Becoming an indisciplinarian: Risking erasure to recover time, space and a commons.

The politics, affects and methods
of mutual improvement initiatives
in Edinburgh and Glasgow 2009-2011

Stefanie Tan Su Ann

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MSc Design and Digital Media
PGCE (English)

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School of Fine Art

For theirs is a land
With a wall around it;
And mine is a faith
In my fellow man

Theirs is a land of
Hope and glory;
Mine is the green
field
and
The
factory
floor

Between the Wars
Billy Bragg, 1984

For

Gustav

who knows

there must be a better way.

Here is but one of many.

Abstract

This dissertation presents the value of indisciplinarity as a phase of transition to a sustainable wall-less classroom. Can a healthy erasure of over-institutionalised specialist authorities address higher levels of engagement in Secondary schools? What could this process of cultivating an emancipatory redistribution of authorities entail?

2008-2011 saw government austerity measures severely impacting social care and university funding. In Scotland, more self-organised mutual improvement groups undertook indisciplinary approaches. How did these conditions result in these mutual improvement groups constructing a curriculum from the commons?

This critical social research presents these accessible, diverse self-directed groups through memos, vignettes, e-mails and transcripts coded for thematic analysis. It focuses on the early stages of “ungrounding” and emerging subjectivities. This participant observation research documents these attempts to sustain leaderless collectives of autodidactic promise. The “Autodidact Archives” subsequently locates these field observations in the reality of the institutional educators’ personal experience. Their recounts legitimise forms of vernacular values to encourage the cultivation of self-taught expertise.

Despite operating on similar democratic assumptions such as horizontal organisation, consensus by assembly, and diverse inclusive constituents, each group produced different termini. Critical concepts of commons and enclosure challenge the pharmakon of autodidactism within a growing restless multitude of a post-Fordist “democracy”. The indisiciplinarian as a facilitator or student manifests these tensions, risking their ipseity.

In the seventies, the rurbanisation movement and alternatives propose moulding institutions to suit human activity, not vice versa. Through the lens of critical deschooling, this dissertation presents groups of ordinary people enacting non-hierarchical alternatives pit against austerity: radicals, conservatives and the undecided between them. The wall-less classrooms are already tentative steps towards the erasure of authority where schools become sites of found assembly, not imperatives. Learning set in the vernacular values of a community is ageless and potent and engages not just students but the disengaged sectors of society.

Key figures
Jeanne Van Heeswijk, Ivan Illich, Jacques Rancière, Bernard Stiegler.

Keywords
Indisciplinary, erasure, deschooling, vernacular values, commons, assembly.

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Preface

Dear Reader,

Edinburgh and Glasgow have been my intellectual alma maters. Both cities have always been kind to this incomer since I was 18. These traits, of independence, criticality and curiosity have seen me through two masters and this SORSAS-sponsored PhD. After a decade of teaching in Singapore, I experienced first-hand the material and cultural infrastructure which encourages the pursuit of perfection, prosperity and prestige through education via narrow education avenues of summative assessments. The outsider politics of my participation with these marginalised groups redressed institutional critique and objectively offer fresh perspectives to disprove the mantra that there is no alternative. Like Billy Bragg's lyric, this inbetween place helped me reassess an education of enclosure which promises the individual the "good life" at the cost of the wealth of a co-operative commons.

The dissertation presents these deschooled premises to garner inspiration to invigorate engaged learning. A new reality confronts knowledge increasingly constructed collectively rather than consumed individually. These meandering irrepressible multivoiced dérives may seem bewildering but prescient where technology challenges the bounds of learning institutions.

This necessary ungrounding process undergone was dynamic, unpredictable and messy. The appetite for alternative forms of self-governance or activism in academia urges ethical authenticity in presenting the world as observed. Thus, indisiciplinarian inquiry weaves in and out of professional, practitioner and participant voices to capture the imagination of a possible commons. The anonymity of the participants serves as an "everyman" device to engage and immerse you in this multitude's chorus.

There are two key navigational tools: the colour coded research timeline in Appendix 1 and thematic quotes from activist academics binding disparate group discussions into coherence. The Results: Chapters 4-8 correspond to progressive reflections at each stage. These groups' formative years demonstrate a premise of restoring wonderment in organising mutual improvement groups which overdetermined learning institutions may do well to recover.

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Et lux in tenebris lucet

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Quintessentially for good company on this variegated dérive:

Jeanne Van Heeswijk for her truth.

_Open School, Hillhead Writers, Social Centre, student activists, educators in the autodidact archive and *thiscollection*, these bound notes are yours to

debate, discuss or disgust.

Ever Ungrounding, yours truly.

Author's Declaration

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Stefanie Tan PHD *Creativity Studies*

DECLARATION:
I hereby declare that all material in this textual dissertation is my own work and contains no material previously submitted for the award of degree by this or any other university. Submitted to The Glasgow School of Art for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Stefanie Tan, The Glasgow School of Art
School of Fine Art, March 2023
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Definition of terms

Affective filter hypothesis: The affective filter hypothesis is indebted to Krashen and Terrell's Natural Approach to Second Language acquisition research (Krashen & Terrel, 1998). It refers to the student's affective well-being and openness to learning, which impacts their course of inquiry. A student's inhibitions to a subject depend on the level of unwarranted monitored scrutiny a course requirement or teacher technician prescribes.

Amateur: A problematic term that refers to a spectrum of practical and hobbyist self-education activities and attitudes. Referring to Jonathan Rose's study of mutual improvement societies, the economic circumstances of the industrial revolution forced once skilled artisans into amateur workmen to learn the language of the machine system, reading and arithmetic. However, his archival research also depicted the amateur hobbyist who sought to learn from the premise of wonderment and purity of knowing where recognition by establishments was incidental. In the post-Fordist era transitioning via virtual capitalism, Andrew Keane's criticism of the cult of the amateur is that the pursuit of this amateur autodidact has destabilising consequences for democracy as it stands. Two contradictory effects: they empower the individual as informational creators and as the centre of their own personal 'me-dia' ecology. Conscious of this spectrum which situates this study, a humble realistic picture of amateur self-formation is considered; *refusing fixed ideological identities and programmes, they are not what power or the media understand them to be*. (Ball, 2016)

Anthropocene: A recurring term in Bernard Stiegler's work encompasses the current global cultural/environmental/social crisis embodied in a new 'epoch' and the rapid changes in employment/work mainly due to technology. This dissertation emphasises the second reference to the virtualisation of labour and formal education's broadly uncritical reliance on proprietary software instead of cultivating a bricolage DIY experimental approach to understanding technology.

Assembly: A form of direct democracy, a social, multi-age, non-hierarchical organisation of diverse constituents involved in building consensus centred on community concerns and action. It rejects consensus by voting alone, which artificially finalises an ongoing negotiating process. The assumption that consensus is homogenous can stall effective assembly. Instead, they have to be seen as a feature of a living community's developmental process, not byzantine administration of partitioned competing services as they currently are experienced.

Austerity: In 2008, the financial crash and the government's bailout of banks resulted in a backlash against cuts in public sectors of education

and social care against wage freezes of civil service and care sector labourers.

Autodidact *see Amateur commonly* refers to an amateur who developed in-depth knowledge of their interest and are responsible for the breakthrough of established understandings and potentially the discovery of new fields. In this dissertation the groups studied offered platforms of support for such an endeavour but redistribute the autodidact trait oft located in a lone individual to be understood as a phase of self-development in the age of a murmuring multitude.

Commons: In social science or history, literature on the concept of the commons primarily focus on the land, water and natural resource as a common to be managed cooperatively. This work reflects on cultural commons as a climate of sharing, trust and willingness to negotiate. A commons may refer to a transient rather than a fixed community, as existing schools are organised – hence the use of the plural despite the singular article. Action to secure a commons is usually collective rather than directed. It often consists of a diverse range of constituents of mixed age, abilities, and backgrounds, mainly from marginalised sectors of the population.

Conscientisation: Refers to Brazilian educational theorist and foundational figure for critical pedagogy Paulo Freire's most influential 1968 work, *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. In this work, he coined the term 'conscientisation' to describe a continual process of consciousness-raising and breaking through normative mythologies to reach heightened levels of awareness, particularly becoming aware of systems of oppression.

Constructivist: This is a bottom-up approach to learning that views knowledge as socially constructed from thoughtful learners' observations and experiences. Research decisions made in this study were along Foucauldian lines *within the reading of neoliberalism that subjectivity and the self become key sites of struggle. That is the point in which he finds power in its most immediate form, on the site, on the grounds of our own subjectivity*. (Ball, 2016)

Convivial society: According to Ivan Illich's 2009 treatise on "Convivial Reconstruction", it is a society where "all members can access autonomous action utilising tools least controlled by others. People feel joy, as opposed to mere pleasure, to the extent that their activities are creative."

Co-opted/Instrumentalised: Refers to the extraction of alternative activism's strategies of resistance as propaganda to monetise the illusion of freedom.

Curriculum: Subjects taught in a school or university course. The term is problematised in the dissertation, not in its value as a tool of organisation; even open free schools had their reading lists and workshops. Can the new curriculum of a commons move from being a remote and abstract document to be enriched by decentralisation and reassembly? Authentic engagement with contributions from the wider community heightens targeted relevant research.

Deschooling: Illich proposed weaning society off this addiction to a pedagogical logic that disables the actual potential capacity to learn cooperatively without schooling. He defines schooling as validation of knowing by an institutional representative, i.e. the teacher or a system of accreditation. Despite calling for schools to be disestablished "as dehumanising enterprises, all together." He would later conclude (Illich, 1971) that society, not just the education sector, needs "deschooling."

Education: Much of the study focuses on informal groups who self-select and govern how and what they learn. These groups having an open and fluctuating membership, have developed structures and tactics to cope with uncertainty and remain hospitable. Their willingness to experiment enables them to uncover a curriculum from a commons through assembly and testimony. These extra-institutional settings encourage a culture of wall-lessness to deliver the philosophy of CfE’s broad-based education to develop independent and resilient learners. The constructivist study focuses more on deschooling as a premise wherein a hybrid Boalean and Freirean figure emerges from these situations.

Education system: The motivation of the study is to understand how positivistic measures of accreditation and accountability delimit the reach and benefits of authentic assessment initiatives. For instance, the dilemma facing CfE Senior phase examination preparation requires a radical rethink of a sustainable education fit for purpose. Can these working alternatives of non-hierarchical forms of shared leadership where disciplined study have curiosity and mutual aid as considerations? The groups studied were in touch with the locals' needs to generate a curriculum from a commons while learning to count on an assembly as a site of exploratory dialogue. Although activist and community work rely on popular education and lifelong learning in adult education, the indisciplinary approach to non-hierarchical and ageless settings aimed to reposition the arguments to benefit those outwith those sectors.

Extractive enclosures: A phrase from Hardt & Negri's "Commonwealth" (2009) describes enclosures as a dehumanising view where everything is a resource from which as much value must be extracted and profit maximised. From the yield of land via mine or agriculture to how productive labour is in commercial ventures.

Habitus: Referring to Pierre Bourdieu's field theory (Bourdieu, 1993), an individual's habitus is shaped by class orientation, religion, gender, race, and ethnicity, which impacts their access to information and levels of education.

Indisciplinarian: An indisciplinarian reconnects and responds directly with tangible pre-existing conditions (Rogoff, 2006) of a situation, experience or artefact to arrive at an unexpected conclusion. Its antithesis operates from an overdetermined specialism (Rancière, 2006b). Indisciplinarity is not a license to disregard the rules or promote extreme epistemological relativism at the cost of truth. Nor is it a license for the outspoken few to thoughtlessly claim the privileges of autonomy, only to replicate the existing system as petite princes building micro empires.

Individuation: Refers to a collective assembly of conscious *amour de soi* persons. Jean Jacques Rosseau's concepts of *amour de soi* and amour-propre frame this definition. Amour-propre is esteem that must be found by the approval of others first. *Amour de soi,* however, is restrained, affirming the value of oneself that does not pursue one's self-interest at the expense of others. The restoration of Amore *de soi* and care for the other leads to acts of individuation, such as enacting commons but demands tolerance for a state of flux between two amours.

Liminality: Badiou and Rancièrean thoughts cited here rely on accepting the inevitability of uncertainty of an in-between period, typically a significant rite of passage and state of transition.

Monitor hypothesis: the formalism of rule-based grammar structures can discount language's fast-paced, lively nature of exchange. The monitor hypothesis refers to the teacher as an explicator who narrowly focuses on capturing and collecting discrete results and removes the pleasure of learning from its informal vernacular context. (Krashen & Terrel, 1998)

Multitude: Typically, a mass of ordinary people without power and influence (OED). However, Negri & Hardt depict this as a site of potential "An open and expansive network in which all differences or diversity can be expressed freely and equally. A network that provides the means of encounter so that we can work and live in common [while retaining our unique differences]. The multitude is the multiplicity of all these singular differences." (Hardt & Negri, 2004). The multitude is a praxis based on an individual's choices, openness to discussion, reinvention and letting go of the "plan". Theirs is a *reality which is blurred: identities, activities, membership, causes, reasons, categorisations and relationships are all multiple* (Ball, 2016), which established power struggles to manage.

Neganthrophy: Stiegler uses this term to describe active labour with tangible purpose, and the result observed by the labourer negates

atrophy. By contrast, the Neganthropocene is a will to transformative and politically accountable chaos that remaps agency, power, and semiocapitalism, which capitalises on producing immaterial goods such as “knowledge”.

Pharmakon/ology: The term pharmakon originally refers to medicines which can be restorative or poisonous depending on measured or wreckless dispensation. For example, Digital technology can connect cultures as well as subject them to surveillance.

Self-education: These autodidactic traits outside of formal accreditation raise issues of limited accessibility and installation of false hierarchies. If the benefits of education fail to be distributed by good governance, the health of civil society is adversely impacted. In response, the murmuring multitude evolves into self-governing independent pockets mistrustful of established authorities. Informal self-education readily lends itself to a Vygotskian open, stable, democratic, and wide-ranging rich resources garnered from the grassroots.

Self-institutionalisation: The conditioning of the teacher as a technician to operate within institutions results in stultifying, explicating, overdetermined scenarios. The demands of the narrow schooling agenda activate Krashen's monitor habits and behaviour which discourage developing learner autonomy (Gresham, 2019). The codes of the institution are embedded in one’s logic. Self-Institutionalisation results in perceiving schooling is everywhere, something to be managed, qualified by meeting standards, demonstrating effectiveness, something to be controlled.

Social epistemology: The philosophical study of the relevance of communities to knowledge construction (Kusch, 2017).

Subjectivities: A form of bias and individuality determined by personal experiences in response to one’s larger historical and political context, e.g. emerging subjectivities refer to the radical ways individuals situate themselves in relation to power during dramatic changes in technology, modes of communication or pandemics. As evidenced by the groups studied, self-governance is an alternative for new “subjects” to resist being shaped by a dominant technological society (Ellul,1964). *Subjectivity is a central philosophical concept related to consciousness, agency, personhood, reality, and truth, which sources have variously defined. It is a process of individuation and socialisation, the individual never being isolated in a self-contained environment but endlessly engaging in interaction with the surrounding world*. (Silverman et al.,2014.)

Vernacular: This dissertation refers to Illich's concept of vernacular values derived from Roman law, describing vernacular as "everything produced within the household is for consumption within the household and not for sale or exchange." It also refers to a "common sense" pragmatics rooted in concrete lived awareness of one's environment and cultural mores. An intelligence whose *embedded data* (Tay, 2011) of an inhabited commons can respond to situations on a grounded basis. Vernacular culture is often associated with the populist sentiment when there were forms of assemblies where members could negotiate resolutions and make informed collective decisions.

List of Abbreviations

JvH:	Jeanne Van Heeswijk
_OS:	_Open School
EGL:	Evacuation of Great Learning
TTP:	Through Train Programme
IWC:	Integrated World Capitalism
TKS:	Tay Kheng Soon
CfE:	Curriculum for Excellence
FIU:	Free International University
FIT:	Film in Translation
NoU:	New opening of University project
ALP:	Adult Learning Programme),
SOOT:	Save our Old Town
MOOC:	Massive open online courses
HHWG:	Hillhead Writer’s Group
EUREDUCON:	European Education Conference

Chapter 1 Introduction

During the COVID-19 lockdowns, schools were forced to close their doors, disrupting the system to which society had become accustomed. These formal institutions had to radically re-evaluate their relevance, having to redefine their services online to survive. René Girard, an indisciplinarian scholar, describes society as suffering from an addiction to institutionalised education[1]. Deschoolers provoke the notion is knowledge or learning reducible to a process of documentation "assessed by a stranger in an alien setting"[2] bound by artificial constructs of the timetable.

> The institution competes with the education of the child in its natural environment the home. Educating their children is what mothers or fathers or relatives do in order to make a happy life – for themselves and for their child. But in our epoch this is what they are less and less able to do: they are prevented by the control that has been taken in protentions and from the earliest phases of life, through systems that capture the attention of both young and old alike, installing proletarianisation, ruining attention and generating immense misery and poverty – affective, symbolic.
>
> (Stiegler, 2016: 220).

Relieved from a remote and overdetermined curriculum during lockdown, education institutions missed an opportunity to reclaim interests and curiosities of youthful energies by tapping into their native environment. The factors of high levels of student disengagement link the architecture of institutionalised learning structures that necessitate a narrative of scarcity which undermines the reality of knowledge as a unified field. Many academic disciplines, classics, maths, black studies, astrophysics and scientific developments such as biology, and astronomy, that occurred in the 19th Century started outside established curricula. They depended on ranks of highly skilled amateurs prepared to carry out detailed observations and experiments (Finnegan, 2005: 10-11) (Terras, 2010). Amateurs still play a significant role in Research, but after

1 (Matos., 2005)
2 (Hern, 2008)

the installation of formal education, their initiatives are more likely to be viewed with suspicion.

Distributing learning outcomes or Bloom's taxonomy perpetuates the artifice that development across an age group is uniform, prioritising expedient convenience over engaging a holistic complementary education in age-less settings. Mechanically breaking up the taxonomy to ascribe "description", "analysis", and "synthesis" to first, second and final year students is an artificial and harmful and unrealistic understanding of diverse learner capacities. Concepts and ideas do become progressively complex; however, educators' creative and critical adaptation of policy documents "must resist the regime of quality control, which has become more about the control, than quality." (Enriquez, 2020) These also must be done in collaboration with the learner, whose time and intellect are subject to these documents. Each student's capacities are more diverse than the curriculum document assumes.

Nevertheless, there is still little resistance to this unnatural hierarchical delineation of higher thinking skills. John Dewey's application of Jevon's paradox to schooling encourages a shift to fallibilism as an approach to epistemological processes. The paradox states that while increased demand predominates, improved efficiency increases the speed at which resources are consumed. Therefore, by refuting claims that unless education was audited through conventional modes standards would be devalued, quite the contrary.

Professor Steve Fuller suggests that knowledge should be considered a public good. All school levels need to work more cohesively, even if it may mean the dissolution of the idea of the university to enrich knowledge as a public good. It will boost the health of learning overall if redistribution and communication between levels of education from secondary to tertiary are enabled. Stiegler's description of a new intergenerational social contract runs on an economy of contributions of relevant knowledge through the university with "associations of citizens [consisting of] amateurs , activists

and residents who are encouraged to work together with the academic world." (Stiegler, 2016: 207).

Currently, the continuum of education groups people by age – primary, secondary, college and Universities akin to a feeder chain of individuals. This artificial and unnatural age-bound design has contributed to the breakdown of intergenerational dialogue and a healthy openness to collaborative problem solving to benefit a nurturing support network. However, several multi-age classroom experiments fail to reach their full potential[3], as funding prioritises performance in grade-level achievement tests (Song et al.,2009). Thus, making experiential durational experiments risky and unattractive. The natural transmission from elders to the young "can increase the intelligence of the people" otherwise interrupted by modernisation. (Tay, 2011)

Despite its noble intent, democratic access to education has been micromanaged through standardised curriculum delivery as a commodity to be consumed. This for-profit model of education disables authentic learning and progress of knowledge. Differentiation is relegated to a teacher's duty in a random mixed-ability classroom to achieve measurable progress, when in reality, as these groups' diversity demonstrates, "not everybody learns something about everything." (Mitra, 2010: 685) The overreliance on standardised testing as a valid measure of fairness and social mobility must be recalibrated.

---

3 (Stone, 2009) Noteworthy list of principles and benefits of multi-age classrooms cut short unfortunately by lack of funding by 2011 Principles constructivist perspectives for children include: Learning as a whole person. / Learning is social.
Freedom to take risks, follow interests, and make choices.
Facilitation of personal construction of knowledge./ Honoring and valuing each person as unique.
Understanding child development so children are not set up for failure.
Learning through meaningful and relevant experiences.**/**Learning as a process and not a product.
Learning through play.**/** Learning as an individual
The advantages for multi-age education from social learning theory for children include:
Learning from children who are both novices and experts./Encouraging the use of more sophisticated skills in order to engage experts./ Mastering skills through modelling for diverse learners. Internalizing new understandings through "cognitive conflict" experiences with mixed ages. Developing intellectual and communication skills because of broader differences in the learning community./ Acquiring social skills in meaningful contexts with mixed ages.
Providing a natural environment for pro-social behaviors to thrive such as helping, sharing, and taking turns./ Encouraging cooperative learning in the absence of competition.
Providing contexts for the development of leadership skills for all ages.
Seeing greater benefits for all children in three age groupings than for two age groupings.

Schooling is not a necessary condition for education, but *teachers* are. Anarchist literature, from Althusser to current advocates like Suissa, propose radical challenges that influence the following line of inquiry. The teacher is by nature a deschooler.

The instrumental treatment of teachers as mere technicians shows that the schooling industrial complex of today understands the danger of teaching. Too many handlers, administrators, and a commercialised industry of textbooks and testing impede authentic education. These disciplinary schooling devices are implemented against the teacher, consequently initiating a perverse cycle of violence. Instead of trusting the imagination and engaging with local environmental intelligence as "textbooks" of direct relevance to building agency; the teacher imposes these abstract theoretical 'resources' on the students' experience.

> "The economic questions of teacher pay and unions are mostly distractions, obscuring the difficult truth that the ontological status of the teacher is the real stake in today's game. Reducing teaching to careerism is to have lost the argument. For the corporate state school to thrive, the teacher's deschooling potential must be discouraged and neutralised. Deschooling may be as simple as restoring the art of teaching to what it is and will always be: the love of wisdom which is indisiciplinary. Teaching as deschooling is the restoration of the practice of philosophy as a way of life to restoring teaching as a vocation."
>
> (Rocha, 2017: 79)

Most education journals offer well-meaning pragmatic attempts at reforming and locating deschooling theory as a transformational practice within current schooling formats (Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Wilms,1983); however, this reformist position is limited. Prevalent attitudes strive to "equip students to adapt, discover new methods of learning—of receiving information, recognising patterns, making meaning of those patterns, and disseminating that new understanding to others— must become more rapid." (Gresham, 2019). Pressure to conform to the demands of the system's dedication to flow, processing or skilling comes from the doctrine of preparing their charges to become administrators of the network economy rather than civic-minded citizens - a pedagogue's view of the

world. Can responsiveness be taught, staged or coerced? If the task were worth doing or the purpose transparent, these desired outcomes would be par for the course. The phrase “must become more rapid” highlights the issue of time and whose perspective the rapid response intends to serve. Does it promote the wealth of sustainable community life or privatised commerce that extracts labour benefits without reciprocal reinvestments?

The study of self-organised groups attempting to form mutual improvement societies is a meditation on the fundamentals of marginalised informal education as transformative. Indisciplinarity is not a whimsical iconoclastic attempt to abolish or denigrate scholarship and knowledge. It is a phase of redistributing the benefits of scholarship from narrow specialisms and elitist barriers to a disempowered majority eager to call knowledge their own[4]. These groups’ initiative, formation and existence protest elitist enclosure of “discoveries and knowledge” by privatisation and the over bureaucratisation of what should be public property. With long-standing criticism of elitism in the grammar system or quality of education being marked by purchasing powers disabling social epistemology as a critical feature essential to a functional democracy. Suppose knowledge is produced solely by a disengaged elite group of people. How are they accountable to society which depends on leadership based on said innovations to generate knowledge?
These groups studied prise the relationship between professionals and amateurs apart by assuming non-hierarchical positionalities. Specialist knowledge to achieve professional status is conditioned to serve the social mobility of the individual, a product of modern schooling. In contrast, the case for social epistemologies requires negotiating collective knowing and consensus building.

> ‘How do you bring a classroom to life as if it were a work of art?
>
> (Guattari, 1995).

These alternative self-educating group experiments refuse the powerlessness of the multitude through a militant, social, indisciplined

4 Cf (Fuller, 2011)

creativity of wild becoming. These mutable forms of subjectivity present an intriguing continuum with no determinant terminus which demand disciplinary institutions to rehumanise.

1.1 Executive Summaries

1.1.1 Statement of Intent

This qualitative research rooted in constructivist premises employs embedded emergent participatory practices. Elements of action research chart the causal conditions for the emergence of such self-organised open access mutual improvement groups. As a critical social-educational participant-observer researcher embedded in their praxis, I theorised that the early formation of these groups' self-determination politics and methods required confidence in the ambiguity of assembly and self-selection by enduring a process of ungrounding self-institutionalised conditioning. In experiencing the array of effects associated with becoming indisciplinarian, these groups' orientation, whether leaning towards enacting a commons or reproducing an extractive enclosure, determined how they organised and the sustainability of their practices. I gathered insights by:

- Documenting these self-organising groups' deinstitutionalisation processes and affects
- Running an iterative comparative analysis of the reflections and materials exchanged within the groups, and
- Generated categories and attempted a substantive theory applicable to formal educators' self-taught experiences, building a case for hybrid spaces of emancipatory education via indisciplinary approaches.

Rogoff's "Academy as Potentiality" essay offers an optimistic option to "live in parallel rather than conflictual economies…engaging in numerous non-legitimated processes, producing the new subjects we need for ourselves." These unassuming mutual improvement groups studied manifest a reality beyond the school walls to revitalise education as situated, responsive, relevant and restorative experiences. These counterexamples unpack social, political and philosophical assumptions about an outmoded education practice that defangs schooled subjects. Becoming indisciplinarian therefore is a restoration of confidence:

> Permission to not cover all the bases all the time,
> permission to start in the middle,
> permission to mix fact and fiction,
> permission to invent languages,
> permission to not support every claim by the proof of some prior knowledge,
> permission to privilege subjectivity as a mode of engaging the world and its woes,
> permission to be obscure and
> permission to chart a completely different path of how we got here, at this very moment.
>
> (Nollert & Rogoff, 2006)

1.1.2 Motivations

I have taught English Literature, Language and Philosophy at various Secondary and tertiary institutions in Singapore and the UK since 2001. My supply teaching experiences in the UK ground the research in a sombre reality between two very different cultural views of education. I worked with schools designated to be “Through Train Programmes”[5] (TTP) as part of the Gifted Education branch in Singapore. The six-year programme gave secondary students direct pathways to the local university. In the foundational years of this innovation, I had the autonomy to design a constructivist-based curriculum from scratch. The design heavily emphasised authentic assessment and digital technologies, which I had implemented in my mainstream school experience. These frameworks demonstrated drastic improvement in literacy and engagement results among reluctant and unmotivated readers. However, such initiatives faced scepticism in mainstream school settings and had to be undertaken independently without support and resources. After two years, pressures in pioneering experimental schools of innovation to conform to conservative standardised assessment models soon nullified the burgeoning benefits of liberal bold experimentation.

In 2007, I presented a paper on New Literacies, new mediums, and a new dawn for literature studies at a conference on Reading Asia, Forging Identities in Literature: Policy, Research, and Practice held at Ateneo de

5Raffles Institution and National University of Singapore school of Math and Science.

Manila University. I have also contributed a chapter about “Demystifying Literature through practice: accessing the producer within” in Pearson’s publication[6], promoting best practices. These research themes presented an emerging autodidact culture in the information revolution which compels current education systems to respond and adapt.

As a self-taught, award-winning[7] digital media producer who has worked in public television and independent film production companies, I facilitated various community art projects for youth and adults. I experienced first-hand the benefits of redistributing the weight of a student’s learning accountability to the broader community by engaging relevant mentors from the student’s field of interest. Exhibiting their work to experts added gravitas and scrutiny, turning evaluations into challenges, not chores resulting in increased self-motivation and ownership of their learning. I have initiated partnerships with museums, art institutions, theatre companies and a University-based augmented reality research lab. These experiences offered mixed ability students access to explore project work in practical settings. It was demoralising having such engaging, indisciplinarian experiences marginalised and seen as distinct from formal schooling and therefore lacked support from conservative administrators and colleagues.

There were three levels of engagement that informed my research findings.

First, as an educator with a proven track record, developing authentic portfolio-based assessment programmes which demonstrate their efficacy in bridging gaps in attainment.

Secondly, as a facilitator of various community art-based experiments with local writers, poets and filmmakers who had access to peer-to-peer digital platforms to create and showcase work. YouTube launched in 2005, Facebook in 2004 and during 2008, the social media phenomenon

6 (Tan, 2009)
7Canada International Film Festival 2010, Vancouver, Rising Star Award for filmmaking. Silver Student Video Award: “The Secret to Happy Children”, 2006 Singapore.

was beginning to move from cute cat pictures to becoming tools of social movement organisation. These tools offered an autonomy dependent on informal oral and visual culture, a “digital vernacular” rather than conventional literacies. Amateurs have access to platforms and were beginning to challenge the validity of established codes, discourse and aesthetics.

Finally, in the era resisting the OECD Bologna privatisation of Universities across Europe, I was a participant-observer of the group _Open School (2009 -11) and various activist events in Europe and Scotland. These protests and forums focus on issues faced by privatising public services, specifically education.

> School of tomorrow then is the question for today.
>
> (Biesta, 2010).

The hypertextuality of the web, where information is hyperlinked rather than linear, where there seems to be no beginning-, middle- or end, requires resilient hyperlearners and a new paradigm of co-curating learning. The current trends toward gamification flipped classrooms, massive open online courses (MOOC) facilitate a form of networked learning and a decentralised education landscape demand more authentic, student-centred learning that redistributes education’s responsibility to more authorities. Biesta’s proposals for an adaptation of schools as multi-age and ability forums, assembly and commons are echoed by alternative praxis posed by artists and social critics discussed in the Literature review. (Bingham et al.,2010

1.1.3 Literature Review

Chapter 2 presents an overview of the literature in four parts: the first two address the external and internal obstacles to emancipatory education. The last two sections present alternative movements and exemplars from socially engaged praxis to inspire confidence for those who dare to risk change.

In section 2.1, the research situates the research project in the current field of deschooling studies, which critiques Ivan Illich's influential text "Deschooling society". A summary of the schizophrenic schooled neoliberal mindset, which resists the logic of deschooling, sets the stage for the following discourse. Several active deschoolers and academics are cited, such as Matt Hern, Irit Rogoff and Paschal Gielen, who challenge the uncritical reproduction of accreditation-based exam cultures. Research by Sugata Mitra and Catherine Belsey's *Critical Practice*, Gillian Beer's *A collection of thoughts on In(ter)discipline: New Languages for Criticism* all identify the level of interest in such radical rethinking, which is, unfortunately, let down by a paucity of practice.

Social critics such as Jacques Ellul, who greatly influenced Illich, Noam Chomsky, John Raulston Saul, and Bernard Harcourt, examine the concept of the *Technological Society* from multiple perspectives. An analysis of numerous articles on the limited impact of Assessment for Learning and Situated Learning programmes complement these critiques. The field research reflected the same over-reliance on *expert* knowledge, which to an extent, limited the efficacy of self-selecting curricula within these autonomous groups.

Addressing hierarchies of amateur and professional knowing led to Rancière's emancipatory concept of indisciplinarian epistemologies: referencing *The Ignorant Schoolmaster*, *Proletarian Nights* and a critical companion *Education, Truth, Emancipation*. Jonathan Rose's archival research helped clarify the nature of the autodidact and the historical context of mutual improvement societies. His compendium *The Intellectual Life of the British Working class* from preindustrial time to modern Britain, was a touchstone for this research. Understanding the new grammatisation as a context for this agenda by hacktavist/ artist Ricardo Dominguez and critic Bernard Stiegler afford the language of alternatives. In particular, Bernard Stiegler's proposals from the *Neganthrophocene* and *Automatic Society*: *The Future of Work* help navigate the disorientation of disentangling from an extractive enclosure mindset. From the field of radical politics, such as Harney & Moten's *The*

Undercommons, Hardt and Negri's *Commonwealth* and *Multitude offer* concepts which counter the unchecked neoliberal enterprise.

The daunting but necessary process of the teacher technician becoming ungovernable is fraught with anxiety, as identified in an exhaustive survey of Curriculum for Excellence government reports, academic and TES literature about the pioneering stages of the radical initiative. These documented issues and perspectives from teachers, policymakers and managers are summarised and organised thematically.

The second section, 1.2 Self Institutionalisation, identifies the biopower struggle imposed by systems on one's agency. Contrasting this with the traits and associations of autodidactic cultures, it transpires that benefits of paragogy are what is disabled in a neoliberal definition of education as function and value. Krashen and Terrell (1998) provide the language to succinctly describe the barriers to indisciplinarity as the affective filter and monitor hypothesis, which inhibit language acquisition. The report adopts these terms to describe the anxieties articulated by educators and newcomers to the self-governing initiatives. The bold stance of presenting a broad "open proposition" is backed by the research of Sugata Mitra and practitioners of alternative education reconfigurations. The open proposition demonstrates the advantages of inviting other agents and widening the commons in the education of the young.

The third section, 1.3, is a survey of the Rurbanisation movement where social critic Tay Kheng Soon helped compound the analysis of case studies enacting the recovery of time, space and commons in sustainable living. Education is a by-product of assembly and commons building rather than a commodity. The unfolding and reclamation of space evidenced by the free universities and occupations complement revisiting influential Scottish town planner Patrick Geddes' philosophy on urban design.

The final section on 1.4 Alternative praxis presents practitioners such as Jeanne Van Heeswijk, Josef Beuys, Walter Hopps, and Michael Asher's autonomous self-selected models of education or exhibition. These

examples aided the creative synthesis or small-scale action research at interim stages through exhibition or forum events. For instance, thiscollection@Tollcross was inspired by Heeswijk's *Blue House* premise of being open to a curriculum initiated by visiting artists to 'radicalise the local'. What would the implications of such sites of de-establishing knowledge hierarchies drawn from autodidacts and self-taught facilitated workshops be? Critics like Ivan Illich and Félix Guattari who ran alternative schools with self-governing programmes are included to encourage experimentation. The case study of Mechai Pattana is an innovative high-tech kampung (village) where the social dynamics in close relation to the land determine the knowledge assembled in the school.

1.1.4 Methodology

Chapter 3 addresses the decisions made in each phase of the emergent, embedded and participatory project as a critical social researcher based on Glesne's guide to qualitative research. The research timeline analysis in Appendix 1 presents the scope of the study. It maps its five phases of progression: introductions, field observation, clarification, and evaluation of theory through assembly. Decisions to address gaps in understanding led to meeting new partners and occasions to hold occasions of forum or assembly to consolidate emerging themes. The evaluation culminates in dis-place *thiscollection* , an installation which was a platform to review the processes observed by all participating groups to date. Trustworthiness depended on the findings enroute presented to theoretical review through presenting conference papers. The performative work "Autodidact Archives" protocols and design via the use of photovoice as a means of engagement. Reinforced findings when formal educators were invited to consider their own self-learning experiences. I address the issues faced in undertaking this participant-led inquiry by answering Holloway and Jefferson's questions for qualitative researchers.

1.1.5 Results

The results section consists of 5 chapters and is prefaced with an interview with Jeanne Van Heeswijk (JvH) with an overview of the

processes, patronage and politics of socially engaged art practice. JvH's insights on her indisciplinary practice guided much of the participant observer's field experience with the following groups. The constructivist structure of the work is led by the experiences of groups observed into themes for analysis. Commonalities of consent or contention observed in these vibrant groups' formation are woven together in the form of an archival breeze. This consists of references to transcripts and correspondence made and are in the appendices attached.

Chapter 4 Approximating Proximities presents the initial stage of the five open set ups engaged in this research. The Hillhead writers' (HHWG), a group of creative writing enthusiasts, are open to variable membership, who gather without an instructor. Their self-organisation based on basic sensible protocols has endured from 2009 to 2022. In 2008 *thiscollection* was a poetry film collaboration founded on the premise that a culture of self-organised leaderless democratic production would ensue from self-publishing internet platforms. In 2009-2012 _Open School was a network of academics, activists, artists and students who organised situations and forums for reimagining schooling. The European Education Conference (EUREDUCON) 2010 occupation in Ruhr-University, Bochum, from 25th to 30th May. It was a satellite squat to host reflections on the Occupation in Vienna against the Bologna Process. The plethora of shared testimonies from international activists highlighted a global appetite for autonomy and alternatives to what they perceived as the widespread neoliberalisation of HE. Finally, the "Autodidact Archives" was a 2017 intervention that captured eight art educators' recounts of self-taught experiences.

Chapter 5 Field observations delve deeper into the causal conditions of these groups' formations and the observance of assembly and curriculums of a commons as themes which emerged. These self-organised groups' scrutiny of the injustices of *mismanaged* institutions resulted in proliferating networks of alternatives.

- Privatisation of HE and student debt slavery leads to sentiments of anti-authoritarianism and collective demands to rethink the **ecology of education**.
- Case study analysis of the arbitration reports of dismissed tenured physics professor turned activist who challenged **institutional assessment regulation** in opting for unorthodox but engaged teaching methods. The court judgements acknowledge much of the struggles facing those who risk indisciplinarity.
- An analysis of the **impact of technological revolutions on convivial vernacular values** based on interviews and post-workshop correspondence. Digital and social media platform technologies that claim democratisation prompt a comparative examination of the health of micropolitics and assumptions of "cultural democracy".
- The disparate **logic of the commons and extractive enclosure** seems the root of the tensions described. The metaphor of sound and noise best describes the flux and risks undertaken to reject or reproduce the existing structures. This section also helps map out these groups' anxieties about being co-opted.

The groups' attempts at leaderlessness and authorial erasure are challenged as ingrained institutionalised habits. These conflicts frame the erasure of authority required for indisciplinarity to succeed.

Chapter 6 Clarifications analyses the obstacles encountered by a shrinking mindset of commoning. It presents the difficulty in reimagining cultural production, where art participation would be a form of political ungrounding to recover space and commons. *thiscollection's* engagement with Sinema and Blochestra demonstrates the processes of this disconcerting ungrounding which comes with experimentation. In particular, an urgent need to detox from invented needs is identified. For the self-institutionalised student to enjoy the process and gratification of experimentation, one must struggle to overcome one's affective filter of conforming to unrealistic expectations of perfection.

Chapter 7 Evaluation brings these observations and analysis to the installation dis-place *thiscollection* where participants interrogated the premises of these various groups. From the study, what would a free summer school look like:

- What characterises self-education in informal self-organised settings?
- What conditions and justifications result in promoting such spaces, and how sustainable are they?
- How can the conditions which shape autonomous alternative mutual improvement initiative influence hybrid forms of formal education?

Various colourful instances are cited of the reality of enacting indisciplinarity, the awkwardness of resisting erasure and confronting the ugly beauty of democracy to arrive at a clear resolve to recover time, space and a commons for such rehabilitative autonomous sites of ungrounding.

Chapter 8 Review/ Application revisits the groups after the observations ended in 2011; it applies the conclusions drawn from the inquiry to develop the “Autodidact Archives”. The interviews draw out what motivates self-taught behaviour, what activities lend themselves to improvisation and traits and rules set by autodidacts in pursuit of accomplishment. It composes a pastoral portrait of the teacher deschooled to counter the limiting persona of teacher technicians within accreditation systems.

1.1.6 Reflection

Chapter 9 Reflection addresses the relevance and significance of this research. How these groups recover space, time and commons force a rethink of the wealth of paucity, vernacular values and humility of the small accomplishments which engage a self-actualised learning experience. Future research based on these prescient findings, given global shifts to modern curricula like Scotland’s CfE, is offered in five

proposals based on feedback from presenting this research at conferences. The radicalised world of work demands a different approach for youth to engage with *pathways* yet written. The composite portrait derived as a participant-observer of these groups makes a strong case for Vygotskyian age-less assembly and moderate use of technologies to restore the joyfulness of sustainable self-selected education. These groups present a map for becoming an indisciplinarian via understanding their politics, effects and self-determined protocols. Further research proposals on variations of these themes are offered for consideration.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 The Deschooling premise

Bakunin's premise is that “Man has two opposed instincts, egoism and sociability. He is both ferocious in his egoism than the most ferocious beasts and more sociable than the bees and ants.” (Bakunin, 1964) Similarly, in encouraging volunteerism and mutual aid in a community, it was essential to ask how each task addresses the ego to respond to an activity as a “we”, not a “them”. Outmoded categorisations of an imaginary public[8], masses or populace fail to contain the multitude’s restless emerging subjectivities.

> forms of institution are inevitable "the institutional process...provides a mechanism of protection (but with no guarantees) against the two primary dangers facing the multitude: externally, repression of the ruling power, and internally, the destructive conflicts among the singularities within the multitude."
>
> (Hardt & Negri, 2009: 359).

They propose that Institutions form "constituent rather than a constituted power." They "consolidate collective habits, practices, and capacities that designate a form of life" and should be "open-ended in that they are continually transformed by the singularities that compose them." (Hardt & Negri, 2009)

Jacques Ellul’s writings heavily influence controversial critic Ivan Illich’s dissent on “Technological society” and “technique” (Ellul, 1964; p.31,338). A critical lens of deschooling unmasks the concept of technique as technology-dependent calculated systemisation, which disrupts the old structure of relations and spontaneity. Illich urged that the process of defamiliarisation with the corrupt institution of modernity was the intermediary between man's material constraints and the truth of his convivial instincts. After "Deschooling" (1971) was published, Illich

8 (Michael & William, 2017)

described it as a frustratingly naive tract for the main task was to "disestablish schools, a dehumanising enterprise, all together." Forty years on, Deschooling studies address how human beings are integrated into systems generated by modern "certitudes" (Bruno-Jofre & Zaldıvar, 2012). By critiquing the politics of the alphabetisation of thought and the dominance of formal language over the vernacular means of knowing, this field endeavours to unmask the invention of needs of education as statecraft. Wrestling with our "self-institutionalisation" avoids the danger of expanding the pedagogue-ordered global classroom. Companion studies in deschooling redress the ethical implications of open source or proprietary enclosures on the autodidactic potential in the age of technological awe.

Illich's work predicted this technological shift in his description of “Learning webs” in his social criticism of the 70s, would be open source, a vision of convivial sharing of knowledge. Fifty years on and a quick survey shows that the renewal of interest in his work is due to the impact on education in the context of the virtualisation of economies—this technology was foreshadowed in Illich's proposal of Learning webs. A range of work reflects a maturing of thought from neophyte to pragmatic views of the anarchy brought on by the World Wide Web. Timely investigations of how far these technologies contribute to or dismantle convivial societies in the steady commercialisation of networks. (Whittington & Mclean, 2001) (Moll,1998) (Jandrić, 2014) (Hart, 2001). The new economy challenges the next generation to be curious to “build, create and think” (Nichols-White, 1996) capacities that current education systems, as they stand, struggle to adopt.

In emerging economies, deschooling is seen as a way of coping with limited access to these new educational opportunities but still struggles with the expectation or guarantees of standards, which education’s aspirational powers in the form of qualifications are a challenge to dissuade. (Hinchliffe,1975) (Anis et al., 2018) This sentiment captures the struggle undertaken in practice, the inescapable duty to accountability, standards and sameness so that the student in your care can have the

same opportunities as those with access to education. The deschooling process should liberate over-dependence on packaged education to begin the work of genuine collective becoming. Illich is not overlooking the realities of a system designed to disempower those who do not participate on its terms. Before Illich passed, his intellectual pursuits turned to contemplating the concept of evil where his deschooling treaty did not go far enough; the root of the corruption went much further than just one institution.

One of the main contradictions in the survey is the well-meaning pragmatic attempts to reform and locate deschooling theory as a transformational practice in current schooling formats and most often in Journals of Education reviews (Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Wilms, 1983). The noteworthy difference is the increasing interest from various disciplines, including Science and Technology researchers, trying to locate the root causes of rigid educational policy and implementation. The case study on Denis Rancourt's Science and Culture course and the limits of specialism is evidence of an inquiry further investigated in 5.1.3. Qualities for democratic self-directed learning environments, mixed ages, choice, time and democratic modes of organisation are natural features of a time before traditional schooling was institutionalised. It is the risk to refute and persevere in deschooling, which the field negotiates from safe distances.

> Maybe there is something about personal histories that there is a safety involved in it. Like the idea of going into a ... surrealist seance trance, it feels as if we are going back in our own histories as a marauding mob. It is amazing how your stories are colouring my sense of the past. Maybe I am only alive when there is a crisis, an economic crisis, and I go to sleep in between. I just see this little zone in the future of what we are saying in the past in a way.
> Everyone so we were told was like we just wanted to make petrol bombs, but no we can also make this shit film, pamphlet, tend a tree, ferment, we don't have to make art, we can just do something.
>
> (Hedditch et al.,2011)

This reflection from the Copenhagen free University captures an ad infinitum "access" to ungovernable online learning networks that

contradicts the establishment's doctrine of scarcity. The leviathan's sluggish response to the changing ecology of knowledge has made studying autodidactic self-organised learning even more prescient. The digital native armed with non-convivial tools may hastily imbue instrumentalised autodidactic convictions.

2.2 Becoming an indisciplinarian?

The French philosopher Jacques Rancière, whose work is dedicated to documenting ways of enacting emancipatory research and practice, is critical of a false institutional division of labour reflected and reproduced within the humanities. Although acceptable and desired, "current forms of interdisciplinarity seem **fundamentally conservative**, merely reiterating a familiar set of models. Under the guise of policing academic rigour, these 'master discourses' exclusively determine the boundaries of what is 'thinkable'. (Lee, 2007: 110-111) Interdisciplinarity within immovable specialist skewed research could pervert the cultivation of knowledge for abstract predefined outcomes.

Interdisciplinarity is challenged to become 'indisciplinary' to expand the field of inquiry rather than be mired in theory wars.[9] Rancière proposes the term serve as a reminder that a discipline is a **provisional territorialisation** of questions and objects, which **do not in and of themselves possess any specific localisation or domain.**[10] This ethos is exemplified in the exploratory creative stages of art making, where disciplinary specialism, segregation, or hierarchisation become subordinate to the study of open propositions.

Art appeals to the senses as much as it does to the intellect as something belonging to everyone. It, therefore, has an emancipatory means of

9 Belsey."English offers a unique and important way to understand contemporary problems.' And that there is a good deal more to the subjects than higher gossip about nice novels'… Belsey and Bob Eaglestone shares a concern with the vast gulf between what goes on in English departments and the public understanding of English, between what students and academics actually do and what the media presents us as doing.' While Eaglestone identifies this gulf as a product of 'theory wars' over the past two decades, a neglect of public outreach resulting from the tension between high theorists and traditionalists, each defending their own specialist concerns. (Price, 2020: 215).
10 In response to the Coronavirus pandemic, Sir Paul Nurse, Nobel prize winner from the Francis Crick Institute reminds governments that "Science is at best tentative knowledge." (Nurse, 2020).

reclaiming thought. Beyond logic and linearity, the site of unknowability associated with *art* foregrounds the simultaneous operations of aesthetics and politics for discourse and ethics and, if need be, open to its dissolution. Broad enough to house popular and highbrow genres making room for modes of thinking which argue for a restoration of balance between the folk and the specialist[11]. (Bal, 2020: 14-15)

This inverted methodology is timely, given that virtual classrooms can alleviate teaching from the constraints of timetables, space and contributors. Framed by appropriate open propositions, exploratory and experiential learning can broaden horizons. An indisciplinary manoeuvre goes not just beside the disciplines but temporally dismantles to arrive at meaningful knowledge for their edification within a reality they inhabit and influence. Rancière sees indisciplinary potential as gesture of infinitude.

> The destructive character has the consciousness of historical man, whose deepest emotion is an insuperable mistrust of the course of things and a readiness at all times to recognise that everything can go wrong. Therefore, the destructive character is reliability itself. The destructive character sees nothing permanent. But for this very reason, he sees ways everywhere. Where others encounter walls or mountains, there, too, he sees a way. But because he sees a way everywhere, he has to clear things from it everywhere. Not always by brute force; sometimes by the most refined. No moment can know what the next will bring.
>
> (Benjamin, 1931)

Indisciplinarity rethinks the division between disciplines and challenges the distribution of territories, which decides who is qualified to speak and about what. Division creates hierarchy, forgetting that professionals and amateurs are those who do the science and those regarded as its objects. Indisciplinarity is both a license to speak and a demand for dialogue and grows through the generosity of assemblies into individuation.

Rancière's 'Ignorant schoolmaster' is an oft-cited account of the eccentric educational practices of the exiled lecturer, Joseph Jacotot, who in 1818 proposed that it was possible to teach what one did not know oneself.

11 c.f Politics of Rurbanisation (Geddes, 1947).

Jacotot realised a system of 'intellectual emancipation' based on 'universal teaching' rejected dominant repressive educational practices based upon the 'explication' of facts to dispossessed students by presumptuous masters. (Rancière, 1991)

As Rancière suggests: “It is the explicator who needs the incapable and not the other way around; it is he who constitutes the incapable as such. To explain something to someone is first to show him he cannot understand it by himself.” (Rancière,1991: 6). It is through a recognition of education's part in producing and preserving an unequal distribution of the sensible that we are able to read an educational experiment to overturn a stultifying pedagogic system as a project of both intellectual and political emancipation:

> We know, in fact, that explication is not only the stultifying weapon of pedagogues but the very bond of the social order. Whoever says order, says distribution into ranks. Putting into ranks presupposes explication, the distributary, justificatory fiction of an inequality that has no other reason for being.

The everyday has the possibility of becoming revolutionary if it achieves authenticity. This aesthetic of the sensible is a compass for the bounds of experience oft delimited by "the safe and standardised school" enclosure awarding licensed knowing. Indisciplinary approaches consider ignored, obscured groups and “arrant” knowing as of equal interest. Supposing that all forms of knowledge have some truth, conversely, no form of knowledge can pretend to be valid or dominant through and through. Representation is challenged to speak from an authentic centre with an in-between language. Democracy is not about the margins being accepted into a canon but sharing a certain battle with the dominant language, with unexpected insights. Chomsky echoes this with the provocation that language that needs to be taught is in fact, prescriptive and artificial.

2.2.1 The schooled neoliberal

> Men make their own history, but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it under self-selected circumstances, but under circumstances existing already, given and

> transmitted from the past. The tradition of all dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brains of the living.
>
> (Marx, 1852).

The logics and motivations of “choice” sit on a spectrum of extractive enclosure of capitalism and a commons of becoming. Chapter 4 presents their varied motivations in reimagining cultures and demonstrates the degree of tense fluctuating effects experienced in resisting the training of the status quo.

The resistance to educational change in the UK is situated within the broader context of restructuring since the 1970s, closely associated with neoliberal economic policies, deregulation and capital flight from communities. ‘Crises’ as inherent and complex moments in the current social system, such as austerity, create cracks (Holloway, 2010) which communities can use to find political opportunities for action or stimulate a movement to cleave from the mainstream system.

As ideology, policy and perverse international polity, neoliberalism is often the catch-all concept for the ire of the age. As an ideology, neoliberalism promotes free-market pursuits of financial accumulation to determine the status of ‘rational economic actors’ as successful individuals or not. Neoliberal policies privatise public good, increase the dominance and expansion of the financial industry in everyday life, offer tax cuts for the rich, and affect an unprecedented erosion of the welfare state through budget cuts. Neoliberal colonialism exacerbates the imbalance of power and welfare of the poor and the rich. The extractive enclosure is backed by international agreements, copyright regimes, the legal protection of corporations, and the privatisation of the resources of developing countries by the corporations of rich countries. Less economically and politically powerful countries have to follow the dictates of wealth and power. This binary, although simplistic, collates early notes taken from the self-organised groups expressing ire at their situations.

	Democracy	**Neoliberalism**
Accountability	To those in community	To investors/ corporations
Authority / Autonomy	Those trusted and skilled to lead community when required. Autonomy grows with trust, which follows proven results felt by the community.	Managerial authority, spokespersons for investors. Senior management only has autonomy when investors' aims, efficiencies, and profits are met.
Peer education	Trust among community has established ownership and direct control of their environment.	Fordist model of individualised learning plans and competitive positioning in specialisms tend to be the educational format.
Community	Consensus decision making Fair distribution of jobs, gains, and risks *communicated and agreed upon in assembly.* Crucially- Jobs of moral consequence remain in the hands of humans – N.Chomsky Security Harmony Choice Time intensive	Vast expansive markets, fans, church organised around commodity or service supplied. Customers rather than citizens. Customer Service as a means of building brand loyalty for continued custom. Labour sold for membership to this system of networked desires disguised as needs. Longing for community masked under the short-term satisfaction of the consumption experience.

Table 1 Comparison of traits of Democracy and Neoliberalism.

Neganthrophy involves not just exertion of the body but also engaging with complex human relations. If endured efforts result in the satisfaction of earning part of something living rather than the fleeting satiation convenience affords of something bought and instantly consumed.

The "educational rituals" reinforce faith in the value of knowledge acquired under conditions of scarcity. Illich further questioned the construction of ideals/ that could be educational aims and the pursuit of the ideal of the educated person. (Bruno-Jofre & Zaldıvar, 2012: 584-5)

For instance, neoliberal policy co-opts Illich's utopic proposals as justifications for privatising public services. Education becomes the

learner's responsibility via campaigns promoting "lifelong learning" to keep up servicing a system rather than as a right of a citizen to uphold an ethical obligation to each other. Noam Chomsky asserts that striking a balance in hyper-capitalism is to retain jobs with moral consequences in the hands of humans. However, existing stretched education systems alienated from associated supportive communities struggle to cultivate the relevant ethico-onto-epistemologies to adequately support Chomsky's assertion.

During Ross Perot's election campaigns in 2000 and Trump's manifesto policy in 2020, "Voucher systems" (Illich, 1971) were promised, which would give students control over when and what they study. A seemingly indisciplinarian idea but through a neoliberal logic can easily become a means to demonetise education funding and trap students in a non-negotiable economy of credits. In the UK, autonomy for privately run consortiums of academies or corporation-sponsored vocational institutes is a means of privatising public funds to train labour for the market. Bill Readings' 1997 "The University in Ruins" describes the move toward cultural studies as a material interest to form an interdisciplinary university. This well-meaning intention became a tool for mapping the boundaries between disciplines under a mandate to achieve efficiency and consolidate resources to ***discipline disciplines***. Pressures cause the panic bolstering of specialism to compete for funding and survival at the cost of progressive, collaborative research.

These caveats are included to be mindful of neoliberal interpretations of the concepts in this treatise. For instance, Illich's 1978 critique of disabling professions was also misappropriated, resulting in cost-cutting measures in academy schools. Unqualified staff hired are misguided by "kindness" and readily spoon-feed answers to low-ability students to achieve targets. This neoliberal cull reinforces the cynical misconceptions that schools are glorified babysitting services for the labour force. Illich was the first to admit his tract on deschooling was naïve; he concluded that all society needed to be deschooled. Similarly, autodidactism is as alluring as

deschooling, but their actions may have problematic ethical implications depending on the context.

