8-9 September 2005
- Devon Arts Conference 17 February 2006
- *Sustainability and contemporary art*, CEU Budapest 30-31 March 2006
- 12-15 July 2006, Falmouth RANE conference *Artful Ecologies*
- 11-13 September 2006, assisted at *Creative Rural Economies* conference, Littoral at Lancaster University
- 30 September 2006, *Artspeak, Connecting with Creativity Seminar*, Radstock Art Project, Somerset
- 17 October 2006, *Art School: Commissioning Art in Plymouth* symposium at Plymouth Arts Centre
- 25-27 October 2006, *Desire Lines* Conference, Dartington
- 22 November 2006, Plymouth University Centre for Sustainable Futures talk: *Sustainability and Economic Growth*
- 29 November 2006, Plymouth Centre for Sustainable Futures talk *Belstone, Green Village*
- 5 December, Plymouth Arts Centre Conversation Between Barbara Steveni, Artists Placement Group
- 6 December, Plymouth Centre for Sustainable Futures talk *Urban Sustainability*
- 11-12 December, London, Royal Society of the Arts *Art and Ecology Symposium*
- PhD Peer support Group (informal group) 2007-08,
- 8 January 2007 TTT Facilitators Training *Designing productive meetings and events*
- 22 January 2007, meeting Olya Mairaboda, environmental sociologist and researcher
- 12 February 2007, TTT Facilitators training John Croft, Gaia Foundation Western Australia *What makes projects successful?*
- 16 February 2007, Dartington, Gustav Metzger symposium on *Art, ethics and action*
- 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd April 2007, *Barefoot Thinking* Peter Redstone, a course introducing lateral and creative thinking tools to encourage behaviour change
- Richard Pavell, Aunehead Arts talk at Dartington College of Arts, 23/10/07;
- *Far West* seminar at Arnolfini 26/10/07;
- Plymouth University ethics seminar 7/11/07;
- *Greenhouse Britain* opening at CCANW 25/11/07;
- *Greenhouse Britain* Lecture CSF Plymouth University 16/11/07;
- *Dance and Sustainability* by Rachel Sweeney 28/11/07
- Plymouth Arts and Humanities research workshop 16&17/1/08;
- *Imagining climate change* Dr Julie Doyle, Plymouth University 7/2/08;

- Critical Spaces talk, Malcolm Miles 20/2/08;
- *Initiative and Institution* Symposium Public Works conference London Metropolitan 7&8/3/08
- Michael Landy RSA London 2/4/08;
- Critical Spaces James Marriot Platform, Plymouth University 9/4/08
- PhD Peer support group informal 13/4/08
- Land/Water Research group, Plymouth University Sarah Chapman 20/4/08
- Fred Pearce *Confessions of an Eco-Sinner* Plymouth Greens and CSF, Plymouth University 7/5/08;
- Malcolm Miles, *The end of utopia*, Plymouth University, 21/5/08;
- 7th – 11th July 2008 Graduate Teaching Associates Course, Plymouth
- 11 September 2008 Whitechapel Gallery Nicholas Bourriard
- 18 September 2008 Whitechapel Gallery Miwon Kwon
- 22 October 2008 Centre for Sustainable Futures Plymouth, *Monetary Transitions*
- 23 October 2008 CCCR University of Plymouth, *The Artist as Producer Walter Benjamin*, Malcolm Miles
- 5 November 2008 CSF, Plymouth, *Green Fingers*
- 6 November 2008 CCCR Plymouth, *Society as a work of art Marcuse*, Malcolm Miles
- 8 November 2008 Transition Town Totnes, *Energy Descent Action Plan Arts and Culture* workshop
- 4 December 2008 CCCR Plymouth, *Aesthetics and Politics*, Malcolm Miles
- 15 January 2008 CCCR Plymouth, *Hannah Arendt*, Malcolm Miles
- 29 January 2009, *Art in the Social Sphere*, RADAR Loughborough University
- 12 February 2009, CCCR, Malcolm Miles, *Marcuse and Aesthetics*
- 17 February 2009, Sound software training David Strang Plymouth University
- 24 March 2009, Arnolfini, Bristol, *Art and Politics Peer to Peer Networks*
- 17 June 2009, Arnolfini Bristol, *The Harrison Studio*
- 29 June 2009, Plymouth Arts Centre, *Supporting freelance artists*

Meetings

- August 2006, meeting with Eco-psychologist Hilary Prentice
- 10 November, Nancy Sinclair, Aune Head Arts meeting
- 2007 ongoing, Appointment as Project Manager, Harrison Studio Devon

Artwork

- April-May 2006, *Conscience Offsets*, Dartington College of the Arts, Friends of the Earth Totnes, Somerfield supermarket, Totnes
- July 2006, *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts I*, Dartington Gallery
- June – August 2007, Totnes, *Collaborative Conversations*, Moira Lake (eco-psychologist), Jan O'Highway (community artist), Olya Maiboroda (environmental sociologist) about aspects of my research
- September 2007, *Eco-renovation: House Receipts II*, Devon Open Studios, Totnes
- March 2008, *Eco-renovation: House Receipts III*, ECOS Trust Homes for Good Show, Bath and West showground
- January - February 2009, *Resolutions Exchanged*, Totnes, Plymouth University Library

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Date

Introduction***The climate change debate***

Since I started this PhD research in September 2005, the climate change debate and its implication on our lifestyles has become very public. From almost no reference to climate change in the media, there are now daily references. Highlighting the importance of this issue, one of Edward Stourton's series of three programmes in December 2009, *Defining the decade*, on BBC Radio Four investigated climate change in 'The Heat is On: How have world leaders' attitude to global warming changed since the year 2000?' (Stourton 2009). His conclusion was that although there are signs of change in the US and China, there is still a significant distance to go, demonstrated by the lack of a treaty at the The Climate Change Summit in Copenhagen.

Bringing this global implication of climate change down to a level that affects us as individuals, Jim Naughtie on BBC Radio 4's Today programme (5/1/2010), for the first time mentioned behaviour change. In a discussion with Hilary Benn about making Britain able to ensure its own food security, Naughtie said

'You talk there in part about changes in behaviour in the sort of purchasing decisions that people make and the way they deal with waste, the way they run their lives as far as food is concerned' (Naughtie 2010)

Naughtie extended the discussion to Rose Prince, food writer in the Daily Telegraph, who observed that despite being 60% self-sufficient in food in the UK, we are choosing convenience foods (a 300% rise since 1997), over local suppliers and fresh food despite food labelling, she suggested this occurs through marketing and as a matter of convenience and cost.

Most people want to buy from British farmers, they want to buy sustainable fish, but once they get to the till and open their wallet, you know they don't necessarily make that decision... Consumers are marketed at the whole time. They don't decide what is sold in supermarkets. That's a myth (Naughtie 2010).

These recent discussions on Radio Four continue to demonstrate the need to engage people in climate change issues that affect their personal lives. Global strategies to tackle climate change appear to be stalled by national, political and economic interests operating on a remote global scale that do not impinge on individual behaviour in the UK.

I propose to investigate through socially engaged art practice how environmental behaviour change happens on an individual level using Michel de Certeau's investigation of the creative resistance of everyday behaviour and environmental behaviour research. I also seek to explore the possibility through socially engaged art practice to translate small scale participative events and effect large scale change, which Michel de Certeau calls rupture events.

Art's reaction to climate change

Two recent exhibitions relating to climate change took place in the UK, with very different approaches to art-making and instrumentality. *Earth: Art of a changing world* took place 3 December 2009 to 31 January 2010 at GSK Contemporary, Royal Academy of Arts, London and *C Words (Carbon, Climate, Capital Culture) How did you get here and where are you going?* at the Arnolfini, Bristol took place 3 October to 29 November 2009.

Earth: Art reflects the engagement of artists with climate change either directly through taking part in the Cape Farewell project (Buckland 2003) or through their own art practice. The Cape Farewell project has brought together artists and scientists to work together in the Arctic. In the curators' forward, Buckland states

'Few of the artists showing here hold the reality of climate change at the centre of their practice. They are not activists *per se*. But each has been moved to address this defining issue of our time...to react to and be inspired by the discord between

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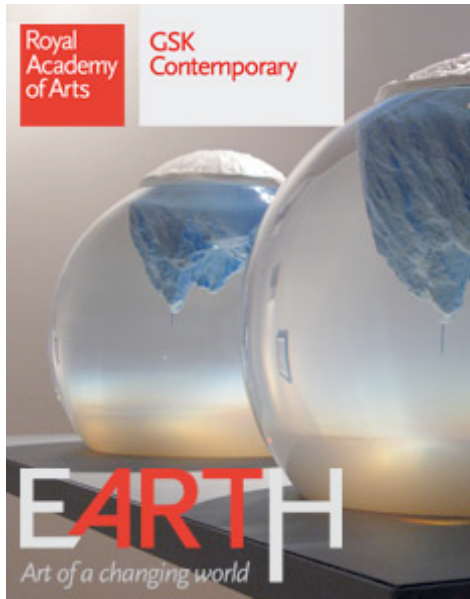


Figure 1 Masreile Neudecker
400 Thousand Generations, 2009



Figure 2 Anthony Gormley, *Field* 2006



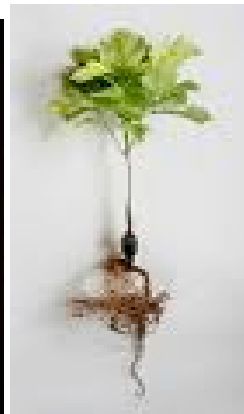
Figure 3 Edward Burtynsky,
Alberta Oil Sands No 6, 2007



Figure 4 Chris Jordan, *Paper Bags*, 2007



Figure 5 & 6 Ackroyd and Harvey, *Beuys Acorns*, 2007 onwards



the balance of natural forces and the ambitions of mankind...each brings a human insight and dimension to a question otherwise unquantifiable in its magnitude' (Buckland et al. 2009).

The exhibition I noticed showed no artists or work that included participatory engagement, held an ambition of social change or an activist agenda. The only artists that appear in both exhibitions are Ackroyd and Harvey, both projects working with trees. When questioned about this in a discussion as part of the SHIFT festival January 2010, part of the Cape Farewell residency at the Southbank Centre, London, David Buckland was very clear that artists cannot expect to be instrumental or achieve change directly, but can act as a mirror to humanity reflecting back what they see (Hunt 2010).

My personal question about this exhibition likens this ambition to mirror reality to disaster fatigue. We are now so exposed to climate change issues that it is easy to ignore them if all that is attempted is to raise awareness, as with disasters we become inured to the images, they no longer prompt us to action, whether it be to give donations or change our transport habits (Associated 2008; Elliott 2008).

In contrast the *C Words* exhibition was at the invitation of the Arnolfini, Bristol to Platform, a London based artist/activist group celebrating twenty-five years of activity (Platform). Their exhibition was also part of a broader season at the Arnolfini addressing climate change in the countdown to the climate change conference in Copenhagen 2009. Instead of a personal retrospective they chose to bring together sixty artists, activists, campaigners and educators with seven new commissions in a daily changing programme of events, courses, film screenings, discussions and actions. The purpose to examine a 'broad critique of dependency on fossil fuels, coal, and gas, and the implication for human rights' (Platform 2009), and which began with the production, transportation and installation of the exhibition itself. Tom Trevor, Director of Arnolfini describes the exhibition as

‘exploring the tangled web of Carbon, Climate, Capital and Culture and our implications within it. Whether in terms of our personal choices around travel or participation in the culture of consumerism, or institutionally, through funding and the movement of art and artists around the world, we are all inextricably linked in the politics of oil.’ (Trevor 2009).

This was a complex exhibition, which, unlike the more usual object based gallery exhibitions, took a lot more time and engagement to grasp, but would I considered repay repeat visits to get more engaged. That many of the artists were available to talk to on the day of their event, was a friendly touch amongst a variety of styles of presentation and where many of the works required animating with active participants. I’m not sure that the exhibition managed to communicate any better than *Earth: Art*, since the three times I visited it seemed to be populated with climate change aficionados. Often the workshops or events seemed rather academic exercises rather than achieving something real, and felt unsatisfactory as a result. Two successful works were Sustrans *Slow Travel Agency* arranging low-carbon travel needs and Hollington & Kyprianou, *Adams and Smith, auctioneers of late-Capitalist period artifacts*, (pictured above) a pre-auction exhibition of late-capitalist period artifacts with provenance. Successfully exhibited in that they were coherent aesthetic ideas presented well that did not require animation to communicate although this enhanced them. Two of the events that I saw stick out in my mind, Platform’s *Carbon Generation*, a performance looking at personal family histories and the rise and fall of fossil fuels and their intertwined narrative and at the end of the exhibition, the second part of the ‘Who’s recuperating who?’ symposium. There I learned that Platform had engaged Arnolfini in a discussion about the carbon footprint of the building and its practices and their reduction. It was revealed that this discussion was not wholly supported by all the staff, but would be continuing beyond the exhibition. Somehow for me this really

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illustrated something tangible about the whole C-Words exhibition and I was sorry that it hadn't formed part of the on-going exhibition.

C WORDS

CARBON CLIMATE CAPITAL CULTURE

an investigation into carbon, climate, capital & culture organised by artist-activist group PLATFORM

FREE POETRY, PERFORMANCE & DISCUSSION FROM AFRICA TO BRISTOL... ★★★★★★★★★★

presented by remember saro wiwa and African Writers Abroad remember saro-wiwa

FOUR EXCITING FREE EVENTS AT BRISTOL'S ARNOLFINI GALLERY ★★★★★★★★★★

Saturday 7 Nov 2009 - 6.30- 8.30pm (Gallery 3)

NO CONDITION IS PERMANENT:

Poetry and performance with:

DOROTHEA SMARTT / AMUNWA


ZENA EDWARDS / SYMURAI /

ROS MARTIN / EDSON BURTON

+ participants in the day's creative writing workshops (see below).

Hosted by **BEN**

Poetry and performance with Dorothea Smartt, Simon Murray, Zena Edwards, Ros Martin, Edson Burton and participants in the day's creative writing workshops. Hosted by Ben Amunwa and PLATFORM's remember saro-wiwa project. For over 40 years the multinational oil giant Shell has been flaring gas in Nigeria. This 'poison fire' releases toxins and carbon dioxide on a vast scale, devastating the environment and the global climate. But no condition is permanent. Join 5 performance poets and young writers, on intimate journeys that take you from the frontlines of climate injustice to radical hopes for a sustainable future. The event marks the 14th anniversary since the writer and activist Ken Saro-Wiwa was executed by Nigerian government for his campaign against the impact of oil companies, in particular Shell, on the environment in the oil-rich Niger Delta.



KILLING TINA, EMBRACING TABOO

Creative Writing Workshop
- led by Symurai (Simon M Murray), AWA
10.30am – 1.30pm / Meeting Room
Free / Booking Advised
We were told "There Is No Alternative" (T.I.N.A.). C Words helps prove that "There Are Billions Of Options" (T.A.B.O.O.)... Come and explore some of these and the power of your own creative voice to write back at the madness that surrounds us.

FULL CIRCLE

Poetry workshop
- led by Dorothea Smartt, AWA
2.30pm – 5.30pm / Meeting Room
Free / Booking Advised
Using visual images & other eco-poems as inspiration, together with a mix of writing exercises/ group discussion we'll develop & draft poems exploring the power of poetry to give voice to our environmental destruction & efforts towards ecological balance.

Sunday 8 Nov 2009 - 2- 5pm (Gallery 3)

REMEMBER SARO-WIWA

- WHAT'S THE FUTURE OF THE NIGER DELTA?

Join a panel discussion with presentations from **SOKARI DOUGLAS-CAMP CBE**, Nigerian campaigner **ALICE UKOKU**, **STAKEHOLDER DEMOCRACY NETWORK** and **REMEMBER SARO-WIWA**. As C Words highlights our uncomfortable dependence on Nigerian oil, we ask what are the most pressing issues affecting Nigeria's oil-rich Niger Delta today? How can we respond, as artists and activists to the ongoing environmental devastation and injustice, corporate power and conflict. Where is the struggle for justice led by Ken Saro-Wiwa today, and what is the future ahead?



ARNOLFINI

16 Narrow Quay, Bristol BS1 4QA
0117 917 2300

C WORDS
CARBON
CLIMATE
CAPITAL
CULTURE

African Writers abroad

remember saro-wiwa

Figure 7 Remember Saro-Wiwa, C Words exhibition 2009

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Figure 8 Platform *The Carbon Map*, Ultimate Holding Company, 2007



Figure 9,10,11 Hollington & Kyprianou, *Adams and Smith, auctioneers of late-Capitalist period artifacts*, C Words exhibition, 2009



Figure 12,13 Trapese Collective (*Taking Radical Action through Popular Education and Sustainable Everything*),
C Words exhibition



Figure 14 Ackroyd and Harvey *the Walking Forest*, 2009 C Words exhibition

The differences between these two exhibitions demonstrate the difference in approach to the climate change agenda and effecting change. Socially engaged art practice often claims to engender social change but understanding how that happens is not often discussed. Analysis of contemporary writers I will be discussing later Bishop, Bourriaud and Kester reveal significant differing components of socially engaged practice. I seek through analysis of my own practice and Michel de Certeau's practice of the everyday to identify key characteristics. I also seek to understand how socially engaged practice can better communicate beyond the participative event to an external audience, Using environmental behaviour research I seek to understand how change happens and the role of the artist in this process.

My art practice

In a socially engaged art practice, which is an interwoven combination of artwork and research, I am an artist 'living my life as enquiry' (Kelley 1993; Marshall 1999) who makes lifeworks, which focus on the processes of living and my own lifestyle and seeks to explore with other people our meanings of experience. More specifically I work in the field of climate change and environmental behaviour and I encourage a public

participation through the medium of conversation and interaction with the artwork that seeks to enable an individual questioning of the values by which we live.

In understanding how an individual makes decisions that change behaviour, environmental behaviour research has identified the 'value-action gap' (Kollmus and Agyeman 2002). The value-action gap describes the tension between our personal recognition of climate change and of the implication and need, but then our inability to change our own behaviour.

The lack of behaviour change has been identified as a major impediment in the adoption of environmentally sustainable lifestyles and communities (Bedford et al. 2004, Darnton 2004a, 2004b, Darton et al 2006, Hounsham 2006, Jackson 2005). The concept of the value-action gap resonates personally with me as I am able to identify within myself impediments to behaviour change and it also resonates with many others to whom I have described it. As a point of tension the value-action gap is an excellent area for my art practice to explore that also fits very well with my preceding artistic investigations into lifestyles.

Socially engaged art practice

Socially engaged art practice can be broadly characterised as using a variety of mediums including performance, image-making, activism and social research. The works, which often take place outside of the gallery or exhibition space, can be presented as transient events or engaged in actual rebuilding or political issues, and they often challenge traditional aesthetics by using process-based approaches often more recognisable as social events, activist engagement, or environmental reconstruction. The common link is the facilitation of dialogue between the artist and participant as an empowering creativity, with the aspect of collaboration emphasised to

a greater or less degree (Bishop 2004, 2006a, 2006c; Bourriaud 2002; Heim 2003; Kester 2004, 2005, 2006b; Kwon 2004).

The earliest example of the use of the phrase 'socially engaged art practice' I can find in contemporary use is at 'CRITICAL SITES: Issues in Critical Art Practice and Pedagogy Conference' of 1998 at Dun Laoghaire Institute of Technology, Art and Design organised by Littoral and the Dublin artist's group Critical Access. Grant Kester's address to that conference is reprinted by Variant Magazine under the title 'Socially Engaged Practice - Dialogical Aesthetics: A Critical Framework For Littoral Art' (Kester 1999). Ian Hunter of Littoral Arts uses the term in his article in Circa Magazine summer 2002 entitled 'New Critical Centres for Art in Ireland?', (Hunter 2002) Claire Bishop is interviewed by Jennifer Roche in 2006 under the title 'Socially Engaged Art, Critics and Discontents: An Interview with Claire Bishop' on the Community Arts Network (Roche 2006).

Despite this group of practices being subsumed under the name 'socially engaged practice', this broad characterisation disguises a great deal of discussion and conflict amongst individual researchers and commentators between demonstrable and desirable aspects of socially engaged art practice. This is in part demonstrated by the many terms and alternative descriptions from contemporary commentators such as: Miwon Kwon 'context-specific' (Kwon 2004), socially collaborative art, Grant Kester 'dialogical art' (Kester 2004), Nicolas Bourriaud 'relational aesthetic' (Bourriaud 2002), Claire Bishop 'socially collaborative art' (Bishop 2006a), and also context specific, site-oriented, site responsive, Christian Kravagna 'participatory practice' (Kravagna 1998), Ian Hunter 'littoral' describing the in-between spaces or activity (Hunter), Tom Finkelpearl 'dialogue-based public art' (Finkelpearl 2000), Claire Doherty 'new situationists' or 'situated practice' (Doherty 2004), Wallace Heim 'social practice art'

(Heim 2003), Dave Best 'the art of encounter' (Best 2009), Maria Lind 'collaborative practices' (Lind 2008), Simon Sheikh 'counter publics' (Sheikh 2004) and 'spaces of experience' (Sheikh 2001).

I suggest that discussion is limited by relating socially engaged practice to previous art forms and other considerations that are perceived to compromise the ability of the artist to distinguish their contribution as art (Bishop 2004, 2006a, 2006c; Bourriaud 2002; Heim 2003; Kester 2004, 2005, 2006b; Kwon 2004). With many artists undertaking this style of practice, contemporary commentators have generally focused on one aspect of the practice (such as the aesthetics or ethics of participation individually) claiming that it is not possible to balance all the aspects in any one artwork. This ignores the broader claims of artists themselves and distorts the possibility of balanced judgment of this practice, instead of asking if or why this balance is unachievable. I wish to explore Bishop's contention that socially engaged art practice should have a visual component that engages in addition to the dialogic aesthetic during participation that Kester discusses.

Personal and Political

The history of socially engaged art practice arises from social, political and economic inequalities that became clear during the feminist movement and Aids campaigns.

Developing from site specific art, that challenged the idea of a work of art as disassociated from its wider context, socially engaged art also brought in the idea of the viewer as part of that expanded context.

Whilst acknowledging that history in this thesis I am not addressing political issues of climate change or behaviour change, rather focusing on individual change and its possibilities and impediments. I would argue that climate change and by consequence behaviour change is made political by the global scale of the changes needed and by

unequal economic development of countries. I acknowledge that some environmental activist/artists are tackling these issues such as Platform's ongoing campaign against oil exploitation in Nigeria, and Superflex project Guarania Power addressing the economic domination of multinationals in developing countries.

I suggest that although party politics proposes different solutions, the problem of climate change remains the same and needs to be addressed first, before specific systems of party political beliefs. This study does not therefore address issues of income, social class, gender or age, studies on these behavioural aspects include Stewart Barr (2003) and Tracey Bedford (2004) and I am cognisant that these can also affect attitude to climate change and environmental behaviour change. Looking at the impediments to individual behaviour change, I am focusing on those people similar to myself who already have a climate change conscience and an intention of change. If those people with a climate change conscience cannot implement personal behaviour change or only to a certain degree, then what hope is there for anyone else.

Perhaps ironically Michel de Certeau's research on the practice of the everyday that informs this thesis and much of contemporary environmental behaviour research have been instigated by their respective governments.

Following an ad hoc study directorship at the Department of Research at the State Office for Cultural Affairs and de Certeau's own innovative writing and thinking on the events in Paris of May 1968, Michel de Certeau was commissioned by the cultural development programme of the State Office for Cultural Affairs to carry out original research. This research was necessary for the French government in order to understand the 'problematic of research and action on the culture that political decision makers and their administrations needed in order to orient their choices and decide on budgetary priorities' (Giard xviii in de Certeau et al, 1998). The research

contract entitled “Conjuncture, Synthesis and Futurology” left de Certeau free to define the contents and methods, employ researchers and collaborators. This project was never intended to be a statistical report as de Certeau perceived this to be limiting, instead to explore the events of May 1968 as a complete disruption of existing French society and culture and to envision its consequences.

Environmental behaviour research began at the instigation of the Department for Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) that took on the responsibility for climate change in the UK following the UN conference The Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992.

Arguably prior to this date discussion of climate change remained with the discipline of ecological science, despite the UN commissioned Bruntland Report in 1987, which reviewed the wider implications.

Defra began a number of advertising campaigns in the late 1990’s to attempt to change individual behaviour and other initiatives such as Agenda 21. These early campaigns failed and in order to understand why they failed and how to affect individual behaviour, the government commissioned research and groups to examine these issues.

As with de Certeau, Defra has not attempted to constrain this research other than requiring that the research assist it to develop policy design. On the old Defra website (www.defra.gov.uk/environment/climate/adaptation/government-role.htm) an undated section entitled ‘The limits to the Government’s role’ states that the government has two roles: in mitigation occurring on a global scale and on national measures such as flood defenses; and in adaptation which generally results in localised benefits. Barriers to adaptation decisions shape the implications for national policy design and can play a role in supporting people and businesses and create an environment conducive to adaptation decisions.

In terms of socially engaged art practice, I do not deny that some artists choose to use this art form in conjunction with their political beliefs as activist art. This is not my approach; I seek to operate more subtly, not an adversarial/a them or us approach. Working within the problem of climate change I choose to work with how people are now and where they are now in adapting their behaviour. Through building a community narrative ie not simply my voice and beliefs, I offer an understanding of the ways in which individuals could change their behaviour, and encourage that process to take place.

Organisation of the thesis: Volume One

A review of these contemporary writers in Chapter One reveals common issues of consideration: participation, the ambition of social change, aesthetic representation and commonly a failure to communicate beyond the participative event. This failure to communicate expands into a discussion of the representation of conversation introduced but I suggest not fully developed by Kwon (2004) and Kester (2004).

These issues then shape the written format of the PhD thesis. Michel de Certeau's research (de Certeau 1984; de Certeau et al. 1998a) on the practice of the everyday offers a comparative means of considering socially engaged art practice through creative participation, an aesthetic of presence and an exploration of change in society.

Chapter Two introduces environmental behaviour research which examines how change happens on an individual basis and also offers a means of updating de Certeau observations in contemporary research. This recent area of research, which began in the 1980's, began by charting the failure of government climate change campaigns to influence individual behaviour (de Certeau's strategies). Researchers (Bedford et al. 2004; Blake 1999; Darnton 2004a, 2004b; Darnton et al. 2006; Hounsham 2006;

Jackson 2005; Kollmus and Agyeman 2002) recognised the need for an active individual capable of individual behaviour change, rather than a passive receiver of climate change information. The means by which an individual makes decisions to change their own behaviour (De Certeau's tactics) and the societal and cultural influences upon that behaviour form the core of this research field.

The active individual, researchers propose, is best enabled by environmental change agents. Drawn from organisational change, change champions or change agents in the context of delivering pro-environmental behaviour, are individuals vital to delivering pro-environmental change for themselves, their own networks and communities (Alexander et al. 2005; S. Ballard and Ballard 2005a; S. Ballard et al. 2007; Darnton et al. 2006; Hounsham 2006). I compare the situational factors that enable change agents that Ballard demonstrated in the model The 5A's for change (Ballard and Associates 2005b) with Francois Matarasso's research on participation in the arts (Matarasso 1997). The considerable overlap enables the role of the artist as a change agent to be investigated through analysis of art works.

The process of change can be recognised through social encounters and a discursive consciousness which brings unexamined habits to the forth. De Certeau also recognises the development of an oral fabric made up of individual conversations as a transfer of knowledge. Developing the idea of the represented conversations, I investigate how this might be represented through examples from the literature of environmental behaviour and practices of the everyday to extend, communicate and enable the effect of the artwork beyond documentation of the participative event.

Chapter Three takes Ballard's (2005) 5A's model and develops it to include aesthetic consideration creating the Model for Practice, Participation and Progression. I use grounded theory as a broad basis for the development of the research, which allows

emergent theory to arise from the art practice and through comparison with existing theory. I recognise a three stage process within my art practice: the provocation for engagement, the situation for engagement and the representation of the work.

Chapter Four analyses each artwork using the Model for Practice, Participation and Progression. I draw out issues that arise from the artworks both for socially engaged art practice and for environmental behaviour.

Chapter Five relates the specific discussion of each artwork back to the issues I identified for socially engaged art practice of participation, the ambition of social change, and aesthetic representation and the contribution to knowledge arising from the research. Michel de Certeau's research on the practice of the everyday is re-considered in light of more recent environmental behaviour research and socially engaged art practice. I suggest re-focusing on participation through the necessity and value of individual narratives ensures personal agency is a key factor in enabling change. The case for the artist as a change agent is argued through the comparison of research by Ballard (2005b) and Matarasso (1997) and in the outcomes of the artworks. Represented conversations is discussed as a theoretical outline with some of its likely components identified. I suggest a different means of expression of socially engaged artworks beyond documentation of participative events is made clear by demonstrating the commodification of lifestyles, a passive culture, requiring a new narrative that demonstrates an aesthetic of presence. I suggest ripple effect of transformation could occur through encounters and their report, as an accumulation of conversations, which allows small-scale rupture events.

Chapter Six discusses my suggestions for further research.

Volume Two

Volume Two contains the Appendices, the breakdown of the analysis of artworks, transcriptions of conversations and dvd's of conversations.

Volume Three

Volume Three contains the documentation of each .

Glossary

Aesthetic

Claire Bishop describes an authored practice, reflecting/describing society as it is and recognising the limitation of what is possibly as art. This also reflects the view of David Buckland of the Cape Farewell project.

Grant Kester describes the creative facilitation of dialogue as fundamentally aesthetic, using a performance and process based approach of immersive interaction. The artist is one of the group rather than autonomous author. Traditional art materials are replaced by sociopolitical relationships resulting in an open-ended process of exchange.

Nicholas Bourriaud describes an aesthetic of interhuman exchange combined with the intention of the artist as an exhibited project, to establish a new relation with the world we live in, counter to the dominant narrative.

My definition: see Page 56, aesthetic of presence in which through conversation, people's stories and everyday experience are uncovered and revalued, and offering a new or alternative narrative comprised of believable objects. Foregrounding participation is an essential component of socially engaged practice, where participant contributions are the essential component of the work. This both guides the context of participation and the outcome of the participative event.

Provocative contributions underpin the value of engagement, intimacy and the knowledge produced, and appear to indicate positive aspects of this practice

Representing Conversations: Collection of the participative material then represented so as to continue to engage people into the temporary community created.

Visual Aesthetic the engaging appearance of the work and it's success at drawing people into participation.

Aesthetic of Presence

A concept developed from Michel de Certeau's aesthetic of absence. A new narrative

Aesthetic representation

Introduced by Claire Bishop as central to any artwork, whether participatory, installation or object based.

Failure to communicate

Deduced from the exhibitions of Bishop, Bourriaud and Kester, I suggest that participative projects are taken out of context and then fail to engage an audience that was not at the original event. The representation of documentation leads to a feeling of missing the event, of

dispassionate interest, rather than a engagement in a project that continues to be meaningful.

Participation

Veracity of participation, here the participant contributions complete the work. Participation is therefore at the core of socially engaged practice, where the contributions are valued in and of themselves. This leads to a style of engagement that will not manipulate the participant in any way, either by an over directive engagement, or a prediction of the outcome. This also has an implication of the outcome of the participative work in the way that it is portrayed after the event, here the aim is to honour the participation, displaying the experience and knowledge gained as inherently valuable.

Performance

A collective performance, facilitated by the artist. can be understood as a process work observing the creative process; a repetitive series of scenes with varying actors (the artist and participants) with the same starting point and method (conversation); and the participant as the lead actor telling their own story.

Public

Pooled knowledge shared onwards.

Community Arts**Socially Engaged Art**

has an aim of social change and aesthetic expression; that uses as its method engaged and responsible participation; uses constructive conversation as its medium and where the outcome is an expression of represented conversations.

Chapter 1 Revisiting Socially Engaged Art Practice

Introduction

As an artist and researcher I am working in the field of climate change and environmental behaviour. My current work is exploring the tension between our recognition of the need, but then our inability, to change our own behaviour in the face of climate change. Identifying myself as a well-intentioned green aspirant, and provoked by my own admissions of failure, I use conversation as both method and outcome, to encourage a sharing of experience and knowledge, frustration and achievement.

Generally operating outside of the gallery, for instance in a commercial eco-building exhibition, on the street, in my kitchen, on a list serv, or on a one-to-one basis, I engage people in conversation, which is used as both a medium and an outcome.¹ My art practice seeks to revalue individual experience and vernacular knowledge, and acknowledge both as valuable resources.² This resource of experience becomes the impetus for change where the global market place cannot provide our response to climate change only the means to implement that response. Our response needs to begin with individual behaviour change.

By encouraging intimacy, my conversations often reveal 'the unexpected', which can challenge both the participants and me. My work is a shared learning process and by re-presenting the unexpected allows the knowledge we have reached to invigorate others. I understand 'public' as pooled knowledge, learned by hard experience, which unless it is revealed could die with the individual.

I identify through my own experience as an arts practitioner and through this research key considerations for socially engaged art practice. These are participation, the

ambition of social change, aesthetic representation and commonly a failure to communicate beyond the participative event.

As stated in my introduction the drawing together of a yet to be clearly defined group of practices that are participative and communicative under the more commonly accepted title of socially engaged art practices, is recent. Most writers indicate a range of practices that can be grouped under that title which may be dissimilar. I have chosen to focus on a small group of writers who appear to me to most clearly encapsulate the discussion and arguments of this practice, who are Nicolas Bourriaud, Miwon Kwon, Grant Kester, and Claire Bishop, with small contributions from others such as Wallace Heim where they contribute to the argument.

A comparison of the well-known sources of Bourriaud, Kester and Bishop with contemporary European discussion would be a useful post-doctoral exercise, of whom Simon Sheikh is probably the most well known in the UK.³ Other contemporary sources that I do not discuss are Claire Doherty who writes similarly to Bishop and largely is engaged with a discussion of site through 'situated practices' (Doherty 2004); Will Bradley and Charles Esche's recent book *Art and social change: a critical reader* (Bradley and Esche 2007), which focuses on the question of how to participate meaningfully in social struggles of a more political nature (I discuss the personal and political nature of the climate change problem and my approach to socially engaged art practice in the Introduction); Ted Purves edited book *What we want is free: Generosity and exchange in recent art* (Purves 2005), which although related to my practice focuses quite tightly on gifts and generosity; and two books arising from conversations between artists enquiring into their own practices *An architecture of interaction* (Mass 2006), which describes a participative practice through interaction; and *Life is more important than art* (Tawadros 2007) which investigated the effect on practices, of often

small scale engagement between artists and audiences and branded visual arts organisations, which appeared to demand visual, large scale and quantifiable works.

This chapter offers an outline of the existing research and commentary from Bishop, Bourriaud, Kester and Kwon on socially engaged art practice. I extract a definition of socially engaged art practice from each commentator and outline their key arguments and explore these arguments in conjunction with art practice. These are demonstrated through a discussion of their curated exhibitions, which draw out issues to be addressed within socially engaged art practice. I then construct a proposal for socially engaged art practice, which is pursued through art practice and theoretical research and detailed in the remainder of the thesis.

Similar approaches but differing practice

I begin with a summary description of socially engaged art practice to serve as a starting point from researcher and curator Wallace Heim. I continue with a brief summary of Bishop, Bourriaud and Kester before continuing a more in-depth analysis of their theories expressed through exhibition. Heim describes social practice art as a heuristic approach, a method that encourages individuals to discover solutions for themselves. Heim's acknowledgment of dialogue as a defining characteristic is one that is shared by most contemporary commentators.

She writes that

'these works can be hybrids of differing forms of performance, image making, activism and social research. They can be marked out as aesthetic works and be indiscernible from everyday activities; they can exist as transient events, or be settled in a location over an extended timescale. But there are shared patterns of formal methods, predominantly the incorporation of dialogue [conversation] between artist and participant.' (Heim 2003: 185-6)

In contradiction, University of Warwick based art historian, Claire Bishop, identifies two approaches to participatory art, which she suggests derive from the historical material,

‘an authored tradition that seeks to provoke participants, and a de-authored lineage that aims to embrace collective creativity; one is disruptive and interventionist, the other constructive and ameliorative’ (Claire Bishop 2006d).

Bishop favours a disruptive, interventionist and authored practice based on Jacques Ranciere’s value of disruption (Ranciere 2004b, 2004c, 2009a), Laclau and Mouffe’s theory of subjectivity and antagonism (Laclau and Mouffe 1985; Mouffe 1996) and Jean-Luc Nancy’s inoperative community (Nancy 1991). Bishop proposes ‘a more complicated imbrication of the social and the aesthetic’ that recognises the ‘limitations of what is possible as art’ (Bishop 2004: 79). ‘Good art’ Bishop argues avoids instrumentality and the danger of dissolution in social praxis. Instead, drawing on Ranciere, spectatorship is not passive but inherently contains the capability of active interpreters, leading to transformation. Social praxis, Bishop argues, offers works that are impossibly utopian, creating micro-authoritarian states, instead democratic society is of necessity a society in which conflict is sustained.

Despite Bishop’s apparently clear philosophy of participatory art, when art practice itself is considered through exhibition experience and reviews this raises a number of questions. The work uses participation as a means to an end, using people to produce a work of pre-determined parameters. In fact the antagonistic experience of the work appears (Debord 1995) alienating rather than transforming. I suggest later that this is style of practice should not be described as socially engaged since its ambition clearly differs from that proposed by Grant Kester. Bishop’s philosophy apparently rejects the experience of other practitioners and researchers, who suggest that socially engaged art practice can be socially relevant and meaningful.

French curator and art critic Nicolas Bourriaud developed his theory of relational aesthetics based on the 20th century avant garde from Dadaism to Situationism. He recognised that artists of the 1990's were investigating 'models of sociality' including 'meetings, encounters, events, various types of collaboration between people, games, festivals and places of conviviality' (Bourriaud, 2002:28). Based on Guy Debord (Debord 1995, 2002) and Henri Lefebvre's observation that everyday life is increasingly restricted and pauperised (Lefebvre 1991, 2008), Bourriaud proposed that art is an activity to establish a relation with the world in which we live, and rather than attempting to be new is attempting to be relevant and useful (Bourriaud 2001a).

The expression of this practice developed Fluxus happenings, invited spectator participation and shifted Duchamp's space of reflection into a culture of interactivity, largely based in the gallery. Inter-human exchange becomes the gallery aesthetic, (Bourriaud 2002b: 31-33) where 'the use value of conviviality is combined with the exhibition value within the framework of an artistic project' (Bourriaud 2001a: 48).

However I suggest models of social engagement expressed within the gallery as aesthetic expression appear to limit the practice of socially engaged art, which now can be seen to engage with political and social issues relevant within the wider society, outside of the gallery. As with Bishop, the works themselves when seen in exhibition, which is the expressive aim, apparently fall short of communicating a sense of the participative quality and exhibit restricted aesthetic expression.

Writer and art historian, Grant Kester, based at the University of California, San Diego, writing in *Conversation Pieces* (Kester 2004), explores artwork made outside the gallery space, operating variously in the social, political and environmental, cultural and activist arenas and developing new forms of collaboration. He specifically defines

socially engaged art practice as ‘dialogical’ art, around the creative facilitation of dialogue and exchange among diverse communities using a performative, process-based approach, in which conversation becomes an integral part of the work. The artist rather than a ‘radically autonomous figure’ accepts ‘a position of dependence and intersubjective vulnerability relative to the viewer or collaborator’ and become “context-providers” rather than “content-providers”, centred on immersive interaction (Kester 2004: 110). Kester argues that traditional art materials are replaced by ‘sociopolitical relationships’, and by dialogue itself as fundamentally aesthetic.

Dialogical art appears to come closest to my own practice. I agree that socially engaged art practice should be based on participation as the fundamental principle, where the value of the participant contribution is not manipulated or merely interactive, but where the contribution help to shape the expression of the artwork. But again there are differences. Kester’s emphasis is generally on a physical site and an identified community, where a sustained (immersive) relationship is essential to dialogic practice (Kester 2004, 152ff. I propose that the physical site and pre-defined community is not essential to achieve a dialogic practice. I suggest Kester’s defence of dialogical leads him into discussion of the conditions of dialogue, rather than a discussion of the aesthetic and the focus on collaboratory aspects of the practice lead him to a discussion of community itself. What is actually discussed are the conditions within which and by which the practice takes place. Despite an emphasis on successful communication strategies, examined through exhibition reviews, as with Bishop and Bourriaud the expression of this practice appears problematic beyond the participative moment.

Writer and art historian, Miwon Kwon, based at the University of California, San Diego, reviews the emergence of site-specific art from the 1960's, using a broad definition of site-specific including context, debate, audience and community and project-based practices. Through Jean-Luc Nancy's argument of the inoperative community (Nancy 1991) Kwon examines the relationship between artist and site, community and art making, which she suggests has become a 'site of struggle' (Kwon, 2004:2). Site specificity, she argues, is not exclusively an artistic genre and can be expressed as a problem-idea and operate within broader social, economic and political processes. In doing so Kwon focuses on the ethical nature of site specific and collaborative practice.

As with Kester, Kwon's discussion, though ground breaking, I suggest is incomplete. Despite the recognition of the shift from a specifically physical site for a sculptural work to a discursive and mutable site, her discussion doesn't move beyond the new conditions of site specificity, the community itself. Similarly to Bishop, Kwon proposes an activist and antagonistic practice to provoke transformation.

Each of the commentators above has offered a different basis for what appears to be a similar practice with different outcomes and where elements of their philosophy conflict with one another and therefore can be re-examined. The difficulties of addressing and resolving these issues within art practice rather than philosophic debate and the parallel difficulty of communicating this practice is demonstrated in an analysis of the exhibitions curated by Bishop, Bourriaud and Kester.

Participation or power games

Claire Bishop is critical of other approaches proposed by socially engaged art practice, but the exhibition *Double Agent* in 2008, which she co-curated with Mark Sladen at the ICA in London suggests weaknesses in her argument as outlined above.

Bishop proposes that participatory practice can address wider questions about public and democracy, the construction of culture and who culture is for and how we experience these in the work. These can be achieved through

‘artistic gestures that shuttle between sense and nonsense, that recalibrate our perception, that allow multiple interpretations, that factor in the problem of documentation/presentation into each project, and that have a life beyond an immediate social goal’ (Claire Bishop 2006c).

Bishop and Sladen, describe ‘art works and collaborative projects in which the artist uses other people as a medium’ (Bishop and Sladen 2008b: 1, my italics). Bishop observes of exhibited artists Phil Collins and Artur Zmijewski that they ‘do not make the “correct” ethical choice’ but their work ‘joins a tradition of highly authored situations that fuse social reality with carefully calculated artifice’ (Bishop 2006a: 183). This is achieved by ‘strategies of mediation, delegation and collaboration...(which) can



Figure 15 Phil Collins, Still from *they shoot horses*, (2004), Courtesy Kerlin Gallery



Figure 16 Artur Zmijewski, Still from *'Them'* (2007)
Courtesy Foksal Foundation © Artur Zmijewski

undermine the idea of the authentic or authoritative artist...promoting unpredictability and risk...and raise ethical issues and questions of exploitation' (Bishop and Sladen 2008b: 1).

The reception of antagonism on the part of the viewer and participant can be demonstrated through reviews and my own experience of the exhibition. Having visited the exhibition, I agree that the works in this exhibition use people as a medium. Contrary to Bishop's claim in the exhibition guide, I suggest these works, in which the artists directed or manipulated people, only displayed the single authorial voice rather than demonstrating a more risky collaborative outcome, because with all the works the artist proscribed the way the participants and audience could interact.

Instant Narrative by Dora García (2006-8) was entirely exploitative. I walked into a white gallery, with a text projection on one wall. This text seemed static and I began to read it, then realising that my presence alone in the gallery was provoking a commentary, which was displayed real time via a writer in the gallery space. I found this work very intrusive and it made me angry. At one point I found a corner of the gallery where the writer could not see me and waited there for some time to see what would happen, after noting that I had hidden myself the writer stopped her commentary. Then I asked the writer if I could take over the typing, because I was angry about the unsolicited and intrusive invasion of my privacy. I didn't want to be observed but I was willing to participate directly in the work but was told that wasn't allowed, I didn't force the point, maybe I should have.



Figure 17 Dora García, *Instant Narrative*, writer at the desk, Galerie für Zeitgenössische Kunst, Leipzig, 2007

One work *Nowolipie Group*, by Pawel Althamer, did display an actual community, as opposed to one created and manipulated by the artist and artwork. This comprised filmed material and collections of the artwork from a group of adults with learning difficulties, with whom the artist had worked for some years. Although the artist's empathy with and dedication to the group is obvious in the film, it is the attitude in which the film is shot, as that of a dispassionate observer engaged in anthropological research, that re-imposes the authorial control of the artist. In fact the strength of character of Rafal, a participant in the workshop, who always makes clay biplanes, threatens to overturn that authorial control. The film, which focuses a large section on Rafal and Althamer's interaction and relationship, reveals the flaws in his impartiality as artist/author when both appear to lose their temper.

Discussing how the artists remain predominant *Frieze* reviewer, Melissa Gronlund, agrees that there is 'persistent confusion between "collaboration" and "interactivity" generally. She agrees with other reviewers (Barrett 2008; Cowan 2008; Davies 2008; O'Reilly 2008) that in this exhibition the artists generally 'retain the authority over the rules of engagement, and how they play out'. (Gronlund 2008) Reviewer Matthew Cowan for *Axis*, also agrees that the 'displacement of authorship' refocuses the work back to the artist (Cowan 2008).

Identifying the effect of manipulation and use of participants, *Art Monthly* reviewer David Barrett identifies 'the power games the public (as passive viewers) is unwillingly engaged in force the issue of an ethical response – as does the ingenious suggestion that the subjects of the works are collaborators' (Barrett, 2008). These feelings of discomfort about the works heighten the viewer's feeling of passivity because they are unable to intervene. *A-N* reviewer Sarah Davies criticises the lack of the visitor's active collaboration and observes that her frustration at being denied collaboration and interaction and being returned to a passive viewer, except at the 'right times and if certain rules are adhered to' (Davies 2008).

I suggest the exhibition rather than interrogating collaborative practices, only serves to confirm the artist's authorial control. The authoritative role of the artist is not undermined, instead the position is re-enforced. As a result of unchallenged authorship the visual aesthetic presentation can be more easily resolved, since the work presents the predetermined aim of the artist. The aesthetic is apparent and familiar, with the work all presented as documentation of events, through video or wall mounted presentation and installation, but Bishop's idea of multiple interpretations is not evident.

Bishop suggests that in other commentators, specifically Kester, an over-emphasis on ethics suppresses the aesthetic, and so correct collaborative methods are prized more highly. But it is not the rejection of aesthetics that provokes a focus on the ethics of socially engaged art practice, but the need to avoid an exploitative relationship with participants in favour of a co-operative enlightenment.

The reviews clearly point to the discomfort of the majority of reviewers about the use and manipulation of the participants in the works themselves and the viewers in the gallery. The works confuse and misunderstand the differences between participation, collaboration and interactivity. Neither within the works themselves nor from the point of view of the exhibition audience do these works demonstrate Ranciere's active interpreter or any sort of personal agency (Ranciere 2004a; 2009b: 13, 22).

These works do have a life beyond the immediate social goal (a criticism of other participatory practices), but only because their primary aim was to produce a gallery exhibited work where participation is the means. Their presentation does not permit continued engagement, rather alienation and create an adversarial and unconstructive situation.

The works in *Double Agent* fail to address the concerns Bishop proposes of allowing multiple interpretations, addressing the presentation of works and a life beyond the social goal.

Narrating these times as art

Relational artists use external elements not normally associated with aesthetic characteristics, such as meetings, workshops, encounters, events, games and festivals. In seeking to understand this practice Nicolas Bourriaud finds it useful to ask 'what is it for?' and why use the 'forms of business' as a model? (Bourriaud 2001a: 45). In

addition Bourriaud asks ‘does this work permit me to enter into a dialogue? Could I exist, and how, in the space it defines?’ (Bourriaud 2002: 109). How original is the way the artist looks at this world? How do they materialise their relationship with the world? (Bourriaud 2001). Essentially these are the same questions that Bishop asks, but the expected outcomes are completely dissimilar.

