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Taking
yourself seriously:
Arts methodologies for social cohesion



Arts & Humanities
Research Council



Promoting effective community action through research

Literature review on Arts Methodologies for Social Cohesion: Summary

Our Taking Yourselves Seriously project draws on a larger project entitled Connected Communities. The Taking Yourselves Seriously project considers what artists do when they work in communities? The project aims to explore how artists work in communities, with a particular focus on social cohesion. We are interested in the specific qualities artists brought to community development work. This review outlines some of our key findings.

An extended literature review has been created which considers the use of arts methodologies for social cohesion. The extended literature review will be published on the Taking Yourselves Seriously Project website in 2018. This shorter literature review focusses on the five themes that have emerged as part of our work with artists considering social cohesion. Drawing on these themes, the Taking Yourselves Seriously project is working with artists and using artistic approaches to consider new ways of thinking about social cohesion. **Working with artistic methods can help us think about the following:**

- Issues of power and trust in communities
- Whose knowledge counts?
- Where do we locate our understanding? In our bodies, and feelings?
- How can the arts build reflective practice in communities?

Five themes have emerged from our work within the three projects; knowledge, co-production, roles, voice and ethics. We consider **knowledge** and question who's knowledge matters, is it artistic knowledge, community development experience or academic reflection? We consider the different types of knowledge, that gained from experience, artistic skill and academic knowledge and question how we have used our different types of knowledge within the project. Arts based approaches can be a social journey through which a new understanding emerges, or the production of a work of art, or indeed can sit anywhere along the process to product binary. We consider the notion of **co-production**, the term means different things to different people. This review considers co-production in the context of the Taking Yourselves Seriously Project,

discussing how the team has had to work across organisational and geographic boundaries and be flexible in the **roles** that they have taken on in the project. Linked to this we discuss the roles that different members of the project group have taken on during the project and how this has affected their **voice** within the project. We also discuss **ethics** within the review, considering how to empower artistic freedom and at the same time ensure that they are fairly paid for their artistic contributions. We consider key questions that have emerged as part of our project work:

- **What does art do?** We discuss how the arts offer a way of seeing what might not always be visible, which we consider within the projects.
- We consider **how art works in different ways**, perhaps not visibly.
- We think about **process and how artistic methods** help us see things in slow motion.
- We think about **product** – does it matter if there is nothing at the end of the process to show for it other than a conversation? We explore ways in which the quality of arts based research lies in the process of its creation. Arts based approaches can be understood as a process, or a product.

This review has been drawn together for ARVAC, intended for members of ARVAC to use it as a resource, we therefore felt that it would be helpful here to add in our key learning, tips and ideas for other projects seeking to use arts based approaches for social cohesion.

Bounded co-production

Co-production is a fashionable word and one that is framed in an ethics of collaboration. It is important to remember however that any project will also have boundaries within which it is based. This might be a school where timetables and exam commenting take precedence over collaborative art project or in a community setting where balancing voices and collaborative tasks are negotiated around project funding and artistic ideas. Co-production is at its most successful when using artistic approaches to social cohesion if those boundaries are explored early on in the project and conversations between all

involved in the project can be developed to either work within or weave around anticipate boundaries.

Power

Recognizing, who personally and organizationally holds power within a co produced project allows for a discussion of how this power is negotiated. It is helpful in arts projects to recognize that the artist may feel vulnerable working in a community development setting and likewise community developmental workers may feel unsure of how the artist might work. The role of art in developing social cohesion is to destabilise and create opportunities for creativity, this doesn't necessarily mean that everyone in the project feels equal power. Recognizing these power differentials, offers an opportunity for discussion and is helpful when

Place art at the centre of the project ... and then work out from the artistic centre

Choosing to use art as a framework for social cohesion means valuing and holding the art at the centre of the project. During our project work, sometimes the variety of voices from academic, to community development worker, to artist sometimes can favour those who are more able to articulate their views rather than working to value, listen and collaboration focus on the art. By focussing on the art the cohesion can emerge organically from the artistic method, which is what is so valuable about using artistic methodologies for social cohesion.

Taking ourselves Seriously: Summarising our Project

We conclude that arts methodologies for social cohesion are complex. integrated and emotional. Using arts based methods to approach social cohesion is to ask questions and create connections from an alternative angle. They allow us to use new means to explore how we experience cohesion within our areas. By using artistic methods we open up social cohesion to reconsider the variety of types of knowledge in a community. For example, what a young person might struggle to articulate verbally about their sense of identity they are often able to express via poetry or portraiture. Art opens up a new form of expression.

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Cover image taken by Sheffield Artist Steve Pool.

Introduction

This review considers the use of **arts based approaches for social cohesion**. It makes up part of a more extensive literature review that has been created to support the artistic projects that emerge from the Taking Yourself Seriously project.¹

Our project developed different approaches to understanding the relationship between arts and community cohesion. We explored this in **three contexts, a school**, a playground and with a group of women of Pakistani heritage. In each we focused on the role of the arts in the projects. In this school project we explored, with the children, how artistic methods such as poetry, music and visual art contributed to social cohesion. The children in the school carried out a small scale research project exploring how these activities helped children from different backgrounds come together. The **community project** was led by Zanib Rasool, a community researcher. She and her team explored oral histories of women who she grew up with to look at the role of Pakistani women in communities and to explore their stories. With a poet and a visual artist, she was able to realise her ideas in different ways, through poetry and visual art. The *adventure playground project* involved an artist, Steve Pool, who spent time as an artist in residence at Pitsmoor Adventure Playground in Sheffield. He decided to create a safe space for young people and built a pirate ship, as a response to issues around feeling safe and secure in the area.