2.2.2 Are examinations accountable to those examined?

This research addresses CfE's senior phase; the ungrounding addressed can prepare these systems to transition to the realities of a sustainable education which has to deal with the long-term concerns facing the dynamic futures to which these charges will have to adapt. Mitra's indisciplinary approaches promote exploration and cooperation and critique mass education:

> "Well as I've said we need some changes in teachers' training programmes, pretty severe changes... but most importantly we need a change in the examination system, otherwise my work would appear to be against teachers. It is not against teachers, it is against the kind of teaching the teachers have to do, because of the examination system."
>
> (Euronews, 2013)

Headteacher Rod Grant (2019) asserts that assessment approaches are contrary to students' garnering knowledge in an accessible or creative manner, nor are they reflective of the subjects' qualities. "We now have written exam papers for subjects like dance, practical woodworking and practical electronics. (I thought the word 'practical' might actually mean something.)." We have forgotten that the tools of assessment, for instance,

> [the]'essay' comes from the French **essayer** - to try, and "discourse' from its Latin root **discourses** - a going to and fro...These terms suggest the potential for taking risks in our experiences and learning, pursuing our interests where we need to.
>
> (Lee, 2007)

In the AAH 2010, Berlin-based curator Doreen Mendes presented a publication series "*Displayer*", as part of her research on the expanded academy developed by Irit Rogoff. The result consisted of three volumes printed on affordable gloss print, where participants document interviews,

reflections on lectures and correspondence from various perspectives of the curatorial curriculum. This project embodied a living document of a shared learning experience struggling to "depict the demands, the challenges, and the potentialities as well as the impossibilities of exhibiting space itself. In this context, space is not considered a mere geometric entity but a conflictual field of relations, situations and events." (Mendes, 2010)

Yet progressive initiatives that encourage creativity, autonomy and interdisciplinarity are disincentivised in stretched state schools. These programmes include Assessment for Learning (AfL), Situated Learning (Brooks et al.,2020) (Lave et al.,1990), Competency-based learning, Project-based learning, Interdisciplinary instruction, mixed-age classrooms, Blended and Flipped Classrooms. These positive programmes demand radical reconfigurations of time, space and support to make an impact. AfL studies identify that classroom implementation either enacts "the spirit of AfL or the letter of AfL". This criticism is expected in the other well-meaning packages delivered in units within packed timetables. Success relies heavily on teams of facilitators willing to work creatively within and against[12] structural obstructions.

In a 2016 report on flipped classrooms, Rotellar and Cain list students' apprehensions at having to "teach oneself" and the rigour they would have to muster without an instructor's "proper guidance". Teacher feedback was consistently preferred over peer feedback or self-assessment (Klinger et al., 2012) (Marshall et al., 2006) (Allison et al., 2018: 77-94). The greater the amount of academic effort and discomfort expected causes a "greater sense of confusion", was one of the report's disconcerting conclusions. When emptied of the delight in self-mastery, a student's risk-averse attitude mistakes a dependence on explication as education as a site of safety. Instead, it outsources responsibility for learning to an institutional figure.

12Cf Chapter 5.1.3 Assessment for clarification, not standardisation

> It is by no means clear, to this day, that a subject-based curriculum is the best educational solution for a movement linked, in other ways, to modernising and aiding the flow of capital for the few.
>
> (Johnson, 1988: 40).

Figures of achievement in examination scores no longer translate to gainful employability for most graduates. Singapore's reputation for being a World-class education model cannot escape the decline facing most developed nations in the epoch of the Anthropocene. Models of education disconnected from vernacular values inevitably objectify man as a unit of labour; in the current climate, the proletariat has turned precariat.[13] For him, education means facing imperative pressures to reskill, to operate a system of never-ending complexity from which he is disenfranchised. Can examinations still claim to be accountable to this growing multitude?

Stretched Secondary schools resistant to unorthodox deviations from bell curve grading systems continue to reward the *profession* of the efficient teacher technician. Instances of the extreme punitive procedures for radical assessment formats are illustrated by Professor Denis Rancourt's case in Chapter 5.1.3. Students are now explicitly trained with standard scripts for employability: CVs, interview rehearsal and pathways to careers which may not exist as soon as they graduate. Time is lost when developing a portfolio of projects based on rigour and interest, which issues rather than coerces confidence. Practical life skills are outsourced to schools with variable efficacy, while an urgent *lifeskill* to navigate the reality of knowledge as a field of possibilities, engaging "unknown territories" with fortitude and integrity, is overlooked. (Rogoff, 2006)

> If unexamined, there is a real danger that uncritical acceptance of increasingly prescriptive standardised outcomes is created and maintained with a level of stability and false assurance of quality in teachers and learners alike.
>
> (Enriquez, 2020).

13 Marx described this phenomenon as proletarianism, where the worker is now an operator of a system but not its beneficiary. However, in its circulation, he consumes what he does not need. The term precariat is attributed to (Standing, 2011) "The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class".

Rancière and his peer Badiou's school of liminality promote enacting alterity and the possibilities beyond state and political ends as the antidote. Badiou asserts that capitalism's obsession with accumulative capital is a refusal of infinitude. Paschal Gielen expounds that this refusal's relentless pursuit of efficiency and standardisation[14] actual cost to the collective imaginary may be irreparable:

> ...This increasing globalisation is mainly prompted by the logic of the free-market economy, and it causes time and space to shrink. ...As of today, we are dealing with a new idealising vision of the world which pretends not to be an ideology and proclaims pragmatism as the sole value.
> The manager, with his **love of efficiency**, is the quintessential citizen of this new cosmopolitan world, as well as an arduous propagandist of its unique ideology. Within this paradigm, **utopias are considered a senseless waste of time.** At present, a new category of new professionals constitutes a new global hegemony, broadcasting 'we have to be realistic' as their central message. **The only legitimate dream tells us that we can no longer be dreamers**… In the vehement character of the no-nonsense rhetoric of the market manager realism, **it is easy to forget that *it is only one* possible principle of organisation among so many other ones.**
>
> (Gielen, 2010a).

How does this research on alternatives rehabilitate a shared responsibility of learning? It challenges the managerial myth of directed instruction as a prerequisite. No time, no space, no interest; is the mantra of the scarcity doctrine to which most developed worlds subscribe. Illich is critical of the system of invented needs, which creates a dependency on a system which discounts the innate power of one's hands and feet. Its false sense of self-sufficiency removes the individual from a sense of community and time no longer one's own. The stolen pleasures of autodidacts and amateurs are then brief reminders of that lost capacity.

Belsey's "Critical Practice" offers an objective view of the state of post-structuralist thought, making a case for the plurality of texts and the demand for a way of navigating and reading texts that allow for thoughtful engagement beyond narrow specialisms. She affords an entry point for

14See Krashen's monitor and affective filter hypothesis (Krashen & Terrel, 1998)

the crisis in classrooms, where there are limitations to territories of knowledge and resources which do not cross over and hence inhibit authentic learning. Her theories helped shape the task of adaptation; transforming text into visuals is a task demanding analysis, creativity and collaborative use of digital technologies. Like Illich and Althusser, Belsey claims by her work that the very basic acts of literacy need to be reclaimed from over-specialism.

> "However paradoxical it may seem, I venture to suggest that our age threatens one day to appear in the history of human culture as marked by the most dramatic and difficult trial of all the discovery of and training in the meaning of the 'simplest acts of existence: seeing, listening, speaking and reading - the acts which relate men to their works'.
>
> (Althusser, 1996: p.259)

The practice Belsey enables, in this case, the adaptation of literary texts into short multimedia responses, poses challenging questions and exposes the limitations of the received formats of education reproduced without criticality. This poor practice results in an imbalance of a mind trained to analyse and report understanding, but the emotion and affect of the language felt in the body remains disengaged by the schooling experience. Similarly, various workshops aimed to restore the body as a site of feeling to communicate learning.[15]

Alan Kaprow was a pioneer in devising instructions for "happenings" of the seventies. He distinguished 'a happening' from an event as the former were cooperative and viewers could become participants. His 1971 treatise "The Education of the Un-artist Part 1" revisited now can be seen as naïvely optimistic of the precarious gig economy we have come to inherit. Yet he raises an interesting proposal that this is a phase-out of institutionalised inertia. In the entrepreneurial chameleon instinct of the art worker, "shift the whole un-artistic operation slyly away from where the arts customarily congregate." In these multiple identities adopted to survive from "accounts executive, ecologist… and a beach bum", which,

15 c.f Appendix _OS 17 Workshop Notices.

to paraphrase, overturns playfully professionalising activities well beyond art instead of programming a specific course of behaviour. The power of play rejuvenates and counters modernism's alienation and dehumanising consequences. It acts as a cypher to a different language of engagement. Namely, "to un-art ourselves, avoid all aesthetic roles, give up all references to being artists of any kind whatever."

This playful improvisational nature of learning, as the construction of self relies on paragogy to make sense of the open propositions that come with liminality.

> Stop thinking about music as a thing to learn and start thinking about it as a thing to do. Encourage playing and making instead of practicing and working on. ...I do not know whether a child needs to know how to read standard notation. Maybe they will be better served by designing their own system for remembering their ideas. Maybe all their music will exist on tape or computer disk or in their heads. Maybe they will be a composer. Most of the world's music is made by people who don't need a notation system and who haven't learned their music from a teacher in the same sense that we have.
>
> (Douglas, 2008: 243)

The metaphor of music is often referenced for understanding and learning as the improvisation of each individual's potential reverberates in the research findings. The post-pandemic generation's frames of reference for their world of work are out of print and yet to be writ.

2.2.3 Becoming Ungovernable

Emancipation is not a change in knowledge but the positioning of bodies. The act of emancipation confirms the power of equality, of non-partition departure from a place in the social order to which one is assigned.

> A worker who had never learned how to write and yet tried to compose verses to suit the taste of his times was perhaps more of a danger to the prevailing ideological order than a worker who performed revolutionary songs...
> Perhaps the truly dangerous classes are not so much the uncivilised ones though to undermine society from below, but rather the migrants who move at the borders between classes, individuals and groups who develop capabilities within themselves which are useless for the improvement of their

> material lives and which in fact are liable to make them despise material concerns.
>
> (Rancière, 1988: 50).

Rancière described his archival research on 19th-century disenfranchised French labourer's self-education attempts. Exposure to reading fires up the imagination of a "deplorable" that reconfigures the sayable, seeable, thinkable, and possible territory. It is a political act of emancipation in which one distances oneself to become im"proper" and intellectually indisciplinary in systems which fail to represent one's reality.

> It is not only prisoners who are treated like children, but children are treated like prisoners. Children are subjected to an infantilisation which is not their own. In this sense, schools are a little like prisons, and factories are very much like them.
>
> (Deleuze, 2004: 206).

Enclosures determine who knows what, when, how and why. Market-driven education systems encourage individual competition through standardised assessment and league tables. All actors dividuals (Deleuze,1992), namely schools, universities, students, teachers, and administrators, willingly recode themselves or have been recoded to function efficiently in an Integrated World Capitalism (IWC) (Guattari, 1989). 'Dividualisation' happens subliminally throughout education, 'Self' has become 'automaticity,' an object of management. Rancière describes mass education as incentivised to promote "privatisation", "competition", and "accountability" (Bingham et al., 2010). This culture fosters an *illusion of autonomous individualised subjects* but constructs a barricaded citizen instead. It disregards the responsibility of the choices impacting local and global communities.

This crisis of memory leads to a crisis of identity. Who are we: citizens, subjects, or customers? John Ralston Saul (1995) describes the era as the “Age of Neo, the not knowing of what they truly are, e.g. Neofacists, who want to be fascists, but claim not to be. Neoliberals who pretend to be liberals but are indeed not, Neoconservatists, secret courtiers of corporatists, but denied seats at the table, are plainly careerists. In

corporatism, legitimacy lies with the group, and the human is reduced to a measurable value – a machine valued for its compliant operability within a smooth-running system.” Stephen J. Ball, professor of education and advocate of reform, encourages educators confounded by working conditions impacted by neoliberal policies to become "impossible subjects".

A learning culture based solely on achievement in summative assessment nurtures atrophy in those who do not attend University. Students, with little influence on their environment, quickly learn who is qualified to speak and what is sayable.

Bernard Stiegler describes this required break as working towards the Neganthropocene, Neganthrophy requires active labour with real purpose, and a result observed by the labourer negates atrophy. By contrast, the Neganthropocene is a will to transformative and politically accountable chaos that remaps agency as biopower against semiocapitalism, which capitalises on producing immaterial goods such as "knowledge".

Consider Jonathan Rose’s account of Francis Place, a tailor, whose self-education attempts were punished when a secret library in his workshop was discovered by a wealthy client. Out of spite at this audacity, he proceeded to convince his peers not to patron his establishment. This injustice was described by Place "as an immense hand which covered the back of my head and shoulders, the fingers spread over me and endeavouring to grasp the thumb…I could do no more." (Rose, 2020: 35) Ironically to Place, school as a place to learn would have been a logical course of emancipation, while for many in this age it has become the cage.

Academia grounded in praxis, as a Law Professor from Columbia University, Bernard Harcourt's latest book "Critique and Praxis" challenge theorists not to stand on the sidelines. He challenges us to put the first-person pronoun back into their work: to ask, "What more am I to do, and how does what I am doing work?" The manifesto tone of this reflection

thus intentionally addresses this emerging consciousness and ethical urgency embedded in the language of these scholars.

2.2.4 New grammatisation

Stiegler refers to these tools categorically as pharmakon or artificial organ, which the human has come to require to operate in their environment (Stiegler, 2015). According to Stiegler, Education has existed since man has had to learn “to use artificial organs such as language, social rules, rituals, computers etc.” Learning is that pre-state based on mind, spirit and affect, through technologies from hand tools to algorithms which now seem to learn for us.

Each technological change requires adaptation to a “new stage of grammatisation” (Stiegler, 2015: 173), to which Education is undertaken either autonomously or begrudgingly with institutional support. In Jonathan Rose’s work on *The Intellectual Life of the British Working class*, the Industrial Revolution saw displaced artisans and crofters form mutual improvement societies to teach each other reading, writing and basic arithmetic. Stiegler describes these inherited mass models of Education as an “overdetermined” epistemology where the practice of reading and writing tasks fulfil duty rather than wisdom.

> Education is a recent invisible commodity that rose alongside the industrialisation of societies.
>
> (Illich, 1971)

Since the 2008-2011 field study, virtualised valorisation means that the digital economy has enmeshed itself into the tiniest pores of how we live and socialise. Digital marketing terminology refers to consumers as pixels and herds in sales reports to advertising clients. Deleuzian societies of control replace Foucault’s disciplinary societies, where institutions

“whatever the length of their expiration periods” are subject to the forces of technology. (Deleuze, 1992) Rather than man in control of tools, man is shaped by *technique* (Ellul, 1964).

Ricardo Dominguez, a controversial artist and associate professor of Visual arts at UC San Diego, presents an updated albeit non-teleological timeline of semio-capitalism. Change in pharmakon corresponds to the emergence of mutual improvement groups and autodidact enclaves, each formed to cope with a corresponding epistemological upheaval.

VIRTUAL TIMELINE VIRTUAL TIMELINE VIRTUAL TIMELINE VIRTUAL TIMELINE			
Entreprenurial Capitalism	Monopoly Capitalism	Multinational Capitalism	Virtual Capitalism
Steam Power	Electric Power	Micro Power	Nano Power
Property Rights	Corporate Rights	Copy Rights	DNA Rights
Nature as Other	Alien as Others	Knowledge as Other	Biology as Other
conquest of nature	3rd world conquest	conquest of intelligence	conquest of existence
nationalism	imperialism	multinationalism	globalization
tuberculosis	cancer	AIDS	GGS (gray goo syndrome)
film	television	computer	wetware
Mechanical	Instantaneous	Logico-iconic	Fractal
realism	modernism	postmodernism	rhizomatics
high art	art as commodity	plagiarism	hypermedia
frame	screen	chip	bio-chip
possession	mediation	interface	introjection
image	collage	simulacra	chaotics
worker vanguard	consumer	affinity	virtual

Table 2 Virtual Timeline by Ricardo Dominguez.

This table charts the evolution of capitalism from Industrialisation to Virtualisation of economies and the corresponding shifts in grammatisation. In the latter, the body is the site of extraction. His analysis suggests there are no longer manual labourers or service providers. Still, in semiocapitalism, our bodies, desires and dreams are the new territories to harvest through bio-chip, gene patents, wetware and immaterial virtual subjectivities.

2.3 Erasure of the teacher technician and overdetermined pathways

Sugata Mitra’s “Minimal Invasive Education" experiments propose a deceptively obvious pedagogy that **frees up teachers' and institutions' time.** It does not displace teachers or schools of demonstrable quality in subject mastery and delivery but seeks to redistribute these capacities. Illich resists attempts to adopt any radical alternatives within institutional settings, as Arthur C. Clark posited in an interview with Mitra," where you have interest, you have an education." regardless of the institution.

Forecast: A low-pressure system with a high chance of anxiety

The main feature of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) sought to de-emphasise assessment, focusing on building students' confidence, ideally encouraging them to spend time developing interest-driven skills as fully as possible. This radical cross-curricular challenge marries two systems: an entrenched mass education system and optimism for the unbounded, self-actualised interpretation of education.

Learning and Teaching Scotland commissioned a Glasgow University research report (Baumfield & Menter, 2008). Results from online questionnaires, school trials and focus groups identify educators' main concerns of educators from 10 subject areas on their concerns regarding implementing Curriculum for Excellence (CfE). These results capture the milieu of survival tactics faced by teachers on the ground. These results evidenced John Dewey's critique of the teacher reduced to administrator and monitor. Although Krashen’s monitor hypothesis[16] expressedly refers to natural approaches for language acquisition it reinforces Mitra's indisciplinary open-ended proposal which sees specialism flourish only after activation and suitable immersive conditions.

16 Theories expanded in 2.4.1The open proposition and the affects of paragogy

Analysis of online questionnaire results from teachers regarding the pioneering phase of CfE 2008						
Areas of interest/ concern / Subject	Progression End point	Assessment	Monitoring Consistency, Systemic	Time for preparing planning resources	Platforms for sharing	Retraining
Science	x	x		x		
Numeracy			x		x 1.	
Modern languages			+ 2.			
Math	x	x			x	
Classics		x	-3	x		
Gaelic learners				x 4.		
Expressive arts		+		x		x 5.
Social Science	x	x				
Literature & English					+	
Literacy and Gaidhlig	x	x	x	x		
Legend + : positive. -: hesitant. x: concern						

Table 3 Analysis of CfE pioneering teachers' concerns. (Tan, 2010) based on Baumfield and Menter 2008 online survey.

Highlighting the extended survey notes:

1. doubtful it will be realised
2. keen to employ technology to overcome these changes
3. realistically doubtful of self-monitoring
4. lack of officially approved resources
5. not all staff will be versatile; experienced ones will fare better

Though the prospect of CfE encouraging *inter*disciplinary learning was largely welcomed, recurring concerns needed assurance of certainties, consistencies and fairness. Clarification on progression, or 'end point' assessments and developing consistent monitoring systems. These were

prevalent in most subjects bar ‘Expressive Arts’, which was concerned that a contrarian overemphasis of assessment could result – the hierarchies were beginning to be exposed. This mindset of pre-emptive territorialism contradicts the spirit of the demanding curriculum experiment: permissions were sought instead of taken as an opportunity to enjoy *autonomy*. Working towards expectations, or the confidence learners gain by completing discrete concrete tasks in a sitting, was a common strategy for accomplished teaching. This solution seemed dependent on a teacher's charisma to engage interest in a subject. The Classics group were most vocal about overestimating the capacity for pupils to self-assess and engage in reflective dialogue. This attitude, dismissive of Jacotot’s premise, presumes that only a few exceptional students will have this capacity. The rest will have their efforts measured by this narrow criterion of genius. There was little conviction among survey participants that the current method of progression should be appropriately challenged, given the ever-widening gap in attainment. Thus, the ambitious programme was seen as a Trojan horse, a gift of “freedom” with a hidden counterpoint to those within the fort. A discomfort of letting the student struggle with not knowing and making room for them to work out ways to see for themselves.

The anxieties of not having time to prepare resources also suggest that the notion of leaving students or the community to present solutions was "irresponsible" and that the teacher had to design and control the learning environment with discrete units of work. In a Scottish Government Learning directorate’s 2019 survey of Senior Headteachers, over 70 per cent of heads identified "timetabling pressures and a lack of teachers as factors limiting their ability to ensure continuity." These issues result from retaining the discrete units of learning in their current form to be delivered. Mitra advocates an openness to not-knowing as a key to students’ genuine engagement. Controversially within appropriate differentiated situations founded on indisciplinarity - “lacks” can be room for innovation. The open proposition CfE aspires to requires schools not to function as departments but as a horizontal community so that students trust risking

open-ended learning instead of working out ways to game the test. Periods of unproductive activities should be available. As democratic schooling literature shows, indulging these impulses soon becomes boring for the student. This slack time for creative daydreaming is productive for youth to find their interests and learning styles. This level of trust afforded the student is contrary to the agenda of school, which breaks time into discrete units perceiving such activity as “dodging” addicted to systematising social relations to be managed.

The value of a closer collegiate assembly as a platform for sharing resources, experiences and practices was a view held by Maths, Numeracy, Modern languages, Classics, Literacy and English teachers. This sharing, they articulated, would ideally happen in locum, first regionally, then nationally, to give the teaching community confidence in transitioning once they had seen proof of concept. The dread of a never-ending meeting can be countered because gathering would no longer be a reporting format of targets achieved. As Mitra’s “Granny cloud” experiment demonstrates, evaluation by a wider public internalises criteria of success of work done. Student-organised exhibitions of their reflections on open proposition investigations of work done instil ownership and accountability.

The results from the expressive arts group raise two interesting points. Firstly, the awareness that retraining would be required, as only experienced teachers would be able to adapt to the new curriculum's openness. The words "magic", "wonder", and "power" were strongly objected to in describing their curriculum, even if as a metaphor, in line with Peter Abbs[17]’ *A New metaphysical art:* as Manifesto Towards an Arts-Based Curriculum:

> We are against the progressive trivialisation of art.
> Against the uncritical and endless use of parody and pastiche.
> Against the ironic and the clever habits of post-modernists.
> We are 'gainst the reductive ethos, the crudely ideological and the

[17] Emeritus Professor of Creative Writing at the University of Sussex in 2006

> merely historical-ological ‘’Universities have been corrupted by too much theory.
> We call for a new initiative in art-making.
>
> (Bell, 1998)

This necessity of letting go of control is a theme in Abbs’ philosophy of creativity. The "vague curriculum" is a challenge to return to learning as a social act. Consider the anti-social comportment of a student preparing for an exam now, sitting for hours cramming alone - in this circumstance, learning is anything but social. Constructivism – connecting learning to real experiences – can displace exam revisions and results as the zenith of a student’s school career.

Community connections

Education secretary and deputy first minister, John Swinney, mentions involving "other partners to deliver learning." Most implemented connections have been predominantly within the education sector and commerce. Opportunities have been missed to complement and diversify the pool of mentors to those in the informal local or activist community capacities. The 2019 review reports that "95 per cent of schools have established long-term partnerships with colleges, and 75 per cent with employers." (Orlando, 2019). The execution of CfE redistributes the responsibility of learning to the learner's community; estranged from its vernacular values there remains much restitution to be done.

For instance, the teachers of Modern Languages saw technology as a way of dealing with resolving the lack of time to prepare. Another example, “Mystery Skype”[18], was a global game of twenty questions where paired classrooms from different countries are beamed to each other, and either has to guess where the other class resided.

On the other hand, the Gaelic department raised the lack of official age-friendly material for students. Mitra's project, the Granny Cloud, seems to be an elegant solution where technology connects community members

[18] [Last Accessed 17/2/23]

to the classroom. In the case of Gaelic learning, an elderly Gaelic speaker could video conference into the classroom to tell stories or bring life to the language through sharing their experiences. Although the uneven distribution of internet access in India has halted the programme during the pandemic, its application to the Gaelic issue has potential to develop. Undaunted by "vagueness", Mitra poses big questions and leaves the class to their investigations assured that they will fill the gap he left behind. A reprise of Rancière's *Ignorant schoolmaster*, with the backing of the internet instead of the Télémaque as the cypher to becoming an indisciplinarian.

Crucially, there are competing interests in this openness, of which educators must be wary of being subjected to privatised initiatives and commerce disguised as commons. The other presents a community-based building of knowledge and purpose, where students enact active and responsible citizenry by learning to becoming accustomed to the messy organisation of assemblies, negotiating diverse points of view and identifying authentic hierarchies resulting in sound consensus decision-making for commons.

The "Autodidact Archives" in Chapter 4 documents eight educators' recounts of personal self-taught experiences. These recount the educator's joyful experience of self-selected study and, reflecting on that memory, begin to emphatically challenge expectations of time and space imposed on them, to reclaim a commons for their students to assemble

Reimagining forms of accountability to counter faux careerism

The assessment provides expectations to align CfE cohorts to existing university entrance requirements. The Scottish Baccalaureate options at that time were:

Science Baccalaureate	Languages Baccalaureate
• two science courses from the eligible list • one mathematics course • an interdisciplinary project.	• two language courses from the eligible list • one English/ Gàidhlig/ ESOL course • an interdisciplinary project.

Table 4 2008 Scottish Baccalaureate options.

In studying a proposed 2008 assessment of exemplars for the interdisciplinary project, authentic assessment seemed to take the form of a bureaucratic process rather than a celebration of learning and discovery. Students would submit reports in project management format, which resembled a funding application, a scientific report for a corporate research centre or a work review form. The nature of knowledge and representation is a field in flux: new methods, theories and examples develop, but bureaucratic evaluation formats insist upon denying this reality. By 2017 development of Arts-Based research methods added to the methodologies and diverse ways of documenting and generating practice-based research undertaken in Art academies and humanities sites of knowability (Leavy, 2017; Rogoff, 2006). Formalised evaluation processes designed to justify accountability seem to nullify means of humanising these very social processes of negotiation.

The self-organised groups studied in this dissertation demonstrate how knowledge as a social construct redistributes the responsibility of learning from one expert to a class of peers. Their direct experience of coping with highs and lows impacting group activities, led to increased self-reliance, confidence and trust bonds. These benefits outweigh the claims of standardised assessment to justify accountability of one to the many.

In my experience of authentic assessment executed in schools in England, a lack of time and appropriate level of peril results in artificial projects where ownership is disingenuous and engagement potential diminished. Students cynically fill in reports half-heartedly, and

documentation folder requirements become tedious chores that are often thoughtlessly done at the last minute.

The pathology of pathways

At first glance, the outcomes or goal setting of the "pathways" seems to be a pragmatic general guide for students, but they emphasise orientation to employability or those paths after school are set in stone. The future jobs have no names and, along these paths, unplanned spaces for students to infect each other with their visions for the future, which could guard against the danger of careerist mentalities. "It would serve us all better if we devoted energy in promoting a better understanding of the senior-phase curriculum as the totality of learner experiences, and not just the subjects studied." Highlighting the critical realistic issue that the "notional length of time for a candidate to complete national courses is 160 hours," filling that time up with subjects and activities contradicts the benefits of the CfE's broad approach. (Boyd, 2019) A 2019 review of Secondary schools, based on responses from 159 of the country's 357 secondary schools, identified a consequence of offering student choice: it had bound teachers to multi-level teaching. The "choice" within enclosure seems to contradict the liberty of material studied, reducing the teacher to an administrator of syllabi.

Alternative course Choice Options – DO THESE COURSES SUIT YOUR CAREER ASPIRATIONS?

	Careers in **Creative Industries**	Careers in **Business, Finance, Maths, Accounting**	Careers in **Hospitality, Events Mgt**	Careers in **Hair, Beauty**	Careers in **Technology or Science or Motor Vehicle and Outdoor**	Careers in **the Caring Professions or Health**
Level 4 *Similar to National 4*	**NON SPECIFIC LEVEL COURSES SCQF 2-5** **ESOL** – English for speakers for other Languages (Tue L2 & 3; Thu L4 & 5) – 1 year per level		**NPA Bakery** ➢Tue & Thu PM – 1 year **Skills for Work Hospitality** ➢Fri PM – 1 or 2 years	**NPA Beauty** Friday PM – 1 year	**Introduction to Carpentry and Joinery** ➢ Friday PM – 1 year **Motor Vehicle Intro S3** ➢ Friday PM – 1 year **Motor Vehicle Programme City and Guilds – S4-6** ➢ Tue/Thu PM – 1 year	
Level 5 *Similar to National 5*	**Folio Building** ➢Friday PM – 1 year; L4 or 5 **Creative Industries an Introduction** ➢Friday PM – 1 year; L4 or 5			**Skills for Work Hairdressing** ➢Tue & Thu – 1 year **NPA Makeup** ➢Friday PM – 1 year	**SfW: Construction** ➢ Tue/Thu PM – 1 year; L4 or 5 **Prep for FA: Engineering** ➢ Tue & Thu PM – 1 year	**Skills for Work Health Sector** ➢ Friday – 2 years **NPA Mental Health** ➢ Tue & Thu – 1 year **Skills for Work Early Education & Childcare** - Friday PM – 1 year
Level 6 *Similar to Higher*	**Portfolio Building Course** ➢ Tuesday 5 – 8 pm – 1 year; L5 or 6 **Foundation App – Creative & Digital Media** ➢ Tue/Thu PM Y1, full day Y2 – 2 years	**Foundation App – Business Skills** ➢Tue/Thu PM Y1, full day Y2 – 2 years or 1 year for S6 ➢@ ICHS with Sport Man focus (Wed 8.35 – 9.35, Thu 11.30 – 12.20, Friday 10.35 – 12.20)	**Foundation Apprenticeship – Food and Drink Technologies** ➢Tue/Thu PM Y1, full day Y2 – 2 years or 1 year for S6	**Foundation Apprenticeship – Software Development** ➢Tue/Thu PM Y1, full day Y2 – 2 years or 1 year for S6 **Foundation Apprenticeship Scientific Technologies** ➢Tue/Thu PM Y1, full day Y2 – 2 years or 1 year for S6 ➢@ JYHS, Armadale, Linlithgow, Inveralmond **Foundation Apprenticeship Civil Engineering** ➢Tue/Thu full day – 2 years, placement during holidays or 1 year for S6 **Foundation Apprenticeship Engineering** ➢Tue/Thu PM Y1, Tue/Thu full day Y2 & Friday PM – 2 years or 1 year for S6		**Foundation Apprenticeship – Social Services and Health Care** @Linlithgow, WLC or Inveralmond (Tue 10.25 – 11.15, Wednesday 1.50 – 3.30, Thu 8.45 – 10.25) Tue/Thu PM Y1, full day Y2 or 1 year for S6 **Girls in Football** ➢ Tue/Thu PM – 1 year **Foundation Apprenticeship – Social Services Children & Young People** ➢ Tue/Thu PM Y1, full day Y2 – 2 years or 1 year for S6 **Higher Childcare & Development** ➢ Tue & Thu PM – 1 year
Level 7 *HNC level above Higher*					**HNC Computing** ➢ Tue & Thu PM – 2 years	

Please note: Tuesday/Thursday courses are studied from 1.30 – 4.30 pm. Friday courses from 1.15 – 3.15. This alters for Year 2 of 2 year Foundation Apprenticeships or for Single Year Foundation Apprenticeships.

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Table 5 Employability Pathways in a Lothian Secondary school.

Consider this sample menu of Alternative course "Choice options" [in sic] table; at first glance, it is an impressive range of skills and opportunities offering insight into various sectors of labour. On deeper consideration, it has programmed experience into a timetable. "Do these courses suit your career aspirations?" If there wasn't a course, could it still be an aspiration, or would that thought need to be licensed? Overdetermined language such as "the promotion of problem-based learning and introduction of course elements on employability and even entrepreneurship"(Scott, 2019) which insists on the design of pathways, can become counter-intuitive to CfE's plans to support citizens of self-directed resilience.

Programmatic initiatives of employability pathways represent worlds that well-meaning administrators inhabit on behalf of youth. The consumer model of “choice” is reductive and inauthentic. It diminishes the peril and challenge of a “self-determined” vocation. The assigned grid presented conditions for the student to perceive work as a step in a process out of their control.

Overemphasis on professionalism and HE as the destination

The move to directly connect schools to universities on a negotiated accreditation system could backfire and impact assessment design, thus further limiting teachers' and students' freedom to develop non-traditional HE pathways. Professor Sir Peter Scott, Scotland's fair access commissioner, adds

> The wider responsibilities of schools should be recognised by universities which should avoid attitudes and actions that may unintentionally suggest that other pathways followed by school leavers are 'second best'. The aim should be to conceive of all these pathways as elements within a unified system of tertiary education and training.

This artifice is levelled in the critique of professionalisation in a rather mandarin quotation from a recent 2019 report of head teachers' findings:

> "61 per cent reported that the training or professional learning they receive to enable them to design the senior phase has been helpful, but 2/5th disagreed that it was helpful."
>
> (Orlando, 2019)

Professionalisation becomes a form of accrediting teachers for the same stilted assessment formats instead of allocating time to build a co-constructed curriculum with their students' direct experiences in the community. Sir Peter's recommendations for better "alignment" between schools and universities could begin by ceasing to be mainly defined in terms of schools' assumed "deficits" in preparing young people for university entrance. He tactfully calls for an urgent establishment of a more coherent and consistent network of these intra-institutional programmes. (Scott, 2019).

In Singapore, the through-train programme assessment instead of GCE A levels had to be accredited by the relevant university departments. It was in this negotiation process that areas of improvement and expectations were more transparent and could develop customised criteria. Although this was still based on departments, it was a move to collaboration

towards accessibility to dialogue as a reality rather than a bureaucratic filtration. Accessibility in a loose sense as these schools were still elite institutions with top students; the time-intensive process would not be feasible for mass education. However, the process demonstrates that negotiating assessment on decentralised community-based terms could lead to more pragmatic employment.

As the ground research suggests, educators should consider the climate of HE perceived as an Edu factory, which is increasingly vulnerable to privatisation. HE is a marker of accomplishment for most school leavers. It seemed pertinent to engage in this research as a reality check of what they were working so hard towards. In Chapter 4, activism within the University is addressed in a close analysis of an arbitration document of a teacher who went against protocols and the subsequent consequences he faced. The accreditation system of indenture (Moten & Harney, 2013) based on preserving enclosure and commodifying scholarship should not come at the cost of losing academic freedoms promoting independent thought.

Summary

The self-organised group experiences give the researcher confidence that teachers' anxieties can be alleviated. An indisciplinarian approach reframes their quandaries with the examples of alternative praxis and schools as working commons hope to show that timetabling and low recruitment issues present opportunities to involve the broader community in prioritising student engagement.

The cost of openness, particularly the controversy over limited courses available for students, subscribes to a consumer model of Education as an illusion of hyper-marts. It is doubtful that reimagining the future to achieve CfE’s four capacities be written with a spreadsheet. Can the documents be intervened and interrupted? Can one redress the boxes that dictate one's teaching position and paradigm? The trenchant tributes to a system of accreditation, high stakes summative assessment and

accountability to remote league tables, which advance only the top 20%, is unsustainable. For enhanced student ownership, plotting pathways, not for those taught and assessed, provide visible contexts and engage what matters. (Enriquez, 2020)

For Holloway, Illich and Rancière, alternative needs-based Education is a murmur of resonance appropriate for disporting ephemera. Current flipped and blended classroom trends embrace the emancipatory mindset in educational research, as seen in Sugata Mitra's experiments initiating Self-Organised Learning Environments (SOLE). Yet growing "Edu-tech enterprise" assumptions of an infinite marketplace without critique replicates formalised learning online, entering all aspects of life under the illusion of choice and continual self-improvement. David Harvey points out in "*Right to the City"* that everything becomes an enterprise of "structured" learning, and there is growing impatience with unstructured living. Stiegler's analysis of the actual cost of virtual capitalism:

> Social networking and engineering are dimensions of the digital stage of a process of grammatization that began thirty thousand years ago. With the advent of digitisation, psychic and collective memory as well as social relations have all become objects of exchange value. Given digital technologies are organs of publishing, that is, of the production of public space and time, digitisation is a process of privatisation of the public thing – of the republica. Privatisation here means commodification. In short, what is occurring is the destruction of the psychic and collective process of individuation that began with the Greek polis. Furthermore, the domination by those giants that are Google, Apple, Facebook and Amazon is possible because very little genuine work is being done on the stakes of digitisation by either the academic sphere or the political sphere.
>
> (Stiegler, 2013)

Stiegler describes digital colonisation as eroding vernacular qualities of the "psychic and collective process of individuation", which roots us to meaning and each other. Illich and Ellul would see the extent of the corruption of Education persist by pervasive non-convivial digital devices, which can be felt in the primary site of Education, the home. TKS and Geddes' visions of rurbanisation integrate learning ecosystems and

attempt to reclaim vernacular values of pleasure and purposeful social epistemology.

2.4 Countering biopower with Autodidactic manoeuvres

> It's not that kind of surveillance and sort of worker discipline and regulation in the sense of it being an externally imposed force. The tricky thing is that the notion is that you are your own policymaker; you are your own police force. Hopefully, *we will have trained you properly so that you will know you have to issue the call to order*. At that point, you have to **police yourself**.
>
> (Moten & Harney, 2013: 127)

Moten and Harney's popular work "The Undercommons" captures the themes circulating in many radical activist groups encountered during this period of protest and occupation. They describe the conditions of the need to subvert internalised hidden curriculums of institutions. Any critique of "institution" as other than "us" is to evade one's complicity. Competencies and dispositions of institutionalisation are embodied and performed by people, not just in buildings or emblems. (Fraser, 2006: 130; 133-134)

Michel Foucault defines this concept of biopower as "the set of mechanisms through which the basic biological features of the human species became the object of a political strategy, of a general strategy of Power". Pierre Bourdieu describes these deeply internalised inhibitions as the "social made body, the **institution made mind.**" blocking the change which needs to happen (Rogoff, 2017).

Bourdieu's field theory research relies heavily on understanding the concept of habitus. He describes teacher habits as professional disciplinarians adhering to the institution's definitions of behaviour management. Acting complicity is to agree to police conformity and discourage critical and creative thought. Bourdieu describes this symbolic violence of middle-class values [customarily inflicted] on students who disagree or seek freedom from the repressive imperative.

Rancière rejects his mentors' tenets as bleak and disempowering, premised on acknowledging the signifiers of oppression and reproducing them. Instead, he assumes emancipatory egalitarianism, refuting that the individual's fate is bound to one's "habitus". The indisciplinarian stance is a way of deschooling the mind from an overdetermined epistemology. It engages the liberty of one to exercise the right to the imagination. Students either comply or are sent to the isolation rooms for resisting, but where is the refuge for the dehumanised teacher technician who needs rehabilitation?

The educator's self-institutionalisation is perpetuated by three dogmas on which extractive enclosures rely. Standardised examinations mark accountability, qualifications equate to employability and encompassing both is a devotion to scarcity. Accompanying the installation of a form of grammar is inevitably the taxonomy and hierarchy of types of knowledge and ways of knowing. Michael Barkun describes five strands of stigmatised knowledge: "forgotten, ignored, rejected, suppressed and superseded." (Neil, 2005).

> [T]here's a kind of fear in the university around something like amateurism - immaturity, pre-maturity, not graduating, not being ready somehow – and the student represents that at certain moments.
>
> (Moten & Harney, 2013: 114).

Suppose the imbalance of power to know belongs to the professional classes that dictate "legitimate" knowledge standards. What can the study of the autodidact who begins their inquiry without official premises illuminate?

Gary Peters' 2014 article "Ignorant Artists/Ignorant Teachers" supports an in-depth analysis of the taxonomy of unknowing or indisciplinarity, on which these strains of creativity rely. "Artists know many things, but that should not obscure the fact that precisely what makes artists and their work interesting is what they don't know, that which is not of the epistemological order." Knowledge of visual arts production and research has often been marginalised as 'non-knowledge'. However, its

indisciplinary expansiveness elicits pleasure, demands openness to enchantment and disrupts one's automatised disposition. The amateur's state of enthrallment derives from the liberty to exercise one's capacity to see things as otherwisely. The Proto Academy, an alternative art laboratory experiment in Edinburgh in the nineties, articulates the generalist approach to an autodidact's predisposition. Paraphrasing Esche's notes[19] on its origins, Art practice has become a generous and permissive area of cultural production. Contemporary artists synthesise knowledge from diverse areas of academic specialisations. They regularly cross boundaries between art, social sciences, physical sciences, humanities and popular culture by assuming each has equal validity as research material to their practice.

The study of an autodidact's creativity is an inquiry into the root of Education as a practice (Hausman & Rothenberg, 1976). Where institutional obstructions exist, the individual steps up, not for certification, but dignity and self-directed purpose - a mark of intellectual courage. It also raises questions about how much of the education process has become an artificial record-keeping exercise. Assessment is a natural process of learning, but currently, standardised testing is a science in arbitrariness and excludes the potential of students who thrive on what the curriculum may designate as stigmatised knowledge, to the detriment of curiosity, imagination and the courage to create as well as to air the taboo for open debate. Non-knowledge signals the indeterminate space between poles of knowing and non-knowing, which premature judgement limits the natural process of making meaning derived from traversing between the two.

Those engaged in artistic endeavours are more likely to have autodidactic traits. Groups studied demonstrated elements of rehabilitating autodidactic tendencies by self-selecting study materials, sharing findings with like-minded communities and in found spaces. Their enthusiasm also meant there was never a lack of stimulating company or material to study

19 (Esche, 2001: 223)

for self-improvement. In this dissertation, the autodidact in pursuit of their interest connotes traits of creativity, curiosity, grit, in-depth research, risk-taking and resourcefulness. They are comfortable with abductive reasoning and can thus work undaunted in situations with few certainties. Most autodidacts have the propensity to be open to all avenues having the potential to experiment and invent. Transdisciplinary agencies describe this as the abundance mindset.

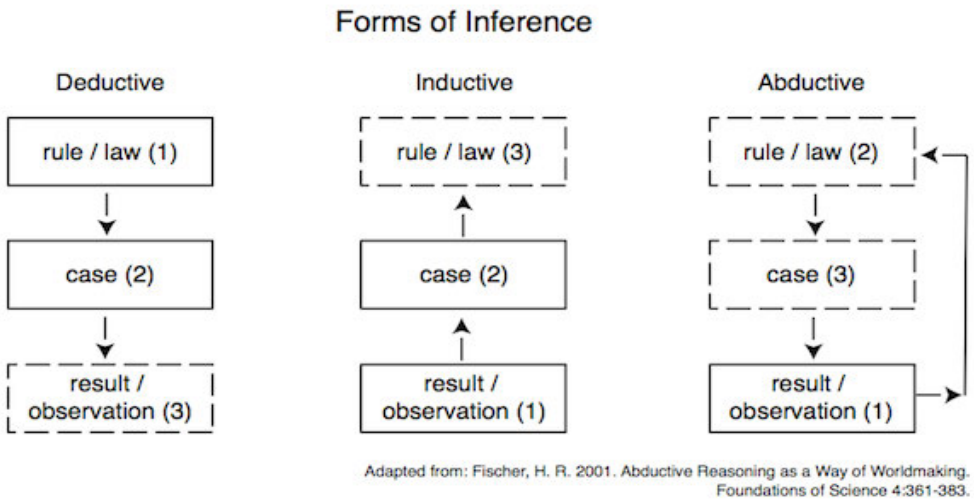


Figure 1 Abductive Reasoning as a Way of Worldmaking.(Fischer, 2001).

The autodidact, therefore, within the mileu of the multitude, contradicts the notion of a figure in the pursuit of isolated study. The multitude is the optimistic emerging post-nationalist democratic subjectivity put forward by Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt. Yet Lauren Berlant cautions that the optimism requires a deeper introspection of the aspirations of “education" which these self-organised manifestations propose to achieve: "resisters ... protesting state/capital but not protesting themselves... need to think about what kinds of good life might better be associated with flourishing, and fight that battle (with fantasy, politically) too." This ethical context for the autodidact benefits from understanding the concept of the commons and extractive enclosures concerning the murmuring multitude (Hardt & Negri, 2004). They contribute to knowledge ecology not in isolation but as part of the living alternative that grows within the Empire.

Extractive enclosures exploit the managerial myth of individualistic exceptionalism by marketing the persona of the autodidact. There emerges a fine line between optimistic and opportunistic intentions, as the ubiquitous spread of handheld digital media production technologies demonstrates. The allure of freedom to make one's own "me-dia[20]" with basic phones, cameras, and editing software show up in reality how these energies could unwittingly reproduce current power structures. Andrew Keen describes "The cult of the amateur" (2007) as less a revolution but a danger of self-exploitation, as these 'petite princes' readily make their lives a billboard, furiously building micro empires of hyper-capitalist frenzy. Indisciplinarian autodidacts, on the other hand, are not bound by proprietary tools but navigate territories of non-knowledge via open-source P2P alternatives. The multitude is the optimistic emergence of post-nationalist democratic subjectivity (Hardt & Negri, 2004), a reclaiming of micro autonomous experiments challenging conventions of the masses. In current networked cultures, self-taught cultures are initiated and supported as small collectives. These nurture a **working social epistemology**, thus complementing the dominant myth of the lone autodidact.

Each revolution has created new opportunities for redistributing wealth by those who master how to wield the technologies. Ellul, Dominguez[21] and Illich elaborate on how this systemic symbiosis ensured investment in technology relied on a populace **more dependent on products and services** they developed to survive.

> All this supports Marshall McLuhan's conclusion: "Print carries the individuating power of the phonetic alphabet much further than manuscript culture could ever do. Print is the technology of individualism[22] ." Walter Ong contended that Print accelerated the disintegration of feudalism when it "created the isolated thinker, the man with the book, and downgraded the network of personal loyalties which oral cultures favour as matrices of communication and as principles of social unity[23].

20 Term attributed to William Merrin is Senior Lecturer in Media and Communications at Swansea University, Baudrillard specialist and media studies.
21 Chapter 2.2.4 Table 2 Virtual Timeline by Ricardo Dominguez http://www.thing.net/~rdom.
22 (McLuhan, 1962: 158)
23 (Ong, 1970).

> “The benefits of print have been questioned by those who uphold the value of “rich oral traditions” (no one ever seems to have a poor oral tradition) but plebeian observers who witnessed that change had no doubt that it represented progress.”
>
> (Rose, 2020:25)

Illich proposed that these non-convivial technologies would disable our hands, feet, and hearts to turn from each other to acquire the continuum of desires masked as invented needs. For a majority of students, staff, and administrations operating under the assumed right to an enabling education find instead piecemeal processes of accreditation accompanied by debt slavery. The friction can also be attributed to the C-change of social media. Bolter’s social media analysis defines it as an attention economy generated by oral and visual literacy. It is a return to an adapted “vernacular medium which is fluid, mediated, remediated and cross-mediated this time manipulated through digital media technologies.” In producing an assortment of unpredictable forms, dynamics of cultural transmission, production, distribution and reception between creator and viewer affect socially constructed realities and epistemologies. (Bolter, 2001) Rose describes how working men’s clubs would collectively purchase volumes of Chambers’ all-encompassing encyclopaedias for their study libraries. In contrast, crowdsourcing fundraising platform patrons are both local and global funding anything from specialised production equipment to personal charitable causes.

2.4.1 The open proposition and the affects of paragogy

A Foucauldian education (Ball, 2016) would not be an institution but a relation to ourselves and others. Sugata Mitra, a physicist by training, conducted landmark experiments of alternative, democratic forms of instruction. He is critical of the mechanistic rote learning method still being advocated in teacher training manuals in India. By de-emphasising narrow exam objectives and simplifying education design, he claims a wealth of readily available embedded knowledge; seeds of a commons. *The Hole-in-the-wall*, *Granny Cloud* and *Kalikuppam* experiments referenced in this

dissertation are propositions to counter modernisation's miscalculated oversight regarding pre-existing conditions of cultures encountered. These experiments demonstrate trust's efficacy in successful ageless self-organised learning environments and is not without detractors. In 2013 his research contributions was recognised when he was awarded a million dollar TED Prize shortly followed by a visiting professorship in the University of Newcastle.

The first experiment involved a group of slum-dwelling children's self-selected mediators. They taught themselves how to use these terminals housed in a solitary station. They managed to access preloaded educational packages and where permitted, access to the internet. Most frequently accessed were games, but these interactions impact their capacity for English, which showed marked improvement.

The second project recruited retired teachers or grandparents, not all of whom spoke English from different countries, to participate. Their role was to engage students as bystanders brought virtually into classrooms in rural village schools from Uttar Pradesh to Maharashtra. These volunteers without any specific subject mastery accomplished high levels of student engagement. Their presence as enthusiasts rather than monitors (Krashen & Terrel, 1998) contributed to this mutually beneficial relationship.

Finally, in Kalikuppam, a village classroom was set up with complicated biochemistry materials online, a subject beyond the maturity of the child's prescribed level of attainment. The children were entrusted to a teenager they knew as a facilitator, who had some language ability but no subject mastery. The results were a broad grasp of concepts which were surprising to the biochemistry experts who audited the experiment. An incidental by-product of the case study was that the voice-aided access to the computer required children to adapt their English accents to be understood by the programme. This authentic means of speech mastery (Krashen & Terrel, 1998) impacted the ownership of the learning processes of those involved.

Critics of his work are usually educators who consider his approaches idealistic, such as Professor Payal Arora, digital anthropologist, who critiqued the lifespan of two Hole-In-The-Wall facilities abandoned in two Central Himalayan communities. However, these facilities were placed close to school compounds instead of locations where there would be a concentration of children who had limited access to teachers. Who is responsible for maintaining these extra-institutional facilities in the long run? Is the local government, school or user; prompts an intriguing question of self-governance?

It is a profound and subversive biopolitical struggle to challenge the ingrained conditioning that licenses knowledge as a scarce fixed commodity. Instead of being socially constructed within communities, it is best outsourced to tests and teachers as the only verifiable truths. Socially constructed knowledge within communities is, by contrast, unreliable, inefficient and erratic only when measured by an external institutions' criteria.

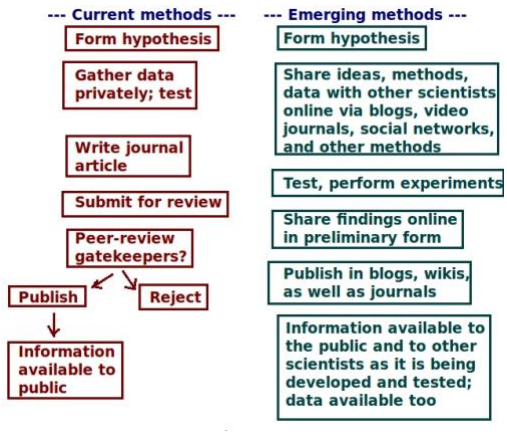


Figure 2 Adapted from Autodidactic potential with Science 2.0.[24]

OLD WORLD DISTRIBUTION	NEW WORLD DISTRIBUTION
Distributor in Control	Filmmaker in Control
Overall Deal	Hybrid Approach
Fixed Release Plans	Flexible Release Strategies
Mass Audience	Core and Crossover Audiences
Rising Costs	Lower Costs
Viewers Reached thru Distributor	Direct Access to Viewers
Third Party Sales	Direct and Third Party Sales
Territory by Territory Distribution	Global Distribution
Cross-Collateralized Revenues	Separate Revenue Streams
Anonymous Consumers	True Fans

© 2010 Peter Broderick

Table 6 Changing film distribution models (Broderick, 2010).

Figure 2 and Table 6, reflect how the hypertextuality and thus increasing interconnectivity of conducting research and communication across art and science demand greater transparency and accountability. Adapting to

[24] (Solomon, 2005)

this asynchronous and improvisational nature of learning becomes a key feature in the emerging model of research production.

The current model is a traditional commercial enclosure with gatekeepers and middlemen in the table below**. It contrasts** with the emerging model of an open commons, where the internet is a tool of ‘sharing’, ‘redistribution’ and ‘alternatives’ via a range of channels. Reputation is no longer determined by prestige alone but also **by the utility to the community** directly through citation, view counts or downloads. Virtual capitalism imposes and insists on old models to perpetuate a simulation of real life, which is easier to control and manage; all the while resisting emerging models which are more concerned with moving towards recovering common ground. The information revolution encourages a willingness to risk Jacotot’s “not knowing”. Sugata Mitra’s Self-Organised Learning Environments which employs this key principle of the “big question” or open proposition.

“First thing I do is tell them: I do not know anything about this. I don’t even know how to spell his name so help me. So they made groups ... I’ve called Self-Organised Learning Environment, I’ve learned it from the Hole in the wall: you have to have one computer and many children not one to one, it is a social thing.” (Eurozone, 2013)

Mitra’s methods are unorthodox, working from the premise of the unknown posited in an open proposition seemingly reliant on incidentals. He trusts that natural multi-age collaboration works better when technology has to be shared. The educator’s challenge is to resist the urge to prepare overdetermined PowerPoints; by trusting that peer-to-peer exploratory indeterminacy confronted with open propositions will be worth the risk. Open propositions can be philosophical, problem-based, indisciplinary explorations towards assembling one’s thought processes to be shared and developed with one’s peers.

Mitra proposes a pedagogy of differentiation to access diverse information sources and support a working paragogy. He divides the curriculum into

three parts to determine different stages of learning—the first where lessons are teacher-directed. They open the doorway communicating their experience, mastery and interest in their subject. In the second phase, a mediator, who is slightly more knowledgeable of the subject, assists topic exploration. Paragogy thus reduces the level of explication associated with Krashen's monitor hypothesis. The Granny Cloud and Kalikuppam experiments described above demonstrated that erasure of the teacher as sole experts has efficacy within parameters of self-organising governance. Thirdly, conducive conditions for students' self-directed learning requires trust that peer groups and free access to learning resources, and a challenging enough "big question" will lead to meaningful self-directed learning.

Behaviours required to enact the last two differentiation protocols go against years of ingrained conditioning and self-institutionalisation of "assured" power dynamics. The last two types of differentiation require teachers to become indisciplinarians. Mitra describes this simply as "to sit in the corner and be quiet", only facilitating upon request. Actors in the current secondary school system lack rehearsal in both behaviours, and Mitra assumes a proactive student learner mindset, which is more prevalent in younger children.

The indisciplinarian mindset is open to a chaotic and lively learning environment. This anti-specialism, anti-isolation and anti-hierarchy sentiment is prevalent in most alternative open school philosophies, such as Josef Beuys Free International University FIU. Consider their founding statement:

> "The specialist's insulated point of view places the arts and other kinds of work in sharp opposition, whereas it is crucial that the structural, formal and thematic problems of the various work processes should be constantly compared to one another...The division of the disciplines for the training of experts, wish no substantial comparative method, reinforces the idea that only specialists can contribute to the basic structures of society: economics, politics, law, structure etc..."
>
> (Esche, 2001).

An indisciplinary disposition is freed of preconceptions and given time this openness and nomadic liberty, prepares a curious robust and ethical imagination. Several studies on motivation report that the correlation between interest and achievement has always been low, variable and even negative (Gardner, 1975). It is the record keeping for accountability which interrupts the process of self-knowledge and purpose. By experimenting with socially engaged situations some of these groups cobble together sustainable strategies of cultural engagement and are less concerned with collecting objects of self-expression. These processes are invisible and defy becoming archivable – hence the convention of achievement is measured by yardsticks specific to each community's situation and intentions. These experiments erase the teacher as sole authority, monitor and administrator of knowledge, emphasising paragogy and community as effective motivators of self-directed learning instead. In Self-Organised Learning Environments (SOLE), Sugata Mitra's "School in the cloud" experiment sets up the classroom with few computers and relies heavily on the children to collaborate.

These exemplars offer high yields from a rich textured learning environment led by student inquiry with minimal investment. Post-pandemic **c**ircumstances demand risking bold creative adaptations of these ideas to counter the disintegration of offline convivial social dynamics.

2.5 Rurbanised Education as a feature of a Commons

Copenhagen's Ørestad Gymnasium, built in a new design media hub section of the city, has no fixed classrooms or teaching methods. Teachers adapt lesson designs to the environment where students and staff rehearse the reality of careers in fast-paced media production. The politics of what determines the architecture and orientation of learning styles is essential, as it makes designing "schools" more than just planning facilities.