Bourriaud acknowledges that relational art cannot dispense with aesthetic value, it is not purely ‘social’ or ‘sociological’ art, but it does use external elements normally disassociated from aesthetic characteristics. This argument does not convince Bishop, who critiques Bourriaud in ‘Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics’ (Bishop 2006c). Bishop describes relational works as ‘rather low-impact on appearance, including photography, video, wall texts, books, objects to be used, and leftovers from the aftermath of an opening event’ (Bishop 2004: 55). Bishop argues that without a sense of what the work or its medium is, as with installation art from which it derives, it lacks ‘self-reflexive criticality’, and becomes ‘a constantly changing portrait of the heterogeneity of everyday life and does not examine their relationship to it’ (Bishop 2004: 64-65). Instead there is an over-emphasis on the ‘artist-as-designer, function over contemplation and open-endedness over aesthetic resolution’ producing bland and innocuous works (Bishop 2004: 53).



Figure 18 Rirkrit Tiravanija
www.foodcrypt.com/2009/06/rirkrit-tiravanija/



Figure 19 Rirkrit Tiravanija *Untitled, (the raw and the cooked)* 2002 photo (c) KIOKU Keizo

A contemporary review by Carl Freedman in *Frieze* of *Traffic* in 1995, curated by Bourriaud at the Musee d'Art Contemporain in Bordeaux, quotes a participating artist saying that it was a 'great show, but the works aren't very good'. Although describing a few interesting works, the reviewer observes that the 'great show' in fact comprised not the exhibition but the experience of the artists in a week-long workshop prior to the show. The works themselves offer 'a sprawling mass of rough constructions, giant sculptures, messy forms, and the drone of scattered and contesting video presentations' (Freedman 1995).

Bourriaud himself suggests that it is possible to be disappointed by the objects on offer in an exhibition of relational art, but observes that this would be to miss the point. Instead the '*product of conviviality*' on view comprises the formal structure, the objects available and 'the fleeting image issuing from collective behaviour', so that the exhibition is not the micro-utopia created by the work itself (Guattari), but a representation of the conditions of production (Bourriaud 2002: 81). The gallery audience is witness to the event rather than participant in the experience. Even so Bourriaud suggests the gallery space is appropriate, because the aesthetic as well as the social and political content of the work needs to be judged. Further that the exhibition can translate real experience or reproduce alienation.

A subsequent exhibition *Touch* in 2002 (Art Institute, San Francisco) states Bourriaud's intention to articulate 'alternative social models...concrete interactions...collaborating or even examining social exchanges in a critical way' through a review of relational works since the 1990's (Bourriaud 2002b Guest curator's statement).

Kenneth Baker's review for the *San Francisco Chronicle* concludes the show is engaging but 'makes a weak case for defining a new category of "relational art"' (Baker 2002).

Glen Helfand reviewing the exhibition for *ArtForum* observes that mounting a traditional exhibition of works that seek to create an ‘invisible spark of interchange’ is bound to be ‘fraught with problems’ and once the opening is over there is only the



Figure 20 Christine Hill, *The Volksboutique Sales Pitch* 2000/2002



Figure 21 Christine Hill, *Sales Pitch*, 2000, performance



Figure 22 Andrea Zittel *Prototype for A to Z Pit Bed* (1995/2002),



Figure 23 Andrea Zittel *A to Z Pit Bed* (1995/2002),

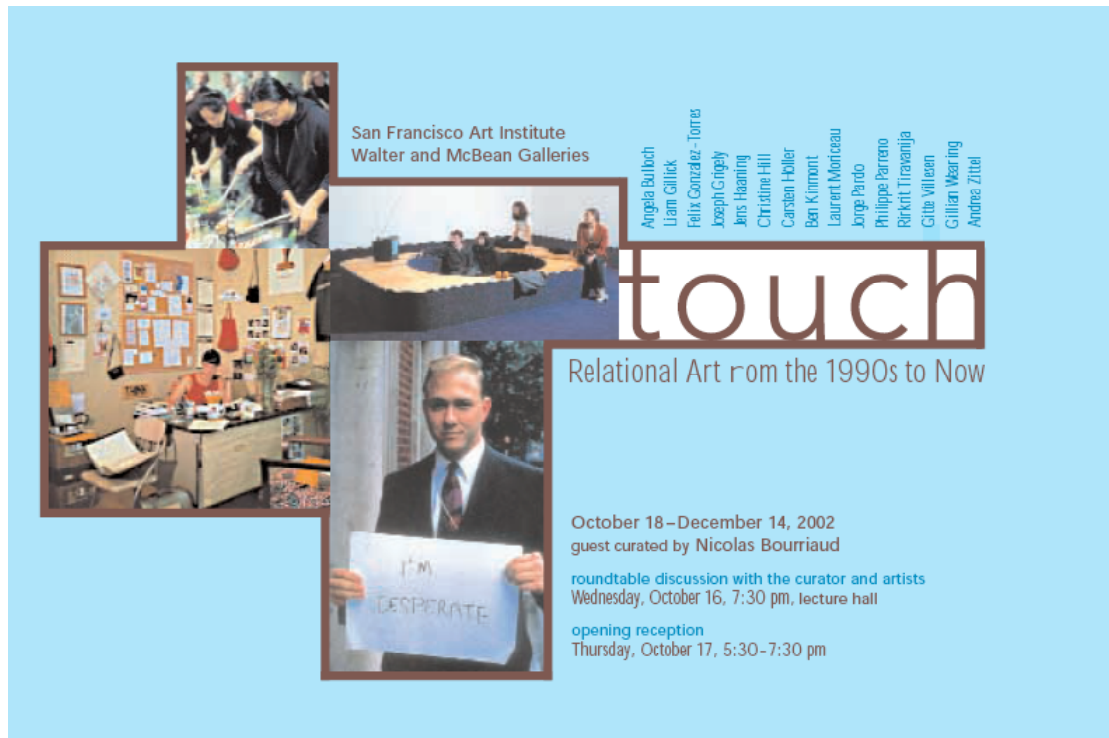


Figure 24 Postcard for *Touch* exhibition 2002

melancholic memory of social interchange. Similarly to the views expressed on Bishop's *Double Agent* of the frustration of the passive spectator, he asks if the work should have a visual form at all if there is no activation. Chris Cobb writing for *Stretcher* comments that there is a feeling of missing the party and although the works are engaging as art, 'to get it, as they say you had to be there' (Cobb 2002).

Despite Bourriaud's intentions within his exhibitions to portray relational art in an atmosphere more reflective of the works themselves and his claim that the gallery space is the correct space to assess these works, their full impact still does not come across. Participation is obviously required to animate the framework that remains in the gallery. Without participants part of the aesthetic criteria of the work is missing. Documentation of the events fails to re-animate other than to indicate a possibility of sociality, to which the viewer feels passive and excluded.

The works fail to communicate. Bourriaud suggests that operating within the gallery is the most appropriate space to balance the aesthetic, social and political elements of the works. However the new narrative is not demonstrated as a product of conviviality or through examining the relationship of the work to everyday life. As with Bishop the works visible in the gallery offer only the memory of social interchange and an experience as a passive spectator, dominated by the gallery space as an alienated social and privileged space.

Making provocative assumptions or whimsical re-enactments

For Kester successful communication strategies are essential in order to counter the modernist failure of communication of art practices other than through shock and incomprehension. Implied here is that communication strategies should also extend beyond the moment of participation itself to the exhibition of the work. However as we have already seen with Bishop and Bourriaud this communication is problematic.

Admitting that he gives less attention to visual aspects, Kester nevertheless asks

‘How to demarcate the limits of community art practice? How do we evaluate the relationship between collaborative interactions and the public installations and performances that result from them? What kind of ethical and dialogical relationship does the artist establish with her chosen constituency or with sponsoring agencies? What forms of knowledge (*as outcome*) are legitimate, and what forms of knowledge are understood a priori to be beyond the specialized skills of the artist?’ (Kester 2004:146, bracketed italics my addition).

Exploring some reasons for failure within the works themselves, Kester explores one work by Danish artist group Superflex, *Guarana Power* in 2003, and suggests an overly simplistic understanding of capitalism and market forces. Exploring other reasons for the failure of some dialogical works Kester quotes critic Joe Lewis ‘the trouble with a lot of politically motivated art is a failure of nerve...truly taking a risk means not knowing what’s going to happen in the end’ (Kester 2004:142). Kester also highlights

the dangers of ‘dialogical determinism: the naïve belief that all social conflicts can be resolved through the utopian power of free and open exchange’ (Kester 2004: 182).

This makes even more important Kester’s observation that communication strategies are essential. The *Groundworks* exhibition, 2005, in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania USA, of which Kester was curator, comprised in addition to the exhibition of international projects, a conference and long-term residencies in the Monongahela river valley in Pennsylvania organised by Tim Collins and Reiko Goto then of Carnegie Mellon University (Kester and Collins 2005; Kester 2005a).



Figure 25 Superflex *The Guarana Power* workshop in Maues, Brazil, 2003



Figure 26 Superflex *The Guarana Power* workshop in Maues, Brazil, 2003

In an on-line curator’s statement (Kester 2005b), Kester describes the intention of the exhibition to address the collaborative process with local residents, neighbourhoods and communities and direct political engagement with policy and planning departments and intervention to repair damaged landscapes around the theme of ecological repair. The exhibition was also intended to explore the boundaries of contemporary practice, to reflect critically on assumptions of the form of art, what effects can it achieve as well as challenging perceptions of the environment. The works themselves are characterised by a questioning stance about authorship involving a surrender to the ‘uncertainty of collaborative interaction’, and a relaxation of the *aesthetic* form of the

work where the ‘open-ended process of exchange’ is more important (Kester 2005b my italics).

However reviews again largely reflect the confused reception of the works. Mary Thomas writing in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* asks the question ‘is this art?’ Reflecting a discussion by the artists themselves, the art shifts the site from the exhibition to ‘the doing and the interaction inspired’, challenging the artist’s ‘unyielding individualism’ and the audience role as ‘passive observer’ (Thomas 2005b). Thomas however seems to feel more comfortable with the idea of these works as purely educative and informative rather than comprising a contemporary aesthetic. Of school and community visits to *Nine Mile Run* over a 3 year period, she observes that ‘through education, the project team does what artists have always done: present a new way of looking at things’. Whilst acknowledging that it is difficult to present the complexity of such large-scale projects, she wishes that they were more accessible to exhibition visitors who are not eco-artists or conservationists.



Figure 27 Helen and Newton Harrison’s installation: *Fecal Matters: A Proposal for Braddock, North Braddock, and the Lands Above 2005*

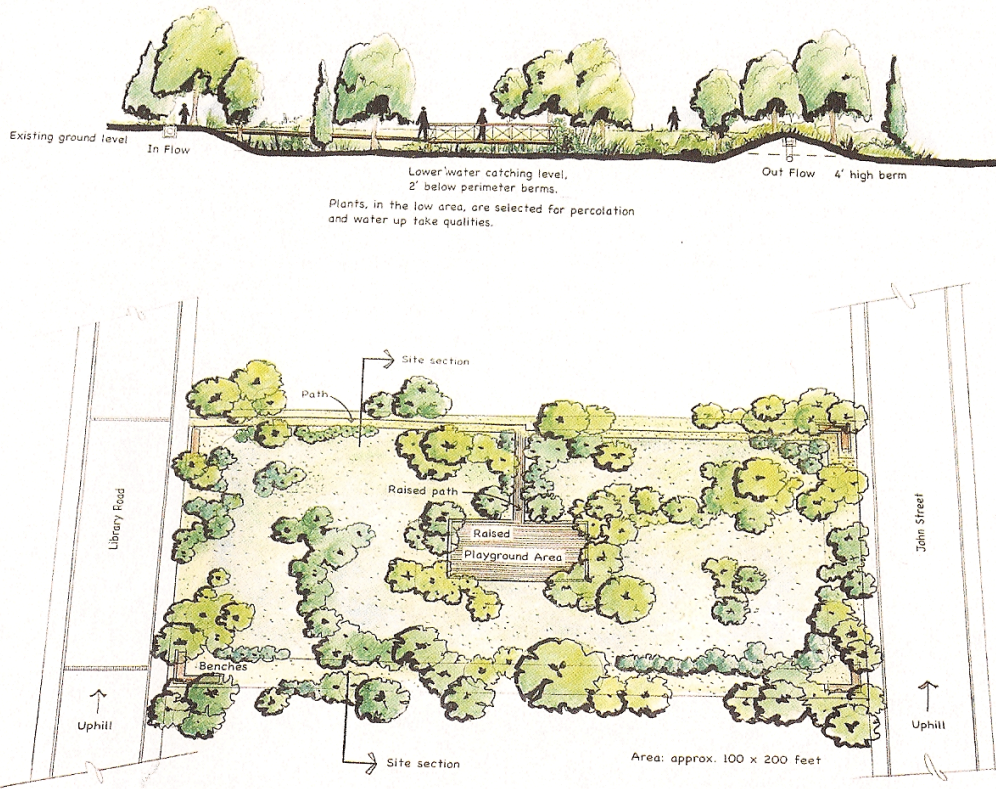


Figure 28 Helen and Newton Harrison: *Fecal Matters: A Proposal for Braddock, North Braddock, and the Lands Above 2005* Sketch plan

Artist and researcher Tim Collins, one of the initiating group for *Groundworks*, notes the exhibition themes of ‘creative social practices and critically informed dialogue’ which challenge authorship and originality. These themes Collins observes, were not taken up by the reviewers, the critics ‘focussed upon the challenges inherent to the process of the work itself, and how it might be understood by a gallery audience’ (Collins 2008 unpublished). Collins concludes ‘visual evidence can not be the sole focal point of critical engagement’ where there is an intention of change or transformation (Collins 2008 unpublished).

Unlike Bishop whose exhibition presents works that portray a singular idea, or Bourriaud where a singular event is portrayed as an installation, Kester is attempting to portray a process of engagement. The aesthetic expression of that process is often

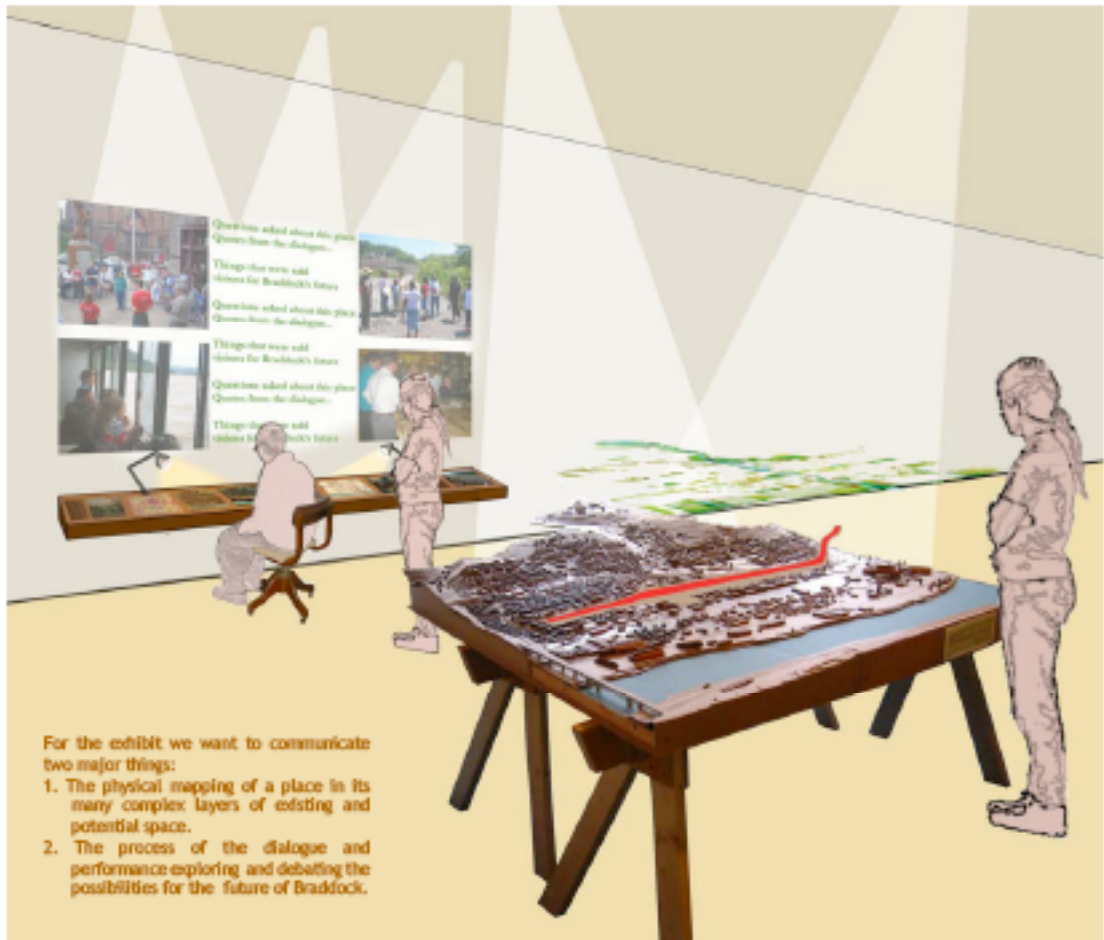
exhibited as a narrative that attempts to encompass the proposal, the engagement and its outcome. However it is evident that reviewers found it difficult to find the key to how to read the works as aesthetic processes. That key perhaps needs to be the singular image or object that encompasses the process. Instead of the value of aesthetic engagement, the reviewers recognised first the familiarity of the presentation as an educational tool and encountered the complexity of the material, which then precluded other readings of the work.

Essentially the assumption of the project is that artists are able to intervene in social, political and environmental issues, where creativity contributes something unique. However the exhibition does not appear to have proved that contribution.

There is no issue with participation and collaboration of the communities, since this is evident in the documentation of the process, but once again the exhibition viewer is passive. The evidence of social change is also evident in the proposals and exhibition, showing a range of projects that aim to enhance the existing post-industrial landscape. Although the viewer is given no criterion by which to judge the value and feasibility of the projects proposed.

The exhibition reviews indicate that the work's reception as other than art and confuses them with outcomes of familiar planning processes, which also utilise community consultation. Bourriaud recognised the dangers of over familiarity with business processes, requiring that these methods were justified aesthetically.

[Proposed Exhibition Format]



For the exhibit we want to communicate two major things:

1. The physical mapping of a place in its many complex layers of existing and potential space.
2. The process of the dialogue and performance exploring and debating the possibilities for the future of Braddock.

[3 Part Exhibition]

Model

A sculptural representation of the place. Suspended above the existing conditions are representations of the proposed highway and a diagram of the green infrastructure potential.

Wall Piece

2-4 large documentary photos from the final project events paired with a few lines of large text from the dialogue.

Information Counter

A display case containing more detailed information - explanatory text, images of the community, the process, the history and our mapping.

[Project Images]



Mapping Braddock's Possible Futures: The proposed I-96-Fayette Toll Road



Mapping Braddock's Possible Futures: An emergent green network



Mapping Braddock's Possible Futures: Possible Green Infrastructure



Community Dialogue: Meeting with elected officials



Community Dialogue: Urban Hike

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Figure 29 Looking for Braddock's Field Christine Brill and Jonathon Kline, proposal for Groundworks 2005

Each of the exhibitions analysed above fall short of demonstrating the claims made by each curator. The exhibitions and reviews also indicate the distance between the art practice outcome and the philosophical arguments of each commentator. This chapter also demonstrates the fundamental difference of Bishop's approach, which does not hold any similarity to my own practice and experience as an artist and audience member. However, I suggest, the similarity of Bishop's questions to Kester and Bourriaud reveal fundamental issues, of participation, the ambition of social change, aesthetic representation and commonly a failure to communicate beyond the participative event, which are still to be satisfactorily addressed.

Next I will build a working description of socially engaged art, based on my own practice and French cultural sociologist Michel de Certeau's research into the practice of the everyday. I use de Certeau as a means of clarification, verification and development of the discussion about socially engaged practice described above. This working description will attempt to address the identified issues and demonstrate through my art practice that socially engaged practice is able to balance an aesthetic presentation with a collaborative practice that continues to communicate and engages beyond the participative event. Revisiting de Certeau's research is of comparative value to socially engaged practice because of its basis in what de Certeau calls a rupture event (a change event in this case the May 1968 protests in Paris). His research traces back the impetus to change on a large scale, which in Paris he suggests began with dissatisfaction of the students with the university's autocratic teaching style (de Certeau 1984), and investigates individual everyday practices, creative resistance, for its origins. This mirrors the ambition of socially engaged artists to affect change through engagement with individuals and their situations, wherein the participants make a significant contribution to the outcome of the work. The practical research of

the everyday through the projects of Luce Giard and Pierre Mayol and the outcomes of that research may also indicate useful approaches for socially engaged art practice (de Certeau et al, 1998a).

Working description of socially engaged art practice

I propose a socially engaged art practice that has as its aim social change and aesthetic expression; that uses as its method engaged and responsible participation; uses constructive conversation as its medium and where the outcome is an expression of represented conversations.

This working description takes into account the issues identified above from contemporary commentators in which socially engaged art practice provokes the greatest discussion. These issues are participation, the ambition of social change, aesthetic representation and commonly a failure to communicate beyond the participative event, which can be explored through an aesthetic of presence. This is similar to Kester's description of socially engaged art practice, but takes into greater account the representation of the work after the participative event and the aesthetic outcome as a means of expanded engagement.

De Certeau describes an aesthetic of absence based on consumable fictions offered through the media, through which we are manipulated and which has become our social reality (Ward 2000: 25). Contrasting an aesthetic of absence with an art of the possible, here we could consider an aesthetic of presence in which people's stories and everyday experience are uncovered and revalued. Speech or conversation creates a new narrative that enables a distinction between the created reality, the consumable fictions and individual experience and indicates what is lacking. Through my art

practice I seek an aesthetic of presence, which will allow the uncovering of a new or alternative narrative comprised of believable objects.

Social change

I will indicate how contemporary writers sanction social change as an ambition of art practice and then explore the means by which that can happen within art practice. As we have already seen from my observation of the exhibitions, social change resulting from art works is generally a claim rather than verifiable. I will then explore through de Certeau the validity of the aim of social change and the means by which that might be observed.

Provocative assumptions or well-intentioned homilies?

Bishop argues that art should not be too closely associated with methods from other fields such as business and politics, as they are then in danger of being manipulated. Writer and consultant on community arts and participation in the arts, François Matarasso undertook landmark research on the social impact of the arts. Matarasso argues that social forces have always attempted to control art, through personal patronage and then through the market of cultural commerce. This occurs today most obviously through controlling financial resources, but that these fail because 'people use the very means of art to subvert the controls imposed and imagine alternative futures' (Matarasso 2004: 2).

Kester recognises socially engaged art practice through collaborative exchange as making 'provocative assumptions about the relationship between art and the broader social and political world (and commercial world) and about the kinds of knowledge that aesthetic experience is capable of producing' (Kester 2004: 9).

Bourriaud suggests that resulting from rationalisation and industrialisation, the content of our daily lives is excluded from reality, 'the images we see every day and our daily life are separate from one another in this void' and this is the place for art to perform. 'Art is an activity to establish a relation with the world we live in', and rather than attempting to be new is attempting to be relevant and useful, (Bourriaud 2001) taking 'as its theoretical horizon the realm of human interactions and its social context' (Bourriaud 2002: 14). The artist exposes the dominant narrative and may also offer alternatives, thereby 'reversing the authority of technology in order to make ways of thinking, living and seeing creative'. The artist operates in a free area where time, values and expectations are different, which utilises methods common outside of the art world in their work characterised as a 'mis-en-scene' (Bourriaud 2002b: 31-33).

Similarly Kester describes some means that artists use to engage in the social and political world. Artists work adjacent to or alongside political, market and social systems, using a 'whimsical re-enactment' of the systems of consultation, which still have a 'pragmatic effect' (Kester 2007:130,137). This operates through the principle of 'adjacency' on processes rather than everyday objects. Another means is the capacity to think critically and creatively across discipline boundaries. As well as enabling the experience of being part of a public or collective body, this allows individual critical reflection. Essentially all these means allow the art world to function as an open space within contemporary culture for questions, investigations and critical analyses not tolerated elsewhere, which allows the unexpected and unpredictable operating through a permeability of political and cultural spheres.⁴

For Bourriaud relational encounters are made of micro-utopias offering 'intentionally fragmentary experiments' offering 'new life possibilities' explored through 'alternative forms of sociability, critical models and moments of constructed conviviality' offering

better relations with our neighbours (Bourriaud, 2002: 44). These take place as a direct response to the service based global economy, where relational art re-edits culture at large to a culture of use.

The principle of unpredictability which Kester, Kwon and Bishop all agree is an essential part of socially engaged art practice offering 'unanticipated new insights' is however lacking in definition (Kester 2004:163). Bishop goes further and criticises artist Carsten Höller's refusal to document his work *The Boudouin experiment: A deliberate, non-fatalistic, large-scale group experiment in deviation* (Bishop 2001). The elusiveness of this event is likened to the fragility of claims for 'meaningful dialogue and political empowerment' generally unavailable in documentation of socially engaged art practice of 'well-intentioned homilies' and unquestioned ameliorative assumptions.

Tactics and strategies, the creative everyday and rupture events

De Certeau's research is able to offer an approach to understanding change both within everyday life and within society.

De Certeau's research was one contribution in a confluence of French publications on the everyday during 1950-80's also including George Perec, Roland Barthes, Henri Lefebvre and a wider group that also included Debord and Bourdieu. This discourse arising from different intellectual traditions reflected on the increasing colonisation, bureaucratisation and control of everyday life in France since the 1950's. Focusing on the near at hand instead of the exotic, these works aimed to find 'ways of teasing out the complex imbrication of the positive and the negative, alienation and freedom, within the weave of everyday life itself' (Sherringham 2006: 12), and to offer the possibility of life's own transformation. De Certeau's particular contribution was to see the everyday as offering the sense of possibilities, which were invigorated and

enriched by living. This challenged the contemporary literary and sociological tradition, which often portrayed the negative pressures of the self-enclosed family, modern housing, production line jobs and the anonymity of routine (Sherringham 2006: 3, 28).

The research that led to the publication of the two volumes of *The practice of the everyday*, was commissioned by the French Ministry of Culture in 1974. De Certeau's remit was to produce a report on future cultural prospects and orientations, the style of which should be visionary not statistical. De Certeau's research used his observations of the 1968 protests as a basis (de Certeau 1974). The May 1968 protests, de Certeau observed, were not a revolution, since normality was quickly resumed, but did represent a rupturing event. The events not only indicated what was lacking in contemporary France, but created a new space within the existing social, political and cultural sphere that did change the nation (Sherringham, 2006; Conley, 2000). De Certeau identified this lacking as the outcome of our recited society, where stories created by advertising and the media are recited until they become truth, which de Certeau calls 'objectless credibility' (de Certeau et al. 1998a: 187-8). The new space defined culture as a fluid set of practices based on the way we do things, where the everyday becomes as valuable as high culture and creates believable objects (Sherringham 2006: 219).

Similarly to Debord and Lefebvre, de Certeau perceived that society was becoming increasingly restricted and proscriptive. Resulting from rationalisation and industrialisation, the content of our daily lives is excluded from reality, 'the images we see every day and our daily life are separate from one another in this void' (Bourriaud 2002b: 31-33). Debord and Lefebvre both suggested our lived experience as a result is pauperised, however in contrast de Certeau understood the everyday to be the site of

creative resistance (Debord 1995: 16; Lefebvre 1991: 43). In chapter two I suggest that everyday resistance is not creative, but based on habit and impedes change.

However the recovery of individual confidence is essential as part of the process to instigate change. I suggest that investigation into what provokes rupture events and their link to the research of individual everyday has not been clearly established. It is this link that I consider further in this research.

De Certeau perceived a dominant *polemic* or knowledge that seeks to impose a culture and belief system, which he called a strategy of the institution of the real. De Certeau identified an alternative polemic explained as tracing 'one's own path through the resisting social system', a tactic, where information and knowledge is appropriated and restructured within the personal realm, barely visible or nameable but capable of 'overturning the imposing power' (de Certeau and Giard 1998b: 254).

The confluence of a series of tactics are capable of creating a rupture event which creates change such as took place following the 1968 protests. Here student protests and a general strike provoked by the increasingly restricted consumer and technical French society were looking for changes in education and employment. The protests were opposed not only by the Gaullist government but also the labour unions and the French communist party as indicators of the de Certeau's dominant polemic. Although an immediate political failure, May 1968 had a huge social impact, indicating the shift of French society to a more liberal ideal.

Complimentary to de Certeau's identification of the neglect of the masses in French society in the 1980's, today I suggest we have reality tv, reveal all magazines, and community consultation. These purport to tell the story of the everyday, but only select certain individuals or stories, which have media appeal. Other stories are

ignored and derided as unviable and ridiculous, as de Certeau also observes.

Community consultation although apparently seeking the opinion of local people about an issue of concern often happens after the decision has been taken or is ignored in the decision making process.

In addition to the increasing homogenisation of culture, we are now faced with the effects of climate change. Arguably this is the most important issue facing society today. There is an apparent business as usual approach from government and a lack of agreement about the scientific data and the means to combat climate change amongst nation states resulting in watered down statements that effect no change as demonstrated in the recent Copenhagen Climate Change conference. However society is increasingly aware of the necessity of a new approach in order to combat climate change. Once again as with May 1968, the necessity for change is apparent, but there has been no rupture event as yet sufficient to force a change of approach on the dominant culture.

De Certeau offers an approach through which the larger picture of social change can be envisaged through rupture events, and a means of examining the tactics and everyday lives through which such change accumulates. The issue of change will also be taken further in the Chapter Two Environmental Behaviour.

Participation / The artist as change agent

Why participation?

Kester highlights the importance of a positive contribution of participation as the site of engagement, where the participant fundamentally contributes to the outcome of the work. This avoids the works as interactive, where a person follows direction or

participates in a controlled manner, or manipulative here the participant is forced into adopting a role.

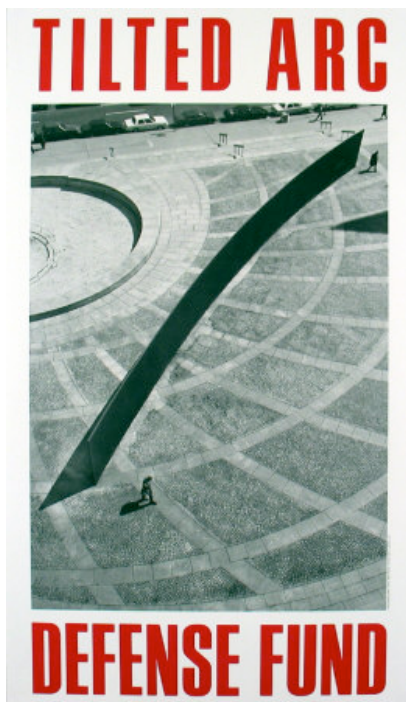
De Certeau, offers a supportive interpretation of an individuals' participation in change and the everyday. His exploration of the everyday offers the means of tracing a personal path and focuses attention on the participant rather than the artist. This alternative polemic of the creative everyday is an empowering tool for participants. In fact the alternative polemic can only be traced through engagement with individuals where the emphasis is on the particularities of the individual and the story of the individual can be uncovered and recognised as holding the potential for change. Knowledge of the everyday reveals something of its opposite, namely culture as a whole and which can function as *Kairos*, a seizing of the moment, allowing a transpositional shift.

In our contemporary society positive reaction to climate change is more obviously visible in community initiatives such as Transition Network (2007) and on an individual level, rather than through local government, county or national government as witnessed through the lack of agreement at the recent Copenhagen climate change summit in 2009.

The importance of a responsible participative element in artwork that takes place outside of the gallery space is demonstrated by Kester's analysis of public projects in the US. Kester compares the effect of abstraction on Public Art, which because it effectively excluded the public, through its espousal of an authoritative elite, led to the rejection of some public works for instance Richard Serra's *Tilted Arc*. Here support for the sculpture arose from the art world and opposition from the local community

and Plaza users (Kester 2004, 128). The judgement resulting from the public hearing describes both the artist and the local community as

‘victims of our earlier governmental process problems...Whatever scars *Tilted Arc* may leave within the lower Manhattan community and the art world, however, it is an episode which should be valued as a difficult, but nonetheless valuable, learning experience’ (Jordan et al. 1987: 170-1; Senie and Webster 1992).



Figures 30-32 Richard Serra *Tilted Arc*, 1981 deconstructed 1989



The artist and the local community are characterised as victim. The former because of the lack of integrated planning and decision-making processes and the latter because of the lack of consultation.

Using Guattari, Bourriaud describes an ideal ‘ecosopic’ practice comprising ‘an ethical-cum-political articulation between the environment, the social and subjectivity’ (Bourriaud 2002:101). But, warns Bourriaud, art as an emancipatory and political tool

will depend on how artists deal with the ethical issue of dealing with people. In a covert criticism of Bishop, Bourriaud is uncomfortable with work where the relationship between the artist and participants becomes 'sado-masochistic' and 'subjected to a repressive ideology' (Bourriaud 2002: 77-8).

As we have already seen Bishop advocates the use of participants as a means to achieve an aesthetic work. Bishop also ignores other work researching co-operative participation. Matarasso reported on the social impact of participation in community arts in 1997. He points to an important difference between the experiences of participants and an audience, which result from the experience and outcome of participation. Specifically what matters is 'the relationships, between participant and professional, between intentions and means, between decider and decided, between art and society.' (Matarasso 1997: 86) Whilst Matarasso acknowledges the over bureaucratisation of community practice and the confused relationship with the UK government's social inclusion policies, his observations of the benefits of participation run counter to Bishop's accusations of social ameliorisation.

Matarasso observes that 'art shapes and articulates values...(and) is key to (the) ability to participate autonomously in democratic society' (Matarasso 2005: 2) and 'is central to how people experience, understand and then shape the world' (Matarasso 1997: 98). However whilst changes are possible both at a personal and community level, these are 'by-products of an artistic intervention, not its purpose', which are also produced by other kinds of participatory activities. 'What participation in the arts, and only participation in the arts, can do is widen the range of people who engage with, question, challenge, re-imagine and revive our cultural life' (Matarasso 2005: 3). This cultural diversity is valuable because 'it provides a deep source of ideas, ways of seeing and values; it widens the range of possibilities...makes it easier for individuals to say

what they really think...it enables other voices, and specifically those which the market fails to nurture, to develop or be heard' (Matarasso 2005: 3).

Kester's description of dialogic practice based in immersive interaction acknowledges the importance of participation. As I have already indicated in my analysis of the contemporary exhibitions of socially engaged art practice, the fact of participation as part of this practice is not questioned, that is evident. However what is not as evident is the quality of that participation, nor the representation of participation as an aesthetic quality of the artwork after the participative event itself, for instance in documentation or exhibition.

I suggest contemporary commentators describe and theorise the conditions of participation, but the practice of the everyday that underpins participation and the reason why participation itself is of value to this practice appears unclear across the literature. De Certeau's understanding of individual creativity of the everyday, supports Kester's interpretation of participation and offers us a means of seeing participation as creative and an understanding that its outcome could comprise a collaborative artwork.

The role of the artist

De Certeau's research observed the practice of the everyday. The everyday de Certeau argues does not need facilitated resistance, and defies the categorisation and imposition of study and culture, in fact de Certeau considered people as able within themselves to be creators or users instead of an homogenised audience, utilising the everyday as a means of resistance.

This appears contradictory to the work of artists engaging in the social world making artworks from collaboration. Nevertheless there are clues within de Certeau's research as to how such a practice might work.

The next stage of de Certeau's research was to identify the ways of operating for everyday life and elaborate a means of mapping these practices. This mapping should not offer a representation of the everyday, which de Certeau suggests would destroy its intrinsic character, rather showing how the everyday can create change. This occurs through an operativity of communication as agency (ie conversation). Communication offers a 'bartering object in the network of family and friends' by which knowledge can be exchanged and extended as 'a reserve of knowledge...concealed within artisanry' (de Certeau 1984: 67).

I propose the role of the artist is to reveal the nature of the everyday through conversation combined with collaborative interaction. The introduction of new concepts, which challenge everyday practices in combination with the existing reservoir of knowledge can create a new narrative. This new narrative can be extended both to other individuals and the wider community to enable change. This concurs the role of the artist described in Kester's dialogic practice.

My art practice indicates people may say what they think you want to hear and need encouragement to voice their opinions and reassurance that their own opinion is okay (discussed further Chapter 4). This indicates the need for facilitators of the everyday. To clarify then the socially engaged artist utilises participation to bring people together through a tactic (an artwork), which enables them both to realise their own inherent everyday creativity and enable a collective knowledge or rupture event that holds the potential for transformation.

Following de Certeau's proposals for the artist to encourage that change, s/he needs to relinquish authority of the work. The work should therefore not be too proscriptive, allowing space for the participants to take ownership. The artist is there to facilitate the individual and personal tactic in order to provoke change.

De Certeau warns that this essential participative element should not be ignored nor the collective inquiry forgotten. If ignored the result ignores or adapts knowledge of the everyday and creates a fictional place and acquires authorship, but still purports to be of the everyday.

Bourriaud proposes that the best contemporary work exposes a 'democratic concern offering a reality based on relationship through make-believe' (Bourriaud 2002: 57).

Contrary to Bishop's argument, this display of the democratic concern is essential to avoid authoritarian work, which she argues implies an intolerant society. In this democratic concern there is no precedence of artist and participant or ownership of originality, but an on-going negotiation of relationships. The artist is an 'operator of meaning' or artist-cum-operator and active agent (Bourriaud 2002: 93). The participant takes part in beholding, partaking and creating the meaning *not just interpreting* within a space and a time span, therefore co-authorship must be acknowledged.

The active agent is essential because as De Certeau observes society is duped by consumption and the media, and the individual is increasingly abstracted from community (discussed further in Chapter 2) and is unable to find its voice of opposition. Society is also faced with the necessity of significant lifestyle and community change caused by climate change and the depletion of resources.

Operating with a democratic concern leads to a co-authored practice between the

artist and participants where the works could instigate change. Here the work is not the end of the creative process, but the instigator of a possible new narrative.

Kester argues that the autonomous and unsanctioned artist acts through disruption and manipulation, regardless of their constituents and this is a position to be avoided. The collaborative process and empathetic identification (Kester 2004: 150) between artist and collaborators are therefore essential components of dialogical art practice. Similarly to de Certeau, Bourdieu suggests that the more people are isolated, silent and voiceless through globalisation and neo-liberalism (Bourdieu 1991: 206) and coerced by examples of Levinas rhetorical language⁵, therefore the more they rely on delegates to speak for them.

Critical of Kwon's and Bishop's promotion of the right of artistic authorship, Kester warns of adopting a 'pedagogical relationship' to audience, explored through Bourdieu's proposal of the political delegate. The danger of embezzlement lies in an assumed authority to speak on behalf of a community or group of participants, which can empower the delegate/artist 'politically, professional and morally' potentially at the expense of the community itself (Kester 2004: 239).

Kester suggests that the artist achieves signifying authority derived from the collaborative process, the moment of transference, and an empathetic understanding. Empathetic identification is drawn from the feminist concept of procedural knowledge in which the dialogic participant attempts to understand the social context, through an embedded practice. This is counter to Nancy's proposal of community as a means of making sense of fragmented existences, where transformation can only be achieved through seismic shifts with the artist as authoritative disruptor, as Kwon and Bishop suggest.⁶ Empathetic identification allows a reciprocal exchange, where the artist is

able to avoid that delegation and by implication empower the individuals themselves. Kester suggests this is achieved through a sustained relationship enabling insights, which in turn enables the artist to work effectively and preserve their critical autonomy.

I suggest that there are other ways in which to establish the empathetic shift Kester sees as key to the artist's role to expand our senses. I achieve this through exposing my own behaviour as a provocation for engagement. This immediately disarms the expectation of the viewer/participant who expects the artist or presenter to impart information rather than propose an exchange amongst equals. Within the field of environmental change this also avoids accusations of polemic, where the artist/activist might seek to proselytise.

An example outside art practice, which uses empathetic process and maps closely my own process is described by action researcher Julie Marshall. Avoiding accusations of polemic she describes her process of 'living life as inquiry' and 'how [she] applies notions of inquiry as method to many areas of [her] professional and personal activities and how research ideas are generated and tested through my life' (Marshall 1999).

The way she describes this process mirrors art practice most closely, so that she describes using 'a range of beliefs and strategies and ways of behaving which encourage me to treat little as fixed, finished, clear-cut.' Her method she describes as being open to continual questioning, finding ways to engage actively; monitoring how what she does relates to what she espouses; reviewing this explicitly; and seeking to maintain curiosity.

Bourdieu's proposal of the political delegate and de Certeau's interventionist expert, although positions to be avoided when exploitative, also identify the usefulness of a

staged interaction. This acts as a point of focus, which enables an exploration of collaborative understanding. Bourriaud describes this position as an active agent working with a democratic concern. I suggest contemporary society exhibits more manipulative domination over individuals than that of de Certeau in 1980's France (for further discussion see Chapter 2). So the artist still has a role, facilitating the recovery of participant resistance, encouraging the voice of the participant and enabling individual re-evaluation. This is comparable to my own proposal of the artist as change agent, which will be explored in the next chapter on environmental behaviour change.

Encouraging participation and its outcome

De Certeau's research sought to 'bring to light the clandestine forms taken by the dispersed, tactical and make-shift creativity of groups or individuals already caught in the nets of "discipline" (and reveal) the network of an antidiscipline' (de Certeau 1984: xiv). In this collective inquiry, 'the task consists not in substituting a representation of the ordinary or covering it up with mere words, but in showing how it introduces itself into our techniques...and how it can reorganize the place from which discourse is produced' (de Certeau 1984: 5).

This creates a challenge to the artist about encouraging participation and representation of the everyday and about the fundamental assumption of participation within socially engaged art practice. I suggest this demonstrates the difference between participatory art described by Bishop, and dialogical practice Kester proposes.

Acknowledging the re-focus on the individual as participant, enabled to uncover their own path through the everyday, then allows unpredictability to flourish.

Unpredictability occurs because events are not controlled, focusing on the participant

as the potential holder of creative resistance should allow control of the artwork to be relaxed in order to reveal the tactics of appropriation and creative resistance.

It is this notion of common practice as appropriation, which creates the energy enabling everyday knowledge to be self-transcending. So rather than passive users willing to be guided by external stimulus, de Certeau identifies the practice of the individual shown through something that works in everyday life (know-how) which is passed on as an informal bank of passive knowledge or a heritage of practical knowledge (Sherringham 2006: 36-38). An artisan form of communication, this bank contains useful advice or tips from know-how rather than specialised knowledge that assist us in understanding events that affect us (Benjamin, 2006: 43). This knowledge does not replace specialised knowledge but offers a different alignment. The artist therefore becomes the narrator of practical knowledge.

Critic and curator Simon Sheikh, teaches Critical Studies at Malmo Art Academy in Sweden. He explores the idea of a post-public characterised by post-modern fragmentation, which he suggests results from global capitalism. This develops the ideas of Debord and Lefebvre, which Bourriaud also discusses (Debord 1995; Lefebvre 1991). Sheikh describes identity politics recognising the assertion of identity by the marginalised as a demand to be recognised as a counter-public. Sheikh's idea of counter-public leads into my idea of public as pooled knowledge, expanded later in this chapter, where the everyday is not only recognised but assumes a power to change (Sheikh 2001, 2004).

An important area that my practice explores is the revaluing of vernacular and individual experience that can contribute to knowledge of environmental behaviour and change. This knowledge is not imposed from the top down, but rather a means of

uncovering the already existent knowledge that even we ourselves undervalue. The re-discovery and uncovering of vernacular knowledge relating to environmental behaviour, can offer a different response from that of the global market place (de Certeau's dominant strategy or narrated reading), which encourages us to over consumption suggested by de Certeau, Bourdeiu and Bourriaud (explored in Chapter 2). This equates to de Certeau's ordinary culture that offers a fundamental diversity and so contributes to the idea of public as pooled knowledge. De Certeau's operativity of communication as agency, builds a robust individual cultural identity, which offers the means to readdress this issue.

Socially engaged art practice needs to avoid overly controlled or structured situations in which the creativity of the everyday cannot flourish. Socially engaged arts' use of conversation as both a medium and in my practice an outcome compares to de Certeau's orality. This offers a basis for relationship and to understand 'the essential space (*and contribution*) of community' and might be represented through recorded fragments and montages (de Certeau and Giard 1998b: 252 *my italics*) as pooled knowledge.

De Certeau allows a revaluation of the participants' role, which refocuses socially engaged art practice on the participant, rather than the artist and concurs with Kester's description. As a result the artist's role is very different from that of the traditional singular author. The task is to reveal the ordinary and understand how it can offer transformation. This might be revealed through unpredictability encouraged by a relaxation of control within the artwork allowing the participant's creativity to flourish. This creates an informal bank of passive knowledge or a heritage of practical knowledge, of which the artist becomes a narrator. This pooled knowledge inherently carries the propensity for change, both of the individual as exchange takes place and

the surrounding community and society who witness the work. The creation of this pooled knowledge takes place through unrestricted conversational exchange.

Aesthetics

Aesthetics then is created in a space arising from an event of the individual's 'everyday', which is revealed through conversation. The accumulation of conversation becomes a bank of pooled knowledge. The final aesthetic expression of the socially engaged art work then becomes the expression of the pooled knowledge as de Certeau's believable object, which becomes available to people viewing the work, during and after the participative event, as a provocation to consider their own opinions or actions as an aesthetic of presence. The aesthetic situation enables individuals to re-evaluate their experience and to re-integrate this new knowledge into their understanding and then decide whether to change their habits and behaviour, although change does not necessarily occur.

I suggest this would avoid the extended expression of process in exhibitions, which in *Groundworks* became overly familiar with community consultation and lacked the key that enabled an aesthetic reading of the works. In fact Kester observes that because dialogical practice comprises an ensemble of effects that balancing the tensions is asking too much of any one project. However the outcomes are not always the expected or perfectly designed and crucially should not be edited in order to present a better outcome. The portrayal of the ensemble of effects could appear, as Bishop observes, to result in a lack of consideration of outcome, and privilege the conditions of participation.

In *Traffic* and *Touch* Bourriaud describes the product of conviviality, not as the experience of the micro-utopia itself, but the conditions of production expressed as a

medium of experience, however he also observes the works can be visually disappointing (Bourriaud 2002: 81). Although he states the exhibition needs to translate real experience, the reviews observe it is not achieved.

Kester also points out that communication of the work is essential to counter the comparable modernist failure of communication. However communicating those outcomes in *Groundworks* is no more successful than with Bourriaud or Bishop's exhibitions.

Bishop criticises these works as unaesthetic and needlessly suppressing visual gratification. She continues

'the urgency of this *political* task has led to a situation in which such collaborative practices are automatically perceived to be equally important *artistic* gestures of resistance: There can be no failed, unsuccessful, unresolved, or boring works of collaborative art because all are equally essential to the task of strengthening the social bond' (Claire Bishop 2006a: 180).

Despite my criticism of Bishop's approach, I find this observation valid in my own experience. However this does not mean that all such practice should be dismissed, but that the issue of aesthetic representation needs to be addressed whilst understanding the expanded process that is apparent in the works. The expression of pooled knowledge could I suggest focus the process of the participative event into a clearly expressed outcome, which I describe as represented conversations.

Next I will go onto describe some expressions of the everyday. We should understand the everyday is the site of practices, of things being done, rather than a descriptive system. They can be grasped by the 'interplay of the individual and the collective, the significant and the insignificant, the singular and the plural, identity and difference, the cumulative and the non-cumulative.' (Sherringham 2006: 363)

In his concluding chapter Michael Sherringham examines approaches to researching the everyday. A summation of four parameters that characterise the everyday, are:

- The everyday is the whole of lived experience and activities or practices such as cooking, shopping, or travelling, which even taken together cannot represent the whole.
- The everyday comprises community
- The everyday is the place of repetition, not the place of an event. Repetition as ‘endless variation and sedimentation which...turn the quotidian into a sphere of invention’ (Sherringham 2006: 361)
- The everyday becomes apparent in practices that weave contexts together but which resist reduction to statistics, proscribed properties and data.