We now explore key themes from our literature review. Five themes have emerged knowledge, co-production, roles, voice and ethics. These themes emerged as we began to use artistic methodologies to explore social cohesion. We began to question how knowledge emerges, who holds knowledge and in what context and within in this consider our roles in the co-production process. As our work continued we began too

¹ The Taking Yourself Seriously project is working in partnership with the Association for Research with the Voluntary and Community Sector (ARVAC) to share the knowledge developed through our work with other voluntary and community groups. This review is intended to be used as a resource for Community and Voluntary Sector members of ARVAC who are interested in developing similar projects.

to explore who had voice and how voices held power. Integrated into all of these discussions was our commitment to taking an ethical approach to our work.

Key Findings

Key to our findings is the recognition that arts methodologies for social cohesion are complex, integrated and emotional. The arts offer a way of seeing what might not always be visible. The quality of arts based research lies in the process of its creation: the creation of social questions which offer a deeper source of understanding. Arts based approaches can be understood as a process, a social journey through which a new understanding emerges, or as the production of a work of art, or indeed as anywhere along that continuum.

Using arts based approaches to build social cohesion creates an opportunity to see social cohesion from alternative perspectives, to have conversations that sit outside of formal community development or academia but in a space where creativity is nurtured and conflicted conversations encouraged. Using arts methodologies for social cohesion is to ask questions and create connections from an alternative angle. Arts methodologies empower the process of social cohesion through an alternative lens (Eisner, 1997). Arts based approaches open up the possibility of reflection on social cohesion, they recognise the variety of skills and knowledge held across community groups. However, they come with complex ethical questions that require discussion and interpretation. Co-production is not equal, and power inequalities exist within artistic methodologies as well as within wider society. This review, for ARVAC seeks to discuss and highlight these themes and offer an honest consideration of the value and challenges of using artistic methodologies for social cohesion.

Themes that Emerge from Using Artistic Approaches to Social Cohesion

The Taking Yourself Seriously project began work in February 2017. The artistic projects have taken very different artistic approaches to social cohesion but out of their varied approaches came the **key themes of knowledge, co-production, roles, voice and ethics**. These themes emerged from discussions within and that fed into the **critical thinking group**. The critical thinking group, is made up of those working on the three projects and invited specialists. The group exists as a safe reflective learning space to consider, discuss and reflect on the learning that is taking place within each of the projects, connecting this learning up to the overall project aim which considers the use of arts methodologies for social cohesion. The Taking Yourself Seriously project draws on the 'Co-producing Legacy' Connected Communities funded research project that identified and explored contributions by artists to the co-production of living knowledge. The research findings drew attention to qualities such as emotion, uncertainty, mess and disorientation, as well as open-ended experimentation through success and failure. In this project, Taking Yourself Seriously, these approaches are considered as key research methods, augmenting conventional research methods such as interviews, focus groups and questionnaires, in working with people in diverse community settings.

Knowledge

Research has a role in legitimising knowledge (Evans and Fisher, 1999), and in shaping what sort of knowledge is given priority. Knowledge production has diverse forms, as knowledge encompasses space, place, histories and a variety of practical and relational skills, and frequently requires emotional intelligence to navigate it:

Experiential methodologies that value everyday perceptions and 'learning with' rather than doing things 'on' people are often privileged within these kinds of projects. These approaches to collaborative knowledge production tend to involve a lot of 'being there,' witnessing everyday activities. (Facer and Pahl, 2017:15)

When considering creative approaches to arts enquiry we can consider art practice as the production of knowledge (Barrett and Bolt, 2016). There is a crucial interrelationship between theory and practice, which holds relevance in both theoretical and philosophical paradigms for the contemporary arts practitioner (Barrett and Bolt, 2016). Indeed, as practice can be perceived as philosophy in action, this links to Heidegger's (1977) concept of *handlability*, that knowledge is created through doing, from the senses. The strength of arts based research is that it enables multidisciplinary forms of knowledge that are 'personally situated, interdisciplinary and diverse and emergent' (Barrett and Bolt, 2016:2). This type of research often contradicts what is expected of research.

Knowledge is most often presented as a finished product, the *opus operatum*, yet this most often fails to recognise the *modus operandi* (Bourdieu, 1993). The processes of knowledge development, reflection, discussion and debate are often overlooked in the process of creating the finished product. In moving beyond the traditional theoretical, philosophical and empirical binaries of knowledge Bourdieu (1993) develops his theory of *the relational aspects of knowledge*. The relational aspects of knowledge relate to where

the researcher is required to articulate knowledge which is robust enough to be objective and generalisable, but at the same time accounts for individual subjective thought and action. (Grenfell and James, 1998:10)

Participatory Approaches

In using participatory approaches, the agency of research participants is nurtured. Those engaged in the research process recognise the central role that they contribute to the project, and they enact agency (Lister, 2002). Participatory approaches recognise that

academic knowledge can only be partial, indirect, informative and explanatory. It lacks the firm footing in raw reality that turns knowledge into a mobilising force capable of leading to action. (Wresinski in Bennett and Roberts 2004:29)

Aristotle explored three types of knowledge: practical, theoretical and productive. Practical knowledge allows us to negotiate the world at a practical level, to know when and how to intervene in a situation. Theoretical knowledge is the pursuit of theoretical certainty, for example why the sun shines. Productive knowledge is the ability to construct objects so that they function. Participatory arts based methodologies integrate all three of Aristotle's forms of knowledge in varying ways. Participatory approaches reengage with people's right to participate. Participatory arts approaches offer an opportunity for voice. Taking a participatory approach to research establishes relationships, gives something back and aims to enact positive change. Participatory approaches redress power differentials, starting from the stance that people have the right to participate, to arise and create their own knowledge. It is important too to recognise that 'not all methods or groups are equally amenable to participation' (Pratt and Loizos, 1992). Trust is an important element in engaging research groups:

Marginalised groups who are often inaccessible to those using conventional research methods can be contacted and involved by people that they trust using more participatory methods. (Bennett and Roberts, 2004:9)

Participatory approaches hold the capacity to enrich knowledge, and they will often give a picture of not simply what the situation is but also why and how it emerged. Participatory approaches often reveal the interconnections between power and access to resources, and they offer an opportunity not only acquire new knowledge but also to re-evaluate the knowledge that they have acquired through more formal research methods.