In Singapore, the education model inherited from developed economies served the growth model by guaranteeing a highly skilled literate labour force which secured investment from Multinational Corporations (MNCs). These dominantly hierarchical factory-like enclosures contain limited, thus quantifiable data and information operating on a curriculum with a set of measurable outcomes that are pre-defined and easy for authorities to evaluate skills foreign to the population's displaced embedded social knowledge. According to Kant[25], the modern subject is narcissistic and willingly hands over his rational competence, and thus sovereignty, to the guilds of faceless professionals. Subjected democratic individuals have the phantasmal freedom of periodical political choice at the polls and continuous consumption of invented needs. When the 'free' individual is confronted with lawless circumstances, the urge for communication, and situations in which selfishness has to be abandoned, he is incapable of any moral act. Morality arises from communicative situations and from disobeying orders of an anti-humanity regime.

Illustrations of education founded on principles of a commons can be found in two influential radical town planning philosophies from Singapore and Scotland, Tay Kheng Soon (TKS) and Patrick Geddes, respectively. TKS shares similar iconoclastic deschooling views as Ivan Illich. Both propose a return to vernacular values, where a non-expert community reclaims words, habits and understandings that inform real social life. DIY autodidact behaviours are less of a gifted anomaly and more of a modus operandi of subsistence. In the 1990s, PM Goh Chok Tong had a vision for Singapore to become a Boston of the East; more recently, TKS resurrected the same slogan but with significant infrastructural differences. Instead of reinforcing the idea of "schools" as commercial enclosures, TKS' proposed principles envision the young having access to a commons of maximum embedded data and information where learning is active, constant and lively. The vernacular language is unruly: acquired without a paid instruction, heard instead of written down,

25 (Gregor, 1996)

undocumentable, therefore mutual and under the radar of exploitative exchange-value[26]. These radical approaches are modes of thinking founded on community and learning, particularly a restorative relationship with nature, as the _OS field trip to Campsie Hills in Chapter 5.2.3 reflects. The wall-less classroom potentially deinstitutionalises the architecture of schooling as ritualised space, time and imposed assembly

Consensus building and rehearsing direct democracy

> In a society which would honour the right to call assemblies through peer-matching, the ability to take educational initiative on a specific subject would be as wide as access to learning itself.
>
> (Illich, 1971: 101).

In South Columbia, the Misak (The Live Mosaic, 2019b) indigenous university's education model consists of a circle of elders, adults, and youth gathering to address issues through the "process of dialogue and investigation". Those who participate may bring issues facing community life, seeking improvements or proposing solutions for the common good and, where required, informed by the experience of the elders. Practising negotiation prepares the Misak university students for leadership and greater autonomy to restore their culture's self-sufficiency to better co-exist as a viable alternative.

This suggests that everyday experiences and offer diversity in addressing legitimate, authentic needs and empowering communities to care for themselves as best they know. Does a limiting pragmatism disable these multi-age assembly forms in schools with misplaced priorities? By surveying a cross-section of how self-organised meetings were run, patterns and reflections of how groups redistributed the role of the teacher as the sole authority to individual members were noted. They bore the following traits: assembly as a convivial multi-age, non-hierarchical organisation functions on high levels of enthusiasm, initiative, and

26 "Vernacular Values: Remembering Ivan Illich" (Merrifield, 2015).

hospitality to build a culture of trust and purpose, all of which enabled the possibility of efficacy with surprising economy.

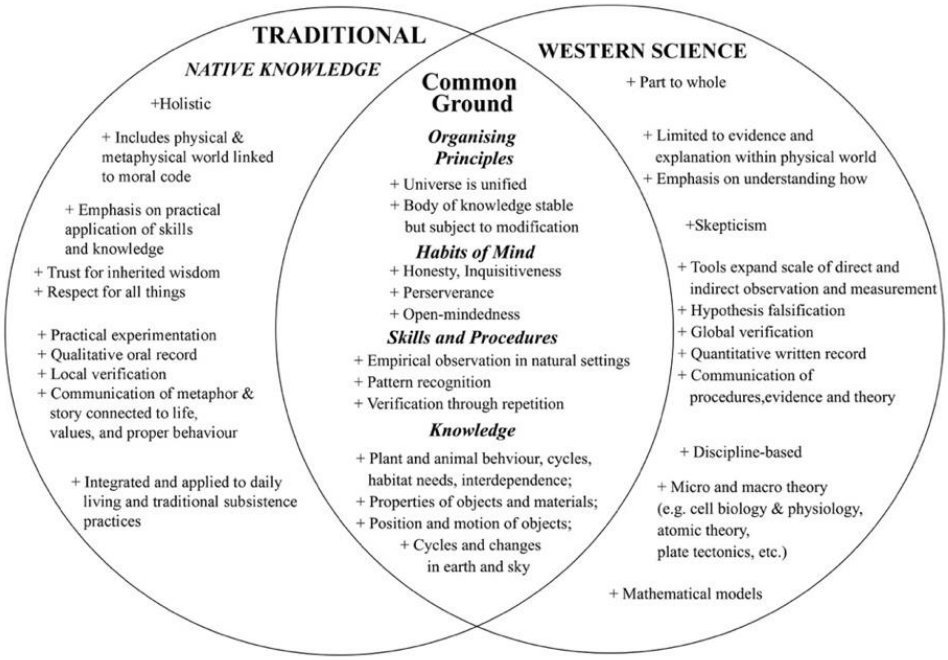


Figure 3 Venn diagram: common ground between Indigenous knowledge and Western Science.[27]

How these precarious groups conceptualise space is reconstructed by surveying transcripts and proposals where at least 30 instances of groups negotiating, finding a base or arranging a gathering were relevant. As forms of Foucauldian "heterotopias", these sought spaces layered unexpected relationships to other places - attempts at appropriating unlicensed utopias. Foucault calls for a society with many heterotopias, i.e. several places for the affirmation of difference and as a means of escape from authoritarianism and repression. As self-managed spaces rely on different models of authority, hierarchy and constituency access to conventional environments were unconventional and raised interesting deontological resistance.

Unfolding Spaces

In this revisioning, Tay Kheng Soon, architect, activist and intellectual, describes Rurbanisation as "rethinking the city and the countryside as one

27 ISFIRE conference 2021: Sean Asiqłuq Topkok: Alaska Native Resiliency for Place-Based Education

space, not two... A rurbanised town is a one-kilometre walking town. It should be dense, where children can walk to school… Schools have to become more than just school buildings; they will have banks, shops and other real-life settings. School fences will become unnecessary."

"Rurbanisation" is the integration of nature with social living. The vision is to move from dependent administrative structures and models toward more self-reliant and resilient communities (Tay, 2011). Tay Kheng Soon's proposal transforms the island into a "campus city" where housing estates are experiential learning hubs, where living and studying happen in a community setting. He seeks to ground education more intuitively and collaboratively with residents as insiders rather than outsiders of the current enclosure of the University as a temple of knowledge, which serve an exclusive minority. Gilan Tawadros is referenced in the New contemporaries 1997 catalogue, intimating the same vision for institutional art:

> Imagine the art school reinvented not as a monolithic institution which relies on exclusion and, elitism and competition but rather as a number of sites, located within the everyday world where artists hone their practice alongside scientists, map-makers, architects, housewives in mutual dialogue and interaction.
>
> (Obrist et al., 1997)

These principles are preceded by a venerated Scottish town planner, Patrick Geddes, in a 1927 work, "Notation of life". He had a profound impact on early Scottish town planning and was committed to achieving a balance of nature with the experience of its inhabitants.

> This school strives to adapt itself to meet the wants and needs, the ideas and ideals of the place and persons concerned. It seeks to undo as little as possible while planning to increase the well-being of the people at all levels, from the humblest to the highest.
>
> (Geddes, 1947: 24).

Rather than being an imposition on a landscape, a school belonged to a "whole set of existing conditions" whose "advantages, difficulties and

defects" should be recognised rather than dismissed. Similarly, Irit Rogoff and Jeanne Van Heeswijk's curatorial practices often begin attuning to the pre-existing conditions of an encountered situation. This observance invariably presents the appropriate open proposition, making for an effective, well-attended, fruitful assembly.

Like TKS, Geddes saw the city as a series of standard, interlocking patterns, "an inseparably interwoven structure" akin to a flower. He was critical of the specialisation promoted by modern scientific thinking. In his "Report to the H.H. the Maharaja of Kapurthala" in 1917, he wrote:

> "Each of the various specialists remains too closely concentrated upon his single specialism, too little awake to those of the others. Each sees clearly and seizes firmly upon one petal of the six-lobed flower of life and tears it apart from the whole."

(Geddes, 1947).

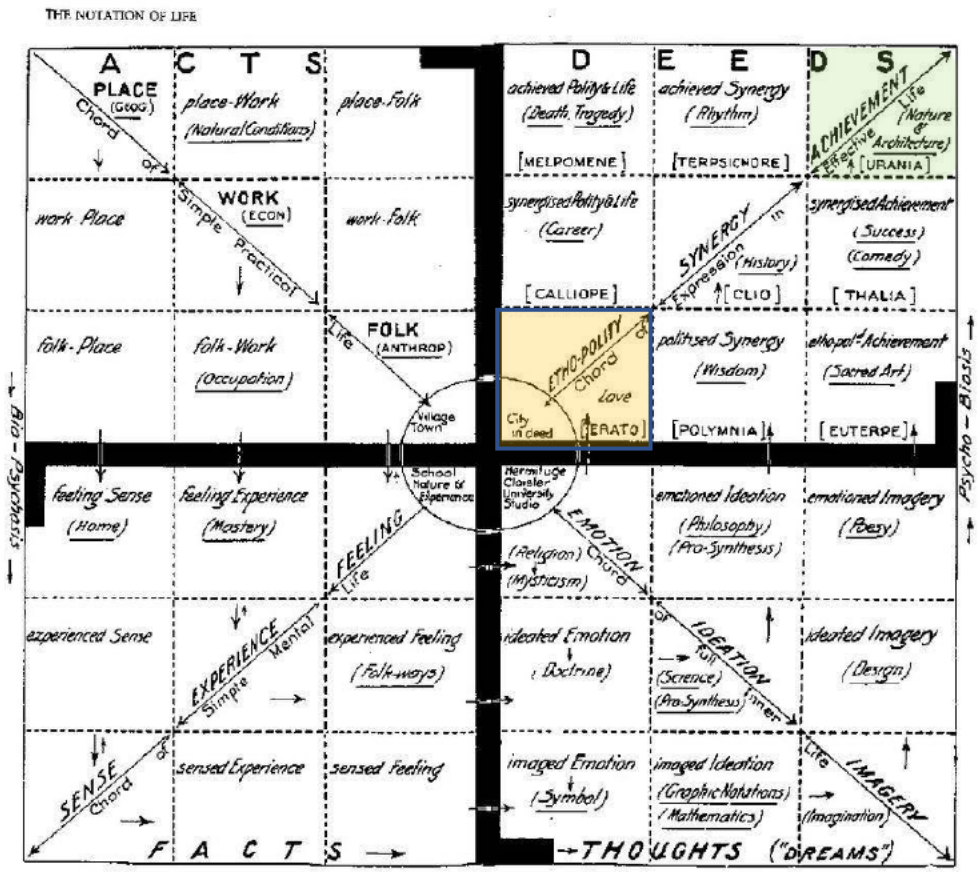


Figure 4 The Notation of Life" as published in 1927 (Geddes, 1947: 24).

Geddes' "The Notation of Life" is a 3D sculpture of an ecosystem of quadrants delineating a citizen’s environs from school, university, city and village. The importance of one's experience of nature in one's education nurtures the individual's "full inner life". Multiple streams of spiritual, intellectual and artisanal development are not compartmentalised. The lack of arrows between the last two quadrants suggests a confluence of innocence with experience, which feeds back into the “school” quadrant, which in turn benefits if the Village and City life are balanced and distinct but symbiotic. The former labelled Acts "a simple, practical life" and the latter, Deeds, as "expression in effective life." The City is the refinement of these streams. For instance, the highlighted quadrants depict the perfection of inner life to achievement in Nature and Architecture, which Geddes calls Urania and is borne out of love or Erato. The Village and Town are rooted in the social, not in abstractions of perfection. " However, during 2008 austerity, the groups studied evidence that the overreaching achievement of invisible capital’s Deeds dominates and suppress Facts, Thoughts and Acts.

> Every minute, another 10,000 square metres of the world becomes urbanised. That's enough roads laid, concrete poured, and buildings raised to make up a new Paris every five days and an entire new Japan every year. That is why the role of cities, which consume over two-thirds of the world's global energy and account for more than 70 per cent of global carbon dioxide emissions, is critical in any attempt to slow climate change.
>
> (Kang, 2019).

In his time, Geddes witnessed the substantial social consequences of crime, illness and poverty that developed due to unchecked modernisation. Similarly, TKS responds to a post-Fordist climate when urgently needed neganthrophic social employment is perceived as contrary to neoliberal managerialism.

Architect TKS advocates a return to a kampung model of education, which does not limit learning to sites or tools available. Instead, it empowers students in the learning process who have to deal with situations with maximum embedded data and information. He cites the

Lamplaimat People and Community Development Association project headed by Dr Mechai Viravaidya. In this hybrid education project based on Waldorf, Montessori and Buddhist philosophy, "Students determine the timetable with their teachers. They do not use books; they use the internet. Maths is learnt through real-life project work. They take no exams yet scored in the top 10% of Thai schools when compelled by the Thai Ministry of Education." He was invited to set up proof that the kampung model as an alternative economy works. "Next to the school, I designed and built a village community centre which accommodates a Rice Academy, a craft shop, an internet café, a library and a radio station. This programme led to a Village Bank which provides microcredits." These micro experiments challenge the economies of scale approach to education which make little sense for the majority.

Alternative initiatives from the seventies that involve creating rebalancing spaces are innumerable and still have currency. The manifestations such as the Free International University branch out from Dusseldorf to Belfast, the Copenhagen Free University and tent universities as a feature in Occupy and various Anti-cuts student protest movements. In these *insurgencies,* the city became sites of ungrounding, breaking down forms of self-institutionalisation and indoctrination of mass culture. These wild school initiatives were often personable no-frills environments of open non-hierarchical exchange. Neutral communication tools such as blackboards, noticeboards, and online simultaneously co-edited Google docs or the humble storyboard in film production are commonplace.

2.6 Models of Alternative Praxis: self-organised education from FIU to Internation

The following models of alternatives share the ethos outlined in the 2008 Remodernist film manifesto. (Richards, 2014) They seek a way out of the modernist narrative which organises culture towards goals of unlimited progress, dominating nature, stricture as structure and perfection which manages failure and risk. Remodernists aim to revive moral, political and religious values lost by this blind drive to what they see as self-

annihilation. The movement seeks to collaborate in decentralised inclusive collectives. It is for all ages, for those who still look at the world with wonderment. Their craft sees Cinema as unbound from specialists; given over to “the process of creating meaning over meaning itself”. Their “stripped down, minimal, lyrical, punk kind of filmmaking” embraces chance and failure which it finds honest and beautiful – impossible to replicate and standardise. Constructivist in nature, elements of the work resist over wrought manufacture relying only on found naturalistic sounds and meditative long shots, where the evocative focus on the emerging becomes film poetry. From Karolina Malinoska’s workshops on Tarkovsky, and the crowd sourced soundtrack experiment, Sinema, the public film making “schools” attempt to enact aspects of these remodernist principles demanded brutal ungrounding. Tensions between ambitious commercial expectations of filmmaking and simpler poetic meditations of a postcode and poem led to a mixed bag of the moribund and marvellous.

For Rancière, Beuys and Van Heeswijk, art through praxis lends itself to a language that is not imposed from a specialist’s lexicon but is self-determined and mutual. Beuys ran a series of emergency alternative school-forum-situation outside of the enframing processes of the scientific, industrial world order. His indisciplinarian teaching practice was an *opportunistic* effort to *rehabilitate ontologically homeless human beings* from their dehumanisation, having been displaced by the *technique* of Ellul’s Technological society.

> Antiquity lacked even this type of vague classification, and the words that we now take to mean art, the Greek techne and the Roman ars, referred ‘less to a class of objects than a *human ability to make and perform*’ and embraced things as diverse as ‘carpentry and poetry, shoemaking and medicine, sculpture and horse breaking.’
>
> (Miles, 2001: 19).

Knowledge constructed from collaborative open propositions relies on this principle:

> All means and methods of knowing are valid: reasoning, intuition, disgust, enthusiasm, lamentation. A vision of the world propped on concepts is no more legitimate than another which proceeds from tears, arguments, or sighs – modalities equally probing and equally vain.
>
> (Cioran, 1990: 146)

These endeavours interrogate the assumptions of everyday institutions and attempt to recover time, space and a commons from a narrative of scarcity. Curators like Maria Lind and Gregory Schollette study and document art engaged in social practice. Lind addresses the impact on curatorial practice and funding in Europe of such immaterial art practices as alternative *art* schools. At the same time, Schollette describes these stealth practices in art activism as the praxis of "Dark Matter", a murmuring multitude of creatives not recognised by the commercial art world. These defiant pockets of alternative self-education collectives are open invitations to all, regardless of specialisms. They resist institutional pedagogy by exercising the right to pursue the life of the mind shaped by participation. A form of "sensus communis" (Berlant et al., 2011) reimagines state/society relations, whereby consumer forms of collectivity do not solely determine a "good life".

In 1974, Beuys combined a drawing exhibition in Belfast with a three-and-a-half-hour lecture, one of the numerous occasions where he turned gallery or institutional invitations to exhibit objects as an opportunity to initiate public discussion. These assemblies were encouraged to make visible the invisible- challenge, understand and discuss to derive an authentic education from these shocks. For Beuys' and Jeanne Van Heeswijk's site-specific engagements, the art world was a stage to amplify the murmurings of a complex multitude. The durational aspect is also key to this process. Elements of *thiscollection* were inspired by Beuys' 1977 100 Days of Free International University (FIU) and JvH's project The Great Unpacking of Associative Life Marche des Douves, rue des Douves, Bordeaux, Oct 2011. This 'Maison' lived through the ten-day *event* by way of activities involving sharing, cooking, exchanges and encounters. The *event* itself took place over ten days, round the clock, like

a scenario of performative actions put on by these associations, inviting the public to join in this neighbourhood event. This was the foundation of her approach of gathering groups to find common ground wherever she was invited – an outsider extending an invitation.

Art has the potential to engage the creative collective imagination. These situations were a conscious step for critical self-realisation of factors inhibiting self-directing one's own "future social order" (Beuys, 1974). Hardt and Negri refer to "common" as a political mode geared towards creation, futurity, and an "ethics" (Robcis, 2018). Similarities to Illich's deschooling treatises resonate but are often misapplied to justify a cultural democracy concerned with reproducing art as an event or continuum of commodities. What is at stake is something more significant than art production; a biennale or gallery cannot bind a transformative art practice - cultural institutions like Museums "hold narratives of our time through images*"* (Van Heeswijk, 2017)

Stiegler's internation

Bernard Stiegler and Michel Bauwens, dedicated to experimenting with open-source software commons, found that these attempts to create micro experiments of micropolitics were insufficient.

> ...the level of Meso and macroeconomics must be addressed, or you will never exist, you will be maintained artificially by the help of Europe or funds or anything you will never transform anything, only produce locally a nice experimentation but **no knowledge**.
>
> (Stiegler, 2013)

A new matrix for industries based on knowledge, not proletarianisation, was possible. Stiegler, who engages with the micro-politics of the local and, like many, suffers the exhaustion of this endeavour, is adamant that true self-sufficiency demands macro politics must also be addressed. However, it is debatable that these "nice experiments" produce no knowledge, as they are generating a vernacular value system invisible and unfathomable to current economics.

These groups demonstrate the readiness or health of the network of communities that surround the HE and pre-university system – without knowledge of this cornerstone Stiegler's Maussian *Internation* cannot be realised.

Stiegler offers an intellectual distance for a transhumance prospect beyond the situations dominated by power struggles. According to him, Europe and her history as the Republic of Letteres can reinvent herself as a platform for negotiation and brokerage between various powers in the state of what he calls *Internation*.

> ... requires a setting up of an economy of contribution, founded on contributory research, on the constitution of an internation where universities throughout the world together assume (and network) their responsibilities, and on a new intergenerational social contract or arrangement of technological (that is, pharmacological) nativities from which the generations are derived - which is the condition of contemporary contributory research.
>
> (Stiegler, 2015)

Ideally, *Internation* would be where minds, not just of university breeding, but academics such as autodidacts or Emeritus professors, can come together to safeguard and recover a hybrid form of vernacular values, which generates individuation. However

> ... European academics have been especially blind or resigned. They have not ceased, most of them, to extol the virtues of a united Europe, without paying attention to the characteristics of its political economy, which has been, from a monetary perspective, the most neoliberal on the planet.
>
> (Stiegler, 2015)

Amnesia induced by capitalist logic’s endless shocks and crises maintains a dependence on a system of blind accumulation on which it is founded. Stiegler critiques the Maastricht treaty as the bedrock of "(EU) the ideological machine that exploits these effects continues to operate at all levels of society, whether via the mass media, think tanks, consulting firms, lobby groups or whatever." (Stiegler, 2015) Unfortunately, ex-

Professor Denis Rancourt’s case analysis in Canada demonstrates that these issues are not limited to Europe.

Beuysian Banners

> On 30 June 1982, as part of his contribution to Documenta 7, Beuys melted a gold cast copy of the crown worn by Czar Ivan the Terrible into a symbol of peace, the Hare with Sun. The proceeds from its sale went toward the financing of a substantial part of 7000 Oak Trees.
>
> (Beuys, 1982)

Beuys' gesture symbolised a dissolution of tyranny in the form of the crown into a shamanistic talisman. This transformation of capital redistributes cultural power out of the domain of state patronage to the artist's praxis embodied in the talisman, a symbol of forgotten vernacular potency. They were inclusive, open alternatives defined by the ephemera of the local and reclaiming time from the *anti-human system* as its wealth.

Beuys was motivated by "the need for direct democracy, to an associative economics, and to a free educational and cultural sphere that would enable people to realise their higher abilities" (1974). These alternative school actions came after his controversial dismissal from the Düsseldorf Academy in 1972. He openly flouted university rules by opening his course enrolment to the public from the permitted 20 to 250 instead. His colleagues and the administration saw the anarchic atmosphere as unprofessional and eventually led to his dismissal. He traversed academy status from Professor of Monumental Sculpture to a free agent of Social sculpture. Several similar activist teacher actions persist today, and evictions from the academic enclosures seem resolutely non-negotiable.

His practice celebrated awkward formats of long discussions in art contexts, putting the durational expectations of events or installations in peril. Spatially, his practice was not contained by the museum, but he never disentangled himself from the institution but negotiated new partnerships of patronage.

In documenta 6, 1977, Beuys' action featured a series of workshops held in 100 Days of Free International University (FIU). The "Honey Pump in the Workplace" marathon spanned 13 workshops addressing specific, social and political topics of immediacy. These included migration, unemployment, marginalised groups, alternatives and empowerment of local groups. Trade unionists, lawyers, economists, politicians, journalists, community workers, educationalists, and sociologists, together with actors, musicians, and young artists, pooled together and compared their practical experience [. . .] to cover a range of pressing themes. Conviviality was emphasised in formats of open group conversations, communal eating, lectures by unlikely speakers and Beuys' *performance* of the Honey pump as the artist and his function to exhibit an art action. Radical and creative new thinking enabled by convivial energies defiant of an emerging crisis of the precariat, which Sennett describes as:

> .. the appearance of a new freedom is deceptive. Time in institutions and individuals has been unchained …but subjected to further top-down controls and surveillance. The time of flexibility is the time of a new power. Flexibility begets disorder, but not freedom from restraint.
>
> (Sennett, 1998: 59).

Consider three illustrations of durational art practice which enact intimations of cultural democracy. Each action usually done behind the scenes was made visible: bureaucracies, recruiting volunteers, and publicity for community support to recognise the city as a social space – insisting on transparency. The projects manage to demystify art as well as co-produce futures by communities and the artist.

Firstly, Obrist describes Walter Hopps as an 'eccentric maverick' who worked well within institutions and independently. One of his experiments into Gemeinschaft was a 36 hours exhibition in Washington D.C. Set in a "small alternative space, the Museum of Temporary Art" had "no budget, no money... anyone who brings anything can be shown." His "role was to be there all 36 hours, meeting and greeting every person who brought in work. They'd walk to a space, and they would help install it right then and there."

Beuys' premise for 7000 Oaks was that "...any artwork should contain all time rather than just a bit of time." (Weikop, 2019). The project aimed to plant 7000 oak trees in the small, historic city of Kassel, Germany. It began in documenta 7 in 1982 but was completed by documenta 8 in 1987. Beuys' multi-layered effort to alter the city's social spaces – economic, political, and cultural – is what finally constituted a community-wide "social sculpture". A meaningful gesture which has since been adapted around the world from New York to Shanghai: 7000 oaks reprised.

Beuys' action challenges the impersonal and mechanistic perception of time as a commodifiable utility. Consider the school curriculum, which premises expectations of what one should know, with a determined structure across various disciplines, to be delivered in discrete blocks of 45 minutes to an hour. The art school crit has an alternative definition of time, space and fluid commons. The crit’s indisciplinary potential means those gathered commit that time to traversing everything from philosophy to construction technique. From 1976 – 2008, CALarts' Michael Asher's legendary post-studio seminar, "The Crit", which ran from 10 am to 1 am and beyond (Shaw, 2015) was an extreme example.

Asher said very little, even nodded off, yet the experience was remembered as having structure and rigour by those who experienced it. This silence made time for students to develop ideas rather than react to minute "critical" questioning found in average class interaction. Such an approach instils in students the unity of knowledge as indisciplinary, and in this openness, spontaneity free of preconceptions built a community of deep inquiry. Fiona Jack, a participant in two of these crits, was asked what she remembered of the class experience (Shaw, 2015). She admitted that what work was presented at the time was inconsequential. Still, the atmosphere had a transformative impact on her thought processes and journey, " I am sure I processed a few specific things ... it was more an impression and attitude that class left me with." This engagement of inquiry is true to the reality that:

> First, there is no singular meaning that art can be purported to harbour and criticism thought to translate. Secondly, audiences are free to spend as much time and energy as intellectual and affective engagement with works of art as they like. Thirdly and most importantly, what defines art is relationship, not autonomy. Hence the contribution of each viewer to that relationship escapes the control of the critic.
>
> (Bal, 2020: 14-15).

The time spent in Asher's course "design" was a means for students to build their own culture of conviviality, a shared endurance of risking embarrassment or speaking of their art processes out loud.

Gresham's Law: CIDOC's rise and fall

In 1961, Illich founded the Centro Intercultural de Documentación (CIDOC, or Intercultural Documentation Center) at Cuernavaca in Mexico, described as part language school, part conference centre and part Free University. It developed into a centre for political, social and educational criticism and has been described as follows: "This atmosphere of reified scholarship evokes the style of the great medieval monasteries where laymen came to steep themselves in the study of learned dialogues."

Ivan Illich, along with educational theorist Everett Reimer, gathered several intellectuals from all over the world, particularly those who were open to deschooling. It became a place to exchange ideas and became a sort of anti-university. The more thoughtful critics of education, Paulo Freire, John Holt, Paul Goodman, Jonathan Kozol, Joel Spring, George Dennison and others, gathered to address the futility of schooling, both locally and in the wider "developed" and industrial world. Dismissed as Marxist, Communist or Socialist, this unworkable, naive experiment lacking common sense was ironically the most exciting place to learn. CIDOC nurtured Paul Goodman, philosopher of education and author of "Growing up Absurd". Illich, too, would draft his thoughts and sit under the Banyan tree with a group of peers to read and critique 4-5 new pages, which he produced every day. In this community, the text *Deschooling Society* was shaped through peer edits and discussions. This proffered a

site where education was a gift of gratuitous pleasure rather than a ritual of false dependency.

CIDOC leased this fancy house on top of the hill, and for a fee of $100, you could stay all year if you wished. Illich made almost no effort to design the program. There was significant autonomy in how and what one could learn or teach. All sorts of people were allowed to lecture, some with quite outlandish ideas. A kind of intellectual Gresham's Law ensued: the good people increasingly stayed away. By 1976, following an influx of formal academics and the potential side effects of CIDOC's own "institutionalisation," Illich, with consent from the other members of the CIDOC, shut the centre down. He kept only an archive of materials on topics that had concerned CIDOC, managed by his long-time collaborator Valentina Borremans. (Berger, 2003)

Guattari’s La Grille

At the clinic in La Borde in Lozère, run by Doctor Jean Oury, Félix Guattari worked to set up a grid to enable a system of empowerment. Some of the theoretical premises that guided Tosquelles and his colleagues at Saint-Alban were a series of concrete practices that would favour this transferential constellation: *group therapies, general meetings, self-managed unions of patients (also known as "the Club"), ergotherapy workshops (printing, binding, woodwork, pottery...), libraries, publications, and a wide range of cultural activities (movies, concerts, theatre...).* [28] Guattari’s prototype prefaces current P2P or Parecon-based radical technical propositions to reorganise society as it exists. It also addresses critical issues the co-ordinator class faces in the groups featured in Chapter 4. In its early years, the clinic was largely self-managed and spontaneously organised. Each staff and patient, usually prescribed fixed roles, were challenged to take on tasks from which they would otherwise be exempt. This mixing up of labour saw all in the clinic build up

28Reflections from Félix Guattari, La Grille , Presentation made at the training course at La Borde hospital on January 29, 1987

ownership by task sharing with different degrees of responsibility to keep the institution running.

Oury sought to root out and change the immutable institutional processes, for "To treat the ill without treating the hospital is madness!" They were working against "Concentrationism", which was the potential of any institution or group to become authoritarian, oppressive, discriminatory and exclusionary, rather than its pragmatic form of organisation or regulation. It sought ways to rehabilitate the attitude of constituents within the collective through self-organisation and redistributed neganthrophic responsibilities, which encouraged rotational leadership. A mix of subjectivities rehumanised the patients and support staff in forming a *new common* [29]of alternative social relations grounded in purposeful practice, in this case, therapy.

As a co-worker in the community sector once remarked: “How does the government solve social problems? It sends in tanks or community workers.” This culture of parachuting agents of community-engaged artists, supply teachers or consultants resulted in entities that functioned independently from the rest of the staff. These arrive on-premises, their roles based on specific tasks and premises, therefore more likely to perform or become enclosures. They became fixated on standardised mechanical interventions to build a resumé or attain a professional qualification credit.

> Our aim with institutional therapy was not to produce objects and nor was it to produce ‘the relationship’ for itself, but to develop new forms of subjectivity. Then, henceforth, all kinds of problems arrived from a different direction: we realised that in running workshops or developing activities the most important thing was not the qualifications of the nursing staff (i.e. registered nurses, psychologists, etc.), but the skills of people who may have worked in the agricultural field, or as linen makers, cooks, etc
>
> (Guattari, 1987)

29 (Joice, 2017)

"The grid" was a rotational work schedule, divided by tasks and activities where everyone had their role in the function of regular or occasional tasks and negotiated "shifts" which did not assume specialism, e.g. chores or night shifts. The grid is, therefore, a double-entry table allowing collective management to regulate the necessary institutional deregulation "framed" by time and tasks, which were graded by degrees of agreeability (Caló, 2016). The essential daily operations of the clinic were everyone's responsibility. In place of economic remuneration, a point system assigned points to be accumulated according to the task's societal value and frequency with which it was performed. This became a form of bargaining power for negotiation in the following discussion of daily grid assignments. Additionally, therapy was no longer a privilege of the expert but hosted collectively in group sessions and discussions. As if these actions impacted space and language and communicated in their own technical, economic and group factors, the individual found their dispositions inevitably shaped by this collective pragmatism.

Crucially "the curatorial," more than just a profession, is an organising and assembling impulse that opens up a set of possibilities, mediations perhaps, to formulate subjects that may not be part of an agreed-upon canon of "subjects" worthy of investigation. So knowledge in the art world, through a set of permissions that do not recognise the academic conventions for how one arrives at a subject, can serve both the purposes of reframing and producing subjects in the world. (Rogoff, 2010)

Rogoff's research into the expanded academy and exhibition showed that knowledge is not hidden, waiting to be uncovered, but is a field of possibilities with fluid relations. Perhaps this potential encourages educators to engage in "unknown territories" with more confidence and honesty. We need to revise our assumptions, give ourselves new permissions, ask new questions, and move from critique to criticality. Trust needed to be restored in understanding that the community of inquiry is a commons maintained by everyone, rather than by specialists' on one's behalf.

Mechai Pattana

Mechai Pattana, or bamboo school, is located in the impoverished and remote Buriram province of Northeast Thailand. As part of a rural education revolution, this student-run school works towards becoming financially autonomous through diverse student entrepreneurship based on cultivating local produce or generating services for the local community's needs. There are no fees; one pays in kind through community service and reforestation; parents may also receive loans to start small businesses to get out of the poverty trap. Transparency in governance cultivates a culture of trust to the extent that Year 8-10s are involved in recruiting: Year 7s and teachers; to managing school budgets and procurement alongside parents, teachers and founders.

Mechai Pattana is a refreshing alternative to sophisticated urban structures of education, in this instance, Singapore. Their multi-disciplinary cross-curricular format, similar to the prestigious International Bacculearate and the entrepreneurial slant typical in licensed Future problem-solving packages, is usually only accessible to elite schools in Singapore. Both aim to inculcate flexible, responsive learning but one with authenticity and purpose determined by a community compared to achieving costly external programmatic prestige. Mechai Pattana also integrates time-intensive Service-learning or Independent project work as core to its curriculum design rather than an afterthought on top of 9 subjects of specialisms offered in Singaporean Secondary schools. The former requires teachers to adapt disciplines and continually learn to keep up with the application of their disciplines to the student's needs. The other continues to set the bounds of a specialism that catches or discourages a student's interest-only incidentally, dependent on random factors such as matched developmental capacity within class profiling, the depth of knowledge, style of delivery and teacher personality. Doggedly following these narrow formats is still classed as efficient by administrators who expect teachers to cope with these premises and become technicians to achieve an illusory standardisation.

This merging of education in a living context is an indisciplinary manoeuvre. Still, it challenges them to arrive at meaningful knowledge for one’s edification and directly influence the reality one inhabits. These cultures nurture not just students but a school of stewards and custodians.

These alternatives presented refute what has been accepted as tried and tested norms. As Year 7s enter conventional institutions at the stage of learning about the world:

We can, by contrast, see how the convivial potential of school is disabled.

> In the Canteen, they are served instead of serving.
>
> In Assembly, they are told instead of sharing.
>
> Contact sports can be banned to avoid conflict and consequences.
>
> The Architecture demands their comportment conform to its rituals.
>
> Their minds are at the mercy of chance and specialist availability.
>
> Their youth is spent on their behalf.
>
> Education happens to the youth rather than for them.

Chapter 3 Methodology

With the onset of social media platforms, these autonomous self-organised groups emerging in two Scottish cities were mapped in the context of a critical social education research paradigm. The critical social research focussed on linking critical research, as a participant with a formal educator background, in change processes in open educational set ups. I describe the influences on my choice of methodology concerning the data collection, analysis, and discussion. This qualitative research is rooted in constructivist premises employing embedded emergent participatory practices. My research questions and conclusions were based on:

- Documenting these self-organising groups' deinstitutionalisation processes and affects
- Running an iterative comparative analysis of the reflections and materials exchanged within the groups, and
- Generated categories and propose a substantive theory applicable to formal educators' self-taught experiences, building a case for indisciplinary studies for a hybrid space of emancipatory education.

The study analysed a cross-section of mutual improvement groups and how independence from institutions shapes practices and perceptions of alternative socio-economic ways of commoning. Glesne describes such case-based research involving in-depth and often longitudinal examination with data gathered through participant observation, interviewing, document collection and analysis. (2011: p. 22)

The constructivist nature of this project focuses on the properties of the multitudes which emerged from such open access groups; their variability was the constant. Hence specifics of number of participants are undefined. There were generally a small core group of 2-5 members convening in places which were found and online. Nomadism was a key feature observed except for the writers' group (HHWG) which met regularly in the public library. Here I briefly outline the context, tasks,

means of data collection, selection procedure, and data analysis of this study.

Context

In Edinburgh and Glasgow from 2008-2010, the climate of austerity and disillusionment led to the formation of various groups with strong DIY non-hierarchical ethos to self-education.In response to the conditions on the ground, I took on the role of a participant observer, where a constructivist study based on my prior knowledge of deschooling hoped to update theorising of Illich's concept.

Timeline

The compass to this durational study can be found in Appendix 1 which is a colour coded overview of the research phases. Chapters 4-8 will have corresponding colour bands in the header as a guide.

The green section in Appendix 1 marks the period of **approximating proximities**, becoming acquainted with groups and their associated networks. These were done by responding to or, in the case of *thiscollection*, initiating open calls for participation. Hospitality and welcoming were crucial to the ethos these groups' sought to enact and observed in their invitation process. By the middle of 2010, my participation in various forms of service or attendance allowed me to map a diverse scene of those drawn to mutual improvement in non-formal contexts. By 2009/10, the testimonies, grassroot discourse brought to bear a deep understanding of the causal effects, which resulted in the context of their self-governing ethos. For example, the darker green band indicates an introduction from the Glasgow Social Centre which led to an invitation to Ruhr-university's occupation EUREDUCON in Bochum. Chapter 4.2 provides the origins of these groups in greater detail.

Participants

Participants and observation devices from this process were as follows:

1. HHWG West End Glasgow Libraries, weekly Wednesday meetings a fluctuating membership from 3 -12 participants. It started in 2009, has endured lockdown, and still meet at the time of writing. Meeting minutes from each session for the first year were collected – documenting a curriculum generated from a commons. Video recordings from their evaluation of their groups' formation at dis-place *thiscollection* were also transcribed. (Appendix HHWG 2)

2. _Open School (_OS) was an open-access group of artists, university students, activists, curators, and members of the public. The research documented their group activities through recordings of meetings, emails, google doc collaborations planning events, open crits, unlearning workshops, sites and company for reflecting and evaluating propositions. The main critical activities referenced in the results are: Conversations with Govan residents, a biodiversity field trip to Campsie Hills, Evacuation of Great Learning, part of the INSTAL experimental music festival, dis-place *thiscollection* & forum for summer school proposals.

3. *thiscollection* was a poetry and filmmaking initiative which aimed to build a community based on adaptations of 100 poems set in Edinburgh postcodes. Submissions gathered from an open call consisted of works from independent and established artists/poets and early career poets. The project collected films by established film artists, semi-professional outfits and general members of the public whose films were made in free one-day workshops based in various locations in the city. Documentation of the workshops, video recordings, email correspondence of planning, feedback and archiving artefacts for installations of works made throughout the three years were collected and analysed to understand the nature of "democratic" projects. Public filmmaking workshops were facilitated by autodidacts, participant-initiated ventures such as Film in Translation (FIT), a collaboration with Forest Café's fundraising film festival called "Sinema", "Property and Theft" (interactive installation- Open Source theatre) of the three-month

long Tollcross community centre residency are highlighted. Finally dis-place *thiscollection* installation in Glasgow was a peer-reviewed evaluation of all groups involved.

4. EUREDUCON was a gathering of activists involved in protests against the Bologna process, which was seen as a neoliberal takeover of universities as independent institutions of learning and experimentation. International activists were also in attendance to describe their struggles in their respective countries. Observation notes, recordings where permitted, conference materials of contexts and issues were shared. The research elaborates on the function of Assembly/ Plenums, the controversial case of Professor Denis Rancourt and a survey of alternative modes of education emerging from occupations and movements where workers self-organise and educate themselves about the politics of their labour conditions.

5. Autodidact Archives collected a series of eight semi-structured interviews and employed photovoice to engage respondents effectively through creative personalised artefacts. The design of this intervention engaged teachers from all sectors, HE, Secondary and community education sectors to describe their self-taught experiences.

Informed consent and confidentiality

The processes for consent at the time of the research were different. Group consent was obtained through email introductions or workshop Notices stating my credentials and research interests. Based on these, I attended numerous non-hierarchical meetings in person and online, as a contributor blog and Google docs access was given. At every meeting and workshop introduction, I explained to all present that I was recording the sessions for research purposes and would share the materials with those interested and there was rarely resistance.

Under a creative commons licence, *thiscollection's* submission process explicitly obtained permission to use or publish poems or film adaptations made. Participants could request to remove poems or films from the online depositories at any point in the project. Consent forms for free filmmaking workshops had an option to participate in follow-up interviews. After workshops or meetings, regular informal correspondence with participants of interest could be followed up, clarifying or expanding useful observations made on the day.

The nature of recording conversation, rather than formal interviews, was to obtain a quality of embeddedness the practice sought to document. It endeavoured to capture what being in an open "structureless" setting was like from an established teacher's perspective. Permissions recorded on tape were most effective due to the nature of the events. Participants were hyper-vigilant of any kind of officious procedure which would have risked less in-depth authentic group sharing. There was only one withdrawal of consent from a few anarchists during a post-dinner plenum in EUREDUCON.

After the meetings, copies of the recordings were uploaded and could be accessed by contributors at all times in the event organisers' secure, shared drives. The leaderless nature of these groups meant identifying specific individuals or personalities was counter-productive; their leaderless policy sought to build a space of inclusivity and trust for sharing genuine testimonials. During transcription, references to participants in smaller intimate groups use initials (e.g. HHWG: S.B, D.M, D), while more public groups use numbered participants (e.g. P1- P20 for 20 members; Gov, Gov 2 for Govan residents; A1 -3 for community artist/activist etc.). This is to preserve anonymity as well as open the dialogue where the reader can imagine taking on various positions at varying stages of ungrounding.

Participant observation focussed on these processes and experiences to build a theory of the leaderless struggles and strategies for enabling autonomous alternative education. _Open School or _OS is a modification

of their moniker in honour of their “dis/organisation” and amorphous playful nature and an ironic pun on an open source operating system (OS). This anonymity and resistance to defining themselves, especially the Open School, has led to the decision that the abbreviation “_OS”, where the place of the school, is deliberately erased to suggest an entity and open signifier of much needed potentialities.

3.1 Field observations

Data collection

Data is derived from observation notes, email correspondence at various stages of group processes: planning, post workshops and organiser reflections, transcripts from recorded discussions, semi-structured interviews with educators in the form of the Autodidact Archives, peer evaluation from members of the groups through an installation of work done, and journal notes.

The following heuristics served as a guide to group selection:

Decision tree for group selection

Within the 2008-9 period, these groups were:

- in early stages of formation
- accessible to diverse constituents, no strict prohibitive membership policies

To justify the time spent studying the groups which had to share *thiscollection*

premises:

- If the event or group had a DIY ethos
- If elements of artistic and creative production with the public were involved
- If groups had open membership, i.e. not under any official institution remit (e.g. University-based social clubs and council-funded projects were excluded)

New event or group invitation accepted if it was associated with affiliated groups:

- which had developed the most relevance to emergent themes

- had a facility within for feedback to further develop theory

Level of documentation was ranked by group's

- potential to develop creative partnerships with thiscollection or
- willing to peer review organisational processes

Types of data

Readily accessible communication technologies such as digital video and audio recorders, emails, blogs, and collaborative word processing software made data collection convenient but also overwhelming. Documenting meetings, events, workshops and journals collected in these open set ups were either from participant drafted minutes, email threads or notices.

They are organised according to groups and total five appendices, each dedicated to a group, e.g. _OS, AA, HHWG, TC, EEC (EUREDUCON). They are referenced in the body of dissertation as follows: e.g. *Appendix _OS 1 EGL* where the **number** is the order it appears in the dissertation, and the appendices it belongs to, e.g. _OS. These can be accessed by scanning the QR code which links to the RADAR depository.

There were three types of raw data which were collected:

Firstly, examples of raw data are email correspondence of associates, meeting minutes and newsletters, and co-edited electronic documents (viz Google docs). _OS insisits that attending is the best way to gain an impression of the possibilities of becoming.[30] The analysis reflected on the ungrounding experience which self-education required and culminated in the Summer School forum held in dis-place *thiscollection.* The ebb and flow captured was crucial to depict the processes of erasure in such open set ups.

Next, memos and journals from personal reflections of events and issues often gave insight into the processes of risking my subjectivity. Through the coding process, pertinent selections of transcripts are presented in

30 Appendix _OS 13 Interview.

thematic relevance to the strategies or philosophies that shaped these groups' activities.

Finally, artefacts such as films, poems, documentation of performances, video or photos, and Photovoice images were collected. Exhibitions such as *thiscollection* in McEwan and dis-place *thiscollection* in the Glue Factory were also documented and found on YouTube and Vimeo[31]. However, the conditions of cultural production rather than their aesthetics are discussed.

Data Sampling

The sources of various groups were categorised as follows:

_OS

Transcripts of meetings, blog posts, co-edited Google Docs, and emails from one and a half years of participation. Three categories were identified and samples from each were selected:

- _OS relationships with networks of alternative schools emerging at the time and problematic matter of leaderlessness in open set ups,
- OS experiments confounding formal formats of education, e.g. “class = situation = event = interception = deschooling”
- _OS finding its place in practice with larger organisations.

EUREDUCON:

- Abstracts of testimonials, journals and correspondence documenting reflections made during the occupation.

HHWG:

- Examples of Meeting minutes based on 10 minute warm up practices devised by group, e.g. Memoirs, Self-selected Reading lists, and opportunities shared are collated from meeting minutes.

31 https://www.youtube.com/@filmthiscollection; https://vimeo.com/filmthiscollection;

- Two transcripts of the group reflecting on the group's origins recorded before and during dis-place *thiscollection.* A transcript of an encounter with politicised self-organised groups *Farewell Welfare* is also included.

thiscollection

- Transcripts from DIY filmmaking workshop video recordings.
- Emails: administration, coordinator, facilitator, welcoming new adaptations.
- Links to artefacts: poems, films, documentation of events.
- Oral History Craigmillar conversations collected by Fiona Grieg who attended an assembly. Important contribution to understanding community art as social employment and activism.
- Blog and Promotional material.
- Post-exhibition journal reflections.

I sampled 15-30 data sources from each category for open coding. From these patterns, I could focus on selecting excerpts of significant interviews based on meetings and post-performance or workshop reflections to be transcribed in more detail. Videos were either artefacts documenting workshops, creative journal responses or productions from workshop participants, which are included when related to a participant's contribution to the commons and the production notes. Employing organising software such as Scrivner, as a journal helped collating all emails by group and chronologically: attach memos and meta-tag recurring themes.

Data Analysis

Glesne states, "Data analysis involves organising what you have seen, heard, and read so that you can figure out what you have learned and make sense of what you experienced". (2011:184) The data collection tools of observation notes, email correspondence at various stages of group processes: planning, post workshops and organiser reflections,

transcripts from recorded discussions, a semi-structured teacher interview in the form of the Autodidact Archives, peer evaluation from members of the groups through an installation of work done, and journal notes were examined for possible triangulation of emerging themes. Handling the vast amount of data collected means it is important to outline what the researcher reflection process entailed. In Appendix 8, the time bank diagram reflects approximately 30% was spent reflecting, transcribing and scanning video footage, this was a form of deep listening to take stock of such enlivening humane interactions to which I was privy.

Coding process

Quirkos is developed to make qualitative analysis accessible to all. Its affordable, highly visual qualitative analysis software was employed for this study. I could import transcripts of individuals or group conversations as sources and colour code impressions and characteristics observed. Memos of questions raised were made in transcript margins collapsing open codes into categories. The visualisation software allowed quick grouping of themes based on concepts which led to preliminary “hunches” regarding relationships between ideas based on the emergent themes and patterns. “You might look at all the data scraps coded the same way for one case and see how it changes or varies in relationship to other factors…If you practice constant case comparison, you take on the mindset of looking for how each of your cases varies in terms of such things as events, participants, settings, or word use. (Glesne, 2011: 187)

These codes helped to see any patterns that arose and from the patterns to see what was shared. In reporting the results, I composed various memos in the margins exploring recurring categories to inform a deeper analysis of the literature and transcripts.

Open Coding: transcripts were entered into Quirkos and NVivo and coded line by line where tags of impressions and connotations were noted. For instance, the green quote in Quirkos has numerous multi-coloured links to high-level impressions, such as “burn out, experiment,

ambitious, parameters, unplanned, exhaustion.” Whereas coding in NVivo led to more concrete conclusions about emerging themes. This is illustrated with screenshots in Appendix 2.

Focused Coding: Quirkos' visual display allowed the grouping of open codes by dragging and dropping tags into categories along with relevant transcriptions and their codes into “Quirk” clusters. Relying on labelling codes could be filtered as group properties allowed for more efficient thematic analysis. In this case, “indisiciplinary potential” showed. The number of codings would determine the weight of attention to a particular cluster. Consider group filtering any transcripts coded with “indisciplinary potential” and their associated clusters are presented. Two views of said group filter are illustrated in Appendix 3.

From relevant clusters in this filter, consider the cluster “Schooling” in the screenshot below. It references 50 quotes on its own, but 161 related and overlapping codes belong to the cluster. In Appendix 4, when a cluster is opened, it lists the subsets labelled: teaching, teaching method, grading innovation, course design, professionalism, obligations, instruction as imperative, time-instruction, entangled, expectations, and ritual.

All transcripts across this filter could be cross-referred on the rightmost column, and yellow memos made in the margins were evaluated. These developed the chapter describing the ecology of education and the overspecialised knowledge hierarchies these groups seemed to be resisting. Grading innovations which faced punitive actions led to the close analysis of activist teacher Denis Rancourt’s case study “Assessment as battleground”. The focused coding had strong links to the Literature review’s concept of “Self-institutionalisation” which could be developed. The range of connections Quirkos collated are demonstrated in selecting the alternative tree view of a transcript in Appendix 5.

High level concept codes, such as labour, commons, and community, followed by the qualities of experiences described, such as self-motivation, curiosity, and frustration. These led to quick drafting of

paragraphs based on these categories, memos and direct quotes from relevant sources.

Theoretical Coding: repetition and patterns from memo writing identified themes whereby linking codes and vignettes from open and selective coding clarified emergent relationships. Selective codes with the most quotes and connections were the basis for theoretical coding. These led to selecting relevant literature to review and fine-tune initial assumptions made from early core texts. It also led to the intervention such as the "Autodidact Archives" as a review to explore how far these theories could be applicable among teachers within formal education. Comparing the data made relationships between cases apparent and helped with the analytical process of determining any differences or comparisons from the groups' interactions, attitudes, decisions, and thoughts. *Chapters 4-8* each have a summary of the emerging themes and as they develop.

This continual process of reflexivity to focus on the research aim and questions entails constantly reflecting upon the research process and writing up about it (Shacklock & Smith, 1998). The iterative process of reflexive research includes questioning the methodology adopted, the researcher's ethos, the revelations which emerge from the study, and how these cumulatively influence the researcher's aims and compound the rigour of the research. My data analysis was supported by situating the groups within a macro and micro historical and political context in my graduate student experience and at a national and international level of education developments. The lively activist community and the associated conferences of scholars interested in alternative socio-economic models were instances of reflexivity and analysis of the research process. They helped clarify the research aim and questions. After each conference presentation which served as a recursive theoretical review, I submitted a report to my supervisor and presented my findings at annual progression sessions. These addressed the decisions made and the tasks to be undertaken over the next period to ensure continuity in the research process, which could be volatile given the dynamic nature of the groups involved. Harvey (1990) argued that the critical social researcher is

“fundamentally dedicated to revealing and opposing oppression” (Harvey, 1990, 212), a theme Illich and the Rancièrian premise set out in the Literature review. In my data analysis, data examines the factors of oppression experienced in these groups’ struggling to assert self-governance; in order to reconstitute trust in alternatives to neoliberal models of social organisation.

3.2 Clarification

Clarifying and consolidating the impressions which surfaced during the coding process led to the blue phase of the project[32]: where the groups’ activities observed drew nearer to theoretical saturation.

Identifying partners and models

Elements of models from the literature review, such as JvH’s blue house project and Illich’s CIDOC experiment, inspired *thiscollection’s* Tollcross Community Centre’s unofficial residency. The collaboration with the Edinburgh Central Library, Forest Café and Tollcross community centre was initiated by the need for *thiscollection* to host more workshops to adapt the remaining films. These paragogical mutual improvement sessions were hosted by amateurs who shared their understanding of cultural production with other burgeoning enthusiasts.

JvH describes this as the radial phase of a project where the associations become comfortable with an idea proposed and then volunteer or direct opportunities which could succeed or fail. As in the _OS INSTAL scenario, her recommendation was to say “Yes” to every proposal and learn from the entangling responsibly.

Identifying gaps in claims.

When gaps in the conclusions or activities were identified, initiatives based on small-scale creative synthesis action research could corroborate or disrupt previous claims. In the _OS INSTAL, for instance, realities of

[32] Appendix 1 Research timeline colour coded.

assembly scaled up from _OS workshops in the intimacy of their flat or found spaces led to issues of arriving at operational consensus and the awkwardness of refusing leadership in the hopes a collective response would emanate.

This non-hierarchical format appealed to those who felt stuck in official institutions or served as tasters for those curious about moving from consumer or critic status to producing their films. Sinema and Films in Translation (FIT) derived from *thiscollection* worked on the assumption that a lack in one's circumstance motivated a greater reliance on one's resourcefulness. In the former, films with no soundtracks found crowdsourced cacophony during a social centre's film festival.

In FIT, the ESL learner's struggle to communicate in a foreign language and connect with a new environment found fruition in exploring postcodes of the city through poetry instead of being bound to the abstract mechanics of grammar in a night class. The workshop was run by a Polish filmmaker, who started out in Edinburgh just experimenting with the student movie production society. Since returning from a successful film school experience in Sydney, she signed up to share her understanding of the process of feeling language through film with a focus on Tarkovsky's works.

_OS INSTAL was a unique opportunity to confront "the shadow face of autonomy as narcissism, expressing *the self-creating and self-transfiguring potential of the person* (Heron, 1992)." Their wilful isolation highlights genuine struggles associated with direct democracy assemblies aspiring to remain leaderless and open.

Meanwhile, as HHWG established its protocols and the membership fluctuated, how did these structures resist institutionalisation to keep their group open to new members and experiences? These situations led to reflecting and fine-tuning theories and building axial coding mapping in Appendix 6.

Conferences as Theoretical review

Supplementing questions raised by these practices, I sought out a community of inquiry from associated fields. I presented the preliminary conclusions based on fieldwork in progress in four conferences and interviewed Jeanne van Heeswijk in Rotterdam. These were on top of in-house progression reviews. These conference papers listed below presented emergent themes from fieldwork in progress. They were opportunities to take stock and receive feedback from academics and practitioners involved in alternative education activist research.

In 2010, I presented a paper “The Scene of the Crime: Curating Resistance” at the Aesthetics & Ethics in Social Movement panel in University of Essex. "The Art of Independence" The Rules of Collective Art: Social Engagement and Collaboration in Contemporary Art panel as part of the Association of Art Historians’ conference. An activist against precarious labour from the Carrot workers collective recommended the second congress of the Free University of Warsaw Creative industries and knowledge factories: analysis and resistance. Ivan Illich’s work as a means of resistance was a central focus of this gathering. Heath Bunting, an artist-activist from Bristol, testified his off-grid experience of alternative economies and his refusal to become an art worker for fear of being co-opted. As praxis he challenged participants to barter and trade skills with each other during his session. I offered an analysis of Illich’s work to a student activist who offered a bowl of hot soup and a plate of pierogis as payment.

In June 2011, I presented the paper as promised on “The calm before the storm: Reflections on Ivan Illich to the impatient reformer”. This paper was delivered via skype at the behest of the Student Government of the Graduate School for Social Research, Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw. The assembly gathered to address dilemmas of science and higher education in times of reform as part of their New opening of University (NoU) project. The paper was presented as an epistle, translated into Polish and distributed in print. It aimed to enact the

convivial and encourage assemblies to be conversational rather than *conferensational*. In November 2011, I presented an updated version of The Scene of the Crime: Curating Resistance at the 8th Annual Historical Materialism SOAS: Spaces of Capital, Moments of Struggle for The Aesthetics, Class Composition, and Cultural Studies of Labour panel.