It is possible to develop a project as a practitioner of the everyday. The project is: interrogative; focuses on a repetitive set of steps or range of actions; operating within a neutral framework with an undetermined goal, and so demonstrating the everyday. The project encourages the suspension of abstract or external definition and creates a breathing space, creating ‘a certain play in the machine through a stratification of different and interfering kinds of functioning’ (de Certeau 1984: 30). In essence a ‘container of a *narrativity* for everyday practices’ (de Certeau 1984: 70), the outcome of these actions ‘are no longer the data of our calculations, but rather the lexicon of users practices’ (de Certeau 1984: 31).

The outcome could be a report of synthesised information as done by Luce Giard or François Bon⁷, or a redirection of attention allowing a shift of awareness. De Certeau theorises a *perruque* in the dominant economic system, which is the worker doing something for themselves within the employers time and materials ‘putting one over

on the established order' through a creative ruse (de Certeau 1984: 26). He proposes,

'we can divert the time...we can make textual objects...we can play the game of free exchange...we can create networks of connivances and sleights of hand; we can exchange gifts; and in these ways we can subvert the law...in the scientific factory...To deal with everyday tactics in this way would be to practice an "ordinary art" to find oneself in the common situation' (de Certeau 1984: 28)

So the artwork as a representation of conversation, should be a container of narratives, reflecting the polyphony of voices and contributions from the preceding events, operating as a perruque.

Bourriaud theorised the real experience, where the work is not the end of the "creative process", a finished product, but the instigator of a fresh set of activities (Bourriaud 2002b: 19). This he proposes recognises a preceding narrative and creates a new one, where I suggest not only the participants, but the work and by extension the artists and audience hold the potential to become active agents.

Similarly to Bourriaud, Kester identifies a principle of adjacency to social, political and market systems, which enable the artist to create a unique space of reflection. As with Bourriaud, this space offers alternatives to the status quo and dominant narrative. Adjacency challenges the concepts of knowledge that art is capable of generating and encourages unpredictability. I suggest by refocusing on the participant unpredictability is encouraged, because their knowledge is outside the artists' control. This avoids an over control of the participative event, which would give a false representation of the everyday.

In understanding the implication of research on the everyday to socially engaged art practice, it is not the everyday itself that participation seeks to reveal, but aspects of the everyday, practices such as cooking or eco-renovation. Practices are doing as a

kind of thinking, inventive interaction, where people know more than we imagine, demonstrated by the improvised variations in the way we live. This corresponds closely to my understanding of participation reached through my art practice, where the artist as change agent encourages confidence of participants in their own opinions discussed in the next chapter. It also corresponds to my proposal of the value of vernacular knowledge as an under-valued resource and when drawn together as a means of transformation.

De Certeau warns that neglect of the collective inquiry creates a fictional plane acquiring authorship. Instead the task is about revealing the creativity of individual responses and the network of an anti-discipline, which can challenge the dominant culture. This can be achieved through the use of a collaborative artwork as tactic, creating a demonstration of everyday resistance. Here the outcome is a believable object, something recognisable by individuals, but revealing of a new way of seeing the everyday, an aesthetic of presence, where the artist becomes a narrator of knowledge. This extends beyond the event of participation and requires considering how to achieve the representation of knowledge.

Communication/Representing Conversations

I extend the notion of the aesthetic of presence to the need for everyone to re-assert their identity and confidence in their own ability and thinking, to be unafraid to ask questions. Sheikh develops the idea of a post-public as a status of development rather than a public of static and competing interests as proposed by Bishop and Kwon, a dematerialisation and expansion of what could be considered public. Using an aesthetic of presence that reveals everyday experience, this recognises the fluid formation of community (possibly Laclau and Mouffe's coming together knowledge), and offers a notion of 'public' as pooled knowledge.

Kwon and Kester extend the notion of site specific to a discursive site (Kester 2004: 171; Kwon 2004: 3,30). This offers a discursive space of critical consciousness created by the artist, separate from coercion and inequality normally present in daily life adhering to 'performative rules' (Kester 2004: 107). Linked to a real issue that challenges the conceptual attitude of the artist and participants, Kester suggests that although not guaranteeing a consensus, this discursive space holds an authority.

How can that authority be achieved and expressed? This implies that the communication and means expression of the outcome of discursive site in addition to the expression or documentation of participative activity could be significant. I suggest neither Kester nor Kwon go further and explore this and for both the discursive site as a physical community or site or interaction was the focus of their research. Kester has begun to discuss this issue with his paper on the Superflex project *Wazunga means White Man* (Kester 2007). As I discuss above in relation to the exhibitions of Bishop, Bourriaud and Kester there is some difficulty in communicating beyond the

participative event and I propose the idea of representing conversations as a means to address this.

Discussing Maria Lind's article on socially engaged practitioners Oda Projesi (Claire Bishop 2006a; Lind 2004) Bishop observes she omits an interesting aesthetic discussion that could be had about the work of discussing 'dialogue as medium' and 'the significance of dematerializing a project into social process' and where the aesthetic outcome might then occur. This admits the exploration of dialogue with individuals and groups as an understanding of site where dialogue itself is of value. Extending the representation of participation, Bishop argues artworks should 'have a life beyond an immediate social goal' as an aesthetic expression (Claire Bishop 2006a) addressing one of her concerns. I suggest representing conversations where the work becomes an expression of dialogue as knowledge, has the potential to achieve the communication and aesthetic expression that appears to be lacking in the reception of socially engaged art practice.

De Certeau acknowledges a 'fundamental diversity', which resists global restructuring, which in art practice is able to re-value the vernacular as unrecognised knowledge. Also he acknowledges the exchange of that newly found knowledge through local networks and situations of conviviality rather than through recognised paths of dissemination.

Sheikh's idea of counter public and an aesthetic of presence derived from de Certeau, allows the formation of a temporary community in which participants can re-acquire their own confidence as individuals and assert their collective experience and knowledge. Vernacular experience as knowledge understands how to live in a

contemporary society, which can be shared through participation and subsequent re-engagement to redefine the public of which we are part.

That knowledge can be represented as a new narrative comprised of believable objects arising from pooled knowledge. Essentially creating a community of common sensibility where the representation of that community is an extension of the site. This represented conversation is characterised by empathetic understanding and the suppression of self-interest, a discursive ethics and interaction, which allow unexpected insights.

In my own practice I create a community based on a common sensibility, focused around a shared experience and ambition of personal contribution to environmental change. Through participation and conversation my practice enables the exploration of and reflection on our own personal values as well as when brought together reflecting that of society. That community of common sensibility is represented by my proposal of the extension of public as pooled knowledge as represented conversations. This would also address Bishop's concerns about socially engaged art practice over-emphasis on open-ended works rather than aesthetic resolution, whilst offering more than participant manipulation and visual gratification.

I suggest that an understanding of the represented conversations as a public of pooled knowledge that can be represented, might allow a different communication of the work beyond the event itself. This does not only represent the means of participation as an easily discarded second-hand experience, but implicates the viewer into the community created.

The next chapter takes the issues discussed here of socially engaged art practice and parallels those concerns with that of another research area of environmental

behaviour change. I also reveal an impediment to the individual creativity of the everyday, which environmental behaviour research interprets as habit, and which obstructs change.

¹ Representation of conversation is identified as key to understanding the place of participation in socially engaged art practice and sharing knowledge and expanding community.

² Recognition of the contribution of the individual and the power of collaboration is acknowledged in contemporary writing on participatory societies eg Leadbetter, Charles (2008), *We-think* (London: Profile Books Ltd). Spannos, Chris (ed.), (2008), *Real utopia: Participatory society for the 21st century* (Oakland, Edinburgh, West Virginia: AK Press). Tapscott, Dan and Williams, Anthony D (2006), *Wikinomics: How mass collaboration changes everything* (London: Portfolio, Penguin). Shirky, Clay (2008), *Here comes everybody: How change happens when people come together* (London and New York: Penguin).

³ A useful starting point for these authors is Re-publicArt 'The artists as producers', <www.republicart.net/disc/aap/index.htm>, Shirky *Here comes everybody: How change happens when people come together*.

⁴ Artist Wolfgang Zingl of Wochenklausur (also Littoral and the Harrison's), who seek to expand the boundaries of art through a problem solving practice situates itself in the art world because of 'the capacity to think critically and creatively across disciplinary boundaries'. Krzysztof Wodiczko, 'Critical art would produce "aesthetic-critical interruptions, infiltrations and appropriations that question the symbolic, psycho-political and economic operations of the city"' (Wodiczko in Kester, 2006:24). An outcome of Park Fiction's project in Hafenstrasse, Hamburg, to establish a local community park, was the observation that 'art and politics made each other more clever' Kester, Grant (2007), 'Wazunga mean white men: Superflex and the limits of capitalism', *Working in Public* (Aberdeen: On the Edge Research, Grays School of Art, Baerdeen).

⁵ See Robbins, J 1999, *Altered reading: Levinas and literature*, Stanford: Stanford University Press

⁶ see Jean-Luc Nancy, 'Of being-in-common' in Miami Theory Collective, ed., *Community at loose ends*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press p4, Nancy, Jean-Luc (1991), *The inoperative community* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press).

⁷ François Bon took the same train each Thursday between Paris and Nancy over the winter of 1998-9 and noted what he saw from the window of the social and economic change. Accumulating lists of words and items seen and comments, writings and ideas through observation and directions for the project. These were reported in sixteen untitled and unnumbered sequences unified by a repeated phrase or rhetorical device. Some writing in English is at www.tierslivre.net/eng/category/actu/

Chapter 2 Environmental behaviour research***Links to socially engaged practice***

There are distinct parallels between socially engaged art practices as I have defined it in the previous chapter and environmental behaviour research. In addition to the arena of my art practice, the parallels mean that environmental behaviour research can assist the discussion of socially engaged practice.

Socially engaged practice claims to identify key issues that relate to the everyday lives of participants in which some new insight can be achieved, or some change is identified as appropriate. These issues directly relate to the participants' values and way of life. Environmental behaviour research seeks to uncover the reasons for people's habits and values, both psychological and social, which affect lifestyle choices.

Participants are identified as key actors in the environmental change process essential to bring in at the earliest opportunity. In socially engaged practice the participant is identified as central to the process of a collaborative creativity, which contributes to change.

Social conversation is identified as the prime mechanism for changing environmental values and attitudes contributing to change. Dialogue as the discursive site I have identified in socially engaged practice creating a community of common sensibility, as a fundamental principle.

This research also examines the intention of socially engaged artists to intervene in the 'broader social, economic and political processes' (Kwon 2004: 3) and to be provocative about 'the kinds of knowledge that aesthetic experience is capable of producing' (Kester 2004: 9). Environmental behaviour research has identified the

effectiveness of change champions or change agents to effect behaviour change. This is comparable to socially engaged artists claim to be able to affect change. Understanding the reasons for the identification and influence of environmental change agents should offer additional insights into the role of the socially engaged artist and assist in understanding their contribution to knowledge and change.

Environmental behaviour research has used psychology and sociology in order to analyse how change happens. Claims for change in socially engaged behaviour are largely based on unsubstantiated claims. Therefore a practice that utilises behaviour change research should be able to understand the behaviour of participants and understand change that may be provoked by the artwork.

Sustainable Lifestyles and everyday resistance

Socially engaged art practice operates within the context of a perceived need for questioning assumptions or change. Here change is normally evolved from a local issue, rather than the more remote global impetus of climate change, but environmental behavioural research links back to the everyday by looking at the reasons why change fails to occur at the individual level. Bourriaud identified the void between daily life and the media images of lifestyle created by industrialisation, globalisation and on line consumerism, as the arena for a relational art practice in which interhuman exchange becomes the aesthetic object (Bourriaud, 2002:3). Kester similarly identifies the socio-political relationships involved in collaborative working with real issues as fundamentally aesthetic. Both establish a link beyond contemporary cultural issues to the wider issues of society.



Figure 33 Radio One DJ's Zoe Ball and Chris Evans: pictured car sharing for the DETR 1999 campaign *Doing your Bit*



Figure 34 Chris Eubank 'Clean Air Spouting Rubbish' for the DETR 1999 campaign *Doing your Bit*, with voice over exhorting us to do something about car exhaust emissions

Environmental behaviour research seeks to understand how change occurs in relation to climate change. This area of research started in the 1990's, as the result of the failure of the first UK Government media campaigns on climate change to achieve any change of individual behaviour or lifestyle (Collins et al. 2003: 29-34; DETR 2000; Hooper and Wright 2001). Research since then has attempted to identify the impediments to and identify more effective means to enable behaviour change and to achieve more sustainable lifestyles.

The most significant work to date on sustainable lifestyles was conducted by researcher, Dr Tracey Bedford (Bedford et al. 2004). This was achieved through a literature review, interviews with key thinkers in the field of sustainable lifestyles and the use of four focus groups in England.

Bedford describes lifestyle as 'an accumulation of patterns of behaviour, resource and consumption use, as well as choices about employment and the best way to live' (Bedford et al. 2004: 3). She continues patterns of consumption have replaced employment as the most important social marker of class, wealth and identity.

Bedford's research appear to substantiate de Certeau and Bourriaud's observations of an impoverished and manipulated society, Sheikh's recognition of a fragmentation of

society resulting from globalisation, and de Certeau's dominant narrative, describing a 'comodification of lifestyles', goods and services. These have 'become the means by which individuals express their values and their desires as well as the way individuals are judged by others' (Bedford et al. 2004: 4). Therefore the 'importance of lifestyle as social markers is helpful in understanding environmental behaviours and underlines the complexities involved with lifestyle change programmes' (Bedford et al. 2004: 4). They observe that many behavioural and consumption practices are habitual, meeting basic needs or adding to an individual's quality of life, which enable them 'to affiliate and differentiate themselves from other people' (Bedford et al. 2004b: ii).

The comodification of lifestyles marking a significant shift in society's values Bedford describes as a replacing the social marker of employment. This demonstrates de Certeau's concern about the recited and narrated society, created by advertising and the media replacing the reality of the everyday. However, I suggest that shift of society's values has also resulted in impeding the characteristic of individual creative resistance within the everyday. The comodification of lifestyles impedes the creativity of the everyday.

Everyday resistance impedes creativity and change

Plymouth University Associate Lecturer Gregory Borne writes of mitigation behaviour demonstrated by joining an energy reduction scheme that was seen by the participants as 'a way of offsetting negative lifestyle choices' predominantly those of car and airplane travel choices. This was understood as demonstrating the paradox of negotiating personal lifestyle against global environmental criteria, which can be distanced because it is seen as a virtual risk. 'Individuals are actively choosing not to reflect on the images of global risk but are instead focusing on their own life-worlds

and the risks that exist within them’, where the ‘actions are motivated by a desire for personal gain’, which mitigate against the adoption of environmental behaviour (Borne 2009).

The uncovering of individual tactics of everyday resistance are therefore essential and the recovery of individual confidence against the dominant society and know-how are crucial to understanding the means of enabling change. I propose that de Certeau’s understanding of everyday tactics of resistance, which reveal the individual’s means of making meaning within their own lifestyle but that also involve habit and emotion, could offer a cultural understanding of the impediments to behaviour change. The dichotomy here is that our everyday practical knowledge tells us that we do not need to change our behaviour in response to climate change. The effects of climate change in the UK are minimal in impact, essentially local circumstances are still the same and should therefore support the same behaviour as before. In fact ‘people need to be “unfrozen” from their habits before behaviour change can be undertaken’ (Darnton 2004b: 18 Quoting Gatersleben and Uzzel 2003; Gatersleben and Uzzell 2003).

Everyday behaviour reveals specific patterns of action affecting decisions about purchasing and disposal, which are linked to environmental behaviour. The example Bedford gives is

‘cooking and the decisions about how to cook a meal (steam, bake, fry; putting lids on pans; using a gas or electric cooker) as well as decisions about what to do with any waste (throw it away or compost it)’ (Bedford et al. 2004: 5).

This parallels and expands Giard’s observations about recipes, food shopping and cooking (de Certeau et al. 1998a: 149-248). Practices of the everyday identified by de Certeau such as cooking, shopping or walking through city spaces (de Certeau 1984: xix) can be seen as elements of an individual’s lifestyle and through which individual quality of life can be achieved and which become ingrained as habit.

However 'environmentalism is perceived to be motivated more from altruistic beliefs and post-material values than from underlying social characteristics' (Bedford et al. 2004: 23). Associated with denial, environmental behaviour is

'out of line with what society considers to be normal...if environmental attitudes are to be converted into action there needs to be a programme of normalisation and an attempt to engage all members of society in more resource-efficient behaviours.' (Bedford et al. 2004: 23)

Independent researcher Andrew Darnton has undertaken a number of reports on behalf of DEFRA and the Centre for Sustainable Development, University of Westminster (Darnton 2004a, 2004b; Darnton et al. 2006; Darnton 2008). In research on the relationships between information, knowledge, awareness and behaviour, Darnton's sources agree that human behaviours are not decided along rational lines and are non-linear.

Although this research indicates that behaviour is not rational, nevertheless it forms the everyday of environmental attitudes, which have been gained through an individual's experience of living and experiences of dealing with the everyday. I would suggest that another understanding of habitual behaviour, through de Certeau, is to understand practices of the everyday. This can be understood as an individual making meaning of her/his own life. Until there is pressure on those making meaning practices within individual experiences of the everyday, which address willingness, cost and convenience and aspirations, there is no impetus for change on an individual level.

Bourriaud and Kester suggest the liminal space of making meaning, between daily life and media images of lives and between the experience of living and the strategies needed to make it successful, as the arena for artists' practice. De Certeau suggests that experience of the everyday creates believable objects, and in order to normalise environmental attitudes these need to be portrayed as believable objects. I would

suggest that the UK government DETR campaign *Doing your bit?* comprised as it was with radio, tv and billboard adverts of personalities expounding the virtues of environmental behaviour did not achieve this. Therefore I suggest that one aim of the artist to achieve social change is to create believable objects. This will allow the artist to engage with people on issues that might not otherwise impel behaviour change, but which through their action as a believable object will promote engagement.

In order to produce a believable object, which might encourage behaviour change, the artist needs to understand the impulsion to and how behaviour changes. In attempting to model behaviour change, both psychological and economic models have been the subject of assessment and amendment. However in the development of non-linear models for pro-environmental behaviour the unifying concept is the 'value-action gap' (Blake 1999; Jackson 2005; Kollmus and Agyeman 2002).

The value-action gap: Resisting change, socio-psychology of individual change

My art practice utilises aspects of environmental behaviour research as the context. The means through which this occurs is through interrogating my own environmental behaviour and by then engaging people to examine their own behaviour and lifestyles. The specific point of tension I utilise is the value-action gap, which takes the principle of adjacency identified by Bourriaud and Kester to create a space of reflection.

The value-action gap in the individual exists 'between the possession of environmental knowledge and environmental awareness, and displaying pro-environmental behaviour', therefore affecting the lifestyles that people adopt (Kollmus and Agyeman 2002: 246). In a 2006 project report 'Green-Engage' Stephen Hounsham demonstrates the value-action gap, observing

‘people do care about the environment, that’s clear, and many of them are specifically worried about climate change. But in general they’re not doing much about it...people feel helpless’ (Hounsham 2006a: 7)

The concept of the value-action gap resonates with me and with many others to whom I have described it as a believable object. I was able to recognise my own failure to shift my behaviour towards environmental alternatives, despite good intentions and realise that this was a common issue for many people. In a similar pattern to climate change, the on-going revolution in the world’s eco-system, is acknowledged as happening by the majority of scientists, but is taking a long time to filter down to individual behaviour change. However in a paradoxical situation where experts say one thing but society and institutions communicate another, we as individuals are unable to accept the changes in our own lifestyle that will be required. This issue should therefore provide an area of broad interest both at the societal and individual level. It is this point of recognition and tension as a believable object that makes the value-action gap an excellent area for my art practice to explore. Additionally the value-action gap, has allowed me to develop my existing investigations through art practice into lifestyles.

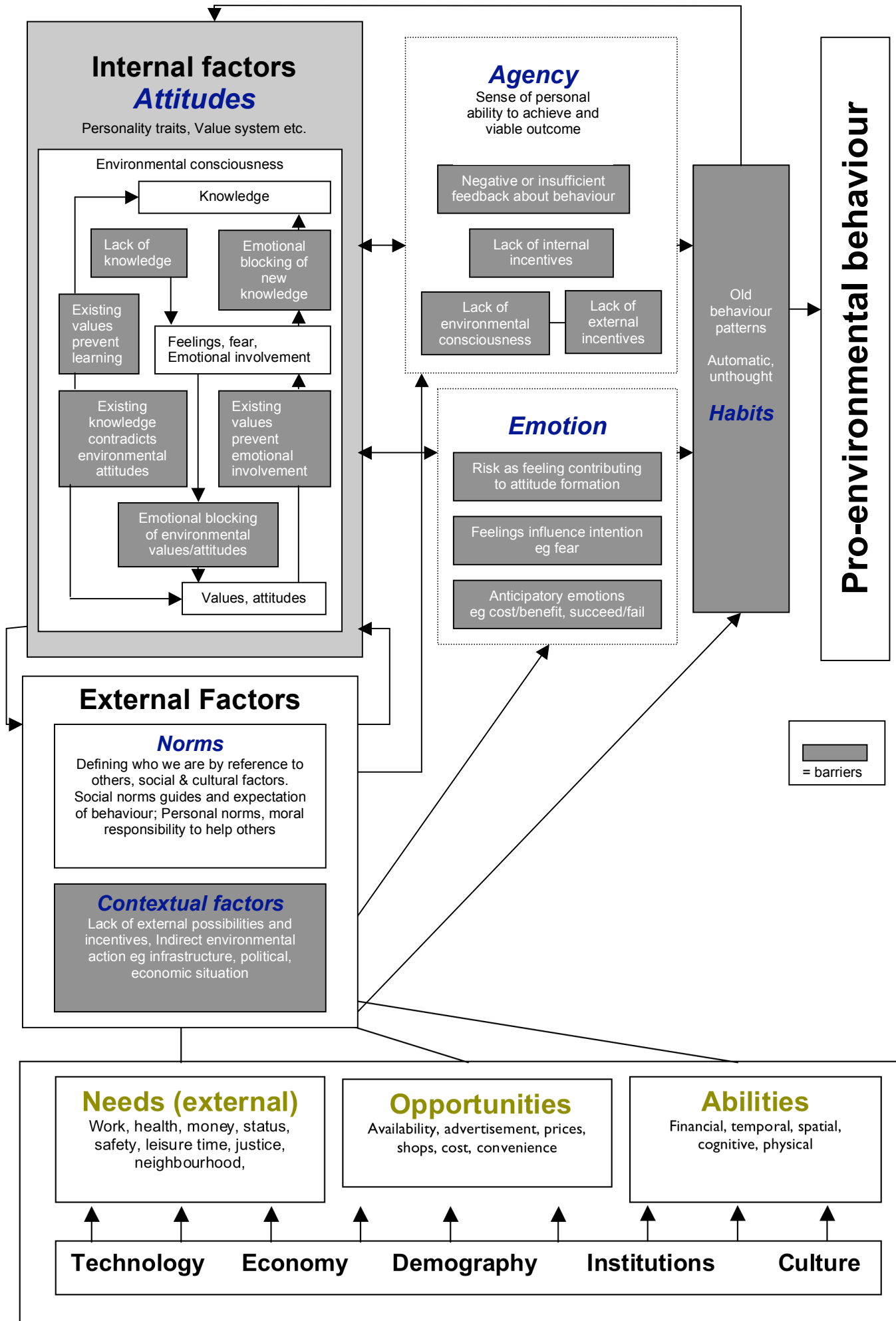
Pro-environmental behaviour is defined as ‘behaviour that consciously seeks to minimise the negative impact of one’s actions on the natural and built world’ (Darnton 2004b). However research finds that despite wide knowledge of climate change, ‘green, ethical living is clearly niche and the result of special effort amongst certain types of people only’ (Hounsham 2006:131).

Researchers modelling the value-action gap have found this complex.¹ In order to create a wider picture useful for socially engaged practice of both individual and situational change I have adapted the model to include a greater breakdown of external factors.

In his most recent report Darnton suggests that the literature agrees on key factors in the models for individual behaviour change (Darnton 2008: 12-14). These have therefore been added to the value-action gap model in order to make clearer how the model operates. They are identified as:

- *Attitudes* or preferences, which generally relate to a specific behaviour including beliefs, also relate to a wider worldview and values the higher level of innate preference.
- *Norms*. Social norms act as a guide to our behaviour based on people around us and to our expectations of them. Personal Norms are based on a sense of moral responsibility to help others. I have grouped these with contextual factors as part of External factors.
- *Agency* is understood to be the individual sense that an action is achievable and successful. It determines the amount of effort or the decision to undertake the action at all.
- *Habit* is described as automatic behaviour, the most frequent behaviours are undertaken at low levels of consciousness. Although unconscious, the frequency of the behaviour makes the habit more ingrained and difficult to change.

Figure 35 (below) Components of the value-action gap
Adapted models from Kollmuss and Aygeman and Darnton's Individual behavioural model
with overlaid societal model drawn from Needs, opportunities, abilities model from Gatersleben and Vlek (Darnton 2008: 15)



- *Emotion* is also included in attitudes, but this can also be considered independently because of its ability to override all other considerations. Eg fear as an overpowering emotion or anticipatory emotions of the cost/benefit of acting or succeeding/failing.
- *Contextual factors*, which are outside of individual control e.g. information, resources (time, money, transport). They may also include facilitating conditions such as ability to act, knowledge, or need. These factors are also influenced by individual perception. I have grouped them in the adapted model above with Norms under External Factors.

Professor of Sustainable Development at Surrey University, Tim Jackson, wrote an influential report for the Sustainable Development Research Network (Jackson 2005). Jackson noted both internal and external characteristics and processes arising from different perspectives on consumer behaviour. The literature, he suggests, does not explore the relationships between internal and external perspectives but these should be understood together. Contextual factors can be broken down further through the influence of societal models of behaviour in addition to the individual model above. Technology, economy, demography, institutions, and culture additionally impinge on our ability to consider the adoption of pro-environmental behaviour.

The internal perspective comprises consumers as individual agents, autonomous of the social structure, comparative to de Certeau's everyday tactics through creativity. We can see the internal factors of the value-action gap, which include personality traits and value systems, together with the inhibiting factors to change existing behaviour patterns can be equated with everyday creativity, indicating its inherent characteristic to inhibit change as proposed above.

Similarly Bourriaud, Sheikh and Kester identify the external perspective that understands people as unconsciously or unknowingly influenced, constrained or programmed by external forces. As has already been observed we are defined by our consumption practices. In the context of environmental behaviour however the failure of government information campaigns to change behaviour can be understood as the failure of dominant strategies of knowledge to affect change within the everyday.

The adapted model illustrated above is very complex with many overlapping categories. It's application as a means of understanding and analysing behaviour change within socially engaged practice proved to be awkward (see Chapter 3). However it is the concept itself that is the most important aspect in respect of influence on my art practice in creating a believable object that would encourage a reciprocal participation within art practice. The model also influenced the later analysis and understanding of the art practice.

The artist as change agent: No champion, no change

Environmental behaviour research began as a result of the failure of first government information campaigns on climate change and attempts to identify more effective means to enable any shift of behaviour change. Green Engage author, Stephen Hounsham (2006), observed that

'the public are crucial in the work of the green movement, but we've a lot to learn in terms of how to engage them. Indeed we sometimes tend to follow the Dad's army approach to changing lifestyles. It's an unattractive combination of disaster prediction (Private Fraser's "We're all doomed!"), supercilious criticism (Sergeant Wilson's "Do you really think that's wise?") and condemnation (Captain Mainwaring's "You stupid boy!") And what response do we often get? Yes, Warden Hodges said it: "Oi, Napoleon! Who do you think you are?" (Hounsham 2006: press release)

One of the key effects for enabling change within organisations and networks is found to be individual agents for change or change champions (Alexander et al. 2005; S.

Ballard and Ballard 2005a; S. Ballard et al. 2007; Darnton et al. 2006: 16-17). Ballard observes

‘Extensive and varied research over many years and across numerous change-related projects has revealed a significant truth: “No champion, no change!” as one astute observer put it. The presence of a champion – or numerous champions – has consistently proven to be a necessary condition for meaningful change on any scale, in any setting, on any subject, at any time’ (Ballard and Associates 2005c)

In their 2006 report Darnton et al draw on organisational change and systems thinking, in addition to recent socio-psychological environmental behaviour change research to offer additional insights. In the Executive summary one of the key messages is that ‘Individuals have the potential to act as “change champions”...Individuals are vital to delivering pro-environmental change, not just for themselves (on the level of individuals) but also within organisations and networks as “agents for change”’. (Darnton et al. 2006: 6) These are individuals able to persuade or encourage others to take action at the most concrete level, from changing light bulbs to car sharing.

Darnton concludes that it is not possible for policymakers to influence the value-action gap and directly change behaviour. However community-led and more local campaigns appear to be more effective on an individual level rather than public awareness-raising publicity.

This identification of the change agent as crucial to change parallels Bourriaud’s observation of the active agent. In a society debased by globalisation and media promotion the artist as change agent is useful in order to provoke moments of reflection, and challenging situations. De Certeau identifies significant change occurring through moments of rupture such as the events of 1968 in Paris and I have already identified the artist role in everyday creativity and instigating rupture events (Chapter 1).

The environmental imperative suggests change agents are necessary to initiate small-scale rupture events such as art works. As Hounsham observes above, the change agent needs to pitch the message correctly, in order to avoid the dangers of Bourdieu's political delegate of assumed authority or the irrelevant symbolic art practice proposed by Bishop. Here democratic creativity needs to enable agency and practical ability that can develop new knowledge and support the shift of behaviour patterns.

Sustainable marketing researcher, Ingrid Kajzer, describes herself as a change activist, a position taken in response to environmental crisis and marketing's contribution through consumption to that crisis. Kajzer cites Gandhi 'you have to be the change you see' as a provocation to become 'an active agent in orchestrating realities' and to see research as 'activism towards changing our ways of knowing'. (Kajzer 2006)

Actors not passive targets

A practical guide for behaviour change for business was part of a broader study published by DEFRA in 2005. The guide observes that 'different audiences behave differently, and require targeted and/or tailored interventions'. Here the artist as change agent can be very effective in designing the artwork to best engage participation.

'The audience for a change intervention should not be regarded as a passive target', but as "actors" at the heart of the change process. They should be involved at the earliest opportunity in the change process. Ideally a total working approach should be adopted in which change partners are involved from the start in defining and redefining the problem through a continuous cycle of action and reflection, from which learning and innovation will result.' (DEFRA 2006: 4)

Environmental behaviour research identifies the process for change as best facilitated by the change agent or, I suggest, the artist. Identified by Kester and confirmed by behavioural research, the participant for change must be actively involved in a

reciprocal process of reflection for the change to be realised and effective, not used to demonstrate that change is necessary. Bishop's proposal for antagonism and disruption as a means of change is further challenged by environmental behaviour research.

In contrast Bourriaud describes a democratic concern, where the artist is an operator of meaning and in which there is an on-going negotiations of relationships. Kester proposes an empathetic practice, which I suggest can be based on a common sensibility, empowered by my own admissions of failing to adopt environmental behaviour. Further de Certeau's recognition of the primary importance of the participant in the means of everyday resistance, confirms co-operation and collaboration as the most appropriate way forward.

Indications of change

Ballard and Ballard's "5A's Model for change" is an example of action learning theories employed in local government to create change champions for climate change (S. Ballard and Ballard 2005a: 7; Darnton et al. 2006:16-17). The 5A's model recognises components that need to be present to create change, and which can be applied on both an organisation and individual level. These can also be used to understand the nature of change through participation in socially engaged art projects. The 5A's model comprises:

Awareness of context and possible action through three levels. Factual awareness disassociated from personal action; Awareness plus urgency and priority, the start of personal engagement; mature awareness undertaking action and understanding context for effective action;

Agency, following awareness enables meaningful action despite scale of issues;

Association, co-operation and networks to enable agency;

Action and Reflection, collective working with cycles of action and reflection suggesting more effective means for action;

Architecture, the external context reflecting society and organisation, structures and processes.

Matarasso’s research on participation in and social impacts of the arts found that on an individual level ‘the arts (are) an effective route for personal growth...can develop networks and understanding...and self-determination...produces social change’.

(Matarasso 1997: 6) On a broader level and comparable to the external context noted in Ballard’s architecture, participation in the arts essentially strengthens cultural life, but also contributes to community development strategies, strengthens organisational planning through creativity, and indirectly benefits other areas such as health and environmental renewal. The intention of participation in the arts is to enable active creators, rather than passive consumers. Giving confidence ‘it aims to help those who are the objects of others imaginations to imagine themselves and to imagine others through art.’ (Matarasso 2004: 3)

Matarasso identifies a list of social impacts of participation, which I reproduce here.

<p>THIS STUDY SHOWS THAT PARTICIPATION IN THE ARTS CAN</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Increase people’s confidence and sense of self-worth 2 Extend involvement in social activity 3 Give people influence over how they are seen by others 4 Stimulate interest and confidence in the arts 5 Provide a forum to explore personal rights and responsibilities 6 Contribute to the educational development of children 7 Encourage adults to take up education and training opportunities 8 Help build new skills and work experience 	<p>SOCIAL IMPACTS OF PARTICIPATION IN THE ARTS</p> <p>This list has been drawn up to give a sense of the range of social outcomes which the study has shown can be produced by participatory arts projects.</p> <p>Naturally, it is not complete, and there are many others, which might emerge from a different analysis. Equally, no single project should be expected to deliver all of them, or to produce outcomes in the same way or to the same degree.</p>
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<p>9 Contribute to people's employability</p> <p>10 Help people take up or develop careers in the arts</p> <p>11 Reduce isolation by helping people to make friends</p> <p>12 Develop community networks and sociability</p> <p>13 Promote tolerance and contribute to conflict resolution</p> <p>14 Provide a forum for intercultural understanding and friendship</p> <p>15 Help validate the contribution of a whole community</p> <p>16 Promote intercultural contact and co-operation</p> <p>17 Develop contact between the generations</p> <p>18 Help offenders and victims address issues of crime</p> <p>19 Provide a route to rehabilitation and integration for offenders</p> <p>20 Build community organisational capacity</p> <p>21 Encourage local self-reliance and project management</p> <p>22 Help people extend control over their own lives</p> <p>23 Be a means of gaining insight into political and social ideas</p> <p>24 Facilitate effective public consultation and participation</p> <p>25 Help involve local people in the regeneration process</p> <p>26 Facilitate the development of partnership</p> <p>27 Build support for community projects</p> <p>28 Strengthen community co-operation and networking</p> <p>29 Develop pride in local traditions and cultures</p> <p>30 Help people feel a sense of belonging and involvement</p> <p>31 Create community traditions in new towns or neighbourhoods</p> <p>32 Involve residents in environmental improvements</p> <p>33 Provide reasons for people to develop community activities</p> <p>34 Improve perceptions of marginalised groups</p> <p>35 Help transform the image of public bodies</p> <p>36 Make people feel better about where they live</p> <p>37 Help people develop their creativity</p> <p>38 Erode the distinction between consumer and creator</p> <p>39 Allow people to explore their values, meanings and dreams</p> <p>40 Enrich the practice of professionals in the public and voluntary sectors</p> <p>41 Transform the responsiveness of public service organisations</p> <p>42 Encourage people to accept risk positively</p> <p>43 Help community groups raise their vision beyond the immediate</p> <p>44 Challenge conventional service delivery</p> <p>45 Raise expectations about what is possible and desirable</p> <p>46 Have a positive impact on how people feel</p> <p>47 Be an effective means of health education</p> <p>48 Contribute to a more relaxed atmosphere in health centres</p> <p>49 Help improve the quality of life of people with poor health</p> <p>50 Provide a unique and deep source of enjoyment</p>	
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Figure 36 Social impacts of the arts (Matarasso 1997: 11)

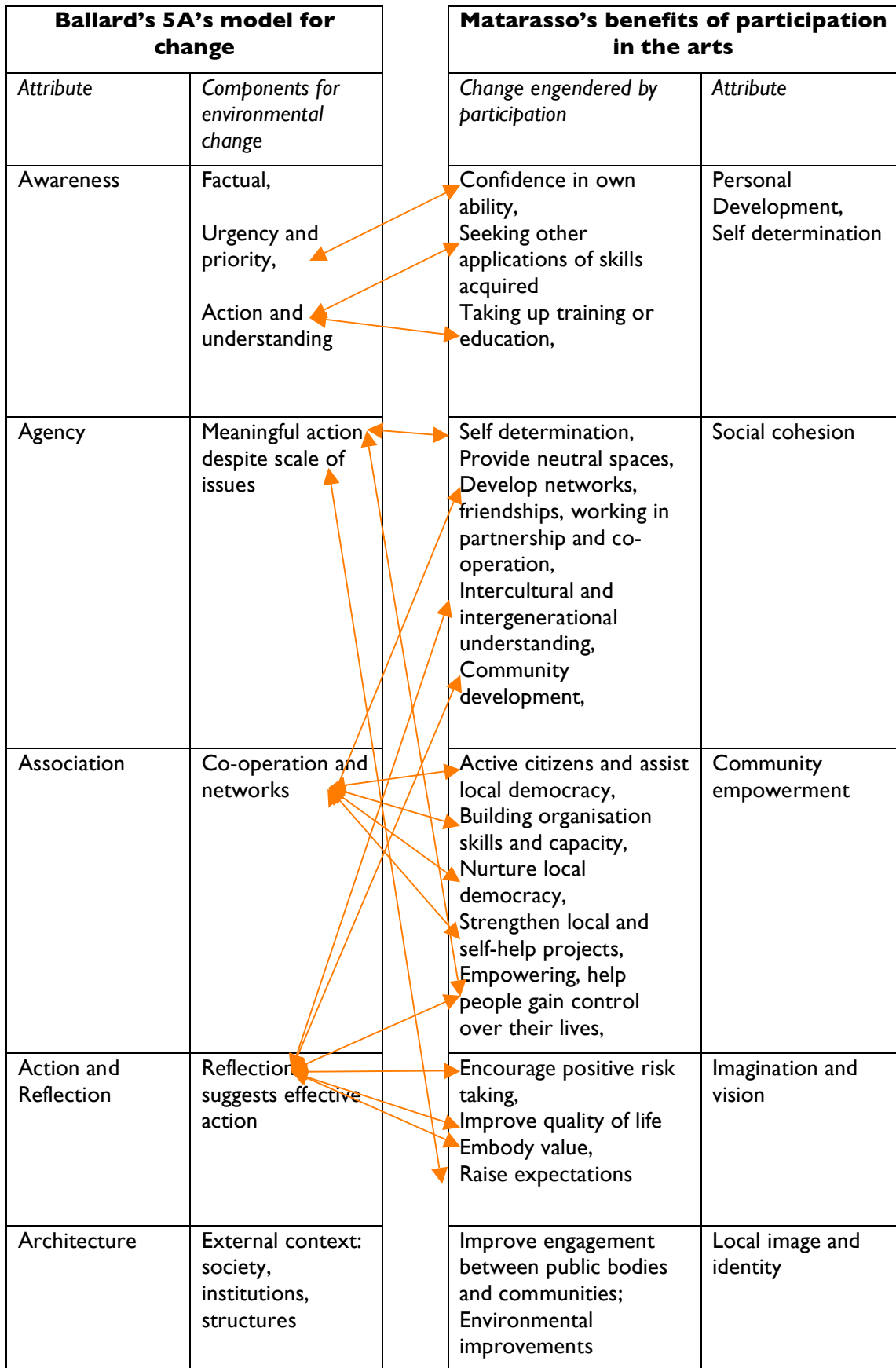


Figure 37 Mapping of Ballard's 5A's model for change and Matarasso's benefits of participation in the arts

Although Matarasso focuses on the outcomes of participation rather than the conditions by which change occurs as with Ballard's 5A's model, there is a useful comparison to be made, which is modelled above (Matarasso 1997: 7-9). Although a different grouping is used, most of the outcomes have a comparable mapping. What is useful to understand are the means by which Matarasso's outcomes occur as a way of understanding and potentially observing change as it takes place.

The development and application of Ballard's 5A's model will be discussed further in the next chapter on Methodology. Darnton observes this model can also have a broader application to behaviour change and in the case of my research most obviously the area and manner in which an artist can intervene, as Matarasso indicates.

Conversation, change and representing conversations

Kester and Kwon identify the discursive site of critical consciousness linked to a real issue that can challenge both the artist and participant creating a reflective space, in which 'the concept of listening is central to a connected knowledge' (Kester 2004: 113). Environmental behaviour also suggests that conversation is key to achieving change.

'We talk in terms of carrots and sticks² as though the public literally were donkeys. Treating them as dumb animals that can be pushed and pulled into doing the right thing is not the right approach. People need to be taken on a shared journey, not exhorted to do things. It must be a journey based on a dialogue between active partners about a shared problem.' (Hounsham 2006b: 7)

Jackson argues from George Herbert Mead³ that the concept of self arises from social processes specifically communication. This process of communication is a series of gesture and counter gesture as response in social encounters, which comprises a social conversation. Social conversation as a process develops the self, and personal behaviour. As an evolutionary process social conversations are the mechanism for

negotiating and internalizing the values, attitudes and beliefs of social groups supporting their cohesion (Jackson 2005: 70-71).

De Certeau describes a transfer of knowledge, which occurs through the 'rhetoric of ordinary conversation'. This produces an 'oral fabric without individual owners' so that 'conversation...(is) the art of manipulating "commonplaces" and subverting the inevitability of events' (Sherringham 2006: 36-38).

Transformational change is suited to addressing crises, for instance dealing with rapid change in technology or environmental performance and allowing deep change (Ballard and Associates 2005b; Darnton 2008). Used when addressing a complex and dynamic problem, transformational change is characterised by disagreements about what is wrong. This soft systems approach generally involves collaborative working through action networks, where

'managers devolve control to interested groups of stakeholders who work through problems together in "action networks", undertaking a cyclical process of action and reflection...Change will result from such a process (both for the individual participants – the 'Reflective practitioners' – and for the organisations and networks involved) but not in a predictable or managed fashion' (Darnton et al. 2006: 19).

Kester identifies unpredictability as characteristic of socially engaged practice, which results from the suppression of self-interest and co-operative ways of working. This discursive space according to Bakhtin offers a reciprocal effect allowing effective insights (Kester 2004: 122)⁴.

A key skill of change agents is communication, where the voice of authority emerges from an engaged passion and knowledge, which is able to communicate to a diversity of audiences on their own terms. Similar to Kester's understanding of an empathetic practice and de Certeau's interventionist expert, which avoids an imposition of authority, this communication utilises co-operative participation, so

‘Champions tend not to refute the positions of others, preferring to understand participants’ own views and work with them to ‘re-frame within the bigger picture’. In this way potential conflict can become willing and productive collaboration.’ (Ballard and Associates 2005c)

Change therefore occurs through a process of social conversation as a creeping evolution. Individual behaviour is constrained by social practices and can be locked in by social norms. Change can only occur by bringing specific behaviour from the level of practical consciousness, the unthinking everyday habits and values that we take for granted that form our values and lifestyle, to discursive consciousness. De Certeau’s proposal of the creative transformation of the everyday as impeding change has been discussed (p46-47), but that can now be seen to compare to practical consciousness. Discursive consciousness represents the level to which the change agent needs to bring the awareness of behaviour in order to enable change to take place and this compares to de Certeau’s believable object.

The researchers in de Certeau’s investigation of the everyday recognise the place of orality, Luce Giard describes this as a means of hearing women speak.

‘All readings, experiences, and personal memories have been supplemented with a series of rather long, individual interviews conducted in a flexible format. They had as a goal neither to record opinion frequencies nor to constitute a representative statistical sample, but rather to allow us to hear women’s voices... These interviews aimed neither to sort out underlying images nor to reveal unconscious roots, nor to define and classify attitude types. Their sole intention was to *hear women speak*: to talk about the very activity that is generally accorded no attention.’ (de Certeau et al. 1998a: 160)

Professor of French Literature at All Souls College, Oxford University, Michael

Sherringham’s analysis of de Certeau’s research projects expresses general dissatisfaction about the practical projects. However in the light of my understanding of behaviour change research, I suggest the projects can be shown to demonstrate the potential for creative strategies and transformative moments of the everyday. They certainly demonstrate that the informal nature of the conversation, when raised to the

level of discursive consciousness encourages the women to be very open about their feelings and their pleasure or dissatisfaction about an everyday task. This tactic reveals much more about everyday activity than a questionnaire would have elicited, both about the activity itself and the women's feelings about cooking. An atmosphere of mutual understanding was created, which I suggest demonstrates de Certeau's symbolic site as an opportunity for the exchange of passive knowledge, and a potential creative and transformative space. This potential of the discursive site as transformative is demonstrated by the women who were delighted to be given the space to be honest and for a chore to be regarded as valued.

De Certeau describes this discursive site as

'order *tricked* by an art...[through] insinuated styles of social exchange, technical invention, and moral resistance, that is, an economy of "gift" (generosities for which one expects a return), and esthetics of "tricks" (artists' operations) and an ethics of *tenacity* (countless ways of refusing to accord the established order the status of law, [or] a meaning' (de Certeau 1984: 26)

An extract of the transcript with Irène and Jean interviewed by Marie Ferrier, demonstrate the abstract nature of the everyday and the multiplicity of stories. It appears that Irène does not really enjoy cooking and likes quick and easy recipes, which makes the choice of this interview to publish in full interesting.

Marie: What kind of cookbook do you use?

Irène: I have a little book by Mapie Toulouse-Lautrec that is very well done, with recipes that are fast, with menus you can make in thirty or forty or fifty minutes. I find a lot of things in it. Then I get recipes from *Elle*, which we get a little late in our office. The magazines come under the name of a guy who left for Canada a long time ago. We get them two or three months late: there, I generally get knitting patterns and I take recipes that interest me, simple recipes that might be useful to me. On Saturdays or Sundays, before Jean goes shopping, I often take a look at these recipes just to try to vary things and make something new. That way, I try to make something different.

Marie: And do you jump right into something new easily, something you've never done? With pleasure?

Irène: Yes! I have a lot of fun! Yes I like it (*Silence*)

- Marie: So you have that one particular cookbook, do you have any others?
- Irène: Yes, I have a book called *The Recipes of Aunt Marie*, or something like that: it's the classic hardback where I can find, for example, hints on cooking times that are not always given or that are given incorrectly in the other book.
- Marie: This title, *The Recipes of Aunt Marie*, for me, it evokes recipes that would be rather complicated.
- Irène: Oh no, they're really quite easy, dead simple!
- Marie: And the clippings from *Elle*, are they usable?
- Jean: Well, they're not great! It's mostly for show.
- Irène: Jean, that's not true at all! You're just joking around. I don't agree!
- Jean: Just some nice pictures!
- Irène: No! Sometimes there are some rather astute things, and other times some very, very simple thing too!
- Jean: And the sea bream with oranges, where did you find that?
- Irène: That was Mapie Toulouse-Lautrec. But for example, I also have the book they give out with pressure cookers; when you buy an SEB cooker, you also get this book.'

('When it comes down to it, cooking worries me', de Certeau and Giard 1998b: 234)

This conversation does not appear to demonstrate an opportunity of dramatic transformation. It is perhaps this expectation that means that Sherringham does not consider Giard's research along with Mayal's successful representations of de Certeau's theories of the everyday.

Sherringham observes Giard's strengths are a demonstration of the complex multiplicity of everyday activities and useful reflections on transient methods of consumption, e.g. sell-by dates replacing recognition of fresh produce. He suggests Giard's observations are uncontroversial and straightforward offering a revaluation of what appears as passive activity, demonstrating the sanctuary of the kitchen, rather than the way in which it is carried out as a transformative potential.

However Sherringham overlooks the possibility of small transformations.