Arts offer an Alternative Perspective

Arts enable an alternative lens, an alternative means of articulating, of modelling consciousness and extending understandings through their facilitation of experiential problem based learning and recognition of multiple intelligences. These enable alternative modes of enquiry (Eisner, 1997). The arts offer 'a heuristic through which we deepen and make more complex our understanding of some aspect of the world' (Barone and Eisner, 2012:3). Here dialogic co-inquiry (Banks et al, 2014) approaches can help us to recognise that

knowledge can be hidden if presented in unfamiliar ways and seek to enable recognition of ways of knowing that are both in lived experience and in academic knowledge. (Facer and Pahl, 2017:219)

In offering evocative and compelling reflections of the world, artistic methodologies facilitate empathetic participation. Eker (1966) linked the process of making art to that of the five phases of qualitative problem solving. The first is the empty canvas whereby the research approaches 'the empty canvas' (Eker 1966), the infinite range of possibilities. The second is the establishment of emerging themes. The third phase is where these themes begin to formulate into a new perspective, 'crystallisation occurs as a new gestalt is composed' (Barone and Eisner, 2012:50). The fourth stage is the writing process, the fifth the completed work. Here arts methodologies challenge Eker's (1966) fifth stage, as arts methodologies are arguably much more of a process (Barone and Eisner 2012). Research is a social process:

Arts based research is, at its deepest level, about artistic and aesthetic approaches to raising and addressing social issues. (Barone and Eisner, 2012:57)

Arts methodologies are a process of questioning, a process of making. Art arguably is not a certainty but offers a means of generating questions that make conversations more interesting.

Valuing Everyday Knowledge

Creative arts research enables knowledge to be articulated that is emotional, personal and subjective. Drawing from tacit knowledge alongside explicit and exact knowledge forms, 'the "everyday" as a field becomes a key site for things to happen' (Facer and Pahl, 2017) . Research using arts methodologies becomes an interchange of ideas, a two-way process of dialogue between researchers and participants (Bennett and Roberts, 2004).

Arts have the potential to enable democracy, to create uncomfortable conversations, which generate values. Indeed, 'flattening knowledge structures and hierarchies is important' (Facer and Pahl, 2017:16). Bourdieu (1977) argues that it is tacit

knowledge and the alternative logic of practice that underpin all enquiries. The notion of 'embodied knowledge' integrates notions of explicit and tacit knowledge, recognising the fluidity of knowledge forms (Bolt, 2004) and reflects Bourdieu's (1977) theory of practice. This theory considers that cultural and material relations construct our objective reality which can only be understood via activity.

Knowledge production becomes a *sensory activity* developed at the interstices of individual subjectivities, objective phenomena, theoretical knowledge and ideological reflection (Grenfell and James, 1998). Haraway challenges the binary between theory and practice. Haraway (1991) recognises that objectivity can be only partial, and offers an embodied vision of knowledge, which she refers to as *reflexive artefactualism*. Belenky et al (1986) refer to *connected knowing* in her study of women's ways of knowing. This connected knowing is linked to the context in which women speak, judge and act. Connected knowing recognises the woman's history and her relationship to social, political and cultural power, acknowledging modes of expression and inequality. Connected knowing is also linked to empathy, and grounded in the capacity to identify with others.

Knowing your area

This links to Haraway's (1991, 1992) concept of *situated knowledge* and Foucault's (1972) *theory of discourse* that links language and practice to the production of knowledge. Situated knowledge in feminist thinking recognises that people understand the world in specific ways based on their experiences and social spatial location; therefore, it is arguably impossible to have a completely objective viewpoint (Jones, 2015). Situated knowledge can be influenced by how a person self identifies, as an artist, as a woman, as a researcher or as a person of colour. Through arts methodologies, forms of embodied knowledge can be rediscovered (Behar, 1996). Jones (2015) discusses the situated knowledge of the policy makers that she interviews, considering how they negotiate their self-identity, when reflecting on social cohesion within the area of London in which they are based. Jones (2015) highlights the difficulty that the white males she interviews have in expressing identity when reflecting on experiences of social cohesion within their neighbourhood. Jones (2015)

reflects on the idea that identity is embodied, that identity can become an active choice and that narrativisation of one's experience is a resource.

Relationships and Knowledge

Here the role of power can be considered: who manages knowledge, who attributes value to art? Here we can link Bourdieu's (1993) relational aspects of knowledge to Carter's (2004) *material thinking*. Carter (2004) develops the idea of material thinking to include the process of knowledge production as a means of creating new relations of knowledge alongside or subsequent to the artistic production. Creative practice here becomes the mode of enquiry. The notion of a bricolage which reflects the 'relationship between material processes and discourse and the way in which creative practice operates intrinsically as a mode of enquiry' (Barrett and Bolt, 2016: 138) can be helpful to understand knowledge in this setting. This links too to Bolt's (2004) concept of *materialising practices* whereby a dialogic relationship between the artistic practice and the artist's own self-reflection is crucial to the production of knowledge.