Occasionally, criticism of the conservative elements of the groups studied was raised, which guided my focus to reflect on this tension – was I resisting erasure and justifying the comfort of remaining self-institutionalised? Was the radical position too insular? Would never the twain meet? Further resources and lines of thought, such as Rancière's *Ignorant schoolmaster* and difficult interjections by a Channel 4 documentary film producer who challenged the radical claims that the film industry was imperialist or had an overarching agenda. As a reality check, his experience was that media was too fast-paced and opportunistic an industry to have time for political introspection. Engaging in these conferences was a good way of moderating internalised group messaging to keep my inquiry balanced to link the gathered data with my argument and analysis.

3.3 Review

dis-place *thiscollection* brought the Edinburgh project to the Glue Factory, Glasgow and was a coming together of initiatives and a culmination of themes. The event reflected their alternative education experiences: such as erasure, subjectivities, commons, assembly and convivial tools to become an indisciplinarian. It also brought extreme viewpoints together to understand the issues of enacting a commons through assemblies, such as activists and other social centre comrades, in discussion with moderate groups like HHWG.

_OS supported *thiscollection* by organising a forum in three parts:

- Evaluate the concept of self-education processes within *thiscollection.*
- Developing a joint statement on education.

- Propose a manifesto to develop a city-wide Summer School initiative.

Though there were disparities between groups' political orientations, they shared similar methodologies. Groups which were critical of the notion of self-expression and its implications of self-exploitation and participation in an ideological economy of things were less concerned with the exhibition as form but more as an assembly forum for ideas.

3.4 Application: Autodidact archives

"The Autodidact Archive" was an art intervention based on constructivist principles. The volunteers represented a spectrum of educational experiences, two professors (H, T), two (C, S) senior teachers, three community art facilitators (N, D, B) and one teacher trainee (E). Despite the time constraints, participants made considered contributions to the engagement, which lent itself to intriguing symbolic interpretations. The translation of self-taught group observations to reflections of formal educators' own self-taught experiences evaluated the robustness and usefulness of the conclusions drawn.

Protocol

I was revisiting the theories drawn from the fieldwork with the clarity of time and distance, a mature and fresh perspective transposed the idealism of that heady period of 2009-2011 back to those working within formal education. In the Edinburgh Sculpture studio's outreach program, Shift/Work, an education conference afforded an opportunity to apply the conclusions to the circumstances of formal educators working within the system. "Autodidact Archives" invited teachers to reflect on what they had taught themselves.

As the event was conceived and presented in a limited time frame of the conference, there was little time to formalise the administration of forms. There were three overarching phases of this *engagement*: the first was registration, exchange or orientation – disorientation and finally, graduation.

As part of the registration process, interested parties queued and put their names on a list; permission to document the valuable interactions through audio and visual media was a pre-requisite. Participants posed with their selected avatar as consent for their interviews and photovoice activity to be used as part of the research. A few participants requested permission to record the session themselves while being recorded - a novel mutual exchange of artefacts.

Participants were introduced to the space of exchange, followed by open-ended free play for participants to deepen their reflection via the photovoice activity; such freedom was disorienting for some but the struggle was a crucial part of the process. Finally, graduation from the archive resulted from completing the photovoice activity and interpreting their decisions. A mock robotic acknowledgement script was their aloof reward: “The archive thanks you for your contribution to the future.”

Registration

- Responding to an Open call invitation from the Archive.
- Obtaining permission to record.
- Portrait of subject posing with a selected avatar.

Exchange

- Sharing as walking around the square together.
- Invitation to fix the avatar in a space that reflects their self-taught experience.
- Same standard basic tools available to all participants as an option. (Scissors, black insulation tape)
- As much time alone as required, beckoning archivist only when they are ready.
- Creating a response to a space with their avatar.

Graduation

- Self-assessment by documenting a portrait of their avatar using the archive’s camera.
- Reflecting on their interpretation.
- Acknowledgement from the Archive.

Notes on design

A few highlights of design elements aim to provide a context for this engagement. The avatars, the symbolism of the square, supplies and camera attempt to demonstrate interpretative apparatus forging a move from institution to a form of self-assessment and selection.

Each selected an avatar representing their self-taught personas from a large terrarium of kitsch plastic figurines. This collection was on loan from Leith-based community workers who I met through *thiscollection.* This impressive array of objects came from a decade-long collection from their practice with communities. For ease of reference, all transcripts and images will be in the Appendices labelled AA, followed by the participant's first initial. E.g. AA_B.

The Autodidact Archives was a circuit of three parts set in the enclosure of the venue's courtyard. A bound space offers orientation and time for them to locate the self in a space to share a memory, recalling a habit of mind that demanded becoming unbound. Without the overt mention of the word "school", the concept of an institutional designate was represented by the walk around the square. The archivist recorded the participants' recollections as they oriented and located the self in the space. The square was the constant actor throughout the interviews; it worked as a bound and time-keeping mechanism, a variant of institutional timekeeping where participants shared their recollections within a set space but at their own pace. One participant had a long gait, so he had less time to share as his enthusiasm rushed the walk, and to be fair to those in the queue, he had to stop sharing to make way for the next contributor. Those who took their time had longer to arrange their thoughts. On reflection, this was a strong point on two levels: it demonstrated that harried working to a standardised frame could not fully capture the wealth of diverse personalities and potentially doused enthusiasm. Secondly, a few participants were anxious about being left to their own devices when the sharing ended. After graduating, one experiences a similar sense of loss,

removed from routines, habits and social constructions of their personas structured by schooling.

Black insulation tape was offered for participants to use to secure their avatars where they chose. Some participants decided to use a lot of it, and others not at all. Those who did use the tape marked a safety zone as an expression of their path of self-discovery.

> I was trying to find my musical self, through bereavement, through my journey and the black lines are a little bit about the journey.

Appendix AA 1_C

Often black insulation tape was perceived by participants as symbolic of a stark official institutional boundary. It was intriguing to see what could happen to the tape supplied, a solid line that could separate or gather, be broken or stretched or avoided altogether. Those who rejected the tape did so as a gesture of rebellion, refusing what was on offer and others enjoying a measure of exceptionalism. In these instances, choosing the path to autodidactic experimentation was identified as a response to some form of institution.

> B: …Is it a false dichotomy between two different spaces?
> ST: *(Her avatar is balancing on a safety barrier)* So learning doesn't give you control? He seems quite free ...
> B.: Yea, learning potential between these two ordering thoughts and emergence ... this is balancing on the precipice, don't want to really says this, of not knowing, knowing, learning and unlearning.
> ST: *(referring to the red safety barrier)* A barrier?
> B.: It is an institutional barrier.

Appendix AA 2 _B

Finally, the camera, which the archivist used to take their portrait initially, is handed over to the participant to capture and compose a self-portrait which they submit to the archives. The relatively stiff scripted appreciation mimicked a formal graduation process marking posterity, which contradicted the familial sharing of their personal experience where

fraternity was assumed. This juxtaposition triggers the notion of gratitude as a value rather than a process: attempting to query the officious prestige which marks education as an accreditation event.

Photovoice

Photovoice is a participatory method of data collection where participants use photography and share their images to identify issues of importance to them. These representations and voluntary responses enable researchers to understand the issue under study better. (Wang & Burris, 1994, 1997) In “The Autodidact Archives”, a redistribution of authorities where the photo taken by the participant would relieve the Archive/ institutional figure of the burden of accountability. Most participants spoke about their work assuredly and with great interest. An example and coded analysis can be found in Appendix 7.

However, E, a participant who was quite shy and benefited from prompts. After the archivist left, E composed her response to the task with the material provided at her own pace. Invited to compose a photo of her learner persona in relation to the space, she was able to give a more developed response.

E:	Uhm, yea, I was just attracted to this bit of tracking cos it was like the tape. I felt it was… suppose a bit of grounding for it. Maybe a little bit of safe- ty round it or something. I don’t know and then having the tape come out of that, I don’t know, maybe learning something new, a wee branch of something. Avatar in the middle cocooned by these ideas or trials
ST:	Drawn from the…
E:	I was just thinking about the way you learn, and it's little bit muddled.

Appendix AA 3_E

Cameras are an appealing tool for the participants; the nature of photography lends itself to the active involvement of community members in a research process, which may increase participants’ motivation to improve their community (Rudkin & Davis, 2007). *thiscollection’s* workshops worked on this principle where low-def cameras made

amateur digital film responses to local poems, and filmmaking attunes observation skills to one's immediate environment.

3.5 Evaluation of Method

Trustworthiness

There are four core questions researchers should ask themselves as they work with their data:

1. What do you notice?
2. Why do you notice what you notice?
3. How can you interpret what you notice?
4. How can you know your interpretation is the "right" one?

(Glesne, 2011, Holloway and Jefferson, 2013)

These questions were addressed when looking at the data to ensure trustworthy analytical interpretations. For the question "What do you notice" I looked not only at the common themes but also at what was not there. Glesne explains, "negative cases can help to point out points of view you may be ignoring" (2011: 211). As the researcher, both possible positive and negative themes of the study were examined. The selected groups consisted of unassuming and ordinary candidates; were they significant subjects to warrant attention? Most were white urban dwellers, educated, middle class who could afford the leisure time to philosophise, engage with politics or pursue personal hobbies. There were a minority of transients and unemployed locals who could make time to join meetings; their contributions marked deep impressions of the invisible realities of their struggles. These negative cases' insights broke down silos groups were in danger of building - they kept the groups honest and open; some resisted more than others, but the prospect of commoning was always available depending on the conviction of each groups' ethos.

Subsequently, I considered "subjectivity in terms of what they observe and hear and to engage in reflexivity, critically thinking about the research process as a whole" (Glesne, 2011). It was a matter of managing objective distance from the groups' studied to continually focused on the interpretations made from the connections. As it was a subjective process

rooted in the ontological basis that reality was a social construction, I probably needed to have greater support and outlets where I could objectively separate my responsibilities as a researcher and a participant observer.

The cultural shock from a conservative approach to education to a liberal and outspoken scene of dissent and protest demanded I use my perceptions like a zoom lens capable of focusing closely on every aspect and benefit from a broader spectrum of thematic analysis from different perspectives. The contradictions in this duality enriched the discoveries but also affected managing my ungrounding. I can resolve that this process was worth it; I did my best to represent my participation experience with the groups; focusing on the issues they encountered. This choice is by no means criticism of individual groups but are valuable to understanding the pitfalls of when circumstances fall short of noble enterprise.

The third query, “How can you interpret what you notice?” implies timeliness, and the granularity of coding means needing to set and plan for specific times for working on the research and observations, also narrowing attention on the essential elements of their study. The volume of data ambitiously collected resulted in researcher fatigue. I did my best to counter this in data sampling key highlights in each group’s timeline, where organising targeted converging events and forums helped to consolidate findings. “Time at your research site, time spent in interviewing, and time building sound relationships with participants all contribute to trustworthy data” (Glesne, 2011: 211). Relationship building led to being caught up in the diversity and energies of the group, which led to an intimate familiarity with their context, and more periods of reflection and selection from the data with more immediacy were sacrificed.

As seen from the research time bank analysis (Appendix 8), the amount of time for review and co-ordination was equal but should have been redistributed to address the former. In small-scale action research,

generating platforms of creative synthesis was an exercise in accountability to acknowledge participant contributions and to collate evidence of the work done to date.

Finally, “How can you know your interpretation is the ‘right one?’” (Glesne, 2011: 210) I was pressed to challenge my process and assumptions constantly. This iterative process diminishes preconceived notions, which could affect my perspective of the results. The final test of trustworthiness. “How can you know your interpretation is the right one?” is to find others to provide feedback. This feedback came from others who have had different experiences; thus, they look at the research differently. I relied on two groups: first verifying concepts directly with participants and for theoretical triangulation activist and academic contemporaries. I presented data at conferences on panels addressing alternative economic and education models at various stages. Thus, analysing work from more than one framework. Fred Moten observed in an interview discussing *The Undercommons* that the act of interpretation bears in mind that even misreadings can be of interest in beginning to understand together.

The section entitled “Informed consent and confidentiality” established a process of triangulating observations at each phase with participants. Regular informal reporting with mentors embedded in the field, such as Stan Reeves, community centre manager for ALP (adult learning programme), and diverse collaborators in online or in-person forums, helped verify doubts or concerns. The conclusions were subject to multiple perspectives from stakeholders and neutral parties to ensure rigour. These discussions tended to be meandering and lengthy, but this gave participants time to process their thoughts in an unrehearsed manner. I also presented data and observations to four conferences as part of a theoretical review.

Recordings were made accessible to participants by email or in shared folders. The _OS Google docs were live open discussions and weighted by contributions. Exhibition planning was derived from reflections from small curatorial groups of volunteers or, in one instance, MSc design

students who took on the project in McEwan Hall as part of their studio project. Workshops of post-performance reflections were recorded, and salient exchanges were transcribed, such as the Open Source theatre's *Property and Theft* and the Film Factory and Clinic workshop participant processes as they happened. Forum responses from dis-place *thiscollection* facilitated by _OS, the HHWG meeting and Farewell Welfare transcripts are included.

For authenticity, there are quotations from raw data, samples of emails and transcripts referenced in findings can be found in the appendix.

Finally, I am conscious of the limitations of my case study and transparent with the issues encountered. The study's results were limited to a homogenous profile of participants in an urban area. Although there was a larger sample size, the interactions with the multitude were variable and heavily dependent on chance. The regulars' rapport with these participants could not be fully captured in one-on-one in-depth interviews. However, the groupthink processes in the INSTAL event "Evacuation of Great Learning, for instance", show in-depth development of a theme across many voices. The ambitious number of groups studied meant the time to address the immediacy of coding while keeping up with the activities or meetings was sacrificed. Attempting to use affordable or open-source software as far as possible was based on solidarity with small independent outfits. The pandemic made access to proprietary software available remotely. Choosing Quirkos over NVivo for coding also meant more time organising quirks visually and less time on filling in analysis matrixes. NVivo stores the data generated from the empirical research and also offers the possibility of structuring the data according to themes chosen by the researcher. Quirkos' visual interface was satisfying to have a grasp of themes as clusters.

Training sessions on how to use NVivo would have been valuable, but much of my open coding was already done on Quirkos. I did struggle with the philosophical issues of the choice of software. At times pen and paper reflections seemed more efficient. Writing notes or doodling diagrams

helped process my analysis when I was time-pressed, choosing to prioritise time with groups rather than with a spreadsheet. Ultimately, both programmes helped facilitate the storage and analysis of data; however, they are basic instruments that enable the structuring of the data. The final decision regarding the data analysis rests with the researcher and cannot be substituted by software (Hanna, 1997).

Questions raised by these issues were suitably addressed by looking for themes across the data and the literature. The study addresses the amorphous profile of the multitude and quality of uncertainty in becoming indisciplinary and open to a hybrid vernacular, and commons meant such issues were inevitable. Qualitative research is about communicating perspectives on experience and action in the world (Gee, 2004). I have shared my observations with such diverse groups and explained how their actions in the world have implications for traditional assumptions about public education.

Addressing the Lincoln- Guba framework of transferability, group selection heuristics and the design of the Autodidact Archives intervention are included to be reproduced in various settings. The degree of variability from my observations would be context-dependent, for instance, Scotland's hospitality and the openness of University towns played a significant factor in the generosity of the groups' engaged as well as their political orientations. Fortuitously at the time of writing, Singapore's education system is adopting its take on modern curricula. Implications could mean opportunities to develop projects like the Autodidact archives as a site of reflection for educators. Changes in the Singapore education landscape where the link between employment and standardised examination results are being re-evaluated are referenced in the final chapter.

RESULTS

Prelude

> What they have to teach us is not teachable through the other formats, as the experience will be about a different way of desiring, even before a different desire. As desires can be sold back to you; a different way of desiring belongs to subjects and the relationships between them alone. As Elicio Pantaleo writes, the multitude changes the present. The place is now, the time is everywhere.
>
> (Graziano, 2010).

Amateur indisciplinary actions problematise the hierarchies of epistemology derived from elitist expertise in 2008 and even more so now. The vernacular values of memory were central to their endeavours, and how these were activated and enriched by hospitality to outsider perspectives are studied. Austerity forced publicly funded actors in the art world to re-evaluate their priorities, ethics and loyalties. At the turn of the twenty first century, they were the first sector to promote renewed interest in Illich's social critique. At the time of the research, key works such as "Curating and the educational turn" alongside symposia on deschooling hosted by Serpentine galleries to biennales were eager to address the ethical turn of art institutions. Alternative schools emerged readily from art schools – Islington Mill Art School and _OS, in response to the hike in fees, closure of departments and student spaces not deemed profitable. First-hand experiences through _OS with local collectives and galleries concerned how to redefine their remits to confront the impotence of art as depoliticised self-expression in a floundering democracy.

Chapter 4 Approximating Proximities

4.1 Process, Patronage and Politics
An Interview with Jeanne Van Heeswijk

Artists like Jeanne Van Heeswijk (JvH) amplify and raise awareness of issues facing marginalised groups through their practice and platforms. Rather than a singular artist reputation, commodity or spectacle, patronage energies were redirected to art as life and collective processes. She enacts the Duchampian gesture where perfectly normal actions or socio-political interventions are presented within the context of art. If they, like “Bicycle Wheel” (1913) or “Fountain” (1917), are accepted as art, these actions mutate the subject to be worthy of attention. She demonstrates that art is a territory where she sets the course; the “specialism” dissolves and becomes indisiciplinary and transformative; objects become subjects of their understanding.

From 2008-2012 JvH worked on fifteen international interventions, happenings, installations and projects simultaneously. Her activismwas humble and opened spaces for dialogue within sites of resistance. Once the match was struck, she stepped into the shadows, and the emancipated actors took ownership of their situations. In cities determined by the privatised housing market, property values become increasingly inhospitable to the notion of the social. The resistance of these *misfit* groups spoke to an ethos of seeing life as art, art as a platform to amplify rather than legitimise career interests. JvH’s practice cultivates cultural commons in urban environments.

When we met, a catalogue of “The Blue House” projects and processes in running the Amsterdam-based project was being reviewed by art critic Paul O’Neill. She noted that “there were lots of gaps in the work," which is unsurprising given the nature of the practice is mainly undocumentable. The nature of these works was about the processes which became visible through the relationships formed. In this interview, she describes her

strategy of expanding the plausibility of the alternative, one conversation at a time.

I interviewed JvH in Rotterdam on 22nd December 2010 on a bitterly cold morning at a UEB Wes cafe. Her frank disposition and warm openness to questions about her process, patronage, and politics shed light on her craft which has impact on communities beyond the exhibition. Her ability to spontaneously negotiate the invisible everyday networks and people was a compass in my field observation and research.

Developing process as a practice

In JVH's early career, she had become dissatisfied with the medium of metalwork sculpture; she had an instinct that art should be life, located outside the market. This dissatisfaction moved her to start again and experiment. She curated dinners, inviting people whose work she appreciated and who were asking similar questions that interested her. Her guests were a broad church, from Marcel Duchamp to people from the street. Her dinner series developed a practice of curating conditions for "something to come." Through developing these various formats of gathering, she positioned her practice as an observer, student and servant. This position reduced the burden of symbolic expectations associated with being an artist[33].

> [A]rt has become something which is related only to objects and not to individuals or to life. That art is something which is specialised or which is done by experts who are artists. But couldn't everyone's life become a work of art?
>
> (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1983: 236)

In 2012, JVH was awarded 'The Minimum Prize' by the Pistoletto Foundation.[34] "Minimum" as it celebrated the humility one needed to promote responsible social transformation and significant changes through the interactions of single units. It was a prize that signalled the

33 c.f Allan Kaprow's "The Education of the Un-artist Part 1" (1971).
34 Located in Cittadellarte, Biella, which is an experiment by the artist to design a city of art in his hometown.

erasure of self in service more valuable than the pursuit of celebrity as a terminus of achievement.

According to JvH, the life of a project begins with an initial radial search for partners, such as experts of specific local knowledge or funding, which you need for these moments to come into being. A critical mass of this meeting presents the research and determines, as an assembly, where to take it in a direction that will be of mutual benefit.

It is futile to pre-determine the terminus of durational projects, as they depend on the constituents and the success of the radial searches. JvH described “The Blue House” as lasting five years, “De Strip” ten years and “Homebaked” as an ongoing project in Liverpool. The moments of presentation could last anywhere from one day to three months, as each project and partner saw fit. There is no denying the nightmare of participation, of days where one could feel “anti-community,” but her act of practice was louder than the remote words of policymakers. “If we want things on the ground to shift, we will need to deal with power. If we want long sustainable change, we need to deal with power.” Illustrating these dealings came in two forms – she discusses the politics of praxis and patronage.

Patronage

The artist who engages with *patronage as an act of relating* devises independent financial strategies, so they never depend on one funding body’s formula. Paul O’Neill’s 2012 research for “The Blue House” catalogue illustrates this fluidity. As part of his research the funding application process came up as a topic. JVH found this puzzling, as funding was sometimes as informal a process as calling people up to ask for money because she needed it. “In the end, do these details really matter? If so, to whom? As what? To replicate? As if a formula? ... There is no formula.”

What strikes me most is how often schooled practitioners expect there to be one and how assured she is living without a similar expectation. “Get

the money and prove the difference.” This position gave her the confidence to enact alternative microeconomics with partners who came from the radial searches of each project, situations of flux meant continual negotiations in order to act. Trust and dialogue resulted in a mutual consensus of monthly or weekly contracts, where all involved in the project were paid an equal wage rather than rates. Funding was split equally among all the employees with the understanding that arrangements could fluctuate. This decision cultivated a sense of non-hierarchical ownership of the project through praxis to connect with a space.

“… in Blue House, **there was no programme; a reputation was built up before the funding wanted to come on board**.” It started as a “House for the unknown”, which problematised the funding process, as this assumes a fallacy that “[We] need project description, programmatic design, if not we cannot *go forward*.” She encouraged risk and trusted one could determine one’s financial strategies instead of complying with top-down agendas. She demonstrates that future political agency can go beyond the initial commissioning framework by starting a dialogue. Observing, connecting and assembling were vital to relieving inevitable community tensions. These same tensions often had the potential to translate into partnerships and would be unwise if written off too soon.

Politics

Unquestioned culture would perpetuate the need for an underlying agenda where everything becomes capital and valuable and has to be worth something. “Capital is everything we valorise when we are calculative.” All the dangers of being co-opted or instrumentalised are inevitable; it will happen. She quotes Barbara Steiner, “whatever we say, war still rages outside, whatever we say, the battleground is outside.”

“Is there still a position on the outside?” She replied that it had to be engaged. What was being addressed were radical forms of imagination not limited to political sides but producing a conflict of possibilities. As an embedded observer and practitioner, she had developed a subjectivity

that allowed her to navigate the uncertainty of transitory modes of production. This practice constantly meant internalising the following questions:[35]

> Why shouldn't I not do that?
> Does it not need to be done?
> Does there have to be a reason?

In the interview, she confirmed her position on prevalent feminist readings of her work, as she has in several public presentations. I asked her how such readings impacted her praxis. She responded, "Never think too much about it. The socialising of space is a feminine role. The knitting, the continual knitting and developing of a network are important. Keep working at it; man or woman, anyone who can knit should do it. A horizontal network society has to be a working net, reknitting again and again. A superficial net is easily broken." She seemed more concerned that "A network that works and constantly connects and produces itself again and again if it just reproduces itself without meaning it is a problem. "Reproduction of a connection, the simulacra of a connection, idea of connection, is more than just its existence – a constant production of connections will be more meaningful." Whether her praxis was a conscious alignment with feminism was a position she "doesn't believe in it too much," which alleviated the ideological burden of praxis I experienced. I asked if working with technology or computers was perceived as an oppressive force that countered conviviality. Did she see digital literacy demands impacting the means of control in her activism, causing a kind of imbalance of positions and focus? She replied that she "works with programmers" closely, which was the only productive course for dealing with something that felt beyond one's knowledge.

The isolating culture of capital has made JvH's communising practices seem foreign to a different generation, especially during a pandemic that relies on social distancing. The need for modelling less transactional and more humane relationships is urgent. It is as simple as those with extreme ideological positions asking basic questions such as "Who is my

35 C.f (Fraser 2005: 133-134)

neighbour?" JvH's practice works alongside forgotten, marginalised people and places where connections are continually revised. "Resistance of small happiness" was another working piece set in a small hamlet of Werthacker in the Ruhr Valley. The village nestled in a complex, interlacing series of concrete highway junctions was inhabited chiefly by post-World War II migrants from Prussia. They resisted common misconceptions that they were a narrow-minded community and somehow of less value to some grander idea of progress. By contrast, the project "De strip", set in the Afrikaan market, showed forms of dislocated inhabitation, which posed crucial questions:

> "In whose name is the revolution? Who is the new working class? Is it migrant workers? The less we ask these questions... areas near the south, migrants feel more alienated, leaving us in spirit every day. Alienation grows."

In that project, the local council and market stall vendors brokered changes to restrictive rules. In coming together, relationships were established in hopes that the council would consider the vendors' realities in the future policies. She distinguished that the local was not just an inhabitant but also a platform of expertise whom, by inhabiting, can be informally acknowledged as a form of unique knowledge. Embedded data and information are not the domain of a complacent local native to the area by birth alone.

Her description of the 'durational experiential – experiment Blue House' best summarises her philosophy, "Part of the process was to raise funds to keep this *Private house* to pay its mortgage but gift it to the community. The work was over when the last building comes up on the island. Now there is a void that needs humanising, and *there is a need for a Blue house, but "it will not be an institution*, leaving space open for the unexpected as the urgency arises."

An uncharacteristic and shameful accident marred this exchange; as a film producer and educator rehearsed in pre-empting and preparing for contingencies ahead of time, there seemed little excuse. The batteries of the recording device and the backups refused to work and had emptied

charge faster than anticipated in the bitter cold. I improvised with a video taken by a digital camera, but most of the interview recording was lost.

Instead of a verbatim transcription, I immediately made most of the notes captured and reflected on the conversation on the tram ride home. The knowledge shared based on her experience and how I felt lost without a concrete record of the exchange was relevant to investigating vernacular forms of knowing. How many thoughts or conversations happen which are never formally captured? Are they any less valid undocumented? This process, then, of losing formal proof of discussion and recollecting its highlights was a strange embodiment of sitting with my bewildering anxiety of self-institutionalisation. Otherwise, I sat, letting JvH's wisdom wash over like a tonic for the hangover of postmodernism. Her pragmatism was humane rather than utilitarian, leading to a chorus of sense-making from a cacophony of nihilistic différance. Success is achieved by connecting with the place and its people and drawing out meaningful collaborations. There was no time to dwell on accidents - only to act.

Her 2009 project set in Lithuania, "Waiting for Return", developed the unseen and unreported life of Kaunas' citizens through short films based around a day in the life of a bus station designated to be demolished. It was a portrait of an erasure of place of grey, decrepit environs while time poor bystanders were bemused by the absurdity of the intervention. The films made with local artists and residents conveyed a mood tinged with sadness and loss with no name. Contrast this with the energies of activist cultures in similar milieus enact JvH's praxis roughshod. "Bastards of Utopia", a documentary about living in Zagreb after the fall of socialism, depicts the unglamorous realities of failure and setbacks in community practice. The pervasive fear of not being legitimate, permitted, or recognised by the state is a big obstacle in starting something new or politicising the populace. Dado, one of the protagonists, states as a matter of fact:

> We have a collective, we don't need an "official" association!
>
> (Razsa, 2010)

When the activists set up a squatted free shop on abandoned premises, police and a landlord soon confronted them. The zeal of the radical act soon caves under authorities who threaten violence – the more hardened activists are disappointed that there is no resistance and that the shop is so quickly lost. The drained activist protagonist Maple Razsa is asked why he perseveres, despite having clashed with thugs sent to disrupt a free shop set up in an abandoned store:

> Instead of looking for socialism, I find myself instead participating in these experiments of alternative new ways of relating to people here and now.
>
> (Razsa, 2010)

Along the way, I pass a workshop where a group of cycling enthusiasts are restoring an abandoned bike to a new lease of life. They dub her Petronina[36] and from this day forth she shall be restored only with the parts of other abandoned brethren.

I arrived at my refuge, the last of the cheap hostels in Rotterdam located near a convenient metro line with easy access to budget airline destinations. The street below is a mad mix of sounds that felt like Bombay, Tokyo, and Casablanca all rolled into one sleepless night - this last night generously reminds me there are more adventures on other shores and coasts – stories waiting to be told.

Perhaps like Petronina, that is who this is becoming, a Frankenstein of voices and tales awakening unquiet within, diasporic ghosts looking on this wide-eyed pilgrim's restlessness, her journey just beginning.

36Petra-, from Aramaic Kephas, means rock, Nina in Spanish means little girl, alludes to one of the ships which first sailed the Atlantic with Christopher Columbus, biblically means gracious and favoured one.

4.2 Overview of groups

> ... as soon as you renounce the rigidity of technocratic organisational charts, you run into a multitude of difficulties; *seemingly, the simplest things get complicated*.
>
> (Guattari, 1987).

From 2008-2011, this divergent exploratory research collected and analysed three extra-institutional self-organised groups in Glasgow and Edinburgh and one associated student occupation in Bochum, Germany. These groups observed were in the early consciousness-building phase of Freirean transformation, enacting forms of non-hierarchical self-governance.

The self-organising initiatives studied in this dissertation were motivated by the political principle of emancipation. The decision is to speak and think based on the assumption of the equality of intelligences; that one has the capacity and takes back their time from a reigning order's distribution of the sensible. Robust knowledge is constructed from exposure to open, healthy disagreement among diverse groups. What are these "unknown territories," why have they been ignored, and do we need a different vocabulary for an alternate narrative of emancipatory education based not on instruction but construction? Indisciplinarity defuses the binary tension in the rhetoric of decolonisation. It emancipates the struggle by **locating the recovery of memory and knowing within each subject's capacities.** The research translates these efforts to self-educate into better understanding the process of assembling an indisciplinarian.

The section consists of their origins, a broad description of the constituents, notes on their practice and significant contributions to the theory. The Section on *Field observations* further develops these impressions.

4.2.1 Hillhead Writers' Group

> Our strength lies in our ordinariness. Those groups that think that having a pure dogma and perhaps good weapons and

> military discipline is the best self-defence could not be more mistaken. The best defence (whether we are a guerrilla group or a social centre in a squatted building) is to blend in with our neighbours: not just as intelligent tactics, but because the mutual resonance of ordinary rebelliousness is the only possible basis for a communising revolution.
>
> (Holloway, 2010: 258).

Origins

Hillhead library writer's group was observed from its inception in October 2008 until May 2011. The group resulted from a library-initiated open call to those interested in creative writing to start groups. Sixty creative writing enthusiasts showed up and swiftly organised into various groups based on their availability during library opening hours. This exercise took twenty minutes of chaos to form six groups organised around the library opening times and working week. Phone numbers were exchanged to facilitate coordinating meetings. As a participant observer, I attended all six groups, and after two weeks, only one of the six groups continued to meet. This Wednesday group, made up of eight to ten creative writing enthusiasts formed a working group which carries on to this day. Key to their longevity was their nascent hospitality and the simple format of meetings arrived at by consensus, surprisingly, from a group of strangers.

Constituents

All six groups were from a similar demographic: pensioners, students and the unemployed. They gathered in a public library at the crossroads of Maryhill and the well-established and increasingly gentrified artery of the west end of Glasgow. For two weeks, I attended all the groups formed from the initial call, keenly observing various self-organising attempts without formal instruction. However, with few willing to take the initiative or participate fully, these groups dissipated by the second week. On the other extreme, two separate meetings had strong personalities who insisted on setting up formal constitutions or rules based on their personal experience neglecting to engage or understand the group's constituency– these too were short-lived.

Practice

The writers' group organised their weekly group around improving creative writing; the two-hour structure was informal and structured. Each meeting was a model of generative and flexible Vygotskyian social constructivism. Instead of instituting a formal creative writing curriculum, the group's open membership meant visitors from all walks of life were warmly welcomed. An opportunity to access the group's wide range of experiences, cultures and interests, visitors would inspire by writing vignettes based on group warm-up exercises. If they shared any work they were developing, their contributions refreshed the imagination.

Over two and a half years, amongst themselves and various itinerant visitors, the writing group gradually amassed their reading lists based on member recommendations. They shared notices of local events, talks and workshops, building up a map of the local scene together; and contributing to it by performing a public reading of their works in the Partick Library. They shared information about competitions, open calls to publications or even organised their publications to develop their craft further. Members also published their works: one started a blog and produced an audio CD of poetry, and another an e-book of memories in comic form set in Glasgow in the fifties. Both had workshopped aspects of their works with the group, and they acknowledged that support in their publications.

Significance

This exemplar counters critics of open calls and self-selection that bound by pragmatic realities of access to space, time availabilities and commitment; the period of chaos is reasonably brief. Aided by keen interest, group formation could occasionally fail to get past affective filters, which inhibit a willingness to engage or take the initiative. Writing is a solitary craft; thus, working in a group would be considered anathema to most. Compassionate facilitators also had to establish a hospitable environment by listening to each participant's narrative and expectations

to advance. Once achieved, groups by consensus develop simple economic routines which endure, enabling the group to focus on mutual improvement. Maintaining group interest depended on circulating light-hearted minutes and recapping meetings which gave the participants a sense of security and belonging. The HHWG also highlighted issues of the precarity of accessible public space as libraries were facing funding cuts and forced to find ways to monetise their facilities.

4.2.2 thiscollection

> "Where poetry takes root, it defines the space it occupies, whether on the page or in the mind. Poems are site-specific, as maps or mazes, at best maybe both maps and mazes."
>
> (Bakatis, 2001).

Origins

This project was an experiment with a local poet blogger in 2008 to collect 100 short local poems[37] based on various postcodes in Edinburgh as prompts. Filmmakers were invited to adapt them into vignettes of political and everyday insights reflecting the milieu. Most of the poems were philosophical reflections grappling with concepts of illusion, the unseen, longing and escape. There were quirky, whimsical observations of life in "the Burgh", comic relief and magical realism as a tonic to pacify or perplex the paradox of the city. There were four broad categories of subjects: the wistful musings of dreamers; the troubled youth and strained relationships[38] with Fathers; depictions of varying stages of coupledom[39]; and allusions to classical figures[40].

An overwhelming sentiment of abandonment corresponded to a deep pining for nature and a longing for escape to a pastoral idyllic. Scots as a vernacular dialect affirmed identity and was a source of comfort and

37 https://thiscollection.wordpress.com/the-poems/
38 Poems listed in footnotes for consideration can be found at https://thiscollection.wordpress.com/the-poems/ [Accessed 17/2/23] Sons and Fathers: 2 The Lonely City, 9 The Piteous Pine, 12 Tollcross, 27 The Number 31 bus taken from Lasswade, 34 View over Nicolson Street, 38 From Saturday to Monday.
39 6,11,31, 60,68, 78,80
40 Underwood and Isla, 31 Corstorphine, Midnight

romanticised belonging. The theme “Home” depicted a deep sense of displacement pervading the city from both a local and migrant’s perspective.

Constituents

The composition from the open call of non-curated contributions of poems was 20% former Scottish Makars, lecturers and published poets to 80% undergraduates, poetry enthusiasts and novices. Similarly, filmmaker contributions from professional to amateur also had a similar ratio. However, a higher incidence of pro-amateur contributions was a challenge to Vilfredo Pareto’s 1896 *80-20* law to some extent by digital technologies opening *thiscollection* as a space to experiment.

> Leadbetter and Miller recommended the term “Pro-am”, meaning someone who “pursues an activity as an amateur , mainly for the love of it, but sets a professional standard”. Robert Stebbins uses “serious leisure” in his seminal studies to describe committed amateurs working across various fields, listing their perseverance, endurance over time, and personal effort based on specially acquired knowledge, training or skills, personal experience, unique ethos, and strong identification with their chosen pursuit.
>
> (Terras, 2010)

These Pro-Am filmmakers were long-term supporters of *thiscollection*, which they saw as an informal free school for filmmaking and exhibition production experience. Their enthusiasm, resourcefulness and self-directed study of the craft were borne out of necessity, as networks, access to film schools and equipment were limited. Setting their criteria for success could be seen in festival screenings, improving lighting design or innovating emergency technical builds on-site of a Jib fashioned out of found materials, building networks of fellow enthusiasts. *thiscollection* was for this sector of constituents a **space to play.**

In the later stages of thiscollection, artists, musicians and a theatre group joined as the remit of adaptation went beyond film.

Practice

Makeshift DIY filmmaking workshops were set up and facilitated by self-taught filmmakers. Every exhibition emanated a radial search for new relationships. For instance, found spaces were negotiated informally with administrators of local libraries, social centres, and community centres as patrons were intrigued by the community focus. The longest engagement was an informal three-month residency with the Tollcross Community Centre, a non-residential variant of JvH's *Blue House* project. Visiting Pro-Am filmmakers hosted one day workshops contributing to a living uncoerced *curriculum* based on their skills and experience. In 2011 the last of the three significant installations, dis-place *thiscollection,* was a series of forums and events hosted over ten days to address the themes of alternative self-organised education and reflect on its fate beyond aesthetics.

DIY, non-hierarchical, open-access ethos presented works made by professionals or amateurs as *thiscollection.* In exhibitions curated by participants, anyone who had adapted poems had a curatorial say – these attempted to be curator-free spaces, but this was a problematic proposition, and coordinators were invariably necessary.

Several unique improvisational interpretative musical experiences found themselves in *thiscollection*. These free improvised unscored performances address themes of leaderlessness and issues of listening.

Cra:cc[41]: a Glasgow-based group of composers and musicians freestyle improvised with horn, flute, clarinet, piccolo, cymbal and triangle alongside vocalised poems in McEwan hall. Without microphones, they responded to poems from *thiscollection* with voice, flute, horn and saxophone to create an ethereal soundscape textured with schools of poets reading in various nooks in the austere institutional venue.

41 Performers from Cra:cc were Liene Rozite, Michael Shearer, Justin Fung, Dick Mitic, Nicole McNeilly, Lana Shvilpe and Alan Govan.

Sinema was a live improvised performance of crowdsourced soundtracks to silent films made from *thiscollection* public DIY filmmaking workshops. The event was part of a Save the Forest Café Film festival which showed all the films made since 2008 in the order they were received.

Blochestra were Glasgow-based amateur and professional musicians who met regularly at Bloc Bar to practice cover versions engaging the best of their talents be it a kazoo or a sitar. They responded to the open call and took on the challenge to adapt a poem into a song for a chance to play a set at dis-place *thiscollection's* opening night in the Glue factory.

Blochestra and Sinema are compared to evaluate art participation as a form of institutionalised ungrounding by necessarily challenging notions of *perfection* and the phenomenon of normalisation.

Significance

thiscollection's adaptation of local postcode-based poems through DIY digital filmmaking was a cross-media translation from written literary to visual literacy. Self-educated creatives and amateurs produced handmade vignettes by experimenting with low-tech mass-produced equipment they owned. 2008 saw a transition between old world gatekeepers and web-based self-publishing of media creations, challenging the phenomenon of normalisation (Adorno, 1951) that was unable to address the noise of "cultural democracy". It became clear that caught up in the neophyte energies of this transition to the era of social media, the critical question loomed just because we can, does that mean we should? The amateur presented alongside a professional required redressing the distribution of the sensible and the privileges of access to leisure time in the pleasurable act of making.

Throughout working with the more actively involved poets, artists, musicians, filmmakers, workshop participants and community workers, each phase of the project began to identify the social issues faced by each, which were more pressing than the contentions regarding valorising the politics of representation. Funding cuts in community art projects,

social centres facing closure and the artist as a precarious worker - these narratives were part of *thiscollection.* However, poorly attended community assemblies saw that though the poems and films gathered these disparate struggles in spectacle, they could little galvanise energies beyond the exhibition. The project's orientation towards becoming a site of commons to address the existential crisis facing art producers was at odds with its initial motivation to become an enclosure of reproducing the status quo.

4.2.3 EUREDUCON: Bochum

> The radical as a notion an entity or a practice.
> Fear of being co-opted, the system as a blind machine to crush you, the intellectual radical offers hope after he punches you in the gut. They decry all attempts to dialogue and make in such dark times to be futile and naive.
> The practice of anarchy is not burning cars or smashing windows. It is the practice of how we treat each other, which is counter-cultural in that sense, to have a basis to model behaviour which can be passed on. E.g. if you believe the distribution of income is unjust. In your practice, you enact that the staff of all designation gets the same slice of the funding. Thereby valuing all work done:
> *This is difficult. This is radical. This is small. This is power.*
> The artist will have to decide whom to serve.
>
> Journal notes re: (Van Heeswijk, 2012)

Origins

The European Education Conference occupation was set up as a satellite squat to host anti-Bologna protesters to reflect on the Occupation in Vienna against the Bologna Process. It took place in Bochum, from the 25th to the 30th of May, at Ruhr University. The gathering in Bochum brought to the fore the value of political assembly and the place of self-education within contexts of solidarity in resistance. Its agenda was ambitious: to share testimonials of global struggles critical against the current state of education and its impact on society. The conference hoped to be a basis to begin an online solidarity network of transnational commons. Through the Glasgow Social Centre and the GACE network, I attended to better understand the global context of the struggles.

Constituents

The conference consisted of students who participated in the occupations, activists and educators from Indonesia, Nepal, Taiwan, Canada, and Catalunya, and the European network of occupations from Lithuania to Vienna. An array of sessions was held, sharing testimonies of resistance during the occupation or in respective countries, and presenting alternative models of schooling, living and technologies to redress the privatising ideology of extractive enclosures. Though most were already politically engaged, some were just disillusioned with the conventions of modern life and beginning to seek alternatives.

Practices and Significance

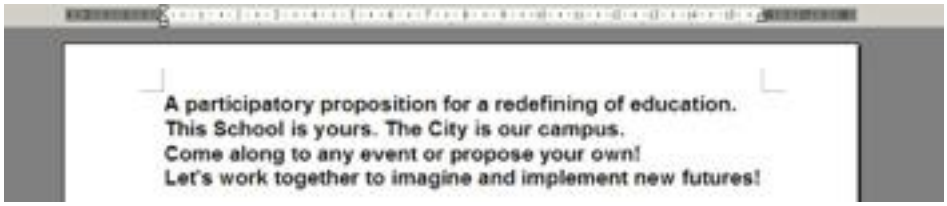
In these protests, autonomous zones of learning took over institutional spaces to reassert the rights of students to “reclaim [their] education, body and brain”. The Bochum gathering was organised to address post-occupation blues, sustaining momentum to put pressure on promises being kept. Although student masses were moved to resist after meeting their demands, groups dissipated, and momentum was lost.

Political education through testimony: The concentration of the collection of shared experiences of resistance from what Holloway described as the ‘cracks’ of capitalism was stupefying. Ex-Professor turned activist Denis Rancourt’s experience cited in Chapter 5.1.3 showed the punitive consequences of challenging academic censorship. Workshops, seminars and plenums addressed themes of anxiety, autonomy, collectivising and commons building in social justice campaigns. These presentations had a cumulative effect of generating hope that alternatives were underway.

Occupation operations: Alternative forms of social organisation
Bochum hosted participants living in communes, co-operatives or squats. Many intense discussions centred around debates of reform or revolt, concerns about being co-opted and radical means of living the alternative. These exhausted organisers from the Lis-Bologna Protests all shared the

same concerns: how to gain critical mass in their respective communities and sustain membership to engage in the long-term struggle of resisting systemic neoliberal enterprise.

4.2.4 _OS



Origins … perhaps

> It ... is not an object or an organisation - it is more a dis/organisation, orientation or objection. .... It relates rather than insists.
>
> Appendix _OS 1_EGL definition.

The *group*'s alias "_ Open School" (_OS) respects their postmodern play with identity and resistance to becoming historicised. Aware of the following description's irony, I needed to situate my brief but productive 2010-2011 membership. Defiantly the _OS refuses the classification of a group. Indeed, it would be difficult to replicate the unique experience that _OS was. Yet, to understand the struggles of leaderlessness, in particular, the limitations of the term 'group' are an uncomfortable necessity to refer to the moments and members organised under the umbrella of _OS gatherings at any one time. _OS was conscientised by the introduction of discriminatory HE tuition fees and work insecurity after graduation. Its activities sought to redress the impact of neoliberal policies *promoting elitism, turning otherwise open experimental laboratories into increasingly tense managerial microclimates of auditing, monitoring, assessment and surveillance.* (Kosmaoglou, 2019).

Retreating to a flat of an _OS member near the Art School, gathering simpaticos to redress an overwhelming sense of disillusionment with University aspirations. Below is a journal entry of my first visit to the flat where most meetings were held. Previously _OS had met under the stone staircase in the 103 Trongate lobby:

> Before the OS meeting began, I admired the austere, sparsely furnished flat. A ladened bicycle leans on the entrance wall, hosting an unfinished render of three grey archways trimmed with a basic trompe-l'œil set against a rich orange ochre base

> coat. There is an eclectic assemblage of found objects, functionality being at the fore. Workbenches and a step ladder splattered with paint serve as surfaces for the formidable collection of rescued houseplants. Precariously perched at the top of the step ladder is an awkwardly large white wooden four-stacked globe lamp capped with an oversized bold satin fuchsia shade trimmed with tassels. Well-loved mismatched warm-toned armchairs face the large windows, and a hardworking electric heater stands by a pillar floor light that watches over a messy, too-small coffee table. The piece de resistance is L's handmade loft bed from found wood. It had his wardrobe and odd storage area underneath while his sleeping quarters sat comfortably as the flat had an impressively high ceiling. Entertaining space was the primary purpose of the living room; domesticities seemed a necessary evil. L is busy laying out refreshments – simple fayre of tea, coffee and hobnobs. I wander to the window. An alleyway joins the row of tenements; one of the Open crit meetings had tried to address how to turn that into a shared social space. A yellow Peugeot 107 is parked haphazardly in the back garden along with a curious collection of assorted wheels: Mr Whippy's truck snug between a weathered camper trailer and a non-descript red panel van. Remnants of a wood fire, bricks, a burnt patch of lawn, and a half-functioning picnic table next to an industrial-sized wooden cable spool stand by an oddly sturdy makeshift table with only one support bearing the weight of a kettle and rusted bread tin. Not an ordinary classroom, nonetheless a site of anticipated reassembling.

As dystopian as the flat and its environs may sound to most, there were undertones of a hard-won warmth, perhaps in the shelter of rescued plants growing fine while balancing on ladders repurposed as shelves. The décor was themed “tentative”, everything a work in progress. The three gateways on the ochre wall were ellipses, conversations that could lead anywhere, waiting for the following open proposition. Mismatches could happen, as there is a place for everything, and everything will work out fine. I don’t remember us gathering around the fire, but some folk must have. I felt like the weathered camper trailer in the company of once useful brethren sitting in the sun stationary, tired of waiting to be repaired. Part of the deschooling process, or rejection of formal structures of validation or instruction, was to embrace discomfort. _OS tried to resist the need to impose order or normative value on an alien experience to

cope. It sat with the discomfort of being a leaderless, non-hierarchical entity and listened.

When ownership of one's learning environment is bound to a school – the students are disadvantaged by not having a natural bond with the apparatus of their learning. Machines which are broken need repair and research, the potential creativity and ingenuity generated by these seemingly mundane tasks' is disabled by outsourcing them to professionals. By contrast _OS members built their own workspaces, found their own guides, engaged with online paragogy and in this neganthrophy, built bonds and solidarity.

> …epistemological knowing is the best kind of art.
>
> (Beuys, 1974)

Since the Copenhagen Free University, Danish officials have outlawed similar alternative universities. Their autonomous practices were perceived as irresponsible spaces from which students needed protection. _OS did not seek to validate any knowledge developed within the group operations. It sought to prove self-governance and change were conceivable – risks worth taking.

Constituents

_ Open school's experimental procedures of self-organising and openness led to affiliations with local social centre members, community workers, activists, creatives, HE students, concerned educators, precarious workers and members of the public. Interested parties were invited to contribute to the blog and a community of peers who prized autonomy and were willing to experiment with open propositions, find alternative spaces and adapt forms of learning engaging effects and the body often ignored in formal education. It is noteworthy that an average group member's cycle of conscientisation towards indisiciplinarity inevitably entails disillusionment, disruption, disguise and discovery.

Practices and Significance

> Capitalism now demands we do life-long learning.
>
> Appendix _OS 2 Summer school forum: Pt 2.

_OS was a “school” where activity was determined by participants’ open propositions and programmed by negotiating consensus. In contrast to formal education contexts, their openness afforded any newcomer liberty to find their starting point or reject the disorienting experience altogether, a closer understanding of such problematic operations of transparency and its impact on discovery and originality are worth pursuing. The group’s contrarian, playful parodies brought to the study a radical rethinking of how one has been conditioned to access knowledge.

The group’s experience is explored through a catalogue of correspondence, co-authored Google document propositions and transcripts from three key actions. Firstly, the “Evacuation of Great Learning, was a collaboration with the experimental music festival INSTAL. The proposition was ‘could 60 strangers co-curate a collective experience, or was the experiment doomed’[42]. After three days of open discussion, workshop participants could take over the festival for the last three hours. _Open School proposed, “we have to ask action for what end and did we accomplish something or settle into complicit niceties. Debate, discuss or disgust."

Second, transcripts from engagements with a local community group in Govan, field trips such as a Biodiversity trip to Campsie Hills and micro gatherings like an unauthorised alternative open crit held in 103 Trongate. Lastly, notes and transcripts from a manifesto-building forum reflecting on self-organised alternative spaces leading up to the Free Hetherington occupation. The latter was part of dis-place *thiscollection*’s installation in the Glue Factory, where *thiscollection* was presented as an object of study.

42Website for INSTAL: Evacuation of Great Learning https://arika.org.uk/archive/items/instal-10/evacuation-great-learning [Accessed 17/2/23]

_Open school started as students from the art school and the university of Glasgow who lived in close proximity. These neighbourhood flat meetings grew to include diverse constituents, most met and organised online, and decision-making of which propositions to act on was based on consensus rather than by 'committee'. The blog was a noticeboard and news hub for affiliates of the alternative school movement, bringing peer experiences into a cooperative education of substance. Regular communication, either online, through emails, Google docs or physical meetings, were led in turns, though encouraged mainly by a few core participants.

More active collaborations with established curatorial collectives developed a more sustained stream of inquiry, preparation, engagement and reflection facilitated by collaborative drafts of Google documents at each stage.

> … the significance of Joyce's name being listed repeatedly in counter-educational contexts, including Beuys's work. Joyce appears to have inspired alternative university structures by writing books that call for collective reading and allow space for trial and error and that are too demanding and time-consuming for conventional educational institutions that are increasingly geared to faster and faster consumption.
>
> (Lerm-Hayes, 2019).

The group's constructivist energies encouraged peer gatherings such as field excursions, fundraiser social ‘events’, hosting visiting thinkers, practitioners from various disciplines and forums in various found, domestic or occupied spaces. One of the highlights was a Biodiversity nature walk offered when an environmental activist was in town for another event. Most reading groups and meetings were based primarily on radical philosophy and pedagogy, i.e. works which benefited most from paragogical dissemination.

> _Open School, in their own words, is "not ‘a group' but an accumulated set of amorphous conditions … It is a dissemination/amalgamation of ideas that amount to an active narrative of context, critical positions, struggle and ways of being together. ... This research, it claims, is a practice without end.”
>
> Appendix _OS 1 EGL Definition.

As Jeanne Van Heeswijk advised, "there is no formula." should the next generation continue to be conditioned otherwise by insisting on maintaining a delimiting scope of education as something to be managed rather than engaged.

Chapter 5 Field observations

After being welcomed and invited to be part of these autonomous sites of assembly,[43] my field observation led to understanding the context and **causal conditions** for formation. There are two parts to the analysis of causal conditions A Macro-Mesopolitical profile of agencies and actors under scrutiny and the second the impact on the micropolitics of communities disenfranchised by these top-level policies. The ecology of education in 2008-11 is extensively developed as the implications on secondary school education is vital. It also articulates the tension between the disparate logics of a commons and reproducing an extractive enclosure. The form and structure of meetings and their adoption of technology, testimonies or time are constructs of autonomy for consideration.

The fieldwork also presents multi-age self-determined groups shaping prolific, generative and rich **curriculum from the commons**. These examples depict a deep regard and longing for **vernacular values** cobbled together from instinct and memory. Their methods of recouping these values via forms of assembly sharing testimonials in person, partaking in a meal or collaborative online wrestling with open propositions. I present examples from *thiscollection,* HHWG, EUREDUCON and _OS, as guides to an indisciplinarian becoming.

5.1 Causal conditions: Rise in Anti-authoritarianism

The macro and meso-political overview of austerity measures and HE failings are drawn from EUREDUCON activist testimonies and through various _OS meetings and memos. From the Bologna process to student occupations, these actions aimed to hold Higher Education institutes to account - that knowledge produced would directly serve the public good.

43 Network of collectives who shared similar interests in the potential of non-hierarchical meetings and governance: Autonomous Center Edinburgh and the Glasgow Social Center, and through the _OS, Transmission Gallery and Ultra Red.

They supported resistance within the universities of education increasingly focussed on accreditation rather than emancipation. They critique the over-specialism in tertiary education, the imbalanced distributions and the rise of knowledge hierarchies based on economies dependent on precarious immaterial labour. Meetings derived from reimagining and realising alternative micropolitics and cultural production. At times frustrations and struggles to articulate these ideals reflect the intellectual courage of the milieu was quite out of practice.

Meanwhile, the _OS Govan reflections, HHWG and *thiscollection* examples highlight the micropolitics and the direct impact of austerity on public spaces and citizen assembly. The effect of these broken contracts led to drawing more voices from the disenfranchised to these inclusive leaderless gatherings to imagine an alternative form of self-governance, micropolitics and cultural production.

The quotations are not presented chronologically or strictly by a group. They are lifted but selected from thematically related events and aggregated as such sprawling meetings necessitate. They are collaged with relevant literature to situate the instincts and observations made by groups in a context for ease of reference. From these causal conditions, the logic of commons and enclosure began to emerge tenuously as a feature of their modus operandi[44]. It is fitting, then, to begin with, testimonies from the ground.

5.1.1 The ecology of education and accounting for community

From medieval times universities have been founded on guilds, exclusive enclaves of scholars dedicated to a specialism, and admission built a bureaucratic class of workers able to manage statecraft or church duties. In an anti-authoritarian age, the ethico-onto-epistemology insists that University and pre-tertiary sectors of education are frameworks which must defend knowledge as a public good (Fuller, 2011). Unfortunately,

44 This is exemplified in Table 9 Comparing characteristics of an Enclosure and a Commons in “6.1.2 Portrait of a Commons” in the analysis of *thiscollection*, as one such inbetween entity.

current education models must promote and dispense short-term "efficient" accreditations to qualify for the job market or continual training to be licensed in one's profession. The noble pragmatic long-term strategy to develop labour for the welfare of the state is encroached by a culture of fetishising knowledge as a commodity, diminishing the substance and gravitas of scholarship to blind ritual.

Polemically, Fuller insists that a more cohesive approach would require a dissolution of the current idea of University as a necessity. He proposes greater communication ***between*** education sectors to redistribute knowledge as an enriched public good, another justification for indisciplinarity as a rehabilitative position.

> Learning by rote for rote activities has spent a century migrating through higher levels of the education system: it has reached and enveloped even the historically 'intellectual' disciplines – it is not for us to create loftier 'levels' of education, but to remove the idea of levels. **Education is performance, not preparation for performance**.
>
> Appendix _OS 3 COMMONPLACE BOOK.'[45]

The Higher Education (HE) crisis directly impacts the pre-university school system. The number of students who make it to University is a general marker of a successful school's achievement. (McGettigan, 2012: 22) and (Charles, 2012: 176) describe in greater depth the impact of insidious aggressive privatisation on Tertiary education and the implications for Comprehensive Secondary and Primary education, where public schools, academy trusts and free schools, in particular, exacerbate the social divide.

Charles describes "Studio Schools" as smaller and sponsored by *local* employers, such as Hilton Hotels, Michelin, Ikea, and various football clubs. They have a more vocational focus on work placements. They faced closure due to low subscription as top-down measures in alternatives were proving unsustainable. The open schools studied demonstrate this 'democratic' impulse of equity rather than

45 See section *RADICAL MANIFESTO [Constructed out of points to be debated.]* |

standardisation oft misunderstood as fair access. Students are empowered when negotiating the issues confronting their institutions' policies for themselves. Drafting and fighting for their demands through sit-ins and occupations were invigorating gestures of solidarity to reclaim universities as a commons for the next generation, not just the elite.

