



Taking Yourself Seriously: *Artistic Approaches to Social Cohesion*

Literature Review

Executive Summary

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 (Facer and Enright, 2016). The 'Co-producing Legacy' project was concerned with understanding the ways in which artists worked with academics on Connected Communities projects. It used case studies to consider how artists contributed to Connected Communities funded research projects. A key finding focused on innovative research methods. The research findings, summarised in the

artists legacy chapter (Facer and Enright, 2016), 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, in conversation with conventional social scientific methods such as interviews, focus groups and questionnaires, in working with people in diverse community settings.

This literature review considers the use of arts methodologies for social cohesion. It is intended to support the artistic projects that emerge from the 'Taking Yourself Seriously' project. The literature review begins with a brief summary of what the 'Taking Yourself Seriously' project is, before considering definitions of arts methodologies and social cohesion. The review then summarises the policy background to social cohesion in the UK before considering the themes that have emerged from the artistic project work on the 'Taking Yourself Seriously' project. Five themes have emerged from our work within the three projects; knowledge, co-production, roles, voice and ethics.

The arts offer a way of seeing what might not always be visible, which we consider within the projects. Investigated within the projects is the idea that 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. Arts based approaches can be a social journey through which a new understanding emerges, or the production of a work of art, or indeed as anywhere along the process to product binary.

The review concludes that arts methodologies for social cohesion are complex, integrated and emotional. Issues of power and trust are located in conversations around inequality, identity and diversity. Using arts methodologies for social cohesion is to ask questions and create connections from an alternative angle. Indeed, arts methodologies enliven our minds, bodies and emotions, recognising the multiplicity of our knowledge and identities. In conclusion, arts methodologies have the potential to empower the process of social cohesion through an alternative lens (Eisner, 1997). They offer an opportunity to build dialogue and reflect alternative knowledges.

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Introduction

This literature review considers the use of arts methodologies for social cohesion. Arts allow a diversity of representation (Goodman, 1968); we need a diversity of representation because each form of representation has its own constraints. The review is intended to support the artistic projects that emerge from the 'Taking Yourselves Seriously' project. These methodologies enable diverse forms of knowledge to expand the field. The aim of the project is to integrate methodological approaches from the arts and humanities in the context of knowledge creation and enquiry around localised issues of social cohesion.

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:

artists ... offer a critical lens, a way to engage, a means to show things back, unsettle, provide momentum and in some instances shape and define the research outcomes. (Pool, 2016:1)

Social cohesion is generally seen as a desirable goal but also a feature that can be perceived to be deteriorating (Schiefer and van der Noll, 2016). Social cohesion can be considered to be deteriorating for several reasons. Globalisation and its associated economic effects are thought to undermine it. Global migration and ethno-cultural diversity can be perceived as a threat to social cohesion. Politics on both the left and right have used notions of social cohesion to value (Green et al, 2009; Green and Janmaat, 2011) or oppose diversity and equality (Boucher and Samad, 2013; Cheong et al, 2007). Changing social interactions in an increasingly digital age change social relationships and affect social cohesion. There are changing national identities within the EU, as new member states are added and new welfare systems must be integrated. How and at what speed the UK exits the EU will also affect UK national identity.

Whilst some have argued that cultural diversity negatively affects trust and social networks (Green and Janmaat, 2011; Letki, 2008), this is not fact in itself, rather it is the way societies respond and interact with cultural diversity that impact on social cohesion. Uslaner (2012) argues that it is not diversity *per se* but segregation that undermines cohesion. Bauman (2000) identified that new hybrid global symbols are developing and impacting on people's global attachment to place, and nested identities are forming around the cultural and global symbols. Shared values of respect, tolerance and humanity arise out of a notion of heterogeneous solidarity and promote social cohesion within diverse and globalised societies.

The literature review begins with a brief summary of what the 'Taking Yourselves Seriously' project is, before considering definitions of arts methodologies and social cohesion. The review then summarises the policy background to social cohesion in the UK before considering the themes that have emerged from the artistic project work on the 'Taking Yourselves Seriously' project. 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 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.

'Taking Yourself Seriously' project background

The Connected Communities Programme was launched in 2010 by Research Councils UK and the Arts and Humanities Research Council. The aim of the project was to develop a more substantive understanding of 'communities' that included both their historic and contemporary formations. Since 2010, Connected Communities has funded over three hundred projects and worked with over five hundred collaborating organisations on a diverse range of projects (Facer and Pahl, 2017). This 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. It used case studies to consider how artists contributed to Connected Communities funded research projects. A key finding focused on innovative research methods. The research findings, documented in the artistic legacy chapter of Facer and Enright (2016) 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 social scientific methods such as interviews, focus groups and questionnaires, in working with people in diverse community settings. The 'Co-producing Legacy' project, upon which this 'Taking Yourself Seriously' Project has emerged, drew on methodologies that included visual and embodied forms of thinking that could surface cultural, ethical, emotional, spiritual, aesthetic, felt and other knowledges, realised through practices such as drawing and workshops (Ravetz and Ravetz, 2016; Graham et al, 2015). Innovatively applied art forms such as film, poetry and visual art can allow voices to be expressed that might not be surfaced in questionnaires or focus groups. These methodologies enable diverse forms of knowledge to expand the field.

The aim of the work is to integrate methodological approaches from the arts and humanities in the context of knowledge creation and enquiry around localised issues of social cohesion. The potential of this work is explored in the context of the 'Creating Living Knowledge' report (Facer and Enright, 2016) in order to articulate more clearly what an arts and humanities informed approach can bring to researching with communities, and how this sits within, yet remains distinct from, established methods within social science. The applied contexts include a school, an adventure playground and a community context. These sites are within contexts where social cohesion issues are key. The school is in central Rotherham, a town that has experienced racialised unrest through far-right marches. The adventure playground is in Pitsmoor in Sheffield, an area that is highly multicultural and multilingual. British Asian communities in Rotherham have experienced high levels of racial tension, particularly women from the communities where the research is taking place. The project seeks to learn from those sites and integrate research findings with community knowledge to produce useable knowledge for community researchers. 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.

The Three Artistic Projects

School context. We established a partnership with Clifton School in Rotherham. Working with year seven/eight pupils in this multilingual school in central Rotherham, we developed creative workshops to extend and deepen definitions of success. The partnership involved a musician and two poets, together with a visual artist. This work contributed to the resources on artistic methodologies with a focus on cohesion work in schools. The school was keen for year seven/eight pupils to communicate better across different groups (British Asian, Roma heritage and white). We explored how creative and artistic methodologies chime with a focus on children's agency and ability to articulate their ideas as active learners. Art was used to open up new opportunities for minority ethnic children to learn about their own history and heritage. A research group led by the young people contributed to an understanding of how arts methodologies were able to reposition young people as arts leaders.

Community project. We explored ways in which artistic methodologies support community-led research with a focus on the life trajectories of women from Pakistani heritage backgrounds. The community co-investigator utilised poetry and other artistic methodologies to connect family histories, creating a sense of being between generations. Through arts based practice, the community co-investigator captured individuals' unique stories across three generations. The project gives deserved recognition to the contribution migrant communities have made to social, cultural and economic life.

Adventure playground. This community research project explored social cohesion through the everyday. As part of this project a piece of play equipment was created. This was a Pirate Ship and arose out of the artist in residence role that was taken on as part of the project. Drawing on recent work on film as well as the experiential work in the artists' 'Co-producing Legacy' project, the team looked at ways in which visual modes achieve impact with community groups and

how arts methodologies can be used with communities in more effective and ethical ways to offer a 'slant' view on the world.

Having briefly summarised the projects in which the literature review sits, the approach to the literature review will be considered.

The Approach to Reviewing the Literature

A literature review can be defined as 'a systematic and thorough search of all types of published literature in order to identify as many items as possible that are relevant to that particular topic' (Gash, 1999:1). The size and diversity of the research topic did not allow for a complete review of the literature. In line with these limitations, a snowball (Ridley, 2012) approach was taken to the literature, whereby after an initial literature search, other relevant literature was drawn from the bibliographies of existing documents.

This literature review aims to gain a detailed picture of theory, practice and policy in relation to arts methodologies as an approach to promoting social cohesion (Ridley, 2012; Boyd et al, 2007). This literature review, in recognition of the vastly changed political environment following the 2010, 2015 and 2017 elections, has focused on policy literature post-2010 and where possible has sought to locate as many documents published after the May 2015 and June 2017 general elections.

Classification and Selection of Literature

Key texts were identified (Facer and Pahl, 2017; Barrett and Bolt, 2016; Jones, 2015; Healy, 2013; Barone and Eisner, 2012; Ratcliffe and Newman, 2011) and the literature search was snowballed from the bibliographies of these key texts. A broader document search was also conducted using internet search engines to ensure policy and think tank publications were included in the review. Literature was broadly classified under these terms: social cohesion, community cohesion, social capital, arts based practice and arts methodologies. It is important to recognise here that these terms also come with complex genealogies. The material was then analysed according to the classification context; this allowed interpretation of key issues such as knowledge, co-production, roles, voice and ethics. The review cites over two hundred and fifty sources; these are made up of policy papers, academic articles, books and news articles. The literature review begins with a definition of arts methodologies and of social cohesion. A policy history of social cohesion considers the political history of social cohesion before the key themes are considered. The key themes – knowledge, co-production, roles, voice and ethics – have emerged from the artistic projects that sit within the 'Taking Yourself Seriously' project.

Considering Definitions of Art and Social Cohesion

What is Arts Based Research?