New Materialism highlights how the '*vibrant matter*' (Bennett, 2010) of the material world offers opportunity for communication and agency (Facer and Pahl, 2017). This experiential approach links to Kolb's (1984) theory of action learning cycle. For Kolb (1984), learning is through activity and reflection upon that activity. For Kolb (1984) and for Heidegger (1977), learning is through praxis, and theoretical knowledge emerges from practice rather than the other way around. There is an interaction between people, place, material objects and matter; 'action, then, emerges from the interplay of forces connected across the meshwork' (Ingold, 2011:x). Here, for Bourdieu (1993) and Kolb (1984), reflexivity is key.

Reflecting on our Knowledge

When considering these approaches adequate consideration needs to be given to power, praxis and voice. This consideration of power, praxis and voice is especially important for the women's community project. Praxis, the combining of social action and knowledge, holds a number of approaches from 'communities of practice' (Hart et al, 2013) to dialogic co-inquiry (Banks et al, 2014) to relationships to the everyday

(Carter, 2004). Power inequalities affect people's ability to make decisions and engage with decision makers, and the concept of 'learning with' (Ingold, 2013) is an important one. A praxis approach (Hart et al, 2013; Mayo et al, 2011) attempts to engage a broad range of collaborators from civil society in the process of achieving social cohesion. An approach that prioritises voice takes a grassroots approach to giving those with experience of poverty a voice (Grimshaw and Smart, 2011), and personal and collective narratives are essential components of building a social cohesive vision (Osler, 2011). Collecting personal narratives and developing collective narratives (Osler, 2011) and cognitive models allow the process of sense making that is essential to social cohesion.

Through arts based research alternative forms of knowledge are recognised. Praxis based knowledge and reflexivity within the research process are integral to our emergent methodology and theory becomes secondary to intuitive response (Iggulden, 2002). Practice itself determines the method to be followed (Barrett and Bolt, 2016). Cultural and material relations that make up our objective reality can only really be grasped through the activity of human agents, and we can use arts methodologies to move hermeneutic binaries (Bourdieu, 1977). Here the ideas of post humanism emerge (Barad, 2007), which introduce the idea of an interaction between matter and discourse, of object generated knowledge, a sensory engagement with the world (Pink, 2009).

In engaging in artistic de-contextualisation from established or universal discourse (Carter, 2004) we can develop a dialogical relationship between our art and research practice (Bolt, 2004). Through this dialogical relationship we can develop narratives of memory into an emancipatory project, uncovering the *bricolage of the soul* (Berger (1984). Here Papastergiadis (2010) integrates Marx's theory that positions the intellectual within the site of struggle with Freud's theory that requires the analyst in an act of transference to offer themselves as part of the healing. Here the artist becomes part of the project. This is an experiential and reflexive mode of learning (Kolb 1984) that offers a situated enquiry and that problematises its context in the development of learning. In utilising practice to determine method (Iggulden 2003) we develop the magic of arts based research which is in *the handling* (Bolt 2004). From the *hand*

ability (Heidegger, 1977) of arts based practice, knowledge is obtained from doing and seeing. In negotiating both tacit and explicit knowledge (Bolt, 2004; Bourdieu, 1977) art can offer an alternative logic of practice that underpins all enquiry.

Arts practice allows us to consider both discursive and non-discursive ways of knowing (Langer, 1957) and to consider the emotional element of our research topic. Arts add a plurality to research which is essential when considering the emotive and politically sensitive topic of social cohesion with groups. Art offers praxical knowledge (Heidegger, 1977 Friere, 1972). Knowledge is embodied, involving the manipulation of artefacts, and in doing so it produces effects in the environment. Valuing embodied knowledge in the manipulation of artefacts, is particularly important for the adventure playground. In their creation of the pirate ship play equipment, the project team's knowledge is embodied, developing and improving the adventure environment. Arts offer a way of re-viewing a phenomenon (Caputo, 1987²), of re-scrutinising through different means and lenses (Goodman, 1968³). Art offers the capacity to 'vex' (Geertz, 1983⁴) fellow conversationalists, via the creation of powerful aesthetic forms. The production of knowledge through arts becomes philosophy in action. Reflexivity is essential to validate our findings and our understanding of where within an interdisciplinary setting our research fits (Bourdieu, 1986). Folk narratives can be developed around spatial and symbolic understandings of community and cohesion that can enable the development of policy:

Narratives are built around (and create) reputations of places, and these reputations become metaphors for more general policy design, markers of what problems exist and how they might be solved. (Jones, 2015:21)

² Caputo (1987) is a philosopher of religion who writes on critical hermeneutics

³ Goodman (1968) *Languages of Art: An Approach to a Theory of Symbols* is a key text on aesthetics in the analytic tradition.

⁴ Geertz (1983) wrote on symbolic anthropology a theory which considers the role of symbols in constructing public meaning

Arts methodologies can facilitate the process of sense making, as through arts methodologies narratives can be created that demonstrate connections between points of view (Jones, 2015: Christie, 2006).