> Rather than homogenise, ring-fence and 'expertise' areas of investigation (an academic operation we abhor), we hope the week will proceed in a spirit of heterogeneity and mutually informing process, in a spirit of tolerance and trust that will enable us to continue resisting together the 'will to power-over' that a 'knowledge economy' offers us as its seduction, its sump, its sop.
>
> Appendix _OS 4 Invitation SummaSkool.

State school system failing students

"Not Another Lost Generation", the slogan of the October 1st Anti-Cuts demonstration, marching from Glasgow Green to a rally in Kelvingrove, expressed the impact of austerity policies as an attack on students and their communities. Generally, those engaged felt that the implementation of top-down managerial policies did not account for the reality communities face on the ground. Symptoms of this cognitive dissonance were described clearly by these Govan residents. Their conversation with the Open School covered issues ranging from precarious funding of community spaces to student poverty and disengagement in Secondary School education.

Gov 2: I always think that our youngest son is 15 with no education, cos he has seen a lot of older people he knew who come out of University with degrees and such like but have nae job. So he left school at 14, went straight into a job in the black economy, worked night shifts in a dairy and refused point blank to ever sign on, and he's still doing that. And he's one of the lucky ones who got a job in the black economy! (Train rumbles past) And he's been stigmatised for that. Oh, you're working, and your no paying taxes. Then again, you're no signing on the dole. So, where does he fit in? He's basically disappeared; you cannae pin him down because he is no in the education

system, and he's no in the workforce system. He's in the black economy.
Gov: What's he gonae do then on the March 27th with the census form?
Gov2: That's a good question.

Appendix _OS 5 Govan Reshuffle

Secondary schools across Scotland were transitioning to the Curriculum for Excellence model at the time of the research. Teachers' concerns for clarity on progression and assessment peaked during this period. Where 'unemployment among 16 to 24-year-olds across the UK had hit one million – its highest level for 19 years.' The reality of Gov 2's son made these short-term administrative details less of a priority given their charges were wholly unprepared for an immaterial labour economy.

As Gov2 described, her son's experience of the "democratic" access to opportunities was markedly absent, both to him and those like him. Erased from the census, he chose to deschool to avoid becoming a *mass-produced idiot* (U. N. E. F., 1966). It was felt that precarity and criminalisation of having dropped out of an ordered society was the cost of non-compliance. Gov 2 expressed her exasperation in the perversion of "rights" in exercising what little "choice" he had. A train rumbled past, shaking the building.

Gov 2 son's predicament was not unique; coincidentally, a multi-media performance called "Changing Tack" was held at the Pearce Institution, Govan, as part of a larger Creative Network event. Similarly, its protagonist was a young man who didn't see the point of staying in school during the recession. His grandfather tells him the history of Govan to convince him to persevere. The figure of an elder, an emblem of vernacular support and belonging makes up for the lack in the young man's formation within formal structures.

Student poverty

Extracts from the literature circulating through the _Open school networks and a personal sharing garnered from anti-cut meetings with grassroots community activists.

> We are a generation who lives precariousness as a permanent condition: the University is no longer an elevator of upward social mobility but rather a factory of precariousness. Nor is the University a closed community: our struggles for welfare, work and the **free circulation of knowledge and people** don't stop at its gates. Our need for a common network is based on our struggles against the Bologna Process and against the education cuts Europe is using as a response to the crisis.
>
> Appendix _OS 6 Invitation Paris.

The Paris Common Organisers' manifesto was circulated with various alternative school initiatives like the _Open School. It amplified the anxiety of the middle classes' growing disillusionment with the benefits of pursuing HE at the high cost of incurring sizable debt. In the Govan conversations participant activist - A2, a part-time carer, described the debt trap. Her aspiration for an honours degree was to stretch her mind and make a better life for herself; however, this necessitated going into debt. "Student debt is part of a growing debt market. Debt, in general, is constructed to humiliate and isolate the debtor yet is a struggle that involves subjects other than students." (The Strickland Distribution et al., 2011)[46]

The indignity of debt for HE students was a reality even without the imposition of school fees. The support system in the welfare state came with a stigma that those who signed on were parasites or failures relegated to "the new poor house".

Gov2: The dole is the new poor house.

The Localism Bill is doing the same for welfare services. Since Labour, the purpose of education was redefined by "changes in funding and

[46] All *The Strickland Distribution et al., 2011* references can also be found in Appendix _OS 5A Right to the City.

assessment policies towards similar ends, and within welfare was already commodifying care under the promotion of 'social entrepreneurship'." (The Strickland Distribution et al., 2011)

> A2: Massive stigma. I had to sign on for three weeks. When I went in, a guy asked if I was there to sign on, I said yea, and he actually laughed at me... I've been working since I was 16. I was doing my honours degree, so for the last year, I had money I saved from working, and I didn't have a job. I signed on. I only needed it for a month and a half. First time I went in, the guy laughed at me.
>
> Appendix _OS 5 Govan Reshuffle.

There seemed to be no compassion for the insecurities A2 endured in supporting herself through University on precarious part-time employment. "Debt enforces 'work-discipline': representing a way of mortgaging many workers' and their families' futures, constraining decisions of which jobs and wages they can seek, and undermining their ability to resist exploitation and/or to fight for better conditions." (The Strickland Distribution et al., 2011)[47]

Critics perceived the increasing privatisation of the University as a theft of a public institution. Independent public co-funded research was overtaken by private research that would be above scrutiny and public accountability. From the final statement of the Free Hetherington occupation, the University of Glasgow's promise in its founding charter was earnestly restated:

> "...that by assiduous study [we] may win the pearl of knowledge, which shows... the way to live well and happily, and by the preciousness thereof makes the man of learning far to surpass the unlearned and opens the door for [them] clearly to understand the mysteries of the Universe, helps the ignorant, and raises to distinction those that were born in the lowest place."
>
> (the Free Hetherington, 2011a).

The few who resisted found recourse in these free and open alternative self-managed education movements—a state-run on capitalist logic

[47] Appendix _OS 5A Right to the City.

benefits from regulating education to *provide* better labour power for greater capitalist accumulation. However, the virtualisation of capital profiting from trading in students indentured in debt coupled with short-term austerity measures result in students becoming consumers of a knowledge economy which commodifies education. According to Jevon's paradox, the University acts as an Edu-factory churning out graduate qualifications in short time frames inadvertently reducing the quality of the labour force and hence long term productivity. Copenhagen Free University extend the metaphor:

> The wholesale privatisation of former public educational institutions by the state reduced them to mines of raw material for industry in the shape of ideas, desires and human beings. This normalising process was somehow not powerful enough to silence all forms of critique and dissent; other measures were required.
>
> (Hedditch et al., 2011).

The pharmakon of "Professionalisation" initially intended to encourage a teacher's pride in work, modelling socially acceptable behaviour and a strong sense of ethics. The term under the neoliberal policy is associated with certification, training courses and standards of excellence accountable to the institution and career progression. It is hard to see how these sanitised training achievements directly benefit Gov2's son and those like him. Neoliberal policies promote hyper-individualism and drive for *perfection* of ideals embodied in a notion of professionalisation. The aloof, isolated figure is the expert or specialist technician for solutions and policy.

> We are bred to be managers - crisis requires thought, not management - Schools punish thought and train management. We live in a corporatist society with soft pretensions to democracy - more power moving towards the groups. Because the managerial élites are now so large and have such a dominant effect on our educational system, we are actually teaching most people to manage, not to think. Not only do we not reward thought, we punish it as unprofessional.
>
> (Saul, 1995)

The imbalanced corporatism, an enclosure of logic and rules, has too long left labour out of the negotiations between state and industry. The 'murmuring multitude' is thus a logical consequence of this neglect.

5.1.2 Assessment as battleground: Resisting artificial knowledge hierarchies

The protestors' efforts target narrow assessment accreditation structures employed as a tool to delimit the distribution of the sensible. Political scientist Cawson's corporatist political theory identifies conditions of ineffectualness in "weak professions", such as those in the education and social care sectors, against professional or managerial groups who defend monopoly interest against direct state intervention. "In general ... social policy provision operates largely in the interests of the producers of the services." From North America to Singapore, corporatisation of universities has threatened to instrumentalise knowledge for narrow business interests. Brownlee's 2014 analysis of the irreconcilable differences corporatizing Canadian universities outlines how 2006 onwards the Public-private partnerships (P3s) were disadvantaging research as public good[48].

> In these new epistemic cultures, academics are facing different trials: a) trials of strength in the sense that they are subjected to managerial control, they have to conform to standards, to assessments imposed by management, quality assurance, etc., they have to comply, to apply new regulations; b) trials of reality, in the sense that they experience gaps between discourses of truth which are held by evidence or policy-makers and practices, paradoxes in terms of performativity, competition, repetition, and mobility. They face existential trials because some of them are suffering from this new order, some injustices and humiliations, whereas they are marginalised and lack recognition; they feel isolated. They have lost their autonomy, some of them adopt passive resistance. It is only some of them! The others can adjust to this new order!
>
> (Normand, 2016)

[48] Sadly, Fuller's proposition in 2011 of knowledge as a public good for all school levels has failed to materialise, and the situation has worsened.

There is thankfully, resistance of professors who strive to be catalysts rather than technicians. In this section, I focus on one major site of contestation i.e. diminishing tenured academics freedoms by managing *outputs* via narrow standardised non-negotiable assessment and evaluation methods to be standardised across many institutions. These ungovernable professors faced censure, reprimand and dismissal for any deviation from approved course design or assessment protocols. These are symptoms which protestors marked as the start of the casualization of academic labour.

Co-author of "The Undercommons", Professor Stefano Harney, had his contract terminated with a Singaporean Management University based on the same argument of ensuring "fairness and consistency" in grading. (The Star, 2019) At the beginning of the course, Professor Harney assigned 'As' to 169 students of the module, which explored business through classic literature, which they had to work to keep. This strategy aimed to reduce the affective filters of stress and anxiety which inhibits engagement

The distribution of ‘As’ was a bold statement of authorial erasure, removing the Professor as an evaluator-monitor and extending trust to the students’ innate capacities to construct meaning for themselves. Focusing on students’ engagement with the coursework was a conscious choice. “Author-ity,” or from the root Latin *auctor* or originator, promotor, is the expert, specialist and right to approve or license thought. Thus exposing assessment procedures as artificial ways of inflating the stature of the courses at the cost of students’ genuine engagement with the materials, ideas and themselves. Sadly, after his dismissal, promised ‘As’ were arbitrarily moderated to lower grades.

> For some, institutional education has always been a ‘dead hand’, a site of compartmentalisation, hierarchy, frozen knowledge and induction by ‘super-ego’. For others, it was a place of respite, a space in which to breathe. A pocket, a place to plot a course away from the forces of normalisation.
>
> Appendix _OS 4 Invitation SummaSkool.

Consider the policies on secondary school examinations during the 2020 lockdown which exposed expensive formal assessments as rituals of test taking procedures rather than representations of student ability. In place of physical exams, centre-assessed grades were determined by teacher assessments and an algorithm that would correct for grade inflation. By the second lockdown, students surveyed preferred examinations to the arbitrariness of centre assessments unsurprising given that a large part of KS4 they have been training to take tests. Meanwhile, the Welsh government suspended the 2021 exams altogether, yet this was still not enough to see through the bureaucracy committed to executing standardised testing as dehumanising.

The groups, who strived for non-hierarchical peer-run self-education, often conflated professionalisation with careerism. The latter is a by-product of instrumentalised education where students conditioned to extract quick and formulaic solutions to a pre-determined outcome. A sophistry ensues which consists of individualist short term opportunistic thinking instead of critical acuity, understanding and resilient foresight. In their view, these practices mechanised and contradict the complexities and realities of positive teaching and learning.

> We have the opportunity to develop structures, practices and relationships through struggle that can demonstrate the future we want to create in the here-and-now – in our everyday actions. In students' assemblies, direct action collectives, 'free universities' and so on, we may be sowing the seeds of new ways of learning and teaching, and new ways of living. But to some, this feels *vague and unfocused*. There are very good arguments for never forgetting the lessons and analyses gained and produced in the past. Are our struggles anywhere near developing new ways of living, are we just stabbing in the dark, are we reproducing the mistakes of the past?
>
> (The Strickland Distribution et al., 2011)[49]

In this anxiety of ungrounding, the pragmatic argument is hard to ignore: there are only five hours in a school day where teachers encounter students. Realistically exams are accepted as more efficient tools to

[49] Appendix _OS 5A Right to the City

assess and challenge rather than oppress students' capacity. Yet, twenty-five hours a week is still time spent on behalf of the youth to benefit the bell curve rather than pursuing authentic multi-faceted assessment for clarification of learning. Consider which would be more beneficial to the students taking a business class on understanding sources of finance? Facilitating the critical evaluation of financial news in order to build strong investment portfolio research or studying textbook processes derived from practical experience to prepare for a test. The fight for these 25 hours to be energised instead of endured is articulated most clearly in the case which follows.

5.1.3 Assessment for clarification, not standardisation

Denis Rancourt was a professor of Physics in the University of Ottawa for 20 years, 10 of which were tenured. After a 2003 encounter with the Cambridge Study Group, he took on a critical pedagogy stance and emboldened by Jeff Schmidt, author of “Disciplined Minds” to become indisciplinarian. He established a course set out to deconstruct the power dynamic: guiding students to become collaborators hence disrupting the expectations of traditional "banking" instruction methods. Rancourt sought to encourage students to think for themselves and engage social activism as an untapped capacity within science education. *Professor Schmidt … advised him that “none of this will work if you grade the students”* (Picher, 2007: p.6).

Two sections follow: the first describes Rancourt’s course PHY1703 and teaching philosophy in greater depth, the second is an analysis of the sources listed below and their implications reviewed.

The research charted informal conversations with Rancourt at EUREDUCON, documentary footage filmed by students supporting his cause[50] and his blog. There are three independent 'Committees of inquiry reports' and arbitration documents from 2007, 2014 and 2017 marking the

[50] (Biesterfield, 2011)

struggles to justify indisciplinary approaches to HE teaching. Rancourt eventually achieved an amicable resolution in 2019. In the dissertation, two key arbitration documents referenced for closer analysis. The first is the Picher Arbitration document based on hearings from 2007, the second is the 2014 Foisy arbitration. The grievance in the former found in favour of Rancourt's defence of his radical activist class PHY1703 and the case celebrated as the right to academic freedoms, in particular to teach in a way which the professor sees fit.

The 2014 Foisy arbitration was a blow-by-blow account of how the administration tried to undermine the ruling of the previous. After the Picher ruling, the University put the PHY 1703 course through 11 months and 16 committee meetings to arrive at a new course SCI 110l / 1501: Science in Society/La Science dans la société, specifically without the word "Activism" in the title. By his dismissal in 2009 three grievances raised accused him of deviating from approved course material, disregarding warnings from the Dean not to use "student -centered" evaluation in a pre-requisite first year course PHY 172, finally in 2008 he assigned A+s his 4th year and master students in PHY4385/5100 as long as they could defend their understandings of these specialised technical topics competently. Rancourt was determined to disable the grading process in order to redress the imbalance of power which he saw as stifling student progress.

Science Minister Lord Sainsbury stated in a press release in 2002,

> We have moved decisively away from the era in which it was enough for science communicators simply to educate the public about science and its benefits. What is needed now is an effective two-way dialogue and debate between those who do scientific research and the public."
>
> (Price, 2020: 217).

Rancourt felt responsibly preparing future scientists for the realities of a "true understanding of science" needed to locate learning within the complexities of the commons. PHY1703's constructivist approach based on participatory democratic principles built the curriculum up from the

commons. Students self-selected areas of interest and formed working groups to develop deeper understanding of the topics. The course was also open to a community of inquiry beyond the university consisting of contributors from local activist and wider social critics. These open propositions curated a gathering of all ages, abilities and education levels to work together to contextualise the study of science in the environment they inhabit.

The following statement from Professor Rancourt is a summary of the course he offered. It is not included as a justification of his teaching prowess or radical politics but to evidence how constructivist educational practice are minimised within larger institutions. The flipped classroom methodology is an instance of students' confidence benefiting from access to the broader community beyond classroom walls and time. Through open propositions students were challenged and exposed to such depth that if engaged increases their understanding and mastery of the concepts. Of note is the integration of activism as a critical element of engagement, prescient in these times as an awareness of the bounds of our own institutionalised motives and execution of method.

Assess class profile and dynamics. A group discussion system, so students had to negotiate to learn and not "study science in a vacuum."

Open door policy. Rancourt opened the class to mature students and activists from campus and the larger community, including a vagrant, to emphasise understanding scientific material within authentic community issues.

Trusted to self-select areas of study from a range of options.
Possible themes of the course (to be decided by the students) include:

- Radical (i.e., at the root) analysis of society and power structures
- Critical examinations of the university and science as institutions that serve power
- Activists' perspectives, motivation, goals, etc.
- Civil society, resistance and defiance, activism in the workplace.
- Foreign policy, globalisation, democracy, environment, social justice, minority rights, first nations rights, the peace movement, the anti-war movement, fair trade
- Personal and community benefits of activism, risk, change, and involvement.

Some characteristics of the new activism course:

- outstanding weekly speakers; activists, and researchers; and invited panels
- free-forming and free-changing parallel workgroups, defined by consensus students can move between work groups and choose their degree of involvement nothing imposed; striving for anarchic freedom ideal

(Foisy, 2014: [15][17])

Pace of learner prized over deadlines to minimise disruption of study:

- ad hoc group reports and presentations as needs arise
- collectively trying to figure out how the world works and how to make it better for everyone.

Resilience and testing one's knowledge with others: continuous challenging of ideas, approaches, and perceptions; by whatever respectful means (e.g., to say what one thinks and feels is a high form of respect)

Students offered multiple modes of self-assessment, group reports, presentations, and discussion with self-determined timelines as and when required were allowed to rehearse independence. He adapted and enriched the students' environment through content and access to mentors from diverse fields of experience in real-world contexts. Cultivating an environment of trust and co-operation encouraged students to pursue issues which resonated with purpose and passion. Assessment in its second life SCI 110l / 1501 was formative based on a satisfactory/not-satisfactory grading system.

The open proposition and generative nature of this learning was disorienting for conservative students and management alike. Recall the teachers hesitant about the radical changes of the CfE, the small percentage of students who complained delineate another polemic; *the changing role of students (as consumers) in corporatized university spaces as well as changes in tuition and debt rates in Canada* (Brownlee, 2014)

> The student in question responded that she was frustrated at having expended her hard earned money "...pour une folie comme ce cours."51 She expressed a number of strong sentiments, including her view that the classroom discussions seemed to her to be devoid of any sense or direction.
>
> (Picher, 2007 p.36)

Yet the madness was the widespread conditioning of *learning* as a consumable. Rancourt made impassioned justifications for this alternative mode of engagement and evaluation in an interview to commentator Benoit Dutrizac on a Montreal radio station.

> ...the traditional technique for teaching science, or university level, does not work... It's unambiguous. If we take new graduates and question them about whether they learned anything, whether they understood the concepts, the answer is absolutely not and the degree to which they understood, if they understood anything, is completely independent of the marks they received, the professors they had, if we use traditional methods, and all the studies show that."
>
> (Foisy, 2014:18)

Illich warned as early as 1978 that the same language associated with learning has been inverted, with verbs becoming nouns; 'to learn' becomes 'to be accredited.' Rancourt's method chimes with the premise of deschooling:

> DR: How do I view teaching? Well, first, I basically believe that it's impossible to teach. In other words, you can't make something be learned. The only way to truly learn is through oneself, through one's being and so I have created an environment in the classroom where the student will be equipped to follow his/her natural instinct to learn. ... A

51 Translated: "for a madness like this French course."

> distinction needs to be made between certifying someone and education.....
>
> (Foisy, 2014:19)

5.1.4 The scapegoat: making a case for redistributing authority.

The activist Professor's dismissal from a Canadian University exemplifies this critique of accreditation systems which value summative rather than formative evaluations. The lengthy appeal was sustained by the immense support from students, media activists, and fellow academic freedom colleagues. Rancourt has since left academia and is currently a researcher/volunteer with Ontario Civil Liberties Association. When a sceptical EUREDUCON participant asked Rancourt if widening access to knowledge was his point, why didn't he volunteer to teach in public places outwith the university? He replied that visible resistance speaks directly to power, to signal a need for a change instead of supporting further self-exploitation.

EUREDUCON invited him to share his activist experiences of resisting an accreditation system, which was used by the administrators to limit his academic freedom. This challenge to institutional mismanagement of assessment and evaluation tools resonated with my experiences promoting authentic assessment at the secondary school level. Rancourt was evaluating learning as a performance of constructing knowledge in paragogy and raising the students' consciousness of who Science is serving rather than just the mechanics of a subject.

This analysis of this indisciplinarian's arbitration is necessary as it raised four key points. Posterity, university as a community of indisciplinary inquiry, ensuring fair student-centred policies and the role of social media in this activist's cause.

Posterity

First, these were powerful testimonies of HE policies infringing academic and student intellectual freedoms. The 2014 Foisy arbitration document in

particular, captured for posterity in legal prose the zeitgeist where overdetermined managerial and bureaucratic bullying constrained academic freedoms. The tone of both reports are very different Foisy's is 32 and Pichard's 66 pages long. Both reference the York University case arbitrated by R. Goodfellow's[52] definition of academic freedom. Yet Foisy claims the case does not include contesting University's rules on assessment which contradicts Pichard's citation that it does include the professor's choice of teaching methods. Foisy also spends the first half of the arbitration citing Pichard's ruling, yet the defences he selects seem skewed to conservative definitions which does not challenge grades as a closed standardised mechanism for promotion.

These testimonies provided the Anti-Bologna protest's cause with concrete evidence in the form of legal documents for scrutiny which has come at significant personal and financial costs to Rancourt. Brownlee described such scenarios as a clash of values at an ethical crossroads of the University as an institution (2014). The protestors and alternative self-organised groups enacted their educational ideals outside the institution in autonomous zones, while he presented a testimony to resistance from within. Both activist camps campaign for just governance and hold neoliberal administrators to account for mismanaging knowledge acquisition and capitalising on accreditation as enterprise.

University as a community of scholars

Rancourt's educational philosophy was to educate, not bureaucratically evaluate. His indisciplinary method employed open propositions and relied on student-led inquiry to activate the *lectures*' coverage. Through impact analysis of the function of science in the community, science as a discipline became part of a larger question of *how to live better* - an indisciplinary propos if ever there was. He was cultivating a culture which confounded automatic compliance by promoting active critical participation. The court had to balance the pedagogical merits of

[52] York University and York University Faculty Assn. (Noble) (Re), 167 L.A.C. (4th) 39

alternative strategies of learning and the institutional contract law of the University. The arbitrator, Foisy, references a University of Calgary case[53]' as a reminder that the academic freedom of the scholar was part of a partnership, on the provision that they meet the university's needs:

> [T]he whole concept of a university is that of a **community of scholars**, supported by the state or the institution or both, who, in return for a general commitment to apply themselves to advance the state of human knowledge, receive extraordinary freedom to define for themselves how to go about doing that... [i]nstead, control by the university exists only at the level of enforcing the basic bargain of the academic appointment: that the appointee will remain productive in scholarly activity, that he or she will co-operate in meeting the institution's needs for teaching and **service**...
>
> (Foisy, 2014:27 [89]).

The key phrases are "community of scholars" and institutions' need for "service" . Since this precedent and the neoliberal marketisation of HE, these concepts have diluted the notion of such hospitality. Foisy backed the University with contradicting arguments claiming University is a “free marketplace of ideas”[54], “Academic freedom and excellence is essential to our continuance as a lively democracy.” Yet a professor enacting democratic forms of learning is called out for working against the University?

Social critics of education are concerned with the community among different disciplines, to paraphrase Illich[55]: What preserves the culture of community when departments or schools are the enemies of community. Critics claim these departments are susceptible to corruption "by a kind of groupthink" mentality. (Smolin, 2008), The phrase "community of scholars" expected to "advance the state of human knowledge" is challenging, if not foregone in fragmented constructs of knowledge hierarchies which isolate one from the other.

53University of Calgary and AUPE (Re), 2008 CLB 16779 – decision of the Alberta Labour Relations Board Langara College and Langara Faculty Assn. (Mirza) (Re), 2000 CLB 14599 – decision by the British Columbia Collective Agreement Arbitration Bureau

[54] *(Foisy, 2014).*There are three University of Calgary cases cited but it is not clear which one Foisy is referencing, Mckinney v. University of Guelph, [1990] 3 SCR 229 respectively

55 (McKnight, 2009: *23:20mins*).

The second term, "service", begs the question to whom does the University serve? The community, the fee-paying student or capital investment in its estate as a legacy? With the university's continual expansion of capital assets, local communities are displaced, thus marginalising the vernacular values of a people, which make a place distinctive. Student accommodation and other amenities stand vacant during the holidays, displacing affordable starter homes or local services. Addressing such cultural and environmental impoverishment Geddes and Tay's rurbanisation propositions harness the pre-existing conditions as rich seams of investigation. Sites of potential becoming when the academy engages to develop a curriculum from a commons and hospitality.

Ensuring fair student-centred policies

Both parties use the terms' justice', 'fairness' and 'equality' to refer to the student. The arbitration process has also called into question: who is the student? Is the student a collector of experiences, captured in grades, or most intangible to institutional measures of the University experience? Is there a right and wrong place to be, or is there a different way to know and legitimise knowing?

> Feeling of confusion
> Impression of the space, [sketch of circle with web].
> Learning/ Knowledge
> Tracing your path through the bits.

Appendix _OS 2 Summer school forum Pt1.

In this case it seems the university is only accountable to the "Student" as a totem of ideological exceptionalism, whose distinction protects[56] the *objective* system of accrediting the individual; whose scholarship award is

56 Cf 4.2.4 Open School Introduction
In December 2010 we received a formal letter from the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation telling us that a new law had passed in the parliament that outlawed the existence of the Copenhagen Free University together with all other self-organised and free universities. The letter stated that they were fully aware of the fact that we do not exist anymore, but just to make sure they wished to notify us that "In case the Copenhagen Free University should resume its educational activities it would be included under the prohibition in the university law. The same year the university law in Denmark was changed, and the term 'university' could only be used by institutions authorised by the state. We were told that this was to protect 'the students from being disappointed'. (the Free U Resistance Committee, 2011).

deemed a marker of success. Rancourt's indisciplinarian assumption was that each had in them the potential to become exceptional. Precisely because they are not born equal, his method challenged the University's insistence that the validity of their progress is standardised and processed as grades.

> [73] ... Your inappropriate and unacceptable approach to grading these courses would negatively impact the reputation of the Department of Physics, the Faculty of Science, and the University as a whole. It is also unfair to students who are entitled to expect that they will be graded on the basis of their academic performance rather than mere attendance.

Extract from Confidential letter from Dean Lalonde to Rancourt March 25, 2008.

> [77] Convinced of the value of his pedagogical approach to teaching Physics he decided to apply it in his classes although he knew the University administration was against it and that in their opinion, it constituted a violation of the collective agreement and a form of academic fraud.

(Foisy, 2014)

Complaints from a few high-achieving scholarship students and a few of Rancourt's colleagues triggered grounds for his dismissal. Within the context of the Anti-Cuts rhetoric, the defence of the University's meritocratic accreditation system as *protective* of the student assumed a faux enlightenment logic. Where are the ethical protections for the lived reality for most students facing debt slavery in pursuit of these qualifications?

> Academic staff members receive compensation from the institution itself, freeing them from dependence on private enterprise and other patrons.

(Foisy, 2014:27, [89])

The University of Calgary case cited by Foisy does not account for the current state of Universities becoming increasingly dependent on private enterprise for funding. Rancourt saw cultivating a culture of autonomy for balanced critical and independent discerning graduates to be in the University's best interests. The protestors would apply the same terms "inappropriate," "unacceptable," "unfair", and "fraud" to their futures held

hostage. Rancourt's stand gave these invisible processes public exposure.

Decentralising media

As a postscript to this dramatic high-profile case,[57] social media was becoming a tool for citizen journalism. It is worth noting that the active citizenry of his student defenders continued long after his dismissal. Through protests, citizen media covered the arbitrations and fundraising, all ensuring the case was not silenced or marginalised. The ungovernable Rancourt's site alternativevoice.ca was a less formal platform public portal for course information and once out in the worldwide commons the University had no control over some of the more controversial discussions. These anarchic tools scrutinised and demanded accountability that University structures were not yet adept at managing. The pressure of the student supporters and their media presence, making a documentary, gathering evidence, putting pressure and a keen spotlight on the case protected Rancourt to an extent. When filming during the Foisy arbitration was denied without justification – even such setbacks of a censor spoke volumes. The urgency of an activist and these platforms may have also worked against Rancourt. Both arbitrators noted that Rancourt's tone and manner were abrasive and combatant. His outspoken remarks on radio and on his blog gave the administrators cause for complaint for his extreme claims.

Illich describes how dealing with disruptive social behaviour legally as outsourcing conflict resolution as a process to remote professionals rather than engaging directly with the community. Who is the community, and how does engagement with this fragmented multitude hold the key to indisciplinary success?

[57] Disclaimer: The inclusion of Rancourt's case focuses on the constructivist indisiciplinary efforts of Rancourt's teaching method which was presented at EUREDUCON which made an impact on the groups present. Any controversies of the defamation suit Rancourt incurred after or the allegations which have developed since are not part of the inquiry.

The legal arguments for the defendants were logical and objective; precepts protect the enclosure's rights and are predominantly concerned with the defence of property over persons. With my experience in formal and informal education, it was possible to make justifications for both sides while reading these documents. This inner conflict was symptomatic of coming to terms with self-institutionalisation and the cognitive dissonance of knowing that having classroom authority meant being complicit with structures which reinforced symbolic violence. The objectives encourage the pursuit of enduring criticality over short-term careerism by situating a curriculum within a sustainable commons. These concepts of "community", "commons", and micropolitics are valued and need closer examination.

5.2 Curriculum from a commons

5.2.1 Epistemological challenges posed by the Indisciplinarian

The following are reflections on safe spaces for commoning, particularly two approaches to community spaces. The Govan community centre and the Tollcross community centre operated in partnership with local governance, and with that came expectations and a level of security for committed care workers. The spaces organised by the self-organised alternatives were self-supported, nomadic, amorphous constituents. The rules for each depended on their attitudes toward institutions. The more the community relies on the infrastructure of physical resources, the more autonomy is compromised. The examples shown at this early stage were alternative spaces of process-based experiments of deschooling. They perceived space as borrowed and adapted for their agenda, not to be dependent on it as something to be maintained. The logic of the ephemeral alternatives was incompatible with the pragmatics of the reformers.

In contrast, the community centres believed communities needed to be served by a licensed vendor who had spent time building relations with the official channels. *thiscollection* worked with both settings in terms of

offering workshops trying to fathom the extent of “cultural democracy”. Autonomous alternatives were open to ‘creative acts’ as the lifeblood of a responsive self-organised community, such as fundraising through celebration. Community centres’ creativity seemed administered as a contained outcome, product or spectacle which justified their value in quarterly reports. These observations of activities are rooted in the deeper question of the sustainability of communities. Whether spontaneous or programmatic their function in the context of a geography delineated by economic social circumstance rather than connection to a place by birth or necessity is worth investigating?

In this section, various activities across the groups considered closely calculate this cost of autonomy. It offers an analysis of the mindset required to dispel the amnesia and reconnect with one’s capacity to self-educate. Examples of groups open to embedded knowledge of a place and accessed by a predisposition of hospitality, curiosity and service support these claims. Fragmented communities governed by abstract, remote institutional entities suffer strained quality of life.

> There remains the anarchism which acts by means of persuasion, by the creation of small groups and networks, denouncing falsehood and oppression, aiming at a true overturning of authorities of all kinds as **people at the bottom speak and organise themselves.**
>
> (Ellul, 1964)

How can mutual improvement societies producing practices that enact non-hierarchical modalities serve as a model of assembly? What are the implications of comparing top-down constructs of knowledge and the epistemological patterns associated with the autonomy of grassroots self-governance? Artificially minimising the unpredictability of knowing, by prizing standardisation, disables a resilient culture of learning which an indisciplinary stance seeks to redress.

> If art succeeds in producing something new, something radical, how are we to know? Knowledge being as economically conditioned as anything else, must we proceed without

> knowing? And if so, must we generate methods that boost our confidence in explorations of the unknown?
>
> Appendix _OS 7 EGL Preparation correspondence.

The groups observed had a diverse diet of opportunities for education presented in horizontal modes of sharing founded on the *open proposition* that made room for members to negotiate authentic rotational hierarchy among themselves (Torbert, 1991; Randall & Southgate, 1980).

5.2.2 Ode to Autonomy: Open collective learning processes

If there are events/situations/ideas/ you would like to explore/investigate/discuss make a proposal! run a class!

EVENTS AND PROJECTS IN THE ETHER:
express your interest or disgust. organise and make it happen

-Imagining spaces in/around West Princes/Woodlands for the Instal post-festival
-collective embodiment remembering session

-listening sessions
-screaming and vocal sessions
-collective lending library

-?????????????????? ...

Appendix _OS 8 EGL Timeline.

The art crit as a forum has an indisciplinary premise that derives learning from individuals sharing working process reflections in the security of an assembly rather than in the isolated scrutiny of assessment.

> There is no curriculum.
> If that's what you are looking for.
> Unless it is the one you chose.

Self-selecting one's curriculum was the premise of many of the self-organised groups, the autonomy and interest-driven assembling of knowledge for themselves meant the spotlight was now on the marginal and obscured. Another reading group hosted during the occupation seeks to crack open and make 'fragile' the reading experience:

> Autonomy is a concept much discussed but perhaps less well understood. This may well be due to the relative neglect of autonomist thought in the UK compared to other European countries such as Italy, France and Greece. This reading group aims to make inroads into that neglect by exploring in detail four classic texts from the movement of Italian Autonomist Marxism; a movement widely considered as the most advanced expression of autonomist thought in the 20th century.

Appendix _OS 9 Strategies for Free Education.

In this instance, the reading group run in Free Hetherington by Strickland distribution ran for a month on Tuesdays. The curriculum handled alternative neglected concepts as canon with “classic texts” in their own right. The need for the group was to recover a narrative to counter a climate of austerity which sought to sanitise alternative suppressed histories of thought. The fact of knowing how to read is nothing; as Althusser’s paradox puts forth, the whole point is knowing what and how to read for oneself.

These self-organised groups observed emphasised leaderlessness, anonymity and evading authoritative didactic insistence in their deeds and propositions. The blurb describes how a particular reading group will operate over the *four weekly two-hour sessions*.

> The group is not afraid *to be caught learning*: our aim is to encourage an open collective learning process for working through some of the fundamental texts of autonomism and autonomia. The group aims to develop deeper critical engagement with some of what we regard as the most important revolutionary writing of the last century. To make the discussion more participatory, reading the texts before each session is encouraged, but this is not mandatory. The group is open to all.
>
> Appendix _OS 9 Strategies for Free Education.

The phrase “caught learning”, operated with no fixed objective or outcome, what would be gleaned from “an open collective process” of understanding an obscure movement would be incidental but of value to those who took part. As a minor satirical note, it also suggested that independent group study employing non-canonical texts seemed criminal or an act to be suppressed. Pre-requisite reading was “not mandatory” for participation, and clarifications would serve as part of the process, challenging those who have an advantage. As Illich’s CIDOC experience demonstrated the risk of Gresham’s law in open group discussions where the level of engagement could become spurious or tangential. Thus, the exhaustion of coping with choice from a commons perhaps is a habit that needed to be cultivated instead of an ungovernable situation to avoid.

> That in making representations of _OS, we are more making actions and narratives of our own experience with the practices and relations that make it up. I tend to find that i often end up ideallising [in sic] the work in some way.
>
> Appendix_OS 9 Strategies for Free Education.

In such rehearsals of commoning, _OS workshops[58] would risk feeling, silence, and in one instance, blindness as means to explore and celebrate what one knows in order to trust one's terms. Their playful resistance to what they perceived as a tyranny of specialist expertise or quantification was as follows: inventing fake artists for study, adopting silent quaker-like meetings to explore texts by touch, not sight, challenging the museum's cardinal rule of the enclosure where one must not be touch the art object. What alternative means of embodied communication is neglected in an academic-centric education system?

5.2.3 Resisting Amnesia: Living languages and histories.

The Writers' group meetings held in a public library had ample opportunities to meet new visitors to the city. Their keen interests in writing introduced the welcoming group to new forms of writing, perspectives and skills to benefit the group's projects. A local scriptwriter[59] workshopped a draft script as the group explored writing that shows, not tells. An MBA student from Kerala[60], who had written two novels, joined the group for a few months.

Later in the year, another visitor shared part of the story of a young girl brought to cold grey England who missed her ayah and the colours and warmth of India. Yet another, who was plotting a life coaching book, inspired the group's ten-minute warm up exercise to brainstorm a list of 10 things to include in a self-help book. Encounters with outsiders opening

58 Appendix _OS 17 Workshop Notices.
59Appendix HHWG 1 Welcoming Strangers Pt 3: 3/11/09. Hi writers, A. Hawes will be joining us next session with a few scripts perfect for showing vs telling.
60Appendix HHWG 1 Welcoming Strangers Pt 3:.9/11. A new person may join us Sashi from Kerala, India, he has written two novels and is working on his MBA.

oneself up to the capacity of knowing the other became an opportunity to broker a common.

> ...the freedom to choose the fellow humans with whom we wish to associate beyond artificial constraints, such as the creation of a particular community – in other words, my neighbour is **who I choose, not who I must choose**.
>
> (Bruno-Jofre & Zaldıvar, 2012)

The empowerment from constructing and sharing personal narratives and voices saw *thiscollection* workshops take an exciting turn. In a particular workshop, a group of Spanish, Italian and Taiwanese participants crossed language barriers to make adaptations—participants from various cultures translated and reinterpreted a local poem and Scottish scenes into their native tongue. In Florian Raith's poem, *The Piteous Pine,*[61] collaborators communicated their interpretation through four languages: Scots, Italian, Chinese and the visual grammar itself. Silvia Sellitto, who led the adaptation, was inspired by the poem evoking the sadness of Scottish cities (and weather). She translated the nouns in the poem into Italian. The nouns "the cold, the wind, hands in the pocket..." struck her most as an Italian experiencing the Scottish climate. Leslie Lu filmed her adaptation as part of a one-day film workshop. The translation from text to image, across speech, and back to text engaged the group's apprehension of having no experience in filmmaking; the work depended on an indisciplinary openness to which filmmaking as a task lends itself.

The alien nature of film to these newcomers was at once daunting and freeing. **Feel film** was a workshop initiated by a young self-taught filmmaker who began her education in Edinburgh and was visiting after completing film school in Sydney. Participants explored the film's visual grammar by closely analysing Tarkovsky's films she shared. The following is an attempt by a visitor unfamiliar with the language, both film and spoken or read. A workshop participant, Sara, was a Spanish journalist living in Edinburgh studying ESL. She wrote and filmed the work in Spanish but later translated the voice-over to English as best she could.

61 Appendix TC 1 Film Adaptations 1: The Piteous Pine.

Her choice to work in her mother tongue and then negotiate speaking in English after demonstrated the self- motivation and confidence which affect engages in language learning:

> One day you arrive to a new city, like Edinburgh, with all your illusion and your desire of living new experiences, of doing new things... You know there are a thousand of things to do there, a lot of people to meet... But when you put your feet on there, you realise that there is like an invisible wall between you and the world, because you are totally unable to express nothing about what you think, nothing of what removes you inside... And, in this moment, it doesn't matter for you if an image costs more than one thousand words, because what you want are those thousand words, and you don't have them... So you resign yourself to keeping silent or, maybe, at best, to using one of these fifty or sixty words that you do have, and to express only a thousandth part of what you would like to say, becoming a kind of parody of yourself, which makes you feel small, more insecure than never, frustrated, impotent... And you feel that you will never be capable of saying everything that you would like to say... Nevermore.

Appendix TC 1 Film Adaptation 2: Scarlet.

Moving, invigorating and sadly lost in the noise of a public exhibition, it inspired a brief side project presented below as a creative proposal of self-education sans a formal curriculum.

FIT

Four participants from the Feeling Film workshop: Maddi, Sara, Lucie, and Lesley, soon drew three other participants with more technical film experience interested in collaborating. Two new members were from the Community Centre's English as a Second Language programme, interested in formal classroom instruction. From the Feel **Film** workshop, an informal ESL creative writing group intended to develop more of the *thiscollection* poems inspired by Sara Bella's example. They called the initiative FIT, which stands for Found in Translation. They met in a café for over a month. The following is a record of their introductions made in the first meeting. Starting with an open proposition as *thiscollection* did, an indisciplinarian native to a homemade vernacular culture stands outside the dominant order. Such a position benefits from the fresh perspectives

and endeavours which, when communities engage, have meaningful critique and confidence.

John Fox, the founder of Welfare State International, an experienced collective of creatives who work on large-scale long-term community art projects, is also the author of the “Engineers of imagination”. In his essay, “Vernacular Project”, Fox cites Canadian filmmaker Clarke Mackey. Mackey reflects on the community engagements that his 1973 film made with Cree children. In his opinion, it was the most interesting work formally, even though they had no exposure to television - “made by those … who had the least stake in mainstream culture.”

He concludes that cultural production is a natural paradigm for children to experience and ‘make’ their world reality through artistic play.

> The psychological consequences of robbing them of this possibility are considerable – both in terms of their emotional and intellectual development. It occurred to me that depriving adults of this opportunity of creative world-making must also have profound psychological consequences for our psyches and the social order. But this is precisely what our commodity-oriented culture has done.”
>
> (Fox, 1991)

Generally, these DIY filmmaking workshops and _OS offered participants a safe place to play, experiment and refresh. Consider minutes from their meetings consisting of participant profiles and proposals that were self-initiated as models to emulate.

Participant Profiles

Sara loves the sight of Nicolson street, which signals the beginning of the city, the gateway from Waverley, which announces that she has arrived.

Maddi loves the windows, which are larger than those in Barcelona, where the life behind each frame seems to be a theatre scene.

Nadja enjoyed the atmosphere of graveyards in this Auld Reekie.

Salvatore found the monuments on Carlton Hill a souvenir of precious solitude.

Thomas H. told us about his project to adapt Orpheus into a short film.

Vernacular connections to place

FIT's group interest in scouting the locations in the poems led to a list of open propositions. They decided that to deepen their understanding of the English language, perhaps inhabiting these obscure locations in their native language experience before translating into English would, as Maddi said, "Mak(e) it less foreign".

Recall in Chapter 2.3 Gaelic teachers' CfE concerns of not having adequate age-appropriate resources described in the Literature Review. This illustration hopes to demonstrate that Mitra's mantra is real; an indisciplinarian's wealth of commons is within reach and readily accessed with hospitality. The aim of learning Gaelic would be to use it in a community, not just pin it to pages in a book.

Proposal

Secret places in Edinburgh

> What moved them when visiting these places inspired by the poems?
> Translating these impressions written in their Native language into English.
> Their responses would then be compared to the ***thiscollection*** poem based on that postcode.

- Duddingston behind Arthur's Seat, Sun 20th 3rd March pm
- Ardmillian "The Diggers" Pub, Tuesday 22nd March 1 pm
- Abandoned Bus Shelter Thurs 31st March 1 pm; 4 pm join locals in the area who are making a radio show about found spaces.

The language was experienced rather than explicated, exposed to the experience of a new environment, through a visual language levelled the hierarchies of teacher and student. Strangers armed with very little prior knowledge were driven to communicate an experience of their new

environs. The task and company were enough impetus to practice living a language unbound from a textbook.

Similar gatherings with _OS took place in found spaces, anywhere from under the stairs at Trongate 103[62] to Reshuffle, i.e. conversations in the Govan community centre. A reflective biodiversity/nature walk field trip to a small nature reserve, Ballagan Glen in the Campsie Hills, led by two environmental activists, one local and one visiting. The excursion was a walk framed introductions to types of trees encountered and a reflection of the current state of climate exploitation. The rest of the time was spent in solitude contemplating one's relationship with Nature among ancient ash woodland and dramatic geological exposures carved by the Ballagan Burn's course, which cascades down a series of waterfalls, including the spout of Ballagan.

A sample of the bio-diversity facilitator's open propositions:

> Are we disconnected with the natural world? Does this break-down explain any of our internal or external problems as humans? How can we benefit from nature? How do we fit in? Why do we surround ourselves with concrete? Is is possible to create a sane and sustainable society when we are so removed from the cycles and processes of the planet?
>
> Appendix _OS 10 Field Trip to Campsie Hills.

Like the FIT excursions, the emotive experience of space, relating to surroundings and thinking about the wider cycles of the world can, to those institutionalised, seem overwhelming.

> City living is for many people, stressful, lonely, claustrophobic and isolated. These feelings and emotions impact our everyday actions and how we relate to our surroundings and the world as a whole.
>
> Appendix _OS 10 Field Trip to Campsie Hills.

The open schoolers met opposite Woodlands Road's garage to board a minibus. This conscious getting away to learn, led by the visitor, was an invitation to return and listen to something strange and new even though it

[62] *From outside of the art school the crit can sound like a mysterious and ugly beast*, Appendix _OS 16 Open Crit invite to demystifying institutions:

has always been there. There was also a commitment to leave the urban for the rural to spend some time in Ballagan Glen.

The structure of these events: the invitation by a visitor, making a new strangeness familiar and reconnecting with landscapes of various scales with affect and reframing language as a cultural experience rather than a technical grammatical exercise. The curator of the Forest Film festival, which hosted Sinema, was also a migrant to the city, contributing to a vibrant underground hive of activity. In FIT, Spanish, Italian and Polish translations, through the film as a medium and a desire to communicate their experience of a scene was the main adaptation. Critic Marina Warner describes the effect of such experimental work is to reel us into their toils to help us **relax into strangeness**. In the Campsie hills, like a return to innocence, reconnecting with Nature mute and a strange sublime through learning the names of trees and leaves and finding our own spaces in the folds and nooks of the hills. Relatively spontaneous this unconscious nomadic makeshift “curriculum” required an openness to the unknown and letting the facilitator and the participants (including the landscape) construct meaningful experiences without overdetermined design.

Memoirs: Living history

Found *curriculum* also came from the memoirs of the writers’ group. Memories recalled generated personal folk histories and provided therapeutic benefits for those who told them and those who cared to listen. In an exercise to reminisce of the first times we heard of WW2 evacuations, rowing boat romances, unpleasant peas, wrong lines, Primary school prizes, Baltic ruins… and hirsute bookies. Most workshopped pieces were memoirs, citing critical selections here.

Family histories were not just domestic but spanned chronicling life abroad from experiences in Banff, Crossing Canada, Belarus, Turkey, Ukraine, and Jerusalem for humanitarian projects as missionaries. One

memorable sharing was S.B's memory of her late husband and their travel to the Holy Land:

> S.B shared a whirlwind adventure of embarking on the Orient Express to the land of storks and sunflowers, Istanbul. The lovely touch about learning "I love you" in every language in every country until reaching her destination was a particular gold nugget. Pronouns and target audience confusions were noted, but hopefully, more of "J and S.B" will be back with adventures in the Holy Land!
>
> Appendix HHWG 1 Memoirs Pt 2: 29/3/10 .

Apart from being colourful stories, these shared personal experiences broadened one's horizons, encouraging a healthy, curious imagination beyond one's postcode. The benefit of the group sharing was that the story continued after its telling; clarifications, pressing for detail or simply having access to the author made the moment special. The potential of presenting these testimonies of local histories to youth in promoting intergeneration dialogue through histories and memoirs written or told by trusted elders is immense.

These memoirs were spontaneous open propositions topics from local personal archives asking questions about identity, customs, governance, and colloquial social portraits of the city's domestic past.[63] During these two years, an impressive contribution of 27 memoirs from S.B and DM, CM and LD shared vignettes of Glasgow life in the 50s and 60s. The local was balanced with global experiences, in this instance from S.B, wife of a missionary pastor, but when her travels ended, the world came to her when she housed asylum seekers.[64] The opportunity for youth to follow up on questions of human rights from these testimonies, debates, ethics, and research complementing deeper self-knowledge of their past, which personalised cannot be mass produced as a textbook but will be unique but not limited to each town's inhabitants. Family artefacts were archives,

63 Diverse scenes of domesticity: Moving house 1962, Fashion mementos such as a 1950s Bed jacket. Weddings: 70s wedding, bridesmaid's trauma. Mean Glasgow Streets. First responders to Britain's plight of August 1940.1968 socials: going to and from a dance. Panto memories 1952. A Boy's Christmas in '59-60s

64 S.B's Asylum seeker portraits: Mostly male: Iraqi lodger, Zimbabwean, Somalian. Apart from a female Zimbabwean, Chinese asylum seeker.

and responses to old photographs reflected inter-generational clues to one's identity. In this instance, indisciplinarity is the confident self-awareness built up by the individuals for themselves instead of being measured via a standard deviation. A visit from a family historian enthusiast was particularly poignant given the groups' interests in compiling their memoirs.

> A warm reception to E., a newcomer, who is interested in developing family histories to hand down to her family. Interesting discussions on how not to get too lost in too much social history and perhaps to simply document the past and let the everyday curiosities speak for themselves.
>
> Appendix HHWG 1 Memoirs Pt 2: 29/3/10 .

Rancière's philosophy behind "The Nights of Labour" echoed in a memoir enthusiast's generous observation. By letting the hi-s-tory of the marginalised speak for themselves, one deconstructs the assumptions of the lives as told by specialists of social history and humanises them through remembered idiosyncrasies. These unassuming encounters demonstrate the group's ability to make meaning and generate material for study and reflection without an overdetermined curriculum.

5.3 Rehearsing Assembly

5.3.1 Sounding together-going fragile[65]

The wealth and capacity within the HHWG sharings make a case for those outwith the institution able to support the exhausted, overburdened teachers in the positive formation of young people. Through conversations with a broad base of strangers, JvH cultivates a culture of hospitality in her various projects. She engaged locals in their everyday circumstances to understand better those who had invited her. These became material for her explorations and means of developing meaningful engagements alongside them. These self-organised groups similarly illustrate the mutual benefits of welcoming the outsider who energises the local and the collective imagination with less effort than one expects.

65 Appendix _OS 17 Workshop Notices Pt 1.

> "whatever happens will emerge from each moment/day/hour/conversation ... everyone is invited/welcome to propose, to partake, to facilitate, to listen, and everyone is collectively responsible for the happening (or not) of each moment, present and future. And everyone is invited/welcome to stay.
>
> Appendix _OS 11 EGL Rejectable Timetable.

Most negative aspects of schooling, such as Corporal punishment, dominate the HHWG memoirs. When asked if members would be willing to go to schools to share these memoirs with youth, they all firmly declined. S.B said, "I've given up my time volunteering with refugees and Iona[66], [schools] that is someone else's job." D.M, who joined the group in mid-2010, "As a retired schoolteacher, I have done my time and don't want to go back." Sadly, these responses reinforce the artificial barrier between community and school, which modern life seems to do a disservice by widening the generation gap. Mitra's experiment "Granny cloud" offers an alternative proposition. Retired teachers are video conferenced into classrooms where prompts of encouragement and presence are enough to ignite the enthusiasm for learning. These instances demonstrate the simplicity and elegance of gathering resources from the community to support a learner's confidence whilst diminishing the social isolation that senior demographic are prone to experiencing.

> CDL: To me, music that moves me and compels me to continue to live with the risk of error and humiliation and discovery is the notion of collective listening, where people collectively listen to each other. My fear here, it may be unfounded cos I am not sure who knows who cos I am out of town. I'm just some guy who came a long way. My fear is that here a situation is quickly being created where not only is everyone not being heard from, not that everyone should have to speak but tha**t not everyone is being listened to.**
>
> Appendix _OS 12 EGL Transcript: The collective struggle.

Experiments of agelessness proposed by Tay Kheng Soon, Sugata Mitra, and multi-age classroom models are antidotes to the rise of mental

66 An ecumenical community based on the Isle of Iona.

health issues in youth. Anti-social media, addictive gaming cultures, limited family time, commensality and disengaging school experiences induce their isolation. The research undertaken with diverse marginalised groups in the community could not overstate the benefits. Pensioners, unemployed, university students and those in mainstream education were potential mentors, experts and elders whose accumulated life experience exceeded a lone teacher's.

Criticism of constructivist programmes should take into account how their benefits are impoverished when implemented within age-defined instructional structures that have come to be associated with formal education systems.

> In Spanish, the word conmover, commocion, is instructive and strong in its denotation. Conmocion means not only to dance with the other the common tune (which does not necessarily define a common conscience]. It also denotes moving together with the heart and stomach, not only with the brain, with rationality. The real plurality of the world is manifest in a pluralist attitude, fully respecting both the radical otherness of the other and their visions and initiatives. Co-motion may thus operate as a vaccine against the corruption of love.
>
> (Esteva et al., 2004:100)

The participants proposed the welcoming, sharing and co-presence in the following ways: dance, food and co-operative construction markedly neganthrophic efforts.

> P14: I think it is a relationship between risk and trust, ... we need to put in place the process for us to trust each other. I was thinking of a ceilidh, the function of the dance is you get to meet everybody. You build a relationship with everyone in the room, and that then creates a collective spirit.
>
> Appendix _OS 12 EGL Transcript: The collective struggle.

Bernard Harcourt poses the challenge: can critical theory change the world? He describes the impotence of remote overdetermined theorising on intellectual emancipation can be resolved by the social praxis in the simple act of a gathering.

5.3.2 Testimony as mode of assembling

> "What is to be done?" we must now turn back onto ourselves and ask, and answer, "What more am I to do?"
>
> (Harcourt, 2020)

From the murmurings in an under-utilised hall in Govan to the UK-wide Anti-cuts movement and internationally via the European Bologna Protest movement, sharing personal eyewitness testimonies emboldened listeners the urge to take action. These alliances at home and abroad to "reclaim our brains" [67] were in unison:

> Witness the EU-wide 'Bologna Process' whereby education is standardised in order to make Europe more competitive as a trading block, and universities are turned into "diploma factories". Is there a truly new moment possible whereby the mobility of industry and of labour is matched by the mobility of protest and of analysis? Is this - the European and North American protests - simply a 'Western' picture, or is there an opportunity for international solidarity?
>
> (The Strickland Distribution et al., 2011)[68]

EUREDUCON explored a universal struggle for rights to education, but diverse constituents in attendance had very different expectations of how these rights would materialise. Gathering these under-reported grassroots testimonies from global struggles was an informal peer-led political education on collectivising.

Representatives from Indonesia, Tibet and Taiwan had markedly different agendas from their European counterparts' definitions of educational activism. Indonesian activists worked out of community "Wild schools" and demanded more political freedom to criticise government policies and push for equal access to higher education. Tibetan activists were fighting for brick-and-mortar libraries and university expansion.

A lone Taiwanese activist demanded justice to reduce international student university fees in the UK. His protest was because the fees and accompanying expectations did not match the quality of education

67 Slogan from Bologna Protest banners
[68] Appendix _OS 5A Right to the City.

regarding contact time with professors and lack of meaningful cultural exchange. Similarly, European resistance was resisting the mounting debts facing graduates from the introduction of tuition fees. The quality of Higher education for them was diluted by corporatist deskilling of qualifications under the guise of positivist rationality favoured careerism. Tent universities and occupied student-run working groups were borne of these frustrations.