Arts based research offers a means of making sense of the world. The Arts allow a diversity of representation (Goodman, 1968); we need a diversity of representation because each form of representation has its own constraints. There are a wide variety of artistic forms or modes of engagement: community arts, arts in health, participatory arts, site specific arts, art outside the gallery, relational aesthetics, dialogical aesthetics, social engaged arts practice and critical pedagogy of the arts (Pool, 2016). Definitions of arts based research are also linked to specific genealogies of practice.

Art as a social process is discussed by Papastergiadis (2010). Papastergiadis' work (2010) sits within a genealogy of spatial aesthetics. Art is formed as a process of working with others and within the institutions of daily life, there is a need for art to engage within the spatial and social environment (Papastergiadis, 2010). The notion of art in the everyday is linked to praxis, and there is a clear step from the art of daily living to social transformation. Praxis is the process of using theory in practice. The everyday sits as a process of representation within structures and institutions of belonging. Structure and agency are both recognised in the art of the everyday, seeking to

demonstrate that there [are] pockets of resistance, tactics of adaptation and reflexive forms of agency which were overlooked by the essentialising and structuralist models of social theory. (Papastergiadis, 2010:24)

Arts based approaches promote disequilibrium and uncertainty in cultural phenomena and revisit our understandings of the work through alternative phenomena, to revisit the 'original difficulty of things' (Caputo, 1987:6).¹ In revisiting and reflecting, arts methodologies can 'call for and resist a usual kind of picture' (Goodman 1968:33²). Arts based methodologies create a challenge:

the challenge is to create a means of reflecting on and understanding what has happened in research processes that is not instrumental and performative, complicit with the worst excesses of accountability regimes, but authentic, embedded and able to enhance our understanding of what has happened. (Facer and Pahl, 2017:3).

By being involved in the experience of production 'responsiveness, intuition, haptic feel come into force' (Douglas et al, 2014:9)³. In so doing arts methodologies 'lay bare the questions that have been hidden by the answers' (Sullivan, 2000:218)⁴. Through this revisiting and re-experiencing, alternative meanings can be developed and new understanding emerge. This approach recognises the reciprocal relationships between social structures and the self, reflecting Marx's dialectic that

The integrated self was both capable of recognising the flux and fragmentation of the social world, and providing critique through the synthetic between its subjectivity and everyday lives. (Papastergiadis, 2010:25)

Participatory arts methodologies respect and engage the experiences of people, offering research participants more control over the research process and influence over how findings are used. Freire's (1974) theory of liberation through education reinforces the importance of recognising power differentials in research. The challenge, Flower et al, (2000) in their writings on participatory work suggest, is to develop processes that work in local communities and can feed into larger scale processes.

Enlightenment

The Enlightenment viewed art as an idealised form of communication. The Enlightenment was a northern European intellectual movement which valued reason and individualisation, it existed during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries (Eagleton 1990). Enlightenment artwork as a term links otherwise disparate artists and movements

¹ Caputo's (1987) work considers radical hermeneutics, exploring radical phenomenology and existential philosophy.

² Goodman's (1968) work is influential in contemporary aesthetics and analytic philosophy

³ Douglas et al (2014) consider drawing as a means of considering understandings of art within communities.

⁴ Sullivan (2000) incorporates autobiographical poetry into an essay that considers attentiveness in teaching, learning and research. Sullivan (2000) uses her poetry to directly identify the questions that her poetry is intended to uncover, in this questioning she seeks to uncover the purpose of her art.

through their common ideas regarding the viewer and the work of art. The Enlightenment vision involved the individual only in so far as they might admire the art work. Art reflected the status quo:

While preserving the ceremonial and performativity dimension of earlier art practices designed to encourage veneration and obeisance (e.g. courtly and liturgical art) these works patterned that performance around a more open ended pedagogical interaction. (Kucor and Leung, 2005:4)

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries forms of spiritual and political authority based on the notion of divine right were challenged by the secularism of the industrial revolution and an expanding merchant class. Enlightenment. The art of the Enlightenment was deliberately elitist, art was a resistance to mass culture.

Avant-garde

As the nineteenth century moved into the twentieth century, avant-garde art emerged. The avant-garde movement used art as a shock tactic, to provoke and expose. Avant-garde art was a twentieth century movement that sought to oppose mainstream cultural values and often offer a political comment.

'with the emergence of an artistic avant-garde in the mid-nineteenth century, the survival of authentic art seemed to require that this potentially stultifying interdependence of artist and viewer be severed through shock, attack and dislocation. The symbiosis of aristocratic patronage was replaced by a critical, adjudicatory relationship, informed by artists identified with the revolutionary rhetoric of the nascent working class' (Kester 2004:26).

Avant-garde art worked from the premise that it should shock the viewer and prepare them for the perceptions and reflections that are envisioned by the artist. Avant-garde art was important, in that it offered a vision of a post-revolutionary future and of art as offering a hope for socialism (Kester, 2004). Hence authentic art in the avant-garde tradition doesn't engage with the viewer or with other art forms, 'only by studiously ignoring the viewer's presence can the authentic work avoid the indignity of selling itself to the viewer like a cheap commodity (Kester, 2004:48).

Kester (2004) discusses a classic piece of avant-garde art by Rachael Whiteread, *House* (1993). *House* is a poured concrete cast on the interior space of an Edwardian terrace house in one of London's poorest boroughs, Tower Hamlets. For Kester, the avant-garde work of art in this scenario

...serves to reveal the inability of conventional language to grasp the infinite complexity of the world and the naive and possibly reactionary, constraints of a "confectionary" consensus about the world. Here consensus, or shared understanding, is associated with something inviting but insubstantial, or even unhealthy. (2004:19).

For Kester (2004) the role of avant-garde art is to remind us of the illusory nature of shared understandings. For Kester (2004) the success of *House* can be gauged by the public's failure to 'get it.' *House* provoked considerable debate within the media

...shock, outrage and hostility are all presumably therapeutic precedents to some deeper grasp of the contingency of meaning *House* sought to catalyse' (Kester 2004:21)

However avant-garde art was still based within the realms of instruction, whilst not didactic in the conventional sense, it sought to educate and sensitize the viewer in a particular way (Kester, 2004). Foster (1996), an art historian and critic argued that the dialectic within avant-garde had broken down between historical engagement and contemporary critique. Foster (1996) sought to rebut Burgers (1984) declaration of the failure of the avant-garde. Bürger (1984) argued for the failure of the historical avant-garde, which aims to overcome the distinction between life and art yet also argued that it had succeeded in transforming the internal logic of the art institution. Burger et al argue that the 'avant-garde's appropriation of outdated and popular materials, for example, played a key role in challenging the norms of the art world, helping to bring about the leveling of distinctions often associated with post-modernism' (2010: 695). Foster (1996) critiqued avant-garde art, concerned that the instruction might foreshadow that art which it intended to exhibit: 'it becomes the spectre, it collects the cultural capital and the director-curator becomes the star' (Foster, 1996:198).

Dialogical Aesthetics

From the avant-garde a dialogical aesthetic emerged, where the artistic encounters occurred in the 'public sphere' (Habermas, 1991). From the protest art of the 1980s the erosion of social and institutional space began. A perspective drawing on dialogical aesthetics framed art as a process as political, rather than simply its product. Conflict was recognised by practitioners of the dialogical aesthetic as an expression of democracy. A perspective that drew on dialogical aesthetics created a very different vision of the artist, defined as listening, vulnerable and as collaborator. Kester (2004) details the move to conversational art works, which have their roots in the feminist art of the 1970s which expressed the need for art to be connected to the society within which it is based (Foster, 2016). An important historical reference point for dialogical art practice was the art of the 1960s and 1970s, which was focused around the movement away from object based practices, the move to create art that interacted with the viewer and the move towards durational over instantaneous artistic experience.

These transitions Kester (2004) argues set the stage for interactive collaborative art practice. The art is formed through dialogue, 'subjectivity is formed through discourse and inter-subjective exchange itself' (Kucor and Leung, 2005:8). Kester (2004) describes the performance art work of Suzanne Lacy, in her *Code 33* project, a performance space where police and young people were encouraged to speak and listen, each performance was preceded by several weeks of community work. Participants may have their views challenged by artists and fellow participants and experience conflict within this process. This links to earlier attempts by avant-garde artwork to challenge artistic norms. However whilst avant-garde artwork popularized provocation and dialogue with viewers, this was typically in response to the finished object. Dialogical art placed conversation as an integral part of the art itself (Kester, 2004). What united a disperse network of artists and collectives was

...a series of provocative assumptions about the relationship between art and the broader social and political world, and about the kinds of knowledge that aesthetic experience is capable of producing' (Kester 2004:9)

Bourriaud (1998) used the term 'relational aesthetics' to describe works of art based around communication and exchange. Bakhtin argued that art 'can be viewed as a kind of conversation' (Kester 2004:10). Kester (2004) discusses the work of Adrian Piper *Four Intruders Plus Alarm Systems* (1980) as an example of relational aesthetics. Here Piper combines images of black men's faces with audio monologues of white voices about black people. Piper uses the interaction between the viewer and the artwork to confront stereotypes and to question the viewer's unconscious bias.

In dialogical art practice there are ethical challenges in balancing empathy, negation, domination and dialogue (Kester, 2004). Power and agency must be recognised. Kester (2004) discusses the work of Tim Rollins in the South Bronx as an example of dialogical art. Rollins took up permanent residence in the South Bronx and worked on long-term collaborative projects with young people there. However living in the South Bronx was always a choice for Rollins which lead to a dialogue across boundaries of wealth, class and race.