The power of Imagination

Arts methodologies allow us the opportunity to create public sociology (Buraway, 2004), where sociological thinking takes place outside of universities. Here we can use the notion of the sociological imagination (Wright Mills, 1999). Wright Mills (1999) argued that dialogue and questioning are central to sociology, that the sociological imagination could be used to question, debate and develop sociology in the world around us. Jones suggests that the sociological imagination can be used to consider the ways in which

Individual policy practitioners reflect on the structural power relations within which they function, and find ways within this to manage their commitments to principles, experiences within their own lives and relationships to other people within these structures, as they shape what effects community cohesion policy actually has. (Jones, 2015:22)

By engaging the sociological imagination (Wright Mills, 1999) in public sociology, arts methodologies can create the possibility of discussions that question power relations and their complexities within society. In using arts methodologies to create a dialogue around social cohesion, feminist theories of affect and attachment can be brought in to question power and ideas of knowledge (Jones, 2015). In using arts methodologies to recognise the emotional element of bureaucracies, we can begin to consider 'how processes of identity and subjectivity are invoked by those acting in governing roles' (Jones 2015:19). As complexity develops, creativity emerges; 'once a certain level of complexity is reached in any system, genuinely novel properties, those that have never been initiated before, emerge. These emergent effects are not predicable before their first occurrence' (Beckerman, 1992:15). This Beckerman (1992) refers to as *physicals*. Arts based methodologies offer the potential to widen the audience for research, to engage beyond conversations held in the 'participant languages' (Toulmin, 1953) of those who work within particular academic disciplines and engage

with a wider audience of readers. Academia has been critiqued for its narrow audience (Nash, 2004; Agger, 1990; Jacoby, 1987) and arts methodologies offer an opportunity to bring academic reflections to a wider audience, 'liberating' academic knowledge (Nash, 2004).

This section has summarised the diversity of types of knowledge that arts methodologies integrate. The next section will look at co-production.

Co-production

Arts methodologies are key to disrupting the everyday power structures that pervade society. Using arts methodologies allows us to reframe knowledge, resituate our thinking and disrupt preconceptions in order to uncover new knowledge. Facer and Pahl (2017) suggest that there are eight elements to co-produced projects: productive divergence, materiality and place, messiness and uncertainty, complexity, translation, praxis and embodied learning. Productive divergence recognises the multiplicity of types and approaches to knowledge. Materiality and place reflects ideas physically, moving within and between projects in the material form of text or artefacts. Messiness embraces the uncertainty and fluid development of collaborative projects that very often morph and adapt rather than follow clear lines of development. Complexity refers to the interconnected, interwoven and non-linear way that co-produced projects often develop. Praxis relates to knowledge being produced in action. Translation refers to how knowledge is interpreted through language as it moves between partners. Stories are often the informal sites of exchange, the reflections and places where connections are made. Embodied learning reflects the transformative nature of collaboration that links to the development of each individual on the co-production project.

Co-production and Art

Arts methodologies are arguably well suited to co-production. Artistic practice is defined through collaboration (Papastergiadis, 2010). Collaborative research is a wide field that includes a range of methodologies from participatory arts practice and community-led action research to patient engagement in medicine (Facer and Pahl, 2017). Arts based research has the capacity to discover new ways to mould consciousness (Barrett and Bolt, 2016). Using a co-production approach, knowledge is created in the crossing of boundaries (Bonnett, 1993). This approach can be understood using the theory of change (Weiss, 1997). Facer and Pahl (2017) suggest a *lexicon* that includes a theory of change approach to understanding collaboration. They identify a range of approaches to collaboration: mutual learning, crowd and open, design and innovation, and correcting the record. The mutual learning approach

is inclusive of action research, participatory action research and communities of practice, and the theory of change is seated in embodied learning. The crowd and open approach is framed around a variety of contributions made to a common project by the public. The design and innovation approach engages representative groups or communities to consult and engage in design work. The correcting the record approach is framed around correcting inequalities; this links to feminist and critical race theory, and the community collaborator builds contemporary knowledge where an inequality or silence in knowledge is perceived. Arts based practice offers a relationality (Carter 2004) that has capacity to reinvent social relations. Issues of power and trust are key to the willing interaction of creativity:

collaboration is a way of receiving others, involving both the recognition of where they are coming from and the projection of the new horizon line towards which the combined practice will head. (Papastergiadis, 2010:116)

Creativity through Co-production

As systems develop, configurations become more complex. Once a certain level of complexity has been reached then novel properties emerge (Beckerman 1992), and through complexity comes creativity (Fullan, 1999). Complexity theory recognises the role of path dependency, that history, identity and culture all frame and construct action, but suggests that the reality is that the social world is messy (Duranti and Goodwin, 1992). The process of creating knowledge is important,

making sense of this kind of intertwined knowledge production and its affordances mean understanding the relationships built up in the process of creating the knowledge. (Facer and Pahl, 2017:222)

Art facilitates co-production by challenging boundaries and combining experiences with new ways of connecting with the world. Through co-production artistic practice is mobilised in everyday life, the artist as the lead in artistic production is challenged, and the redistribution of artistic responsibility is created.

This section has summarised approaches to co-production that arts methodologies can facilitate. This leads to a consideration of the variety of roles undertaken during collaborative work.

Co-production and the Fluidity of Roles Within the Artistic Project

Foucault (1991) refers to the notion of *dispersed selves*, which considers the multiple positions the researcher must occupy in terms of reporting on and writing up the studio production of art and its outcomes. Co-production requires a delicate negotiation of both insider and outsider research:

The space between what organisations do, what they say they do and how they appear is not something for critical social research to expose. It is something that practitioners also recognise and work with. (Jones, 2015:25)

Three membership roles of insider researchers were identified by Adler and Adler (1987). The first role was that of a peripheral researcher, who was part of the group but not a regular participant. The other membership roles were active members of the group and complete members. The challenge of working in a space where one is at once both an insider and an outsider is that:

The qualitative researcher's perspective is perhaps a paradoxical one: it is to be acutely tuned in to the experiences and meanings systems of others – to indwell – and at the same time to be aware of how one's biases and pre-conceptions may be influencing what one is trying to understand. (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994:123)