Later that evening, without PowerPoint slides, just note paper and a weary exasperation, an Indonesian activist, aliased Mo, described the modernisation of his country installed by brute force. Beginning in 1965's genocide of secular populist opposition and branding ethnic and minority persons as communist insurgents. Key student demonstrations against corruption, inflation and access to Higher education, were met with full military force. 1978 revolts saw kidnapping and 1998's demonstrations, 4 deaths and 2 casualties. Wild schools, spontaneous assemblies, based on oral vernacular traditions, or HE scholarship for sustained critical independent thought were destabilised and supressed - state education sanitised culture and the social memory of resistance. "Schools", a public good, became sites of propaganda perverting the populace's desire for education as means out of oppressive poverty. In 2008, he described the thankless cycle of resistance in efforts to conscientise slum dwellers in Jakarta. After the immediate threat of slum demolition eased, rallies of residents' support of the long-term cause dwindled. There was little will from within to change; thus, root causes of poverty remained unchallenged: penny prostitution, and exploitative conditions for taxi drivers, remained their limited employment opportunities. Mo echoed Stiegler's description that such skirmishes against the state would be opportunistic at best without challenging macro politics, "they dissipate, exhaust and and endangered activist lives. Mo reads a poem written by an Indonesian activist who had gone missing.

> they push me to know 1+1
> they push me to know who is my president
> they push me to know what colour is the flag
> they push me to know who is my minister
> I don't know why I must know

Appendix EEC 1 notes.

In gathering, the Indonesian activists end their sharing with their vision for emancipatory education:

> Education is accessible for all, pupils of all stages are united by general assembly to the cause to defend literacy and resources to develop independent thought free from fake representative councils on the side with agendas contrary to independent scholarship, e.g., overt state or corporate censorship. **Globally connected interdisciplinary projects based on genuine needs will lead to authentic learning purpose, gainful employment within a functioning network of commons.** We own our education and institutions and develop attitudes of *curiosity and imagination* to see it as something to be kept alive and not a commodity disconnected or bound to a designated space. We have agency and are conscientised, on guard to conflicts of interest impacting our rights to education within prevailing power structures, thereby gaining autonomy; freedom from potential instrumentalisation. [in sic]

Appendix EEC 1 notes.

Participants from Nepal and Taiwan had very different revolutions in mind: they demanded equity, free education, libraries, access to buildings, and university places for females. The fight for the University's principles was the matter in the Anti-Bologna protests. The alternative self-education anti-university formats challenged knowledge as bound to a site, personality or price tag. Por YL, a student activist, summarised the conference best. These conditions make a strong case for increased reliance on technology or virtualisation for productivity. "Resisting privatisation is not an end in itself: educational exploitation of privatisation is the start of challenging the expansion of extractive enclosure and working towards a network of commoning."[69]

69Researcher notes from Por YL's seminar presentation.

5.3.3 The Communal meal

In 2021 Scander, Yngve & Wiklund surveyed and assessed Commensality in European research over the last five years. Their study of eating together encompassed a diversity of disciplines. The most common themes focused on family, technology's impact on the act and how "overall economic, time and social pressures may inhibit pleasurable family dining". Marovell's 2018 research on how social isolation impacts eating habits also articulates the "provisional bridging mechanism between people, communities, projects and services", which is hard to measure quantitatively. In particular, the groups studied how commensality enriches "the capacity to embrace social differences and to facilitate circulation of ideas and practices." Vesnaver's 2015 study of widows' who simplify their eating habits after their loss promotes a case for commensality therapy. Given the limiting of social gatherings and change in food consumption habits, such impact has scope for further research. During lockdown, the rise of takeaway consumption offered insight into the social act of gathering removed from the cooking process. Consider the food made for deliveries by a lone chef in a box kitchen unit, packing food into boxes and transporting in yet another insulated box to be consumed by a person alone in a box apartment. The process becomes utilitarian and extractive rather than an occasion of pleasure and bonding.

thiscollection's chapter in Tollcross community centre, hosted an interactive theatre collaboration entitled "Property and Theft". Set in a deserted supermarket with characters such as an unqualified debt counsellor, tragic street vendor, overly suspicious security guard and robot fortune teller. The play was a satirical performance, seeking to engage the audience's perspectives of life, economics and poetry in a decaying capitalist society. During a lengthy post-performance discussion, the participants reflected on a particular intervention which challenged the notion of value by having to barter for services or trade at the paltry market store filled with random bric-a-brac. Where cash no longer had

currency, satirical jest skills were traded, such as “teaching welsh badly for a week” or “a masterclass in producing excel spreadsheets”.

> P3: It is like a birthplace. I’m probably coming from my job right now because I’ve spent the last week telling people to be careful how they regulate products and stuff, (sighs) seeing everything so cut back, I was thinking like, wow, **everything is so heavily regulated** these days. You got to go through s**o many barriers before you even get this thing,** then when you get it, all you get is **a piece of paper saying that you have it. You don’t even get to see this thing; it is all finance stuff**. So coming here and actually **seeing the straight physical thing, there here you go, done. The trade of skills was refreshing just nice to see** it again.
>
> Appendix TC 2 Property & theft workshop transcript.

Set in the virtualisation of economies, these forms of *amore de soi*, self-care acts, rank food as first on the agenda of these alternative self-organised groups. Cooking or communal eating arrangement were valued signs of solidarity and trust building. In a memorable late autumn _Open School event, members were each invited to bring a vegetable to contribute to the group broth which stewed as long as the meeting ran. In the Ruhr University occupation, until the assembly or plenum was fully attended and taken seriously, the kitchen stayed on strike. Activists described it jovially as **“potato salad”** solidarity. Even dishwashing was an opportunity to practice the habit of mutual responsibility; each took care of their utensils rather than leaving all their dishes to a few volunteers. Similarly, in INSTAL, when the sizeable leaderless group meeting hit an impasse, a proposition was to storm the kitchen to destabilise their relationship with the space and its’ oppressive expectations

> P8: I feel like there is a pressure to do something and not quite sure what, feels we need to get out of our comfort zone and stuff but on the other hand feels a bit … I don’t know, pointless, we are doing things cos we are supposed to do them, you’re not sure why you are supposed to do them feels ... disempowering.
>
> P 3: So maybe we should just strike?

P 4: Thing about the strike is that suggesting that there is nothing to do, we can't do anything, but we have someone suggesting to do something ... we can't go anywhere.

P4: (exasperated) But why are we here to not doing anything? (in sic)

P5: (Spanish accent) Maybe we should move together, we are thinking too much, we need to take possess of the kitchen. I am serious about this.

P8: I didn't hear sorry.

P5: I said we are thinking too much, from my point of view, and we should cook for each other.

Gentle laughter

P5: (Earnestly) It's true.

P3: But then are we not... we would have to invade the kitchen, that in a way will be a kind of direct action thing.

P6: I'm up for that.

P3: and the bar...

Appendix_OS 12 EGL Transcript: The collective struggle.

Close to recovering their hybrid vernacular sensibilities, these activities are spontaneous, not too heavily dependent on technology or extraneous tools, but by face-to-face communication on a basic level of sharing food. Although the kitchen in Tramway wasn't stormed, holding the post INSTAL workshops in the _Open School flat had decided to move discussions to a more intimate setting among a chosen *family*.

~1000 -	'Fragments' / Normal Life Unstructured time/space, along with potential focused tasks, investigations, events, wanders. Those of us who are able to experiment and work during the day have this time free to wander the city, discuss, perform, to become fragmented, less fragmented.
1700-	Cooking, we come together for, to prepare and talk and help
1800-	Eating, we come together for, to give and receive and eat and talk
1900-	Must
2000-	*Discussion*
2100-	**be**
2200-	Separate
2300-	**from**
2400	*Performance?*

Table 7 _OS 'post-INSTAL' Day Planner Provisional Schedule (see Appendix _OS 11).

This indeterminate timetable, ideally to be filled by attendees, was an invitation to process reconciliations and reflect on attempted reinventions.

One of the teachers in the Autodidact archives recounted teaching herself to cook curry from a recipe handed down through the women in her family. it required observation, experimentation and perseverance. The motivation to endeavour was through the making and eating these dishes to be part of memories of home, family life and to own her heritage.

Late Autumn, one of the HHWG writers was away on a trip to the Far East, this prompted a meeting which coincided with his homecoming date. The proposition was called "Travelling Light". It was to be a micro-exhibition of personal or imaginary accounts of travels and a potluck of cuisines from various cultures. The intimacy of meeting in someone's home was agreed as there wasn't anywhere public which would be appropriate. This led to a discussion about spaces one member remarked that alternatives to chain cafes where we could possibly meet were increasingly difficult to find.

Members were invited to bring small samples of food from real or imagined places; the spread featured a flask of Finnish vegetable

soup/casserole, Belgian chocolates, frites, beer and gyoza dumplings. Members volunteered to bring their utensils and bowls to partake in this miniature potluck hosted in a member's home. In the bleak winter it is probably worth mentioning that the meeting was not as well attended as those held in the public library. Still the structure was kept the same, members could bring an object, a postcard, a picture or a curiosity from a real or imagined faraway place to inspire the warm-up exercises which the second half was spent sharing of any travel writing pieces which sought to be workshopped.

On a side note, whilst I was in Ruhr, in nearby Kaiserberg, JvH was facilitating a project entitled "The Resistance of Small Happiness[70]". Efforts to embolden this marginalised community to keep their identities and protest alive as the city's highways expanded around them; the 'former' church was transformed into a community centre. They built a large horseshoe-shaped table next to the church. The table is a Biergarten, a 'council table' and a performing platform. They raised funds required for building work by selling beer, cakes, marmalade and local fare such as *soks*. Residents organised events such as barbeques and drinks, which would take place from Wednesday until Sunday. JvH captured these gatherings and actions in a written manifesto of small happiness.

> We are the Ruhrgebied. We are people open to the world and principled, acting in solidarity. We are the heartland of Europe par excellence. You have to take us in account while dreaming up a new Metropole.
>
> (Van Heeswijk, 2011)

The gathering around food as practical wisdom in ethics and politics demonstrates the capacity for improvisation and flexibility for groups to co-operate. This realisation is coupled with an appreciation for how interdependent economic and political realities are in preparing the restorative meal.

70Described in the interview with JVH: 12.06.-08.08.2010 Kaiserberg Participants: Inhabitants of Werthacker Visitors: Inhabitants and people visiting the exhibition

It seems fitting to close this *feast* of highlights from self-organised alternative education outfits with a poem from a HHWG writer. Produced during the warm-up exercise prompts, inspired by dis-place *thiscollection,* were made on pieces of paper and drawn at random, C.M kindly gave permission to reproduce her improvised poem. It was based on the topic "What if there was nothing left but us…" drawn from themes discussed light-heartedly. For all the chaos and dismantling of self-institutionalised habits to trust one's agency in the plurality of the multitude: "We are everything, /Always have been, always will be," [71]

71 Appendix HHWG 2 Self-governance transcripts Pt 2 13/05/10. Poem based on randomly drawn prompts generated by members inspired by the Glue factory installation lines 64-5

If there was nothing left but us

The world would surely be a better

place. If I were burgled there would be

few suspects -

among us sits a thief.

But who is us?

Is it this group, in this glue factory,

on the 13th of May 2011

at 2:30 pm?

Or are we including the camera guy?

The voices audible - the world beyond this

Garscube Road.

I had a friend at university who dragged

Garscube Road into every conversation.

I have no idea why.

I know he was an Orangeman and a librarian

I had never seen the traditional

Horse-mounted iconic

King Billy image till I had supper in his flat.

But he insisted we read the ragged trousered

Philanthropists, so he was not all

bad.

Is he one of us?

Who is us? - my family, your family,

I am inclined to include

Pretty much the entire human population

Apart from burglars,

As we are all the same

Our hearts and minds are the same.

Burglars are included -

We are all burglars to a degree

We have thieved and stolen, taken what

was not ours, at a microscopic level

at least,

although no one is

accusing anyone of anything.

Property is theft,

Given that the more you possess

the more of a thief you are.

So there's nobody left to steal from.

All of the people -

many of them, want their pets included in 'us'

"Don't forget the livestock!" shouts some peasant

"Don't forget the fodder!" says his wife,

"We need the bees and the birds and the flowers"

his children call out -

...but there is nothing left but us

"We are everything,

Always have been, always will be,"

As my cousin, the cauliflower, said

Just the other day.

Christine Macrae, HHWG

5.3.4 The time-bound meeting

The writers' group shared the same nomadic fate as most self-organised initiatives. It has recently been welcomed back to Hillhead Library after *moving* to Partick Library in 2012 and has lasted more than a decade since its formation in 2009. During lockdown, the otherwise tech-averse crew had surprisingly moved meetings online. Their time-bound ritual based on some basic precepts developed in the beginning has nurtured a consistent core group who rotate responsibilities and have kept the group running for so long.

The group members negotiated this writers' group meeting format instead of being imposed. The impact of such ownership is worth representing as a viable option for empowering engaged learning and active citizenry.

Hillhead Writer's group meeting structure was developed by trial and error over the initial three meetings.

1st hour

- A scribe/ chronicler volunteers or is elected to recap the meeting and send it to everyone by email.
- Welcome introductions from current group members, names, and writing interests for the benefit of guests (if any)
- Warm-ups
- Proposed 10-minute free response writing to member suggested activity.
- Each member shares if they have attempted the task, and the group gives feedback.

Tea break

2nd hour

- Workshopping
- 2-3 members who have brought material from new or ongoing projects for critique and discussion

Closing

- Suggestions for next meeting's warm-up exercise, if any.
- Guests' feedback on the meeting.
- AOM.

The first half was social, with introductions and updates, followed by a proposed intensive ten-minute divergent free response writing exercise.

This open proposition presented a range of imaginative interpretations, peer-reviewed and appreciated. After the tea break, the group would focus on workshopping works in progress. Those keen to have their work critiqued would say so in the introductions. The session ended with notices and suggestions for the next warm-up exercise. Finally, a group member would chronicle the highlights of the group's meeting in an email sent before the next meeting. The openness and simplicity of this format demonstrate how effective minimal self-selected learning structures can be. The flexibility allowed new participants to contribute as much or as little as they wished or were able. The form gave a platform to the group's creative expression and the individual seeking more in-depth development.

> LD: Do you mean take minutes? When you are talking, I get the drift you are presenting us as a sort of how we evolved as a group where we organised ourselves. That's fair enough if that's what you want to do. We just do what we usually do.
>
> Appendix HHWG 2 Self-governance transcripts Pt 1.

This was LD's response to a request to hold a meeting as part of the two-week installation in the Glue Factory. Distinct from the other groups and worth mentioning is the value of the scribe or chronicler to the community that contributed. The quality of this email had a profound impact on building group cohesion and retaining membership. The minutes (reports/updates) sent out the day of the meeting or at least before the next were reflections of participants being listened to and heard. The scribe's creative expression and joyful reporting of the meeting were most appreciated by those who shared work. The phrase "We heard" is repeated in the minutes describing each 10 min exercise and accumulatively made a positive impact on sustaining group attendance.

> S. what a tour de force. I am breathless with admiration!. ... thanks.
>
> S.B
>
> Appendix HHWG 1 Memoirs Pt 2: 20/4.

This standard of chronicling could be an alternative to standardised assessment reports - a collective evaluation where the teacher is not the authority but a facilitator of a group's progress.

The intimacy of this experience allowed participants to see the direct impact of their contributions or lack thereof on the quality of the group's discussions. This personal stake in the group and connection to the task was a powerful motivator for engagement. Like some newcomers who tended to shy from the pressure of writing a work in ten mins, LD was one such late bloomer. Over time, with exposure to the task, listening to others' creative contributions, and in this supportive atmosphere, LD eventually felt safe to join in and found a distinctive writing voice.

> (T)he face is the location of community and the only possible city.
>
> (Agamben, 1996)

Social distancing and lockdown mental health challenged this aphorism - could familiarity translate online?

> S.B may invite her grandchildren to respond to her work via email or Facebook, carry on the conversation. ... the finished product is well and good, but the internet may encourage the memoir to be written in collaboration rather than in isolation.
>
> Appendix HHWG 1 Memoirs Pt 2: 15/3/10.

Compared to the HHWG's gathering, to what extent were online co-edited documents forms of e-assembly, and how would it compare with a digital native's idea of offline collectivity?

5.3.5 Digital devises[72]: The endless meeting of open propositions

Google docs, a *free* word processing software was gaining popularity in 2010. Google docs and open office facilitated multiple asynchronous contributors to a shared document by utilising cloud technologies. Changes could be date stamped and tracked, theoretically implying contributors could comment at their convenience, suggesting a *deeper,* more committed investigation proffering various perspectives – the software promised so much. This flux supported an openness to crowdsourced process writing where contributions could be negotiated and fine-tuned by other contributors. The _OS INSTAL festival/conference served as _OS's rare time bound occasion to pursue propositions or actions.

> However, authorship is facing a challenge from contributive usership. As users contribute content, knowledge, know-how and value, the question as to how they be acknowledged becomes pressing. With the rise of collectively organised art sustaining environments, single-signature authorship tends to lose its purchase – like possessive individualism in reverse.
>
> (Wright, 2013: 11).

Unlike a thread forum, the focus was always brought back to the document and targeted trolling was difficult and less likely to be tolerated. This format meant co-authorship shaped or disrupted the group's propositions, identity and practice. This openness to the fluidity and messiness of collective thinking featured in other free school spaces emerging simultaneously, expressions of freedom to ask and question without fear of evaluation or pressure of a definitive answer. The cost for this liberty and depth risks the discomfort of potentially missing out on a new point challenging the normative expectations of extractive summative efficiency. The ever-expanding nature of the digital collaborative document prizes meaningful, enduring reflective practice instead.

'We are an open invitation.'

72 (Jandrić, 2014)

This may sound non-committal, but as we have tried to make no assumptions, we cannot rely on our own experiences as individuals concerning what happened in a group to make a definitive statement about what we are.

'We are a Bastard Society'.

* Each meeting is made through the single action of attending.

* Each meeting contains different people.

* Each meeting (or class) concerns a different concept, problem, event, feeling, aim, need.

* Each meeting (or class) (or situation) has its own politics.

* Each meeting (or class) (or situation) (or interception) has its own matrix of incisions (bludgeonings).

* Each meeting (or class) (or situation) (or interception) (or deschooling) has its own problems.

* Each meeting is allowed to die.

The best way to gain an impression is to attend.

Appendix _OS 13 interview.

THIS DOCUMENT IS A 'SCRATCH PAD' or 'COMMONPLACE BOOK' of sorts for dumping quotes thoughts and phrasings that you want to survive but don't know where to place.

The commonplace book was prime evidence of the collective's thought processes. This depository or living document of open propositions for future considerations with no terminus hosts a multitude of voices. Other documents were explicitly "Frozen" by group consensus, every contribution could be referenced, shifting thoughts left trails and seemed amorphous and alive with this strange multicoloured nervous system. _Open School's irreverent playful header below was a pointed criticism of the system of modern "certitudes" embodied in such technologies, painfully aware and reluctantly complicit.

Appendix _OS 14 EGL Prep online edit frozen.

_Open School was invited to participate in INSTAL 2010, online preparation and collaboration with "Evacuation of great learning" organisers offered refreshing transparency. Apart from the invitation to the event, the _Open School members could also be involved in organiser pre-production discussions via emails and an editable Google document to shape the event. Transcripts from the workshop were open for scrutiny and a post-festival "erratum" event was a space to process the collaboration.

Evacuation of the Great Learning **O2. (Charles Muller?)**	*Evacuation of the Great Learning* .**_o.s**
[1] The evacuation of the great learning consists in manifesting one's obscure vice; it consists in hating the people; it consists in perpetuating consummate sterility.	
[2] When you do not know where to stop, you will be unstable. When you are unstable, you will be disturbed. When you are disturbed, you will be uneasy. When you are uneasy, you will be unresolved. When you are unresolved, you will achieve nothing.	:. instrumentalism?
[3] There is neither root nor branch; affairs neither begin nor end. When you are as ignorant of what is first as of what is last, you remain mired in the Obstacle.	
[4] The ancients who wished to keep their obscure vices from the world could not govern themselves. Unable to govern themselves, they precipitated strife among their people. Not wanting to precipitate strife among their people, they tried to stifle their own wants. Unable to stifle their own wants, they could not correct their own minds. Unable to correct their own minds, they failed to achieve sincerity. Failing to achieve sincerity, they remained ignorant. The retrenchement of knowledge consists in the ignorance of things.	Alfredo has made a film looking at the cardew score with the help of Wang Yang Ming, Neo-Confucian Philosopher -i think he will bring this
[5] When knowledge retreats, ignorance is extended. When ignorance is extended, the will becomes insincere. When the will becomes insincere, the mind is corrupted. When the mind is corrupted, the self is neglected. When the self is neglected, the community is divided. When the community is divided, the nation is ungovernable. When the nation is ungovernable, there is strife throughout the land.	
[6] Whether emperor or peasant, all must regard the neglect of the self as essential.	Nietszche
[7] It is possible to have a situation wherein the essential is disordered even though the appearances are well ordered. Woe to those who mistake the essential for the superficial, and the superficial for the essential. This is called, 'Ignorance of the Obstacle'. This is called, 'The extension of ignorance'. We who know only apparent order, must seek out the essential chaos.	What is the job of polemic, manifesto and dictat from philosophers today?

*Table 8 INSTAL: *Evacuation of the Great Learning* Preparation (Appendix_OS 7).*

A selection of correspondence contained a list of questions and propositions sent by a philosopher and noise artist to the _OS before the workshop (Appendix_OS 7). It provided an overview to the group and set up the commentators posing this open proposition and invitation. Reactive educational management literature oft applied in schools rarely cites this posture of sharing, which requires **waiting patiently** for a response. In the table below INSTAL, O1's table of an analysis of a common text was left empty despite being presented as a very competent teacher's aid.

Although a proposition offers space and time to respond there is no guarantee there will be any; it can be a rendezvous when other discussions do not take root. The participants reflected in the document a cobbling of thoughts, from definitions to "**Questions that ask them to explain their position/ Questions that ask a moving forward Questions that propose:"** with the posture of a devil's advocate. This instance demonstrates how digital tools afford an infinitude of room and transparency. A convenience which allows a level of informality of exchange that recognises the weightlessness of learning where one can compose thoughtful responses or not rather than promote haste to justify a predefined concrete objective of a technician's design.

Death to the deadline claims the _OS, imbued with cavalier nonchalance to the SKINNY[73], a local listings magazine: **We have missed it; perhaps it doesn't matter.**

> this document was submitted to g@skinny.co.uk in the state it had accomplished at noon on tues 19 oct. He received both a pdf 'concrete state' form, and a link to this editable document. the discussion is still very much live.

Their approach was informal, defiant and ridiculed the artificial pressure of publishing a conversation thus it denied sound bite commodification and demanded mass me-dia confront the personal. As an outsider to the group, it seemed that most were already in the know, usual suspects of the scene despite their best efforts were still perceived as a clique. The _OS offered anyone liberty to enter into discussion at any point. In these documents, there was no judgement based on appearance; only one's bearing on the matter. This self-directed inquiry of a set of premises was empowering and built one's confidence to contribute to more ambitious points in the document.

In the document, **A simple, but complicated, being together**[74]**.** A concrete version subtitled FROZEN and the process document can be cross-referenced. Consider the following rules of

73 Appendix _OS 13 Interview.
74 Appendix _OS 14 EGL Prep online edit frozen.

engagement, choice is the central premise, along with encouragement and reassurance. These leaderless spaces were conscious to avoid any overt evaluative judgement from on high nor rush to revere a claim. Thus, the editing process was more akin to an informal rehearsal among peers. This mode drew out others who find the anonymity of online discussion safe. Writing is just one mode on the spectrum of processes to full engagement of an assembly. This form of engagement is potentially exclusionary, only benefitting those versed at writing or confident enough to put their thoughts into type. Reading the document is also a form of engagement too quickly discounted as passive bystander activism.

What one would bring to the gathering, what does one imagine is possible with what was at hand, how did they feel about the expectations of those who made the proposition, and lessons learnt from negative past experiences. Finally, putting the *strategies* back to the _Open School members, "tasking" them to take on this "offering" as it would have a bearing on the 'quasi-public' position of the 'open schooler'.

Post-scripts in Appendix _OS 1 & 11 uniquely documented experiences which went beyond the event. Stimulus generated post-event reflections on site in the venue and in out of Tramway and into _Open School premises.

> _open school is as easily rejected as this document: **it is a space** offered, but every gift is also a burden: how can we tolerate any limit to our freedom, but how can we live alone?
>
> Appendix _OS 11 EGL Rejectable Timetable.

Consider the effectiveness of the table as a depository of thought. Earlier in Table 8, a grid organises an analysis of a set text to prime a conversation, but these propositions were not open but loaded with expectations. In contrast, the grid in Table 7 was an empty provisional planner to be improvised by the participants; in particular, the afternoon schedule to "-create some un/structured time throughout the week" instead of the intense intellectual activity at the weekend. Table 7 offered time leaving the participants to suggested topics, activities, eating, or even irreverent scribblings within each "slot".

> Claims of leaderless organisation are relegated to the realms of 'mythology and public performance'
>
> (Smucker, 2014).

Hardt & Negri describe this increased tendency of left-leaning movements as being drawn to being leaderless and not being located to one spokesperson as one of the possible causes of losing the momentum of any radicalised concert between diverse groups

Attempts of these self-governing instances developing in the 2008-2011 climate of austerity are presented for consideration. In this pursuit, the temporality and variability of these assemblies perturb bureaucratic order, which respond by outlawing free universities in Copenhagen just after the Copenhagen free University project had folded.

> We fell into a register or international roster of discourse that mainstream institutions regarded as representative of broader, more general debate. The CfU somehow mirrored these institutions with their identifiable project, a manifesto and a discourse community
> That's also why we shut down[75] the CfU because it was a Collective phantom and became more and more connected to our own identities - a relief to close it down and declare that 'we had won'. We did not want to become the identifiers, but people from the outside projected identities on us - that was clear.
> Then the CfU became this projection space. Maybe this was the biggest audience, people projecting ideas onto the project, people using it as a mirror of their own dreams.
>
> [Hedditch et al., 2011]

These assemblies are rehearsals for direct democracy, not in frameworks of established parties for governance; instead, to realise, gaining the confidence of empowerment for self-governance by participating in working assemblies.

The _OS' logic of time sharply contrasts the finitude of formal education structures of timetables and minutiae of lesson plans contributing to a fragmented experience of knowing and learning. These online google documents capture discussions beyond the physical time-bound

75 C.f Ch 2.6: Gresham's Law: CIDOC's rise and fall

meetings. Specialisms packaged and delivered with the noble intention of the democratic distribution of education are not as robust as socially constructed knowing and understanding derived within a meaningful context.

The online dimension transformed the authoritative lecture into author-ties who could add, edit and transmit the knowledge, which changed fluidly through digests or summaries. The role of understanding within these socially dynamic situations expands the tasks of constructing meaning as a group leaning toward habits of individuation. Therefore, online space offers a promising alternative for marginalised communities fraught with performative anxieties to recalibrate a sense of self outside of mainstream normalisation:

> "This is an online space for collective work, we invite all to join us in this work; please be sensitive to that which has been done; we put this here through a **commitment to risk** as a driving force to improvisation."
>
> Appendix _OS 15 Zones of Contention.

The diversity of opinions, tones and backgrounds vocalise freedom to leave conversations or to bookmark conversations that could be explored later, "Commonplace book" was one such strategy that reflected an authentic portrait of developing critical discussion. The notion of creating a space for a digital archive of thought processes and journaling of political events demonstrate a need for memory-making, which represent markers of listening to the past and being heard.

5.4 Emerging themes

These themes arose from this phase of field observations:

Erasure of Authority: Erasing a teacher as an authority can be seen as severe deviance to face punitive action. Why is its seat of authority so insecure and fragile; to perceive that students need to be protected from themselves? Why are amateurism and self-determination seen as dangerous to the University?

Risking and trusting ungrounding: Deschooled or erasure of a formal curriculum, and the explicator leaves what is explored up to what each participant can offer to the whole. The potency of social epistemology where knowledge is negotiated, made and not fed, become self-sufficient spaces of mutual improvement.

Achievable autonomy: Resisting the notion of a “knowledge economy” advancing autonomous alternatives instead offers an alternative to debt, disillusionment, helplessness, isolation, desperation and confusion. Self-organised assembly mechanisms tend to be simple, free and flexible routines that endure and are maintained through consensus. In engaging with alternatives the illusion that we need the technological society is challenged when we realise that it needs us.

Vernacular as a guide for a curriculum from a commons: Desire to be out of the classroom to experience learning in a natural environment, not simulate it in a classroom. Self-selecting what and where they study.

- OS workshops led by affective responses to study/ field trips to Campsie Hills and Govan conversations.
- Testimonies from the traveller/visitor: what did we have before textbooks and telegrams?
- The communal power of a shared meal.

Agelessness: difference in older and younger generation's responses to HHWG open call, _OS online co-edited document, Rancourt’s Science in community course, turning unfamiliar setups into self-sufficient spaces of mutual improvement.

Technology as a conundrum: a disembodied assembly widens access (if one has access to technology), asynchronous access is convenient but needs aggregation, may or may not be communicated well into a physical assembly, demands self-study but is it neganthrophic or a tool of productivity and if so for what end and whose benefit?

Chapter 6 Clarification

In this section, these emergent themes from the tenuous period of groups establishing their autonomy are clarified. In particular I focused on how these groups embraced risk and erasure to trust paragogy in pursuing self-selected interests. As the groups grew larger, would there be more evidence of how disentangling from very real affective fears of erasure could be possible? What were the realities of assembly and consensus building for a generation which lacked practice? Why is ‘a commons’ such an elusive and, in some instances, derisive idea to be resisted despite their benefits?

6.1 Causal conditions: Craving a commons

6.1.1 Austerity’s impact on the local

At a community assembly held by *thiscollection*, an ex-community worker, F.G, attended and generously shared her experiences and oral history[76] from founders, artists and beneficiaries of the Craigmillar Community arts center. Referenced in Appendix TC 3 Craigmillar Oral Histories [77] are interviews with practicing community artists and Helen Crummy MBE, a spirited, outspoken local community activist, who initiated the Craigmillar Festival Society.

At the assembly, F.G shared her experiences of supporting a 2007 project entitled "It's my life", where 100 large blank canvases were supplied to participants. These were to be put up in the windows of empty house due for demolition on Niddrie Mains Road. They were free to express themselves, but most hesitated and preferred to be directed and told **what to draw**. She described her primary role as convincing community groups of the purpose of their participation in designated activities. Her experience reflected that the ‘public at large’ had little appetite for radical change. The significant cultural issue was the lack of confidence to risk experimentation let alone engage in the creative tasks prepared. Her

[76] Appendix TC 3 Craigmillar Oral Histories. Courtesy of Fiona Greig
[77] Among the recordings are candid community artists who decry the climate of creativity in the public sphere by contrast.

research attributed this apathy to the progressive depoliticisation of community arts from the late Seventies.

By comparison in the early Sixties, Arts Council refused funding to start a music group in the neglected neighbourhoods of Craigmillar, Edinburgh. Resident Helen Crummy, who was looking for violin lessons for her son managed to mobilise residents to run the famous People's festival, which led to a self-organised communiversity, community theatre productions and other leading community art initiatives which mark “Art as catalyst”. Mike Greenlaw, community artist, described how the festival society led to campaigns for better public services and at one point “was the largest employer in the area after the brewery closed.” Crummy described how the **outcome directives of funding made much needed playful outreach increasingly difficult**. Her observation was that committee-centric and project engagement was superficial at best, which suited “the Man in charge just fine”.

JvH’s 2010 work *Mistaken Identities* was a sizable collection of identification lanyards suspended from a nail in the wall. This poetic statement encapsulated the demands placed on a socially engaged artist - who is everyone and yet invisible if the transformation is successful.

T.:	Seem to want a performance, megaphone, juggler, entertainer… all sound like they want a parade or a festival. So the opening can be some kind of carnivalesque.
OS 6:	Yea to make it something fun.
OS 3:	Do you want to do it just because they want. I think you could challenge what they want.
OS5:	What they want…Yea.. They want everything… read it… facilitator, activist, juggler, entertainer, researcher, bridge,
OS2:	Art-ist factory

Appendix _OS 16 Open Crit.

This pop up crit held under the stone staircase of 103 Trongate, an _OS member describes the criteria for art funding. On the ground, artists working in the community were becoming surrogate social workers,

marginalised on inadequate pockets of "guilt-money"[78]. Marina Vishmidt refers to the "dead hand of the state" that could no longer protect the citizenry from privatisation and rampant volunteer industries set up to take its place. She implied that those working there were exploiting themselves under the banners of community and goodwill, which were fundamentally misplaced.

Welfare State International's (WSI) legendary spectacles were political, satirical and engaging in community content and concerns. John Fox, founder of the WSI from 1968 to 2006. He describes artists' experiences working with communities away from market-orientated art networks.

> [Artists] begin a process of dialogue, but it is rare that they can carry the journey to an extreme edge or to a high standard, or beyond therapy.
>
> (Fox, 1991)

What he means by “beyond therapy” reflects projects which placate more than awake. The signature carnivals and lantern parades of the Welfare State International regenerated participating since it was founded in 1968.

> …shall we re-read (and re-read) [The Black Cat….] book in a circular collective (as before) in different locations. For example, Transmission Gallery, GOMA lobby, City Council Lobby, the shore of Loch Fyne and everywhere else.
>
> Appendix _OS 17 Workshop Notices Pt 4.

In this phase it happened that the precarity of space became an issue that features for each group. The HHWG was pressured to rent a meeting room in the library for a fee. The librarian’s justification was that meetings, which by now had been running for almost a year, held in its public space were considered disruptive. Meanwhile, _OS was preparing to be part of INSTAL, an experimental festival to be held in Tramway, a repurposed building specifically for events. An ambitious improvisational experiment in non-hierarchical DIY cultural production was to be the main event. It was inspired by a Confucian contemplation of erasure, i.e. “Evacuation of Great Learning”. This three-day event scaled up the small _OS group

78 (Fox, 1991)

sizes to 60 strong strangers and more where planning meetings were done via Google documents.

JvH described the radial scan such engagement projects make for patrons and partners in particular her project *The Blue House*. In a smaller scale, *thiscollection* found a match with Tollcross Community centre; negotiating a three-month residency in an under-utilised art room to run public workshops or events for three days a week in winter without charge. The *curriculum* focussed on adapting the poems into films but this space enabled adaptations into other genres of craft such as drawing, punk zine workshops, theatre and musical performances. Amateur-run DIY filmmaking workshops carried on with local and international facilitators: from Craigmillar to Canada. The president of a local film society demonstrated how to build a jib from scratch which led to discussions about how to run a collective shed or tool library of shared equipment or DIY builds. It also raised interesting issues about co-operative space and how cheaper mass-produced alternatives negated the neganthrophic handmade satisfaction of the custom-built jib.

A local theatre company hosted two full-house performances of “Property and Theft”, an interactive drama production presented in a challenging space. Forest Café, a long-term supporter of *thiscollection*, who was fundraising to save its Bedlam premises, ran Sinema initiated by a few active *thiscollection* volunteers. An open call welcomed musicians of all abilities to crowdsource soundtracks for the unscored films made by workshop participants. All the while a deep suspicion permeated that producing more artefacts was losing sight of the project’s remit of developing a dialogical community.

As a respected activist for just social housing, Cathy McCormack[79]was invited to review dis-place *thiscollection*. Her input on the groups gathered by the research’s premise was highly valued. In the eighties, she fought to improve conditions in Easterhouse, Glasgow. The resistance she faced struck her as being in a war without bullets targeting the poor. There is

79 Attended the HHWG group meeting in dis-place thiscollection

little capacity for the time-poor to self-organise against their systematic erasure. Greenlaw and Crummy's Craigmillar description of the gentrification and potential ghettoization of the existing communities echo her claims that there is little change to the narrative. Indisciplinarians and indisciplinarian spaces are needed to confront operations of Non-Sense, i.e., a "brutalised political situation, and to prevent the destruction of critical community and language and people becoming extremely isolated" (Hedditch et al., 2011). Returning to the Govan conversation with the Open School, these short-term fire-fighting cultures of community based creative production were unsustainable:

> A1: I think it is just being threatened (nervous laugh) to disappear. We were talking earlier on where all these community groups, community education projects, arts projects, whatever you want to call them are built up and go on. As soon as the funding gets cut, the actual people that are involved in it, their knowledge just disperses once the funding is gone.
>
> Appendix _OS 5 Govan Reshuffle.

Those present described first-hand the destabilising of non-commercial social spaces, contrary to their mission for care in the local community. Exhausted community workers saw the **erasure of spaces** where popular education initiatives and art, media access programmes seemed strategic. Short staffed, having to split attention between balancing these primary care services with administrative fundraising bureaucracies, the impact of austerity on closing these common spaces could easily give rise to more profound anti-social implications.

Govan's community activist's predicament problematised the role of patronage to supply stable spaces of assembly. When social impact does not always equate to profitability – "structural disinvestment becomes a normalised procedure in neoliberalism"[80]. Under such circumstances, whose responsibility is it to sustain cultural production? The reality of these micro projects' benefits lasting longer than three years necessitates

80 (Friend of Zannetti, 2006)

support from the wider community, local government officials and businesses in terms of public funding and sponsorship. (Lowndes, 2016).

These realities explain scepticism around a proposed vision for a networked society which challenges Lowndes' short-term conclusion. The research reflects on autonomous self-educating groups' practices as evidence of social ethico-epistemology. The wall-less classroom opens the possibility of reconnecting with vanishing community vernaculars as Rancourt attempted to do in his course. Opportunities to build a curriculum as a working document based on first-hand accounts of local history, personal accounts and pressing local social concerns. This indisciplinarian approach develops a working common. It reorients education in schools as a site of assembly responsive to the learner's community rather than abstract overdetermined packages of knowledge.

In another instance in EUREDUCON, participants opted to leave the cool lecture theatre for the scorching sunshine. They gathered in a circle sprawled out on the lawn, leaning in to hear from the Institute of Economic Sciences and Self-Management (ICEA) founders. ICEA was the Economic institute based in Catalunya. It is an open collective for workers to self-educate and situate themselves in their economic context critically. The visiting economist shared the initial difficulties and hardships of setting up their autonomous space. The ICEA constituents were the people behind the statistics keen to ground theory into practice; they worked to situate the study of alternatives based on worker and social self-management. Students, graduates, doctors and economics professors, professionals from other social and human sciences (sociologists, political scientists, historians, philosophers, lawyers, psychologists, etc.) and workers were involved. The bulk of their time was to gather research required to make information about private companies transparent and accessible to the public, who would hold them to account.

6.1.2 Portrait of a commons

Stiegler's Internation struggles to materialise given the state of a dilapidated public sphere. Space can be designated a purpose, apportioned a time for activity, symbolic or otherwise. What is done in that

space is up to the imagination of those who use it. What does impermanence do to a space and the culture within it?

> The concept of the commons is not that of a resource; a commons comes from a totally different way of being in the world where it is not production which counts, but bodily, physical use according to rules that are established by custom, which never recognises equality of all subjects because different people follow different customs. Their differences can be recognised in the way they share the commons…
>
> (Illich, 1986).

Self-organised groups' central nervous system of social functions, which determine found or constructed spaces for assembling, is founded **first on social relations.** Space shapes subjectivities, but subjectivities and relations are not bound to the intent of a purpose-built site. Groups are enhanced by reconfiguring the space to fit their complexity. This concept 'recovery of space' is fully developed in Chapter 6.2.

> **Operating without a set terminus** and **assuming equality** among participants of diverse constituencies encourage prospects of an indisciplinarian approaches. Deciding for others, with others, and for oneself... **natural leaders in different situations** emerge transforming relationships so that those in relatively subordinate positions move toward greater skills in collaborative and autonomous action.
>
> (Torbert, 1991)

The following extracts from the INSTAL transcript[81] demonstrate the concrete to abstract reasoning of what it means to try and build consensus:

> P4: We are all sitting in the same place but is this the only common? Is it possible to cut through, short circuit common ground? How can we or are we interested in finding ways we have in common and work on that for the short time?

It is important to reiterate that 'a commons' is not merely a public space but a space ***established by custom***. The law would never be able to give sufficient details to regulate a commons. A typical tree in the commons of

81 Appendix _OS 12 EGL Transcript: The collective struggle.

a village has, by tradition, very different uses for different people. (Illich, 1986)

Being together physically in the same place, for instance, a formal school but developing a relational commons takes time. There are no shortcuts to achieving a commons.

> P3: I thought that as well, to find commonality, then it occurred to me the third question about what activity and why collectives seem to dissolve. My observation is simplistic, but a group of people identify something they have in common and organise around a common interest then they realise that there are differences, and the differences get so much that they fragment and draw apart, and everyone feels a bit sad and annoyed. I wondered if we did the opposite, worked out the point where the group would most disagree and then worked from there as a kind of focus. Or wherever it will take us.

This observation described how “compromise” challenges collective consensus, which "fragment and draw apart". The suggestion proposed identifying the out-of-bound markers to minimise conflict to arrive at a result. This reasoning sought to minimise group flux and disagreement and disable any new knowledge that frustration and conflict could construct. It premised that a positive outcome could be based solely on principles of institutional markers.

> CDL: ... in my experience with collectives I have been part of, disintegrate because they don't see a terminus, **they don't plan** for a terminus. Terminus is not the same thing as a goal. But not understanding that there is a lifespan and a life cycle to collective action, then thinking about or trying to forecast how that goes, there are several constraints there is time, not concerned about changing out there, change happens with one person and has ripple effects, we are together for such a short time, maybe we should have, I hope we have maybe we should have faith in that.

This contribution had a conviction based on direct personal experience with collectives which P4 and P3 lacked. CDL’s key points were that collectives dissolve and do not operate as conventional projects. Time is not defined or programmed but zones of influence, negotiation, and the

basis of collective operations. As and when required, like CIDOC, collective forms will naturally disband when no longer relevant.

The following table delineates the inner struggle between the reality of extractive enclosure’s expectation of the spectacle and attempts to develop grassroots collaborations. This dichotomy may appear formalistic, but movement between columns did take place at various project stages

In this table, these characteristics demonstrate the tensions between the two logics and how they understand time, space and collaboration. Most of these self-organised alternatives consciously resisted enclosure, yet anxieties of being co-opted almost paralysed their efforts to enact a commons. William Morris, from the arts and crafts movement, grappled with the mechanised reproduction of his craft for commerce. Here he describes their angst as striving to find a balance between commerce and creative liberties.

.

This collection	*thiscollection*
Motivated to be a digital platform for seed funding	*Community network*
100 poets	*100 conversations*
Postcodes	*Memorialising the everyday*
Programme of events	*Workshops based on and led by conversations*
Exhibitions, showcases, accountability to stakeholders	*Celebrations, welcoming new contributions; transparency/ laboratory*
Something to be managed	*Something to unfold*
Success: external validation by press, professionals, promotion, greater influence	*Success: informal personal relationships open a network in an unexpected territory, each builds its own criteria for success.*
Audience Building	*Community building*
Incentivised and accountable to scheduled deadlines.	*Slow time*[82]*; no fixed terminus; deadlines opportunistic rather than planned.*
Delineate territories and find new professional partners.	*Seek new partnerships & perspectives specialism made include locals with in depth knowledge of a postcode or craft. Inviting participants to see their contributions in new context.*
Extractive enclosure, neoliberal criteria: accountability, efficiency, productivity.	*Commons, indisciplinary approach.*
Product positioned within the field of normalisation.	*Process open to experimentation and exploration.*
Contingencies to preserve audience numbers.	*Constituents are basis for contingencies*

Table 9 Comparing features of an Enclosure and a Commons.

82 Appendix TC 7 dis-place *thiscollection* journal.

> The ethics of the commercial person (squaring themselves, of course, to his necessities) bid him give as little as he can to the public and take as much as he possibly can from them: the ethics of the artist bid him put as much of himself as he can in every piece of goods he makes. The commercial person, therefore, is in a position, that he is dealing with a public of enemies, the artist on the contrary, with a public of friends and neighbours.
>
> (Morris, 1901: 38-9).

Alternative forms of economies, such as microfinancing, emerged alongside online self-publishing platforms. The latter democratised access to the mass market *audience*, which is increasingly diverse and niche. Without middlemen, producers appear to have had greater control over resources and distribution and could build direct relationships with a network which translated to influence[83]. These autodidact energies rely on communities but have markedly different intentions. The following illustrates that the word "community" is as problematic then, in 2008, as it is now.

6.1.3 Commons are not projects

The “Evacuation of Great Learning” INSTAL "revolution" had more institutional resources than the typical _Open School gathering. On hand were facilitators who were experts in the field, microphones, PA systems and access to all areas in a purpose-built performance venue. The strangers had carte blanche to challenge the limits of the venue, blurring the lines between performer and participant, exploring the idea of collective self-management. Interpretations could expand the initially printed declarations or focus on themes concerning these notions of disruption or choose to ignore these altogether.

The situation was an impossible negotiation of presenting something akin to performance or not. Bound within a context loaded with expectations such as a music festival, it was not strictly unchartered terrain.

> P3: I agree with you the sounds being made are not recognisable as being traditional to music, but there is a performer on the stage, audience, seats, all the kind

83"Patronage in a human way." Interview with JVH

> of usual paraphernalia; if you start chatting at the bar, someone may come and tell you to keep quiet. That is what that set-up involves. If we can map out the expectations for this festival, it might give us a starting point for what will be a surprise.
>
> Appendix _OS 12 EGL Transcript: The collective struggle.

Participants indirectly embodied the risk of knowing as an improvised social construct operating on assumptions of mutualism. Disorientation became part of the disempowering experience. Risks were motivated by a disillusionment which emptied art of its potent mode of discourse.

> O1: The challenge is to find a situation with an unrecognisability, which is genuinely challenging, not this banal and deterministic, which too often becomes a placeholder for unrecognisability. In order for things to be unrecognisable, they can't just be indeterminate; you can always assign them an interpretation as soon as you are given a clue.
>
> Appendix _OS 12 EGL Transcript: The collective struggle.

The improvisational nature of knowing then is contrary to knowledge as units to be processed, controlled, evaluated and managed with specialist determinism. Critical of the dominant discourse of art enclosure which excludes and exults; empties rather than engages. What would be more unrecognisable than a commons?

6.2 Reimagining cultural production as political ungrounding

During DIY filmmaking workshops and collaborations generated by *thiscollection's* poems, participants momentarily disengaged from consuming mass media to briefly reconnect to their dormant creative capacity within. These found spaces had different rhythms of time and rules. They were zones of resistance and refuge for those who risked taking back time from *The Technological Society*. (Ellul, 1964) through neganthrophy. bell hooks described this space as **creating** rather than reclaiming narratives and ultimately a place of hope, as the participants demonstrate, a disorienting site of struggle to inhabit.

Refusing to conform to an image of the dominant hegemonic aspiration is to no longer accept mass aesthetics as the "norm." – choosing not to distort truth to fit an illusion is to disturb and disrupt. These bold claims of new technologies democratising digital filmmaking must be scrutinised. The paradox of a "civilisation" based on technology is less civility which tolerates différance.

In Edinburgh North, Leith, a long-standing area of deprivation close to the centre, was pegged for gentrification. Through *thiscollection's* search for partners, a local Community Radio volunteer described the lack of impact and relevance the radio station had to Leith, apart from traffic updates. The local situation had residents expressing frustrations about disruptive and costly tram works with little impact. The controversies of delays persist while widespread local business closures raised issues of who or what community was left. Like petite princes, a core of dominant volunteers left to their own devices aspired to reproduce commercial formats for community radio, prioritising a breakfast show playing the latest hits. There wasn't a culture of representing diverse groups living in Leith in its programming. The medium did not address local issues, outreach or galvanise solidarity with what remained of the community. These misguided managerial decisions imposed unnecessary professional expectations and formats onto a largely amateur community outfit. Given the freedom to do anything, they chose the comfort of normalisation and conforming to mass media rather than risk imagining something new.

On the one hand, many of the creators producing these diverse amateur resources were highly self-motivated, enthusiastic, and dedicated to community causes- similarly, the term "community" in microfinancing projects needed scrutiny. Pro-ams[84], i.e. amateurs with aspirations for professional recognition and access, reproduce their extractive enclosures of media production as a vehicle of commerce. Similarly, throughout *thiscollection,* several filmmakers offered to adapt their own poems rather than work with existing contributions. Publicity for their craft

84 (Leadbetter & Miller, 2004).

through *thiscollection's* email list were welcome, but few were willing to develop considered conversations with these everyday vignettes which would detract energies from many other personal projects. “Community” was problematised by these tensions - was it an object to be managed or a site of assembling subjects

> What lies beyond the economically conditioned sphere? If 'nothing', is that where we must start? If so, how? What is the radical potential of nothingness? At what point does negation become affirmative?
>
> Appendix _OS 7 EGL Preparation correspondence.

In a conversation about teaching to transgress, the New School host Arthur Jafa and bell hooks echo this sentiment; the hope for revolution is no longer in the protests of the 1960s. The system had learnt and studied those formats and turned those spectacles into little more than street theatre with little lasting impact. The key to change is in small communities enacting self-governance.

Josef Beuys articulated in the Cooper Union lectures on 7th January, "Art has nothing to do with art." Artmaking is an act of faith, an engagement of self-education. All making is interconnected, not just between makers but also when individual components of variable levels attempt to assemble. Reconsider the film crew not as professional outfits but as an agile collective of amateur autodidacts’ resourcefulness weaponised to respond to situations in collective commons living. Collective decision-making communication across multiple disciplines, creative problem solving, and teamwork as a flexible unit of authentic hierarchies form a potent model for political organising. They learn from colleagues, are mindful of business operations, speed read through manuals and script changes, and adapt to unfamiliar filming locations quickly. In her last years poet and activist Audre Lorde lived in Berlin, one of the conversations documented in this period was with South African activist, author and member of parliament, Ellen Kuzwayo[85]. In this documentary they describe such necessary alternatives:

85 (Schultz, 2012)

> We have to start small clusters of activities, small networks. Community of networks. That is what is the best possible thing, we have to believe, and we have to see them happening.

The neganthrophic benefits of linking such productive micro commons, redirects energies from mass commercial success affirms alternative confident identities from fragmented, unnamed or unvoiced histories.

> ... think of the [open] school in this "**invalid as soon as it exists**" way - that the school re-materialises itself in different ways at every meeting/class/situation/interception/de-class, that it is not beholden to a "mission statement" or "statement of objectives" that certain organisations are because **it does not demand funding, encouragement or authorisation** from any person or body outside of those present at the current materialisation.
>
> Appendix OS 13 Interview.

_Open School and several activist communities in Glasgow generally were proud to be independent, not seeking funding from public or institutional schemes that helped safeguard political autonomy. Instead, they supported their activities through live gigs,[86] licensed bars and cottage industry merchandise by in-house creatives such as CDs, books, screen printed tee shirts.

> While we all watch television, business gets organised.
>
> Appendix _OS 18 Invitation Govan.

6.2.1 Blochestra/Sinema: A study on leaderlessness

The following describes the three most frequently referenced situations, Sinema, Blochestra and the Evacuation of Great Learning (EGL). These reflections from *thiscollection,* and the _Open School's ungrounding processes describe learning to sit with the discomfort of unrecognizability. The “struggle” became the aesthetics that mattered.

> The distribution of the sensible reveals who can have a share in what is common to the community based on what they do and on the time and space in which this activity is performed... it defines what is visible or not in a common space, endowed with a common language, etc. There is thus an 'aesthetics' at

86Appendix _OS 18 Invitation Govan.

> the core of politics that has nothing to do with Benjamin's discussion of the 'aestheticisation of politics' specific to the 'age of the masses'... It is a delimitation of spaces and times, of the visible and the invisible, of speech and noise, that simultaneously determines the place and the stakes of politics as a form of experience.
>
> (Rancière, 2004).

The comparison between Blochestra and Sinema illustrates the spectrum of leaderless scenarios and the varying levels of consensus one should expect as authentic hierarchies develop. Collaborations involved both hobbyists and professional musicians. Blochestra had an informal working, non-horizontal form of authentic hierarchy. Sinema was a "spontaneous" gathering of musicians and film festival audience members, all strangers in a shared space brought together by a shared task. The audience came with little expectations, nor was there a conductor of the experience to impose any.

Both were interpreting poems from *thiscollection* into musical forms. Blochestra focused on adapting one poem, while Sinema attempted to record a live track for fifteen shorts which had no soundtracks. Sinema participants responded mainly to the visual vignettes inspired by poems rather than the text. These spontaneous embodied reactions of affect are rarely encouraged in traditional text-based literary analysis in formal education. Blochestra’s rendition was one member's emotive response to the poem workshopped as a group over four rehearsals.

	Blochestra	Sinema
What	Gather every Tuesday at the Bloc bar in Glasgow Sauchiehall Street. Practice covers and reinterpretations of songs selected as a collective. Performed in affiliated communities, e.g. a wedding of a Blochestra member. Or out of curiosity about performing in unique venues, e.g. Glue Factory, for the fee. In this instance, an adaptation of a poem into an original composition.	This fundraising initiative accepted all 38 of the short films collected by thiscollection. 15 of these films had no soundtrack. Workshop attendees had either run out of time or resources or did not feel confident in their ability to experiment with adding sound to their visuals.The audience was invited to bring instruments to supply these voiceless films with a soundtrack What would transpire? Would it work? What would crack? What could be learnt? The risky interaction was lively and spontaneous; did it need conducting? No one stood up to direct; there was flow and ebb of either doing their own thing or playing off each other.
Who	A group of mixed-ability musicians, hobbyists to professionals who all came along for a pint and some play. An informal committee "managed" booking gigs or set lists, agreed upon by group consensus.	The 50 strong film festival audience were invited to bring instruments and participate in Sinema.The crowd consisted of activists, social centre co-operative volunteers, members of the public and workshop filmmakers watching their première. The films were shown in the order they were collected. Those interested were invited to improvise a live soundtrack by making free responses to the sequences. There were musicians with guitars, drums, flutes, pipes and a didgeridoo. Otherwise, most of the audience, without specialised equipment, slowly warmed up to engage their bodies and found objects and gestures to participate. Visiting workshop facilitators documented the event. A few workshop members also documented the experience with lo-def cameras.
Where	Bloc+ Bar on Bath St in Glasgow benefited as the 40-strong members practice venue.	The Forest Cafe, an informal and cosy social centre with a strong DIY Ethos dependent on volunteers- all welcome to join the management committee, run events, workshops or art exhibitions. The Forest Film Festival ran alongside a packed café serving food. End of its 8-year lease at Bristo Place. The social centre, housed in a former Seventh Day Adventist church, had to move as the University sold it to developers.
Why	Informal self-taught and socially constructed knowledge = a strong sense of belonging in horizontal non-hierarchical atmosphere which reduced affective filters of a formal orchestra and encouraged unique works. Informal groups and spaces like Blochestra complement the rise of online bedroom studios.	The cafe's DIY ethos has always supported struggling creatives access to space and audiences to showcase work and develop. Several well-received filmmaking workshops were held in the upper hall. Although the resources were sparse and unconventional, what mattered more was there was a space to risk experimenting. One particular workshop participant was a neuroscience PhD student who wanted to make a short animation—filmmaking was a platform of indisciplinarity collisions constructing and risking one's specialist comfort zone in a safe non judgemental space.
How	Organised diverse: keyboard, drum kit, xylophone, chimes, string instruments, classical and popular merge.	Improvised Salt shakers, keys, bodies, voices, screams, guitars, hand drums, horns, saxophones and doors creak deliberately to respond to these scratches of digital films based on poems.
Duration	Over a few months	2 hours in 1 evening.

Table 10 Comparison of Blochestra and Sinema observations.