Artistic theory began to collapse distinctions and blur boundaries between performer and audience, production and view (Bishop, 2004; Kaprow, 1993). Art moved towards engagement with the environment in which it sat, using more conciliatory and affirmative strategies. Kaprow (1993) considered the art of the everyday, art for Kaprow (1993) moved beyond the idea of art as an object to the concept that art can become anything at all, movement, sight or scent. Kaprow (1993) wrote about 'the aesthetic of regular experience' the momentary experience of the viewer was as significant as a work of art on canvas. Bishop (2004) considered the role, purpose and value of participation within art. Papastergiadis (2010) frames this new approach 'spatial aesthetics' and suggests that it exists around three foundations: a utopian drive, the abstraction of human communication and the ubiquity of screen images. Spatial aesthetics negotiates identity across boundaries:

The place and politics of art in everyday life has also presented new challenges for the ways in which we understand cultural identity. (Papastergiadis, 2010:10)

The politics of the everyday needs to balance the need to experience an event, but to also be aware of the politics of institutionalisation, now engagements must be made between the politics of place (*topos*) and modes of perception (*tropos*). Spatial aesthetics argues that there is a need to reconceptualise the relationship between theory (discourse) and practice (art). Here we are encouraged to develop 'expressive lives' (Jones, 2009) and the arts are perceived as having the potential to facilitate democracy to invite uncomfortable conversations. Cultures are changing and multi-faceted which creates opportunities for technology and the arts. Jones (2009) suggests that the expressive life should be presented collectively. Demos, a think tank, in 2009 published a series of articles, entitled 'Expressive Lives', based on the idea that through culture we find our place in the world. Culture is a space where we generate values and respond to the world around us. Through our cultural consumption we find means to express ourselves :

Cultural institutions, from museums and concert venues, IT web-platforms and education, should ensure that expressive and creative forms are shown collectively in communication with each other and in ways that allow people to group around them ... we can achieve this by enabling the expressive life. (Jones, 2009:91-92)

Art as a Social Form

Contemporary art now sits beyond the boundaries of the studio and therefore 'privileges intersubjective relations over detached optimality' (Bishop, 2004:61). Bishop (2004) in her book, *Participation*, discusses art as a social form. This installs a new relationship between the contemplation of and the duration of a work of art. Art becomes a social form and therefore holds a political and emancipatory function. Papastergiadis (2010) suggests that we need to develop new critical studies to determine its meaning. Artworks sit within nested layers of identity:

...the place in which contemporary art is displayed, and the material from which it is produced, are intertwined with the process of its production and reception. (Papastergiadis, 2010:15)

Art is no longer a document, but becomes a dialogue with the present. The emergence of relational aesthetics can be linked to a move from a goods based economy to a service based economy. Bourriaud (1998) links this to the move from utopian agendas to provisional solutions, to '*microtopias*' solutions that address the minutia of the here and now, of communities whose members seek to identify with each other as they share commonalities. Kucor and Leung (2005) introduce a body of contemporary art practice that refocuses on collaborative, emancipatory forms of dialogue. This approach has deep and complex roots in the history of art and cultural activism (Kucor and Leung, 2005) and it is part of a new genre of public art to reflect the hybrid liminal nature of this artistic approach. Bourriaud (1998) described art that focuses on communication and exchange as using the 'relational aesthetic'. The approach has also been described as 'conversational art' (Bhabha, 1998⁵) and 'dialogue based public art' (Finkelpearl, 2000).

Artistic methodologies hold complex genealogies. This section seeks to summarise the move from the art of the Enlightenment, to the avant-garde, to relational and dialogical aesthetics. Kester (2004) in 'Conversation Pieces' provides a detailed exploration of this movement. Having considered some of the key themes that surround the theory of art and arts methodologies, a definition of social cohesion will now be explored.

Defining Social Cohesion

There are a variety of dimensions to each definition of social cohesion. It is a contested concept and a multidimensional phenomenon (Healy, 2013). In its simplistic form cohesion means to hold something together, which leads us to reflect on social cohesion as perhaps a type of 'social glue' (Durkheim, 1893). Much of the empirical literature on social cohesion falls into three groups: inclusion or exclusion from society, as a study of institutions and governance or as a study of networks and belonging. An inclusive definition of social cohesion considers that:

Social cohesion is present when individuals and groups with different cultures, values, beliefs, lifestyles and socio-economic resources have equal access to all domains of societal life and life together without conflict. (Schiefer et al, 2016)

Despite its frequent politicisation there are two broad approaches to understanding social cohesion; the first emphasises the shared values that bind a community and the second emphasises the quality of these social relationships (Delhey, 2007). From these definitions, **social cohesion can be understood as**

..a state of affairs concerning both the vertical and horizontal interactions of society as characterised by a set of attitudes and norms that includes trust, a sense of belonging and the willingness to participate and help, as well as their behavioural manifestations. (Chan et al, 2006:290)

Social cohesion is perhaps a 'quasi-concept' (Bernard 1999:2), a multidimensional construct. Bernard (1999) states that equality is a 'key dimension of social democratic order' (1999:57) and argues that equality, liberty and solidarity are linked in a dialectical relationship. Social cohesion is both subjective (opinions and attitudes) and objective (behaviour) (Chan et al., 2006). Social cohesion is perhaps one of 'those hybrid mental constructions' (Schiefer and van der Noll, 2016) that makes it adaptable to a variety of situations but lacks a clear definition. The meaning of social cohesion is both fluid and shifting, often context specific and linked to broader notions of identity, belonging, power and inequality (Jones, 2015).

⁵ Bhabha (1998) whose influential work in the field of post-colonial studies includes work on third space theory, abivalence, cultural difference, hybridity and mimicry discusses conversational art as a work of art. Conversations, dialogue become a method of generating new understandings and insight for research and practice.

There are five dimensions to Jenson's (2010) definition of social cohesion: belonging, economic inclusion, participation in public affairs, recognition versus rejection of diversity and pluralism, and legitimacy of societal institutions. Bernard (1999) reclassified Jenson's approach by classifying her dimensions into three domains, economic, cultural or socio-cultural, and into type of involvement, attitudinal or behavioural, creating six dimensions. Chan et al (2006) distinguished between subjective (trust, attitudes, identity) and objective (civic participation, crime statistics) components of social cohesion. They then applied these components to horizontal (between individuals in society) and vertical (between individuals and institutions) relationships. Dickes et al (2010) developed these approaches to create four dimensions of social cohesion: legitimacy versus illegitimacy (e.g. instructional trust), acceptance versus rejection (e.g. solidarity and concern for the common good), political participation and socio-cultural participation.

There are three ways of understanding these definitions (Janmaat, 2011; Moody and White, 2003), by considering the definitions as ideational (norms, values and sense of identity), as relational (relationships and networks between individuals) and as distributive (the equality of distribution of physical, economic, social and cultural resources). This enables Schiefer and van der Noll (2016) to distil social cohesion to three essential dimensions: social relations, a sense of belonging and orientation towards the common good. Social relations are about the relationship that individuals have within a society. Social networks and social capital fit into this dimension.

Belonging

A sense of belonging is a reoccurring theme in definitions of social cohesion (Healy 2013). Social cohesion literature then uses this sense of belonging to refer to an underlying sense of community, a degree of support for collective action (Corak et al, 2002) or concepts of an organic bond between members (Lepineux, 2005). The notion of belonging,

...the belief that human beings are motivated to form and maintain relationships and bonds with others, has a long history in philosophy, psychology and the human sciences ... recent studies in neuroscience seem to indicate that our brains have evolved to cope with group living. (Healy, 2013:22).

A sense of belonging can also be connected with identity. This connects the sense of belonging to identification with a geographical space (Dickes et al, 2010; Bernard, 1999; Jenson, 1998). Touraine (2000) was concerned that globalisation would result in fragmentation of this sense of belonging. Orientation towards the common good relates to the commitment towards as a common good, to comply with the social order, to feel responsibly towards the wider society. This links to the notion of solidarity. This solidarity is both individual and instructional, this solidarity is caring for the other regardless of whether that person is kin or not. Institutional solidarity is performed in welfare systems. Social order is created within this orientation towards the common good; it is the basis on which individuals cooperate to reach common goals. A lack of compliance with the common order results in anomy (Merton, 1957), a state where the goals of societal members no longer correspond with the legitimate means for reaching these goals. Hence, lack of social cohesion is often illustrated using crime statistics.

Developments in ethical theory have highlighted relationships as 'an important element of our moral landscape' (Mokrosinska, 2012:67). Social cohesion can move between a descriptive term or a value based term depending on the definition (Healy, 2013). This notion of belonging is therefore developed as a broader concept than that of citizenship (Kannabrin et al, 2006:189). Belonging is valued as an approach to feeling connected to political institutions (for if we feel connected then we are more likely to feel answerable to their political authority), to supporting the stability of liberal institutions through the creation of a shared national identity, to facilitating civic trust, and to forming the basis for social justice and the redistribution of resources (Mason, 2000). Belonging, however, is not a fixed unitary factor, and we can hold multiple senses of belonging. Indeed, Yuval-Davis et al (2005) and Antonsich (2010) distinguish between the emotional attachment of feeling like you belong and belonging in the sense of institutional membership.

Identity

Sharing a sense of belonging or identity promotes social cohesion (Holtug, 2016). The identity thesis identifies a concern that diversity undermines shared identities, reducing community trust. These claims are contested, with evidence available to support and deny that diversity drives down social cohesion (van der Meer and Tolsma, 2014). How do we build collective and community identities without scapegoating those that are excluded from them? Can we create social cohesion and maintain social identity (Kucor and Leung, 2005)? How people perceive their identity is important. Pehrson, Vignoles and Brown (2009), in a cross-national study, found the correlation between national identification and anti-immigrant views to be stronger in countries where national identity was framed around language and weaker in countries where national identity was framed around citizenship.