As part of recognising the importance of context as a researcher within the research, of each participant as part of the narrative of interpretation (Angrosino 2005), it is important to make known the multiple roles and membership identities within the research group. Co-production here can create tensions. This challenge can be aided by reflexivity and a commitment to open and honest dialogue with project participants. Indeed, Dwyer and Buckle argue that

The core ingredient is not insider or outsider status but an ability to be open, authentic, honest, deeply interested in the experience of one's research participants, and committed to accurately and adequately representing their experience. (2009:59)

Engaging in research from a co-production perspective involves not intentionally creating boundaries between researcher and researched, although each person has a different relationship to the research being done (Lloyd et al, 1994). The notion of a space in between insider and outsider research challenges the dichotomy of insider versus outsider research status, for 'as qualitative researchers we have an appreciation for the fluidity and multi-layered complexity of human experience' (Dwyer and Buckle, 2009:60). This space in between (Dwyer and Buckle, 2009) sits well with a participatory feminist stance that aims to produce 'non-hierarchical, non-manipulative research relationships which have the potential to overcome the separation between the researchers and researched' (Reinharz, 1992:594). It leads to a perspective that holds that 'there is no absolute boundary between different people and no outsider position from which one can launch attacks against the insiders' (Papastergiadis, 2010:113).

Working Across Boundaries

Arts methodologies offer the creative expression of complexity, of recognising the multiplicity of interpretations of social cohesion and reinventing them using creative means. The power relationships that link a person's professional, personal and structural selves can be linked, recognising the contradictions and inequalities of power at the heart of social cohesion policies. From the notion of creative interpretations of complexity comes the idea of the Taking Yourself Seriously team as creative boundary spanners.

Successful 'boundary spanners' (Williams, 2011; Spillane et al, 2004) are creative innovators with an ability to communicate across professional language barriers using their interpersonal skills to effectively network (Petch 2014). For the boundary spanner, the formulation and choice of strategic alternatives are driven through interpretation, so enhancing the importance of ideas, narratives and policy paradigms

is key. A boundary spanner engages in integrated working through a process of interpretation, of framing (Benford and Snow, 2000) and sense making (Weick, 1995). In developing artistic methodologies, collaboratively key issues of time, trust and inequalities need to be recognised within the research process. Project work requires a diverse set of roles within the team, and navigating these effectively is important (Facer and Enright, 2016).

Culture and Creativity

Creative activity by its nature is iterative, and ensuring a transformative legacy often requires collaborative consideration and multiple approaches from resource books, academic papers and visual art (Facer and Enright, 2016). Creative activity 'is the medium through which culture is created' (Jones, 2009:15). The boundary spanner engages in interpretative work, linking organisational cultures:

in the interpretive processes whereby choices are imagined, evaluated, and contingently reconstructed by actors in on-going dialogue with unfolding situations. (Emirbayer and Mische 1998:966)

Cultures are slippery subjects, changing, adapting and responding to their times and contexts (Jones, 2009). Boundary spanners take on the role of 'cognitive filter' (Williams, 2011), helping others to interpret the integrated working approach, role and respective responsibilities. Continuing open and honest dialogue is necessary for collaborative projects, and enabling core questions to be asked is important. Good quality collaborative working is about

creating substantive conversations between the different sets of expertise and experience that university and community partners offer, and in so doing enabling the core questions that both are asking to be re-framed and challenged. (Facer and Enright, 2016:8)

Bauman describes our age as one of 'liquid modernity' (2000), defined by constant change and questioning. Innovative working in order to solve complex problems requires skilful management of complexity, sometimes 'on the edge of chaos, where learning is crucial' (O'Flynn et al, 2014:57).

This section has considered the multiplicity of roles that exist within a collaborative project, including the complex sense making required. The next section will consider the theme of voice within co-production.

Voice

In gathering the diversity of opinions, ideas and approaches 'creative solutions arise out of interaction under conditions of uncertainty, diversity and instability' (Fullan, 1999:4). Fullan (1999) argues that partnerships are at their most effective when all opposing voices at the table can be heard. There is a need to be diverse, to have conflicted conversations. Creative writing empowers voice (Perry, 2004), as it allows the integration of fiction and reality enabling 'a reconnection with real life events permitting emotions to be moulded and shaped as reparation and redemption' (Barrett and Bolt, 2016:9). Participatory research embodies the principle that all people have a right to a voice (Lister and Beresford, 1991). Participatory arts approaches involve listening to that voice, and listening to people's experiences of social cohesion and sharing their perspectives on how change is happening lead to a more in-depth understanding of change processes (Richardson, 2003).

Inequality and Voice

Recognising the inequalities of power within the research process is important, for there is no neutral transmission of voice (Bennett and Roberts, 2004) and the researcher is inevitably intervening and must acknowledge the responsibilities of their profession and the imbalances of power that emerge from that role (Lister and Beresford, 2000). It is important to consider who participates. Participation is a right (Bennett and Roberts, 2004), but there are a variety of power differentials in communities, and often women find their voices less audible in 'community' conversations (Cornwall, 2000). Inclusive approaches need to recognise voices that may be silenced to account for the differentials in power within communities and to seek out 'hidden' groups (Norton et al, 2001). However, not everyone will be free, available or willing to participate throughout the research process (Cornwall, 2000) and an interactive approach to participation can be recognised and woven into the research aims in order to gather a range of perspectives. This ability to participate has been an issue in the school project, school timetables, exams and holidays have all affected the schools and the projects capacity to participate.

Silencing Voices

The language of diversity and social cohesion creates a contested space; some types of difference are highlighted and preferred over others (Jones, 2015). Difference exists in visible and invisible forms (Jones, 2015) and the power relationships to the variety of forms of difference can be uncomfortable to voice. Here Jones (2015) suggests that taking an emotional lens to highlight the emotional and affective elements of imagination can be helpful in considering some of the power relationships that impact on belonging, identity and inequality.