Conversation brings to discursive consciousness how cooking works in her family,

offers a place of understanding and reflection, which might help resolve the guilt Irène appears to feel about her lack of skill. This has the potential of a small and individual transformation. This narrative certainly points up the aesthetic of absence indicated by Irène's attempted use of the *Elle* magazine recipes, and the aesthetic of presence (her realisation of practical knowledge stimulated by the discursive site) when she admits that the recipes from her pressure cooker book come out the best.

Irène often displays guilt that she is not able to cook better, but realises through the conversation that she does what she can, within the restrictions of a busy job. So their family's social code is shifting with her husband Jean doing the shopping and Irène no longer using the traditional but time consuming recipes from her grandmother.

The use of the *Elle* magazine recipes holds an expectation of perfections, certainly as Jean remarks that they look great on the page, but practical knowledge warns that they are just for show. The recipes are adapted to their family circumstances.

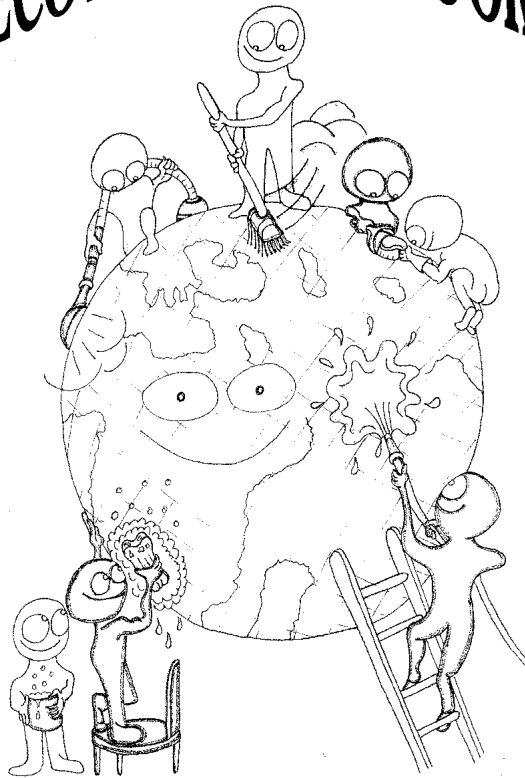
The space of creative transformation in the everyday within one family is not necessarily an immediate and explosive transformation. De Certeau's observations of the failed May 1968 protests as a rupture event are on a different scale to that of the family. Perhaps this indicates two different arenas within the everyday. Within the family or individual situations, transformative change is much slower affected by both the perception of need for a personal shift and the lack of pressure to change from other external forces.

Global Action Plan's (GAP) programme 'Action at Home' is a six-month voluntary scheme that encourages individuals to take positive environmental action at home.



Figure 38 Global Action plan household questionnaire

GLOBAL ACTION PLAN'S ECOTEAM WORKBOOK



304.
2
ECO

IRISH ENERGY CENTRE

SPONSORED BY

ENVIRONMENT

Figure 39 Global Action Plan's Ecoteam Workbook

Conducted through Eco-teams, each household is given a workbook of information and step-by-step actions. The team meets regularly to share experiences and offer peer support through the changes in lifestyle. Researcher Kersty Hobson's qualitative research on behalf of GAP describes behaviour change both actual and perceived, not as a barrier but as an opportunity for 'rich moral conversations' (Kersty Hobson 2001) and 'sites of daily political/personal struggles' (Kersty Hobson 2003: 108). These sites are the homes of those taking part in the Eco-teams, 'the interview can be seen as a social event' (Kersty Hobson 2001: 89). The interview translates as action in the form of talk, a site of creation enabling the perception of alternatives and change creating 'an emancipatory agenda of "dialogic" research' (Kersty Hobson 2001: 90). She describes the process of GAP participants as 'knowledgeable social agent[s]' where 'through the experience of realizing that they could act differently some participants felt able to reapply this questioning process to other parts of their lives' (Kirsty Hobson 2003: 103, 05).

In my practice I create situations for conversations, in which the exchange reveals attitudes to environmental behaviour and which might provoke change. By utilising a failure of my own environmental behaviour as a provocation for discussion, discursive consciousness comes to the fore. By exhibiting the outcomes of those conversations, as represented conversations, through written comments and transcripts as collective knowledge I suggest that an alternative social norm is revealed and a community of common sensibility is created which offers a different scenario from the familiar and habitual to be considered.

Observing people as irrational and self-centred, Hounsham notes that 'everyday lifestyle decisions are made at an emotional level (rather) than...based on cool-headed rational thinking...achieving behaviour change to benefit the environment is difficult

and complex. But it's not impossible; the green movement just has to be more creative in how it goes about it." (Hounsham 2006:4)

The value-action gap models describe the inhibitions for change, Ballard's 5A's model for change describes the conditions for change. This model is comparable to Matarasso's findings on the benefits of participation in the arts. The further development of this model in the context of this research is discussed in the next chapter on Methodology.

¹ Many behavioural models for individuals represent internal psychological or dispositional inhibitors to behaviour change but there is a confusion of others factors that are included or excluded. Environmental researchers Anja Kollmuss and Julian Agyeman's model explores the commonality of previous models and describes more general factors, but still omits other factors. They describe 'environmental knowledge, values and attitudes, together with emotional involvement as making up a complex we call pro-environmental consciousness. This complex in turn is embedded in broader personal values and shaped by personality traits and other internal as well as external factors.' (Kollmuss and Agyeman 2002: 256)

² Reference to the title of an influential research paper on environmental behaviour and government policy: Collins, Joanna , et al. (2003), 'Carrots, sticks and sermons: influencing public behaviour for environmental goals ', (Demos/Green Alliance, Defra).

³ 1934, *Mind, self and society*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press

⁴ Kester cites Mikhail Bakhtin 'Author and hero in aesthetic activity' and 'Art and answerability' in *Art and Answerability: Early philosophical essay*, ed Michael Holquist and Vadim Liapunov, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990

Chapter 3 Methodology

This chapter looks at the methods involved in my own art practice and methods by which I can come to some understanding of behaviour change from the participants contributions to the artworks.

Developing a practice based methodology

I began by wanting to use recognisable social science based methodologies to investigate my art practice. This was provoked by reading other art PhD's that did not seem to apply very thorough analysis to their art practice.

It seemed after some initial investigation that action research (Reason, 2001) (participative dialogue, cycle of action and reflection, intervening, diagnosing and solving a problem in a specific real world context) would fit my art practice and particularly socially engaged practice. Community based social marketing (McKenzie-Mohr, 1999) (identifying barriers and benefits to an activity; developing a strategy to change behaviour; piloting the strategy, implementing and evaluating across a community) could offer an interesting approach to promoting environmental behaviour change.

Early on it was suggested to me by a sociologist that using a focus group (an interactive group asked about their perceptions, opinions, beliefs or attitudes traditionally towards a product, service, concept, advertisement, idea, or packaging) might be a useful situation to try out my artworks. This would allow me access to a fixed group of people for an extended period and I recognised this would allow an investigation and evaluation of values and behaviour change through exposure to my art practice and during the research.

However as I began to research these particular methodologies and methods it became less clear how my art practice, which may not follow a linear developmental pattern might develop within these confines. It was important to me that the artworks maintain their own integrity within the context of research. It also became clear that these two methodologies did not reflect the PhD as a whole. I also felt uncomfortable with an expectation of evidence as an outcome of art practice and that my choice of methodologies was more like cherry-picking rather than coherent and defensible and rigorous choice.

My art practice prior to this research was based on a personal reflection on lifestyle and our engagement with the countryside. This practice, although utilising participation, controlled it within a specific framework to suite the artwork. The participants, although not used in an exploitative way, were used as an unknowing counterfoil to my intent within the work, where the imaginative act was more important than participation. This is also evident in the works curated by Claire Bishop in the recent *Double Agent* exhibition at the ICA, London discussed in Chapter one.

These concerns have developed through the research and were clarified in Chapter one as an under-emphasis on participation, the ambition of social change, aesthetic representation and the perception of failing to communicate beyond the participative event. This research offers a means of better understanding socially engaged art practice from the point of view of the participant rather than that of the artist.

Other than a consideration of written material and exhibition reviews, I also wanted to use a small advisory group for my research, which would comprise other disciplines that impacted on socially engaged practice. This took the form of an investigative

project *Collaborative Conversations I and II* (May and August 2007). *Collaborative Conversations* utilised an informal discussion format between a small group of invited expert collaborators. This project is described below.

My concerns about socially engaged practice coincided with an interest in why we make the decisions we do. In the context of my previous art practice, this was looking at our attitude to the countryside. I had come to the conclusion through research (Hunt 2004) that we held a psychological need for the countryside, while that need had become distorted towards the requirement for the countryside to become a leisure landscape. Why and how we come to hold such views or to change them became an area of interest.

This led me to look at the emerging research area of behaviour change and specifically the value-action gap. (Discussed in Chapter 2 above.) Understanding the necessity of individual behaviour change and actually undertaking the behaviour, as a point of tension makes the value-action gap an excellent area for my art practice to explore.

I was also concerned to investigate the claims that socially engaged artists make to be able to facilitate change. Environmental behaviour research identifies the change agent as key to engendering change and research investigates ways in which change can happen (Alexander et al. 2005; S. Ballard and Ballard 2005a; S. Ballard et al. 2007; Darnton et al. 2006: 16-17). A comparison of the socially engaged artist and the environmental change agent would be a means of investigating the facilitation of change and perhaps identifying some of the characteristics of a socially engaged project..

With so much contradiction in contemporary writing about socially engaged art practice, I was concerned that I did not rely entirely on environmental behaviour research as a comparative field to analyse art practice. Matarasso's (1997) research on

the benefits of participation in the arts offered a cultural comparison for the environmental change agent as discussed in Chapter Two. De Certeau's research on the everyday also offered significant parallels to socially engaged practice, through his emphasis on the everyday as an under-recognised resource, participants as key to understanding the everyday, tactics of resistance, rupture events signifying change and the use of conversations as a means of uncovering the everyday. Discussed in Chapter One and Two de Certeau's research encompasses both fields of socially engaged art practice and environmental behaviour research and allows the discussion of overlaps between each field.

The overall methodology of this research has evolved and developed through practical and theoretical research. It is most closely aligned to grounded research (Dick, 2000). This begins with a research situation and the collection and analysis of practical data and the emergence and revision of theory, reviewed to cross-check with the available theoretical data. Literature is accessed when it is relevant and compared to the research situation where then the emergent theory is rigorously tested against the research (practical and theoretical) and honed so that it 'fits the situation; and that it works' (Dick 2000). Initial reading is wide and should not prejudice the emergent theory; more focused reading becomes a part of the data collection procedures. Emergent theory is developed through reflection on the practical research. This occurs through the noting of memos (intuitive thoughts) about the practice and the development of an intuitive coding system, which develops through the review of material until a coherent coding system emerges.

Realising the methods

Collaborative Conversations I and II (June and August 2007)

Collaborative Conversations was designed as a collaborative work by invitation, which would bring together skilled practitioners in some of the other fields of enquiry that impacted on my art practice and more generally on socially engaged practice. It took some time to locate suitable participants and agree a time to meet. As a result this work took place after the initial artworks *Conscience Offsets* and *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts I* in June and August 2007. Originally designed as an ongoing advisory group, this intention had to be changed due to the difficulty of organising the people and arranging times and it was further complicated by one member moving away.

Although a replacement could have been sought, the group had in a short period of time built a close rapport and it would have taken time and some considerable recapping to integrate someone new. The function of the group had also shifted to the investigation of specific questions affecting socially engaged practice, for these reasons no further meetings were organised..

The two basic questions to guide and start the discussion were:

- How to encourage or engineer effective conversations?
- What is the responsibility of the artist to participants given that the conversations:
 - a. involve issues that provoke behaviour change?
 - b. may be recorded and re-used in succeeding artworks?

Environmental sociologist Olya Mairoboda worked for the Centre for Sustainable Futures at Plymouth University, and gave a presentation about a project on which she was working: Belstone Green Village on Dartmoor, Devon. I was particularly

Janey Hunt, 2011, *Conversations: the socially engaged artist as environmental change agent*,
The University of Plymouth PhD thesis

interested in that project and how she gathered and analysed data from the field.

Ecopsychologist Moira Lake practices therapy that not only looks at individual and interpersonal relationships, but also the synergy of personal and planetary wellbeing. I

hoped to draw on her expertise in how to ask or provoke people into changing behaviour and the moral responsibilities that might be involved. Community artist Jan

O'Highway has a practice of community and public projects often dealing with

environmental issues and I was interested in how she dealt with issues such as social inclusion, race and feminism. I facilitated the conversation as well as participating.

Only one of the participants was known to me prior to the first conversation, Jan had also seen some of my artworks. I did not show any work to the participants, I had not considered it necessary for the conversation. Showing them work might also have pre-conditioned their responses instead of ensuring the participants drew on their



Figure 40 *Collaborative Conversations I*, video still



Figure 41 Collaborative Conversations I, edited sequence of video stills

own experiences, although there was some description of the works in the course of the conversation.

Each of these individuals I could have interviewed separately, but it was the creative energy of these people in conversation together that I wanted to enable with the focus of my art practice. Having established the potential for conversations as generative knowledge from *Conscience Offsets* and *Eco-Renovations: House Receipts I*, I was interested to see if this organised conversation would yield something more than data and creatively explore the guiding questions.

The conversations were documented by sound and video. Fellow artist Stormsmith Nomi acted as technician during the first conversation allowing a roving camera. However she was unavailable for the second conversation, which was recorded via a static camera only. During the conversations mind maps were used to highlight important issues that came up and be visible to all at the time. The conversations were also transcribed and annotated with the assistance of the mind map and sent to each participant as soon as possible after the conversation.

The conversations took place around my kitchen table. This was a purposeful selection of venue, mimicking a group of friends chatting. This was intended to assist the participants to relax even though they had not met together previously. I also offered lunch, in place of payment for their time.

In addition to lunch as an exchange for their time, I hoped that the participants would gain something from the conversation themselves and the exchange with an interesting selection of people.



Figure 42 Collaborative Conversations I, Video Stills

Many interesting issues came up during the course of the conversation, which are indexed and annotated in the transcripts (Appendix 9 and 10). I reproduce here the index for both conversations to give a flavour of the range of discussion. However I have selected issues of direct relevance to this enquiry for specific discussion.

Meeting One
1. Engineering conversations
Ethical practice p1
Question introduction p2
Format of conversation p2
Introductions p3
Olya p3
Jan p5
Moir a p8
Janey p 11
What's the role of conversation in my artwork p14
Conversations designed for artwork <i>Mindmap 1: i</i>
Who owns the artwork p15 <i>Mindmap 2:a</i>
Encourage or engineer conversations p16 <i>Mindmap 1:ii</i>
Mechanistic language p16 <i>Mindmap 1:iii</i>
Let conversations flow, ad-lib, unstructured p16 <i>Mindmap 1:iv</i>
Conversations as artwork or normal/spontaneous experience p17 <i>Mindmap 1:v</i>
Value and exchange (Judy Chicago) p17
Exploiting people P17 <i>Mindmap 1:vi</i>
Artist as professional p17 <i>Mindmap 1:vii & 2:b</i>
Participant volunteers p18 <i>Mindmap 1:viii & 2:c</i>
Level of responsibility (Suzanne Lacy) p18 <i>Fig on Mindmap 1</i>
Series of conversations/discussions p19
Artist acquiring more roles/skills p19
Conversations not small talk p19
Signing away all future rights p20
Ethical statement p21
Aesthetics p21
Communication p21 <i>Mindmap 1:ix</i>
Deep meeting p22 <i>Mindmap 1:x</i>

Silence p22, 24 *Mindmap 1:xi*

Creating or enabling conversations p22 *Mindmap 1:xii*

Real interest p22 *Mindmap 1:xiii*

Neutral facilitator p22 *Mindmap 1:xiv*

Time p22 *Mindmap 1:xv*

Neutral facilitator p23 *Mindmap 1:xvi*

2. Responsibility to participants

Second question p24 *Mindmap 2*

Who owns the artwork p15 *Mindmap 2:a*

Artist as professional p17 *Mindmap 1:vii & 2:b*

Participant volunteers p18 *Mindmap 1:viii & 2:c*

No responsibility p25 *Mindmap 2:d*

Legal responsibility p25 *Mindmap 2:e*

CCCTV and surveillance p25

Art and research as one p25 *Mindmap 2:f*

Participants/audience not engaged p25 *Mindmap 2:g*

If artwork for the artist is a learning process p25 *Mindmap 2:h*

Art documentation p26

The non-human participant p26 *Mindmap 2:i*

Harm p26 *Mindmap 2:j*

Image as soul capture p29 *Mindmap 2:ji*

Intentional harm p29 *Mindmap 2:jii*

Spontaneity p27 *Mindmap 2:k*

Restricting to the artist p30 *Mindmap 2:l*

Issues that provoke behaviour change p31

Artist as role model p32 *Mindmap 2:m*

Information on enabling/modelling behaviour p31 *Mindmap 2:n*

Enabling p32 *Mindmap 2:o*

Being in a real dialogue p32 *Mindmap 2:p*

Try out new ideas p32

So where is the artist in this? p33

Stop p33

Lovely out there p35

Meeting Two

3. questions/issues to discuss L30

engineered conversation L34

Neutral facilitator L37

deep meeting L43

non-human L48

Harm and getting permission 49

Artist as change agent L53

4. deep meeting L59

You create it together L90

the meeting is the artwork L92

Creating the conditions L100

It's happened with my two most recent works

Achieving a real engagement L106

Other conditions L132

Interest L134,

motivation L134,

knowing not essential L159,

being nonjudgmental L166,

changing flow of energy L214,
slowness is important L255,
nice port of tea L271
People checking if they were saying the right thing L310
Intimacy L317|
Conversation between physically present people? L426
Not bringing anything specifically eco-psychology/sociology L443
5. Non-human L451
Deep meeting feeling love L485
Love as motivation for artwork? L536
Motivation is desperation L539
A meeting of desperation L564
Joanna Macy L568
Collaborative conversation useful L627
Not an engineered conversation L667
Provided certain conditions L774

Discussion

This investigative project was a means of investigating some of the issues involved in socially engaged practice and to assess how these might be implemented in future artworks. The discussions were free flowing though evolving from specific initial questions and in my discussion below I have highlighted specific issues of communication, level of responsibility to participants, the artist as role model, and responsibility. I have also used some extensive extracts from the conversations within this section, not only to illustrate the significant points, but also to give a flavour of the conversations.

3 Methodology

Janey Hunt, 2011, Conversations: the socially engaged artist as environmental change agent, The University of Plymouth PhD thesis

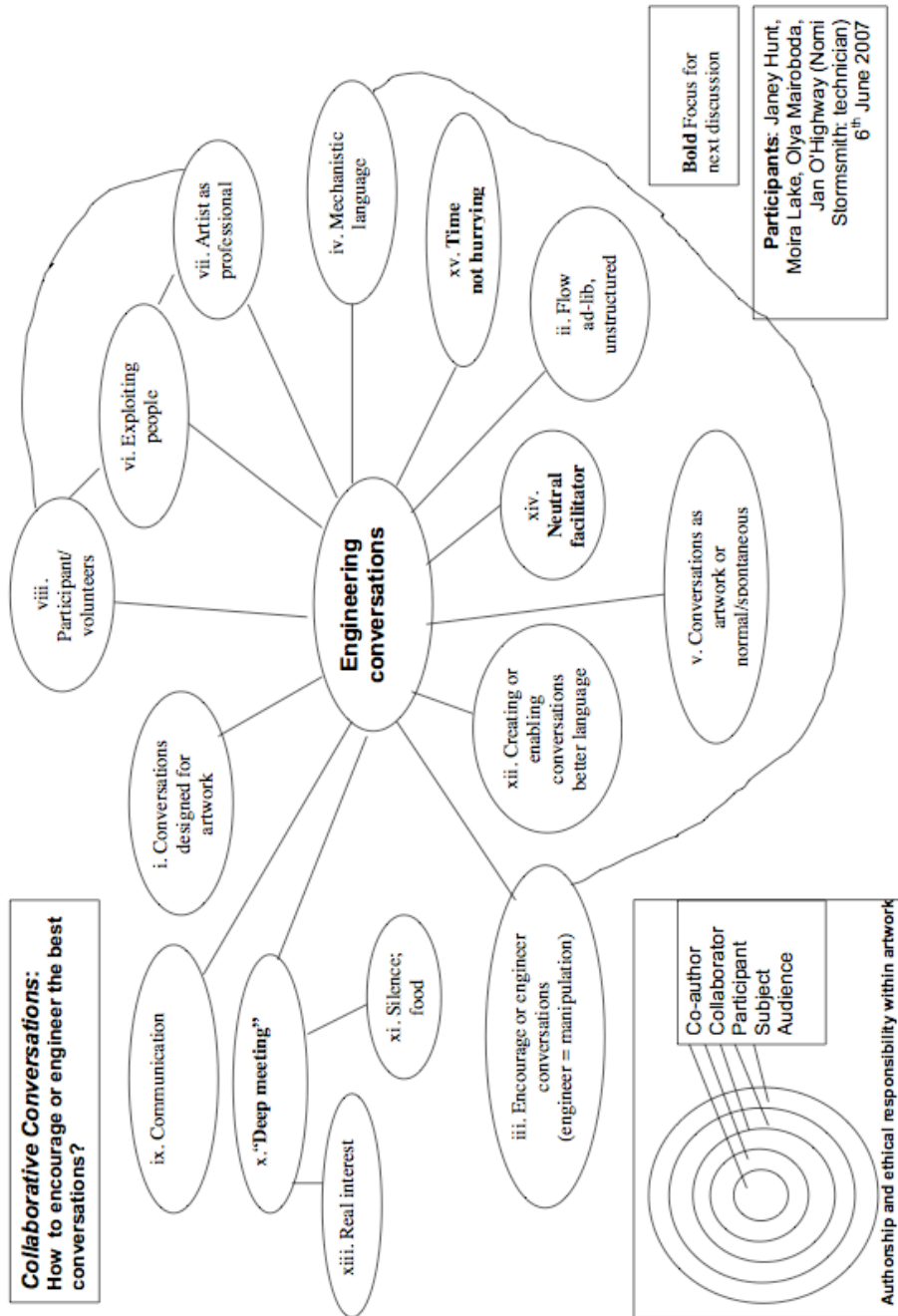


Figure 43 Collaborative Conversations I, Engineering conversations mind map

Communication

There was some discussion about the way I had phrased the question about encouraging or engineering effective conversations. The word 'engineering' was felt to have a mechanistic, manipulative and polemic attitude, which 'encouraging' avoided. Conversations were equated with communication and in order for this to be most effective, a set of parameters within which a 'deep meeting' could take place were explored. For Olya some of the parameters in which this could occur were silence, food, real interest, intimacy, and neutral facilitator, these would create the conditions for a visioning process of which she would more likely wish to be a part. These discussions are reflected in the mind map above, which annotate the conditions of effective communication.

Moira:	To me there is a big difference between encouraging and engineering a conversation...I don't want to engineer conversations. In the sense that...for me it's associated with being manipulated. Or manipulating people into certain situations where they say or do certain things. Do you see what I mean?
Janey:	Yes I do indeed.
Jan:	I found the word engineer a really interesting one, because it is very mechanistic, it's very male in our society. Engineers are usually men and we are all women here umm.
Janey:	Well that's also why I put in encourage, because I think I was uncomfortable with the term...
Olya:	I didn't like the word engineer and I didn't fully understand the question, but what came for me when I thought about conversations was communication and I feel that the best kind of communication or effective communication, always involves a meeting, a deep meeting, of those who communicate or converse.

The idea of a deep meeting was explored more deeply in *Collaborative Conversations II* in August 2007, particularly in the context of a more transitory meeting during an

artwork. We discussed how it might be possible to encourage people to be receptive, or perhaps that only a few people are receptive at that particular moment, but this could also occur suddenly through shock or identification. We observed that this process is true of any experience whether for an artwork that is recognised and revered or a new work encountered on the street. The conclusion from this discussion was the artist's role in the context of a socially engaged artwork was to create the conditions of readiness in which that conversation could best take place. Exploring the idea of a deep meeting helped to explain the art in what I was doing, where the conversation is the artwork that is co-created by the participants, including myself.

Olya:	But what does it mean for you as an artist to enter into deep meetings, that is...What would you feel for you would be in a deep meeting with another person through your artwork? Would that be more time, what would indicate that you were in a deep meeting?
Janey:	Ummm?
Moira:	Is it about you being in a deep meeting with them, or them being in a deep meeting with the artwork? Or is there no difference?
Janey:	Well, umm, given that the conversation is the artwork, I can't quite differentiate between the two because the conversation has to be with me for it to form part of the artwork, in a way.
Moira:	Because what I'm thinking is that the conversation is the artwork. But you're not the conversation and you're not the artwork, you create it together don't you.
Janey:	We create it together.
Moira:	So in a sense the meeting is the artwork. You see I agree with you Olya, that people will be touched when they are ready to be touched, or they will have that deep meeting. I think that's true of any experience and any artwork whether it's a conversation on the street or something that been revered for thousands of years in a gallery or hundreds of years. But the important thing I think is yes people have to be ready, but actually you don't know when people are ready and the person themselves often doesn't know they're ready. Because sometimes a deep meeting with a person, or a landscape or an animal or an

artwork can be quite shocking or sudden, can't it.
So for me it's not about looking for or finding people who are
ready but creating the conditions in which that readiness...

Olya: Can manifest

Moira: Yes exactly yes, because that's all you can ever do isn't it...

Considering how the idea of a deep meeting might already have manifested itself in the artwork to date, helped me to understand that some of those conditions were already being met. We touched again on the essential criteria of real or genuine interest and real dialogue, which needs to be present in the question being asked and present in the artist and participant, and which equates to de Certeau's understanding of a believable object and Kester's empathetic practice. I was able to describe situations from my art practice in which I felt that deep meetings had already occurred. In *Conscience Offsets* people had taken time out of their shopping or daily activities to engage with the issue I was presenting and honestly engage with the issue: one participant writing that as he was a mobile farrier he couldn't give up his car without losing his livelihood despite his anxiety about climate change (discussed in Chapter 4). In *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts* I conversations reflected the quality of thinking that some people had undertaken: exemplified by the development of the purchase matrix and a personal example of realising that if Totnes did not stock what one participant wanted it was probably not worth having (discussed in Chapter 4).

One quality of this genuine interest was to be non-judgmental and encourage a free opinion even when people were obviously unsure what answer I wanted from them (this was indicated by their need for reassurance about their own opinions). Another quality was intimacy (already observed in my work) where my self-disclosure enabled a presentation of myself as an individual with whom anyone could identify consciously avoiding a polemic presentation.

3 Methodology

Janey Hunt, 2011, Conversations: the socially engaged artist as environmental change agent, The University of Plymouth PhD thesis

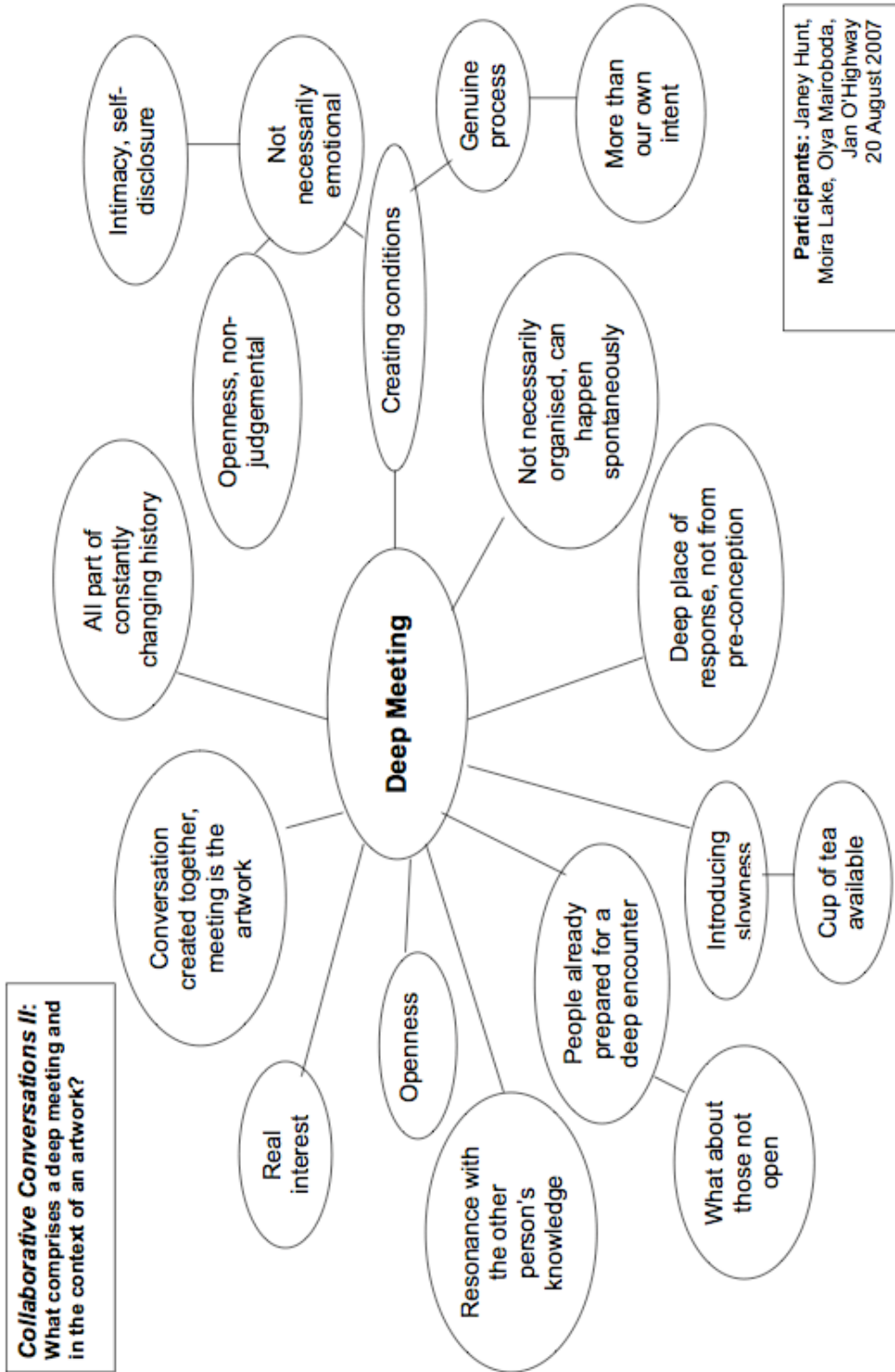


Figure 44 Collaborative Conversations I, Deep Meeting mind map

Level of responsibility to participants

This issue arose in response to a question from one of the participants, Jan, ‘who owns this artwork?’ Jan witnessed the criticism of Judy Chicago in the UK during the making phase of *The Dinner Party* (1974-79), when she was criticised for exploiting her volunteer contributors. Each person had to subscribe to an intensive and extended period of work and achieve a very high standard without pay or recognition.

Jan: ‘it was an interesting dilemma, because the women were, and some men, were entering willingly into this exchange, donating their labour willingly. But Chicago was the one who had ownership of the work, it was not collective, it was still the old hierarchical system.’

A similar question was being asked of my art works. I had already recognised, and offered into the conversation, that different levels of contribution might incur different levels of responsibility on behalf of the artist and developed a model of contribution (above) in which I would ascribe Judy Chicago’s volunteers the level of co-authorship or at least collaboration.

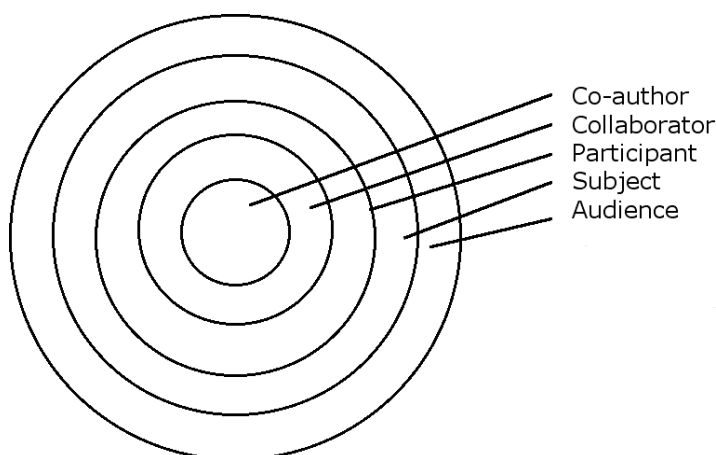


Figure 45 Collaborative Conversation I, Participation/Responsibility model

A further discussion about signing away all rights in this work, (Hunt et al, 2006, Collaborative Conversations p6) acknowledged those taking part in the Collaborative

3 Methodology

Janey Hunt, 2011, Conversations: the socially engaged artist as environmental change agent, The University of Plymouth PhD thesis

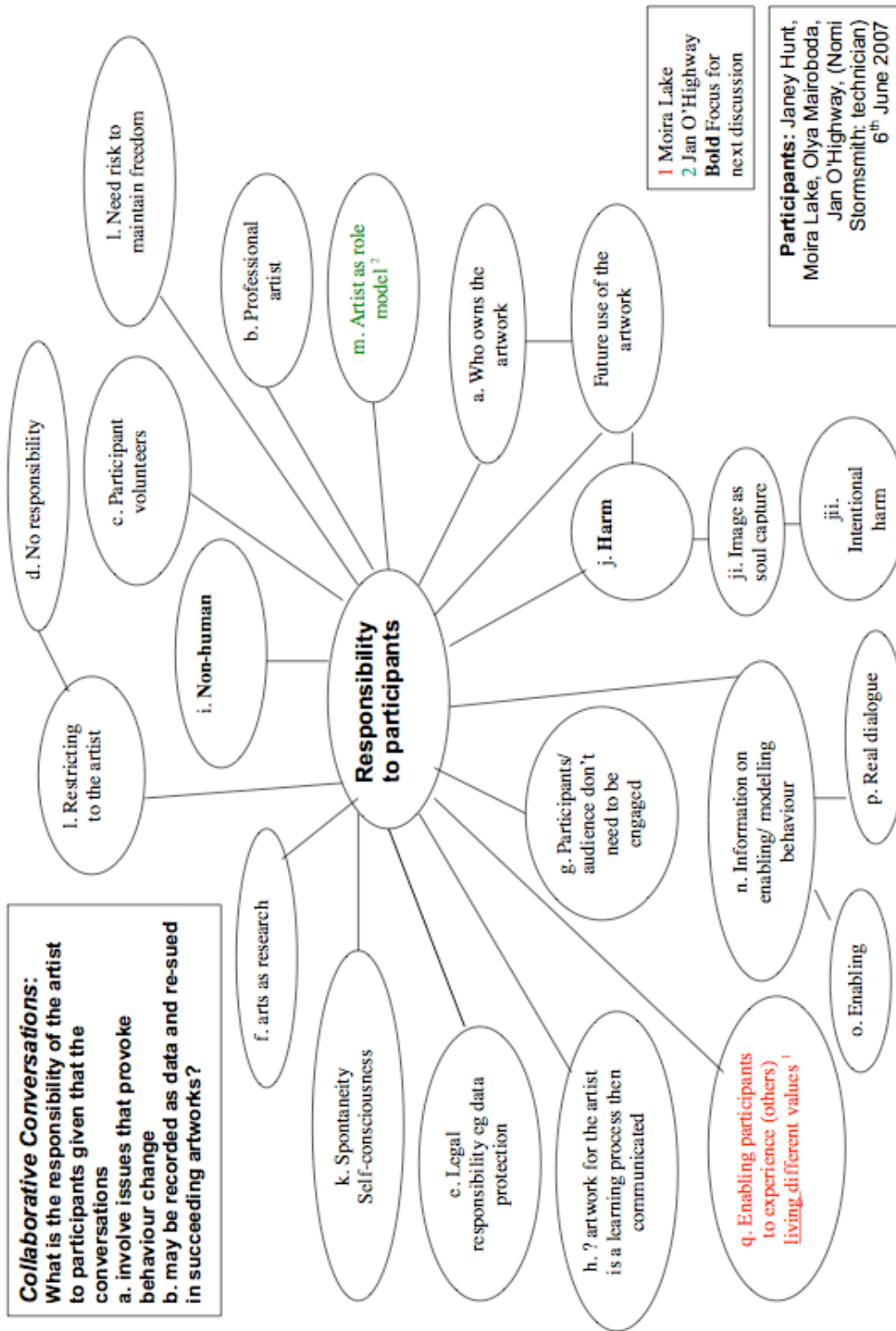


Figure 45 Collaborative Conversations I, Responsibility to participants mind map

Conversation as co-authors. There was some discussion about this issue with different views being expressed. Jan, the community artist was perfectly willing to understand the conversations as co-authored material that she might use with a different intention. Moira, the ecopsychologist didn't feel that she was a co-artist, even though as a writer the material might form a book, but that she formed part of the material with which I would make a work. There was no resolution to this discussion, but an exchange of views.

The artist as role model

In addressing my question about the responsibility of the artist where the work may involve issues that provoke behaviour change we had some discussion about how that might happen. We discussed the idea that the artist in the context of behaviour change needs to become the role model, demonstrating how to do something or how it could be done. This resonates and appears to confirm the artist as a change agent. Olya talked about her experience of observing the greening of Belstone and how that could have been improved. As an artist I conceive I am providing a space in which to 'try out' behaviour, allowing participants to compare their behaviour with my own and other participants visible through the written stories or listened conversations. Moira additionally understood this identification to be more than trying out, but an empathetic shift which explored that way of living for themselves and undertaking a comparison with their own current life choices.

Olya: From this experience of this year-long project in this Green Village (Belstone) and from my reading of literature on the subject, it seems to be a very strong suggestion that what really leads to change of behaviour is when human beings observe other human beings modelling the new behaviour. (Umm) No amount of print literature, spoken word, seems to make a big difference, probably a little bit.

It seems that the way we learn is by modelling...is by modelling the behaviour of others. And that seems to have

the deepest impact and also by doing ourselves. And changing in that process, that seems to lead to change of behaviour. That's how the value-action gap is partly explained, so that unless we have opportunities to either observe someone modelling this behaviour or engage in it, the amount of information we get makes no difference. (Mmm)

Jan: So the artist has a responsibility to be a *role model*.

M: Is that true?...

O: ...Or maybe enabling again, situations through art (Mmm, yes) in which people can (yes)...

M: It's about experience, isn't it. They can experience...

Jan: and participate.

A series of discussions

In the context of *Collaborative Conversations* itself fulfilling the criteria for encouraging the best conversations or a deep meeting, this was deemed a success. Although only invited for a single 2-hour conversation, the participants discussed the idea of this being an on-going series of conversations in which I was the main protagonist, but in fact everyone wanted to continue. I was delighted that this was agreed without my prompting, as I realised that we would need far longer in order to explore the issues properly. I felt curtailed in asking for more time initially because I was unable to offer financial recompense for the participants' time.

This demonstrated the reciprocal benefit of the conversation amongst the participants', something that I hoped would be an outcome. This also confirmed my supposition about the value of conversations both to the artwork and to participants. It also began to underline the possible generative value as accumulative knowledge.

In fact arranging a second meeting proved difficult and further meetings were curtailed by Olya's return to Russia for a year. Some how it didn't feel right to continue the

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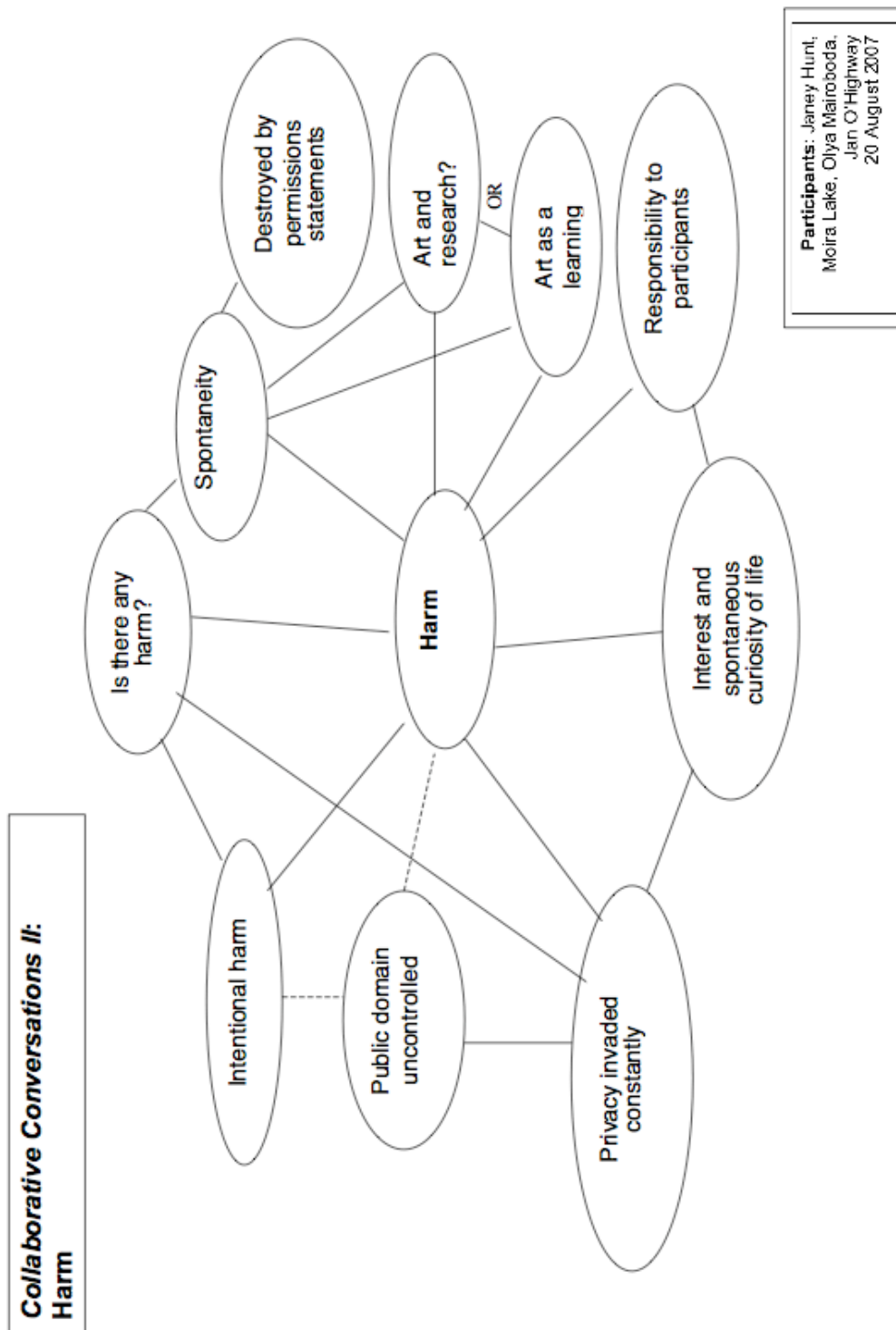


Figure 47 Collaborative Conversations II, Harm Mind Map

conversation with a replacement sociologist, the conversation had become particular to those people. This was particularly evident when in the second meeting Olya had to leave early, her absence left a gap that disrupted the conversation.

Responsibility

This part of the discussion responded directly to the second part of the second question for the Collaborative Conversations, what is the responsibility of the artist to participants given that the conversations: b. may be recorded and reused in succeeding artworks? (Mind Map: Responsibility below)

In discussing responsibility we touched on research etiquette and permissions forms and the lack of spontaneity that evokes, together with the problems that arise in obviously recording people. Olya observed from her experience that the gems in a conversation always came after she had turned off the recorder. In finding a way around the more formalised process of seeking permissions and formal ethical statements, we discussed the idea of responsibility as avoiding harm. The idea of harm as a means of understanding an ethics of art practice was recorded through a mind map (below). Again the idea of some participation being interactive rather than collaborative or co-authored became an important distinction. Olya observed that in sociological research, the researcher has a responsibility to return to the participants with the material and findings that are to be made public. I described the introduction of a government bill designed to prevent intrusion by paparazzi, which also had potential to be used to prevent any public photography. This introduced a defence for the necessity of the artist to take social risks in order to preserve freedom not just for him/herself, but also for society and a recognition of the paradox that created.

Olya: I feel for me that there should be a little bit of a distinction between, again I'm not entirely clear, whether this is art and research as one, or whether this is art as a question of
--

creative energy, that comes through the artist.

So that you just feel like creating this artwork and people are engaged or you go into a public place and this is where it's happening the Totnes Market...Then you don't have responsibility in terms with checking in with the people, if they feel like being engaged they come in and be engaged.

But if you are doing um...I'm trying to differentiate in my own head...if you're doing, if you're designing your artwork, in a way that it's a learning process that involves people you are learning with and learning from. Then I feel there is a responsibility to go back to those people and to say well this is what I have learned, with your participation in it. And I'm just sharing it back with you...

Moira: ...I feel we can just get too precious about all this. We invade each other all the time, life is full of inconvenient, embarrassing, invasive, annoying experiences as well as...if you are buying into the excitement and the interest and the spontaneous curiosity of life, you are also buying into the invasion and the embarrassment and the potential humiliation of it. And really if we are alive and wanting to interact with the rest of the world, we just have to put up with that. So in a way I can only think well okay, someone might think you were being a bit invasive. I don't always like it if I see that someone is taking a photograph of me for some reason. I might think oh what a bloody cheek, but so what, that is life isn't it?...

...And how much *harm* is likely to be done...intentional harm

Moira: Well also you see, it's kind of related to what you're saying the fact is that once an image exists in physical form it can be used in all kinds of ways. So for instance...

Jan: Particularly with Photoshop

Moira: Yes, exactly. So, I mean I would...I'm perfectly happy to trust you with a video of me or photos of me or whatever. But suppose you put that video of me on the internet?...

Moira: But can an individual artist actually take that responsibility?...
...if an artist is restricted to what she can do to such an extent, by concern for all these things, is that in a way buying in again to social control, rather than the freedom to create art?

Maybe we ought to take these risks in order to maintain our freedom. (All: Mmm. Mmm) If you see what I mean it's a paradox that we need to risk the loss of freedom in order to maintain the freedom (All: yes, yes)

Issues/implications Arising from Collaborative Conversations I and II

(June and August 2007)

The outcomes of *Collaborative Conversations* affected my approach to subsequent works. The conversations confirmed my revised approach in *Eco-Renovations: House Receipts I*: avoiding a polemic by focusing the work on an aspect of my own behaviour, which encourages the potential participant to offer something in return; focussing on an issue of current and real or genuine interest, which equates to de Certeau's believable object and Kester's empathetic practice; creating an atmosphere of intimacy to encourage exchange, revealing significant behavioural factors; and the value of participant contributions as part of the rich tapestry of the work. The conversations also confirmed my own observation of the value and potential richness of focussed conversations, both to the artwork but as a reciprocal process for the participants themselves.

The idea of deep meetings influenced the design of future artworks by a conscious intention to create the conditions for conversations and the potential for deep meetings to encourage the conditions for behaviour change.

Part of those conditions was to ensure participants' personal agency within the work. Allowing the opportunity to participate in a real dialogue that was meaningful to themselves and with the potential to affect their lives. The range of responses to the subsequent artworks by participants indicated that there was not an imposition of one approach to which everyone had to subscribe. There was no manipulation of responses, in fact personal opinion was encouraged and displayed even if it was contrary to the work.

The idea of the artist as role model, when s/he works in the context of a real life issue, in order to present alternatives as a measure of behaviour for others equated with my

proposal of the artist as change agent. But I also recognised that by making visible participant contributions highlighting their own attitudes and behaviour, these also became comparative role models.

The conversations revealed the artists' role in cultural diversity, where social freedoms also needed to be preserved uninhibited by over control. The imposition of sociological codes of practice were observed by Olya, the environmental sociologist, to incur a lack of spontaneity and this made me cautious about the imposition of consent forms outside of a formal sociological research situation. In fact *Eco-Renovations: House Receipts II and III* and *Resolutions Exchanged* were conducted without consent forms. Verbal consent to record conversations was obtained in *House Receipts II*, but that was not possible in the even more transitory encounters of *House Receipts III* and for part of *Resolutions Exchanged*.