Bauman (2000) identified that new hybrid, global symbols are developing, and impacting on people's global attachment to place, and nested identities are forming around the cultural and global symbols. Bauman's (2000) concept of 'liquid identity' leads to ideas of liquids filling in the cracks, filling liminal spaces between the multi-faceted stepping stones of

human identity. Here metaphors for nested, layered or rhizomatic identities can offer ways of understanding belonging. Metaphors can be useful ways of considering identity and belonging (Race, 2011). Metaphors of melting pots, where identity blends and becomes one, or salad bowls, where individual identity becomes part of a wider diverse group, are ways of considering belonging in different forms. The metaphor of the mosaic offers another understanding of belonging, as the mosaic cannot exist nor can the pattern be observed without all constitutive parts (Race, 2011).

Artistic approaches allow us to consider our layered identities; they allow us to see the world through alternative lens, to view questions of identity in visual, poetic and narrativised ways that offer an alternative view of identity. Art allows us to consider the idea of multiple identities, the concept of the multiple self that is fluid, fragmented and not fully stable. Sullivan suggests that 'the purpose of art is to lay bare the questions that have been hidden by the answers' (2000:218). People have multiple identities and networks that reach beyond their neighbourhood (Fuller, 2011). Notions of belonging, trust and reciprocity can be addressed through visions of melting pots, bricolage, salads and mosaics, allowing a visual exploration of situated meanings of social cohesion.

Trust

Notions of trust and shared values are linked (Uslaner, 2002). Trust and solidarity can be considered essential for the implementation of social justice (Rawls, 1971). Values are implicit in social and cultural practices, and are therefore linked to social identities (Holtug, 2016). The term 'shared values' needs to be defined, for sharing values of democracy, tolerance and equality may lead to social cohesion yet sharing values of racism, inequality and intolerance will be unlikely to improve social cohesion. Uslaner (2002) defines shared values in this sense as shared liberal values that promote social cohesion. Identities therefore impact on social cohesion not simply in the process of being shared but in terms of the specific virtues that they consist of. For example, sharing an identity as a vegetarian also suggests specific values around animal welfare. The question then becomes about what kinds of bonds are required to underpin trust and solidarity,

Trust and solidarity rely on a shared identity that services both to demarcate the 'we' among whom solidarity will be practiced, and to create the positive emotional disposition towards members of the group required for trust and solidarity. (Holtug, 2016:7)

Trust can be linked to our predictability (Putnam, 2000); can we roughly predict how others will behave? Trust, the expectancy that another person's behaviour is predictable and is in principle led by positive intentions (Morrone et al, 2009), is a key element of social capital. Trust is the basis for collective action (Larsen, 2013). Trust also lowers transactional costs (Fukuyama 1995) and therefore creates opportunities for economic prosperity. Good social relations facilitate participation within society (Acket et al, 2011; Berger-Schmitt, 2000).

We are increasingly being forced to 'navigate in a world where shared values cannot be taken for granted' (Holtug, 2016:10). The relationships between identity, predictability and trust are complex; 'as moral philosophers have long argued, there may be certain societal and cooperative advantages in specific kinds of value diversity' (Holtug, 2016:10). Relationships can be based on diverse values but mediated by predictability (Hare, 1981). How trust is generated is important here; the moral and the institutional models of trust affect cohesion. The moral model of trust is based on a moral disposition to trust that is passed from parents to children within families (Uslaner, 2002). The institutional model of trust is based on the quality of public institutions and their behaviour towards citizens (Rothstein and Stolle, 2003). For Briedahl, Holtug and Kongshoj (2016) trust can be linked to liberal citizenship values. The inclusion model of trust is an extension of the moral model of trust; it requires people to hold multicultural values and rests on a shared recognition of difference. Briedahl et al (2016) find that trust and solidarity are higher in groups who hold multicultural values, although the impact of multicultural policies on social cohesion is contested (Hooghe et al, 2007; Banting et al, 2006).

Social Capital

Social networks matter. The social networks of primary relationships tend to be with mutual others, and the characteristic of close primary relationships is their interdependence (Granovetter, 1983). These primary relationships are underpinned by intimacy, reciprocity and emotional intensity. The secondary relationships that we develop enable us to meet and engage with those that might be different to us. Social networks are a major feature of cultural industries' labour markets (O'Brien and Oakley 2015).

The concept of 'social capital' describes the benefits that accrue from our social interactions and relationships. Recognising emotion and relationships is central to social cohesion work. Organisations depend on policy practitioners to persuade and negotiate, drawing often on emotions, recognising that 'emotions are powerful and power operates through emotions' (Jones, 2015:6). Social cohesion, although linked to social capital, is broader and includes more behavioural and attitudinal dimensions (Klein, 2011). Fromm (1976) distinguishes between '*having*' and '*being*', whilst

Carrasco and Bilal (2016) argue that social capital relates to having and social cohesion relates to being. They suggest that focusing on social capital leads to individualising tendencies that 'are antithetical to social cohesion' (Carrasco and Bilal, 2016:127).

Social capital can be considered linked but separate from social cohesion. The 'Taking Yourself Seriously' women's community project, which created poetry with three generations of Muslim women addresses some of these issues, questioning if the women have had access to the same types of social capital as male or white counterparts. Bourdieu (1986) describes social capital as the resources available to group members through memberships of usual acquaintance. For Bourdieu (1986) social capital was a source of power, shaping class relations and enabling dominant classes to pursue their interests. Coleman (1988) linked social and human capital, suggesting that social capital facilitates trust and communication and holds the capacity to promote the common good. Portes (2000) comments that social capital then became understood as accrued no longer by individuals but collectively by communities, in the form of reduced criminality and improved governance. Putnam (1995) suggests that social capital includes trust, norms and networks, and that both individuals and the wider community benefit from social capital since it improves societal interactions. Putnam (2004) differentiates between social capital and social cohesion:

...social capital is a narrower, more tightly defined concept that calls attention to one crucial ingredient in social cohesion, in the sense of a just, equitable, tolerant and well integrated society. (Putnam, 2004:33)

The term capital (in a Marxist understanding) is itself something that can be owned and invested to gather a surplus (Bourdieu, 1986). As the term developed, as social capital was collectivised, then some of the broader characteristics of social cohesion were linked in (Coleman, 1988). Putnam (1995) re-defined the separation of social capital as an individual asset that can be owned and social cohesion as collective assets that cannot be individually owned. For Fromm, the current emphasis on having objectifies our reality, for in a capitalist society having is being: 'if one has nothing, one is nothing' (1976:3). Fromm (1976) differentiates between *having knowledge* and *knowing*. Having knowledge is possessive whilst knowing is bound in a process of productive creative thought. Social capital is an individual capital that can be owned whereas social cohesion is broader and collective, a process of production. However, another framing of social cohesion by Fonner et al (2014) links bonding social capital at an individual level with the collective nature of social cohesion, and social capital is nested within collective cohesion.

There are also other incorporated elements of social cohesion: equality, quality of life and shared values. These are perhaps antecedents or consequences rather than essential components. Unequal opportunities for individuals can lead to social exclusion. Quality of life can be key in creating psychological and physical wellbeing and ensuring that a socially cohesive life can be lived out. The requirement for societal homogeneity is both ambiguous and simplistic (Schiefer et al, 2016; Chan et al, 2006; Jenson, 1998). Social cohesion debates have moved from the suggestion that democracy requires shared values and consensus for cohesion (Mann 1970) to the concept that cohesion requires the acceptance of and constructive engagement with diversity and respectful interactions with the conflicts and debates that arise. The Playground project addresses some of these issues, questioning how they might create a shared safe place of play in an area experiencing tensions and if or how they might expand that safe space to other groups.

Inequality

Social cohesion can also be framed as a social process linked to power structure and empowerment of communities. From this perspective cohesion is a core element of community empowerment (Kerrigan et al, 2015). Linked to empowerment and voice, social cohesion has also been framed as a social process that 'provides the psychosocial space for group resistance and subversion against oppressive social norms' (Carrasco and Bilal, 2016:128). The concept of social cohesion can be understood from a behavioural perspective, focused on civic participation, or an attitudinal perspective, focused on common values of trust and reciprocity (Valentova, 2016). Inequality has returned discussions of social class to popular discourse (Skeggs, 2004).

Yet little is known about the perceptions of various social groups' sense of attachment to each other: are we all experiencing austerity similarly, and crudely speaking are we all 'in it together' (Andrews and Jilke, 2016)? Indeed, those experiencing economic hardship have a tendency to problematise their experience against those of other social groups (Lester, 1998). Institutional theory suggests that the quality of public institutions leaves a mark on people's attitudes, beliefs and actions. Trust in street level institutions has an impact on social cohesion (Blaxland, 2013). Welfare spending impacts on social trust. Universal welfare results in higher social trust than means tested welfare policies (Rothstein and Uslaner, 2005). Social services play an important role in creating 'structured spaces of association' (Amin, 2002) which in turn build trust. However Van Ryzin and Charbonneau (2010) find that satisfaction takes a U-shaped curve, as the more that people's expectations of service quality increase the more they become dissatisfied with the service quality that they receive.

Reference group theory (Runciman, 1966) is useful here, in that perceptions of relative economic deprivation can be as detrimental to social solidarity as actual income inequality. Indeed, economic strain might not directly relate to income but to a person's subjective perception of their circumstances (Whelan and Maitre, 2005), often referred to by politicians as those people in the 'squeezed middle' (Andrews and Jilke, 2016). Reference group theory argues that the subjective comparison with others can create negative comparisons with others that lead to 'out group hostility' (Andrews and Jilke, 2016) and affect the ability to maintain social networks. Inequality 'has become essential to understanding contemporary British Society' (O'Brien and Oakley, 2015:2).