Sinema, another manifestation of *thiscollection*, challenged a conventional cinema goer's comfort zone. The film festival curator aptly promoted *thiscollection*'s poems as "snippets of memories and dreams." The poetry and films were studies of everyday city scenes often overlooked. For two hours the filmgoer was an indisciplinarian inverting the convention of the lone specialist composer scoring a film. Sinema represented the initial chaos of "spontaneous" freedom intruding on a curated filmgoer's experience. John Cage proposes patience:

> “If something is boring after two minutes, try it for four. If still boring, then eight. Then sixteen. Then thirty-two. Eventually, one discovers that it is not boring at all.”
>
> (Cage, 1973)

The results document the impact of time in engaging with “expressive” activities. They materialise the harmful realities of classroom constraints and what potential is quashed or unrealised in youth by a system designed to limit the disorder of experimentation. The tyranny of openness resulted in chaos, noise, uncertainty, and an anarchic disruption which challenged conventional aesthetics. Although not strictly remodernist in its rejection of non-diegetic sounds, this sequence of short films resulted in a gathering of strangers' maelstrom of emotional responses initiated by this open proposition. Sinema, was remodernist in other factors: it pushed the boundaries of mixed ability musicians working without a conductor or sheet notes by reacting to visuals with raw instinct. The challenge was to sit with the imperfections and discomfort. Chance a choice to act or not, to listen to each other through the noise, speak to the images, attempt stewardship in some small gesture or leave. Participating, part of something for those non-musicians to push their boundaries, was a riskier proposition. Having no specialist training or instruments, with only found objects such as saltshakers, cups, keys, doors and voices, they contributed regardless.

During the interval, a participant who brought his electric guitar described the experience as "bizarre and interesting", and a flautist concurred it was "unexpected". They stayed on till the end, and their openness to

uncertainty began to belie the frustration of the limitations of repeating the same riffs. Though they had more musical experience, there was no presumptuous rush to take on a directorial leadership role. Was it necessary to show formalistic compositions, was the chaos of casual gestures uncomfortable but perhaps the exploration was too brief to have seen a way forward? The liberty of experimenting with sounds one could make without instruments seemed more expansive, direct and accessible. Filmmaking depends on reproducing a more complex visual grammar aided by cameras – a non-convivial tool by comparison.

6.2.2 The power of imperfection

This reflection saw the incompleteness of a film offering, its lack, as a call to act that seemed to deepen a collective experience. Noise is a sound judged by an aesthetic framework. Consider the professional film submissions collected which demonstrated mastery of the craft's grammar. The filmmaker's ability to direct the gaze through skilled composition and manipulate the affect of the viewer with one's distinctive voice determined perfection. These polished clips received respectful applause, needing no supplementary measure of *noise* from the audience.

This same captive multitude was then shown a series of ‘misfit’ amateur handmade films. The curious collection of strangers contributed to these diverse incomplete films - soundtracks and *voice*. Just as the works of James Joyce were fixtures in free universities’ *curricula* to acclimate one to disorienting reconfiguring, these deviations from conventional film grammar ironically **demanded greater participation**. In making the soundtrack attention was paid to the abstract details, the contributions tried intuitively to make sense where perhaps there was none. They participated in something unique, raw and honest through the Sinema invitation. A chorus of stomping intensity, keys rattling, sustained notes strain, and rousing claps end the "march" of lively, generative neganthrophy gathered by the film with no sound.

The audio improvisation in Sinema was more forgiving alleviated of the technical prerequisites video improvisation demanded in the workshops.

Compared to the voice of bodies as instruments, equipment such as cameras, sound recorders, and musical instruments required financial investments, experience, and knowledge to unlock their creative potential. Hence as most would not have privileged prior knowledge, film or music making was less likely to be as spontaneously adapted. Where no masters were present, time and drive would instruct and progress demonstrable through processes rather than immediate products or performances. The being together in this barbaric yawp became the event; initiated by the lack of soundtracks resulting in another indisciplinarian noise: resolutely fearless.

As part of the INSTAL Evacuation of Great Learning discussion, given similar license to do what one pleased, a similar session of wild barbaric yawping ensued, much to the consternation of the organiser[87]. It was clear something trapped or contained within needed and wanted to come out; a participant responded:

> P12: We are making sound for the sake of creating a sound, rather than really listening to each other or creating an environment of being aware of what other people are doing; it is more that we are just doing something for the sake of creating a noise not necessarily a constructive way forward. **But maybe by doing it, it suggests a new route, so maybe that is a good thing.**
>
> Appendix _OS 12 EGL Transcript: The collective struggle.

Perhaps making sense of the noise, i.e.a breach of what was acceptable, resulted in an awareness of how culture is conditioned. The higher the level of resistance to autonomy within participatory governance, the greater the dissonance. These experiences raised the tension between art made for the market opposed to awakening alternative forms of organisation.

87 O1 was a major European philosopher and intellectual while O2 an established artist in the field of experimental music.

> Art judged by art's standards can be easily written off as, well... just art. Of contemplative value to people who like that sort of thing but without teeth.
>
> (Wright, 2013)

Conventional standards may misjudge the aspirations of the Open access workshops as mediocre and unproductive. They could also reflect the conditioning of cultural systems which are difficult to transcend. These alternative experiments pursue creativity beyond the production of things: a film, pamphlet or exhibition.

Experimental cinema and music-making employ a bricolage of technology to challenge viewing and listening conventions *i.e.* the politeness or expectation of art to be managed into a convenient spectacle or experience. When confronted with a difficult exhibition, a visitor shared this insight:

> Art & Education – education of art teaches us not to ask questions in the context of exhibition space
> (Turn to your neighbour & just ask)
>
> Appendix _OS 2 Summer school forum Pt 1.

Recall the participants faced with the blank canvas, not knowing where to begin. Why is it embarrassing to "turn to your neighbour" when faced with challenging work? Who is the neighbour? Why don't we ask how we have been "taught" or conditioned to approach art? How does a fear of embarrassment dominate? The anxiety of being seen as ignorant of ***the*** correct way to approach challenging work? In this situation, anthropologically, a social act of collective reflection could be the process of finding one or many interpretations.[88]

During COVID, cultural production was forced to redefine itself in the form of networks to communicate with new patronage. This struggle was foreshadowed during austerity _Open School's dialogue with local galleries in 2010-11 still has currency:

88 (Knowles, 2018:39.) If a university is a place of learning, then mistakes must and will happen within it. That's how all of us learn. If learning is trial and error, then we've kept the trial and eliminated the errors. The modern university has lost its way: in its search for (procedural) rectitude and the comforts of perception.

> The exclusions inherent with the recourse to 'freedom of expression over 'freedom of communication': Freedom of expression, with its **interwoven rights and responsibilities,** lies at the ideological centre of contemporary cultural policy as a key human right and 'pillar of democracy.' Yet freedom of expression is contingent on **freedom and <u>equality</u> in communication**. Freedom of expression under neoliberalism has been **increasingly commercialised and steadily trivialised** and that this has come at the expense of legislation which promoted piecemeal but hard won equalities in public discourse. There is a need to account for the way "power is exercised upon and through practices of mediated public communication" so as to nurture diversity of opinion, expression, and communication... to situate and examine the politics and discourse of diversity in the context of cultural policies.
>
> Appendix _OS 19 Invitation T_V Workshop.

Is there escape from these limiting aspirations of dominant forms, these received formats of commodification? The radio breakfast show, the blockbuster film, the book, the pamphlet, and the painting - a commodity. This narrow mindset, uncritical of the politics of freedom of expression, would be responsible for a large percentage of mediocre art. Producers caught up in **reproducing the expectations of enclosures of commercial success** fail to see that their craft is founded on a **revolutionary microcosm of self-organising tactics**. Illusions of mass media success distract perhaps from questioning the broader implications of how freedom of communication and association link to **labour organising and economic solidarity**.

During the Evacuation of Great Learning workshop, a participant challenged the utility of the function to perform; there is a critique of leisure time as a right to art which excludes and rarefies creativity. Would the labour spent to devise a performance be neganthrophic? Should the last three hours be spent in silence or better spent somehow beyond a "good time"? Was the very act of the expenditure the time-defying the dominant expectation of productivity the radicalisation? "There are probably better ways to spend our time, or aren't there?"[89]

89Appendix _OS 12 EGL Transcript: The collective struggle.

O2's experience of being continually asked to evaluate sound or noise led to frustration with the limits of aestheticism[90]. This tension in trying to go "deeper" than trans or interdisciplinary distinctions towards improvisational indisciplinarian acts. Acts that deny imposed enclosure rites open art up as a form of agency, not just a performance:

> O2: Noises, sounds, or music, in any given situation, there are already sounds being produced, so the question is, do people just want to judge them aesthetically by the form or do you want to use them to help to understand more about the context we are in and what issue can you bring to that context and what would can you change? So.. the notion of the music can be an excuse for the other questions you pose... An excuse for appropriating the careful listening one may have from many years of playing very, very quiet improvisation but not to use it, not for aesthetic experience but to go deeper into the questions that you [the participant] asked. 'Cos that is very difficult, but maybe someone may have some answers.[91]
>
> Appendix_OS 12 EGL Transcript: The collective struggle.

In negotiating a self-governing environment, how can these affects of sound and noise translate to the cerebral act of reading a text? "How can we crack *open* the idea of a 'reading group'? Shake it loose from some of its more familiar trappings, making it 'fragile'."[92] In one particular _Open School reading session, an hour-long *Proposition for Studies in Poetry No.1* was intended for a series based on the theme "Silence and Symbolism". In Sinema, listening to the other sounds before rushing to express; in the Evacuation of Great Learning, CDL's sanctuaries of silence demonstrate a critical point. As Althusser anticipated, listening had become an alternative practice and was a skill that sadly needed rehearsal.

90 Appendix _OS 12. *If I am not interested in reframing my own tastes in different sounds that are produced, I don't want to make distinctions between the sound of you moving the legs or another sound.*
91c.f 6.3 Detoxing from invented need, Rise of professionalism displaces a trust in vernacular wisdoms to benefit an abstract system of societal control rather than a grounded self-sufficient network.
92 Appendix _OS 17 Workshop Notices Pt 1.

> "The pure work implies the disappearance of the poet as speaker" –
>
> Mallarmé

Proposed readings from Stéphane Mallarmé, *Collected Poems and Other Verse*, would focus on one poem, and the format was modelled on a Quaker meeting. These meetings are "an expectant silence of waiting, in which we seek to come nearer to each other and God", here in place of the Bible, poems by Mallarmé. The spiritual history of such meditative practices to contemplate literature is also in Catholic Lectio Divina worship. The common text in the _OS proposition would be Mallarmé's poetry; a meeting could pass in total silence. With an opportunity to speak just once, responses would hopefully have more gravitas having to be focussed on the work or others' responses. The meeting would end with a group of selected members who close the session by shaking hands. After the session, rumination and further discussions were options with the _Open School mantra of openness and invitation to ownership: "This is yours. Alter, expand, elucidate, discard?"

The minimal nature of the session took pressure off explication, making explicit the rules of engagement, turn taking, focus and terminus were structural markers to support the learner. *Proposition No.1* would have been a series, dependent on others continuing to propose or bring to the group. The session was a temporal structure; beyond that, discussions could continue as much or as little as required. The self-institutionalised educator's practice had to manage the anxieties expected within an enclosure in this deschooled scenario. Could they trust that an experience with no expectations would benefit the student, no matter the rubric? Dare the 5-hour school day risk re-orientation?

Critics may say silence takes discipline; it would be illogical to expect secondary school-aged students to comply. Would being compelled to write an essay in exam conditions guarantee learning or breed cynicism? In _Open School, combining more performative methods into adaptations by "recording-documenting (with dictaphones, mobile phones, cameras or objects etc.) responses to the texts". This option opens up the

interpretation of the text to be embodied and sensorial, and it “will not just be limited to polite verbal communication."

> How do you record the sound of your indifference to the text?
> How would you represent your procrastination – wash the pots?
> Can you represent the space/time that may influence your reading?
> We could then choose documents at random, listen/watch them and use this to guide the discussion, creating a montage of our thoughts, ponderings, screams and screeds.
>
> Moleskins optional.

Appendix _OS 17 Workshop Notices Pt 1.

A preparatory group’s discussion sets its criteria for success of where and how the works will be displayed and to whom. The assessment is ultimately the participant's responsibility, especially if the evaluation has a destination and purpose beyond the classroom. The openness of these tasks deliberately put off forms of discrete evaluation results. Instead, they generate the allure of the creative process and challenge one to negotiate uncertainty for themselves. There is room for the personal pace of diverse individuals where one’s construction of meaning would not be in isolation but derived from dialogue. How will the confused dreams of the "good life" (Berlant et al., 2011) be tuned to fit a post-capitalist bureaucracy? The indisciplinarian presumes to stay the course to invalidate the "dreams" of self-aggrandisement formal education propagates as the norm.

6.3 Detoxing from invented need

This fatigue is felt more acutely in the lockdown post-COVID habitus, community outreach disabled, displaced art workers on precarious contract hours, and a frustrated desire to connect with people rather than vast deposits of information. As an illustration, after intense discussions at INSTAL’s Evacuation of Great Learning and the sudden shift in gears from leisurely philosophising to the pressure of planning a three-hour performance in the venue, this participant’s acute observation stood out.

> P10: …am deaf and wear a hearing aid and have become increasingly worn out by the amount of sound in the building. Am also increasingly worn out …and

concerned about the level of electricity and technology that is sort of dominating everything that we do. Am not sure if we are appropriating or using it for our means or whether they are using us. The main thing is that I am very worn out.
I've just been walking around just now, out there the stairs the creaking, I can hear my trousers swishing there's a lot of stuff going on and I feel like, it's been awesome it's also quite disturbing me. So many performances yesterday. What is it when you fill up a jug…

B: Saturated.
P10: Yes totally saturated.
ST: A listening room?
P10: So I had a simple idea which was … just…
P7: Create a space free from electricity and technology.
P10: That's free of electricity and technology, includes this bit here where there are bodies, we make sounds we move, maybe use what is already in the environment, move our bodies, it's just a very simple back-to-basics idea.

Appendix _OS 20 EGL Dress Rehearsal.

Firstly, P10 was an elderly gent; including different generations is a natural brake in the tendency for assembly dialogue to sprawl. Their experience of less "development" reigns in the enthusiastic expectations of presuming things as they equate to progress. The diversity of constituents humanises collective action providing a context where compassion and empathy are the conditions for "progress". It reduces the sense of isolation or sectors of society who feel "emptied of use value" and recovers intimate histories of people, places and the purpose of shared narratives. The elderly participant identified technology and its requirements as the cause of the frenzy which was coercing the group to react.

> What is at stake in the production of art under the conditions of contemporary capitalism? What would an art of consequence be? An art whose alternative to entertainment does not just consist in investigating its own form, but one whose political content ventures beyond platitude. To what extent is it relevant to think of art as a profession and what are the implications of this?

Appendix_OS 7 EGL Preparation correspondence.

This instance seems to argue against self-governance; it is inefficient, and patience is tried in a time-poor climate oriented to obtaining immediate standardised results. Recall how authentic assessment staged within the clinical confines of age-defined structures yielded poor results. Similarly, there was criticism of EGL attempting to stage collectivising in a vacuum, in an institutional format of a festival in a formal venue.

> P15: It's not the case that everyone who has spoken so far is speaking even when asking a question, they are **asking from a position of professionalism**. If I may say, today has been a (deep inhale) a complete intellectual thing. We have to embarrass ourselves if we are going to make something new. We got to be willing to become embarrassed.
>
> Appendix_OS 12 EGL Transcript: The collective struggle.

In attempting to reconstruct the social through non-verbal communication, what these interventions demonstrate how sound and noise making are potent metaphors. Over intellectualising[93] a situation while negotiate an affective momentum towards the act of ‘a simple, but complicated, being together' results in static. Illich alludes to this vernacular value of "good sense", which derives enjoyment from plain speaking narratives grounded in immediate convivial experience and histories. Etymologically the term designates such value as “homebred, homemade, derived from the commons”[94] It is less preoccupied with the deontic[95] normalisation attached to mass communication's appeal. It is intent instead on opposing commodities and their shadow. The internal ideological wrestle required to unground self-institutionalisation clashes with expectations of performance-driven productivity at the cost of deep learning.

> AM: S has to go at 5 PM, so you have to film scenes with her first.
> *Shifts board around.*
> AM: Yea, ‘cause directors always think, ‘I know what I am talking about, so everyone knows what I am talking about.’ But nobody knows what you are talking about; only You know what you are talking about. So that’s why a shot list is a good thing and why a

93Amateur vs professional the anxiety of validation. (Constructivist deconstruction)
94 (Illich, 1986) see 1.1 Definition of terms: Vernacular
95(Solomon, 2005:166) John Searle describes the unconscious obligation to respect and maintain bounds of higher and lower status functions, as deontic obligations.

> storyboard is an even better thing. Cos then everybody knows…
>
> Austin Muirhead, Film Factory 31/1/11 workshop video 2:27-2:28

Film production, as a situation, builds a commons that relies on transparency to co-ordinate the co-operative activities with the "elegant technology" of the storyboard. One of the plenums held in EUREDUCON heard organisers complain about the responsibility of keys, running security, manning the information point and coordinating administrative tasks which were unevenly distributed. The co-ordinator burn-out they suffered led to suggestions raised at the plenum. A solution similar to Guattari's, La Grille, was proposed, where boards had tasks of the day listed. Willing and able participants could sign up for them or prioritise roles based on their experience level. Several anarchists proposed to destroy a centralised info point and to rely on social relations to communicate or seek information from each other - which would, in their mind, build more solidarity.

This preference for an oral vernacular came with a trust that if a task were crucial enough, teams would assemble to cope with them. It was a criticism by leadership stressed with overdetermined preparation and anxiety that came with organising within an institutional space with its own rules and expectations. As a caveat, this is a temporal community already sternly critical of monolithic authority, hence in this context with Marshall McLuhan’s warning in mind - that oral vernacular cultures would be prone to feudal tyranny. What form would the governance of emerging subjectivities’ hybrid vernaculars adopt?

Similarly, on Day 3 of the Evacuation of Great Learning, the one technology that resembled any kind of consensus mechanics in this ungovernable group was a blackboard reminiscent of Guattari’s La Grille.

> CDL: Would it be useful ... cos we are kind of ploughing up the same old stuff again. Would it be useful or possible to have a piece of paper or a blackboard that has the time slots ***as opposed to divisions of times*** and back to concrete projects to figure out what’s going to be where, when, what, who, how and then those individuals working on their group

> projects hash through the process, so the whole group doesn’t have the to go through it all again. If people are up for that…
>
> Appendix _OS 20 EGL Dress Rehearsal.

This led to the turning point when the group decided to affirm every proposal instead of pitching proposals for approval. Immediately there was open discussion in smaller groups and an air of playfulness and relief. The self-organised mechanism demanded a personal stake in the discussion and confidence to defend or amend with peers without intermediary mediation. These alternative outfits tended to be lean and economical to maintain autonomy. For instance, they would not prioritise investing in a computer lab, or if they did, it would be through refurbished means and in negotiation with like-minded groups in a gift economy.

In 2009 -11 the writers' group's activities relied on access to the public space and a network of citywide cultural activities to supplement their longevity. The members perceived that their lo-tech activity also contributed to this self-sufficiency.

> S: That would be a meditative pause that this can happen anywhere... a bit dystopic to set it in the glue factory. If the space wars have gone on as they have (libraries shutting down, public spaces closing...), could we continue doing what we do anywhere?
> LD: We could do what we do anywhere; all we need is pen and paper.
> DM: A bit of space.
> LD: We don't need plugs; we don't need anything, really.
> DM: Just a degree of silence, maybe. Especially if some of our members have trouble hearing if we go to a cafe and there is music playing, and you are trying to read a story and Bruce Springsteen is hammering away in the background. It's surprising how few places there are now that you get totally away from music.
> *Murmurs of agreement*
> LD: Yes, that would be the problem with commercial places.
>
> Appendix HHWG 2 Self-governance transcripts Pt 1.

Two examples demonstrate why the notion of a commons as a resource for self-organised groups is hard to materialise. Most of *thiscollection*'s workshops required participants to bring their equipment; there was no emphasis on standardisation, and each worked with what they had. When *thiscollection* attempted to install a co-operative shed of DIY filmmaking equipment such as a handmade jib and a trolley constructed in one of the workshops, an interesting series of complications arose. There were issues of insurance, access and maintenance of the kit that a self-funded project would struggle to supply. The volunteers concluded that it would be cheaper to purchase the equipment online themselves than to borrow a handmade custom-built kit which would be less reliable. These realities dampened the resolve to campaign for such a space of collective ownership.

Another instance was one of the last Open School[96] propositions to initiate a self-organised library. "The Mutual Assembly" sought to host reference material, an 'archive of performances', and be a space of gathering, exhibition and discussion. This resource-intense undertaking had difficulty agreeing on opening hours. Both demonstrate the dangers of institutionalising a process by the logistics of managing a long-term space of sharing.

Illich and Ellul describe these as a consequence of invented needs, in this case, even the technology of material aids. Illich describes the need to recover the Epimethean hands, feet and heart and reject the Promethean man’s obsession entrenched in industry, commerce and education. (Jandrić, 2014)

> What is the nature of the resource room? What can the notion of Assembly bring to such a place? What is the relationship between libraries and art practices? What tensions arise from ideals of infinite knowledge? Is this a project about access to resources and the strength of communities? Can such a space function as a temporary space?
>
> Appendix _OS 21 The Mutual Assembly.

96 Before redirecting their energies to the Free Hetherington occupation.

The Mutual Assembly and Jib workshop proved too resource-heavy and demanded too much manpower commitment for these small initiatives to gain critical mass. By contrast in lo-tech folk craft-based workshops allowed for flexible fleet footed organisation. For instance, the schedule for the whole year was decided on by the group in the inaugural meeting. Each monthly meeting would have an *expert* on a selected topic. Members could feed into the *experts*' resources to support the month's session in advance. The capacity to self-organise is evident in the above instance, and the mobilisation of HHWG after the library's open call; thus, complex technological enterprises accrued byzantine bureaucratic systems.

6.3.1 The affective filter of adopting new technology

Rancière suggests that what is unique in a contemporary historical shift from the dominance of literature to that of the image (the pictorial turn) is less the reign of the image but rather an "interpretive turn." The groups' responses to encountering emerging literacies which technology expedites are explored. Firstly, the politics and obstacles of adopting open-source coding followed by community digital media production with ubiquitous computing available in consumer products.

> 9 PM Weekly organisational meeting. All welcome.
> On the agenda:
> :
> 2. BLOG OF THE FUTURE - how do we want our online space to look/function/feel? DOES ANYONE HAVE HTML/DRUPAL SKILLS THAT THEY WOULD LIKE TO CONTRIBUTE/SHARE???
>
> Appendix_OS 8 EGL Timeline.

In the _Open School appeal for technical support from the electron club forum, the term self-education then took on a different dimension: not just to be critical of one's complicity but to learn the language of the virtual economy. Coding requires a very different skill set, and from experiences in Hacker and Maker labs, the chief complaint was the expectation that in-house tinkerers were there as a service. The spaces were for experimenting and self-teaching, but it took a particular mindset to commit

to building the _Open School online school, a site that better coordinated online interactions and that could be run collectively. This task needed "people with technical knowledge on interactive open-source website building, e.g., wikis and online content creation." The group appealed for collaborators or advisors to little response.

Alternative platforms like Drupal, Crabgrass and Risenet required more commitment and were not as user-friendly as other dominant social media sites. Jonathan Rose offered an analogy for activists' frustrations in describing the mutual improvement of societies in the wake of the industrial revolution. The noble intention to self-educate and access more opportunities is akin to the challenge of dedicated study of code; it attracts few. In the mixed-nineteenth century, full participation in modern society's political and social life was impossible without the "useful knowledge" of populist publications. Instructional populist magazines such as Chambers' Journal aimed at keeping reproduction costs low and access affordable. Yet this task of self-study struggled to compete with the distractions of leisure favoured by exhausted workers. In Rose's example, the working man club's license to serve alcohol and read the funnies in the gazette trumped the grit to work through the comprehensive compendiums of Chambers' journals of common sense offered exposure to a range of subjects from Art to Science, the Classics to Humanities.

The co-operative sharing of technology and skills were valued by the groups as a means of self-sufficiency but proved difficult to achieve. The struggles to hold BYO technology labs, online micro-financing for community projects, and co-ordinate a co-operative library raised insights into how achieving autonomy within the system at the time was problematic. Primarily one was dependent on mass-produced devices catered to consumer convenience. Digital literacy as a means of individuation seems a loose marketing claim as only those with coding skills had more autonomy while the rest contribute unwittingly to accumulating e-waste.

> D: [referring to his camera] This has no sound, by the way. Yea, this is pretty old. Pretty mass-produced.
>
> Appendix TC 4 Film Clinic Pt 2 Transcript.

D. Forbes' refrain to any difficulty he encountered during the workshop was that his equipment was mass-produced. In preparing for the film factory workshops, participants were sent out with general technical guidelines. Tinkering with the equipment they did have was the main aim of the workshops; adapting the poems was an exercise.

> As long as your camera can point and shoot (fully charged battery) and you have a cable that can transfer footage to your laptop, which has basic video editing software (movie maker PC or iMovie Mac), you will be fine. Make sure you have enough storage memory on your laptop for footage, as that will help speed things along.
>
> Appendix TC 5 J.Logan Pt 1 27/1/2011.

The anxieties raised by this proposition contribute to the argument of technology acting as a kind of enclosure: "The way that different uses of senses, and different aesthetic activities – say reading or painting – are distributed politically among different social groups according to different aesthetic regimes or distributions." (Mitchell, 2007:22) Although 2008 saw the beginning of YouTube and other online digital self-publishing platforms, with promises of smashing old distribution models, the playing field was far from level.

The workshops expected that most participants would bring in either of the dominant proprietary operating systems (OS). On occasion, open-sourced platforms without video editing software challenged the assumption that pre-installed movie makers on market dominant brands were "basic". The diversity of software and OS was something to be engaged in, but often in mainstream scenarios, considered inconvenient. It was soon proved that there was no such thing as basic regarding the minefield of digital media technologies.

> …Went to download movie maker, but I only have ubuntu and can't see it in the open software centre to download -
>
> Appendix TC 6 W. G Pt 1: 3/2/2011 17:13.

The frustration of not conversing with one's tool to access the creativity it promised manifested itself on two levels: first, kit anxiety, i.e. one's tools not being good enough, measured against expectations of glossy professional productions.

> I'm really looking forward to it but a little worried that my equipment is very basic.
>
> Appendix TC 5 J.Logan Pt 1: 27/1/2011.

The workshops were founded on mutual aid principles for all in order to build confidence and inspire success among participants. Testimonials of strangers who participated shared common ground through the workshop:

> Everyone's kit is different, we even had someone come in with a stills camera, and she has made a film that she submitted in the British Council Palestine and the UK film festival. Last workshop another only had a basic 10 year old Sony camcorder and she made a simple impactful piece of work. So you never know till you give it a go.
>
> Appendix TC 5 J.Logan Pt 1: 27/1/2011.

This response to J. Logan coming to the workshop and having to overcome her kit insecurity. It was a busy workshop, and while waiting for facilitator assistance, she had the self-determination to tinker and struggle through her project. Once she had her many questions and demonstrations addressed in a one-day exercise, her assured self-assessment of what she needed to do in the post-production process was satisfying.

> I still need to finish putting titles/credits etc., but I've rejigged the film now. Will try and get a chat with my Bro' about music etc. Can I drop by on Friday afternoon to put final credits etc. on... it won't take me long now you have skilled me up! I'll send it as soon as I've done it. Still thinking about *happy birthday hole* [a poem] and want to do another wee film!
>
> Appendix TC 5 J. Logan Pt 1: 2/2/2011, 13:47.

She initiated the collaboration, finished the process independently, and wanted to adapt another poem with confidence and enthusiasm. Her activist background predisposed her to be open to experimental learning environments. Her application of newfound competence culminated in her documenting a conference on Patrick Geddes as part of her Save our Old

Town (SOOT) campaign. This result was what the workshop had hoped to encourage – a sense of citizen empowerment among a local community to use the basic tools with impact. Her keenness to promote the workshops, "I'll be raving about it to everyone." was encouraging.

Crimethinc (2010), a “rebel alliance – a decentralised network pledged to anonymous collective action”, is critical of this ‘faux’ claim that digital technology provides democratic access to cultural production. It is wary that hopes 'have been granted in form, but not in content'. '[T]he central contradiction of our age is that the new technologies and social forms horizontalise production and distribution of information, yet make us more dependent on corporate products.’ Direct experiences with these self-improvement groups support examples of this criticism.

> Your education, your experience.
> You are an expert.
>
> Appendix _OS 22 Unity in the Community.

An expert on what you need in order to act and not particularly one that is prescribed. The DIY filmmaking workshop interrogated notions about time, cultural democracy and peer-to-peer skill-sharing. Participants experienced the creative environment, noisy, busy, and multi-faceted, and in these makeshift circumstances, informal and sociable. The intention was for participants to see their productions to completion in the company of approachable practitioners.

In Appendix HHWG 2 Self-governance transcripts Pt 2: Lines 141-165, this refusal of a monitoring presence opens up creativity, flow and co-operation. The group had time and found incidental mentors, who enjoying the informal setting, become peers through mutuality. This cultivated a confident ownership by self determining standards of craft at one’s own pace and ability. Conversely in film workshops, new technologies demanded more structures of monitoring. The means of achieving mutuality for mixed abilities to “skill up” was politically entwined in the issue of access which leads to a greater dependency on needs invented by hypercapitalism – Modernism on steroids.

The participants were finishing the post-production of films made in previous workshops. On hand were facilitators and once a sound designer from the local university, whom we referred to ironically as Dr Sound. The clinic was open from 4–9 PM, and participants brought their equipment.

> I have an idea now. I took some footage of an idea I had. How can I play with it? I know what I want to do, but I am not sure how to do it.
>
> Appendix TC 4 Film Clinic Pt 2: Transcript.

L's adaptation "Wordless" tried to articulate a feeling of helplessness in a classroom. Secondly, it captured the gamut of creative energies the adaptation task unlocked in two participants engaged in dabbling in unfamiliar territories. For L, it was trying to communicate an emotional experience on video; the text he had highlighted read like a spontaneous and vivid list poem. His visuals were an attempt to evoke the jarring anger of being trapped. Here the facilitator listens to L.'s attempt to make an experimental film.

L: When I read the poem, I didn't want to go literal; one of the emotions the poem wanted to communicate where we felt helpless or powerless. Like in Primary school, you feel like you were right but are on the other side of the teacher. You just felt powerless cos what can you do? You can't do anything. So Like... So I'm not quite sure who the protagonist feels trapped at the hands of..., but I felt there was an emotion of being trapped, y'know...	Experimenting with an abstract interpretation based on an emotional response to the poem. Trying to communicate through video the personal experience of powerlessness
L: I've been improvising this film the whole time, It's been changing...it's been... S: So you put it together in the editing room.	Experimental exploratory nature of video production as a medium: the bricolage element as processing and "improvising".
Lee: Yea, ... there is this part here... He cannot speak. Testing trying pressing teeth like a broken pen useless worthless .... Which can be frustrating as well D: (Shouting at PC crashing) No! (Hands up) O Sorry, carry on. *Everyone laughs.*	Describing his intention with a series of intentions which read like a list poem. Meanwhile, at the other end of the table, D's processes with the same task hit a snag.

Table 11 Selected coding from Film Clinic transcript (Appendix TC 4 Pt : Wordless).

In *Meltdown*, D.'s adaptation experimented with editing and technology, scripting his voiceover of a poem in response to three poems.

> Red for comradeship – you for me
> and me for you, courage shared out
> no time for heroes.

Appendix TC 4 Pt 3: Meltdown.

The process was infuriating but it felt deeply satisfying, even if it took all evening, having done it largely independently. The workshop is over, and we say our goodbyes; as usual, *thiscollection* was always the last to leave the centre. Walking home, I received a notification from the _OS blog that an open proposition was put to the members to consider the forum in the Glue Factory proposed to evaluate *thiscollection* and plans to host a

citywide Free Summer School. Another notice comes up; the Free Hetherington occupation has held a meeting about making its' demands; there is so much to do, more than these poems and films- so very much to do.

6.4 Summary

This period of clarification observed the groups moving from their initial optimism into the realities of merging the informal and the formal demands of a fluctuating open membership. Apart from the HHWG who stayed on library premises, space politics and tensions impacted the groups who had now moved into fixed premises or invited into formal performance venues.

The confidence of the early stages of experimentation was destabilised as in various non-hierarchical workshops and events new participants' anxiety of risking erasure required periods of adjustment. The willingness to embrace the ambiguity of assembly to maintain an autonomous self-educating space was challenged. Conversations and scenarios were addressed where workshops' paragogical approaches proved an effective means of reducing the affective filter. These led to varied results but also exciting reimagining of cultural production that needed to consider new literacies, and these "languages" demanded different definitions. A commons is not a project with a terminus. A culture of ungrounding means accepting levels of uncertainty and imperfection that come with the erasure of oppressive authority for such benefits to flourish.

This detox from the invented need for progress and the latest technology surfaced the fallacy of materialist democracy. On the one hand, these tools allowed autonomous groups to find digital commons through open-source software. However, the skills required to do this were highly specialised, and coding culture came with a non-convivial ethos, making such ideals challenging to access.

Simultaneously, technology as pharmakon and mode of mediated communication was scrutinised. Was the struggle to master these tools part of the process of self-education to illuminate and extend the diverse experiences that accord experimentation and resilience? Was it also a tool of enclosure, a mark of

exceptionalism which isolates one from the primary cultural purpose of gathering as cultural beings?

These are factors to be considered for an indisciplinarian to thrive in an autonomous setting. Most affective anxieties around self-selected education were concerned with justifying the quality and validity of such enterprises. This refusal to risk the embarrassment of *imperfection* resulted from over-reliance on formal education's positivistic narrow assessment culture. In such paradigms one's capacity for judgment is surrendered to criteria established by external bodies accepting hierarchies and specialisms as measures of certainty. The indisciplinarian appreciates that sites of knowability inhabit invisible hierarchy systems but recovers time, space and a commons in the spaces between. In these reimagining of a commons there was something more radical at stake than the artist as worker, rather a field of potential located not in one specialism or specialist?

An indisciplinarian mindset is an integral part of the murmuring multitude. Through compassionate erasure and ungrounding, an emerging subjectivity can participate in the social epistemologies of an age-less non-hierarchical commons. A commons whose qualities of the "every day" and vernacular values such as the essential act of commensality are fast vanishing in post-pandemic cultures. Assembling is often crippled by the anxieties of those unwilling to risk the noise and ambiguity. These instances reinforce technology as impeding the experience of convivial custom; it jars, cajoles and confounds its owner from tangible contact with the real in a faux neganthrophy - productive for its ends.

The following section, dis-place *thiscollection*'s Glue Factory ten-day exhibition, presents these themes and reflections to groups engaged. The forum aimed to collectively evaluate themes of erasure, subjectivities, commons, assembly, and convivial neganthrophic tools required to become an indisciplinarian.

Chapter 7 Evaluations

The 'Self-Organisation in Education' forum was facilitated by _Open School and based on the dis-place *thiscollection* exhibition in the Glue Factory, Glasgow. The forum aimed to redress the premises of assembling autonomous, self-directed education as foundations for a more significant movement where traditional models of cultural production limited effective forms of radical reorganisation. The exhibition evoked shared experiences of education to develop a joint statement and manifesto[97] for a possible free summer school. This section also addresses the post INSTAL reflections as these became pertinent in formalising the evaluation of becoming an indisciplinarian.

7.1 dis-place *thiscollection:* The ugly beauty of democracy caught in a universe of things

These reflections address how the processes of commoning or enclosure of reputation and presentation impact the potency of cultural production.

The Glue Factory[98] is an abandoned industrial space turned community arts venue and adopted by *thiscollection* as its temporary home from 30th April to 15th May. The venue stayed open for ten days, 12-6 pm on weekdays and 12-9 pm at weekends anticipating the area's time poor constituents and attempting to widen access beyond the usual crowds. It was host to forums, film screenings and discussions around community practice with local groups. The ten-day[99] exhibition gathered past and present participants to confirm or reject conclusions about erasure, autonomy and assembly made by these diverse experiences. I was mapping these composite themes of erasure, subjectivities, commons, assembly and convivial tools back on education and reflecting on becoming an indisciplinarian.

97 Appendix _OS 2 Summer school forum: Pt 1-3.
98 Glue Factory, 22 Farnell St, G4 9SE
99 Inspired by Beuys' 1977 100 Days of Free International University (FIU) and JvH's ten day project The Great Unpacking of Associative Life Marche des Douves.

This installation reflects the processes of this attempt to build a micro-community of creatives based on their adaptations of text into image or performance. In the process, Beuys' adage that "Everyone is an artist." is difficult to sustain, hence the need to **interrogate the appearance of democracy in the tools available to us** to create but the need for a corresponding attitude to identify the oppression within to begin the conversation that truly matters.

During the installation _OS came to recce and assist, reiterating that the representation of art as self-expression was not of interest. By now, the notion of democracy, access and openness had radically been rethought, reflecting that by straddling two worlds, one obliged to *thiscollection*'s universe of things and the other a radical investigation of the causal conditions which made these energies spent seem naïve. _OS made clear its role was to facilitate the discussion based on *thiscollection* and leading up to a draft manifesto for the Free Summer School. The forum was crucial to the evaluation process and well attended by members of the public and various autonomous organisations galvanised by the momentum of the Free Hetherington occupation.

The field research noted the theme across all interventions was of chairs as symbols of mobile positions of potential conversations to be had or not. The notion of "taking a seat" and joining a conversation and gesture of hospitality was encouraged. An array of chairs, some contributed by the local Episcopalian church, and a found chaise lounge scattered in the space dominated by a sizeable handmade projection screen.

Expectations
of exhibitions; feel
Connection but
Actual effect of dislocation
Grp 4

Appendix _OS 2 Summer school forum Pt1.

This programme and installation broke with conventional exhibition etiquette requiring viewers to activate the installation by making selections. The installation overwhelmed, capturing the ugly beauty of democracy, the reality of its mess and chaos. The decision to present

poems and films was motivated in a way that challenged and critiqued distribution festivals as platforms of commerce and self-promotion. Suspending these spinning DVDs from the weaves along with poems, an unprogrammable archive of moments results where works would be played or read if selected by visitors rather than curated.

After the forum, as if a stubborn refusal, the opening night hosted new *thiscollection's* adaptations by Blochestra, Zorras, and AP Swedo set in the installation shaped by *thiscollection* participants: a mural of Edinburgh by Helen Askew, mammoth weave by Rocio Jungenfeld and past collaborators. I recorded their reflections on *thiscollection*'s evolution during the installation. The multiverse of poems and DVDs suspended from a multicoloured wool weave stretched across the main hall – a tactile 3D collage of contributions old and new. The circus of DVD mirror moons encircled by found odd-sized empty picture frames suspended from the ceiling.

The forum participants' reflections rehabilitated the anxieties of the reluctant curator. In one response, a site which resembled a web depicted the exhibition sketched as the top-of circus tent and a spider web, where a trapped fly exclaims as a spider approaches.[100] The web being a common description for a site of potential where responsibility for discovery is one's own.

Learning/ Knowledge
Tracing your path through the bits.
Grp 3

Appendix _OS 2 Summer school forum Pt1

In this that conclusion of self-selection returns, were we equipped, would we be misled having relied so long on an institutional reading of our world, and did we have the courage to risk constructing it by ourselves? Was it a choice when the climate of austerity has ruptured trust in governance?

> Orange note;
> ... as an opposite my education wasn't centred around roving around, ... choosing what I wished to look at, read or view. It

100 Grp 5 (Visual) Appendix _OS 2 Summer school forum Pt 1.

> was based on pre-chosen, pre-set, pre-determined decisions by teachers, schools and her background systems.
>
> Appendix _OS 2 Summer school forum Pt1.

Bishop describes curating participatory art relations as resisting commodification by dematerialising art. This results in tensions between the generosity on the one hand and exploitative perversity of engaging on the other. The "failures" of "dis-place *thiscollection*" is pertinent as it demonstrates the impossibility of a community without authentic hierarchies or a functioning direct democracy. Its scream became more provocative through its issues than its accomplishments as defined by the standards of a "good" show.[101]

> When we judge beauty or strength or character, we have criteria; this scene of democratic media was probably by conventional art gallery expectations – untouchable.
>
> Appendix TC 7 dis-place thiscollection journal.

Disenfranchised and dissatisfied, these alternative open spaces represented deliberate homelessness motivated by a rejection of mainstream culture. They offered refuge for an ungrounding from one's self-institutionalisation and, more importantly, craved an assembly open to all forms of reassembly.

> Conversely it was cautioned that the effort could grow **too** large as _Open School advised, "Could be small and good, but sometimes, they grow out of control, and you suddenly find you have to do this thing... you didn't even plan it and ..."
>
> Appendix TC 7 dis-place thiscollection journal.

Mid-week, HHWG were invited to run their weekly meeting in the Glue factory during their nomadic phase. Cathy McCormack, the author of “The Wee Yellow Butterfly”, was a special guest. McCormack was screening her film “Sharp end of the knife”, which led to a fitful post-film discussion. In particular, during the round of introductions, this visitor shared a gloomy truth:

> Got an email 11 months here from Austria. Work in a Kitchen, and had no time to find spaces and was a bit sad and

101 Cf (Roggof, 2010)

> melancholic. All I made was this superficial system stuff. I am more a travelling to separate myself from this nonsense that is going on. I read the little bit of the fantasy of what you are doing, and for me it is very important to connect a little bit to … [chokes] to me it is important to connect to a network or group or so on.
>
> Appendix HHWG 3 Farewell Welfare: What can be done?

His emotional and frank craving for connection compounded the consequence of resisting erasure by insisting on the status quo; the installation nullified the social if art's significance was attached to objects alone. "Why is the collectivity contrived around the exhibition space?" (Grp 2[102])

> Round the clock but "dis-place" installation ability to garner common assembly was limited.[103] True something inhabited the space, but those that came to the forum did not interact or challenge the space but imposed upon it with their agenda. Unconfronted, it was accepted as unsculpted by aloof judgement.
>
> Appendix TC 7 dis-place thiscollection journal: *Too much time?*

After the performers and artist volunteers had put up their works and left, the chaotic sprawl seemed to cry out for a narrative. There was no one left who had the energy or was around to compose it, and it was not something to have been written alone. Despite the intention to be open, the pressure of reproducing deontic obligations[104] was immense. Exhausted, I struggled to devise a means to engage the space; could it be an **open proposition** for viewers to present ideas of how they would interact with the space like a game? Instead of gallery interpretations or "instructions" on how to engage the space, would a large question mark on the wall serve just as well? These reflections captured the wrestling of ideologies, resisting the design and instruction and trusting the viewer to glean as much or as little of the experience as they saw fit. At this point, like its name "dis-place", *thiscollection* could not help but feel

102 Appendix _OS 2 Summer school forum Pt 1.
103 Appendix _OS 16 Open Crit: In a similar attempt, community knowledge was absent in preparing publicity for an _OS initiated pop-up cinema event while flyering, they were told established "village fetes up the hill" "already do that".
104 (Solomon, 2005:166).

uncomfortably irresponsible and its care should never have been a solo affair.

Grp 3

Appendix _OS 2 Summer school forum Pt1.

Making sense of imperfection and chaotic *Tyranny of openness* (Grp 4) was a function of a crit and was written upside down. An inverted crit as a non-school directed assembly, a deschooled space like CIDOC, made room to have alternative thoughts rather than rush to be slotted too quickly into genres and hierarchies.

ꓶRIꓶ

7.1.1 Resisting erasure of artist/ teacher/authority

> What about being anti-student/teacher/school? Indeed there is a contradiction in a 'student-led school', it is the image of the school without the function of a school: unless we are re-capturing the idea of what a school is as an **organisation of peers** that is self-organised, rather than an institution that contains teachers as well as students.

Appendix _OS 23 Liverpool, Art School Alternatives.

The installation principles of dis-place *thiscollection* was also a journal of trying to let go of the plan, directed narrative and authorial intent.

"Community art" worried about the function/ In a society - what is it for.
Gallery art does not have to justify itself.
Grp 1

Appendix _OS 2 Summer school forum Pt 1.

Education is a responsibility: in the HHWG workshops, try to deauthorise the role of instructor to the peers. The response below seemed to remind us of this individual responsibility which comes with autonomy.

Workshops - what is educational? Whose learning,
Whose teaching?
Grp 2

Appendix _OS 2 Summer school forum Pt1.

Erasure was then appreciating and trusting that each would be responsible for their learning. The fruits of their labour would be their communal worth – a jury not based solely on certification but competent experience.

> The teacher refused to deschool.
> The teacher resisted erasure.
> The teacher refused to deschool.
> The teacher feared the open proposition.
> The teacher desperately wanted to give into explication.

Appendix TC 7 dis-place thiscollection journal.

Despite being aware of issues with authority and canonical knowledge, formal schooling expectations were the antithesis of democratic ideals. It showed after all this time steeped with these communities engaged with creative practices. At this stage, I was still unsure that 'lack" alone would suffice and that improvised learning could be a rigorous study experience. Those who rejected formal education describe Art as an alternative site of knowability where invisible systems of hierarchy could be interrogated. Vitally when engaged in creative activity, one could reclaim time to think.

I learn outside of education institutions	Independently
the contradiction in struggling 'for' the university university is the guardian of the canon what happens when there isn't a canon	Issues with authority, canonical knowledge
When we were at art school we had to teach ourselves there are different degrees of what is educational.	Art as a site of knowability conscious of invisible systems of hierarchy
Even when a canon doesn't seem defined there still is a system going on Not going to school much led me to art	Art as an alternative commonly associated with a rejection of formal mass education
Luxury of a different kind of time to produce reactions – I learnt by accident.	Time is defined differently, Learning as improvised.
A democratic education would be ‘1’, not having to conform to essay hand-ins and specific standards.	Formal schooling expectations and the antithesis of democratic ideals.

Table 12 Developing codes: How did you/ we learn? Appendix_OS 2 Summer school forum:Pt 2.

Reflections from the Copenhagen Free University prompt that "Slowly" is the time span in such making determined not by capitalist logic of productivity per se, reclaiming time from deadlines.

> **Slowly** the research projects were collectively constructed through the display of material, presentations, meetings, and spending time together. The nature of the process was sharing and mutual empowerment, not focusing on a final product or paper but rather on the **process of communisation and redistribution of facts and feelings**. (Hedditch et al., 2011).

The demand for transparency, rehabilitating authority and self-determination is the crisis educators face with the virtualisation of packaged content delivery. Blended classrooms set up within specialisms and governance systems still expecting traditional reporting structures only overwhelm students and teachers unrehearsed with such freedom. The documents produced by _Open School are suspicious of and reject an outcome-based, expectation-bound agenda of optimising knowledge, productivity and efficiency. For instance, the authors of this

simultaneously edited document demonstrate the recursive nature of socially constructed epistemologies:

> I consider this an act of fidelity, a process led by rational obligation to an idea, which allows us to clearly measure success in stark terms, in relation to how that idea requires us to act. In this way new ideas and practices are generated, situated specifically within their current wider social context.
> "rational obligation", "clearly measure success" - these terms worry me. it's like it turns it into one of those **"outcome based operations"** - i suppose that's what's being called for here, but the wording is worrying. can't the process itself be a political act, one that has real consequences? **do we need to plan/theorise everything we (want to) do?**

Appendix 14_OS EGL Prep online edit frozen [**emphasis** researcher].

_Open school refuses the imperative of goals which dominates the discourse of standardised mass education. They "do not learn to act", "not to operate the world", but to start something anew yet known and to be discovered. These strategies push the bounds of subjects processed by the Edu-Factory:

> We do not learn with the aim to act, but to discover why we learn…
> We learn not to operate the world, but to turn unknowns into new questions.

Appendix _OS 3 'COMMONPLACE BOOK'.

These responses critique mass education's short-term utilitarian recourse of preparing a labour force which objectifies the student. _Open School's dismantling questions resist enduring programmatic procedures of life-long skills and employability. These groups' critiques though urgent, seemed ill-prepared for the realities of defending, for instance, open-source commons code building of the future. Digital territories as enclosures for proprietary services have overtaken the noble commons ideal of the internet set out by the likes of Tim Berners-Lee. These profit-motivated enclosures' interests perpetuate the aspiration of accreditation, a plethora of academies, tutorials and coaches for almost any subject imaginable exists. Critics depict Edu factories dictating such automated processes in danger of producing hapless automatons dependent on

institutions, which see education as renewing licenses to survive. Such cultures leave little neganthrophic potential for the student to undertake passion-driven study – generative and authentic means of becoming autonomous entities.

The leaderlessness and egalitarian assumptions the independent groups made also came with complex ungrounding. The following extracts of the introductory statement from the "Evacuation of Great Learning" transcript illustrate the erasure of authorial imposition.

> Evacuation can mean a moment of emptiness, a positive emptiness of a precondition for action, emptiness as the enabling condition for the kind of clarity that allows you to intervene effectively in the situation.
>
> Appendix _OS 12 EGL Transcript: The collective struggle.

O1 was a prominent European philosopher and intellectual, while O2 was an established artist in experimental music. However, the premise of the three-day workshop was that they would be absentee organisers – a frank admission of not knowing and an erasure of authority as experts, suspending expectations. The invitation was for those present to self-organise and took over the festival as they saw fit.

> O1: Title chosen randomly because the starting point of the workshop is that we both don't know what we are doing. Neither O2 or I really know what we are doing.
>
> Appendix _OS 12 EGL Transcript: The collective struggle.

This free-for-all stance was at once refreshing and overwhelming at the same time. Taking on Mitra's big question approach described in the Literature review. Jo Freeman's work on the tyranny of structurelessness pre-empts the issues to come, "Collective art practice is always a strategic way to impugn the actualism of authorial discourses in art." (Beech et al., 2009). These implied risks, precarity and struggle for a self-institutionalised educator to let go of preconceptions, especially when dealing with the multitude outwith the classroom domain:

> ... it seems contentious to assume this kind of organic model of the social body. This is no longer available for advanced late capitalist societies; this kind of recipe is no longer a viable option. Wisdom in this ancient sense is not able to be valorised

> or embraced. Evacuation because unlike Confucius, we don't know what the conditions for the optimal harmonisation of individual collective interests will be.
>
> Appendix _OS 12 EGL Transcript: The collective struggle.

In unscripted and ungovernable circumstances, what consequent actions or inactions emerged, and what did the awkwardness of their success or failure mean for this erasure process?

7.1.2 Addicted to a plan but at what cost

> the pedagogy of:the teacher/ the collective/ the class/ class/ the question/ the proposition/ the document/ silence/ cacophony/ discourse/ the metropolis/ the body/ the ear/ the vision/ prehension/ the dogma/ of no dogma/ the student/ the movement. Can we continue to unground ourselves?
>
> Appendix _OS 17 Workshop notices Pt 4.

Fear of failure disables a habit of developing rooted trust and self-esteem, which cultivates an overdependence on explication. Fear presumes human endeavours have to rely on rule-based standards and expectations, conventional logic of imperatives, which seeks to control and manage one's environment efficiently to avoid risk at all costs. Midway through the INSTAL discussion, a group was sure a plan to mobilise others would be a technical way forward to manage the chaos via a system:

> P9: (loud and assured) Can I just say something related to that, the most interesting? One of the many interesting things said this evening was **M's practical one of making a map for expectations** of Sunday night. I am really interested in doing that, and I think M. is interested in doing so as well, we would like to go do that so if anyone else would like to join us, just come give us a shout.
>
> P11: Give us paper and pen... explain a bit more.
>
> P9: We could go sit in the bar, or here or wherever to **map out the expectations** for Sunday night and those coming on Sunday night and the expectations they may have of what will be happening. **How that**

is the basis for disruption or fragmentation and go forward.

P10: Don't you think that is a bit **prescriptive**.

Crowd sniggers

P9: (Confidently)Well, we are going to do that if anyone wants to join us.

P12: **I'd like if you do that but not leave and happen in the space.**

P13: We've got pens and big paper.

Appendix _OS 12 EGL Transcript: The collective struggle.

P12's request that the technicians stay in the same place was an intervention where transparency and feedback on the plan's progress could be addressed by the very group it intended to assist. Indisciplinary spaces in schools are counterintuitive to a rigidly set curriculum[105] and specialist territories organised in timetables. Though the distribution is technically equitable in managing space and time, it is also an artificial representation of knowledge.

Tormod: What should notes look like?

Helene: I don't know.

Tormod: Like drawing?

Helene: (Hesitant) Yes.

Tormod: So 15 mins.

Helene: Yes don't feel you should fulfil any learning requirements. Just try to inhabit whatever.

Tormod: Be back at 10:52.

Appendix AA 4_Researcher seminar notes.

This "pens and big paper" master plan solution heightens affective filters and homogenises each secondary student's experience of learning in the classroom in the name of efficiency. The management of time, space and fear of a commons reflects risk-averse governance where messy, noisy, unruly expressions from youth must be contained rather than reframed as exuberance in need of an outlet.

In 6.2, the comparison between Blochestra and Sinema demonstrate that time and space to collect and gather thoughts and experiences can distinguish between sound and noise.

105 C.f Mechai Pattana: students determine what they learn and teachers learn and adapt alongside them applying their area of expertise when required.

> Random, spontaneous individual expressions caught between "repeating the world as we know it and trying to challenge it" is static -an in-between noise.
>
> Appendix TC 8 Sinema Journal.

Does it pose the problem of how to draw all the voices into concert, or does it demand problematising one's conditioning that assumes explicit direction necessarily leads to harmonisation?

These experiments examined attempts to challenge an indoctrinal disabling which prevents amateurs and professionals from fully engaging in an *internation* through cultural production. Attempts in the field to enact such promises scrutinise claims that digital platforms are levellers and encourage democracy. Without a critical examination of online activities' motives, operating either with an open-source creative commons ethos as opposed to extractive enclosures - leaderlessness could easily lead to opportunistic tribalism. Presenting an ethical dilemma that self-governance in the context of the multitude would be more divisive than unifying. This precarious and insecure position raised the issue of responsibilities. Can an indisciplinary space be public, where duties and structures require a level of mutually agreed containment?

7.1.3 An Indisiciplinarian's Reluctant Sermon

Inspired by these reflections, it seemed appropriate to return to a poignant moment from the last day of the "Evacuation of Great Learning" workshops. After the drama and deliberations, the "Instigator" reluctantly felt compelled to break with character to make some constructive clarifications. In small ways these groups tried recovering time, space and activate a commons by very gradually giving themselves permission. Kaprow's "11 rules for a Happening" emphasises that creative production of an event or object must be avoided at all costs (1968). The space, if paid for, comes with expectations and determines the tensions or demand for performance as justification for funding. This analysis demonstrates that "openness" in practice had to account for the power relations the situation imposed on the experiment. It also had to communicate the groups' prior knowledge: i.e. language and thinking cultivated in the pre-

event Google documents, to orientate and limit performance anxiety of newcomers.

The role of the Instigator is to support the use of available resources hospitably. This unique opportunity alleviated all these restraints for the duration of the festival.

He describes the struggle

> I think it is helpful to draw a distinction between a notion of collectivity and resisting the urge to produce something towards homogeneity.
> Because you are discussing this together doesn't mean consensus must or can happen; just because you meet together doesn't mean that the endpoint will be homogenous.
> A lot of problems with decision-making and consensus within the situation… These are the points where we differ; the points of divergence are where we have to inhabit and investigate.

Appendix _OS 20 EGL Dress Rehearsal.

Collectivity confounds the conditioning of modernism. The convenience which urges snap judgement, pre-concluding, overdetermining and being validated by an authority is hard to resist. Like the AfL students confronted with the discomfort of trusting peer evaluation, attendees sought security in organiser validity as **ten proposals were made privately to the Instigator but not to the group.** Risk, embarrassment, fear, ownership of thought this reluctance to redistribute authorities is articulated by the Instigator, who has erased himself as best as he can.

The linguistic habits are telling; the Instigator tried so hard to avoid the imperative language of the monitor. He struggled to avoid using the word "expectations" just in time, "our ex- uh intentions". He is conscious not to invoke a hidden rubric or give the participants a hint that there is a desired outcome and hierarchy of contributions or ideas. "without overdetermining what you might do, I want to just simply say why O2's work was interesting was because..."

The indisicplinarian is ultimately not one agent but a group's attitude to participation. Until then, the "Instigator" defined some of the qualities helpful to consider in this reflection.

Reassurance

> This [experience] may be having an overview which the individuals in the collective may miss and appreciate the reassurance. **"You already have a vast amount of material**, 40 of you that's 8 hours total of 400 human hours together that's a lot of time."