Artistic approaches to social cohesion can aid the negotiation of relationships between insider and outsider roles. Voice and the silencing of voice is an important element of co-production. Voice and opportunity to share opinion relate to power and inequality within co-production projects. This is linked to ethics and the importance of reflexivity, which is key to effective co-production.

Ethics

Artistic methodologies offer a mode of creative expression, of reflections, but can they be trusted? Gombrich (2000) stated that an artist does not paint what they see but instead what they are able to paint; indeed, 'truth is not owned simply by propositional discourse; it is also owned by those activities that yield meanings that may be ineffable' (Barone and Eisner, 2012:6). Artistic approaches offer a lens through which creative debate can occur, and arts methodologies are 'the conscious pursuit of expressive form in the service of understanding' (Barone and Eisner, 2012:7). Arts methodologies recognise discursive and non-discursive ways of knowing:

Thus arts based research is not a literal description of a state of affairs; it is an evocative and emotionally drenched expression that makes it possible to know how others feel. (Barone and Eisner, 2012:9)

To consider the ethics of this approach is to consider the epistemological underpinnings of the research approach. It returns us to the question of our approach to knowledge, where arts methodologies accept the situated and fluid understandings of knowledge, rejecting positivist interpretations of certainty. Perhaps through collaboration art can abandon responsibility (Douglas et al, 2014). In removing the individualistic responsibility of a sole artist, collaborative art risks becoming soulless in its drive to represent collective ideals. The self-emancipatory nature of engaging in arts projects creates the idea of the self as a research audience:

Most arts researchers are, however, not unaware of the intersubjective nature of their enterprise, understanding the artistic gesture as primarily a social act. (Barone and Eisner, 2012:64)

Research to Empower Cohesion

Engaging wider research informants within the research process (Denzin, 1997; Lather and Smithies, 1997) is an ethical approach to research that recognises the emancipatory power of research. Here participatory approaches to arts based research are relevant, as the life stories of the oppressed must not be told by the privileged researcher (Barone and Eisner, 2012). Participatory approaches allow

those with experience of oppression to create their own emancipatory artwork (Chappell, 2009). In creating their own pedagogical sketchbook (Klee, 1972) a quality of open-endedness develops, through movement and freedom of input.

Art and Activism

Activist art facilitates a 'hybrid cultural practice' (Felshin 1995:9) which integrates art and political activism. How arts based methodologies can become both political and ethical is an important consideration, for the arts can choose to challenge or condone the unequal power relationships prevailing within a culture, they can be *socially engaged* (Sartre, 1988). The value of arts based research is twofold: it can help us to examine the effects of social practices and institutions on others and it offers the opportunity to awaken ourselves to whom we might become (Rorty, 1989). To achieve this the artist must adopt a stance of epistemological humility (Barone and Eisner, 2012) whereby the existing political is questioned without the imposition of a new narrative. Creating action whilst remaining humble is an artistic challenge, and the need to recognise conflict and yet develop creative relationships between the informants and researcher is a key challenge. Research participants must be 'free people, capable of standing alongside their creator, capable of disagreeing with him and even rebelling against him' (Bakhtin 1984:6).

Ensuring Fair Payment of Artists

A further ethical question emerges from developing artistic methodologies in research, as how artists and artistic methodologies are engaged is an important ethical issue. The research has funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and the artists involved are paid for their time. The intention behind this is equality, to fairly remunerate artists for their time:

to explore this effectively the socio-political contexts of artists' employment, the changing funding regimes and validation structures within the cultural sector and the often conflicted terrain of visual artists working within research projects needed to be taken into account. (Pool, 2016:4)

There is a challenge when being asked to critique the institutions or to become a voice for under-represented groups within an institution in which one is employed (Ahmed, 2012) , yet knowledge is created in the crossing of boundaries. Here bell hooks invites us (privileged, subjected and marginalised) to 'chose the margin' (1990:146) and to use the boundaries of insider/outsider knowledge to disrupt dominant categorisations. This links to du Bois's notions of 'double consciousness' (1994:2), which duBois (1994) sees as a resource and source of knowledge. Art can offer a form of resistance by confronting power structures, and it holds a role in illuminating power inequalities. The role of collaboration itself an art 'collaboration occurs not in the production of imagery, but in the exploration of a shared eidetic curiosity' (Carter 2004).

The Emotional Impact

It is important that the process be supported both financially and emotionally, that engaging research participants does not hold a financial or emotional cost. When engaging research participants in uncomfortable conversations about social cohesion 'it is important to understand the frailty and insecurity of some people's lives' (Bennett and Roberts, 2004:7). Resourcing the project is important, and funding is both practical and symbolic in its enabling role. Allocating the correct funding to a collaborative project and its partners enshrines its value for participants and the university. However, we can question the freedom in this receipt of payment, as in receiving payment artists and researchers must recognise that they become agents of a capitalist agenda, and capitalism exploits (Bishop, 2004). It is important to reflect on the hiring, payment and contracting of artists and how this reflects the project's collaboration:

older avant-garde rhetorics of opposition and transformation have been frequently replaced by strategies of complicity; what matters is not the complicity but how we receive it. (Bishop, 2004:71)

Payment of artists on collaborative projects leads to the question, can creativity be owned? Do collective artistic collaborations of social practice have an author/s? If relational art offers a constantly changing picture of the heterogeneity of everyday life

then it is important to question the everyday. Who are the public? How is culture made and who for?

the politics of participation might lie neither in the formal spectacle of artistic production nor in anti-spectacular stagings of community' (Douglas et al, 2014:12).