Instead after an extended discussion about the responsibility of the artist to participants of the artwork, the *Collaborative Conversations* participants concluded that in order to avoid social over-control paradoxically some risk of harm or offence should be allowed. What should be avoided was the intention of harm within the artwork.

These discussions and their outcomes contributed to the development of subsequent artworks. *Collaborative Conversations* also contributed to development of the model for Participation, Practice and Progression discussed later in this chapter.

The Practice

As I have stated above new artwork was developed for this PhD. The art works run through the period of the PhD and reflect the cycle of reading, reflection of both practice and theory, trying out and refining practice and my understanding of the

theory and writing. Through this process I have come to understand my own practice better and to consider the issues that socially engaged practice raises as noted above. I also better understand the integration of research and practice, to produce a final thesis that reflects the integrity of writing and art practice.

The artworks comprise pilot projects *Conscience Offsets* (May 2006), *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts I* (July 2006), and following these, *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts II* (September 2007), and *III* (March 2008), and *Resolutions Exchanged* (January 2009).

These works generally take place outside of the art gallery: on the street, a community venue, in my kitchen, at a commercial exhibition. They are of short duration, a day or two, with intensive participative activity of conversations and written contributions.

They are initiated by me and engaged in by anyone who wants to stop and talk.

Conscience Offsets used a small information display and pin boards for participant contributions. *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts I* used a large wall sized mind map, with additional printed and written material and participant contributions. *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts II* reorganised the mind map information to fit a much smaller wall space within my own house and developed the narrative that was apparent in the work and enabled the display and addition of participant stories and comments. *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts III* utilised the above narrative, but in a very different display situation. Taking place at the ECOS Trust Homes for Good Show 2008, the work was re-configured to the format of the show stand. In order to enable the work to stand out amongst many other stands I added in other features including a confessional box in which to record conversations, an easel and poster to make clear the purpose of the stand and small table and chair to encourage written contributions. *Resolutions Exchanged* in Totnes offered free coffee/tea and cake in an informal sitting area, as an exchange for participants' contribution and time. Participant contributions and a tally

of sins/successes were displayed. In the Plymouth University library foyer cakes were given away in specially printed bags and space for the work demarcated by display boards. Images of these works follow in the next chapter and are documented in an accompanying volume.

I have come to an understanding of my art practice as a three-stage process each building on the stage before:

- a provocation for engagement comprising the examination of some aspect of my own behaviour.

This part of the process developed as a result of a reaction from PhD colleagues to a workshop presentation of *Conscience Offsets*. There it was commented that the work seemed to be preaching in tone and thereby provoking resistance. This in conjunction with Bourdieu's description of the political delegate made me formulate an approach that would implicate myself as part of the everyday in the behaviour I wanted to investigate.

This also ties in with the styles of investigation into the everyday, which was at first conducted through interview, and later used the format of first person observation. For instance François Bon (1999) took the same train each Thursday between Paris and Nancy over the winter of 1998-9 and noted what he saw from the window of the social and economic change.)

By implicating myself in the work through everyday observation of my own lifestyle I am also ensuring that I create a believable object, which is therefore able to communicate to other people.

- designing a situation to encourage participation and conversation and enable an initial questioning of our personal assumptions and attitudes.

Using my own environmental behaviour as the provocation for engagement, I invite people to add their own stories and contributions, whether sharing their own failures and frustrations or indicating ways in which their lifestyles have changed. The admission of my own behaviour also encourages a non-threatening situation, which allows participants to be open about their own lifestyles.

Understanding the everyday as a site of knowledge also focuses the work on the participant. This ensures that participant contributions are valued in and of themselves, avoiding any manipulation.

Following *Conscience Offsets*, which took place on the street and observed the richness of the conversations, the works have taken place in public places where people might be willing to spend more time. These have been for instance my own house as an open studio, a tradeshow, or community venue. The participative events are facilitated to encourage conversation and exchange. This requires a sensitivity of approach that ensures the participant voice is paramount, whilst ensuring the exchanges are still genuine. *Collaborative Conversations* (see above) discussed the idea of a deep meeting as a means of encouraging conversations. The conditions for a deep meeting are expressed as openness and readiness, real interest, intimacy, time, non-judgemental situation, genuine question/interest, slowing down and personal agency. Food and silence were also suggested as features of a deep meeting, but are less applicable to a public event than a personal private meeting. This approach of a deep meeting was considered in the design of each work that followed.

- representing conversation as a means of further sharing knowledge to enable others engagement and behaviour change. This final section has not been

expressed through the works explored within this thesis. I propose it as the next stage for the works and as further research. However I mention it here in order to show the development of my practice throughout the PhD and including the period of writing up.

I suggest this takes the artwork beyond the participative event and documentation and attempts to extend the artwork to a wider audience. Here the exchanges that took place could be represented as a pool of knowledge that can lead to further transformation and the work has the potential to be a small-scale rupture event described by de Certeau. Operating as a narrative comprised of believable objects arising from pooled knowledge, a community of common sensibility is created with the viewer, who is also implicated.

This process has been integrated with the Model for Practice, Participation and Progression, which is described and developed below.

Development of the Practice, Participation and Progression model

At first the two areas of socially engaged practice and behaviour change seemed too separate, with the application of a largely discursive model and more analytical model respectively. Grounded research focuses on the data and the means of generating understanding allowing a more integrated approach.

In order to decide on the most appropriate means to understand individual behaviour change and an artwork intended to provoke change, I undertook analysis of the pilot project, *Conscience Offsets*, using grounded research intuitive coding, and application of the Value-action Gap model, modified to include internal and external factors demonstrating the impediments to individual change, and the 5A's Model for Change

(Ballard and Ballard 2005a) alongside the investigative project *Collaborative Conversations* (described above). This model identifies the situational components essential to create change, which are awareness, agency, association, action and reflection, architecture. Figure 48 below explores these in more depth. These situational components can operate on both an individual and an organisational level and so can be used to identify the characteristics of change at an individual level, the participant, that of the change agent, the artist and on the level of the components of the artwork. The comparison of the data can be found in Appendix One.

Comparing the three behaviour change models, each offered its own nuance on the contributions, however the value-action gap model was the least adaptable because of its overlapping categories (see figure 35 above). The intuitive coding that arose through Grounded Research, achieved the most sensitive and detailed coding, but focused on individual behaviour alone. It was difficult to use the model to analyse the artwork, or the situation for change. The 5A's Model for Change already indicated most categories for change and could be adapted to include those missing for art practice.

The 5A's Model for Change already recognised organisational or situational change within its scope. It could also be mapped onto Matarasso's analysis of the benefits of participation in the arts (Matarasso 1997) as I have indicated in Chapter Two (see figure 37). The correlation of these two models allows the exploration of the socially engaged artist as change agent. The model also allowed for a sensitive and supportive design of participation and has been developed to accommodate the positive and negative aspects of behaviour.

However the 5A's Model for Change as it stood did not allow for a rounded aesthetic consideration of the artworks; only some of the aesthetics issues could be considered eg Agency. Utilising the intuitive coding from Grounded Research I coded the aesthetic qualities of the artwork, both negatively and positively (Figure 48). These were further grouped into four categories reflecting aspects of participatory artwork: Approach/attitude; Acquisition/appreciation; Assumptions challenged and Accumulation. From this process I have developed an extension of the 5A's Model for Change to apply to socially engaged artworks particularly in environmental situations, which I have called the model for Practice, Participation and Progression (Figure 49).

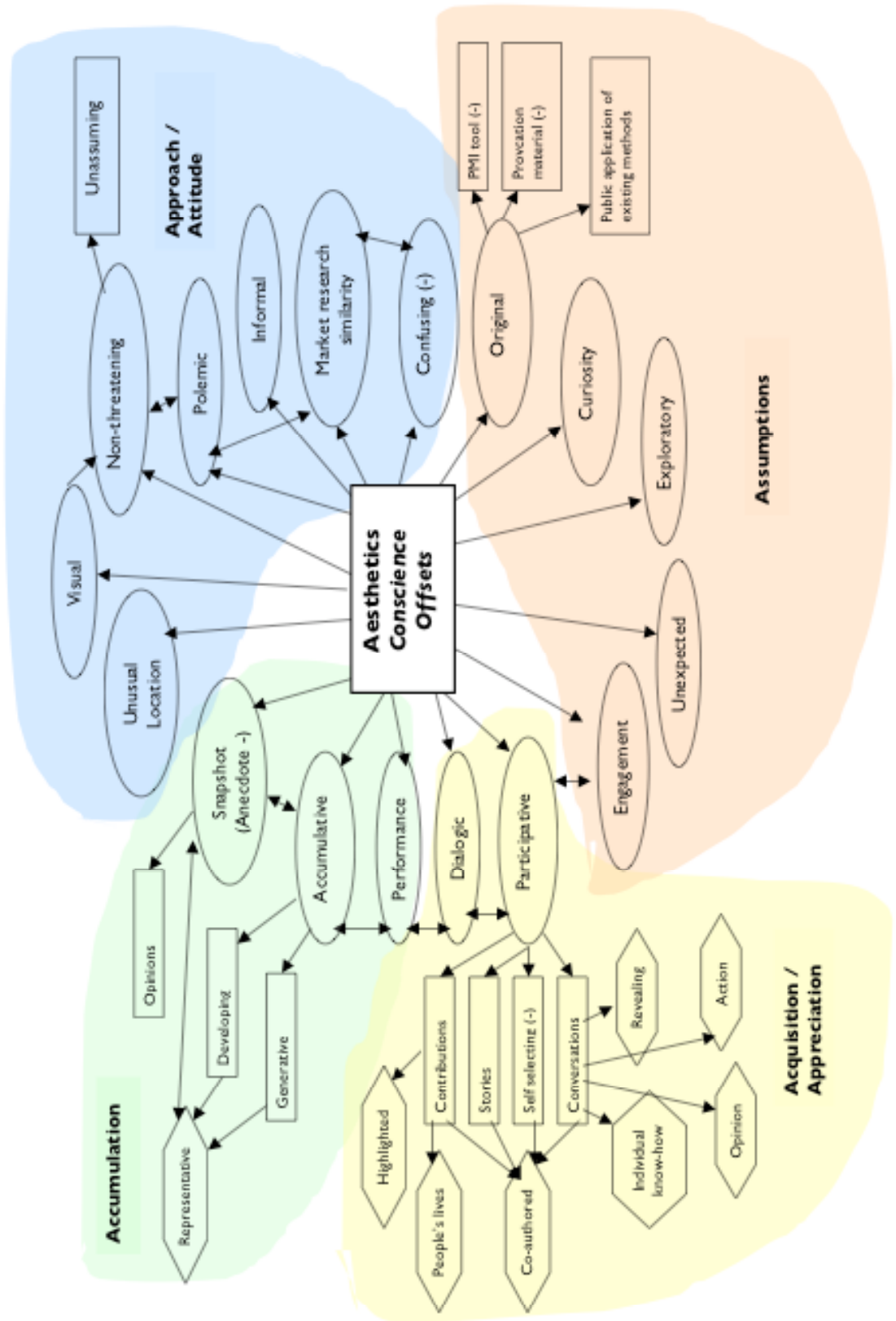


Figure 48 Aesthetic analysis of Conscience Offsets

Model for Practice, Participation and Progression based on Ballard			
	Attribute	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>
Situation for change	Approach / Attitude	Avoiding polemic Informal situation Non-threatening Unusual location or setting	Preaching, predetermined outcome Intimidating or uncomfortable situation Location defining reception
	Acquisition / appreciation	Encouraging engagement Dialogic Participative: Contributions are highlighted; Stories; Conversations demonstrating individual know-how, revealing, opinion, action	Participants or audience disregarded Participation interactive but without influence or effect Contributions edited and selective Stories, conversations absorbed into artists' authored work
	Assumptions challenged	Being exploratory, using curiosity, encouraging engagement, allowing the unexpected	Predetermined outcomes Predefined aim excludes the unexpected
	Accumulation	Snapshot: capturing opinions; Accumulative: developing, generative through sharing, representative Co-authored	Not essential once point proved Artist as author
	Awareness	Factual, Urgency and priority, Confidence Application of existing skills Action and understanding New Skills Self determination	Rejecting fact, Abstracting fact Diversion from personal application Lack of confidence in individual impact Lack of confidence in small scale change Lack of confidence in external advice
Indication of change	Agency	Meaningful action despite scale of issues Personal behaviour and implications Self determination Empowering, people gaining control over own lives Raised expectations Seeking out options for action	Diversionsary action eg buying out of season imported organic food Unwillingness / lack of understanding how to change personal behaviour Negative or insufficient feedback about behaviour Lack of internal incentives Unthinking behaviour / Habit
	Association	Co-operation and networks, supportive friendships Active citizens Active local democracy Building organisational skills and capacity	Individual isolation Lack of co-operation Peer group resistance
	Action and Reflection	Reflection suggests effective action Empowered and active individuals Meeting expectations Improving quality of life	Conflicting or confusing advice obstructs action Reversion back to old behaviour patterns and habits Fear influences intention Anticipatory emotions negative
	Architecture	External context: government incentives, local government and institutional support, easily available advice and goods, affordable Contextual factors: work flexible, good health, money not an issue, DIY fitting or easy fit installation and maintenance, asset to property or lifestyle	External context: lack of government, local government and institutional support; Lack of advice; lack of availability; expensive Contextual factors: Work practices obstructive; Work too hard; poor health; low wages or income support; Complex installation and maintenance; expensive; no asset to property or lifestyle

Figure 49 Model for Participation, practice and progression

Application of the model for Participation, Practice and Progression

In Chapter 4 each artwork is described in terms of its presentation, the situation in which it occurred and the facilitation of the work. I used the categories within the model to assist my interrogation and understanding of the works. I then highlighted the specific issues that arose from each work. These findings were summarised to describe the outcomes of each work and the development of the works as art, through participation and indicated where behaviour change might become apparent.

These findings allow me to draw in differing data and interpretation from Bishop, Bourriaud and Kester, as comparative material and from Collaborative Conversations, to test my conclusions about socially engaged practice.

Chapter 4 Analysis of the artworks according to the Model for Practice, Participation and Progression

Success of methodology

The methodology used in this research has been influenced by and evolved both from the desk-based research, investigative projects and art practice throughout the period of the research. As discussed in Chapter 3 this resulted in the Model for Practice, Participation and Progression.

I suggest the model allowed interrogation and understanding of the works. It indicated the development of my sophistication about the design and delivery of the artwork. The model also allowed me to make generative conclusions about the aesthetics of this practice and its contribution to knowledge of the value-action gap and an indication of the behavioural change that has already been achieved by individuals and the possibility of artwork of this type encouraging environmental behaviour.

Each work is described and illustrated, the material gathered is then analysed according to the Model for Practice, Participation and Progression and any particular issues arising from the analysis of that artwork are then discussed. Formatting the material in this way, although lengthy, exposes my thought processes through grounded research. This takes in observation about both the art practice and environmental behaviour, which makes this chapter of necessity quite detailed.

A table summarising the outcomes of the work can be found at the end of this chapter.

Conscience Offsets (April/May 2006)

Description of the work



Figure 50 Detail of *Conscience Offsets* outside Somerfield Supermarket

This participative artwork, *Conscience Offsets*, was conceived as a pilot project to establish a means of working with environmental behaviour issues and the value-action gap. Specifically the work brought forward the idea of carbon offsetting, at that time relatively unknown. I used Edward de Bono's business development tool, the PMI exercise (Plus, Minus, Interesting) (Bono 1990) as a method in order to personalise the process

and to examine the adjacency principle noted by Bourriaud and Kester. This invited people to examine the idea of carbon offsetting in a personal application, any implications it would have for them personally and to



Figure 51 Detail of *Conscience Offsets*, Climate Care flyer front and reverse

consider if it was an appropriate personal approach to carbon reduction. There was some basic explanatory information about carbon offsetting from the then government approved carbon offsetting company www.climatecare.org. The format of the artwork was a series of boards, onto which people could pin their various PMI comments. The pin boards covered in comments were then available for people to read and comment upon further.

Conscience Offsets was trialled initially with a group of PhD colleagues, at a Friends' of the Earth meeting and outside of Somerfield Supermarket as part of a curated event *Fora* by Marianne Torrance. Following the trial with PhD colleagues the introductory board explaining carbon offsetting was refined.



Figure 52 Detail of *Conscience Offsets* outside Somerfield Supermarket

The work was announced as an artwork at the PhD workshop and Friends' of the Earth meeting. In the Somerfield supermarket location, although some people sought the work out as part of the *Fora* event and were therefore aware of the work as art, for the majority of passers-by the work was not labelled and they could make their own interpretation of its purpose.

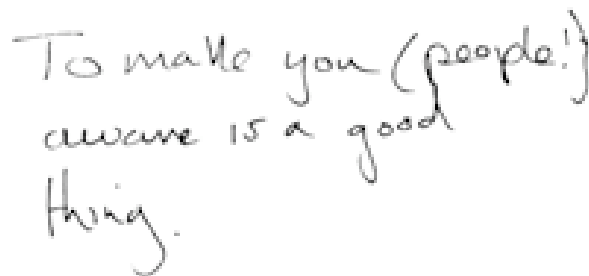
I wanted to utilise aspects of business or sociological methods (as described by Bourriaud and Kester) that might be relevant methodology in an unusual circumstance to engage passers-by, to see if these made a positive contribution to the artwork and facilitated useful responses to the value-action gap and behaviour change. The selection of the PMI exercise was intended to extend an exchange of views, beyond people telling me their opinions, to thinking more deeply about the issue of carbon offsetting. If people stopped to find out what I was doing then they generally participated in the work, despite a resultant similarity to market research which confused some participants, some of who also thought I might be selling something.

The pin boards were empty at the start of the work, aside from the description about carbon offsetting, however comments accumulated quickly further animating the work.

To begin with I did not intend to facilitate the work. In the PhD workshop the criteria was that the artists did not speak, and this meant that it took people some time to read the material and understand what the work was about and what I wanted them to do. I hoped that a more informed audience at the Friends of the Earth meeting would engage with the work more fluently, there my intention was to focus on documentation.

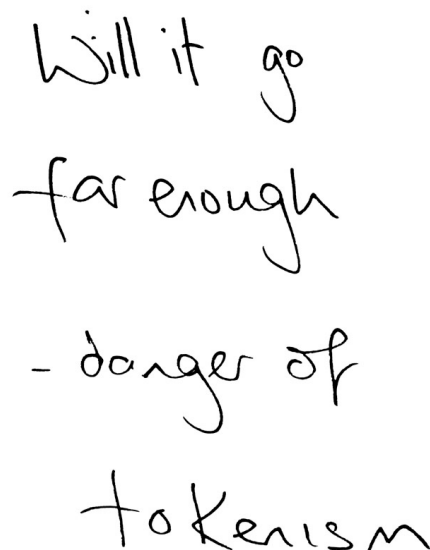
However I was surprised that this was not the case. They seemed no better informed about carbon offsetting than my PhD colleagues none of

whom had particular environmental interests. I found that quite a lot of explanation and encouragement was necessary to gain participation. I realised that facilitating the work would be essential outside Somerfield Supermarket.



To make you (people!)
aware is a good
thing.

Figure 53 Detail of *Conscience Offsets*, Friends of the Earth, Contribution to plus



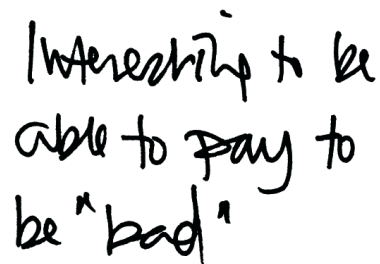
Will it go
far enough
- danger of
tokenism

Figure 54 Detail of *Conscience Offsets*, Friends of the Earth, Contribution to minus

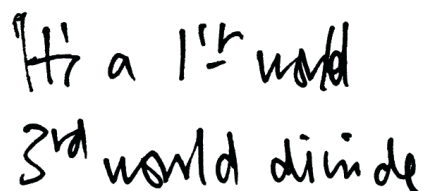
This I did without giving my own opinion about carbon offsetting. I asked people what they thought about carbon offsetting and if they did not know

gave them a quick explanation. I then asked them to think about the concept and write a comment under the three headings plus, minus and interesting.

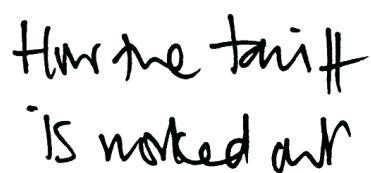
Some people were happy to talk to me, but did not want to make a written contribution. However they usually allowed me to write something on their behalf as a direct quote or a summary of what they had said. I would have preferred that they write their own comment, but in the interests of



Interesting to be
able to pay to
be "bad"



It's a 1st world
3rd world divide



How the tariff
is worked out

Figure 55 Detail of *Conscience Offsets*, Friends of the Earth, Contribution to interesting

getting as many views as possible, my scribing their comments was the only way of ensuring their contribution to the work. This occurred in a minority of instances.

Most people did not follow through the PMI method, despite encouragement. Often the comments were specific to one category, so there was little individual exploration or development of understanding as I had intended. However since comments were ranged across all three categories of plus, minus and interesting, reading the boards could give people access to a range of opinions that might provoke further thought at a later stage beyond the presence of the artwork.

I received 87 comments in total over the three events. Not everyone made a contribution in each of the three categories. All contributions were anonymous, with no personal data collected.

This work first highlighted the rich conversations I was having with participants' beyond the intended participation in the work. These conversations went unrecorded, but for me and often for the participants, were the most interesting aspect of the engagement. They often ranged beyond the particular parameters set by the PMI exercise, but this formed the starting point.



Figure 56 Detail of *Conscience Offsets*, outside Somerfield supermarket, in conversation

Participants ranged in age from approximately 20's to 50's. My attempts to engage older people were generally unsuccessful, my impression being one of suspicion or confusion. In terms of a younger audience, two young schoolgirls approached me asking if they could take part, but my attempts to engage a teenage male group who were hanging around were unsuccessful.

The work was documented in a form familiar from site-specific practice by images and reproduction of the contributed comments as a small booklet.

Analysis using the Model for Practice, Participation and Progression

As described in the previous chapter *Conscience Offsets* was used as a pilot project to assist in the construction of a suitable model for analysis. The aesthetic qualities of a socially engaged artwork using *Conscience Offsets* has been described in Figure 48 above.

Approach / Attitude

There was a comment from my PhD colleagues about the possible perception of preaching climate change and additionally the misunderstanding by some members of the public that I might be conducting market research or selling something. In order to dispel those notions in future works, I felt I could not retain a neutral position within the artwork, an intended impartial observer. I needed to be implicated in the value-action gap behaviour that I was seeking to reveal, I needed to make it obvious that I was doing no better than the participants in the artwork.

In terms of a visual aesthetic, the low-tech approach taken with the installation was a deliberate decision not to intimidate. The handwritten comments became very engaging with people stopping to read them. The unusual location meant the interaction of a non-art audience was achieved, which was essential for a representative participation.

Acquisition / Appreciation

Facilitating the participation would also be easier if I was also obviously part of the work, rather than an impartial recorder. This would then be my point of introduction, which as an unusual approach might also draw people in to participate.

I designed this pilot artwork according to my existing experience of site-specific practices with a preconceived idea of the outputs ie the written comments reproduced as booklets. These were based on the understanding that the artwork comprised the participative event, which included my facilitation, the written contributions, people's unrecorded conversations with me and their reading of others' comments.

Although I, the artist, provide the framework for the event, participation shapes the work. The boards were empty at the beginning other than the introductory panel, waiting for participants to animate the work. Without the contributions, there would only be the initial premise that forms the framework and which I facilitate. The participation itself is therefore of paramount importance.

Assumptions

Although there was some confusion about the work, what it was/offering/selling, this generally made people curious to enquire further and therefore enabled participation. Utilising a specific business model (PMI) to gather comments did not particularly strengthen the work. I felt that at

times it inhibited it, by confining the parameters of the response. I was disappointed that people were still telling me what they thought, rather than thinking through the issue, as I intended. There is a difference between utilising a method from another discipline in the formation of an artwork, as with the PMI exercise, and using an artwork to contribute to knowledge in another field, the value-action gap. My conclusion here is that the adoption of methods from another discipline should not dictate the form of the artwork, the method needed to be more absorbed into the work.

I found a lack of confidence from participants in their own opinions. This was evident because often people “looked to me” to see if they were making the right response and I had to re-assure people that what they thought was perfectly reasonable. This lack of confidence surprised me, since often what participants said was entirely couched in their own experience of what worked for them, and gave fascinating insights into their thoughts and behaviour. Even if requested I would not give my own opinion before the participant had given theirs.

The veracity of participation is also important for what it can contribute to understanding the value-action gap and behaviour change. Representing this fairly, possibly without later manipulation or editing, allowing for the range of opinions to be revealed would not only contribute to our understanding of the value-action gap, but also lend depth to the artwork.

Conscience Offsets was delivered in three separate venues, with very different audiences. It was my intention to run the artwork in different circumstances to verify the opinions I was receiving, and to see if there was a difference between the attitudes of those from an environmental movement (Friends of the Earth) and a general public (outside Somerfield Supermarket). The range of views is broad indicating a good cross section of people.

Accumulation

There was a performative element, since I had to work hard to facilitate the artwork. However this was a means to achieve participation as the end point, not as an end in itself. If this was a performance it was not about a single individual, the artist, creating a work, but a collective performance, which created a picture of society at that moment.

The unexpected outcome of this artwork was the conversations I had with people, which formed the most interesting part. The conversations although entirely unstructured, were exciting because of what I felt they revealed about the way people lived and might change. They revealed more than I could get using the PMI exercise. The conversations in the context of behaviour change represented a body of knowledge that was being largely ignored, but which could be interesting both in terms of knowledge and aesthetic. I resolved to find a way of recording these

conversations as unobtrusively as possible so as not to impede conversation.

All the events took place in Totnes. What might be useful as a further comparison is to repeat the work with a different range of people in a different place, or repeat the work after time to gauge the shift of opinions. Unlike a sociological survey I do not have numbers or demographics of participants taking part, nor a count of the number of people who had previously heard of carbon offsets. However looking at the content of the comments after the three events, there is a duplication of views taking place indicating a good range of opinion and the interaction was good and could therefore be considered representative. This work formed a snapshot of local opinion.

Being in a public space ensured the variety of participants. Although the majority of contributions revealed an interest in and support of environmental issues, a significant minority of doubters indicated a balanced participation. To a certain extent the participants are self-selecting ie they participate if they are interested and have time, and cannot be proved to be representative without other data collection.

The accumulative nature of the participation, which people could also read within the event meant that as well as representative the work was generative, in that it could enable the sharing of views and opinions.

The 5A's model

The summary analysis below enables an understanding of carbon offsetting as predominantly useful to raise awareness of carbon use, but also impacting negatively on carbon reduction. The full spreadsheet analysis is available in Appendix I. Comments also reflected the opinion that carbon offsetting would not necessarily change behaviour, since the relatively low cost incurred could be absorbed. Some comments viewed offsetting as a legislative measure rather than a personal choice, but which then would be ineffective unless every country joined in. It was also viewed as creating social inequity, since the cost could be more easily borne by the rich.

Beyond individual behaviour change, this model also affords a picture of the effect that this artwork could have. These are largely in the first areas of awareness and indication of individual agency, with some reflections on the external context of the role of government and social equity.

Awareness

- 19 comments viewed carbon offsetting as contributing to awareness eg 'Informs people of specific results through changing behaviour/reducing emissions', 'Excellent idea - makes people at least think about it all'.
- 17 comments viewed carbon offsetting as obscuring the real issues of carbon reduction (awareness -)
eg '(Interesting) that air flights cost so little in terms of CO2

emissions?', 'Will it go far enough - danger of tokenism'. 'Does it really balance it out?' 'Could it stop people seriously considering alternate energy use?'

Agency

- 17 comments viewed carbon offsetting as offering a negative agency, where the behaviour might contribute to carbon rather than reduce it eg 'I use my vehicle for business as a farrier, I can't do without it. What can I do?'
- 12 comments viewed carbon offsetting as offering a positive agency to encourage action
eg 'They encourage people to understand that they have a choice about their role in encouraging/inhibiting carbon emissions'

Association

- 2 comments viewed carbon offsetting as able to build co-operation and network within friends and local community
eg 'Further discussion with friends about CO2 offsets scheme'

Action and Reflection

- 2 comments reflected considered action to reduce carbon use, rather than pay for use
eg 'Think more seriously about life style + what I can change on a personal level'

Architecture

- I comment viewed carbon offsetting as a means of measuring the cost of carbon use beyond the individual and in the national context eg 'We can measure financial costs'
- 14 comments viewed carbon offsetting as an imposition from government, where not all would agree to be liable, or would be financially able
eg 'It's a 1st world 3rd world divide', 'It's a problem - don't know what the solution is without America', 'Another way that poor people are hammered'.

None of the behaviour change models I assessed recognise a diversion from the personal and individual situation to an abstract situation despite a direct question. The attitude adopted was often this would be good for people generally, rather than for me personally, a similar observation to Borne's research on mitigation behaviour referred to in Chapter 2 (Borne 2009).

Issues arising from Conscience Offsets*Avoiding a polemic presentation*

In order to avoid accusation of a polemic and to ensure the maximum participation in the artwork, I adjusted the starting point of later works to begin from an aspect of my own behaviour. This reflects Kester's discussion of the dangers of Bourdieu's political agent and de Certeau's refocusing on the participant (Bourdieu 1991: 206, de Certeau and Giard

1998b: 254, Kester 2004: 239). By starting from a position of equality with participants, this disarms any tendency to of defensiveness by participants through my personal admittance of eco-failure.

Adjacency

The confusion of the initial reception of this work, not sales, not market research, not conventional art approach could both attract and detract from participation. The informal presentation (aesthetic) was to attract participants to ask what it was and so provide a way into participation. Adopting this style of presentation was also to consciously try out the principle of 'adjacency' to other styles of working as explored by Kester and Bourriaud (Bourriaud, 2002: 44, Kester 2007:130,137). In this work this took the format of the PMI exercise, which as I have discussed above did not in these instances encourage an exploration of individual preformed opinions. It did however provide a sufficient range of responses as to be representative of opinion overall.

The older age group and young people were more difficult to engage. Was this because the work was not meaningful for them, particularly in the case of young people? Or because older people were suspicious of a sales gimmick (my conclusion at the time)?

Capturing the conversations

One of the unexpected outcomes from this work were the conversations. Unrecorded during this work, they appeared to be the most interesting

aspect of the work itself. Note taking was impractical during the work, other than writing down short spoken contributions to the PMI, because of the necessary facilitation of the events. I felt the personality that came through the real person speaking was also part of the conversation and decided that recording would be the best method and essential to the progress of the artwork.

The confidence of participants

I observed during the work the apparent lack of confidence about the validity and expression of personal opinion. This does not appear to arise directly elsewhere in the theoretical research, it led me to question that de Certeau's proposal of the creative individual may have become a degraded position.

Knowledge

This artwork was not ideal as has been outlined above, however it led the way to some significant understandings about how socially engaged projects operate and within the context where the most valuable outcomes might appear. As indicated above the conversations formed the richest exchange.

Abstracting the personal

There was a general tendency to abstract the personal to people generally, so as to avoid an individual implication for change. Can the design or theme of the artworks be adjusted to ensure that the personal and individual come to the fore?

Effects on behaviour change

Conscience Offsets reveals most behaviour change responses in the categories of Awareness and Agency. However the balance between positive and negative Awareness and Agency indicates the mixed reception of carbon offsetting as a contributor to carbon reduction, instead indicating its function as carbon use amelioration. It's interpretation as an abstract concept is indicated by the number of comments in the category of Architecture, not applicable personally but relating to government action and taxation. This could indicate why carbon offsets are considered in the abstract, as a government sponsored voluntary scheme, choosing to participate becoming something we ought to do, rather than we will do.

Eco-Renovation: House Receipts I, (July 2006)*Description of the work*

Eco-Renovation: House Receipts I took place at the Dartington Gallery, Dartington College of the Arts and comprised a wall-sized mind map, using both image and textual material, in order to expose my own failure to eco-renoate my house. The work also actively invited people to add their own thoughts, information, ideas and stories. This work directly situated my



Figure 57 Detail of *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts I*, mind map

own behaviour within the research parameters and artwork and enabled me to examine my own habits and attitudes, as well as the differing attitudes of participants that contributed.

This work was conducted as an open studio event, since I did not know prior to the event the form or content that the work would take during the weeklong exhibition. I took advantage of the availability of the gallery space to ensure sufficient room to explore my behaviour.



Figure 58 *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts* poster

Analysis using the Model for Practice, Participation and Progression

Detailed analysis of the findings can be found in Appendix 2.

Approach / Attitude

The open format allowed for experimentation around the presentation of information and deliberation about the exploration of my own behaviour.

This approach avoided the polemic that had been identified in *Conscience*

Offsets. Choosing to admit failure, was a recognition that failure was not acknowledged, a conclusion I drew from personal observation of environmental groups within Totnes. I observed that failure was rarely acknowledged, or a positive gloss was commonly portrayed that I felt obstructed the ability of the groups to recognise areas for improvement.

I also chose a subject area in which I might get more distinctive contributions. From speaking to people beforehand I realised that many people had thought about some aspect of eco-renovation, so this subject area made it relevant to real lives, in de Certeau's words a believable object. Carbon offsetting the subject of the first artwork was then a new and more abstract concept to most people.

I utilised the back wall of the gallery for a long mind map. Starting with just the bundle of receipts from the renovation of my house, I built up detail each day examining one particular area of the renovation and my behaviour and researched possible alternatives.

At the end the work had both a macro aesthetic and micro detail. I did have a visual composition in mind, in my choice of marker pens, paper, labels and receipts and how I fixed information to the wall panels, which allowed a textural element.



Figure 59 Eco-Renovation: House Receipts I, eco paints

Some people were very comfortable with the aesthetic style of the event, recognising tools that they used, which allowed them a way into the material. Whilst for others the use of the mind map, meant confusion with normally non-aesthetic tools. One participant asked if he was also an artist, because he used creative development tools in business development

and consultation. On reflection my lack of preparation ie trialling the work beforehand, resulted in a shifting visual approach throughout the duration of this event. This was revealed by some confusion about the varied content of the work by some people and my need to explain what the work was doing.

Once again I chose a tool from another discipline for the presentation of the work, the mind map. However the mind map is more generic and has been used by other artists eg Jeremy Deller *The History of the World* 1997-2004, it is also more commonly used as opposed the PMI method that required explanation, which could have obstructed the work.

The artwork again exposed a number of questions that I needed to address. It was difficult for the audience to distinguish participant contributions from my own material, despite the different handwriting. Is this important? Could my material form a flat background and the stories and material from the participants to provide the texture? Is the texture an important aesthetic element of this work? As a means of encouraging better engagement would this operate better as a workshop?

The work took place during the Dartington Music Summer School, which offered the potential for a sizeable audience. The work was advertised through posters and email with a closing event at the end of the week. The weather was extremely hot and it was very difficult to think in the gallery. Quite a few people looked through the gallery window, but only a few

came into the gallery to find out what was happening, those that did were very interested.

In the context of this artwork, it was clear that comments and stories were requested on the poster and would be on public display. However there were no permission forms for reproduction, or collection of contact information for later follow-up. In this case no photographic documentation was taken whilst participants were in the gallery, so permission for reproduction from people in the images was not necessary.

Acquisition / Appreciation

Verbal comments indicated that the work was engaging and people did spend some time reading and looking at the work. People were invited to participate during the process and to a closing event, when the artwork could be viewed as a whole.

An ecological architect who visited observed that this artwork was making a valuable contribution to the eco-renovation debate. This demonstrated the obverse side to the architects and suppliers, who are attempting to develop the conditions for eco-renovation and development without necessarily understanding what happens for their clients. Following a presentation to a local artist's group, I received the following email

'Your presentation was very interesting to see and hear after only visiting the exhibition on the first day. The whole issue is deeply interesting on so many levels. The more I thought about it...the more engaged with it I became.' (Posner 2007 personal communication)

I offered two different paper sizes in blue for participant written contributions, A4 (297mm x 210mm) and DL (210mm x 98mm). This was to allow longer stories as well as short comments. I received 8 contributions in all (including spoken) of which 3 were A4.

Participants found it very difficult to write contributions. The audience was quite varied, however some people appeared taken aback when asked to contribute something. I suspect that the gallery context is not somewhere normally associated with a contribution, generally a comments book is the most that is expected. One person who came in did not wish to make a contribution to the work, but did ask for my comments book. I purposely did not have one, to avoid any distraction from participation on the mind map. They still did not want to add a note onto the wall.

I had a number of very good conversations again, which reinforced my understanding of their value as part of the participative process and subsequent artwork. However the mini-disc equipment on loan was large and intrusive, I would have been uncomfortable using it, let alone being recorded myself. Once again therefore the conversations were unrecorded. I did write some diary entries, which reflected the conversations and thoughts arising from the conversations, when there was no one in the gallery. These are regrettably anecdotal and paraphrased rather than transliterated. In reviewing this work the anecdotal recording

is wholly insufficient in capturing the quality of the conversation and character of the participant.

Although unintentional in the design of the artwork, there is a performative element within this work. This can be identified within three aspects: observation of the artist compiling a work by passers-by and people coming into the gallery; a repetitive scene of the artist/actor using the same conversational method, all starting from the same premise but ending differently with a different participant/actor; and a scene in which the participant becomes the lead player telling his/her own story. Each of these three aspects of performance could be viewed by coming into the gallery or through the gallery window.

Although the work was clearly advertised as participative, it is unlikely that participants or people looking through the window or door to see what was happening understood that this event was, or they were taking part in, a performance.

Assumptions challenged

Making an event of exposing my behaviour itself, was a reflective personal exercise, but also to do it in public was a risky strategy. My own honesty encouraged participants to be equally reflective.

The contributions that were made often projected a very different picture from my own technological approach and certainly challenged my own personal attitudes. I had decided on solar water heating and got in a

company to quote for its installation. However during our discussion a combination of difficulties involved in re-siting a hot water tank, the age of my combination boiler and the existing loft conversion became obvious. The company didn't even bother to send a quote for the work.

My whole approach to eco-renovation was based on an assumption that I would buy a house to begin with. This approach was challenged when a mother and two young children came in who had recently sold their house and moved into a caravan on a piece of woodland they had acquired. The children told me how much they enjoyed living there instead of their house. The intention was to apply for planning consent for an eco house (figure 54).

'I live in a caravan and I have natural ways to heat water during the summer months. I have a black water bag, which is designed to hang in a tree and provides a hot shower at the end of the day...Alternatively I have a 1930's style tin bath, which I fill with water in the morning and by the evening it is warm enough for a bath! Outdoor baths from May 'till the end of October have been part of my seasonal cycle for 4 years now.' (Written contribution from participant)

An elderly couple visiting Dartington Hall, came in and spoke to me of sorting their recycling rubbish for the council to collect. Although they had made no other changes to the way they lived, they were thrifty by virtue of the post-war time in which they were brought up. They felt this contrasted strongly with the way people live now apparently so dependant on machines and new goods, instead of making do and mend.

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THE Caravan

The best thing about living in the caravan is having Strinds over the road and having a granny up the road and living with a very nice person.

Dad keeps bottles and wates till the time when he can crash them ~~up~~ with a machine When we were at our old house we kept recidling outside and the ~~people~~ people came to collect it.

I always play outside.

I play with my brotther and my sister and a nattie and mattlew.

My friends have a swimming pool

We have a seesor and a ~~seesor~~ and a trampoline and a Swig

I have a batz have a bikes and

Ki my brotther has a habit of coming

as coming on the swing when I am on it.



Figure 60 Detail of Eco-Renovation: House Receipts I, Caravan story

Accumulation

I received considerable encouragement to pursue the work beyond this event. It was felt that the question, approach through the mind map, engagement with audience/public was creating a dynamic work.

This was a different work to Conscience Offsets, which set out to survey and explore opinion. Here the engagement was far more anecdotal and more conversational by intention. Although the number of conversations was small, their quality was very high, with some very insightful contributions. However my failure to record the conversations, severely limits my ability to represent and demonstrate the value of the accumulation of knowledge.

One supervisor has pointed out that the personal recollection is a perfectly valid form of record, however in the spirit of participation and consensus and honouring all contributions it seems more important to capture the conversation rather than filter it through my personal perceptions. In capturing the conversations I am seeking to collectivise experience and represent that, offering greater value than one individual's (the artist's) opinion.

This event did not produce enough participation to get a rounded picture of attitudes and action about eco-renovation. Further events would be essential to obtain a more rounded picture.

Following a presentation at Falmouth for the RANE research group in 2006 of the first part of *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts*, one of the audience offered the following observation.

‘Where exactly does the knowledge reside...the real wisdom rests with the various individuals doing it for themselves. Does what they have learned by hard experience die with them, or does it/can it get transferred/multiplied somehow?’ (Pritchard 2006, personal email)

The above comment assisted the confluence of issues that have arisen out of my practice and theoretical research. These issues comprise personal observations of the artwork to date from: the value of the conversations, imparted in the Falmouth presentation; the individual understanding of knowledge (know-how) and an implied need to share knowledge, reflected in de Certeau’s observations of everyday experience and the rhetoric of ordinary conversation as a creative agency; the often unsatisfactory representation of participative artworks beyond the event itself and in exhibitions (as evidenced in this thesis by the outcome of reviews and critical writing about socially engaged practice); and the desire to contribute a vernacular knowledge to the debates around environmental behaviour. It was my conclusion that a lack of understanding about the knowledge produced in socially engaged practice impeded the works representation.

These together led to a desire to explore how to represent the written and conversational participation with the intention to share the knowledge and wisdom of those individuals with a wider community. That wider

exchange of knowledge seemed important to enable others engagement with the issues of behaviour change.

Awareness

Despite the small number of participants, which therefore implies an unrepresentative group, *House Receipts* produced a broader spread of responses once analysed, which were generally demonstrating greater eco-awareness. However this may demonstrate the self-selection of participants, the lack of interest in this work by a more general audience and the unsuitability of a gallery situation.

In this category of awareness all three contributions demonstrated the need for greater information, but that information should be there to assist people to make decisions, not general information about more products available in the market. The contributions speculated about the look of an Eco-DIY store; the necessity for a magazine rating eco-products similar to

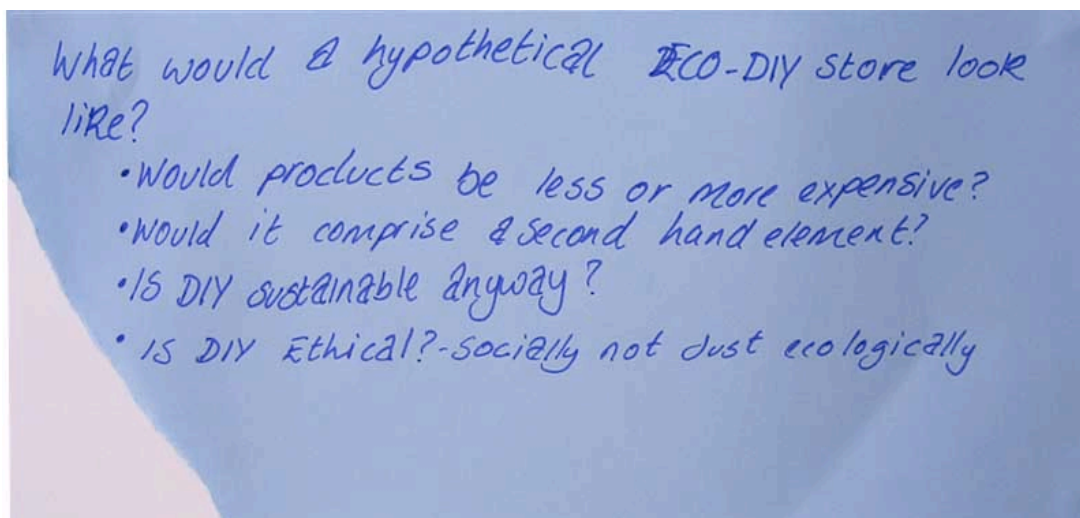


Figure 61 Detail of *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts I*, Eco-DIY

the *Which* guide; and the need for a local information network of eco-suppliers, so that individuals approaching eco-renovation did not all need to start from scratch each time.

Agency

One comment demonstrated a lack of agency. Reflecting on the Purchase Matrix (see below), which acts as a pocket guide to environmental purchasing, the participant observed that it would be impossible to shop locally, environmentally and ethically. This allowed the implication that perhaps eco-ambitions are set too high and feel unachievable as a result.

Association

Two of the comments already noted as demonstrating awareness, an Eco-Which magazine and a local eco-information network also indicate the benefits of people coming together to enable effective action.

Action and Reflection

One comment from a retired organic farmer, who continued to use a coal-fired Aga in a unecorenovated farmhouse, demonstrated the apparent conflicting standards that can operate in environmental behaviour.

Although one of the first organic dairy farms in the south west of England the family had to concentrate on building up the business first. Now twenty-five years on, the house, made habitable on arrival is still in the

same condition. The environmental concerns of the family have not necessarily affected their behaviour once settled in the property.

Three comments demonstrated reflective action from bathing outside using the sun to warm the water, to using recycle centres to decorate and furnish a house, to a decision to live in a caravan prior to building an eco-house. These contributions challenged and contrasted my failed technological approach as noted in Accumulation above. They also

ECO Purchase Matrix					
COST	CONVENIENCE	AESTHETICS	LOCAL	ENVIRONMENTAL	ETHICAL
Existing value system Familiar decision/purchasing criteria			Additional values Environmental and social behaviour		

ECO Purchase Matrix					
A matrix could help to uncover and clarify values before starting the buying process. Cost Convenience and Aesthetics represent the standard values and an encological stand would also add Local, Environmental, and Ethical.					
COST	CONVENIENCE	AESTHETICS	LOCAL	ENVIRONMENTAL	ETHICAL
Price paid, either the cheapest, or value for money, which is a more complex balance of cost, quality and life span.	Convenient travel distance. Can you buy other items at the same time? A choice of quality and price.	The 'look' or design wanted, reflecting personal taste. Something seen in a magazine to copy.	Buying local to support local business, community infrastructure and environment (local origin of materials and labour). Reduction of travel miles.	Environmentally friendly. Natural man-made or recycled? Air-alternative sustainable trade. Health and well-being.	Fair Trade, local social enterprises. Companies and parent companies that act according to ethical social, environmental and animal principles.
Existing value system			Additional values		
Escape Lane / Janey Hunt. E: janey.hunt@googlemail.com, W: www.escapelane.co.uk					

Figure 62 Eco-Renovation: House Receipts I, Eco-Purchase Matrix front and reverse

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In response to the "map" I can see a way of representing the choices. I would suggest that we all have cost, convenience & aesthetic criteria in these kinds of purchases. ^{socially engaged artist} You wanted

	COST	CONVENIENCE	AESTHETICS	LOCAL	ENVIRONMENTAL	ETHICAL
Carpets	✓	✓	✓	?	?	?

What % of your expenditure is represented in these columns

To add others - "Local" "Environmental" "Ethical". I wonder whether this format would help people uncover & clarify their values before starting the purchasing process.

Figure 63 Detail from Eco-Renovation House Receipts II, Eco-purchase matrix participant contribution

demonstrate a considered decision to take a different approach from the society's normal living patterns and therefore empowered and active individuals.

Demonstrating a considered shift in consumption attitude one participant indicated eco-behaviour with a decision to undertake entirely local shopping, 'I've decided that if I can't buy it in Totnes, I probably don't need it.' (anecdotal record)

The thrifty elderly couple described above, also indicate society's shift towards consumption as the norm and indicate an alternative of thrift.

A discussion following reflection of my own shopping habits with a participant in the work developed the *Eco-Purchase Matrix* (figures 62 and 63 above), which has since been published by the ECOS Trust in their publication *Mendip Sustainable Living Information Pack*. This matrix creates a checklist against which to compare purchasing decision, in which if all six categories were checked would mean a super-eco purchase. However in the current market this would be almost unachievable because of the ethical criteria. Many companies selling eco-products are subsidiaries of larger companies and organisations, which do not always operate ethical standards across their business or have instituted ethical reporting. My purchases achieved the first four categories at best, with only local purchases environmentally enhancing the other standard purchasing

criteria. Alternative sources such as recycle centres, or on-line exchange web sites eg Freecycle could allow the possibility of achieving all six criteria.