Consumption and the cultural values placed upon who consumes, what they consume and the values associated with consumption impact on who holds value within a society (Skeggs, 2011). There are a variety of types of inequality (Piketty, 2014), and they are connected to societal hierarchies and power structures. Bourdieu (1986) identifies range of non-income related inequalities linked to gender, race, social capital or access to resources. Some groups have more negative perceptions of social cohesion than others. Those who are unemployed are less likely to feel a sense of social cohesion, and those with higher education levels are more likely to feel a sense of social cohesion (Andrews and Jilke, 2016). Those who experience more economic strain feel less of a sense of social cohesion although there is a positive connection between social services quality and perceptions of social cohesion. This leads Andres and Jilke (2016) to conclude that good quality social services are important for social cohesion and that there is an important role for street level bureaucrats to improve the quality of their relationships with clients.

Intersectionality

It is important to recognise the intersection of multiple inequalities (Walby, 2009; Hancock, 2007; Yuval-Davis, 2006). Gender and intersectionality (McCall, 2005; Crenshaw, 1991; Hartmann, 1976) are fundamental to considering inequalities within communities. Social power operates to exclude and marginalise, 'women of colour can be erased by the strategic silences of anti-racism and feminism' (Crenshaw, 1991:1253). When considering social cohesion from a civic participation perspective, it is important to note that the gender gap in terms of participation in public life remains significant, especially in relation to political participation (Lowndes, 2003), civic participation, social networks and institutional trust (Valentova, 2016). Valentova (2016) suggests gender roles create mutually independent patterns of social relations. This is reflected within the cultural industries:

the fact that class exclusion and indeed class prejudice in the cultural industries appears to be getting worse is difficult to separate both from an economic settlement which sees widening polarisation, a decline in trade union membership in the cultural industries and a less sympathetic portrayal of working class life, particularly in the mainstream media. (O'Brien and Oakley 2015:17)

There are a variety of approaches to intersectionality. McCall (2005) suggests three approaches: intra-categorical, anti-categorical and inter-categorical. Intra-categorical approaches focus on social groups at the neglected point of intersection. Anti-categorical approaches prioritise fluidity over stability of categories. Inter-categorical approaches provisionally adopt existing analytical categories in order to document inequality. Hancock (2007) builds a typology of approaches, unitary, multiple and intersectional, stating that only the latter presumes a fluidity of categories. Unitary approaches only examine one category, whilst multiple approaches examine more than one category and these matter equally. The categories are presumed to be stable and hold static relations. Intersectional approaches recognise multiple categories and that these categories matter equally, but they anticipate that these categories are fluid and mutually constitute each other. Hancock (2007) argues for a mutual constitutive approach; if, for example, you are a black woman, you complete a distinctive category. Here skin colour becomes a form of embodied capital

that disrupts and lessens the worth of the cultural capital held by black middle classes. They are perpetual outsiders because of their race, irrespective of class status, and this contributes to their hesitation about comfortably self-identifying as middle class. (Rollock, 2014:448)

Walby et al (2012) suggest that *mutual shaping* is a better category than mutual constitution, and that systems of social relations change each other at the point of intersection. However, social cohesion is an important characteristic of the social environment.

Intersectionality recognises several theoretical dilemmas (Walby et al, 2012): addressing structural and political intersectionality, recognising agency within inequality, balancing the fluidity and stability of intersections, recognising and responding to class appropriately, recognising small minorities and recognising that the intersection of inequality changes the nature of inequality. Here the actions of the dominant group within categories are important:

it is important not to focus only on the disadvantaged people since this obscures the role of the powerful within sets of unequal social relations. (Walby et al, 2012:7)

It is important to note the historically constructed nature of social inequality (Choo and Ferree, 2010; Ferree, 2009; Walby, 2009). Social cohesion therefore is 'a descriptive multi-faceted and gradual phenomenon attributed to a collective, indicating a quality of togetherness' (Schiefer et al, 2016:2). The notion of cultural value is centred on art and culture's capacity to effect change. Culture produces a range of social goods; however, cultural consumption is socially differentiated, and it is the wealthiest, least ethnically diverse, eight percent of the population that benefits most from arts council funding (Warwick Commission 2015: 33). There are funding inequalities which affect spatial aspects of arts and cultural consumption (O'Brien and Oakley, 2015:6). The arts have had an elitist image for BAME communities which has led to under consumption, 'further confirming their marginalisation and the potential distance between state culture and BAME lives' (Malik, 2013; Appiganesi, 2010).

The health benefits of living in a socially cohesive neighbourhood may be due to increased social capital, which may promote healthy norms of behaviour and co-operation between residents to ensure good access to health facilities (Erdem et al, 2016). Living in neighbourhoods with high social cohesion is linked to reduced levels of mental health difficulties among residents:

Residing in socially cohesive neighbourhoods may reduce the influence of lack of paid employment and financial difficulties on psychological distress among urban adults. (Erdem et al, 2016:2)

Higher levels of social cohesion within a neighbourhood may act as a buffer to mental health issues, as access to emotional and practical support can be achieved with good social links.

Liveability

Social cohesion does not automatically become societal cohesion, and the way that community level bonds of association convert into macro level bonds has not yet been fully evidenced (Healy, 2013). Neither should we assume that social cohesion alone is the answer to stability (Healy, 2013). Perhaps we can consider social cohesion in terms of 'liveability' (Lloyd, Fullagar and Reid, 2016). The concept of liveability is as relativistic (Vine 2012) as that of social cohesion but can be disrobed using four key components: governance and active citizenship, common values and a sense of identity, complete communities and natural resource flows (Timmer and Seymoar, 2006). The social dimensions of liveability, as defined by a shared physical sense of space, are threatened by transient social relations (Bauman, 2001) that have eroded the geographical basis of community (Rosenblatt et al, 2009). Communities therefore become no longer physical entities but become either digital or ideological, and exist to create a sense of ontological security (Lloyd, Fullagar and Reid, 2016). Despite this people still hold strong affective ties to where they live, engaging in 'a multiplicity of communities across diverse geographies' (Rosenblatt et al, 2009:132). However, in losing the shared space once located in a physical version of community, a barrier to mutual empathy emerges:

the interpretation of difference and the realisation of (in) tolerance rests, in part, on the qualities of social interaction which are influenced by the scale and intensity of social and (typically) spatial distance manifest in city living. (Bannister and Kearns, 2013:2707)

We need meaningful social interaction, in shared spaces, to build empathy and social connection (Lloyd, Fullagar and Reid, 2016). Here the note of caution sits on the term meaningful. Meaningful social interaction as defined by Lloyd, Fullagar and Reid (2016) is positive, goes beyond the superficial and involves a variety of forms of communication. People's life stage and daily routines have an important effect on social interaction and consequent levels (or not) of social cohesion. Forrest and Kearns (2001) reinforce the importance of lived routines and the role of often mundane activities to enhance social interaction and cohesion. They warn too of the dangers of a socially cohesive but divided society where one group discriminates over another (Forrest and Kearns, 2001).

Welfare states have a unique and critical role in promoting social cohesion, and arguably good quality social services have the potential to promote social cohesion (Andrews and Jilke, 2016). Erdem et al (2016) frame social cohesion as a neighbourhood construct; social cohesion is nested within individuals who in turn are nested within neighbourhoods. Neighbourhood social cohesion does not affect us all equally; living in neighbourhoods with high social cohesion might be more beneficial to persons in financial difficulties and for unemployed or disabled people than for other groups in relation to health (Erdem et al, 2016).

Community Cohesion

Four ways of framing of social cohesion within communities are offered by Jones (2015). These framings attempt to consider social cohesion within a variety of policy narratives, seeing social cohesion as an ongoing lived process (Jones, 2015). These visions of cohesion are framed in geographically anchored reference points: a vision of divided communities living 'parallel lives', a vision of white working class communities as powerless, a vision of 'traditional' rural 'English' identity and a vision of inner city, multicultural diversity. There are tensions around the construction of each of the four visions, and policies framed around the visions often exclude issues in order to fit their narrative of cohesion;

politics constructs definitions of the problems to be tackled which exclude certain issues from serious consideration (Solomos, 1988:142). Social cohesion as a political construct can be problematised using the four understandings. In the first 'parallel lives', understanding sees cohesion as a response to the urban riots of the 1980s (Solomos, 1988) and developed from the race riots of the early 2000s (Cantle, 2001), the central precept being that despite living in a geographically shared space, communities were divided along racial lines. The parallel lives narrative is that of the 'north' as a site for post-industrial hopelessness and depressed racism, of communities imagined as both spatially and ideologically outside of government and power (Jones, 2015).

The second framing of community cohesion locates racism with the white working class as 'the other'. unable to adjust to a globalised world, as a community economically excluded (Solomos, 1988. This narrative, however, frames the white working class as victims, and racism a symptom of oppression (Bottero, 2009). Sympathetic depictions of racism are uncomfortable

imagining the place (or any place) as somewhere populated by some violent racists but simultaneously by those deserving of sympathy does not provide so easy a narrative; it necessitates uncomfortable positions. (Jones, 2015:45)

This, however, silences the analysis of inequality (Gillborn, 2009) and confines racism to the 'other' (Garner, 2009), and in entering into this narrative creates a difficult space of attempting to understand discrimination without condoning it (Back, 2002). The third framing of social cohesion as a narrative is framed around the imagined whiteness of 'the countryside'. The countryside vision is framed here as white but also Anglo-Saxon white, heterosexual and protestant. The framing is most often classed. The image is frequently of farmers and landed gentry with little consideration given to rural poverty and homelessness. Here British identity becomes an ethno-cultural one, one which Trevor Philips, then chair of the Commission for Racial Equality referred to as 'genteel xenophobia' (Philips, 2004, para 1).