Artists individually or collectively position themselves based on the development of personal practice, experience and political histories (Pool, 2016). Arguably the arts require fluidity and not ideology, that physical activity is the participation and this is where the authorship lies in naming what has always been implicit in the arts.

Recognising Conflict

Perhaps in politicising arts practice the quality of the experience has been inhibited (Douglas et al, 2014). Although the works of relational art claim to defer to their context they do not question their imbrication within it (Bishop, 2004). An ethical approach to artistic methodologies must recognise too that conflict exists within democratic spaces; 'conflict division and instability, then, do not ruin the democratic public sphere, they are conditions of its existence' (Bishop, 2004:65). Here the concept of antagonism is important (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985). Mouffe (2007) differentiates between 'agonism' and 'antagonism', suggesting the former offers a space where conflict can be acknowledged. Democracy requires debate and conflicted opinion to function, and a democratic society is where 'the relations of conflict are sustained and not erased' (Bishop, 2004:66). This tension links to notions of structure and agency. We have a fluid structural identity and are therefore dependent on identification (agency) in order to proceed. Antagonism (Lacan, 2017) is the relationships that emerge between incomplete identities.

Ethics as a theme that has emerged from the Taking Yourself Seriously artistic projects has led us to consider questions of voice, power and payment within co-production projects. Artistic autonomy is reasserted by Hirschhorn (2000), who argues that he does not make political art but that he makes art politically, thus the politics of his practice are derived from how his art is made.

Summary

This section has reflected on the key themes that have emerged from the Taking Yourself Seriously artistic projects. These themes sit within the background of successive government social cohesion politics that have favoured various iterations of integration and multiculturalism.

Conclusion

This smaller section of the extended literature review has been created as a resource for the Taking Yourself Seriously project and ARVAC members and has considered arts methodologies as an approach to social cohesion⁵. This review has considered the key themes of knowledge, co-production, roles, voice and ethics that have emerged as part of the Taking Yourself Seriously project has developed have been reviewed.

We conclude that arts methodologies for social cohesion are complex. integrated and emotional. Using arts based methods to approach social cohesion is to ask questions and create connections from an alternative angle. They allow us to use new means to explore how we experience cohesion within our areas. By using artistic methods we open up social cohesion to reconsider the variety of types of knowledge in a community. For example, what a young person might struggle to articulate verbally about their sense of identity they are often able to express via poetry or portraiture. Art opens up a new form of expression.

The arts offer a way of seeing what might not always be visible. The quality of arts based research lies in the process of its creation: the creation of social questions which offer a deeper source of understanding. Arts based approaches can be understood as a process, a social journey through which a new understanding emerges, or as the production of a work of art, or indeed as anywhere along that continuum.

Using arts based approaches to build social cohesion creates an opportunity to see social cohesion from alternative perspectives, to have conversations that sit outside of formal community development or academia but in a space where creativity is nurtured and conflicted conversations encouraged. Using arts methodologies for

⁵ The Taking Yourself Seriously project draws on the 'Co-producing Legacy' Connected Communities funded research project that identified and explored contributions by artists to the co-production of living knowledge. The 'Co-producing Legacy' project was concerned with understanding the ways in which artists worked with academics on Connected Communities projects. A key finding focused on innovative research methods and drew attention to qualities such as emotion, uncertainty, mess and disorientation, as well as open-ended experimentation through success and failure.

social cohesion is to ask questions and create connections from an alternative angle. Arts methodologies empower the process of social cohesion through an alternative lens (Eisner, 1997). Arts based approaches open up the possibility of reflection on social cohesion, they recognise the variety of skills and knowledge held across community groups. However, they come with complex ethical questions that require discussion and interpretation. Co-production is not equal, and power inequalities exist within artistic methodologies as well as within wider society.

This review, for ARVAC has sought to discuss and highlight these themes and offer an honest consideration of the value and challenges of using artistic methodologies for social cohesion.

Building Social Cohesion: Resources and Ideas

Building social cohesion requires skilled and carefully negotiated planned project work (Rose et al, 2016). Ratcliffe and Newman suggest that mixed techniques should be used when evaluating the success of social cohesion policies, suggesting an ecological model as 'it is necessary to build up a picture of the contributions of the initiative towards improving social cohesion at different levels' (2011:288). Success factors (Rose et al, 2016) can be briefly summarised as:

- **Face to face contact.** Being in the same place and the same time and building meaningful relationships.
- **Shared interests and common causes.** Building relationships around a core theme that people care about – arts and culture can bring people together on common ground (Matarasso, 2016).
- **A multi-pronged approach.** Using targeted and universal services to approach the same topic.
- **Effective communication and myth busting.** Using good communication – without jargon and language and technology – that suits the group we are working with is essential to ensuring people feel valued and supported.
- **Engagement from the bottom up.** It is essential that people feel engaged and listened to – nurturing community involvement takes time, patience and an open-hearted attitude.
- **Champions.** Projects that have champions have people that share their work and dedicate time and energy into translating the project into community terms and helping to galvanise support and making things happen.
- **Partnership working.** Integrated working builds up project knowledge and support and enhances the long-term sustainability of the work.

- **Youth work.** Young people are the decision makers of the future; they are also potential champions of the work, building partnerships between school, home and projects.
- **Local adaptation.** Ensuring local projects reflect the diverse needs of an area and celebrate diversity within localities.
- **Tackling inequality.** Inequality is a barrier to cohesion and should be tackled as a key element of the social cohesion project.
- **Acknowledging intersectionality.** Every individual and group can relate to multiple identities; exclusion can be based on more than race or gender and the multiplicity of our identities should be recognised.

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