Architecture

The need for institutional support and infrastructure becomes clear in enabling and supporting decision making with clear guidance and information. An eco-‘Which?’ guide and local information network would considerably enhance decision making, as would the innovation of eco-DIY stores, with eco buying under one roof.

Issues Arising: Eco-Renovation: House Receipts I, (July 2006)

Avoiding polemic

Utilising the value-action gap to interrogate my own behaviour and specifically my failure to change, has proved a useful and unusual starting point for the artwork. This starting point also ensures any accusation of polemic is avoided, since I as the artist place myself at a low level of achievement.

This artwork is unusual in appearance, and when people seeing the work first asked me what it was about, my first line was to explain that it was about failing to eco-renovate my house. As a very unusual standpoint this made people smile. Assuming a self-satirical position shifted people’s expectation of the work and immediately broke down any distance

between a conceptual, process based artwork and people's own personal experience.

Creating Community

Self-exposure created empathy, creating a bond that invariably stimulated conversation. This enables recognition of similarities between potential participants and myself that encourages them to take part in the artwork, effectively creating a community of common concern. Following a presentation of *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts II*, at a local artist's group, one of the audience emailed

'your way of working reveals intimacy at extraordinary levels...in regard to you the artist...(and) about the information visitors shared about their lives' (Posner 2007 personal communication).

This intimacy encourages equally considered responses from participants.

Real life situations

The choice of the eco-renovation of houses was relevant to many people and so ensured more distinctive and personal contributions. This ties in with de Certeau's believable objects, these are narratives that avoid the imposition of the dominant polemic and are recognisable by people as directly relevant to their daily lives and which I explore in Chapter 2.

The unexpected

Participant contributions also challenged my own expectations of using and buying in expensive technological approaches and introduced the ideas of simplicity and making-do and thrift and expectation. Reflected in External

Factors: Norms in the value-action gap model, this factor is able to dictate what we consider even before we explore our own attitudes and emotions.

Aesthetics – layering

How participant contributions are distinguished from the initial research on my own behaviour indicates the layering that is occurring in this work. Any confusion between those layers is resolved by the use of blue paper for contributions and white for my own research in future events. This layering makes clear some of the aesthetic aspects of this work.

Performance

The unintentional performative aspects of this participative artwork can be understood as a process work observing the creative process; a repetitive series of scenes with varying actors (the artist and participants) with the same starting point and method (conversation); and the participant as the lead actor telling their own story. Each of these could be publicly viewed through the gallery windows, but could not necessarily be understood as performance in the conventional sense. The lack of record of this performance does not alter the fact that it took place, but does the ignorance on the part of the participants' mean it is not a performance?

Visual aesthetics

Reactions to the artwork are varied, as indicated by two contrary receptions of the work at the RANE symposium described below, indicating the confusion about socially engaged practice, which is also apparent in the

literature. Following a presentation of *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts* at a RANE symposium, Falmouth University in 2007, I was asked where the art lay in this practice, some members of the audience were distinctly uncomfortable with the issue of aesthetics. Following a spirited exchange, in which I was trying to be polite, I finally lost my temper and said that I didn't care if my work was seen as art. To my astonishment half of the audience erupted in cheers and applause. This indicated to me a distinct shift in the consideration of aesthetics as codification in objects and support for my approach.

Aesthetics – other aspects

Nevertheless the most provocative of the contributions and thinking reflectively about the engagement, intimacy and the knowledge produced, all indicate positive aspects of this practice. The contributed observation (above) about knowledge and wisdom residing with individuals that will go unnoticed unless shared, linked with value of the conversation both to the artwork and its contribution to knowledge. It linked again with the layering of material that is becoming apparent and indicates that this is an alternative approach both in aesthetics and the production of knowledge and well as indicating a valuable contribution to the debate on eco-renovation.

Once again the unrecorded conversations offered considerable insight into lifestyles and behaviour. However a satisfactory and unobtrusive means of recording still needs to be achieved.

Ensuring the wider exchange of this inherent knowledge and wisdom so that it achieves a cultural shift of action is part of the consideration of this research. In response to the RANE symposium, one of the audience emailed 'I think the issue of how "new knowledge" on ecological responses evolves and coalesces and reaches enough critical mass to become 'received vision' is an interesting dimension' also reflecting de Certeau's ideas of a rupture event (Pritchard 2006 personal communication).

Eco-Renovation: House Receipts II (September 2007)

Description of the work

The second showing took place during Devon Open Studio 2007 in my house, occupying one wall of the front sitting room, with other works displayed in the back sitting room. A much smaller space than the Dartington Gallery, I had to rationalise the mind map and condense the information. Similar to the mind map the material was presented as informal pin-board poster information, with sections referring to DIY materials, paint purchase, solar panels etc. I added an analysis of my selection criteria when choosing my house, and a narrative context to each aspect of the renovation in order to defuse some of the confusion from the first showing.

These explained my eco-intentions, experience, what happened, what dissuaded me from my eco-intentions, and the outcome of the choice.



Figure 64 Detail of *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts II*, wall display

Participant comments from the first exhibition were also displayed as part of the layering of material on the relevant sections and as a means of encouraging further contributions. I analysed my behaviour in each potential renovation category according to the *Eco-purchase matrix*.

The invitation/advertising for the work took place through the Devon Open Studios catalogue and street signs, with additional personal advertising through email.

People visiting were able to access the material more easily than the previous mind map. Each section had a clear narrative pattern and space for more comments to be added. The narrative context assisted the entry

into the rest of the material, which took people some time to read and consider, before making a contribution.

I also obtained some suitable recording equipment in order to record the conversations I had with people. Verbal permission was requested before each conversation. Only one person declined to be recorded, although an interesting conversation followed. In accordance with the participant's wishes this was not recorded or noted in any way.

I received a steady stream of visitors, which meant that there was no overlap of conversations. Given the intensive interaction, which this work required, this pattern of visiting was perfect.

A few people were surprised by the content of the work and came with the misguided impression that I was an expert who was giving them a house tour. Generally the understanding that I had failed to eco-renovate my house meant that their reception of the work achieved a more reflective attitude.

Analysis using the Model for Practice, Participation and Progression

Approach/Attitude

Evidence of the success of the premise of the artwork, exposing my own behaviour during the failure to eco-renovate my house, was indicated when visiting some of the other open studios during the second week. Other artists commented that they had noticed the work in the catalogue of over

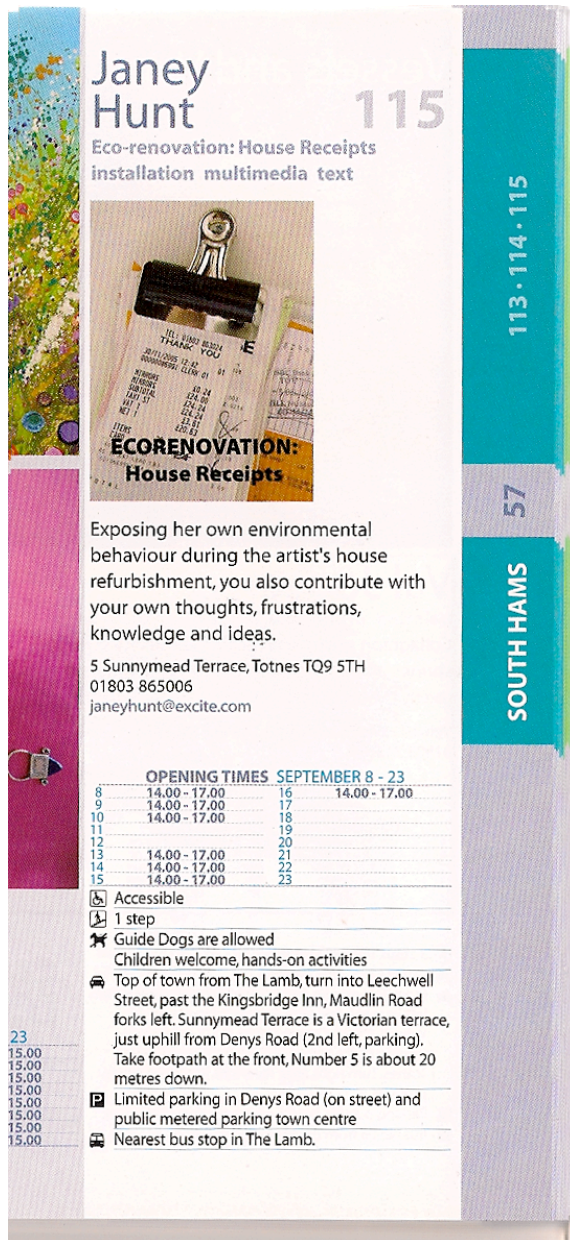


Figure 65 *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts II*, Open Studios catalogue entry

- ECO – Paints**
- I wanted to use eco-paints, both because they were better ecologically, but also because of the health issues.
 - Research led me to eco-paints, which were mail order. Estimating the amount of paint required for the whole house was difficult and very costly.
 - I'd never tried eco-paints before and was nervous about them, the postage cost of £7.00 minimum by weight put me off trying them out.
 - At the time I was unaware of any local eco-paint suppliers
 - Harris', the local hardware store was selling Dulux on offer and so I bought that instead
 - After I had painted the whole house, I did feel quite ill and thought my cost and convenience had outweighed wisdom

Dulux

According to the 'Good Shopping Guide (2005)' Dulux is one of the worst paint suppliers I could have used.

Figure 66 *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts II*, Narrative addition

240 exhibitors and would have liked to see the work, but were unable to visit. They felt encouraged by my admission of failure and that just the idea of the work encouraged them to have another attempt at eco-renovation.

Sections of the conversations also particularly referred to the artwork directly. Some participants wanted the artwork to be more visually engaging or even shocking.

Male 1: 'What you are presenting doesn't have a shock factor'

...about presenting it differently visually some how and you've presented it visually in this documentation which is great, but I think to get the message across... one of the exhibits was, they filled Trafalgar Square full of teacups, cups of tea and there was another one where...

W2: That was that thing about the environment wasn't it? They had things...they created little sort of bubbles of water and had them in a tree

JH: Right

MI: And I think some sort of installation, which shows in a visual form you know how much carbon do I produce

However I would suggest that given the understanding about motivations encouraging environmental behaviour, the works mentioned could only raise awareness rather than encourage any other behaviour change, demonstrated by the aesthetic recollection rather than practical and personal implications. Others appreciated the low-key approach, 'Because your life is your art' (Woman 1) and 'I'm just so interested' (Woman 3).

As people came in, I welcomed them and allowed them to gain a first impression of the work, which I introduced as a reflection on my failure to

eco-renovate my house. Once the conversation began to start I asked if they would be okay if the conversation was recorded, and that it could be used as part of a future work. Only one person declined to be recorded but she then remained and talked about the work and her experience.

The conversations themselves became the contribution that participants made to the work. They superseded the written comments, although I did extract some sections and wrote them out after the participant had left, to add to the visual texture and immediate experience of the work.

The first recorded conversation revealed that I was talking too much and directing the conversation. The conversation was about my experience, rather than drawing out the experiences of the participant. Once I became aware of this I was consciously able to facilitate the conversation to enable the participant's voice and story to be heard.

Some people wanted me to talk through the material, which after a week became quite difficult to keep fresh. It also unfortunately established a pattern of me talking to them about the work, and I had to realise that this could mean I was not listening to what my visitors had to say. The first day I was generally talking too much, however this improved as the week went on and I gained experience.

This event took place in my own home, which gave a different feeling to the work, as it took place within the arena of the artwork itself. This lent an additional frisson of interest as participants could see the house itself.

The work built on the previous event, with the material re-organised into nine panels of information to be easier to navigate and to fit the available space. It took people some time to look through the material before they were able to begin to communicate their reactions.

I offered a cup of tea/coffee to make people feel less pressured about time. This relaxed atmosphere meant that people stayed some time looking and talking about the work and their personal experiences. It was rare that I had an overlap of visitors, which also lent a more intimate air to the work of one-to-one conversations. This also made the conversations easier to record.

The clarity of the artwork was improved by adding a narrative section to each behaviour panel. This assisted the participants to follow the story of the renovation and was successful in communicating my standpoint. The questions I asked of myself now clearly displayed also provoked reactions and further questions in the participants.

Clarity was also improved by restricting the presentation of my information to white paper and participant comments on blue. People were interested to be able to see the layering that was taking place in the work, generally reading my material first and then the participant contributions.

Why did I shop at Homebase?

- **Familiarity**
- **Time**
- **Choice/range**
- **Convenience (all under 1 roof)**
- **Saver card (10% discount)**

I couldn't find everything that I wanted/needed in Totnes' local shops. These shops only held a limited range because of their size and did not stock what I wanted. Often I did not know what I wanted, but by looking at a choice I could make a decision.

I used Harris' for straightforward hardware items. But for other items, where an aesthetic decision was needed, I went to Homebase or B&Q.

I'm ashamed to say that I spent a considerable amount at Homebase.

Why isn't there an Eco-DIY store?

With time I might have been able to find/salvage the right materials. But I wanted to re-decorate and refurbish within a specific period.

I feel this was an eco-failure ?

What are my

alternatives?

Figure 67 Detail of *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts II*, Why did I shop at Homebase? narrative

Acquisition/Appreciation

Participation ranged from looking at the artwork on the wall and reading the material, listening to a brief introduction to the work, to an in-depth conversation. Only one person came to my Open Studio venue by mistake

and left quickly, other visitors came purposefully to see this work. Even though it may not have been what they then expected they remained.

Unlike *Conscience Offsets*, which took place on the street in a very public venue, this work took place in a private space. The people came specifically because of their interest in the work that I advertised in the Open Studios catalogue or through posters in Totnes. I received no adhoc visitors passing by despite posters immediately outside my house. To this extent the participants were self-selecting and represented only those interested in environmental issues. However the range of comments and issues revealed in the conversations made an interesting contribution to the discussion of the value-action gap. (See below for discussion)

The performative aspect of *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts II* differs from that of the earlier work. Although the work could be viewed in part by passers-by through the front sitting room window, in practice the quiet location of my house meant they were few. Instead the performance was on a one-to-one basis although still demonstrating the repeated scene with different characters and a different ending and the participant as the lead actor.

Reflecting on the artwork itself the recorded participants, revealed their understanding of the contributions, and its value as a generative process.

Woman 3 found the work not only stimulated her intentions for her own

4 Analysis

Janey Hunt, 2011, Conversations: the socially engaged artist as environmental change agent, The University of Plymouth PhD thesis


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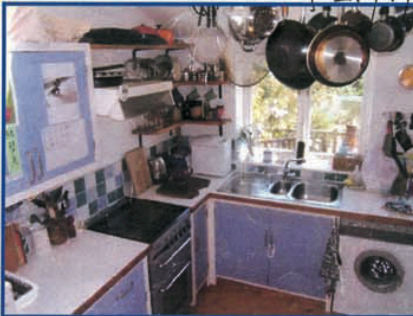
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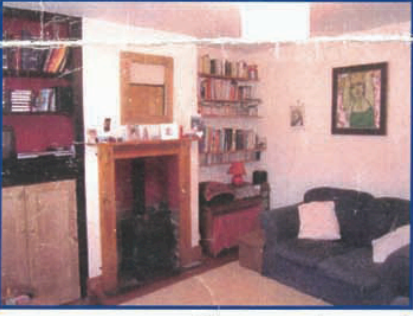
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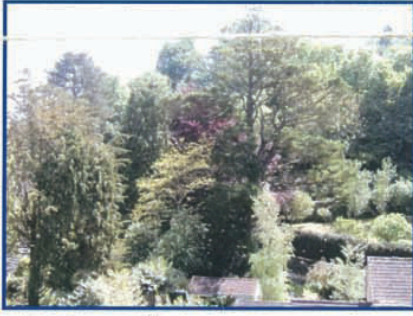
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Figure 68 Detail of Eco-Renovation: House Receipts II, House Purchase

eco-renovation, but asked questions that she had not considered. Woman 2 appreciated the value of the work as a reflective piece, which allowed others to follow the process.

‘the way you are going, which is book works and postcards...I think there is something about the story...the postcards enable people...to write a response on them and come back which is a dialogue happening in the community’
(Woman 2)

Assumptions challenged

The story about living in a caravan from the previous event, prompted me to add a new panel about my house purchase three years earlier. I realised as a result of their story, that the sort of house I had bought had in part dictated the possibilities for eco-renovation. A consideration of the reasons why I bought the house would reveal an interesting set of attitudes and expectations, but also reveal something about the viability of eco-renovation on existing dwellings.

My personal conclusion was that retro-fitting a house in good condition especially with traditional features was difficult, because of the need to disturb so much of the fabric of the building. A house that needed significant renovation could be much more easily retrofitted with energy and water saving devices.

Purchase Matrix: House Purchase

Existing value system Familiar decision/purchasing criteria	Cost	For sale for 2 months, price reduced. Drove a hard bargain. Small but at the right price. Some work to do, but nothing structural. The right number of rooms for me
	Convenience	In Totnes, but on edge of town. Room available to let, plus two sitting rooms. Small but has the space I need with a work space/studio. Good kitchen extension and deck south facing at rear. Garden very small
	Aesthetics	Quiet location with borrowed vista of big ornamental trees. Grotty garages in road below. Nice 'feel' to house, old features still intact. Needs complete re-decoration and re-carpeting and currently very cramped so needs paring back to clean room lines. Needs new bathroom, possibly new kitchen
Additional environmental value system		
Additional values environmental and social behaviour criteria	Local	Near to Dartington College, within walking/cycling distance. Good public transport links with buses and mainline train station. Walking distance to shops. Good local suppliers
	Environmental	Good public transport. Rear faces south-south-east so roof okay for solar panels. Wood burner in sitting room. Old boiler to be replaced. Wanted to find an eco-surveyor, but survey needed quickly
	Ethical	Increasing house prices = increased personal wealth from which I benefited. Totnes property very expensive. Property only affordable by incomers

Figure 69 Detail of *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts II*, purchase matrix analysis of decision to buy my house

However despite the difficulties about eco-renovation of the house itself, the work challenged assumptions about this as an artwork (see the discussion about the visual quality above). The work also challenged the assumption that this was not a subject for an artwork to explore.

Artist: ‘...doing a PhD about my fine art practice and encouraging pro-environmental behaviour. So hence (this work).’

Woman 4: ‘Oh I see. That's really interesting...you see most people haven't thought about this before....We're going to have to in the future’

Accumulation

The *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts* series offered a far more open-ended scenario compared to *Conscience Offsets*, which explored opinions about a specific issue. The accumulation of written contributions was both responsive to my own story and to that of other participants. The layers of

participation were adding richness to the initial premise of a work about failing to eco-renovate my house. The conversational extracts below respond to the developing work and the layering of contributions.

'you've noticed in a reflective way...it feels that one way or another you've got the desire to use (eco paints) but then you found that you were actually thwarted because of this that or the other...' (Woman 2)

'Do you know this is such a good idea because I've got all this stuff going round in my head and you know in pieces of paper or folders and files...and you need to come and have a graphic picture of where you're going' (Woman 3)

'Why isn't there a Do It Yourself store. What a brilliant idea' (Woman 3)

Conversations allowed a response to the form of the artwork. The generative aspect in the accumulation of the material allows reflection and a graphic image of the subject matter, which people felt had not been represented before.

The contributions included recommendations for similar literature, about the intention of the work to reveal a vernacular knowledge and to other investigations on what brings about change. They also included participant's personal experience of attempting eco-renovation or retrofitting their own homes.

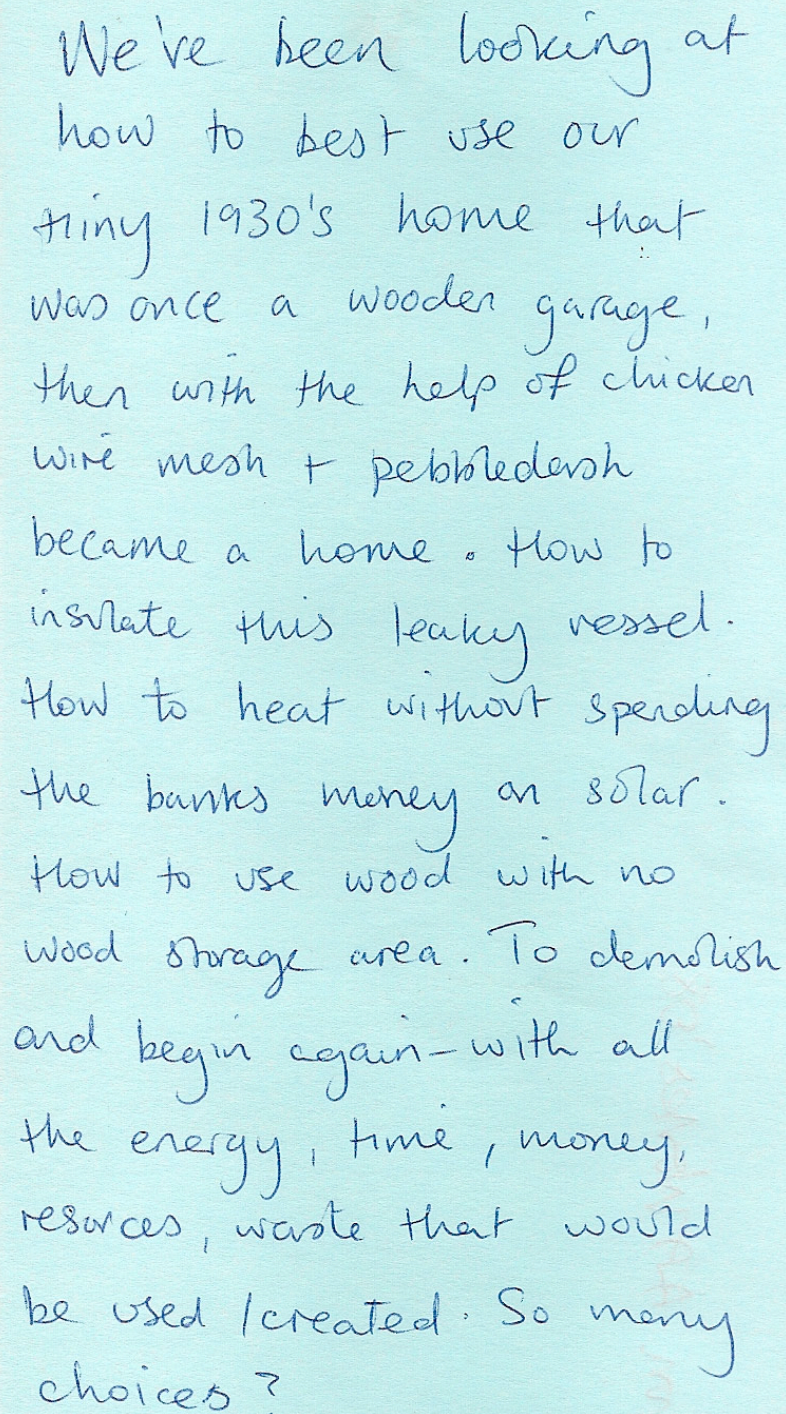
The majority of contributions were spoken. People who were willing to spend some time talking did not make a written contribution, they knew the conversation was being recorded. However where I felt that a particular issue arose in those conversations I wrote it down, to contribute

to the visual material in the exhibition. These contributions are annotated as 'spoken contributions'.

During the second week I played back the unedited conversations recorded during the first week within the exhibition space. This resulted in a different atmosphere when people came in and were first looking at the work. The space was far more animated by other voices talking about the work and their own experiences. Although my front door was open and therefore people could just walk in, I greeted each person visiting the artwork, so establishing a conversational form immediately. This effectively reduced the importance of the replayed conversations as part of the presentation of the artwork.

I could however imagine an exhibition situation that was not facilitated and which replayed the conversations on a continuous loop. This would then give them an equal standing to the visual material.

Creating a more animated space contributed to the layering of material that is becoming evident in this work. These voices were turned off when the new participant wanted to speak to me, so that it became clear that my presence within the work over-rode their voices. Their value was thereby reduced in such an intimate situation.



We've been looking at how to best use our tiny 1930's home that was once a wooden garage, then with the help of chicken wire mesh + pebbledash became a home. How to insulate this leaky vessel. How to heat without spending the banks money on solar. How to use wood with no wood storage area. To demolish and begin again - with all the energy, time, money, resources, waste that would be used / created. So many choices?

Figure 70 Detail from *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts II*, Written contribution

Awareness

Four comments demonstrated positive awareness, indicating a range of conscious approaches to environmental behaviour. These ranged from a general intention to include eco and ethical in consideration of all purchases, to awareness of possible grants for solar installation.

Twelve comments demonstrated negative awareness, largely indicating the confusion of advice available and lack of joined up advice, or a lack of where to go for advice. These range from observations about the inefficiency of existing fittings, such as the amount of wasted water waiting for hot water from a combination boiler, to a confusion of advice and sequence of actions involved in changing heating systems and installing solar panels. Another couple wanted to eco-renovate their property but didn't know who or where to go for advice.

This confusion often resulted in a lack of trust about any advice and sourcing reliable advice becomes a problem. De Certeau and Bourriaud assert a picture of media influenced lifestyles (Bourriaud 2002; de Certeau 1984), yet this image cannot be accepted so broadly. We can be selective about the media sources we trust, in the example below it seems that material received through the post is particularly untrustworthy. But in our information overloaded world it also seems that trusting any suppliers could be problematic with unsubstantiated suspicions by some participants of many company's practising green wash (a pretence of eco practice).

‘One has to be very careful because there is a lot of stuff coming through the junk mail, offering solar heaters...(one) particular firm...got a very bad write-up in the Ethical Consumer magazine’
(Male 3)

Even when there has been some assimilation of information, it is difficult to reconcile with everyday habits and convenience, if the item you want is in front of you but the eco-choice is absent, or you can't remember what the report said.

Of the comments indicating positive awareness, these demonstrated the small shifts in behaviour in everyday behaviour, to aiming for more conscious decisions and to requesting a greater depth of information about products, which might also include ethical information about the company and production.

Agency

This category represented the highest response. Twenty-three negative comments demonstrating an ambition to change behaviour, which was then thwarted by cost, confusion, or misinformation. Nine comments demonstrated positive agency, putting into practice some aspect of environmental behaviour.

‘a reputable cavity wall company (said) we would have to put up scaffolding (which would) make it completely prohibitive’ (Woman 3)

‘I'm happy to fork out maybe more than I need for the solar panels, but the insulation is another thing’ (Woman 3)

‘I don't know what to do first solar heating with a new hot water tank, or convert my wood burning stove to a back boiler, which

means changing my tank. So what comes first? It's chicken and egg - a minefield.' (Woman 3)

The process of decision making reflected by this woman is indicative of value decisions about eco-behaviour. Although the Energy Savings Trust recommends that insulation is one of the first steps towards energy efficiency, in this instance the apparent value for money mitigated against its installation. Instead the woman was considered internal insulation lining, which would have been far more disruptive. Although she did not disclose the cost she was prepared to pay more than she needed for solar water heating. As a visible badge of environmental pride, this made solar panels appear to give better value for money, not just in financial return but personal satisfaction.

Other people encountered problems of not fitting into the standard housing format. Insulation is only appropriate for buildings from the mid twentieth century onwards. However a large amount of the existing housing stock has either solid walls or smaller cavities unsuitable for insulation, as is the case with my own house.

Other purchasing decisions reveal that convenience and cost overrode environmental knowledge in deciding to make a purchase. However one participant (Male Three) might have considered borrowing a neighbour's strimmer instead of buying a new one, but ended up buying one in a local shop that only stocked one make from Bosch a company associated with

armaments, rather than travelling further afield. In our conversation he mused on how to balance all the criteria and make a “good” decision.

‘I went into Woolworth's 'cause I wanted a strimmer and they were selling all these for fifteen quid...It was really cheap...and I didn't really look at the name...I sort of vaguely thought of Bosch...well I did know it was armaments...but I still went ahead and bought it...you may have to go to Plymouth or somewhere. This was more convenient. How do you balance all of these? I don't know the answer to that at all’ (Male 3)

Male Two got sponsorship in kind from paint company Dulux (which I demonstrated to have poor standards according to the Good Shopping Guide (Mulvey 2005)) in spite of building an eco extension, and even though his principles elsewhere demonstrated high ideals. The Dulux paint was for a part of the house to be let out, but getting something for nothing overrode the decision to use eco paints throughout.

Practicing environmental behaviour was demonstrated by recycling activity, including salvaging from local skips and sourcing from local Recycle Centres and second-hand shops.

Those who best demonstrated agency looked for and adopted alternative ways of doing things, rather than going to a shop and buying whatever was needed. Although as this comment by myself during one of the conversations, achieving this shift of thinking and then into action is not always easy.

‘(It's) about finding other ways of doing it, and I haven't done

anything about it since' (Artist, in reference to her own options for internal rather than cavity wall insulation)

Association

Ten comments indicate that people found linking into local networks both supportive and practical. In Totnes a plan by Transition Town Totnes for bulk purchase of solar panels encouraged one woman (Three) who might not otherwise have individually explored that option. Also looking at broader networks specifically magazines such as *Ethical Consumer* magazine, was also useful to support and inform behaviour change.

Action and Reflection

Eight comments demonstrate positive action and reflection, where the participants made a sustained and effective change of behaviour. Male Two's eco-extension became a full time occupation because of the research and sourcing of materials and Woman Four's environmentally aware upbringing meant she continued her behaviour into adulthood.

However even sustained intention and action, resulted in compromises and the same woman from the green family chose to 'wait and see what was available' rather than make any changes to her house, because the market was changing and improving so quickly. Woman One anecdotally commented that the builder of a strawbale house built nearby had to make lots of unintentional compromises.

Architecture

Of six positive comments relating to the external context, they were evenly spread over governmental (Recycle Centres), private company research and development initiatives (Domestic combined heat and power fuel cells,) and magazines such as 'Which?' or 'Ethical Consumer' and alternative economy systems (eg Freecycle and skips).

One comment indicated the social inequity of eco-renovation, indicating the lack of sufficient government subsidy to entice private landlords to upgrade their properties.

'If I can't afford a house, what will my children be able to do? If you haven't much money, eco-renovation is beyond me.'

Issues arising Eco-Renovation: House Receipts II (September 2007)

Visual aesthetics

The discussion about the work and the preference of one participant for a more visually stimulating work, was challenged by other participants who appreciated the alternative approach. Once again the premise of the work, my failure to eco-renovate my house, was successful in encouraging people to come and see the work and to give their own contributions. The alternate visual approach was justified by the recognition of turning my own life and that of other people into art and the interest of people who came to see the work.

Participative aesthetics

The contributive process was appreciated with the understanding that the

value was in the individual stories and variations of people's lives. The accumulative value was appreciated by recognition of the initial reflective process that encourages participants to be thoughtful and instigate 'a dialogue happening into the community' (participant contribution).

The contributive process also challenged assumptions about the individual attitudes and assumptions we bring to personal environmental projects.

These are demonstrated by the large variation in examples from recycling and freecycle as a means of finding second hand goods, to the purchase of new technological systems to improve energy efficiency.

Accumulation

The conversations gave a deeper picture than short written contributions. Through analysis the conversations gave responses in most of the categories indicating environmental behaviour both positive and negative, although the greatest responses were in Awareness and Agency. The written comments were limited largely to responses in Awareness and Agency, demonstrating the conversational method as more revealing.

Contradictory behaviour

The conversations themselves also revealed contradictory behaviour on the part of the same participant. Participant Male 2 engaged in building an eco extension was potentially willing to go anywhere within the south of England up to Birmingham to get second hand materials, demonstrating thrift over the environmental cost of travel. Participant Woman 4, who

was brought up in a green family and taught environmental science, travelled between Totnes and Oxford to see her partner who lives there regularly. She also bought a house she liked without consideration for its efficiency, but was also very active in the local community and participated regularly in environmental groups. Male 3 who read the magazine 'Ethical Consumer' claimed to always consider ethical issues in his purchases, but then admitted that he bought very little. In a recent purchase he also disregarded the poor ethical standing of the company in the purchase of a strimmer, because of the convenience of the purchase.

Layering

Utilising the recorded conversations within the exhibition also added to the layering that was already apparent. The facilitation of the exhibition and the recording of further conversations meant that they were not always playing. However replaying the conversations peopled the space in a way that the written comments failed to do until they were read. The animation of the space by the replayed conversations created a very comfortable feeling, which could be encouraged by the content of the conversations, and other people sharing their own similar experiences.

The highest number of responses was again in the negative aspects of Awareness and Agency. Despite some demonstrations of successful environmental behaviour, this was limited to fairly simple behaviours such as recycling, walking, food shopping. In Eco-Renovations: House Receipts I,

the simpler approaches challenged my technological approach. In this work the reason for the success of the simpler approaches become clear. These are day-to-day actions easily within our control in a straightforward exchange process. Where more technological processes became involved incurring greater costs and therefore carrying higher value judgments, the process of decision-making took much longer. That advice and information often appeared contradictory often ensured that no decision was made.

Eco-Renovation: House Receipts III (March 2008)

Description of the work

The third showing of *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts* took place following an invitation from the Ecos Trust (a sustainable building organisation in the southwest of England) to exhibit at their annual two day eco-building and eco-renovation show in March 2008. They were particularly interested in the theme of failing to eco-renoate my house and in the participative element of my practice as a counterpoint to the sales stands of a commercial show. They gave me a prime place near the centre concourse and utilised the artwork as part of their marketing. I was also offered a seminar slot.

Once again the work had to be adapted to the space available and competition of the other stands around me. The display panels from the Open Studio event could be re-used, however these had to be reduced



Figure 71 *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts III* detail

from nine to four. I allowed three panels for participant comments beside the display panels.

These were kept separate in order to visually delineate this different section of the work. I used an artist's easel to display a large AI poster of the work to inform people what the stand was and which also formed the right hand boundary. There was also a table and chair, to display the postcards and leaflets that people could take and to write any contributions. On the left hand of the stand I had sourced a real confessional box, which invited people to an Eco-Conversation.

The visual look appeared like an information stand, but with material apparently more haphazardly presented, this confounded the expectation of

participants. The confessional box was also intended as a visually striking element of the stand, which would arouse the curiosity of passers-by.

The show was took place over two days and the other exhibitors comprised architects, green builders, alternative energy installers, plants, and builders' merchants.

I was available on the stand most of the time, facilitating engagement with the work. I also took another artist with me to set up the stand, and to assist facilitation. People were able to read the display panels, post up comments on the separate panels and /or speak to me directly.

Twenty people made written contributions and I recorded 30 different conversations with a total of 40 participants. I was not able to record all the time as I did not have the means at the event to download the sound files once the recorder was full. The majority of the contributions come from transcribed conversations.

The conversations were recorded using a digital sound recorder and clip on mics. However the sound quality is poor because significant levels of background noise in the show hall and therefore cannot be used as sound works.

Generally people did not spend too long on the stand, being one of many within the ECOS show. This resulted in less general conversations, which were more specifically directed at eco-building, rather than revealing more about general attitudes.

I was also invited to give a seminar, which I organised as a surgery event, rather than an art presentation. From previous showings of the work, I understood that confusion of advice was often one of the biggest stumbling blocks to action. This surgery therefore invited a panel of other exhibitors at the show comprising an eco-architect, eco-builder, solar energy consultant, and eco-kitchens supplier and which I facilitated. In comparison with other seminar events organized as solo presentations, which were timetabled throughout the day and often drew only a small audience of 3 or 4, the eco-surgery had an audience of 10. It produced a lively discussion and was videoed.

Analysis using the Model for Practice, Participation and Progression

Approach

Of a total of 13 comments relating to the Approach of the artwork, only one was negative from some one who had not made any eco-alterations to his property. Not having made any changes was his story, but this could also be interpreted as the participant considered that he didn't have a contribution to make to the artwork.

However many people appreciated the style of the approach about failing to eco-renovate and their amusement drew them in. My entry in the exhibition programme had stood out to some people, and my stand was offering something completely different from any other in the exhibition,



Figure 72 *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts III*, detail

this level of participation indicates that the self-deprecating approach was working.

Each element of the stand was carefully considered within the overall visual appearance and within the context of the show itself. These elements comprised an easel carrying a poster advertising the work, the unpolished presentation of the information panels and the comments panel, the style of the printed material unlike a sales brochure and the confessional box.

The confessional box was intended to be a striking visual element within my stand that might distinguish it from other stands. It was also intended to provide a private space in which to listen to the conversations recorded in the previous event, as well as a space in which to record new conversations. It certainly worked as a dramatic visual statement that drew

interest. However it only attracted one participant to explore it, and no one was interested in sitting inside. Within the context of the Homes for Good show, time was at a premium and although some people spent quite some time reading the material and writing contributions, with one couple conversing for over half an hour, generally encounters were much quicker. People did not even approach the confessional box except to glance inside and move away quickly. I realised very soon that if I wanted to record any conversations, the confessional was not the space in which this would happen, but out on the show floor, acquiring any conversations as they happened. The confessional box might have a place in a work situated in a different context where participants have more time and might have come with an expectation of engagement with the work.

Acquisition

Of two recorded comments one is of myself observing how day one was going in terms of participation. The other comment indicated the reception of the collection of stories. In a commercial show where there was lots of information to acquire, people appreciated to be able to tell something of their own experience and it be valued for itself, rather than as a means of identifying a potential customer.

JH:	I'm collecting stories actually, other people's stories
W3:	A really good idea
JH:	so if you've got something you would like to...
W3:	We've done quite well in terms of...

4 Analysis

Janey Hunt, 2011, Conversations: the socially engaged artist as environmental change agent,
The University of Plymouth PhD thesis

200



Figure 73 Eco-Renovation: House Receipts III, detail

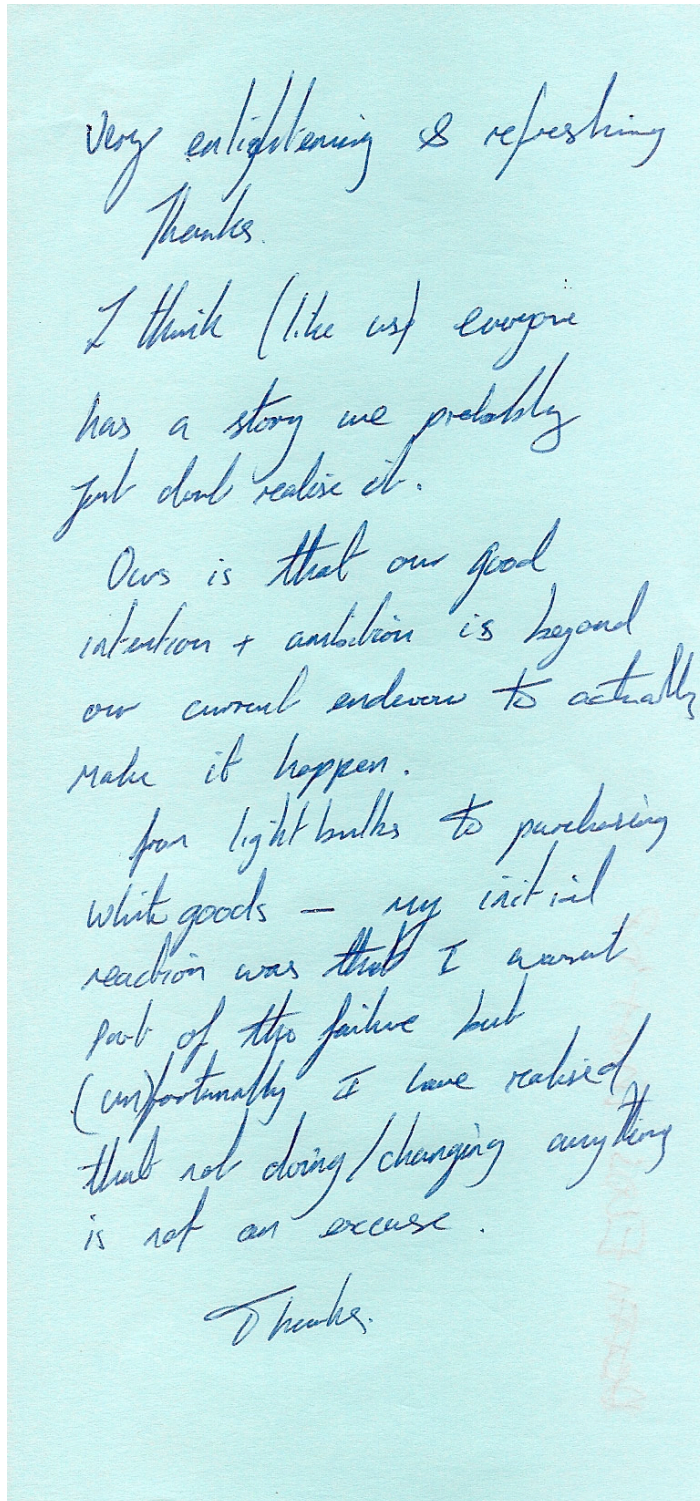


Figure 74 Eco-Renovation: House Receipts III, detail Written comment



Figure 75 *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts III*, detail

Assumptions

Of three comments all offered an unexpected reaction to the work. Two comments indicated negative reactions to the work demonstrating an emotional reaction to the idea of failure and setting such a high standard.

W4: So when you're thinking of buying something, you think, now which of these does it fit into (on the purchase matrix)?
JH: Or how many do I manage to meet
W4: Very good idea. But challenging

One positive reaction indicated a real change of attitude revealing that the work was able to shift assumptions (illustrated below). The quote below indicates the success of the artwork in terms of getting people to think

about what they are doing and accept different approaches to the same problem.

JH: Hello yes do come and have a look. It's about me failing to eco-reno-vate my house
Woman 12
W12: So I gather
Laughter
W12: Oh that sounds very interesting...and it's thinking out of the box, because until you can really get an angle on how you can get round some things, you're kind of stuffed

Accumulation

Some of the quotes above indicate the successful accumulation of contributions, but three indicated this directly.

This is an interesting piece of conceptual art...I think it's fascinating (Male 2)
It's always interesting to see what people write (Male 7)
So where have your stories come from? (Woman 3)

Awareness

Fifteen negative comments indicating a range of issues ranging from confusing and conflicting advice (eg integration of boiler and solar heating systems, whether to get the eco-appearance right and replace existing uPVC for wooden doors and windows) to a lack of understanding about what to do next (eg mis-understanding the first action of insulation).

M17: I mean my problem today has been listening to so many different versions of the same thing
JH: Yes

MI7: And thinking well I didn't understand the first one and I certainly don't understand the fifth one and I've got no way of comparing any of those



Figure 76 Eco-Renovation: House Receipts III detail

Other comments reveal the tension between doing the right thing and the financial costs and social inequality (eg cheaper to buy new building materials than re-use and adjust something to fit, how can low income families participate in this environmental shift?) and indications of the

fundamental shifts in thinking that are needed but not yet main stream and barely apparent.

Four comments indicated an understanding of the issues and action and an awareness of where to go to get information. These range from on-line sources to trade-shows and books.

No that's right, but obviously because we...also want to make sure it is really well insulated and work out what the thermal retention properties are (Male 17)

Have you looked at the website called The Yellow House? He's completely reduced his heating bills to nothing... (Woman 3)

Agency

Demonstrating negative agency twenty comments came from people equating sustainability with saving money, or who have knowledge about environmental issues, but still have not implemented any measures in their own property. Others, despite willingness and information, were not able to make a decision about the right choice for them. These comments revealed a desire for a simple one-fit solution to retro-fit every house, where-as the reality is a range of solutions that needed to be assessed in balance, therefore making the right decisions in the right sequence as a lay person became impossible.

I live in a house but I've never done anything. But I happen to work for a project, as a gardener for a sustainable charity. We try as much as possible to do everything sustainable. So you know we have a lot of recycling, bio fuel (*indistinct*). No interesting, I'm sure the day will come when I'll be doing

something myself like that (*Laughter*) (Woman 5)

A number of people had made the lifestyle choice to live in an older property and had disposable income to implement eco-measures (as had I), but found the restrictions the property imposed on them added another layer of complication, which impeded action. There were also comments again about suspicious green credentials of some materials or companies, which also impeded action.

MI7: Or you're constantly worrying as I think I've got to the stage now of worrying about making the right decision
JH: Yeah
MI7: And almost freezing up and thinking I'm not going to make a decision here
JH: That's exactly right
MI7: Or a year down the line being told, oh no you shouldn't have done that you should have done that one and how am I supposed to know that?

Of the six positive comments demonstrating agency, they ranged from practical hints to divert waste-water to a rainwater-but, to a reflection on vernacular means of achieving energy efficiency. One person indicated the shift in value system that is needed with goods still being cheap enough to buy new rather than mend and adapt.

A few people commented how useful the Eco-Purchase matrix was as a tool to aid purchase decisions. One architect took a number of cards for

use within his practice and a charity worker took some for use within their eco-project.

...(the Purchase Matrix) that's quite useful for us again. We're going through the process of work we need done, how ethical can we be within the constraints we've got, you know. Being a charity we need to raise funds, um time, you know, labour and the rest of it. So it would be quite good to do one of these for every project we have going. Oh right excellent. Thank you very much (Woman 5)

Association

Of a total of eight comments indicating Association, two showed how difficult it was when moving to a new area, to make the links both in terms of organisations and like-minded people, that would help implement an intended environmental shift.

However there were networks that could be utilised. Such as the ECOS Trust itself that already give advice about eco-building. Comments indicated that people were using the ECOS exhibition to inform themselves about possibilities, although scepticism about cost might not mean any environmental options were not taken forward. Or taking advice from one person you trust, who can tailor systems to a particular situation, rather than over-gathering general information to the point of confusion. An eco-architect in the exhibition eco-surgery that I organised suggested finding one adviser and trusting them. I passed this advice onto another participant:

JH: ...stop shopping around, 'cause that's too confusing because there's no one solution, there's no one absolutely right solution. They're all slightly different. They've all got their benefit, but if you go with one person, who's going to do the job for you that you trust, then you trust their advice as well

MI8: That's interesting

JH: And that would mean that things happen

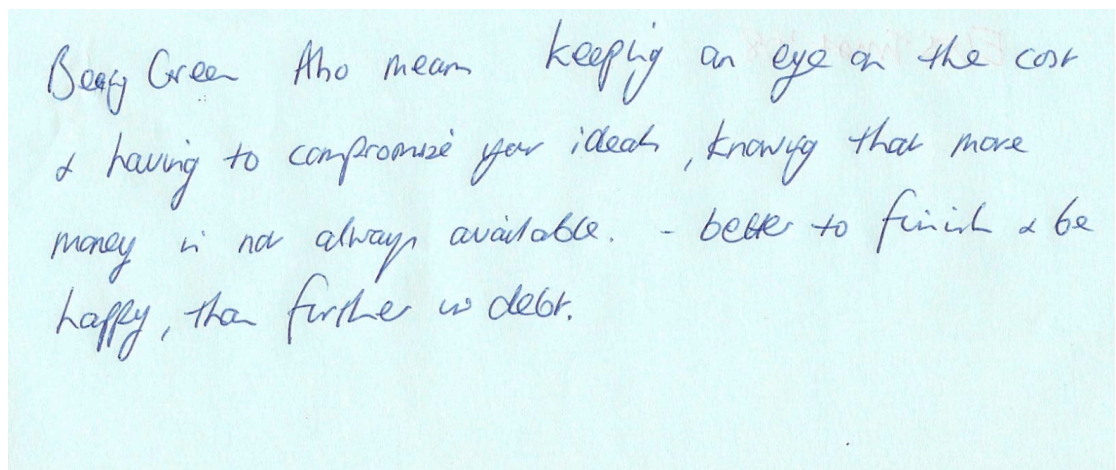
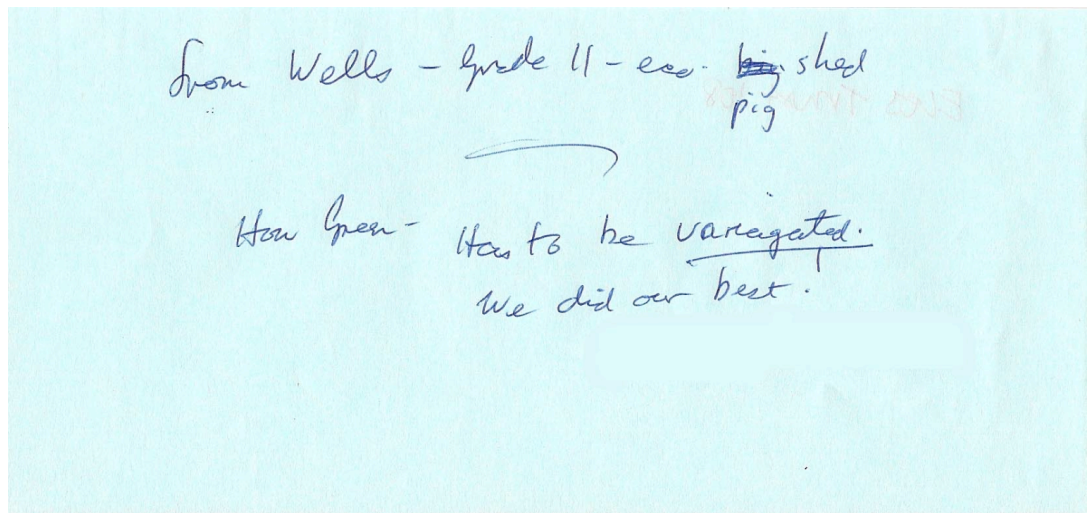


Figure 77 & 78 Eco-Renovation: House Receipts III, participant contributions

Action and Reflection

Reflecting an intention to use eco products, five comments indicate a forced compromise by money or pressure of time (for instance when the

builder want an immediate decision and the owner didn't have time to research the eco-solution), so that habitual behaviour takes over.