The fourth framing of social cohesion has been set around the diverse inner city. It attempts to reframe the inner city from a place of poverty to an engine of growth, emphasising diversity and inclusion. This reconceptualising of diversity as a virtue 'has been part of reimagining it as a capitalist asset, and as a governed and managed activity' (Jacobs, 1996:87). This narrative fits with New Labour's classless society: if we are all middle class and multicultural then struggles with race and equality are over.

Community and Unity

We can discuss notions of community as geographic and notions of communities of identity (Sparke, 2008), but it is arguably naïve to consider these communities as 'communities of mythic unity' (Kwon, 2002). The term 'community' in community cohesion can be created as the 'ontological equivalent of kitsch' (Kucor and Leung, 2005:11). Communities are diverse within themselves and conflicted, and the role of art is to facilitate reflexivity and self-criticism within and beyond communities of geography, interest and identity. Contemporary British society no longer perceives a single 'unified' culture (Warde et al, 2007). Collective identities do not have to be essentialising, however, and identities can be maintained if they are prepared to open up to the transformational effects of dialogue (Kucor and Leung, 2005). Community cohesion and social cohesion are often used interchangeably yet Sullivan argues that there are important differences:

Social cohesion is a more fundamental concept than community cohesion. It effectively acknowledges the presence of intra – as well as inter – 'community' divisions. Social cohesion refers to a situation where these internal divisions (based, for example, on age/generation, gender and socio-economic background) have also been addressed successfully. Here 'success' is judged by sustainable, lasting stability based on the firm foundation of *achieved* equality targets. (Sullivan, 2011:41)

Democracy as an ideology requires a sense of cohesion, of community, a sense of us, the people being involved in the governing of our selves (Healy, 2013). Community cohesion policies have developed from being positioned as part of race equality work (Cantle, 2001:21) to being framed as a distinct approach (Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), 2008:11). Jones states that 'the negotiations around community cohesion policy can shed light on much broader questions about the operation of government and policy, and the relationships between levels and agencies of government' (2016:8).

Summary

The contested and various definitions of social cohesion have been considered, drawing together notions of trust, identity, belonging and dialogue into notions of art as a political act. The policy background to social cohesion will now be reviewed before focusing on the themes that emerge from the artists' work in the 'Taking Yourselves Seriously' project.

The Policy Background to Social Cohesion

Social cohesion is not a contemporary construct, as it has a long history of academic debate that considers what constitutes social order within a society. The roots of contemporary discussions can be traced through the seventeenth century liberalism that considered social cohesion as an unintended by-product of liberal behaviour, emerging automatically from the natural harmony of individual interest. In response to this, Durkheim (1893) developed the idea of society as an integrated system of shared values and principles based on solidarity. The origins of social cohesion can be linked to Durkheim's (1893) *Division of Labour* where he linked social cohesion to social solidarity and collective consciousness. For Durkheim, solidarity is based on shared collective values, beliefs and lifestyles that had emerged from industrialised society and its divisions of labour. Social cohesion was the product of mutual dependencies created between individuals as they conducted specialised roles within society. Tönnies (1887) linked solidarity into a social cohesion based on individuals that are socially connected and focused on the needs of community (*Gemeinschaft*) and groups of individuals who are living together in a geographical sense but are socially isolated from each other (*Gesellschaft*). Romantic conservatism developed this idea in the eighteenth century, suggesting that cohesive societies existed as social hierarchies that were linked together by cultural traditions and by individual deference to the overarching social order, and were accepting of their role or position in society.

Twentieth century sociology linked social cohesion to social integration. Lockwood (1999) made a distinction between social integration (relationships between individuals and groups) and system integration (relationships between functions and parts of society). This theory separates out social cohesion (strength of networks) and civic integration (institutions within society). The importance of social networks for social cohesion was emphasised by Putnam (2000) and Bourdieu (1986). Putnam separated social capital into bonding (links and ties within an individual's immediate social circle) and bridging (links and ties outside of an individual's social network or class structure). Putnam further developed social capital with his notion of linking social capital; this occurs in relationships across social classes or other power structures. Arguably a person's ability to achieve, to attain advantage, relies on ties to these elites (van Straveren and Knorringa, 2006).

Arguably, welfare regions are tools for achieving and maintaining social cohesion (Bernard, 1999). Bernard (1999) argues that welfare state regions are founded on three basic principles of democracy: liberty, equality and solidarity. Depending on which government holds power then they give various levels of priority to each of the three foundations. Bosenberger, Fleury and Dickes (2016) suggest four rough versions of welfare state regions: liberal, conservative, social democratic and Mediterranean/Latin, updating Esping-Andersen's three models. They acknowledge too that the fall of the communist regimes in central and Eastern Europe has produced an additional variant of welfare state.

Commonwealth Migration

Social cohesion as a policy paradigm can be rooted in the post-world war two economic migration of workers from commonwealth countries. They settled in poor inner city areas of major cities such as London (Patterson, 1965), Birmingham (Rex and Moore, 1967) and Nottingham (Lawrence, 1974). Successive governments have prioritised policies of multiculturalism over the last forty years (Goodhart, 2013). These policies have aimed to build tolerance and a sense of living alongside rather than integration (Goodhart, 2013). Ratcliffe (2011), however, disagrees, arguing that government policy of the 1950s and 1960s was framed around integration; 'fitting in' was the essence of integration policy. Ratcliffe (2011) argues that only when this policy was unsuccessful was the notion of multiculturalism engaged with, as the Labour government of the mid 1960s 'saw the way forward as working towards a society where cultural diversity could flourish in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance' (Ratcliffe, 2011:17).

Race Relations Acts

Since 1965 a series of Race Relations Acts have been enacted, establishing the principle of equity (Lester, 1998), with the later acts extending the powers of subpoena in relation to documents and witnesses (Radcliffe, 2004). The 1976 Race Relations Act also created the Commission for Racial Equality, which had the power to launch investigations into institutions or indeed whole professions. However, after Thatcher's election funding cuts reduced the effectiveness of the Commission (Sander, 1998).

New Labour

The New Labour government of 1997 onwards adopted a culturist approach to policy (Ratcliffe, 2011). This culturist approach involved those who were socially excluded being considered as a community apart, the excluded were framed as responsible for their exclusion (Gough et al, 2006). The Social Exclusion Unit created a variety of policy action teams to cover key areas of policy (Ratcliffe, 2011). Sure Start was created to develop early educational opportunities for children from deprived areas. There was a heavy focus on 'community' and 'neighbourhood' as routes to sustainable change. This is further evidenced by the New Deal for Communities programme, where thirty-nine of the most deprived communities in the country were allocated a major injection of public finance.

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 that emerged from the institutional racism (Macpherson, 1999) displayed during the Stephen Lawrence inquiry imposed key statutory responsibilities on the police. The public authorities (a newly expanded definition included in the Act) were required to draw up Race Equality Schemes by May 2001, and Race Equality Schemes that already existed were required to complete Race Equality Impact Assessments. However, having the right legislation was not enough, with 'public authorities for a number of reasons reluctant to adopt them' (Ratcliffe, 2011:19).

In 2001 the term 'social cohesion' entered the policy arena after outbreaks of civil unrest and social disturbances in the UK. There is a 'strong link between social exclusion and insecurity' (United Nations Development Program (UNDP), 2009:14). The 2001 Cattle Report considered the riots of Bradford, Burnley and Oldham, and highlighted the *parallel lives* lived by communities divided by ethnicity. However, it is important to note that 'the drivers of violence and insecurity are various and complex' (UNDP, 2009). The Local Government Association (LGA) defined a cohesive community as one where there is a common vision and sense of belonging for all communities, the diversity of people's backgrounds is appreciated and valued, those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities, and strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds (LGA 2002:6).

Community cohesion was further developed as a policy narrative in the Pathfinder programme (Home Office and Vantage Point, 2003), which aimed to increase the quality of cross-cultural interaction. This policy initiative too failed to recognise the lived experiences within a locality, that trust is integral:

Immigration tends to impact disproportionately on already poor, deprived communities and as a direct consequence, some local inter-communal tensions are to be expected. (Ratcliffe, 2011:25)

Attempts to build trust and create identity around civic values have had some success, and the concept of an '*Oldhamer*' has had some success (Ratcliffe, 2011). Other approaches have taken a more corporate approach, introducing a 'toolkit' for community cohesion (Community Cohesion Unit, 2005). Ensuring local level participation in policy impacts on success (UNDP, 2009). However, local work on community cohesion can be compromised by central government policies and global politics (Rose et al, 2016). Inevitably, social and community cohesion narratives are affected by the effects of global policy:

[G]overnment and policy makers are neither able to control global capitalism and its effects, nor at the other end of the scale direct or manage the fortunes of individual neighbourhoods within their jurisdictions. (Kearns and Parkinson, 2001:2103)

The equalities agenda, recognising inter-sectionality, began from the 2000s. In 2007 the Equalities and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) replaced three former commissions: the Commission for Racial Equality, the Equal Opportunities Commission and the Disability Rights Commission. Alongside this the media were raising concerns around increasingly diverse immigration, in the wake of EU expansion and reported increases in radicalisation (Ratcliffe, 2011). The response to these concerns revived the language of cohesion and integration. The need to 'integrate' migrants and enhance spoken English among migrant communities was once again on the agenda, echoing the politics of the 1960s (Ratcliffe, 2011). The media are influential in 'shaping, amplifying and responding to public attitudes towards poverty' (McKendrick et al, 2008) and indeed migration (Ratcliffe and Newman, 2011).

The Commission on Integration and Cohesion (CIC) offered four key principles for 'open communities': shared futures, a new model of rights and responsibilities, a new emphasis on mutual respect and civility, and visible social justice (CIC, 2007:1). The CIC described a cohesive community as one enabling contributions from a wide range of individuals, having a strong sense of an individual's rights and responsibilities, where those from different backgrounds have similar life chances, where there is trust in intrusions, where commonalities between newly arrived and existing residents are emphasised and where there are strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds. In 2008 the DCLG published a formal response to the CIC's (2007) definitions of integration and cohesion:

Community cohesion is what must happen in all communities to enable different groups of people to get on well together. A key contributor to cohesion is integration which is what must happen to enable new residents to adjust to one another. (DCLG, 2008:10)

This vision was based on three foundations: people from different backgrounds having similar life opportunities, people knowing their rights and responsibilities and people trusting each other and local institutions. These three foundations led to three ways of living together: with shared vision and a sense of belonging, with a focus on what communities have in common and strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds (DCLG, 2008:10). The challenge was to create a policy agenda that emerged from these statements that added inequality as well as intra (and inter) community relationships (Ratcliffe, 2011).

New Labour's community cohesion policy emerged as part of the 'Third Way' approach which was arguably a compromise between socialism and liberalism (Giddens, 1998), emphasising pragmatism over ideology. The term 'community' was attractive arguably for its ambiguity (Schofield, 2002). The New Labour concept of 'community' and communitarianism (Putnam, 2000; Etzioni, 1993) aimed to 'formalise a cogent and coherent defence and celebration of community life' (Sage, 2012:2). The contested meanings of community and 'Community's legendary 'plasticity' of course means that it is nearly always a highly attractive tool for policy makers' (Hancock 2012:355). Communitarianism aimed to reinvigorate citizenship to help to re-shape the social, philosophical and political agenda. Communitarianism argued that with rights came responsibilities, and citizens needed to engage with these responsibilities in order to create a better society. Communitarianism can be seen as a critique of neoliberalism; we might be individuals but we are also part of universal groups such as families. The notion of shared values emerged, with consensus considered a positive goal (Yuval-Davis et al, 2005), and integration was framed as a learned competence within policy narratives (Jones, 2015).

Conservative–Liberal Democrat Coalition

Arguably New Labour's successor, the Conservative–Liberal Democrat Coalition's agenda drew too on Etzioni's (1993) communitarian agenda. Hancock (2012) argues that whilst the concept of community remained a key policy notion of the Coalition, it was a top down depoliticised community rather than the community engagement of deprived communities. Fiscal crisis was used as a reason why we cannot deviate from the neoliberal paradigm (Hancock et al, 2012). The Coalition, Hancock et al (2012) argue, used the concept of community to facilitate the neoliberal notion of an alternative to state provided welfare.

Governmentality

Governmentality is a useful means of 'conceptualising a genre of policies that make the focus on individual freedom and responsibility their starting point' (Jones, 2015:14). Foucault discusses his theory of governmentality in terms of 'the conduct of conduct' (Foucault, 1982:221). For Foucault, governmentality is a form of governance where control (power) is exercised through the development of a situation where individuals feel responsible for their own lives and circumstances. It is where ultimately individuals comply with the rule of law, because they see it as essential to their civic engagement as citizens (Rose, 1999). Foucault contrasts governmentality with sovereign power that requires citizens to conform to the rule of law by using punitive methods (Foucault, 1991). Foucault's theory of governmentality 'enables us to think about government not just as a process of state, but as something that is undertaken at the level of the individual self' (Jones, 2015:5). Here we can consider the individuals who are enacting the policies of governmentality, the policy practitioners (Jones, 2015:5). These policy practitioners are made up of local government workers, civil servants, members of think tanks and local community groups, and their role involves the implementation of governmentality.

Considering policy practitioners in this way, Jones suggests, allows us to consider 'policy as a dynamic, ongoing practice [which] gets closer to understanding government as shifting and interpretative rather than commanding' (2015:5). Policy practitioners working in the social cohesion field negotiate social cohesion within and between national and local contexts, encouraging dialogue between groups that may have otherwise been separate from each other (Hunter, 2013; Ahmed, 2012; Hoggett et al, 2006; Lipsky 1980). These street level bureaucrats (Lipsky, 1980) are comfortable with uncomfortable conversations and are able to negotiate the interwoven relationships that exist within communities, recognising the fragile webs of emotion and power that link communities of identity, geography and circumstance (Jones, 2015).

This shift towards governmentality has seen a return to a Victorian narrative of the deserving and undeserving poor and a 'dangerous alchemic mix of more austerity and more authoritarian' (Clarke and Newman 2012:316). The language of 'fairness' introduced by the Conservative–Liberal Democrat Coalition policy approaches replaced New Labour's equality. Wiggan (2012:389) states 'the concept of fairness is utilised to manufacture a dichotomy between those who are said to primarily contribute to, and those who are primarily said to receive, social security.'

Arguably Coalition policy and subsequent Conservative party policy marginalise the structural aspects of persistent unemployment and poverty by transforming these into individual pathologies of begging dependency and worklessness (Wiggan, 2012). Finlayson (2010) states that there has been an attempt to separate the economics from the social effects of policy. The Coalition, and subsequently the Conservative party, have evoked notions of deserving and undeserving poor, reframing the social constructivist post-war notion of welfare into a neoliberal individualist approach emphasising personal responsibility, self-motivation and the superiority of the market (Wiggan, 2012). The 2010 Equality Act was a key achievement for the Coalition government:

‘linking equalities with the human rights agenda provides a strong and necessary basis for arguing for the importance of services that may be considered expensive’ (Ratcliffe and Newman, 2001:271).

Although the attempt to include ‘socio-economic’ grounds in the 2010 Equality Act failed (Walby et al, 2012), this led to some inequalities having stronger legal powers than others (Walby et al, 2012; Bell, 2004; Hepple et al, 2000). This has implications for the varying forms of competition, co-operation, hierarchy and hegemony between inequalities (Walby et al, 2012).

Conservative Government

Arguably changes in economic and social capitals have resulted in communities with fewer connections to each other; ‘these trends have resulted in a Britain that is at once more diverse and less integrated ... social divisions as our communities of trust’ (Umunna, 2016:7). The reality of social cohesion can be recognised as a process; a vibrant, diverse solidarity of multicultural communities can be the ideal but it is also important to recognise the pressures that rapid demographic and cultural changes placed on people’s sense of belonging. Building a more socially cohesive community, Umunna suggests, will involve ‘seriously engaging with the vital task of managing change and crafting a politics which speaks to the concerns of both globalists and patriots’ (2016:7).

The Casey Review (2016) explored social cohesion, focusing on isolation and disadvantage. Casey highlighted the experiences of certain groups of Muslim women, who, she suggests, struggle to participate in British life, although this can be contested. The segregation that emerges from this reduces life opportunities. From this analysis, she expresses hope that the next wave of fighting for women’s equality reaches across all communities. The Casey Review (2016) was a motivation behind the community poetry project with three generations of Muslim women. The project sought to explore the nested identities of the women and their experience of living in Rotherham, it sought too to challenge Casey’s (2016) findings regarding Muslim women’s engagement in public life. Casey (2016) links fear of appearing racist, or fear of inflaming racial tension, to the child sexual exploitation cases in Rotherham:

We have to be honest about abuse, discrimination and disadvantage wherever it occurs. If we wouldn’t stand for it with white women, we shouldn’t stand for it with any women. (Casey, 2016:5b).

Current approaches to social cohesion place the individual as the ‘problem’ and consider modes of behaviour change to stem from a communitarian, social capital framework adopting modes of policy change that enhance social capital (Radcliffe, 2001). Lewis and Craig (2014) list four threats to community cohesion: the extent of the local authorities’ community cohesion agenda and its approach to equality, the covert problematising of specific populations (BAME groups over white populations), the focus on partnership funding over single organisation funding and the funding cuts experienced by civil society as a whole. Lewis and Craig (2014) link security and immigration policies to negative impacts on community cohesion. In radicalising difference, arguably, community cohesion is impacted. The Prevent agenda has arguably ‘generated a perception and reality of enhanced securitisation and the side lining of cohesion’ (Thomas 2014:472). The Prevent agenda has been critiqued as Islamophobic (Rose et al, 2016).

Integration as Policy

Integration is not a simple concept. It can be defined from a variety of perspectives and can be linked to assimilation or to inter-cultural confidence (Cantle, 2016). Integration cannot be left to chance; the most important starting point needs to be a one of living together (Cantle, 2016). Cantle (2016) suggests that a positive starting point is in education where dangerous conversations can be tackled and the issue of segregation among class groups can be approached to offer opportunities for cross-cultural interaction. Other areas to be approached are segregation within business and housing policies, creating opportunities to experience diversity (Cantle, 2016).