Thirteen positive indications of action and reflection reveal people making it happen and indicating how that happened. This is generally either through a familiarity with the process ie some inherent expertise as indicated by Woman 14 below, or by keeping it simple and aiming for insulation. One person commented that it was essential to avoid expensive maintenance contracts, if it was maintainable by the ordinary person only then consider installation.

Me and my partner we've got a water mill and we're really lucky. He's an electrician and engineer, carpentry,...he's got a turbine so we are generating our own electrics. We've got solar panels, we've got this that and the other, purely because he's got the technical know how. (Woman 14)

...we've renovated a seventies house...despite of the cavity wall (insulation), it had a lot of heat loss and the heating bills were absolutely huge so we actually lined all of the interior walls with Kingspan and then replastered so we have you know made the walls that deep to about this deep (*indicated by hands*)...Our heating bills are really reduced... We've got three night storage heaters and a wood burner and that's it (Woman 3)

Many comments demonstrated the difference between opting for technological eco-solutions and a complete change of lifestyle. These indicated alternative arrangements from commercial suppliers such as utilising recycling facilities and making do (Ebay was recognised as an unintentional eco-supplier, making a decision to source all materials from

dumps, skips, 2nd hand sources requiring an adaptable builder), and installations that are simple and maintenance free that cost little to install. One contribution highlighted the change in attitude needed for this model of behaviour change as alternative methods and practices instead of alternative technologies.

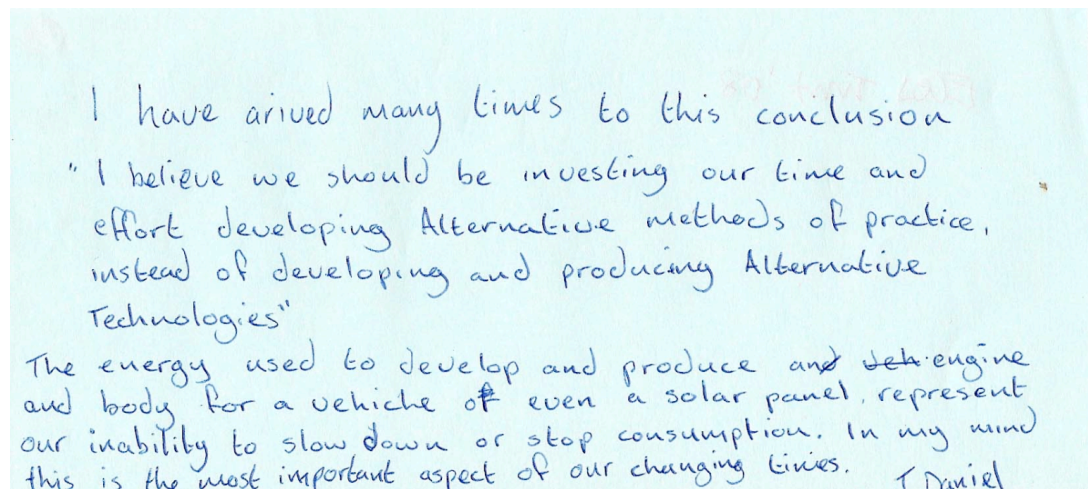


Figure 79, Written contribution from *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts III*

Architecture

Reflecting on the problems related to contextual factors that affect nine comments indicate difficulties with planning and permission to undertake anything alternative to mainstream building renovation. Many comments reflected the lack of governmental support either to eco-renoate or to ensure sufficient standards for new build housing, suggesting that the government make eco-renovation VAT free. Other comments revealed the entrenched attitudes from local planning authorities and the Environment Agency that discourage ambitions for eco-builds. One participant found eco-renovation of an older property in a conservation

area impossible because of obstructive planners and a lack of information about suitable products. Three comments only refer obliquely to external organisations that implements sustainable practices or extend advice.

Issues arising: Eco-Renovation: House Receipts III (March 2008)

Despite the greater number of participants at the Ecos event, the contributions reveal a similar number of coded comments to the Open Studios event. This reflects the shorter conversations at the Ecos Trust show. The spread however is similar with the greater number of comments related to Awareness and Agency, where a lack of confidence or a lack of reliable information impeded change. The significant differences are related to appreciation of the Approach of the work, using my own failure as a means of drawing people's interest and Action and reflection where people gave examples of success stories. Given the context of the ECOS Trust show, it is not surprising that a high number of comments in Architecture, revealed difficulties with local planning authorities.

Aesthetics

The success of the self-deprecating approach in encouraging interest becomes particularly apparent in this event. People appreciated being able to tell their stories, where their personal experience was valued in its own right. The written comments as they were added, also became an object of interest, with many people looking at the material without necessarily speaking to me at all. There was an appreciation of the work as art to the

people that came to the stand, in that it generated something that was of real interest and significance to them.

Visual aesthetics

The consideration given to the visual appearance of the work within the overall Homes for Good Show, made the work distinctive from other stands. By confounding expectation, the work invoked curiosity and drew people in. The initial intention to use the confessional box as the venue for conversations did not work, but its visual impact again distinguished the stand from others. The confessional box needs a quieter and more reflective venue such as a gallery in which to function.

Assumptions

Following on from the Open Studios event some of the contributions highlighted the simple, common sense or making do approaches. Of specific importance was that changes were understandable and easily maintainable. The actions that people could take in their day-to-day lives were those most easily adopted.

Inhibiting decision

Once more where technological solutions were introduced, which also required a financial investment, the decision period became much longer and might be permanently postponed. This was particularly apparent with a plethora of advice and sales pitches but a lack of understanding about who

to trust. The lack of local networks to swap experiences and recommendations for contractors also inhibited change.

External context

Experience with uncooperative local planning authorities also obstructed the ambition of some people to achieve an eco build or eco-renovation.

But there was evidence of more supportive and informative organisations that might assist with advice.

Resolutions Exchange (January/February 2009)*Description of the work*

Resolutions Exchange seeks through a convivial and light-hearted approach to emphasise our personal contribution to the climate's tipping point. By gathering personal eco-sins and eco-successes and totalling them up, this represents a crude measure of the tipping point balance as at January 2009. As well as this more general measure of behaviour change, the artwork allows personal evaluation of eco-sins and successes, which can then be compared to other participant contributions as an indication of individual change.

The 'tipping point' in climatology is the point in the evolution of the earth's climate leading to irreversible change. It is argued that man's contribution to greenhouse gases has increased and accelerated this change. Immediate indicators are the melting of the Arctic Ice in the summer and the Greenland ice sheet and the concentration of the greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. The 'tipping point' some argue has already passed, and some argue it will not happen, however the consensus is that it will happen within the next ten years.

This work comprises: a response form, pre-printed with my own eco-sins and successes, with the reverse blank for contributions; a space to immediately display the copied responses; a tally, which displays the totals of sins and successes; and free coffee/tea and cake.



Figure 80 *Resolutions Exchanged 2009*, Totnes

This work arose from the confessional box into *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts III*. Although not using the confessional box itself, it evolved from the idea of eco-sins, which could be admitted, but which could also be balanced by the acknowledgement of eco-successes. Essentially this was a means of raising our awareness of our personal activities, which might otherwise go unacknowledged. Our admissions could then allow some aims (resolutions) to be drawn out for the coming year, which might lead to behaviour change.

This work is intended to be run over succeeding New Years' to see through the tally if we are making a difference year on year, or if as Private

Fraser in *Dad's Army* said “we’re all doomed” (Perry and Croft 1968-1977)
by our inability to change.



Figure 81, 82 *Resolutions Exchanged* 2009, Totnes participants

This work also developed the idea of exchange and hospitality implicit in the idea of ‘deep meeting’ established through *Collaborative Conversations*. So a café style venue was found that could offer an informal situation in which to allow time to complete the form. The work continued the style of a revelation of my own behavioural failure as a prompt to encourage an equally honest admission on the part of participants.

Organised to take place in Totnes first, the work ran over 3 succeeding Saturday’s in January 2009. However the attendance at the first two Saturday’s was very disappointing, largely people that I already knew or friends. I think this was partly due to the location of the event, tucked away in the kitchen at the back of Birdwood House. Even though I was



Figure 83 *Resolutions Exchanged* 2009, Plymouth University library

offering free coffee and cake, and stood outside handing out flyers, with all the distractions of the market on Saturday, and other environmental surveys immediately outside, not enough people came in off the street. Fortunately the third Saturday was much better attended.

The proposed solution was to relocate the work to a venue where people might have more time and an area with passing traffic such as a library. I contacted Plymouth University Library and Plymouth City Library, although both initially were enthusiastic about idea of the work, only the University Library offered me a space and appropriate date.

This meant altering the format of the work slightly. In Birdwood House for those people who came in, the initial form of the exchange, to be able to sit



Figure 84,85 *Resolutions Exchanged* 2009, Plymouth University library

down, the cake and coffee (or tea) created a friendly atmosphere. This arrangement was not available to me at Plymouth University library.

What that exchange could be in a library was not at all clear. Obviously I couldn't serve coffee and I assumed that food would not be allowed. A friend suggested giving away a newsheet available of my previous artwork, but that didn't feel right. It didn't mean anything in the context of this work and might just be confusing. The day before the event, I decided that I needed to have cakes to give away as an integral part of the work for the next day. I wasn't sure that the library allowed food on the premises, but decided not to ask. Still unsure of the number of people that would participate having had small numbers in Totnes, I only made 24 cakes in addition to the half dozen I had left from the previous event in the freezer. As it turns out, food is allowed in the library, so my paper bags printed with

the *Resolutions Exchange* logo and 'Do not eat in the library' went largely unused. I ran out of cakes just before 4pm the end of the event.

Analysis using the Model for Practice, Participation and Progression

Aesthetic criteria within the model for Practice, Participation and Progression, Approach, Acquisition / Appreciation, Accumulation,

Assumptions were easily assessed, since they are based on reflective material, backed up by observation of the context of the artwork.

However with regard to the rest of the model, the brief responses on the forms and my question of eco-sins and eco-successes, targeted actions and specific behaviours. Without more conversations recorded at the time or further contact it was difficult to ascribe these behaviours other than as Agency + or -. The specific statement of behaviour did not add anything meaningful to my understanding of how change happens or the impediments of change. However what was revealed and more interesting in this work was the thresholds at which different people consider an activity a success or a failure. Individually the forms also reveal conflicting behaviour or complex motivations. Together these reveal rich nuances of behaviour change, which a straightforward analysis using the model would miss.

Approach

In comparison, the two sites were different. What did work in Totnes was the café feeling, so that people were willing to spend some time and talk. It

was a very relaxed space to take a break from shopping. People coming in generally knew what the work was and I was able to have more focused conversations there. I also found that people gave me more considered written responses. However technical difficulties on the final day when most people attended meant that these conversations were not always recorded.

In Plymouth University Library it was much more about passing traffic, with many more people taking a leaflet away to send or return to me later. The situation in the library foyer, a very busy and public space, did not allow for extended conversations. Nevertheless I did record a number of good exchanges. But everything happened at a faster pace and with less engagement.

Having made a comparison to performance in other works, in Plymouth particularly, this work felt to me, like a mini stage set, although without a formal stage that separated the audience and actors. People walked by, people could move in and out of the arena of the work easily without a differentiation of space or altered relationship to me. It was a take it or leave it situation, with no pressure. In Plymouth with the conversations a minor focus the work was much more about me as facilitator, enabling participation, rather than the participant as actors. The contributions are largely written.

The offer of free cakes really caught people's attention and people stopped to listen to my patter. Once they had stopped I knew I had them. Only a few listened patiently as I said my spiel but moved on. Some sat down immediately and filled out a leaflet, some took one away to bring back later. Other people stopped to read the participant lists, but didn't want to take part.

The tally also made a big visual impact and with the pinned up forms made people wonder what was happening and approach the display.

<i>Janey Hunt</i>	'Free cake for participating in <i>Resolutions Exchange?</i> '
<i>Participant</i>	'I'd like a free cake. What's this?'
<i>JH:</i>	'It's an artwork offering an opportunity to review your eco-successes and failures of 2008 and perhaps make some resolutions for 2009. Look I've confessed my own here and you can see other people have made their own lists there.'
<i>P:</i>	Oh yes
<i>JH:</i>	I'm just counting up the sins and successes on the tally to see if our behaviour is helping or hindering climate change. At the moment it looks like we are doing okay!'
<i>P:</i>	Well yes, I'm not so sure about that. All right I'll have a go.
<i>JH:</i>	<i>Laughingly</i> So is it the cake that's lured you?
<i>Male:</i>	Umm slightly. I'm not really a big cake fan, but I suppose it's free...
<i>JH:</i>	<i>Enquiringly</i> A free cake for participating in this artwork?
<i>Female passer-by:</i>	Umm no thank you
<i>JH:</i>	Free cake in return for participating in...

<i>Woman stops, JH continues</i>	It's an artwork looking at umm, giving you a chance to review your eco-successes and failures of the last year...
<i>W:</i>	<i>Interested</i> Oh right
<i>JH:</i>	and perhaps making some resolutions. Those are my confessions and lots of other people have already participated
<i>W:</i>	Oh right. Are you going to be here later?
<i>JH:</i>	I'll be here until 4pm, so...
<i>W:</i>	Can I come back later, is that all right?
<i>JH:</i>	Sure
<i>W:</i>	Yeah lovely. Okay thank you
<i>Woman leaves</i>	
<i>JH trying again:</i>	Free cake, no?

I worked solidly all day to get people to participate or encouraging them when they were writing their own eco-sins and successes, except for a short lunch break of 20 minutes. Even then I didn't get away promptly, as people came back with their lists and some one was waiting for me when I came back at 2.30pm. Thirty cakes was the right amount since the last one was shared by the last two participant's at 3.55pm, just before I was due to pack up.

Acquisition / Appreciation

There is a tension between getting good numbers of participants and having conversations. Although in Totnes on the first two days there were too few participants altogether, on the final day a steady flow of people came in. I was able to sit down with them and chat. In Plymouth I wanted to make

sure that I got plenty of contributions and make the tally more impressive, in achieving that I missed the opportunity to have some potentially interesting conversations.

Quite a few people found it difficult to think of anything to put down and copied other people's responses. At the library people often copied something written on another form. On the other hand other people told me that although it was difficult to do, they'd never thought to make such a personal assessment before and so it was really useful. It gave them pause for thought about their own behaviour and enabled them to question their own assumptions about being 'green'. Comparing themselves with other people also gave them an interesting benchmark against which to judge themselves. This was far better than me judging them through a questionnaire.

In hindsight the headings from the 'Exploratory framework for a sustainable lifestyle' (After Darnton 2004, after Bedford 2004 in Appendix 7) to which I have made additions, would have formed a useful prompt for people to think about their own lifestyles. These categories are Energy use domestic, Energy use transport, Water use, Waste, Household consumption food, Household consumption general, Housing, Tourism, Leisure, Banking, Social

RESOLUTIONS	ECO-eco-sins	Eco-successes
<p>Get laws changed re listed buildings. Get better energy saving light bulbs? There's loads more but I expect this is enough for now purposes.</p> <p>Gill Smith</p>	<p>My little cottage is listed¹⁾ and stone/cob²⁾ so I can't have double glazing (It's cold!) (2) It can't have insulated walls. (It's cold!) 3/1) Not allowed solar panels et al. ("The look!") (The laws re listed buildings must change slowly!) 3/ look at Janey's list - I too buy certain products 'irrationally' i.e. I just like them even if non-ecologically sound. Tooth-paste/Ploum-in Lemsay/ do even check out my biro!! 4/ Gas/electricity supplier is best price for me (and in fear for all poor people, supplier is Equipower who are non-profit making!!) 5/ I go to mousions for a few items (recycled boards and enamel/cheaper than the others) and alcohol... 2 I go to Somerfield 3/4 pm for 75% off sale products on its subby date. (I am poor) 6/ I use fairy lights (I bot all year round) and they're now LED 'cos I hate the quality of that light. 7/ I use daylight bulbs (cost 44p each.) because energy savers work on fluorescent principles next causes me to have migrifts (Scolopic sensitivity). (I do use energy savers in hallways, bathroom, kitchen but not in work-spaces! They give bulbs work for artists!) 8/ I use plastic bags for swim suit/pottery clay / but I wash them & reuse them until they disintegrate. 9/ You have to leave the digital recorder on standby or else it rings out!</p>	<p>1) None in my entire family drives a car. None in my family ever drove a car - (except my daughter at times past) 2/ I shop in Totes, or occasionally Sainsbury. 3/ I am a big advocate of reuse so I visit recyrcy centre 2 or 3 times each week 4/ Also check my shops (that they aren't so eco ready) - they don't help local shops to flourish 5/ I buy 2nd hand things (which I do!) 5/ Never have holidays so don't fly! 6/ Grew 15 types fruit + veg on my flat roof last year. (Nisings/salads/more sun) 7/ Bought very carefully + extensively 8/ Wood burner mostly, use of cuts, also fuel from Devon for fire & sawdust used for ships' pegs, re-uvating + the woods 9/ Save water by keeping 2 25 litre empty water containers beside sink + fill them for AS IT GETS UP so I don't waste the water! beginning water prior to washing up 10/ Doubled the thickness of winter curtains by lining the velvet curtains with blankets/did duvets so saving heat loss. 11/ At auburn prickly time I buy several 5p asterisks of white veggie. I use a couple or less every time I pee. So I only flush the veggie water. I never neutralize, the water smell when I pee! Vnager neutralize the water. I clean the loo. So I use fewer loo cleaners & so pollute the sewage less. 12/ I have any lemon or lime water peels, but a sinner by the sink & put them in washing up water. I don't need 'lemony smelling' washing up liquid - I use 1/2 bowl drop of lemon - make peed do greenish in your kettle. still put a sea shell in your kettle. shell is lime scale and forms on the kettle. Total</p>
<p>ECO-SUCCESS continued.</p> <p>14/ I move my am 'fertilizer' through the year using 2 home-made Comfrey stils</p> <p>15/ Beside each of my 3 water-butts I have a recycling-cante-bag for (£1 or £2) metal or green glass. Butts cost £30-40. So when my butts are full I empty the bucket by bucket into the adjacent dustbin. Then the next rain-fall fills the butt. I double my rain saving at little cost (except space - you see a) grow plants up thru + b) put pot plants on the lids). 16/ Hand wash most clothes (save else + £20) 17/ Swe headed by going to labline-come first thing each day to exercise + swim so my blood gets going!!! 2 I don't need heating or - I am self-heating!! when I cool down I go for a walk or do 'sults to the sun' yoga to heat up. 18. Never buy cash - always make them - keep PIX from newspapers/jam stilt... + hand-post if possible.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">18</p>	<p>Continue! Total</p>	<p>Total</p>

Figure 86 Resolutions Exchanged, Gill's contribution by post

participation, Volunteering, Neighbourliness. In future, I will incorporate this guide to assist the focus of participants' reflections.

Assumptions

The best responses I had came from post and email, and which were very considered and specific to that person's life. They were also compiled without reference to other people's contributions. One participant who posted her contribution gave the most detailed and informative contribution (reproduced above). This was the one most often read by people looking at the work. Although her response gave more information than I had intended, it gave many savings tips and a real insight into her life committed to the reduction of her carbon footprint and the areas in which she made compromises.

Accumulation

The quantitative outcome...

Venue	Numbers participating	Eco-successes	Eco-sins ²	Resolutions ¹
Totnes	15	149	86	55
Plymouth	28	224	151	76
Email/web	4	66	37	5
Totals	47	439	274	136

¹ Not everyone offered resolutions

² Two people disliked the category sins and did not write anything

At Birdwood House I was able to ask people if they minded being recorded. At Plymouth this was not possible, since the conversations were never focused, but more about transient quick discussion.

Conflicting behaviour and complex motivations

For reasons stated above the remainder of this analysis deviates from the Model of Practice, Participation and Progression and focuses on behavioural perception, thresholds and motivation rather than the conditions for change described in the model. Taken together the participants contributions fell into broad categories of concern that are indicative of our immediate main concerns about our own behaviour, which I have based on the 'Exploratory Framework for a sustainable lifestyle' (described above and Appendix 7). Recycling: includes waste, packaging, 2nd hand goods, plastic/cloth bags; Transport: includes car, public, plane and walking; Home energy: includes insulation, heating, standby, lights, cooking, showers; Food: includes organic, home grown, supermarket, air miles, take-out coffee; Living: includes eco-habits at work, water use, moving from rural to town, occupation, Ethical issues: includes banking, social enterprises, Eco-friendly purchases: all non food products; Leisure: includes non work occupations.

Category	Successes	Category	Sins
Leisure	8	Leisure	1
Eco-friendly purchases	12	Eco-friendly purchases	27
Ethical issues	15	Ethical issues	11
Living	35	Living	10
Food	53	Food	21
Energy Home	84	Eco-friendly purchases	27
Transport	87	Transport	48
Recycling	93	Recycling	21

Of 47 participants, most successes were achieved in Recycling (93 Successes, and 21 sins) Transport (87 successes and 48 sins), Home energy (84 successes and 80 sins) and Food (53 successes and 21 sins). Behaviours in which there is the highest number of sins indicated by this work are particularly transport and home energy. This would appear to indicate a range of attitudes and behaviours within this category that conflict with each other.

In line with environmental research the biggest behaviour change is found in recycling, where people are very conscious of what they can and can't recycle, including shopping at charity shops or ebay. Food is also a marked area of concern, with many people buying organic and local produce but conversely the continued use of supermarkets and unseasonal food.

In terms of transport, participants report walking or using public transport more, but also using a car, or flying.

<i>JH:</i>	Gosh you think travelling by train or bus is a sin?
<i>Woman:</i>	Yes I only travel by bicycle In fact I cycled up to my sister's in Princetown on the top of Dartmoor on Christmas Day. It took four hours. Of course I stayed overnight.

Another participant's resolution was to 'use the train/bus more', and although she only drove 4,000 miles a year and car shared, she regarded owning and driving a car a sin. An email participant stated successes of using a bike, public transport and trains in the UK, but also admitted to borrowing his partner's car for short walkable journeys, hiring a car for journeys within the UK, driving at 70+ on the motorway and flying twice a year.

In terms of Home energy, commonly people have double-glazing, but have not necessarily insulated their houses, or updated their boilers. In terms of contradictory behaviour this is often displayed in turning down the central heating or having the heating on all the time. An email participant added to the loft insulation, but admitted it could have been better quality and left a green energy supplier because of poor customer service. His resolution was to move to a south facing house and install sustainable heating systems, moving would also satisfy his desire to grow more of his own food, rather than address some of those issues at his current location. Another

participant's successes were regular servicing of the boiler, a home energy test, turning down the heating and low energy light bulbs. But admitted to a poorly insulated house and having the heating on when out and leaving lights on. His resolution was to ensure proper house insulation and turning out the lights and the heating off when not needed.

Of the two recorded conversations in Totnes, both revealed environmental behaviour adopted largely because of the necessity of frugality.

JH:	I'll just make coffee a minute Just help yourself and have a seat wherever you like, or some of the contributions are on the wall over there if you want to have a read of other peoples?
Woman with six kids:	<i>(Reading my confessions)</i> Well I do walk or bus most places, bus at the moment because of my legs at the moment I have arthritis
JH:	Milk or soya?
W:	just a small amount
JH:	Milk?
W:	Yes please not too much <i>(Reading my confessions)</i> Done most of this I think
JH:	You might be able to think of some others, that's my list not...necessarily a check list

Although it appears that this woman might have adopted pro-environmental behaviour her motivation is to save money in most cases. Her understanding of the wider issues of the effects of climate change appears limited or perhaps beyond her financial ability to effect. Low energy light bulbs are used to save money on electricity (Agency+), but there is confusion about the environmental effect of energy efficient light bulbs and doubts about their claims for duration (Awareness -).

W:	One of mine is ah...energy efficient light bulbs? Although I'm beginning to wonder about them now, with all the fury about them. Are they as eco-friendly as they sound?
JH:	Mmn, mmn
W:	with all this mercury in them
JH:	Well yes they say that on balance, because of the less use of electricity, the balance is that they are okay.

Although this woman was using a supposed eco-ball device in her dryer, which she uses to deal with the laundry for a family of eight, her emphasis was on the saving in electricity. Eco-claims for these dryer devices has been challenged and counteredⁱ through comparison with whole life cycle. Although saving electricity when in use, as plastics their initial production and eventual disposal counter balance the benefit. Effective advertising therefore confused an effort to make an eco contribution (Agency -) although may have saved energy (Agency+).

W:	So that's why I say an eco-sin is having a tumble dryer at all
JH:	But I think you could say with six children at home, that's justifiable really. I mean you just couldn't do it otherwise...
W:	One of the things I've found...I use the tumble dryer, because I have a large family, there's eight of us, so that's a lot of washing... But what I've found I put in my tumble dryer these dryer balls and it cuts my use of electricity by 25%.
W:	And also another thing I've found, it may sound funny, but if I put more than one load most times, I bring it to the launderette, because I find it is actually cheaper than to dry it at home...

RESOLUTIONS	ECO-eco-sins	ECO-SUCCESSSES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gas central-heating - Aga (gas-fired) 8 mths/year - Travel by bus & train - Wear plastic clothes - Love bananas, dates, rice, tea & coffee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cycle everywhere I can - Grow some of my own food - Rarely buy new clothes - Currently when I do buy new clothes, going for bio-degradable - Not flying last few years - Try & encourage / inspire my household to turn off the lights, fly less, drive less etc etc - - -
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not much success as as an inspiration! 	
Total	6	6

Figure 87 Resolutions Exchanged detail woman with 6 children

A misunderstanding about shopping locally intended to enhance local production and reduce food miles is interpreted as not travelling far to shop ie at Morrison's supermarket in Totnes.

The general motivation to save money is demonstrated by her use of charity shops, not only to save money, but to dispose of worn out clothing which are sold on by the charity to be recycled. This demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of recycling (Agency+).

W:	I use the charity shops mainly. Mostly because of cost issues basically, because I can't really afford to buy new ...
	Again another thing I do is clothes that aren't fit to be worn, I used to throw them into the bin, but the charity shops, anything that isn't good enough to be sold they sell onto a recycling firm,
JH:	Oh right
W:	...so many pounds a kilo
JH:	Oh great, I didn't realise that

Another participant is very environmentally aware as demonstrated in the final extracted paragraph from the recorded conversation below. Food purchases are considered not simply because of the personal benefit, but also because of the implication of the wider network of influences (Action and Reflection+). That network includes local growers and the ethical practice of large multinationals. Despite those conscious choices, most of her life is lived according to the needs of frugality. Her ceramic art practice uses toxic glazes and an electric kiln, but these produce the particular effects she wants to achieve (Agency-). Thrift prevents her from owning a

car, but she would like to have one and if money were no object would find one with as many recycled/recyclable components as possible.

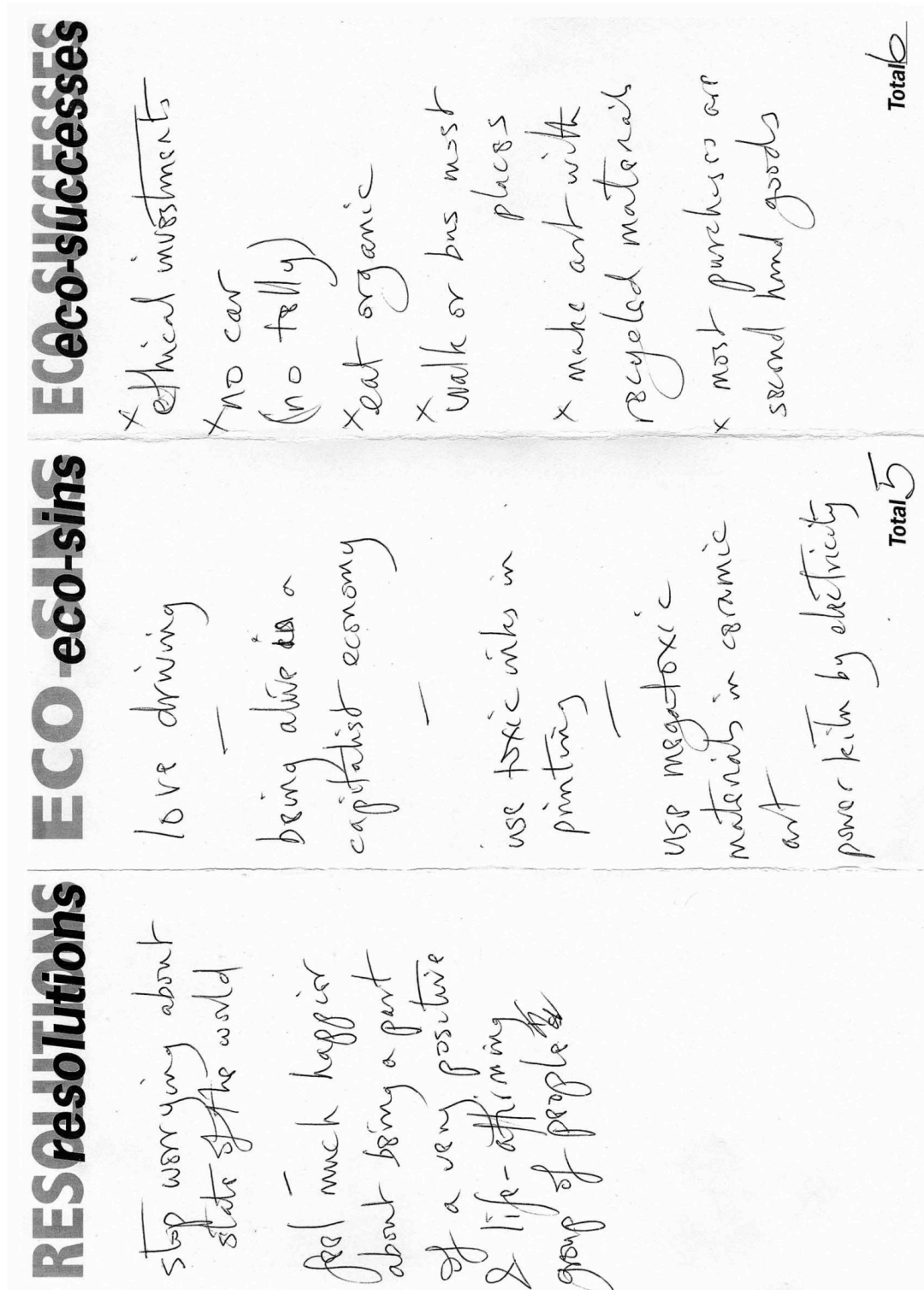


Figure 88 Resolutions Exchanged contribution woman friend

Woman friend: (reading from my confessions) “Make decisions still made by habits or price”, well I think it is my habit now to really think, because I have been doing this for so many years, it is my habit to think about where things come from. Umm and occasionally price dictates. But I don’t need to buy things very often. Food is the main thing I buy, my life is pretty pared down...

JH: You buy things strictly according to need really

Wf: Mmn

JH: And only according to need, you don’t buy luxuries and...

Wf: Books?

JH: You are not the consummate consumer

Wf: With me only, capitalism would falter, umm (*Laughter*)

JH: Do you think, in a way, a lot of what you do is actually down to frugality anyway. I mean that you have lived like this, on a meagre income...

Wf: For most of my life, yeah, and being born in the war, I think had a huge impact. In that, you know, I grew up, not feeling deprived, but just grew up with a minimum...Just going out and buying things was just not umm, was not a major entertainment, as it is these days...

Because I don’t do these things because it makes me feel deprived I do these things because I like to. I like to eat organic, I don’t eat organic out of a sense of I ought to do it. I do it because it is the best possible food and there is a really nice feeling that the money I’m spending on food is going to support people who are living the best they possibly can. Which is much nicer than feeling it is going to McDonald’s shareholders.

In Plymouth participation was split between participants who were engaged in environmental behaviour and those whose awareness was limited.

One female architecture student was very interested in sustainability issues although she admitted that she was not innocent, and completed a form.

As she was writing a group of male students came along, one of whom demonstrated some awareness of environmental behaviour (Awareness +), the others were disinterested however all completed a form.

<i>MS2:</i>	So what so you have to do?
<i>JH:</i>	Just think about your own eco-successes and eco-failures.
<i>MS2:</i>	Like what are eco-sins? Like eco...
<i>JH:</i>	Like driving, like climate change...
<i>MS2:</i>	So you could say that I don't recycled enough, don't turn the power off, they leave the computer on all the time, sky box is left on...
<i>JH:</i>	Absolutely
<i>MS2:</i>	Just a couple of bullet points?
<i>JH:</i>	Sure

Despite demonstrating general awareness such as understanding that he could recycle more or save energy by turning off unneeded appliances, Male Student Two was not able to think about his own personal behaviour in the same way. Although he bought local and organic food, this was related to a more personal desire to eat well, rather than any concern for the wider implications (Agency -). In terms of travel although there was some awareness of energy consumption and what he could do, but this was ignored over a consciousness of image (I hate buses.) and the personal comfort of using a car (Agency -).

RESOLUTIONS	ECO-eco-sins	ECO-SUCCESSSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wider use of local produce and organic foods when I cook	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- leaving things on street- <u>Never</u> use the bus- <u>Never</u> use bikes- Use to much water and leave taps on- essentially don't feel like I'm that bothered about my carbon footprint! SORRY!	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- using local/organic produce- turn off lights
	Total 5	Total 2

Figure 89 Resolutions Exchange Plymouth University Library 2009, Male student 2

There was also confusion between sustainability and cost, the bus was good because it was cheaper. When Male Student Three talked about the carbon footprint of flying (Awareness +), Male student two admitted wanting to go to Japan (Awareness -).

A second typical student response also highlighted the impression of a lack of personal agency through the effects of rented accommodation and temporary residency. However the resolutions did indicate a willingness to begin adopting environmental behaviour by avoiding plastic carrier bags and leaving electrical goods on standby.

Issues arising Resolutions Exchange (January/February 2009)

Visual aesthetic

There was only one conversation of this work as art, which was not recorded, however as soon as it was completed I wrote the exchange down. My conclusion from the exchange was that I needed to be better prepared to describe my work in aesthetic terms.

Recollected conversation

Janey Hunt: Would you like a free cake for participating in this artwork?

Male Lecturer: Looks around and asks

What makes this an artwork? It looks like a survey to me? Is this the same as that survey on the web site a little while ago?

JH: No I didn't know about that. The idea comes from a new definition of a work of art, no longer the idea of an object, but as a process of dialogue. Conversation

	becomes the medium.
ML:	So that means that anything could become a work of art like a toilet or this carpet here?
JH:	You're thinking of Marcel Duchamp, but that is still an object.
ML:	Well it still looks like a survey
JH:	It is in part, but I am not telling people what is right and wrong, there is no judgement.
ML:	Are you going to evaluate the results?
JH:	Mmm, well that's not really what an artist does, I haven't decided yet. All the information will go onto my web site. One person has suggested that I summarise the top tens sins, successes and resolutions I am going to run it again next year
ML:	So that's looking at the results and it still seems like a survey. I'm not convinced this is art, but I'll take the leaflet and look at it. Bye
	<i>Afterwards I am kicking myself for not being prepared for this question and thinking how I could have answered better:</i>
	<i>JH imagined responses:</i> I am using the survey form to reveal our behaviour that is usually only analysed and given back to us the public in a summary report; The results are already visible, not taken away and analysed behind closed doors; It's looking to engage people in defining their own parameters through a process of consensus, rather than assessing them against a 'norm'; My voice as the 'author/artist' is a minor one, there only as a provocation for engagement; What becomes interesting is the boundaries between success and failure that is completely undefined; The tally is an immediate encouragement to keep on going.

The tally itself, as well as the contributions, was intended as a visual hook in the work and as an immediate portrayal of our impact on climate change. It was something immediately tangible about the work, which people could

take in without having to examine the detail of the contributions, but also implicated the importance of the participations and contributions to the nature of the work. The growing tally also gave a value to repeated encounters with the work alongside reading the new contributions.

Facilitation not performance

This work was much less about a collaborative performance as identified in previous works. It was a work of facilitation and largely written participation. Although all the contributions were available to read and were read, I am not sure what people made of them. I do know through observation that many people read Gill's contribution, reproduced above, which gave such a vivid insight into her ways of consciously living environmentally.

The outcome of the project is the collection of individual narratives, where these as observation demonstrate the everyday and the sense of profusion also suggests a rich commonality. This rich commonality is the value of participation, not reducing an artwork to the lowest denominator, but the recognition of the value of the everyday as evidenced by the variety of people's lives and consequent responses to the artwork's provocation.

Neutral guide to environmental behaviour

My eco-confessions on the form acted as a checklist to a certain extent for people to respond to, which was not what I had intended. I had to make clear that my admissions were not an exhaustive list. When making my

own confessions I had found it quite difficult to think what they were and using the 'Exploratory framework for sustainable living' would have been a useful neutral guide to prompt thinking both for myself and the participants.

Contradictions in lifestyle

This work was much less about gathering vernacular knowledge. Already becoming clear during the event from the written contributions, were the different conceptions of environmental behaviour by different people and the contradictions in people's lifestyles. This observation has been confirmed during the analysis. The contributions were analysed to reveal the major behavioural areas of environmental concern.

Personal Agency

There was a distinct difference between most of the student responses and older people even when they too lived in rented accommodation. Students apparently could only affect environmental behaviour within their personal lifestyles, however this was often motivated by personal benefit rather than altruistic motivation demonstrating a lack of agency. The woman with six children although primarily motivated by cost, was also very informed about environmental issues. Perhaps the difference was provoked by a lack of sense of permanence as between short term rented accommodation and longer term renting such as Housing Associations.

Motivation

The conversations in this instance although interesting in their revelation about the motivations of eco-behaviour, could not be considered representative since so few were recorded. The prime motivation for environmental behaviour appeared to be lack of money or saving money, either through necessity or habit.

Transformation

The process was not proscriptive allowing a wide variety of responses and many people commented on its use as a means of reflection. Community arose from this process contributing varied responses, which are fascinating to compare. This contributes to behaviour change by uncovering actions hidden by habit, making visible what is already there in our personal everyday.

So transformation occurs not as a moment of revelation or privileged moment within the everyday. Rather the shift of awareness exploits the opportunity through collective participation in my art practice, which offers moments of attunement, as individuals and collectively.

Comparison of analysis of artworks

The table that follows provides a summary analysis of all of the works according to the Model for Practice, Participation and Progression.

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Model	House Receipts I	House Receipts II	House Receipts III	Resolutions Exchanged
<p><i>Comparison of analysis for each artwork</i></p> <p>Offsets</p> <p>Confusion with marketing/survey; Interest led to participation; Facilitation essential; Polemical; Unpolished visually; Conducted on the street;</p>	<p>Work engaging and challenging; Avoiding polemic; Focus on own behaviour and exposing failure; Stimulated conversation; Empathy, encouraging intimacy to real lives; Visual aesthetic challenge; Difficulty of differentiating my material and contributions;</p>	<p>visual aesthetic discussion, countered by individual stories and process of dialogue with community; polemic, talking too much; intimate venue, intimate conversations; clarity of presentation, layering successful; Premise of work striking, relevant issue, admitting failure; Conversations replace contributions;</p>	<p>Self deprecating approach encourages interest; Appreciation of work as art; Relevance to real lives; Elements of the artwork effective, but not confessional box; Catching conversation;</p>	<p>Mini stage set, performance. Artist as facilitator. Challenge of work as art. Relaxed ambience encourages participation. Free cakes appealing. Tally as visual hook, immediately tangible, gave value to repeated encounters.</p>
<p>Approach/ Attitude</p>	<p>valuable material from alternate point of view architect; Performance - observation of artist, repeated scene with varying actor, participant as lead actor; Character of conversation important;</p>	<p>Self-selecting participants; Facilitation establishes conversational tone of artwork; Contributions as generative process</p>	<p>Personal experience valued for itself; People appreciate telling own story;</p>	<p>Not performance or collaboration, facilitation encouraging participation. Greater participation obstructs conversations. Participants copying responses. Others taking time to reflect and interrogate their own assumptions of green behaviour. Using other contributions as comparative measure. Utilising neutral framework to guide thinking.</p>
<p>Acquisition/ appreciation</p>	<p>Hi-tec/low-tec, challenging my assumption that Hi-tec is the only approach; Wartime thrift & lower expectations;</p>	<p>Motivations of house purchase; Subject of artwork relevance to participant; Unusual subject matter for art; Large variations in approaches & willingness to shift behaviour;</p>	<p>Work challenged inaction as negative behaviour; Too challenging, overly high standards; Provokes thinking out of the box; Exchange of stories and ideas encouraging;</p>	<p>Technical difficulties prevented recording. Plymouth transitory encounters. Email/post responses in isolation most reflective.</p>
<p>Assumptions</p>	<p>Rich conversations unrecorded; Curiosity; PMI not very affective; 3 different venues same outcome;</p>			

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Comparison of analysis for each artwork

	Conscience Offsets	House Receipts I	House Receipts II	House Receipts III	Resolutions Exchanged
Accumulation	<p>Collective performance; Conversations possible body of neglected knowledge;</p>	<p>Collectivisation of experience; knowledge/wisdom doing it for themselves; knowledge transfer, generative knowledge; Visual layering of material needs clarity; Dynamic artwork; Lack of understanding about knowledge impedes works presentation;</p>	<p>Richness added by conversations to original premise; Played conversations animating space; Layered material; Contributions encourage more, telling personal stories;</p>	<p>Stories quantify becoming interesting; Unique enquiry as artwork;</p>	
Awareness	<p>CO raise awareness of climate change; excuse real changes of behaviour;</p>	<p>Information needed to assist decision making eg Eco-DIY, which type guide; Self selection of participants; gallery unsuitable;</p>	<p>Confusion of advice, not joined up; Lack of trust; Assimilation of advice to affect habit problematic; Small shifts in everyday behaviour; Environmental behaviour equated with saving money.</p>	<p>Fundamental shifts in thinking, still missing; Confusion of advice; Balance of doing the right things and financial costs; Social inequality; Starting with the right actions eg insulation; Different values at work and home;</p>	<p>Nuances of environmental behaviour very individual. Indicated main areas of concern and agency: Recycling, home energy, transport, Frugality/Thrift, a major motivation for eco-behaviour. Conflicting information about environmental effects.</p>
Agency	<p>CO's contribute to carbon; Could make people think; Abstract from the personal to the public</p>	<p>Eco-ambitions set too high</p>	<p>Ambition to change, thwarted by cost, confusion or misinformation; Older housing stock inappropriate; Convenience overrode knowledge; Value decisions pro-environmental; Desire for visible badges of pride; Alternative methods best; Recycling pride; Simple behaviours most effective (day to day actions); Day to day within our control; Technology delays decisions</p>	<p>Sustainability equals saving money; Environmental application different from work and home; Transient population; Confusion of advice inhibits decisions; Simple solutions, common sense; Eco-purchase matrix successful decision aid</p>	<p>In conversations most responses indication Agency+ or Agency-. Students often lacking sense of personal agency. Environmental behaviour adopted because of selfish interest eg food.</p>
Association	<p>Consider personal action to reduce carbon use;</p>	<p>Local networks would be useful;</p>	<p>Local networks affective; National network informative;</p>	<p>Gaining understanding; Lack of local networks; Trusting one expert to tailor systems;</p>	

4 Analysis

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Comparison of analysis for each artwork (p3)

Conscience Offsets	House Receipts I	House Receipts II	House Receipts III	Resolutions Exchanged	
Miscellaneous Avoidance of personal and individual to abstract context	Useful measure of carbon costs; 1st world/3rd world divide; social inequality; All countries must agree;	Once settled no impetus to change; Different lifestyle choices; Purchase matrix; Hi- tec/low- tec; local shopping;	Success with compromise; Contradictory behaviour by same participant;	Compromise inevitable thru time/money allowing in habitual behaviour; How people make it happen; Re-application of existing skills to use technology; Utilising alternative approaches/sources; Technology; Simple & making do & maintenance easy; Changing our approach altogether;	A few participants indicated wider application of environmental behaviour through their work or study interests listed as successes.
Architecture Action and reflection	Enabling and supporting decision making	National or research initiatives move agenda forward; Social inequality issues;	Planning obstructions; Useful organisations; lack of local networks; fiscal stimulus;		

Summary

The Model for Practice, Participation and Progression was applied to both aesthetic and participative aspects of each artwork undertaken for the PhD. Analysis of each work was undertaken according to the model headings of Approach/Attitude, Acquisition/appreciation, Assumptions, Accumulation, Awareness, Agency, Association, Action and reflection, and Architecture. For each work and arising from this initial analysis, specific issues that arose are discussed. This allows the progression of the practice to become visible as the works developed in conjunction with the theoretical research.

The main issues that arose can be separated in to those affecting the artwork itself and those commenting on some aspect of environmental behaviour. Issues arising relating to the artwork are:

- The necessity to avoid a polemic or I know more than you attitude in the presentation and engagement of the artwork and the success of using some aspect of my own environmental behaviour as the initial provocation for participation;
- The creation of a community that arises from such intimacy and reflected in the participant responses. The collection of individual narratives offers a sense rich commonality as the principle value of participation;

- Ensuring personal agency is present in the work represented by the successful use of a real-life issue relevant and meaningful to people's daily lives;
- Ensuring there is no intention of harm in the artwork, which to preserve social freedoms and over control by society paradoxically might incur some unintentional harm;
- The unusual appearance of the artworks utilising tools from other disciplines are of mixed success, certainly requiring some initial introduction, but sparking people's interest;
- The value of the conversations observed prior to recording and in their content when reviewed after recording, which is recognised as knowledge and wisdom;
- The confidence of the participants to voice their own opinion often appeared to be impeded and needed encouragement to be expressed;
- The layering of material contributes both to the aesthetic and cultural value of the artworks, which reflect individual stories and the variations of people's lives;
- The performative aspect of the artwork revealed by a 'scripted' introduction and a repetitive scene with varying actors and the participant as lead actor;

Issues relating to environmental behaviour were:

- Generally the artworks could not demonstrate behaviour change as a direct influence. Instead they reflect the consciousness of society about climate change and the need to change personal behaviour and the different ways in which people achieve this and set their standards.
- The use of personal reflection to uncover habits offering a shift of awareness and the comparison with others are a bench mark of our own behaviour offered the greatest empowerment to change;
- a tendency to abstract behaviour to a general societal implication away from the personal;
- *Conscience Offsets* responses were both negative and positive responses in Awareness and Agency indicating a mixed response to carbon offsetting;
- Contradictory behaviour by the same participant indicates a sliding scale of values; similarly the differing individual conceptions of environmental behaviour;
- Challenge to technological approaches by simplicity and making do, thrift and expectation; *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts* offered a users' approach to change rather than supplier or designer and the recognition of the *Purchase Matrix* as a useful guide to decision making;

- Day to day environmental actions easily undertaken and maintained were adopted, more technological or expensive options delay or indefinitely postpone decision making;
- Often action is informed by thrift and simplicity either through necessity or habit;
- The over-supply of information, with insufficient knowledge and criteria by which to value it also impeded behaviour change;
- Planning authorities and listed building status also impeded change, as did builders unfamiliar with environmental standards.