Contact can promote integration and build social ties. Waterhead Academy is a new school built in Oldham, one of the towns that featured in Cantle’s (2001) report that concluded Asian and white communities were living ‘parallel lives’. Hewstone (2016) researched the young people in a longitudinal study from before the new school opened and through five years of education in the new school setting. Whilst the results revealed segregation still existed, the mixed school setting improved cohesion:

pupils self-segregated by gender and, to a significantly greater degree, by ethnicity. There was, however, a significant increase in integration over time. (Hewstone, 2016:20)

Hewstone's (2016) findings revealed that there was reduced anxiety and increased liking and contact between, British Asian and white groups over time, yet segregation or re-segregation was evident. The young people held cross group friendships and sat in mixed seating groups in the classroom; however, when lunchtime seating preferences were observed these were much more segregated by ethnic grouping. This led Hewstone (2016) to conclude that the young people of Waterhead Academy no longer led the 'parallel lives' referred to in the Cattle Report of 2001 as they have mixed and made friends across ethnic groups, but more can be done to further support and maintain this promising start.

Summary

This section has traced the policy background to social cohesion from Durkheimian theories of 'social glue' and solidarity to the Race Relations Acts that began a series of reforms in 1976 and the variety of integration and multicultural policies enacted by successive governments of various colours. Having defined artistic approaches to social cohesion and social cohesion as concepts, and reviewed the policy background to social cohesion, the next section of this review will consider the key themes that have emerged as part of the project.

Themes that Emerge from Using Artistic Approaches to Social Cohesion

The 'Taking Yourself Seriously' project began work in February 2017. The projects have taken very different 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 that fed into the project's critical thinking group. The critical thinking group was made up of those working on the three projects and invited social cohesion specialists. The group existed as a safe reflective learning space to consider, discuss and reflect on the learning that was taking place within each of the projects, connecting this learning up to the overall project aim which considered the use of arts methodologies for social cohesion. The 'Taking Yourself Seriously' project drew 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 were 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.

An Alternative Lens

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.

Emotional and Embodied 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.

Situated Knowledge

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.

Relational Aspects of Knowledge and Material Thinking

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.

Praxis and Reflexivity

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, 1987⁶), of re-scrutinising through different means and lenses (Goodman, 1968⁷). Art offers the capacity to 'vex' (Geertz, 1983⁸) 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)

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).

Sociological 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).

⁶ Caputo (1987) is a philosopher of religion who writes on critical hermeneutics

⁷ Goodman (1968) *Languages of Art: An Approach to a Theory of Symbols* is a key text on [aesthetics](#) in the [analytic tradition](#).

⁸ Geertz (1983) wrote on symbolic anthropology a theory which considers the role of symbols in constructing public meaning

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. Co-production methods draw on and seek to enact a variety of critical theories including Marxist, anarchism's, critical race theories, feminisms, queer theories and Critical disability theories (Bell and Pahl, 2017). Arts based practices offer the opportunity for research participant and their audiences to engage in imagination and in so doing to produce diverse counter-narratives (Foster, 2016). In recognising alternative knowledge's co-coproduction 'destabilise academia as a privileged site for the production and dissemination of knowledge (Bell and Pahl, 2017:3). Bell and Pahl, (2017) warn that co-production can be diluted and repressed by neoliberal approaches and that co-production needs to be structured around a critical understanding of hope. Co-production can

....increase the capacities of communities to co-produce situated, embodied knowledge of relevance for their struggle and its openness to situated and embodied experiences makes neo-liberalisms conservative understandings of community impossible to maintain. (Bell and Pahl, 2017, 8)

Co-production recognises diverse epistemology (Pahl, 2014) which is reflected in dialogue arts practice (Kester, 2004), listening (Foster, 2016; Back, 2007) and the development of spaces of unknowing (Vasudevan, 2011). Arts based research practices lend themselves to collaborative working and 'the control participant have over the research process is central to the transformation potential of this methodology' (Foster, 2016:2)

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.

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)

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).

Boundary Spanners

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 Yourselves 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).

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. Empathy is an essential element of empowering voice, and is important in building artistic dialogue

...we can never claim to fully inhabit the other subjects position: but we can imagine it, and this imagination, the approximation, can radically alter our sense of who we are' (Kester, 2004:115)

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). The process of art based practice can create a safe space for empathic dialogue. Here the artist's role is not in offering creative vision but in listening. Arts based practices can,

...challenge dominant representations of a given community and create a more complex understanding of and empathy for, that community among a broader public' (Kester, 2004:115)

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.

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.

The central tenants of critical race theory are fixed around voice and praxis, critical race theory aids researchers to consider their own assumptions about race and reflect on how they view themselves in relation to wider society (Duncan,) It is in this context that the 'Taking Yourselves Seriously' project utilises the tenants of critical race theory

Critical race theory can be seen as a historical movement and a philosophical orientation that recognises the centrality and permanence of racism" (Kumasi, 2011:201).

Du Bois (1953) theory of double consciousness laid the foundation for crucial social theories that address race and power. Shujaa's (1994) work 'Too Much Schooling, too Little education: A paradox of black life in white society' developed Du Bois's (1953) legacy. Critical Race scholars acknowledge the permanence of racism, while arguing that recognition should not lead to despair (Kumasi, 2011) but to opposition. For critical race theorists, recognising the permanence of racism is an 'acknowledgement of the trouble of the world' (Dixon and Rousseau, 2006). Stories can help overcome ethnocentric views, and provide people with a vehicle for self-expression, in telling the stories of black people, critical race theory derives from an alternative frame of reference to the dominant culture, and speaks to the importance of naming your own reality. For,

...as individuals seek to move beyond the nefarious legacy of racism in the post-civil rights era and in an increasingly globalist, multiculturalism societal context, race will continue to command increased attention (Kumasi, 2011:210).

In taking a participatory approach research to research the 'Taking Yourselves Seriously' project aims to be collaborate, and holds to a relational ontology (Datta et al, 2015) which is respectful to multiple forms of knowledges, and accountable to communities.

Whose culture has capital (Yosso, 2005) addresses community cultural wealth and power. Indeed, 'Race and power intersect in ways that not only shape my life choices but also shape the larger societies struggle over valued cultural and material resources such as schools' (Kumasi, 2011:197). Tuhiwai Smith critiques western paradigms of research and knowledge, and aims for a more critical understand of the underlying assumptions, motivations and values that inform research practices (1999:1). There is significant power in research and how it is represented, arguing for a decolonisation of research practices, and for the creation of safe spaces, 'to retrieve spaces of marginalisation as spaces from which to develop indigenous research agendas' (Tuhiwai-Smith 1999: 5). In collaborating in the creation of this literature review and in co-writing a journal article attached to the project, the 'Taking Yourselves Seriously' team have aimed to share research ownership, and maintain community control over the research analysis (Datta et al, 2015). For if the everyday is a source of expression, then it is also in the everyday that resistance should emerge (Foster, 2016). Here we can use arts based practice to address power relations in the research process, by reducing focus on the written word and working with alternative modes of communication (Foster, 2012: 533). Indeed 'at the heart of arts based inquiry is a radical, political grounded statement about social justice and control over the production and dissemination of knowledge' (Finley, 2008:72). Arts based research methodologies for social cohesion can potentially be utilised to re-focus research methodologies to theoretical and political commitment (Lather, 1991).

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)

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. It is important that dissemination of research is accessible and inclusive of community partners (Bell and Pahl, 2017). Indeed 'research that is not orientated towards transformation effective reinforces inequality by default' (Lynch, 2000:89).

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).

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 'choose 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).

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.

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 Yourselves 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 Yourselves 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 literature review has been written as a resource for the 'Taking Yourselves Seriously' project and has considered arts methodologies as an approach to social cohesion. The 'Taking Yourselves 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. In this project, 'Taking Yourselves Seriously', these approaches are considered as key research methods augmenting conventional social scientific methods, such as interviews, focus groups and questionnaires, in working with people in diverse community settings.

This literature review has sought to define the varied and contested understandings of arts methodologies and social cohesion and summarised the policy background to social cohesion policy. Key themes of knowledge, co-production, roles, voice and ethics that have emerged as part of the 'Taking Yourselves Seriously' project have been reviewed.

In conclusion, arts methodologies for social cohesion are complex, integrated and emotional. Success and failure should be held in tension (Visweswaran, 1994:100). Issues of power and trust are located in conversations around inequality, identity and diversity. For in order to promote social justice there is a need to recognise that knowledge is inseparable from issues of power and control, it is those with knowledge that hold the power (Foster, 2016). Power can not simply be handed over through the research process, however opportunities can be created for 'people to explore their own lives, to acknowledge their suffering, to communicate it and perhaps even to move forwards from it' (Foster, 2016:132).

Using arts methodologies for social cohesion is to ask questions and create connections from an alternative angle: 'Having reflections and critical thoughts is to get active, posing questions is to come to life' (Hirchhorn, 2003). Indeed, arts methodologies enliven our minds, bodies and emotions by recognising the multiplicity of our knowledge and identities. Arts methodologies empower the process of social cohesion through an alternative lens (Eisner, 1997); they offer an opportunity to build dialogue and reflect alternative knowledges.

'the per formative orientation of arts-based inquiry invites a richer and more nuanced exploration of humanity than much conversational research is able to provide' (Foster, 2016:133)

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. When discussing social cohesion and social justice the stories and experiences shared in artistic form can be difficult to express and difficult to listen to, these stories operate as a call for social justice and require a 'different kind of inhabitation' (Ahmed 2004:39). Involving people in the research process 'has the potential to enable them to determine their own social and political realities and can restore a social bond through collective understanding of meaning' (Foster, 2016:135). For as Foster reflects 'if we are to know the world differently we need to act and be differently in the world' (2016:141).

Key to the 'Taking Yourselves Seriously' work of using arts methodologies is the process of social cohesion. Using arts based methodologies for social cohesion is a process of listening to voices and considering who is listened to.

'...truly transformative research practice requires a careful listening for the music that accompanies our dance through life, the harmonies and beats that sing and pulsate through our suffering and joy' (Foster, 2016:142)

This literature review 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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