The next chapter relates this analysis back into the wider context of socially engaged practice, environmental behaviour change and Michel de Certeau's practice of the everyday.

ⁱ www.treehugger.com/files/2007/09/nellie_dryer_balls.php

5 Conclusion

Contributions to knowledge

The presentation of this written thesis seems to chart an apparently ordered and clear path of development through the research, yet the process was disordered and instinctive, with paths of different thoughts, which became coherent only once the material was gathered together and chapter drafts were prepared.

I began with a general understanding of socially engaged practice, but my reading started with environmental behaviour research, a field about which I knew nothing prior to this research. The value-action gap offered a starting point, a useful point of tension with which to probe the potential for environmental behaviour change through art practice.

Early drafts of the thesis were written as a time-line narrative to represent the exploration of the research and reveal understanding as it occurred. But this made for awkward and repetitive reading and a more formal and organised structure emerged, in the format presented here.

This thesis begins with an analysis of discussion about socially engaged art practice through the writings and exhibitions of Claire Bishop, Nicholas Bourriaud and Grant Kester, who argue for different and sometimes contradictory characteristics. Their work is introduced through the extension of site specificity developed by Miwon Kwon. My discussion highlights the following as fundamental issues of socially engaged art practice: participation, the ambition of social change, aesthetic representation and an issue with communicating beyond the participative event discussed here as representing conversations as key issues for investigation through this research.

In part these issues are investigated in this research through a reconsideration and application of the principles of Michael de Certeau's research into the everyday. De Certeau's impetus to begin his research was the May 1968 protests, which he identified as a rupture event achieving cultural and social rather than political change. Although de Certeau's proposal of individual creative resistance is, I suggest in Chapter 2, countered by subsequent studies into behaviour change and particularly the value-action gap, there is still value in his understanding of the everyday. This is confirmed by the failure of government-led public climate change campaigns in the 1990's and a subsequent focus on understanding the impediments to and enabling factors in individual behaviour change in behaviour change research. De Certeau's research is of value through his emphasis on believable objects and the value of participation offering an outcome of collective enquiry, which can be represented as a new narrative and his exploration of rupture events as the means through which change occurs on a large scale.

Investigating impediments to change and how change occurs in environmental behaviour research alongside the benefits of participation in the arts emphasised the potential of the role of the artist in change, but also underlined the necessity of participant involvement at the heart of the process. This research enabled a transfer of understanding of how change can be identified. The extension of the model for Practice, Participation and Progression enables socially engaged artworks to identify the contribution of participants to the general agenda of behaviour change and holds the potential to understand and analyse the artwork's specific contribution to change and to assist the design of the artwork where change is an aim. Environmental behaviour research then extends the discussion of the issues identified for socially engaged practice.

Despite my intention to investigate the claim for change in socially engaged artworks, I have been unable to demonstrate this through the artworks included in this research. Although the artworks may have instigated behaviour change this cannot be substantiated. I did not conduct a sociological research methodology of working with a specific group of people throughout the research or collect any base line data as a means of comparison. However the works have generated a picture of lifestyles, environmental attitudes and people's attitude to change.

This chapter will take the outcome of the analysis of the artworks through the model for Practice, Participation and Progression and apply these to the issues arising from my discussion of socially engaged art practice and environmental behaviour.

The Discursive Site

Countering the commodification of lifestyle

De Certeau (1984, 1998) describes everyday life as increasingly restricted and impoverished, an aesthetic of absence reflecting media fictions, which have become our reality and through which we are manipulated (see Chapter 2). Demonstrating a continuation of this theme through environmental behavioural research, Bedford (2004) identifies a commodification of lifestyle, which has become the means of self-identification. The government, global corporations and the media, tell us how and what to think, how to live and what to buy, resulting in a passive culture and impeding individual creativity of resistance identified by de Certeau (1984, 1998).

De Certeau (1984, 1998) proposes localised practices that construct individual lifestyles and everyday activity. We have seen that these practices that can be understood as individual behaviour choices and where habits impede change and link

to the value-action gap. Borne (2009) identifies mitigation behaviour where individuals attempt to balance the paradox of global pressures and making meaning locally. *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts III* demonstrates this through different values operating for one individual at work with a sustainable charity and at home where no changes had been made. Some participants found themselves forced to make decisions between doing the right thing and cost, demonstrating an internal value system. My motivations for buying a house that in the end I concluded could not have much eco-renovation carried out was made through unconscious lifestyle choices.

Passive culture is demonstrated in my research through participants' lack of confidence about their own opinions and looking to me, as the notional expert, for confirmation of the right answer. *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts* challenged this passive culture making one person change his attitude to inaction as an acceptable alternative.

Amongst those investigating change the commodification of lifestyle is demonstrated by the technological approach taken by the majority of people, including myself, that necessitates the purchase of complex products and which contrasts with the low-tech approaches from some participants. People appear to want technological badges of pride eg solar water heating, rather than starting with the basics eg insulation.

The artworks reveal large variations in approaches and willingness to shift behaviour. By making these visible through written and spoken contributions this enables participants to exchange stories and make comparisons to their own intentions and actions and to try out, through imagination, alternative approaches and lifestyles.

Together these describe an aesthetic of presence, and a new narrative as described by de Certeau (1984, 1998).

Demonstrating the aesthetic of presence, *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts* was observed by an architect as providing valuable material from the point of view of the client, which is normally assumed rather than understood by architects, designers and suppliers. It was also recognised as 'thinking out of the box' (*Eco-Renovation: House Receipts I* anecdote) and enabling others to think differently as well as countering the passive culture identified by de Certeau (1984, 1998).

Resolutions Exchanged offered both deeply reflective contributions, and contributions largely copied from others in the workshop. Some participants took time to reflect and interrogate their own assumptions of personal green behaviour, others recognised the value of taking time to consider failures and successes, which had gone unconsidered previously. Others copied responses, uncertain or unwilling to consider their own behaviour, and in an assumption that these were the right answer demonstrating passive culture.

Changes in behaviour were more likely to be effective if they were simple to adopt and could be operated within the control of the participant. These were most likely to be day-to-day actions, easy to accommodate within our existing lifestyles such as recycling, changing light bulbs, or insulation. These actions do not require expensive technical maintenance. More technological approaches required a greater time for consideration, a confusion of information and the delay or permanent postponement of decision making. Here the everyday is the place for the instigation of behaviour change, where willingness to change overcomes unconscious habit.

A new narrative

To counter the restriction of everyday life and the commodification of lifestyles Bourriaud (2002) proposes the necessity of a new narrative (Chapter One). The value-action gap applied to my own behaviour and then extended to include participant behaviours demonstrates the need for new narratives to enable new lifestyles to develop.

The success of my approach within my own art practice to reveal my own failures to adopt environmental behaviour is a successful new narrative, which acts as a catalyst. In my experience, admitting failure in the environmental world happens rarely with only successes admitted. However admitting failure has encouraged people to be very open about their own experiences.

There is a demonstrable gap between knowledge and behaviour. This is indicated through the confusion of advice and the difficulty of decision making that the majority of participants encounter. A new narrative is needed to enable decision making, rather than more general advice or more suppliers in the market, more tailored and trustworthy consultation is required. This could be reflected in actual choice of products in shops (an eco-DIY store), through a magazine offering product trials and reviews or a local network that enabled exchange of information. A new narrative is required to address our ability to abstract behaviour and ensure behaviours are clearly identifiable as individual and personal rather than generic choices. Wartime and austerity thrift and lower expectations may provide a narrative that can counter the commodification of lifestyles.

Principle of Adjacency

Having established that works should be meaningful and socially relevant, (Kravagna 1998, Matarasso 1997, 2004, 2005, Bourriaud 2002) their effectiveness operates through the principle of adjacency to other social, political and market systems described by Bourriaud (2002) and Kester (2004). The works should offer alternatives to the status quo and explore alternative forms of sociability or micro-utopias (Bourriaud 2002), offering an alternative to the dominant narrative (de Certeau 1998) and challenging art's production of knowledge (Kester 2004).

Behaviour change research and socially engaged art practice demonstrate useful parallels in investigating change, with the artist as change agent and a refocus on participation. Ballard's (2005) 5 A's Model for Change describes the conditions for change, which are comparable to Matarasso (1997) findings on the benefits of participation in the arts. This transposition of values between the two disciplines then elaborates both disciplines through contrasting approaches.

The value-action gap addresses the real life issue of the impediments to changing behaviour, utilising this as a point of tension for art to probe, of relevance both to the artist and participants. This I used directly to analyse my own failure to implement environmental behaviour within my own lifestyle and then as a provocation for participants to re-think their own behaviour. By displaying contributions I create an arena in which unconscious behaviours are brought into the open through discussion and can be compared with other contributors. The success of this approach can be found in the conversation thus stimulated, evidenced by the quantity and variety of contributions detailed in Chapter 4.

As well as this general principle I utilised business approaches to change with the artworks, in *Conscience Offsets* this was Edward de Bono's (1990) PMI method and in *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts* this began with a mind map. The direct adoption of these methods generally resulted in some confusion with marketing or surveys and creative business practices, which questioned my practice as art. The methods created a difficulty of differentiating my material and participant contributions. *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts* took place over three stages where each developed the presentation. At the ECOS Trust Homes for Good show, the most successful presentation separated my provocation material and gave a separate section to participant comments. This marked absorption of the business methods into a less specific approach allowed the participant contributions to be fore-grounded.

Despite too close an adjacency to business approaches to change, which provoked an initial confusion, these were overcome by the provocation of exposing my own failure of behaviour change, and the desire by the audience to reveal something of their own story. This intrigued people sufficiently to become participants.

Representing Conversations

Kwon (2004) describes the discursive site as an extension of site specificity where art intervenes in political issues, Bishop's interest in dialogue as aesthetic medium via Maria Lind (2006a) offers a way to consider the life of the participative artwork beyond the immediate social goal, and Bourriaud (2002) describes the relational aesthetic as reflecting a medium of experience.

Sheikh's (2001, 2004) proposal of a counter-public arises from his view of post-modern fragmentation and global capitalism, and allows the assertion of identity through the discursive site. Kester (2004) describes a discursive site of critical

consciousness. Jackson (2005) suggests change is most effective as communication through social encounters, which engage a discursive consciousness. De Certeau (1984, 1998) recognises conversation itself recorded, through individual participation, becomes part of a collective inquiry creating an oral fabric.

The oral fabric in this research project reveals very individual nuances of environmental behaviour. For individuals the process of participation allows attention on otherwise unnoticed, unquestioned habitual behaviour, or allows the celebration and acknowledgment of successes. The main areas of concern, demonstrating Awareness and Agency in the Model for Practice, Participation and Progression, are recycling, home energy, and transport. The main motivation for adopting environmental behaviour appears to be cost saving/frugality and thrift. The artworks indicate through some participant's successes ways in which we all might achieve behaviour change.

I have argued the problem of some of socially engaged practice to communicate beyond the participative event in Chapter 1. I argue that the discursive site extends beyond documentation of participation or demonstration of the process of the artwork to the outcome of the discursive site. This outcome is an understanding of public as pooled knowledge, where collective experience and the accumulation of variation, allows the re-negotiation of the everyday life of individuals. This avoids an over-emphasis on the ethics of participation that Bishop (2004, 2006) critiques and Kester (2004) discusses and offers the conversations as knowledge suggested by my term Representing Conversations.

Re-Presenting conversation from my artwork

Within my art practice I use the everyday know-how as an accumulative knowledge to investigate what inhibits the shift to environmentally sustainable lifestyles and to offer a picture of what that lifestyle might comprise. In this sense I am working contrary to accepted lifestyles and also challenging government assumptions of environmental activity. I recognise three different elements of representing conversations that are taking place within the research: the accumulation of knowledge from participants as part of the written thesis; the development of a personal art practice representing an interpretation of socially engaged art practice; and the re-presentation of conversations and accumulative knowledge as distribution and comparison in exhibition beyond the participative event.

The written thesis

Initially I also wanted to reflect that accumulative knowledge directly within the written element of the thesis, using extensive quotes from participants particularly in Chapter 4 Findings. However following discussion with my supervision team, the parameters of the PhD dictated the need for my own interpretation to come to the fore, despite this acting in contradiction to premise of collective knowledge. I was also aware of the need to summarise the contributions, since viewers could not be expected to go through all the primary data. I have tried to honour the progressive accumulation of knowledge from participants that the artworks represent by using a model that interrogates not only the contributions but also the artwork.

Practice narrative

Within the context of this research I am also interrogating the characteristics of socially engaged practice. In order to begin to explore my proposal of representing

Janey Hunt, 2010, Conversations: the socially engaged artist as environmental change agent, The University of Plymouth PhD thesis

MOTIVATION: OUTSIDE THE GALLERY FOR INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPATION ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

WOMEN COMMENTS REVEALING AND OFFER IMMEDIATE VISUAL MENTAL STIMULUS

ISSUES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH

- CARBON USE AMELIORATION
- NOT RESTRICTION
- TOO ABSTRACT FOR GOVERNMENT NOT INDIVIDUALS



the world is beautiful
www.climatechange.org

Conscience Offsets

Please use the message pads below to write your comments about the offsetting using the **What? How? When?** interesting/Action) headings and provided on the pinboards. Explore how carbon offsets can be personally and how you might use them. This is a lateral and creative thinking strategy developed by the **Climate Change** Thinking Program Guide.

minus

positive

Why does it have to be based on monetary value? Increasing value between what you give and what you receive responsibility if you can afford it.

interesting

Integrating it in city to pay to be a part!

It's a 15% used 3rd world divide

Home-trait is needed as

Facilitation avoids confusion over approach

Issues for Environmental Research

- Carbon Use Amelioration
- Not Restriction
- Too Abstract for Government
- Not Individuals

RESOURCES FOR SOCIALLY ENGAGED ART PRACTICE

- CONVERSATIONS REVEALING AND PRESENTING
- ENCOURAGING CONFIDENTIAL OPINIONS ABOUT PERSONAL

This is a continuing artwork, first shown in the summer of 2006, at Dartington College of Arts, a Friends of the Earth initiative, in a local supermarket.

The black handwritten quotations are from comments contributed by participants at these events.

The blue comments above and below are those of my socially engaged practice.

Many thanks to all who participated.

Janey Hunt
www.janeyhunt.co.uk

Figure 91 Conscience Offsets practice narrative

conversations in this context, I have developed a practice narrative, which visually describes each artwork, with an additional meta-narrative of the development of the practice as the research progressed. These are in the form of hand-written comments, which are intended to bring the viewers into the work by sharing my interrogative process. (*Conscience Offsets* is exemplified above and the Practice Narrative booklets can be found within the volume of documentation printed and as an interactive pdf.)

Documentation of the artworks

The format of documentation of each artwork that could be included with the written thesis presented some difficulty of design. Again I was concerned to ensure an adequate representation of participation. The participant contributions came in the form of written comments and recorded conversations (sound and video), however the sound quality of many of the conversations due to the conditions of recording mean they are unsuitable for representation. Videoed conversations suitable for editing also produced overlong and relatively inactive movies that would be difficult to watch. This left me with extensive transcriptions of the conversations, which I find fascinating, but which are also unrealistic to reproduce verbatim other than as research appendices.

I was mindful of de Certeau's advice not to ignore the collective enquiry when annotating the everyday and this led me to a series of booklets, which both describe the participative artwork and allow the inclusion of participant contributions.

Documentation for *Conscience Offsets* comprises the comments contributed under the Plus, Minus and Interesting headings and an indicative postcard. *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts* comprises a broadsheet produced for *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts III*, which explains the contexts of the project, my failure to eco-renovate my house

and contributions received to date. I also include three postcards of different aspects of the project and a booklet comprising a printed section of one extended conversation from *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts III* illustrated with sequenced video images, stills and written participant contributions. A pdf of all the conversations as a booklet is also included. *Collaborative Conversations* is represented as booklets through selected part of the transcribed conversation, which explore four issues of importance to the research: Deep meeting, Responsibility, the Artist as role model and Harm. These are illustrated with sequenced video stills and the mind maps which were compiled during the conversations. *Resolutions Exchanged* is documented through a series of leaflets and a booklet exploring the artwork context and outcomes including participant contributions, stills, and transcriptions of conversations. The leaflets use one participant contribution together with the transcription of the conversation that took place and illustrate a particular issue that arose such as Travel, Best tips, Thrift, and Students.

Unfortunately I was not able to fully explore this representation of participatory works within my research. Some thoughts on this issue will be discussed later in Chapter Six Further Research.

Participation

Reversing de Certeau's aesthetic of absence (1998), an aesthetic of presence uncovers the everyday stories and conversations creating a new narrative of believable objects from pooled knowledge, which crucially utilises personal agency. This refocuses socially engaged practice on the participant and makes sense of the alternative polemic of individual resistance described by de Certeau. Darnton (2004, 2006) and Ballard (2005) also recognise that participants must be actors at the heart

of the process and involved in change from the beginning rather than being presented with a pre-determined scenario. *Collaborative Conversations* recognises the necessity of allowing personal agency as key to successful participation or collaboration.

I suggest that an aesthetics of socially engaged practice arises from the site of exchange and then as a contribution to and expression of pooled knowledge. I suggest this secondary expression, which I describe as representing conversations forms a new narrative of believable objects and everyday knowledge as an outcome that could address the failure of socially engaged practice to communicate beyond the participative event, instead creating a community of common sensibility.

The commodification of lifestyles, and the lack of confidence of participants in their own opinions identified during the artworks indicate that creativity of resistance has been impeded. Recovering that creativity inherently encourages unpredictability, a characteristic of socially engaged practice. Vernacular experience is valued, and allows participants to re-acquire confidence in their personal agency or know-how, which is indicated by the rich conversations of the artworks. It is therefore a key role of the artist to assist participants to recover or uncover that creativity. My understanding of the artwork functioning as a performative work can ascribe the lead role to the participant.

I have come to describe the artworks as unscripted performative events, identified by three aspects: observation of the artist compiling a work observed by passersby and people coming into the gallery; a repetitive scene of the artist/actor using the same conversational method, with a different participant/actor all starting from the

same premise but ending differently; and a scene in which the participant becomes the lead player telling his/her own story.

Creating the opportunity of personal agency is crucial to the creation of a successful conversation. This is realised through the use of a real-life issue that is relevant and meaningful to people's daily lives (de Certeau's believable object 1998). Each of the participants in my art practice retained their personal agency, or could through accepting the exchange of knowledge, use their personal agency for change.

This appears to be different from de Certeau's understanding of everyday creative resistance against a dominant and imposed culture (1998). I have already shown that the everyday could be seen to inhibit change, by the maintenance of an individual quality of life and personal meaning. Personal agency however offers the security of retaining individual opinions, whilst through a discursive site allowing the opportunity of transformation through encounters. Retaining personal agency through the life of the artwork including representation beyond the social moment or participative event could counter the impression of missing the event felt by the majority of exhibition viewers.

This goes beyond the discussion in *Collaborative Conversations* of responsibility to participants by the artist. That discussion distinguished participants who may not have been acknowledged, but where they are making a significant contribution to the work as unacknowledged co-authors. Personal agency counters Bishop's promotion of antagonism and disruption that manipulates participants in a work that serves the interests of the artist, rather than the participant. Both of these discussions are superceded by de Certeau's concept of participation where the recovery of creative resistance and personal agency is the pre-dominant function for socially engaged

practice. This implies an inherent respect for the participant, since the material they supply is crucial to the expression of the artwork as an example of the discursive site.

Conversation

Giard (1984) demonstrates small transformative moments rather than dramatic change in individual conversation. The individual conversations collected during my artworks also demonstrate a similar outcome. I create situations for conversation which reveal attitudes to environmental behaviour and which could then provoke change. Similarly to Giard the participants appreciated being able to tell their own story, to talk about something generally regarded as mundane, in describing successful or unsuccessful environmental behaviour, their personal experience was valued in and of itself.

During *Conscience Offsets*, I found that I had to facilitate the work, to encourage participation. However the facilitation then was able to set the conversational tone of the artwork. An exchange in *Collaborative Conversations* investigates the artwork as a meeting created by the artist and participant together through conversation.

The conversations tended to replace written contributions to the artwork, but I extracted and printed sections that would contribute visually to the work and acknowledged them as a spoken contribution. However unlike the written contributions that are necessarily very brief, the conversations revealed greater nuances of behaviour. I concur with Kersty Hobson's (2001) description of rich moral conversations describing sites of daily political and personal struggle.

Collaborative Conversations explored the idea of a Deep Meeting as essential to effective communication. The conditions in which this might occur were described

as an openness and readiness, real interest, intimacy, time, non-judgemental situation, food, silence, genuine question/interest, and slowing down. *Collaborative Conversations* itself demonstrated a successful deep meeting indicated by the unprompted willingness of the collaborators to return for a second conversation. One collaborator commented that the context was right and allowed personal agency. These conversations were unfortunately curtailed because of the departure of one collaborator to Russia.

The conditions for deep meetings in the context of my art practice, were held in my mind during the facilitation of subsequent artworks and can be understood to have taken place indicated by the sort of responses that the work elicited described in Chapter 4. Additionally further characteristics of deep meetings were incorporated into later work such as food. In both *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts II* and *Resolutions Exchanged* this allowed the participant to slow down and give time for conversation and consideration through offering coffee and cake.

The artist as change agent

I have already suggested that the increased commodification of lifestyle has created a passive culture. Rather than de Certeau's individual creative resistance offering the means of making sense, passive culture now requires active agents to engage personal agency (Bourriaud 2002, de Certeau 1984, 1998, Kester 2004). As discussed above the role of the artist is to assist participants to regain personal agency in order to enable change.

Environmental behaviour research identifies the change agent as essential to create change. Jackson (2005) observes that to achieve change the message needs to be pitched carefully. Hounsham (2006) observes that the process must be a shared

journey, not one in which participants are admonished for failure, or told what to do.

Socially engaged art practice proposes a democratic concern (Bourriaud 2002) or empathetic understanding (Kester 2004) as the means by which a collaborative work is created. This avoids Bourdieu's political delegate (in Kester 2004) and de Certeau's interventionist expert (1998), who usurp the process for their own ends and distort the outcome, however well intentioned.

Kester describes the empathetic concern arising only from an extended engagement within a geographical community. However I demonstrate that the empathetic engagement can be generated in a transient site, as long as the issue is of real relevance.

The accusation of a polemic from my art practice as preaching climate change came very soon in this research. In order to avoid that, which would diminish participation, I decided to begin each work with an examination of my own behaviour, based on the value-action gap. Highlighting my own failure to adopt environmental behaviour worked as a provocation for engagement. Participants found this approach amusing, and the honesty engaging, invoking recognition of their own position and therefore encouraging participation, creating an empathetic engagement.

I understood that the value-action gap was recognisable to everyone (comparable to de Certeau's believable object). This resonance would also provoke engagement. One of the conditions for a deep meeting was a genuine question and interest, demonstrating an empathetic context. The relevance of the value-action gap in the context of a wider ongoing discussion about climate change made the issue of direct

relevance to people's lives. This created the conditions for a deep meeting or empathetic engagement allowing personal agency, which could best encourage the conditions for change.

Change and unexpected outcomes

Socially engaged practice has claimed to be able to provoke change for the better without ever examining that claim. Matarasso's research into the benefits of participation in arts practice has not been continued into socially engaged practice. I suggest the significant overlap between environmental behaviour research and socially engaged practice offers a means of comparison and assessment of change in a practice that is influenced by both fields.

However the assessment of the artworks in this research reveal that unless there is a sociological process alongside the execution of artworks, which monitors a specific group of people from the beginning of their extended engagement over a series of artworks and duration of time, individual change cannot be monitored.

I was able to indicate the value of the artworks to achieve an alternative view (thinking out of the box) and encourage participants to think more deeply about the consequences of their behaviour eg *Resolutions Exchanged* encouraged people to review their past year rather make assumptions of behaviour. Despite indications of demonstrable change my art practice has been able to reveal a snap shot of individual attitudes and behaviour towards environmental and social change at the time of the event. This is more revealing where conversations were recorded, which reveal motivations for behaviour and the reasons why change was inhibited or encouraged. Together the material contributes towards a new narrative of environmental behaviour. Varying influences on behaviour change described through

the models described in Chapter 2, indicate that it is unlikely that any one provocation will achieve change by itself.

The works reveal the majority of people aware of climate change do not undertake any significant change to their lifestyles. Change is impeded through a confusion of advice, which is not joined up or further obfuscated by misinformation leading to further confusion about whose opinion to trust. Even where information is sought out, such as web sites, eco-consumer magazines, eco-trade shows, quotes from suppliers, this does not necessarily lead to the adoption of environmental behaviour when convenience and habit override knowledge.

The most effective impulsion to change behaviour and the one most celebrated in the contributions to these works is cost or the exercise of thrift. For many people sustainability equates to saving money. The other motivation to changing behaviour was personal benefit such as buying organic food, or taking more exercise.

The majority of behaviour change was found to be within simple behaviours that are within the control of the individual, such as recycling, using energy saving light bulbs or travelling by bus and train rather than car. Where changes in behaviour become significantly expensive, technologically complex or inconvenient to the current lifestyle choice, such as solar water heating or effective insulation solutions, or doing without a car, decisions are often delayed indefinitely.

The variation and contradiction of behaviour within the contributions was also interesting and provides a reflection of the value-action gap. Here participants might adopt different behaviour at work and home e.g. the organic gardener and organic farmer.

Simple solutions, which often reveal common sense are those most often adopted.

In trying to instigate change, local authorities or government need to make more lifestyle changes more accessible, both financially and locally. This may be through fiscal stimulus, streamlining planning regulations, local network of reputable suppliers, and real examples of those who have achieved change.

The research demonstrated the need for new narratives to enable new lifestyles, enable decision making for more complex changes, and focus on individual (I) rather than abstract behaviour (they or we). Using examples of my own environmental behaviour as a starting point was also found to encourage participation and demonstrated a new narrative. The discursive site itself allowed attention on otherwise unquestioned habitual behaviour and highlighted both successful and poor examples of environmental behaviour, including my own. Observation of the accumulation of variation with participant contribution allowed a ripple effect of transformation also indicated the potential of the final stage of representing conversations, which could redefine the public ideal and challenge dominant culture.

Supportive mechanisms to enable behaviour change through more complex installations such as solar panels, was found to be missing often impeding or postponing decision making altogether. However the display of collective knowledge as a supportive framework, through the art works, allowed both the comparison of personal behaviour and lifestyle choices.

However there is a significant minority who have undertaken significant shifts of behaviour that have become absorbed into habit and their way of life as normal. The contributions for these participants were displayed alongside those with less

successful stories. This display of collective knowledge enables the comparison of personal behaviour and lifestyle choices.

An Aesthetic of Presence

Bishop (2006, 2008) and Bourriaud (2001, 2002) ask useful questions of socially engaged practice. The similarity of the questions is striking given the very different outcomes that arise. But the context of their questions is also very different, where Bourriaud (2002) and Kester (2004) see no limit to the aesthetic, cultural and political arena of socially engaged practice, Bishop confines her questions to a cultural aesthetic.

Bourriaud asks ‘what is it for?’ and why use the ‘forms of business’ as a model? (Bourriaud 2001a: 45) ‘Does this work permit me to enter into a dialogue? Could I exist, and how, in the space it defines?’ (Bourriaud 2002: 109) ‘How original is the way the artist looks at this world?’ How do they materialise their relationship with the world? (Bourriaud 2001)

Bishop asks questions about the “public”, the construction of culture and asks how and who is culture for, through the following tasks

‘to analyze how contemporary art addresses the viewer and to assess the quality of the audience relations it produces: the subject position that any work presupposes and the democratic notions it upholds and how these are manifested in our experience of the work’. (Bishop 2004: 78)

I encountered questions about this context three times during this research, at a Research in Art Nature & Environment (RANE) symposium in Falmouth, during *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts II* and *Resolutions Exchanged*. At the RANE symposium when I presented *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts I*, following an extended exchange in which the lack of a visually pleasing object appeared to form the main criticism, I

finally lost my temper and said that I didn't care if my work was seen as art at all. In reaction to this statement half the audience erupted in applause and cheers. During *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts II*, one participant again questioned the visual impact of the work as lacking a shock factor, which he perceived as necessary to get the message of climate change across. However the works he described could achieve little more than raising awareness of the situation. In *Resolutions Exchanged* one conversation again revolved around the visual aspect of the work, the implication of which according to one person similarly made aesthetically acceptable a toilet or the library carpet and its approach in tackling an issue of direct relevance. Here the work was compared to a survey and I was asked if I was going to evaluate the work, which would mean it was definitely not a work of art. My written reflection after the end of the conversation, was that the results are immediately visible not taken away and analysed privately; the work brings out the varying thresholds of success and failure that are completely undefined; the work engaged people in defining their own parameters through a process of consensus, rather than assessing them against an imposed norm, all of which are very different from a sociological or marketing approach.

Counter to these criticisms I received considerable support for my aesthetic approach from participants. In *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts I* I was encouraged to continue the process begun. Some people were comfortable with the presentation through a mind map, which offered them a familiar process within an unusual artwork. An architect felt the work to be very important as it gave a voice to the architectural client or homeowner that was missing from the current dialogue of suppliers and designers. Another contributor via email found the work interesting on many levels and very engaging. The discussion of the lack of a shock tactic in *Eco-*

Renovation: House Receipts II was countered by the contemporaneous appreciation of the individual stories and the extendable process of dialogue with the community.

Others observed that the material itself was very interesting and that my life was my art. In *Eco-Renovation: House Receipts III* the work was applauded as a piece of conceptual art that participant could get his head around ie a believable object.

I have come to an understanding of my art practice as a three-stage process each building on the stage before: a provocation for engagement comprising the examination of some aspect of my own behaviour; designing a situation to encourage participation and conversation and enable an initial questioning of our own assumptions and attitudes; and representing conversation as a means of sharing knowledge to enable others engagement and behaviour change.

This allows a consideration of the aesthetics of the work, through the premise, presentation and engagement. In the Model for Practice, Participation, and Progression, these were expressed as Approach/attitude, Acquisition/appreciation, Assumptions, and Accumulation and a full discussion can be found in Chapter 4.

Other aspects of this work also mark it out as part of a creative practice. The initial provocation based my own failure to achieve behaviour change, revealed an intimacy absent from anything other than an artwork. This provocation also encouraged a reciprocal intimacy, which was willingly given by participants.

The layering of material from my provocation, researched material, participant contributions and recorded conversations make the work engaging and challenging. This layering achieves a visual composition with varying presentation of material as well as a demonstration of the rich oral fabric that makes up our society. This collectivisation and exchange of experience, creates an unacknowledged generative

knowledge. In extending the notion of site to discursive activity this generative knowledge or collective enquiry, extends the site to the idea of public as transferable knowledge and can be expressed as an aesthetic of presence.

Summary

This chapter has drawn together the issues that came out of the analysis of the artwork using the Model for Practice, Participation and Progression and integrated them with the issues that arose out of my theoretical consideration of socially engaged art practice, Michel de Certeau's practice of the everyday and environmental behaviour research. This chapter also demonstrates the development of the research, the integration of art practice and theoretical research and suggests contributions to knowledge.

Chapter Six Suggestions for further research*Extending the application of the Model for Practice, Participation and Progression*

The analysis of art practice that I have conducted within the PhD has been focused on my own art practice. This analysis using the Model for Practice, Participation and Progression could be extended to others' practicing in socially engaged art. It would be particularly beneficial to undertake a comparison of works by artists claiming to initiate social change and those who make no such claim.

Drawing in European sources in the discussion of socially engaged art practice

In discussing the contemporary research into socially engaged art practice I used Claire Bishop, Nicholas Bourriaud and Grant Kester as my sources. These I felt demonstrated the key arguments currently under discussion in this practice. There is however a significant field of contributors in Europe, of whom I briefly touched on Simon Sheikh and Maria Lind. Investigation of that extended field could well illuminate the arguments further. A useful source as a beginning point is

<http://republicart.net/disc/aap/index.htm>.

Collaborative and collective creativity in business

Creative collaboration in fields outside the art world, for example, in business and social organizations such as social forums (Tormey 2005), open space methodology (Owen undated), has arisen since the 1990's. This is reflected in a number of new books about the subject, which include Charles Leadbetter (2008), Chris Spannos (2008 ed), Dan Tapscott and Anthony D Williams (2006), and Clay Shirky (2008).

How far these practices duplicate the style of creativity developed by socially engaged practice would be an interesting comparison. My questions would be does the use of creative approaches to achieve change by business and consultants renders socially

engaged practice no longer viable as an aesthetic practice? In the field of social change where artists are not the only practitioners who are able to bring about change and transformation, what are artists able to contribute that is distinctive?

Representing conversations

I have discussed above representing conversations as a vital third stage of my art practice, which I was not able to explore practically within the parameters of this research. However I have given some thought already to this issue, which I present here.

Recreating community in the discursive site

In Chapter One I demonstrated an issue with artwork communicating beyond the participative event, demonstrated through exhibition analysis and reviews.

In *Groundworks*, Kester describes four main aims for the exhibition

- To address the collaborative process
- Engage direct political engagement with policy and planning departments
- Intervene to repair damaged landscapes
- Explore the boundaries of contemporary art

The aesthetic expression of this process is often exhibited as a complex narrative that attempts to encompass the proposal, the engagement and its outcome. The presentation however appears too similar to company or community consultation presentations. It becomes clear from the reviews that the presentation of the works was complicated and technical, it was difficult to find the key to how to read the works as aesthetic process.

Bourriaud is no more successful. Here the works focused on the participative act itself, which apparently left anyone viewing the work outside of that event feeling they

had missed the party. Nevertheless Bourriaud describes the exhibition not as the participative act itself but the outcome of an event, a renewed sense of community, engagement with strangers, taking part in something outside of a normal experience, realising possibility, as the important aspect of the work. Although the participants are crucial to the event, it is the outcome of sociability that is the work. This does not come through the exhibited work that fails to argue the case for relational art and make one reviewer question if there should be a visual form at all without activation. Here too little about the work is made clear other than a representation of the participative moment, which is insufficient to achieve Bourriaud's aims.

In place of these expressions of socially engaged practice I have suggested an outcome of the participative event, which I describe as representing conversations. This is based on a consideration of de Certeau's investigation into the everyday. Comprising an expression of dialogue as knowledge where in this context the bank of knowledge itself becomes visible and operates as an arena of exchange and forming a temporary community of common sensibility. Representing conversations offers an aesthetic of presence not of accumulation as in the discursive site of Kester and Bishop, but of distribution and comparison. Here the audience of the work is able to view the bank of everyday knowledge that the artwork has accumulated. Beyond that because the work comprises a believable object, something knowable and familiar by the audience, they are also implicated into the community created, drawn into the work and able to compare their own values against those participant contributions. This then could

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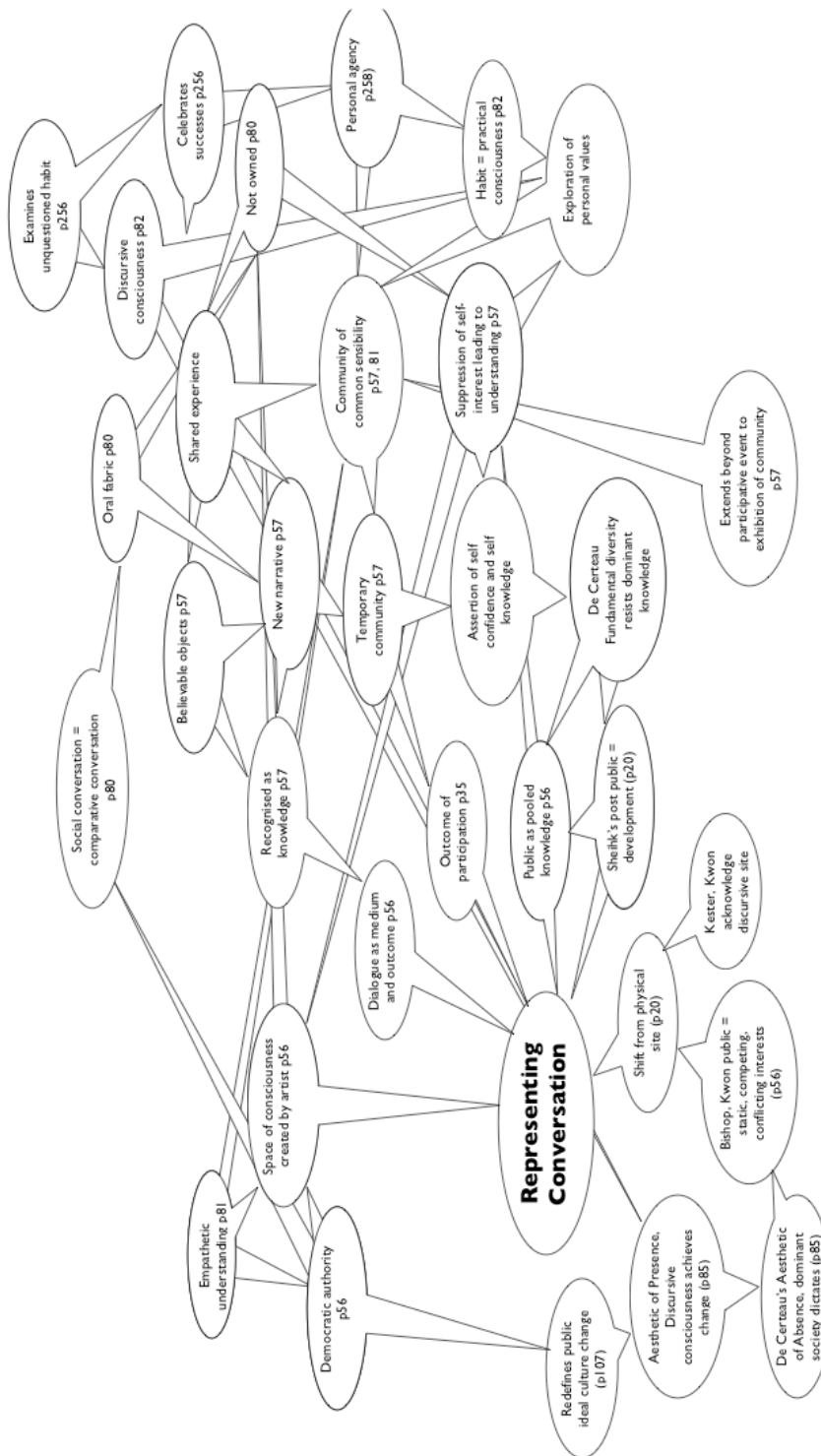


Figure 92 Mind map of the Represented Conversations from thesis references

afford a continual transformative opportunity acting as a small-scale rupture event towards change. This bank of knowledge is a believable object as it reflects how we currently live in a contemporary society and how we are beginning to be affected by climate change, which requires changes of lifestyle and thoughts on what those lifestyles might comprise. This allows an exploration and reflection of personal values but also reflects those of society as a whole. The mind map above draws together discussion within the thesis to inform the outcome of the representing conversations.

The appearance of Representing Conversations

Reader in Media Studies, University of Sussex, Ben Highmore discusses the aesthetic expression of everyday life, which is described as the 'experience and the form such experience takes when it is communicated'. This should be expressed through 'purposefully *inappropriate* forms of representation', a proposal that results from not only an inattention to the everyday, implying a lack of value, but also that 'the kinds of attention that are available are severely out of step with the actuality of the everyday' (Highmore 2002: 19-22). Although Highmore suggests that there is something to be learnt from the artistic avant-garde, offering a sociological aesthetic, I suggest he does not go further than repeating the researchers and authors of the everyday.

Performance art also has the same issue of providing a key, the believable object that represents and unlocks a performance that has already occurred. Often that takes the form of one iconic photograph, which comes to represent the entire performance.

Curator, researcher and teacher Tracey Warr argues however that the single photograph cannot be objective or complete. The editorial process remains invisible; the photograph itself is composed and framed. The iconic photograph therefore creates an uneasy status between art document and publicity stunt (Warr 2003). This is also the representation of a past event that does not intend any change to occur as a

result, nor attempts to record the reception of the event by the audience/participants.

The performance is reduced to one symbolic and authored image rather than representing the idea of a durational performance which might also reflect the reactions of the people around.



Figure 93 Hayley Newman, *Crying Glasses (An Aid to Melancholia)* 1998, © the artist, Photo: Casey Orr



Figure 94 Harry Shunk, *Saut dans le vide (Leap into the Void)*, October 23 1960

At Glasgow School of Art, where I was studying environmental art (site-specific or socially engaged art), we were constantly reminded that with documentation we were making a record of something that had happened. We were emphatically instructed we should not make a new work. For me that always made the work when represented in the gallery seem rather flat in comparison to the project itself. I always trod a fine line between making documentation and a re-expression of the work that spoke to an exhibition audience.

De Certeau warns that we should beware of forgetting the collective enquiry and avoid an over controlled authorship. The iconic performance photograph clearly identifies the work with a particular artist, rather than presenting the work as an accumulation of action and reaction. In this it is acting as documentation of the event,

rather than its re-presentation. So the discursive site cannot be reduced to an iconic photograph.

Kester describes *Soul Shadows: Urban warrior myths* (1993) by Dawn Dedeaux as ignoring the wider discursive cultural frame. Arising from her participation in an art in prisons project in New Orleans, she developed

‘a multimedia installation that would help white viewers empathize with the conditions faced by youthful offenders while also acting as a moral prophylactic for young black men on the outside, who would, hopefully, mend their ways after witnessing the contrition expressed by the inmates and gang members she interviewed’ (Kester, 2002, 140-1).

The resulting exhibition toured from New Orleans to Baltimore, Rochester (New York) and Los Angeles, where in particular it was criticised by Afro-American viewers. Although the installation contained videoed interviews with inmates and gang members, Kester argues that the work’s presentation was aligned to the agenda of social service agencies and the criminal justice system and confirmed conservative views of race, class and poverty. There was no enquiry into race and criminality or an ‘attempt to relate the images to a broader political or economic analysis’ (Kester 2002:145). Kester criticises the work further

‘The way she edited her video footage, the questions she asked (and didn’t ask) her subjects, the institutional collaborations she sanctioned, the framing of text and image all combine to suggest a very specific explanation of race and criminality. They make a statement that is all the more powerful for being presented as some kind of empirical truth about these issues (through the use of video documentation) rather than as a particular interpretation’ (Kester 2002:146).

Here I suggest the editorial process predetermined the outcome and did not allow a collective enquiry, this then failed to question or challenge the dominant culture.

Kester also observes the benefit to the participants was unclear.



Figure 95 Dawn Dedeaux, 1990 *Urban Warriors*



Figure 96 Dawn Dedeaux, 1990 *Soul Shadows* (silhouetted images taken from video stills)

The Mass-Observation project begun in 1937, recorded the everyday lives of ordinary people in Britain, through a team of observers and personal diarists. Very quickly the amount of material received was unmanageable. Its formation as an archival project that 'becomes a diverse ensemble of different practices and experiences...that tried to attend to the conscious and unconscious aspects of everyday life' (Highmore 2002: 111). The archive comprises over a thousand file reports and boxes of raw materials in the form of writings and diaries and the early output was books and reports.



Figure 97 Britain by Mass observation
www.massobs.org.uk/a_brief_history.htm

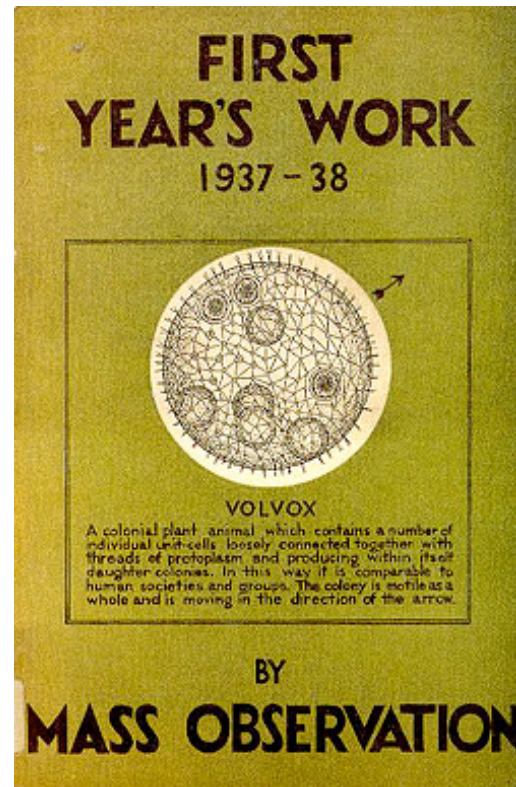


Figure 98 Mass-Observation first year's work
www.massobs.org.uk/original_massobservation_project.htm

However an archive implies a comprehensive accumulation of material rather than the snap-shot works that a single artist is able to present.

Curator Okwui Enwezor writes on the archive as an aesthetic medium in *Archive Fever: Uses of the document in contemporary art*. He describes artists using the photographic archive to transform the perception of historical events because of its assumption of accuracy and value offering 'the aura of an anthropological artefact and the authority of a social instrument' (Enwezor 2008: 13). Enwezor here describes the artist as 'the historic agent of memory' with a 'a noticeable humanist concern (which) drives the analyses found in individual projects' (Enwezor 2008: 46). Instead of the photograph as the record of the individual moment, the archive describes 'the simultaneity of separate but contingent social frameworks and an infinity of participating agents (where) the process of history is reconceived as a structural system of perpetually changing interactions and permutations between economic and ecological givens, class

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formations and their ideologies, and the resulting types of social and cultural interactions specific to each particular moment' (Enwezor 2008: 46, Quoting Buchloh on Gerhard Richter's *Atlas*).

So here the artist rather than creating a comprehensive archive, points to existing archives or social perception as edited memory and presents an alternative reading or contrary images which challenge the dominant reading. Similarly Sherringham describes a characteristic of the everyday as a practice that weave contexts together, but which resists reduction to statistics, proscribed properties and data.

Whilst Richter's *Atlas* is a random accumulation of photographic images by the artist since 1967, other works do exhibit more evidence of the humanist concern. Hans-Peter Feldmann's *9/12 Front Page* (2001) collects 100 newspaper front pages the day after the World Trade Centre bombings. These reflect the differing opinions about



Figure 99 Peter Feldmann, *9/12 Front Page*, 2001 (Photo: John Berens (International Center of Photography))



Figure 100 Fazal Sheikh, *The Victor Weeps; Afghanistan*, 1997

the bombings and its priority within that country's news, challenging the dominant US view.

Fazal Sheikh's work *The Victor Weeps; Afghanistan* (1997) depicts passport images of mujahedeen fighters. The images are exhibited alongside statements explaining that these men died or disappeared fighting against the Russian invasion of Afghanistan in the 1980's. For Enwezor these images depict the strength of personal memory against forgotten acts of martyrdom and nobility. But, I suggest, there is also a wider social comment, which depicts the passion of a people prepared to die for their country, who fought the Russian invasion and who were encouraged, supported and equipped by the US government. The legacy of which is the current Afghan war against the US and Britain. Both of these works were made specifically for gallery display, from participative co-operation, where the accumulative quality of the material was intended to re-enforce the viewer's reaction, rather than engender any alteration to the participant's circumstances.

Continued exploration and exhibition of Representing conversations

Demonstrating the discursive space unfortunately falls outside the parameters of this thesis, as it would comprise new artwork, despite the extensive discussion within the written thesis. Since my viva I have attended a number of conferences and discussed

these ideas with other researchers, curators and artists who are beginning also to consider these issues. I look forward to being able to continue this research through continuing post doctoral research and practice.

Janey Hunt January 2011

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