Engaging with such open possibilities can be debilitating; being able to converge by having access to supportive experts or models as guides can relieve the pressure of performance. In this instance, the relationship between the expert and amateur would attempt to be mutual. Overcoming the anxiety of subscribing to a heuristic of sophistication and unspoken aesthetic then fell on the expert to surrender more than the amateur who was not ladened with such prerequisites.

> O2 made one decision, and it worked for an hour; I don't want you to feel you have to fill four spaces with ten things or whatever; I want to relieve pressure from that situation. Again, I want to be realistic and remove any kind of burden of expectation and reinforce that what we are doing is a process of collectivity and engagement already.

O2 arriving at a decision came with practice and experience; the attendees had only partial exposure to the field, and their *noise* would initially be querulous before it would be ironically *productive.* Something to prepare for then would be this time to detox and purge, which the conditions within a festival would limit.

The instigator/producer could only provide access to space, time and talent for others to act:

> …anyway I started off just wanting to talk about the material conditions available to you. I'll be here all this morning …

Time is never wasted; everything is material was a powerful message. Improvising means being confident that whatever you bring to the table is material; sitting with yourself for so long, the patterns and quirks of your knowledge will form their own rules if one paid attention. Improvisation does not happen spontaneously; see Sinema, it insists that you discount nothing; all is engagement, even disengagement. Sitting with the hours spent deliberating is part of the process, but the space, resources and hospitality in a rented enclosure could not be boundless. Although the

organisers set up preparations before the performance in a google doc[106], there was a limit to realising these in the space with a revolving door of new constituents. Similarly, a school that offers an abstract curriculum without addressing the needs those they serve may find itself steeped in bureaucratic self-sabotage by noble intentions.

7.2 Recovering time, space and a commons

Organising a free summer school with such a small forum summarises the initiatives encountered. Their responses are in italics and reference Appendix _OS 2 Summer school forum Pt 3 Manifesto. Proposal for future action. These responses are woven into the evaluation statements drawn from the study so far.

Recovering Time

Having a long-standing establishment did not always translate to enduring reliable sites of *good conditions for our own learning,* as the HE protests were keen to assert. Was learning in *temporary occupations* real? Legitimate understanding or the assumption is that there are hierarchies of useful knowledge, in a commons what is fundamental changes on the needs at the time. The indoctrination is hard to resist the preference to see specialism as real, verifiable valid knowledge. This balances the argument that the connectivity of one's study, not duration alone, assumes value. Requiring *spaces that relate to available time in relation to longer processes of learning, to feel safe* to begin to explore. Multiple sites could require reconnaissance knowledge which suggests that the security would come from one's confidence in observation and then returning to an assembly to verify and develop that knowledge into action. *One could participate through affording a relationship through an invitation -the social relations of education*. Time in this instance, would be determined by hospitality and purpose. Note that this discussion did not consider the asynchronous value of e-assembly.

106 Appendix _OS 14 EGL Prep online edit frozen.

Recovering Space

Where could this free school happen? Spaces that look outwards from the university, places that capture the imagination of the questions raised today. Perhaps “The University for Strategic Optimism” is an example of a temporary takeover of a bank or shop for education. The playfulness of this suggestion is education as a site of political occupation. What are the differences between the spaces Transmission, the Free Hetherington or a newly occupied space? A space not only has to be safe but respectful and responsible for its vernacular history. Spaces though neutral, have histories difficult to approach, but conscious of that, all activities add another layer to that history that interrogates it and eventually is part of it. The space of Transmission (Gallery) could be problematic; it sits within a gentrified arts complex and brings up the eviction of Paddy's Market and the displacement of the locals. When dissonance or expectations of a happening in the space is upset, the confusion and surprise disorientate those in it, and the space can become unsafe. It demands the critical inhabitant find the resolve to navigate the difference and that navigation can be a powerful form of self-directed learning.

Recovering a commons

How could these invisible histories be on the Summer school agenda? *'what do we want out of education?'* seemed the logical consequence. *Would a summer school have **a** curriculum?* Was that humble article the issue? Did an overarching curriculum make sense in autonomous zones? Was it a means of ensuring there wasn’t a bias of *the arts* over *radical science investigations?* A minority in the group seemed anxious about the ambiguity of a curriculum developing from the commons. They had no trust in the agency; if they felt a course of study was in demand, they were free to seek out the facilitator and offer that to the commons. As a model, *Transmission has a membership, the call is for them to propose workshops or to tell transmission what they would like to learn.* It was not an insular enterprise but a proactive and experimental one. *Is self-selection viable for a democratic education?* The issue of gatekeeping is

embedded in the question of desiring a curriculum. Hence the attraction to the potential of The Free Hetherington is without *an apparent curriculum.* Setting it free to base the Summer School *curriculum on the problems* facing *the community* without the prejudice of *disciplines and* open to diverse *constituencies.*

Chapter 8 Review

This review follows up on a few groups and applies the theoretical conclusions made through the study with a group of formal educators in an exchange entitled “Autodidact archives”.

8.1 Fatigued imaginal machines[107]

The free summer school never did transpire. Transmission decided to run their school separately, and the Free Hetherington initiated a research group to address social ills; however, there was no immediate follow-up, and understandably activist energies were spent. The Free Hetherington occupation was exhausted and ended on 31st August 2011 with concessions from Senior Management. Anti-austerity protests died down after 2012, unable to broker dialogue and simply ignored. Critics claimed that leaderless groups failed to make precise ideological positions to build a consensus on what to support. *Staying within constituent spaces might preserve small bubbles of activity which don't interact*. Pragmatists filtered into larger movements like “Momentum” and “Another Europe is possible”. They spent their energies on campaigning locally rather than organising mass demonstrations. On a positive note, one of the more prolific _OS contributors went on to teacher training and currently holds a school-based leadership position in a school in the Inner Hebrides.

These tensions are not new and criticism of the homogeneity of those observed being white, middle class[108], educated, and relatively socially mobile has been noted. Those who participated still had resources, a phone, a camera, and PCs, no matter how meagre. Erasure was an option, an indulgent position as they could disengage and return to comfort without too much peril. The “Simple but complicated being together” among those at different stages of emancipation is a real

107 (Bey, 1994) (Shukaitis, 2009:13) For the purposes of this exposition, the term imaginal machine will indicate a particular arrangement or composition of desires and creativity as territorialized through and by relations between bodies in motion. Imaginal machines are composed by the affective states they animate, reflecting the capacities to affect and be affected by the worlds that are contained within them.

108 A tongue in cheek instruction for an _OS reading group “Moleskins optional” Appendix _OS 17 Workshop Notices Pt 1.

struggle and pressing task for the Anthropocene. In Appendix HHWG 3 Farewell to welfare lines 224-298, a disagreement arose which illustrates the conflict between the two mindsets: middle-class and activist values. The latter perceived serious issues of inequality were whitewashed by well-meaning reports from civil servants and NGOs. Their frustration and experience of poverty and those living the consequences of poor governance find these papers translate to little action. The pragmatist from the HHWG happened to know a researcher of the white paper personally and defensively countered the cynicism by insisting that “at least someone is trying”. Similarly, in the education sector, this tension between policy and practice, which parallels the OECD and frontline educators, can seem like living by the ruling of "the man on the moon”[109].

As CDL at INSTAL proffered that the reality of achieving collective consensus is that there can be no guaranteed termini, where the model of Misak community assembly is iterative and contrary to the current form of closed democracy overdependent on the vote as a means of agreement. Voting is a disingenuous interruption of assembly which is an iterative live process with stages of growth and ideas evolving but with a consistent and available platform to be heard or supported to guard against isolation.

Adaptations

Initiatives rooted in some concrete shared neganthrophy tend to benefit and endure such as the HHWG, which is still running at the time[110] of writing. Simple structures derived from a welcome, introductions, group consensus of how to proceed, a task involving all members, a social break and then selected works in greater depth followed up by minutes to recap and celebrate everyone’s contributions. These enduring principles have applications beyond creative writing - meetings persevered online during the pandemic regardless the level of tech savvy. HHWG have since been more public, actively publishing or being published, and gracefully invited to return to the library where they first started.

109 An anecdote from a participant in a GSC meeting who described facing a judicial system as being judged by a cold unsympathetic judge who may as well be from the moon.
110 2022

In 2012 *thiscollection* was adopted by two MSc Community Studies students at the suggestion of a participant filmmaker. The event was in the Out of the Blue Drill Hall, an Edinburgh-based Arts and Education Trust which hosts events and has studio spaces for working artists. This revival was a reunion of workshop participants. O.B, one of the early filmmakers, who documented initiatives, contributing two adaptations, documenting Artist-Poet collaborations [111]and the Open Source Theatre Property and Theft event, ran the public filmmaking workshop. The films from *thiscollection* were played on loop from 2-7 pm. The installation was in a room draped in black material, chairs covered with white satin throws, letters from the alphabet strewn across the floor while black and white balloons garnished the space. A curtain of bright wool surrounded the welcome desk; visitors were encouraged to leave feedback cards they could attach to strands. It seemed as if dis-place *thiscollection* never happened, and art carries on – this time, democracy seemed the commodity. The curators discussed concepts like ownership and democracy in a follow-up interview Their responses are in *italics* and refer to the Under light and shadow curator interview and reflection.

Their installation premise was based on the following: *all people are equal*. Cultural democracy is taken for granted *by a lot of artists*. Working on *thiscollection,* they realised that a contributor to the archive founded on freedom of expression might agree that everyone has the right to create, but *it does not mean that he believes in the idea that everyone can be an artist*. According to them, free access to unique democratic experiments is as important as *today's consumerist society does not give opportunities to people that want to get involved in art projects. thiscollection* was democratic because the public would have access to make their own films or poems - active participation through free education. Democracy was about inclusion; to the curators, that meant not charging for entry and accepting any contribution. They did not examine the politics of leisure time, which could impact attendance. They screened all the films, *even if they were a lot,* as making a selection would contradict the idea of free

111https://vimeo.com/14726947 [Accessed 17/2/23]

expression for all. It was strange hearing the idealism I had at the start of *thiscollection* echoed back to me; I wrote back with the advice I wish I had had when I started. *Democracy is* a *noble* ideal, *but sometimes the structures we work within are* not, *and* despite our best intentions*, sincerity alone does not a democracy make.* (Appendix TC 9 Under light and shadow).

These dissolutions and adaptations **surmise** that operationalising radical change without the broad critical awareness of principles of commons or extractive enclosure fails to develop a strong enough ideology to galvanise the public imagination. Self-organised initiatives can be sustained if rooted in gestures of neganthrophic action assembled in service to those directly relevant to improving their situation. There is much value in leaderlessness and anonymity at the initial stages of developing open propositions. These energies gradually develop into healthy rotational hierarchies derived from working groups on specific tasks related to long-term goals.

8.2 The Autodidact Archives

> Formalist Viktor Shklovsky's idea of "making strange" (Oestranenie) with Jonathan Culler's opinion that "the works we allude to as theory have the power to make strange the familiar and to make readers conceive of their own thinking, behaviours and institutions in new ways." The idea of defamiliarisation is not a new concept but it is one we have rather put aside, perhaps in fear of its potential romanticism. Within what is frequently described as the knowledge economy, not immediately knowing or understanding is something to be concealed rather than positively experienced.
>
> (Lee, 2020)

Intention

The Autodidact Archives translated these conclusions back to the frontline educator. Can theory hold if applied to a context of formal educators reflecting on self-taught experiences? Cumulative reflection of conclusions elicited from all roles: community activist, artist, producer and educator within these self-organised groups of varying political orientations were reviewed. From these responses to the questions “What

have they taught themselves?" varying stages of becoming indisiciplinary could be charted.

The contributors to the Autodidact archive[112] describe how they recovered time, space and self-selected communities to pursue self-taught activities which tended to be rooted in the vernacular or folk: musical, linguistic, craft-based or culinary. The collation and analysis of the coded transcripts describe the types of activities, and social context of these varied autodidactic impulses and the boundaries faced. Participants describe their impetus for self-motivation, where curiosity is a crucial incendiary. The documentation of these sharings was an update to the situation facing teachers and a reflection of the research findings on the teacher's persona.

These reflections of early experiences of erasure or innocence brought the explorations from the radical experiments back to redressing the anxieties of the teacher stuck between two worlds.

> ...disciplines are always necessarily lacking, in constant need of supplementation, correction, sharpening, and weeding. They fail us when we try to account for the nuances of the text, or when we try to model the peculiarities of the process we observe. They fail us because they were designed for purposes which never fully coincide with ours. Ultimately, they fail us because they do not emanate from the singularity of who we are and what our object is. Since all of us have to "perform a large number of diverse tasks", we constantly have to improvise new indisciplined tools and skills.
>
> (Citton, 2014).

"Our world is not the world in general." Judith Revel's sobering critique of The Invisible committee's "Now" demands revolution. In this redress, aware of Bourdieu's concept of habitus, most of those interviewed were from a professional class with a level of social, intellectual, capital culture, leisure time, and privilege to pursue their interests. Yet adopting the emancipatory assumption of democracy, these experiences outside of the institutional remits taken up and recounted allow us to identify factors and boundaries which could support the dissertation. They are offered here as

[112] Full Interview transcripts can be found in Appendix AA 1-3,5-8.

a counterpoint to the anxieties faced by the CfE pioneers of what learning can be; as administrators entrusted with the time of these youth, how can they be better served? Are their worries about accreditation misplaced, and how can these positive recollections of invigorating self-discovery rattle the cage of self-institutionalisation?

> A surprising encounter is a meeting with something you did not expect and with which you are not fully prepared to engage. Contained within this surprising state are (I) a pleasurable feeling of being charmed by the novel and as yet unprocessed encounter and (2) a more uncanny feeling of being disrupted or torn out of one's default sensory -psychic- intellectual disposition.
>
> (Bennett, 2016)

Remembering these self-taught experiences led to discussions of what factors inhibited enabling such powerful affective experiences in their classrooms. From their responses, themes of such self-taught experiences coming from educators were consistent with those defined in the Literature review. Working with teachers reflecting on their own experiences of autodidact endeavour raised questions of how much we *facilitate* such behaviours in our classrooms and, if yes, how and if not, why not? Participants were reluctant to describe themselves as 'autodidact', which had associations of exclusive genius and mettle to which they felt their efforts could not fully correspond. The procedure revealed that each attempt at self-education presented a spectrum of autodidactic stages. A portrait composite of a realistic representation of a novice's independent, self-motivated, self-determined efforts, thus problematising the modern myth of the autodidact that has been negating nascent vernacular confidence derived from everyday accomplishments.

8.2.1 Nature of self-taught activities

In order of frequency, the nature of self-taught activities was predominantly musical, a second language, craft-based, followed by cooking and technology. Of particular interest were self-taught behaviours, social skills or habits which a participant regarded as:

> Things you would expect to be taught, I was never taught that, I learnt that through trial and error, I remember learning the hard way.
>
> N, Appendix AA 5_N&D.

These activities were undertaken for various reasons: they were born of necessity for cultural or basic self-preservation or were often the satisfaction of a dream or deep curiosity. One participant was drawn by a vision to build a “secret place” in the woods, where no instructors within the field of interest were available, so he embarked on the ambition independently.

> [N]one of my leaders knew how to do it, so I had to teach myself.
>
> T, Appendix AA 6_T.

This focus differs significantly from Jonathan Rose's historical account of self-taught activities in the Industrial era: reading, writing, arithmetic, debating and amateur dramatics. Can R. Dominguez's chart of virtual capitalism be applied here? The *core* literacies and social occasions for gathering have gone online, as opposed to being reproduced and accessible in humble makeshift halls in the days of the working men club movement. These activities are vernacular in that they harken to a cultural knowledge that is off the curriculum's radar- less concerned with the status of knowledge but more so in the personal accomplishment of coming to know something well. They emphasise convivial generative qualities. Apolitical endeavours such as singing, cooking, speaking Italian, building a makeshift village out of found wood, and navigating social-emotional boundaries to adjust to society, put in perspective what standardised mass education struggles to disseminate.

Social Context

Self-taught activities were usually in non-formal schooling settings such as overseas, scouting, relatives' homes or studios. They involved some immersive quality, where they self-selected mentors or space to practice their chosen activity. These settings often involved some senior family member, adopted family or peer unit.

> I taught myself guitar, but my uncle was sort of in the background, learnt by watching his fingers. These days it is all on YouTube.

B

watching mum closely,

D

> Motivation… lived with a family and school and exchange [in Italy], was tiring, and when my mother called, I couldn't even speak Danish anymore, was exhausted.

H, Appendix AA 7_H.

singing in bands...

C

The participants who described only indirect connection with social groups in the initial stages of their self-taught experiences recounted how this lack of connection resulted in limited progress, lack of confidence in their self-taught ability and, at worst, burnout. Those with limited access to mentors felt there was a limit to their enthusiasm towards mastery of their selected interests.

> [W]hat would you like to learn… is to take it the next step, I feel as an autodidact I got to a basic limit, and I needed a teacher to take me further.

S Appendix AA 8-S.

Self-education consisted of learning through mimicking those with experience, complemented by references to books, YouTube or tutorials for instructional material. However, most described mastery as a result of solitary study or experimentation. The social aspect of learning was undeniably a factor in sustainability and jouissance. One pair of participants who responded creatively to the prompt described their collaboration as an act of *paragogy* (AA_N & D) – peer-led learning.

8.2.2 Motivations

A range of push and pull motivational factors as drivers extend this notion of moving from cocoon to assuredness. In order of ascending intensity, these included first encountering parameters to push against crucially a

frustration or a lack. These could manifest as having identified an interest, not knowing where to start or having access to reliable mentors; in one instance, bereavement and therapy spurred deep learning. This lack or gap's importance in one's motivation could not be underestimated. It was overcoming this which spurred curiosity and the tenacity to investigate. In particular identifying gaps from personal experience was the most effective. Top-down curriculums miss cultivating these learning habits and impress upon their recipients that their specialist knowledge is prized over the students' experience of the world.

What does self-motivation look like in autodidactic pursuits? Though not exhaustive, the participants identified frustration and parameters obstructing their curiosity as a factor. The first two are more common, while the emotional sharing of a loss of a loved one, though a profound push factor, from the small sample of this data, cannot be conclusive. Suffice it to say the emotional impact on one's personal life is stirring enough to shake off the convention of "should" and makes one more willing to engage in experimental behaviour.

Through this particular tragic event, intense emotion such as grief, of which autodidact activity was in her mind crucial for therapy, an instinctive drive to perform or share these discoveries, was part of her process. Levels of enthusiasm to share through performance were varied. For those who communicated their discovery, pride and ownership was an occasion of celebration: a proving rather than approval.

The autodidact is uncoerced and emboldened to exhibit or perform this discovery with an assured enthusiasm. They knew their practice was sufficient. They are uninhibited by the scrutiny of others and confident in the results by self-assessment, a Rousseauian trait of *Amore di soi*. This sharing made a deep impression on the issues faced by educators who endure begrudging performances or half-hearted essays submitted for accreditation requirements. The confidence to persist in one's learning goes beyond the monitor's remit, and standardised assessments or attempted scenario-based tasks within the current architecture seem staged and self-defeating. Yet parents are conditioned by the security of

examinations. Students are indoctrinated for the validation of grades to access social mobility and may be dependent on being assigned tasks rather than developing the resolve to make one's opportunities.

Supporting the ownership of such independent learning led to insights from participants' perspectives on parameter indicators of when facilitation is required and when they feel open to experimenting independently. Recall the CfE 2008 survey where Classics teachers doubted students would have the maturity to self-assess and monitor their learning. From an educator's personal experience, success depends very much on the activation of imagination and the students' sense of purpose and space to take on their tasks. Ideally, they have a room without overt, fretful interference to develop trust in one's abilities. The first phase of the AA procedure relies on pacing the square; each stride varies, as does each student's progress. However, capping this time and space to suit the imposed bounds seems to contradict the CfE objective to encourage ownership in work. As the groups show committing to alternative means of engaging learner autonomy, the expectations of time and room for imperfection must be a key consideration.

Consider the parameters, which are self-determined but flexible or even discovered by accident but at high risk of burnout or failure. Still, self-selection of interest meant the participant sustained persistence. As participants interpreted their photovoice decisions, a common response was one of delight and surprise at their conclusions:

> I didn't intend to be talking about this. Fantastic, isn't it?
>
> C

One pair of participants chose not to use tape and positioned their avatars between bricks in a wall.

> D: I just like the idea that there are these things all around you all the time that can influence you, and I suppose this … regimented bricks in my head

symbolising the possibilities of all the different things I could learn.

ST: …it was a struggle to find the right...

D: Spot, well it did then it pinged out ...I had to reinsert it.

ST: …but is the wall learning or your attempts to learn, and sometimes you bounce out? Experimenting ... to find the right spot.

N: I mean its boundaries because it is the boundary of the wall between two things; it's a parameter.

N had previously discussed how the emotional boundaries to curb her enthusiasm had been self-taught. It was in dialogue with D that the idea that parameters focused or emerged during exploration and could not always be anticipated.

N: Yea, that's a real thing I have taught myself. Things you would expect to be taught, I was never taught that, I learnt that through trial and error, I remember learning the hard way. ... Recently taught myself how to work with porcelain not by watching YouTube, but by doing it really badly for a long time and then seeing what works.

ST: Like being comfortable with failure?

N: O yea luckily I am. I am not embarrassed.

One participant was quite focused on the task, and meticulously deliberated on how to communicate her intention, generating her parameter design.

> ... aware these three objects were a way of trying to make sound, so they needed to stay together on some level.

C

Another participant had positioned his avatar under a corner of the bothy. Carefully marking a square zone for his avatar with black tape, he explained:

> I think I wanted to link him to the house somehow. It is this issue of this vast project (pause), and everyone will see it is too big, but from his point of view, it is natural.

T

The independent learner, engrossed in realising their vision, ignores convention to engage enthusiastically and take risks where adventure is the prize.

> Failure? Mostly came from overly ambitious building something too big; it wasn't that the building failed, but I started out too vast like a whole village in the woods, that was too much, so the energy ran out. ...Yes, I burnt out.
>
> T

Exuberance has limits. T notes that his initiative to pursue his vision's unchecked ambition came from frustration and the impatience of not having access to suitable mentors.

> T: I think it started with this wolf cub story in a way, which is linked to the boy scouts when I was little, because that is where I started to dream about things I would want to do, but there was there was no one there to really teach me. I learnt somethings, but the thing I liked to do was building huts or this way, the scouts use pieces of wood and tie it together to make constructions. It all looked very grand, but none of my leaders knew how to do it, so I had to teach myself.
> ST: Were there seniors?
> T: There were seniors, sometimes we learnt somethings, most times we would look up books.

The emphasis on relevant and sympathetic mentors, not just certified bodies, maps out the pathfinding of a self-taught adventurer driven by a "dream". The model of construction which first inspired T was seen in the club. However, this was not backed up by relevant, timely tutelage, resulting in burnout.

> ... very unconsciously went and bought a guitar and came back and I poured a year's grief into this when I was in a very terrible place into this guitar and all the songs and memories whatever came up really ...

by the end, the air was praying, because I was so motivated by the emotion.

ST: You taught yourself from scratch. Chords everything.

C: From scratch everything. That was it. Emotion was the most powerful influence and motivation,

ST: …improvising?

C: Yea everything improvising, discover, discovering through mistakes discovering through listening, using all the senses.

Curiosity

The recurring notion of enthusiasm brings us to the description of curiosity by these participants' autodidactic experiences. The more curious the participant was, the more energised they were to be creative, experimental and resourceful. As art educators predisposed to creative endeavours, they mainly seemed undaunted by the supply of the very basic options of black tape and scissors to complete their tasks.

In describing her self-taught experience of learning how to play the guitar, S used tape to map out the progress of her experience – in particular, her obstacle and anticipation of progress, where external help would have got her going.

> (giggling) So this is where I started very enthusiastically, and it became a line which I haven't managed to cross. This is me getting excited about some future progress. And this is like the mingle, the moment where it is all (makes a crackling scratchy noise) of trying to get further.
>
> S

Apart from two participants who were anxious about the constructivist element of the procedure, most were enthusiastic and responded promptly, eager to share. Namely, N & D. C & H., whose impatience to investigate or inhabit[113] the space supported the erasure of the archivist as an institutional figure.

Their choice of avatar added an element of playfulness to the engagement. When referring to a small toy television with 2 cartoon screen options:

113 A term frequently used by facilitators in the main workshop.

> Choice of silly or smiley face, I choose smiley... I prefer it.
>
> N

The participants generally described their experience as joyful, and in recounting spontaneous moments, C, in particular, was very keen when the archivist played along with her installation after lovingly devising it. Playful improvisation in tasks, alone or with others, who either modelled or participated in their processes.

> I wanted to learn it because I saw others do it. I wanted to be able to do that too. So I got a guitar and just played around with it by myself. I liked singing, so I was happy when I could just play basic chords and sing along to them.
>
> S

S's responses raise a challenge to the conventional profile of an autodidact. Can it be a spectrum with degrees of autodidactic behaviour, self-reliance and independent deep learning? Does the autodidact have to be one who aims for single-minded mastery or achieves recognition in the field? What kinds of autodidacts are there, and how does the community they curate impact the individual's pursuit? Perhaps the stages begin with a dream; from there, a clearer vision develops or a period of sitting with vague notions persists.

In discussion with E on the topic of schooling:

> ST: How do you feel when you have taught yourself something?
> E: Sense of achievement maybe, satisfaction, sometimes it is frustrating if it is not coming out the way you want it or you realise it is a bit limiting but you have the skill, but it is not vast enough. Yea.
> ST: What holds you back?
> E: I think sometimes confidence, and maybe sometimes ability?
> E: I don't if it's the risk. Eh, uhm... I can get frustrated with some things; then I try to change route...uhm.

After describing the swathes of ideas and trials, she makes a curious statement as the learner faces some kind of a cocoon.

> I was just thinking about the way you learn, and it's little bit muddled.
>
> E

Most participants used the tape to represent institutional support and the representation of an official boundary. E is kept safe by following the tracking where it leads, "a wee branch of something". Ultimately there is not a surge but cautious anticipation of learning happening to E rather than insisted upon: hence "it's little bit muddled" desiring to be cocooned by this process.

Conversely, this dreaming autodidact translates vague, nervous energy of insecurity into a constructive, expansive force.

> Yes, I burnt out. I think the energy was not only in the final result; it was the process of dreaming and starting to build something.
>
> T

T shares the dreaming process as the absorbing part of undertaking a world-building initiative.

> Maybe not ambitious, just dreaming of like I wanted to have a secret place in the middle of the woods, underground, hive in a way?
>
> T

The autodidact process begins when the dream and desire present themselves. T's avatar was the wolf he describes as fearless, doggedly following this elusive impossible dream.

> T: ...everyone will see [the project] is too big, but from his point of view, it is natural.
> ST: The bothy does look poised overhead to crush him though.
> T: Yes, exactly, yea. ... The dreaming wolf.

In the absence of conventional mentors or experiences of disappointment, persevering was par for the course.

> …that is where I started to dream about things I would want to do, but there was there was no one there to really teach me.
>
> T

C demonstrates the dream as opening oneself up and out of the muddle.

> C: No, no, no, no, no, I think that's not true. I think people can come up and make sound. The whole idea was they (avatars) weren't tied down (with the

tape) so you could (She rubs/ strikes two pieces together to make a grating noise). The whole idea of not tying that down was so they could (she demonstrates the striking of two objects together). It was an installation I was creating. So people could come along it was necessary for this figure, taped over, it was the fact when you play guitar.

ST: Like a pick?

C: Yes, I needed something that could be a guitar board.

C. demonstrated resourcefulness by transforming three everyday items into a musical game, generously opening a bound space into a playground. Self-assessment was effortless when criteria for success were embedded in each curiosity-driven activity. Often pragmatic decisions about what could be done with readily available resources to achieve their purpose drove discovery. Mostly, it was a concentration of their intention, tinkering with the idea based on their dream and enthusiasm to share their discoveries, which stood out.

> It has things like this (like drums?) (she flecks it loudly). There was nothing in the box that I could get close to a musical instrument, so I've had to make my own.
>
> C

This resulting resourcefulness and openness to risking the chaos of unknowing and potential failure were demonstrated in the activity by participants' choices.

B: Yea, there is a lovely space of possibility and potential here, but equally there is here it's very ordered, clean and clinical, strange

ST: Where rules are? But you could get thrown out with the trash?

B: Totally, that's ok; there's something really poetic about all that and real. Yea will be cool to see where he lands. I don't know where I hope he lands, actually.

In contrast to the *amore prope* personality, which constructs itself in competition with others, these recounts of autodidactic pursuits exhibit permission to lose oneself to gain a new perspective. As one participant articulated:

> The thing that moved me most when we began is the word erasure, the word itself; it really made me identify; it is also what you do when you learn, like the Italian, you sort of erase yourself.
>
> H

Erasure was empowering. It made room for curiosity, creativity, and willingness to experiment. The risk of erasure made one committed to this vision and decisively resourceful.

This curiosity as contagion in C and T precisely translated into recreating these scenarios into their teaching to benefit their students.

> Yes, that was childhood. I guess there is an element that I talked about yesterday, finding this abandoned theatre and bringing the students in and building their surroundings.
>
> T

C, in her installation of a participatory sculpture, was imbued with enthusiasm to engage and empower those who would try to make sounds or tunes from her selection. She attached her avatar instruments to the black tape.

> ...these three objects were a way of trying to make sound, so they needed to stay together on some level.
>
> C

The group's constituents were prone to indulging in the symbolic interpretation of the tape as a metaphor for their self-taught experience. After the recordings, C stood by her work which, to her mind, was far from finished. She wondered if strips of longer tape could be fashioned into makeshift ropes to give the participant more liberty to make sounds instead of her avatars. Her generosity and enthusiasm showed she valued collaborating as idea generation and improvement, but the archivist in character had to remain silent and detached and not rush to engage. Given this remit, dialogue was limited, leaving room for reflection on what she needed, what was valuable to her process and self-discovery – to which her eventual sharing would be much anticipated.

8.2.3 Boundaries

As described, two types of boundaries emerged from these recollections. Firstly, the initial barrier of ‘self-doubt’ to begin attempting self-education; the other was a limit where the self-taught knew mentoring from a person or group was needed to move forward.

These self-doubts were expressed through their choice of avatars. Barriers to initiating self-education depended on the affective filters' level of intensity, which was particular to each individual.

> Sometimes when I am learning things … I feel a bit embarrassed, like I will get something wrong.
>
> D

> I best remember that I taught myself something: I had a sensation of being stupid and a sense of being outside, not taking part in a community where the knowledge was common.
>
> H

Apart from the participant-driven by a dream or personal vision, all the other participants described this leaving their "comfort zone" as feeling "stupid", stuck or labouring under an expectation.

8.2.4 Comparing a schooled and self-taught education

These behaviours, marked by personality or conditioning, a theme that emerged from the recollections was a need for the safety of boundaries. The responses were varied and thought-provoking, describing the symbolic and affective notion of school as an inhabitable zone concerning one's capacity to self-teach. The following responses are from the photovoice interpretations:

> Uhm, yea, I was just attracted to this bit of tracking cos it was like the tape; I felt it was… suppose a bit of grounding for it. Maybe a little bit of safe- ty round it or something. I don't know and then having the tape come out of that, I don't know, maybe learning something new, a wee branch of something. Avatar in the middle cocooned by these ideas or trials...
>
> E

E's transcripts reflected the highest frequencies of hesitations and pauses. She was cautious and nervous and also sought reassurance from the archivist. An archive's role was to remain objective, only clarifying if responses were unclear, presenting an interesting dilemma of the nature of a library as a territory of interpretation. Her reflections describe taping the avatar along a plastic tracking, which hid electrical wiring, connotations of "grounding", "safety", and being "in the middle, cocooned by these ideas or trials" suggest the pre-conditions for learning were a centring of self and enclosure of experience, which encouraged self-discovery. The inherited education system provides security through proven performance to an externalised standard. Experiences of rooting confidence through self-knowledge would be incidental in this remit. E's self-taught endeavour in learning casting was limited to dabbling and not pursued further without structures to encourage her interest. Even though E knew what she would like, she did not actively make these pre-conditions materialise, nor did she know where to begin.

B's in-depth reflection seemed to articulate a similar uncertainty, reiterating the notion of "the middle" and that not of cocooning but more of balancing between two outcomes "safety or chaos."

> I guess it is just, I looked around, under there, at that house structure, I am in a space of introspection I wanted to be in, there is a bordered space here there is chaos there, He's tentatively balanced here between these two uh.. very interesting like...barriers internal, physical, real as a site of struggle, be it political, spiritual, emotional whatever, so yea, limits, chaos, order bridging them as an assemblage in the middle. (laughs self-consciously) very precarious and contingently placed, but poised, totally relying on that barrier, and where will he fall, does it matter? Maybe it does?
>
> B

The house mentioned in B's response was the bothy, right in the middle of the sculpture square. T, H, E, and S were also drawn to this structure in their activity. Preferring not to use any tape but not having her preferred tool, i.e. glue, H had her avatar taped to the middle of one side of the bothy, looking out.

> I like the idea of people in the background, so learner is isolated but still together with others.
>
> H

In contemplation of the possibility of education, Ball presents this challenge by referencing Foucault's stance as an educator:

> …subjectivity becomes the key site of critical activity within neoliberalism, the struggle over what it is that we have to become and what it is that we might be. Again, this is not about discovering our true self, there is no true self, rather it is about taking responsibility for our own self-formation, for producing ourselves, not discovering ourselves, not understanding ourselves but forming ourselves, always of course, in relation to others. The struggle is the struggle of our own experience, how one experiences oneself.
>
> (Ball, 2016).

In one instance, H suspected the archivist was avoiding the risk of making the Autodidact Archive more of a practice disguised as a research device.

> If you want me to do something, you have to invent some practice, you have to show me.
>
> H

Students in school institutions ask the same of their educators to model and demand alternatives rather than perpetuate toxic microclimates that expend energy disciplining behaviour. Schooled neoliberals imbued with reflections of self-taught experience can empathise with any student as authorities of their visions, thus taking risks to learn and develop the confidence to teach themselves.

8.3 Summary

From these sharings, the themes from the study in autonomous groups recur. Both address the need to overcome personal inhibitions based on security and reliance on an external authority before risking experimentation. Through their interpretations of the use or not of the black insulation tape, a comparison of formal and informal education tied this back to their resistance to erasure. These recounts are valuable to reassess the relevance of standardised assessment and curriculum

design in seeking to develop confident learners: success in what areas and on whose terms?

Both identify that self-taught activities tended to favour simple vernacular everyday pleasures. Folk activity had a quality of humanising through meaningfully connecting with physical capabilities or one's heritage and sense of belonging. The social context they describe is informal, comfortable social environments for quiet self-study and experimentation of tasks derived from self-awareness and purposefulness. Motivations that broke through these inhibitions were equally powerful, such as grief, ambition and dreams. The willingness to face the challenge drew them to set criteria for internal validation. The effects of curiosity and play were compassionate self-assessment and revision. Their newfound skill saw external validation through sharing via performance or exhibition as a complementary assessment.

Most memories of self-taught actions took place in their youth, so maturity wasn't a factor. The more tenacious autodidacts who persevered were of an older generation. It is worth investigating if their markedly different exposure to formal education may have resulted in fewer affective filters to overcome.

The "Autodidact Archives" helped locate the theories back to the teacher as a potential deschooler. Reflecting on personal experiences of indisciplinarian potential presented concrete means of bridging formal and informal educational settings. Increasing the porosity of the schooling experience to include the vernacular would activate student curiosities and in risking to trust they are capable of developing portfolios of self-selected propositions, timeframes, suitable mentors and criteria of success. These self-managed activities also define enclosure on their terms. The autodidact's adaptations draw inspiration and relevant mentors from a commons which models vernacular values, e.g. recipes, musical prowess, and den building. The hierarchies of knowledge abstract the terms of success from students who cannot comprehend why they need to be ranked and lose confidence in their capacity to trust their self-assessment

Chapter 9 Reflection

A 400 BC proverb adapted from Hippocrates states, “Let food be your medicine or medicine will be your food.”. In the narrative of “economic development”, substituting the word “food” for “education” in this proverb implies that current systems of schooling have become overprescribed “medicine” consisting of a mystical cult of knowledge hierarchies. Through observing these self-organised endeavours, this dissertation has attempted to identify what a detoxed schooling experience affords once past a rewarding albeit difficult “ungrounding”. These *remodernist* alternatives studied share similar traits, trying creative, sometimes contrarian ends, still revealing how institutions have fossilised habits of knowledge exchange. The assembly, celebration of commensality, intellectual resilience and curiosity to address the open proposition are alternative means worth reclaiming. This study has aimed to establish the value of becoming an indisciplinarian as the key to increasing the porosity of staid institutions to regenerate a sustainable model of living and working fit for the 21st century.

What seems obvious seems designed out of reach, the study shows informal self-selected education settings operate as a commons where humble sharing time and space is its currency. Indisciplinarity is the means of accessing such a commons that the process of knowing is enjoyable and pragmatic, driven by curiosity and purpose. The affective filters of risk-averse anxieties in trusting self-selected curricula, fearing the embarrassment of appearing amateurish or wasting time, are vestiges of extractive enclosures’ commodification of knowing. Prestigious scholarship is characterised by steep knowledge hierarchies, exclusive, expensive and increasingly abstract. Learning for its own sake as intrinsically joyful has been supressed or channelled into narrow pursuits of trends, ratings or technological advancement out of step with the man on the street’s concerns. Conversely, Indisciplinarians operate as if all bits of intelligence are equal and rotational leadership is necessary via non-hierarchical working assemblies. The study presents the following

features of sustainable sites of assembly. They are hospitable to all visitors, informed by shared testimonies and rooted in specific neganthrophic activities. They are simple, consistent structures which require minimal administration and are not too attached to fixed physical premises. The process of assembling is open, recursive and ambiguous; the uninitiated must undergo compassionate erasure to accept situations which may have no clear termini.

9.1 The wealth of paucity and the role of technology

The potency of an assembly and commoning depends on its openness to diverse constituents. As a non-convivial tool, digital advancements in communication can present the illusion of asynchronous and omniscient participation. Yet a disproportionate amount of energy is spent on critical aggregation instead of progressive action. Specific forms of digital assembly may help coordinate groups across territories with shared concerns. However, as the EUREDUCON proceedings demonstrate, the contexts of resistance relied heavily on decentralised local knowledge and actors, nuances which could not be captured on centralised platforms.

“Mystery Skype”, a Google-funded project, supported schools skyping a network of classrooms worldwide where students from one culture had to guess where the other was from with Yes/No questions. This cultural exchange and connectedness have been limited to a few American schools. Yet since 2005 Google’s budget for education projects to close the global education gaps has been only £250 million. £160 million a year in grants for educators and researchers has been allotted to push the educational arm of the platform. In 2022 it offers India a ten billion fund over five years for digital education when the annual budget for education is 6 billion. In proportion to the company's worth, these low levels of investment are not surprising. The ethos of the company and programmer culture is fiercely autodidactic – schools are perceived to be leviathan enterprises. Secondly, their business model benefits from reduced school time which translates to increased online traffic. Currently, digital devices are perceived as anti-social and criminalised in schools, while means and

training for time poor educators to adapt technology to complement offline engagement are limited.

The issue is identified in Mitra's projects; humanising a learner's relationship to digital technologies is necessary. His work demonstrates that Education is most effective if led by curiousity and developed by social epistemology and can be very cost-effective. Unfortunately, like "Mystery Skype" several of these models were interrupted by Lockdown and have yet to resume raising issues of sustainability and is a reminder that a commons is not a project to be managed.

They don't use books; they use the internet.

The above was a visitor's observation of Metchai Pattana. Students have cultivated a habit of seeing a school day designed by purpose-driven tasks rather than a subject-divvied timetable. Determining what knowledge is important to them is then supplemented rather than supplied by teachers. A facilitator's indisciplinarian flexibility shows that education in service to the young, not their specialism alone, is worth further study.

Students **"without"** devices are unfettered from online distractions and can be pathfinders for their classmates to engage with the natural world rather than seeking solace in a virtual one. The attempts by _OS to engage with Govan to build people assemblies or their openness to visiting experts to lead their inquiries have more impact and relevance. They are defining a need for "*associations of citizens, amateurs , activists and residents who are encouraged to work together with the academic world*." (Stiegler, 2016: 207). At appropriate stages, a resourceful educator in tune with the class' needs could identify local experts to develop joint investigations, as modelled by Rancourt's Science in the community module.

Class sizes need not be bound to standard sizes or locations; parks, homes, and neighbourhoods' embedded knowledge could be sites of exploratory learning. Guided by thoughtful observation from well-placed open propositions by teachers or students could open up the curriculum objectives to activate experience and enrich those assembled to learn.

These constructivist approaches counter the overdetermined lesson plans and help students make sense of their world. Mitra's case studies show problem solving skills of the young are often too readily discounted.

There are real issues: the digital divide, unstable domestic dynamics, and disengaged students not logging on must be considered. Unwillingness to log on if the same symbolic violence is served up is unsurprising. These real issues are prime material for open propositions and in each unique circumstance potential agency and ownership. They can problem-solve instead of passively being a problem to be solved. Set their reality as the priority, and investment of interest in the 'lack' will be the site of research and learning. Age-defined setups are compromises that miss out on reality's wealth of experience and social memory as HHWG offers. Rather than risk seeing how closely entangled issues are to their solutions tokenism of half-hearted initiatives of multi-age form classes for 25 mins a day diminish the power of assembly, perpetuating a culture where hierarchical leadership seems indispensable.

During lockdown, schools missed an opportunity to engage a deeper connection to the local environment and research skills online or offline by replicating old formats online – lectures, powerpoints, and individual exercises. The lack of appetite for deschooling will fail to unlock the potential of educational technologies for robust learning. Teacher technicians who turn readily to technology, pressured to speed up packaged learning delivery to demonstrate productivity could soon be replaced by online videos and quizzes. In the groups studied, the generosity of hospitality and the open proposition are generative when coupled with a commons-building mindset. Online schooling had the potential to be a low-cost, prolific, community-engaged project inquiry-based forum of exchange. Instead, panicked institutions became complicit in building an invisible bureaucratic system of platforms which shape how we communicate and counts virtual participation as adequate.

In order to better understand the operations of a commons, a reference to "The Ostrom principle: Rules supporting individuation." is worth noting. Elinor Ostrom, who was the first woman to be awarded the Nobel Peace

prize in economics in 2009, developed an institutional analysis and development framework (IAD) with her research team to determine where commoning actions could relieve helplessness felt by locals.

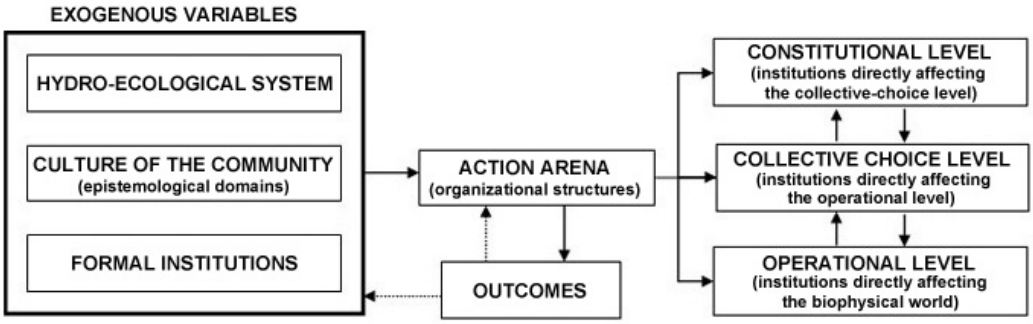


Figure 5 Institutional Analysis and Development framework. Elinor Ostrom (1980s).

Over her extensive surveys of water resources, relevant insights make a case for a hybrid vernacular for governance and grassroots communication. The struggle to obtain data to understand a commons was mainly due to a lack of *trans*disciplinary language between disciplines, each using specialised terminology. As it lacked the focus of geography and subjects studied, collating data was incredibly counter-productive. She warns that caging data in silos of proprietary software obstructs genuine emancipatory research. This concern supports the case for indisiciplinarity in education to ***see connections before categories***.

9.1.1 Making visible the invisible

Instances of self-organised mutual improvement initiatives based on improving mastery of a craft, writing and music-making, from the realm of folk activities tend to invest in a culture of consensus building. This confidence results in authentic hierarchies that run more efficiently than overdetermined aims and objectives. There are no guarantees that the *standard* delivery of a course will yield successful results across a class of science students: even in the Film Factory workshops run, none were exactly alike. Rancourt observed how many undergraduates drawn to Science by their curiosity about how nature works spent their energies working to navigate the dogma of academia publishing politics instead.

These amateur groups studied enact indisciplinarity where the “curriculum” shaped by interest and keen observations without monitoring

experts. They are also “free” and generative; consider examples of the _OS Commonplace book’s[114]open propositions or HHWG’s collected memoirs[115]. Fals Borda, a critical figure in emancipatory participatory action research encourages indisiciplinary engagement as

> ‘This systematic devolution of knowledge complies with the objective set by Gramsci transforming “common” sense into “good” sense or critical knowledge’
>
> (Fals Borda, 1991:9).

This framework for recovering a critical history which values and applies folk culture through collective research to produce new knowledge rather than reproduce a logic of domination. Comprises playful gatherings of young and old, a restoration of vernacular values such as local histories of self-organised movements, political struggles, and everyday experiences of the city from memoirs of local elderly

EUREDUCON 2010 hosted international independents to share testimonials of the issues in their countries or experiences as overseas students in a squat with plenums and free food. The findings address that small groups can extend hospitality to outsiders gathered around the meal, a workshop or a story as convivial commonwealths. Similarly, the Autodidact Archive recounts the basic pleasures derived from cooking a new dish, building a village out of dens, and other simple invisible domestic acts yet these experiences were rare for the average student. Stiegler critiques work and school cycles take time and energy, leaving little left for them to decompress: a cultural shift is needed. Community artists and youth group volunteers struggle to manufacture these moments with short-term projects of unrealistic funding remits. It may seem risky to present some of the simple acts, such as organising a 2-hour workshop on writing or even the meal as a metaphor for a different economic logic within an academic context. It may have seemed to onlookers that being in self-organised groups was an exercise in tediously “reinventing the wheel” but in reconstructing a ‘broken wheel’ much

114Appendix _OS 3 ‘COMMONPLACE BOOK'.
115Appendix HHWG 1Memoirs Pt 2: 29/3/10.

confidence in one's agency was restored.[116]. Worryingly they are also admitted as fragments for posterity as in the future, as self-isolation in Lockdown has proven, some may consider these simple acts works of science fiction.

These are recorded here to advance the humility and non-judgemental mindset of the indisciplinarian ready to interrogate a "need" and return to basics. Consider the irony that gifted with enviable natural environments, the OECD 2020 report observed that Scotland's teachers spend the most time in classrooms than any country. Biodiversity, design of sustainable shelter, clothing, equipment to survive or live with nature, self-expression of the sublime to punctuate the evenings by the fireplace, alternative ways of intergenerational co-habiting rather than reliance on outsourced costly social care programmes. These are embedded but often ignored benefits from what one's hinterland's natural resources gift the youth for learning.

Current experiments that aspire to rehabilitate this ritual are described as inefficient, unrealistic, resource-intensive, and too risky to implement within existing school structures. These experiences with ungrounding in self-educating alternatives demonstrate that these claims prioritise institutional architecture **without concern for the comportment it imposes on the students** within. Hence such initiatives defanged of healthy risk appear staged and forced if programmed within school timetabling. As demonstrated by Bamboo and Open School's indisciplinary approaches described above, radically reimagining needs to occur in or without schools.

9.2 Future Research

Despite the realities of assembly trusting that a commons can self-govern comes with compassionate erasure of the technician explicator either individually or as a support network. This kindness, in turn, cultivates an environment which builds curricula from student observations in response to embedded knowledge expressed through testimonials from those most in need in one's immediate commons.

116 HHWG, LD's growing confidence in sharing writing.

The CfE is a pioneer among modern curricula, and more are taking heed. Positive change was afoot in March 2020; the Ministry of Education in Singapore released the Committee of Supply report “Learn for Life”. Highlight the following radical changes: removing mid-year exams, which frees up three weeks of curriculum time—actively phasing out streaming classes by abilities with Full Subject Based Banding (FSBB) mixed ability classes instead. Flexible non-assessment-based pathways are also a 10% rise in non-exam based direct school admissions to Junior College, and by 2028 the last of the Secondary 4 Normal Technical students can skip Secondary 5 to enter polytechnics as foundation year students. In line with OECD PISA 2018 Global competencies, the MOE also intends to pilot a third language programme which encourages every school to have at least one overseas partner and organise virtual or in-person student exchanges with a school abroad. Bold, positive claims, but just as the pioneer batch of CfE teachers were trepidatious, the chaos of *autonomy* may require equally bold re-assessment of one’s self-institutionalisation?

Figure 6 Three models of modern curricula*OECD's PISA 2018, CfE & MOE Singapore global competencies*[117]*. (Left to Right)*

117 Images taken from https://www.oecd.org/pisa/innovation/global-competence/; https://education.gov.scot/media/u2lgmyum/4capacities.jpg?width=280&height=251&mode=max; https://www.moe.gov.sg/-/media/moe/uploads/21st-century-competencies.ashx?la=en&hash=97AF1F54D89A04E071D72949C6EFD868E3139206; [Accessed 17/2/23] respectively

Research proposals

In promoting modern curricula, ongoing work done in the field since this study suggests that the following directions are worth pursuing.

1. Furthering place-based research by connecting urban education research with rural education models would make a stronger case for adapting alternatives to standardised examinations.

In attending an International Symposium for Innovation in Rural Education, representatives from Bhutan to the Orkneys to there is much value in translating habits of mind in living vernacular cultures in Rural Education to those in urban settings. The exchange of experiences would also raise awareness of social issues the rural areas facing the youth of their age and realise sustainability beyond jargon.

2. Developing coping strategies for anxieties associated with dismantling knowledge hierarchies.

While presenting highlights of this dissertation at the 2021 iJADE conference “Hybrid Spaces: Re-imagining pedagogy, practice and research” On the same panel was a primary school art teacher who epitomised the traumatised indisciplinarian being force-fitted into a narrow technician’s suit. She presented a poem she had written about the tragedy she saw on the frontlines working in schools. Keynote speakers such as Henry Giroux and Satish Kumar made points much aligned with the study, which inspired making this work more accessible and impactful. Although the impact of transitioning curricula systems on students has been extensively researched, more could be done to represent teachers[118]. This research would alleviate the growing number of disillusioned educators where the Autodidact Archives aimed to initiate a restoration of strength to reclaim meaningful education.

3. A wider cross cultural survey of assemblies as a mode of nurturing self-determination in collective self-governance.

118 Work done to date which does address anxieties are by [Lucey & Reay, (2002; 2010), (Priestley & Minty, 2013) (Aydin, 2021) the latter’s Literature review on the Systematic Review of Teaching anxiety cites a smattering of articles from 1985 – 2018.

The ideal composite of future research groups would consist of students, teachers, activists, homeschoolers and policymakers to apply these conclusions in the crucial third and fourth levels of CfE. This action research would aim to phase out short-term positivistic assessment formats in favour of long-term portfolios of projects for direct admission. This culture of assessment for clarification can build confidence in creating employment opportunities in their chosen interests beyond graduation. It is not advocating never-ending schooling of the global classroom but initiating the porosity of the school's remit and involving invisible knowledge which no longer isolates the learner in a "box of should" but apply their curiosity directly to their environments.

9.2.1 Radicalising the world of work

Before retiring, respected mentor and patron of thiscollection and manager of the Adult learning project at Tollcross, Stan Reeves, declared:

> Employment isn't someone's problem to solve; **it is job doing, not job seeking.**

During the pandemic, daily operations of educational institutions were disrupted; examinations cancelled, and lessons went online. Students conditioned to top-down instruction waited expectantly for schools to do something about *their* education. A learned helplessness is a greater disservice to the young, where resilience and independent study seemed daunting. The global crisis posits a real possibility for change. It is easy to forget that students are already ungrounded; it is us that need ungrounding. They are already indisciplinarian until they are herded into guilds of abstraction in Secondary schools. This research has been a valuable ungrounding experience as a professional in the field. Institutions are accountable for the time these charges entrust to them

Stan Reeves' concept of social employment, redistributing authorities to communities to determine their long view ambition of meaningful employment. Authentic projects and pathways will generate a curriculum relevant to a commons if community-led assemblies direct them to engaging pertinent local and external experts. With a broader church of local partners, youth will have alternative models and criteria for success other than corporate life. Social enterprise unwittingly commodifies what

should be publicly funded services. This conclusion comes from understanding the potency of commoning as a severe threat to the longevity of these radical monopolies. The simplicity of protocols developed by the HHWG and several craft groups I have since observed is a testament to how overdetermined formal education can quash the life out of learning and living.

In promoting enterprise to youth, one must guard against the adrenaline and culture these platforms encourage, such as monetising a genuine need, rather than seeing needs as a duty of sound governance. At boot camps, the large number of start-up pitches' exit strategies tend to rely on being bought out by a larger company. This is a critique of the imbalanced view of business as a commodity rather than a culture. Wisdom to build rather than to extract requires rehabilitation and ungrounding preferably in assembly to redefine employment as renewing social infrastructures for purposeful work.

9.3 Notes to the Indisciplinarian.

"Mutual improvement societies of the industrial revolution took responsibility for their learning when state schooling turned out *small-town snobs* instead of allies to a self-confident working class they could not understand why." (Rose, 2010:457) With Indisciplinarity, Rancière was challenging the snobbery of professional opinions or rigid canonical readings of concepts, experiences and objects which formalised elitist ways of knowing the world.

Bourdieu challenges educators to be conscious of the symbolic violence unwittingly inflicted on students of a "should know" epistemology laden with obedience to middle-class aesthetics and values. Society has put that duty solely on schools as service providers, putting pressure on the solitary teacher to equip, speed up and deliver results as a technician – rather than a vocation to a mission.

Adopting the defiance of the ungovernable challenges teachers to confront their complicity with the structures that reinforce their charges' disempowerment and empathise with their malcontent. Preparing to be an Indisciplinarian demands reflection and evaluation of self-institutionalised

habits of mind. Ironically, the most confident feature of one's early teaching career could be the most disempowering for developing self-directed learners. The dismantling work comes from deciding what elements of one's praxis can be phased out and remaining open to help from the unlikely. Erasure must not be absolute or immediate but compassionate. The monitor technician is not a sustainable persona to uphold; perhaps be open to the surprises of the curricula from a commons and let the students' open propositions take the lead - first by neganthrophy, then technology.

This notion of students "leading" needs clarification- collective governance is a delicate balance to enable such ideals – self-selected mentors model sustainable relationships. Despite the apparent claim to leaderlessness in these autonomous groups' ethos, a core group of involved volunteers and migratory associates guided the activities and organised events. Governance with consideration to vernacular positions of those involved rather than micro-management of deadlines and top-down agendas then seemed to be the root cause of the breakdown in trust of institutions. The technician's deschooling will enable this process of becoming an indisciplinarian.

Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence has led the way for modern curriculum models. Singapore has recently followed suit with a "Learn for Life" programme comprising radical changes to the system, which downplays the rhetoric of excellence and success, reduces examinations and stigma of streaming. Increasing direct school admissions to Junior colleges and widening access to polytechnics -listing "Self- directed" learning as a key. Given this policy shift, this survey of diverse groups' self-organising non-hierarchical protocols unravels a curriculum from a commons embedded in one's multi-layered context. Conscious of one's orientation towards an ethos of commoning or extractive enclosure requires a period of readjustment or ungrounding to reclaim innate autodidact passions and indisciplinarian potential. The collective's efficacy to assemble needs to risk rehearsal starting with the neganthrophy of sitting with differences in order to identify similarities.

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Groups[119]

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[119] Access to digital appendices is via https://radar.gsa.ac.uk/8953 or the QR code provided below.

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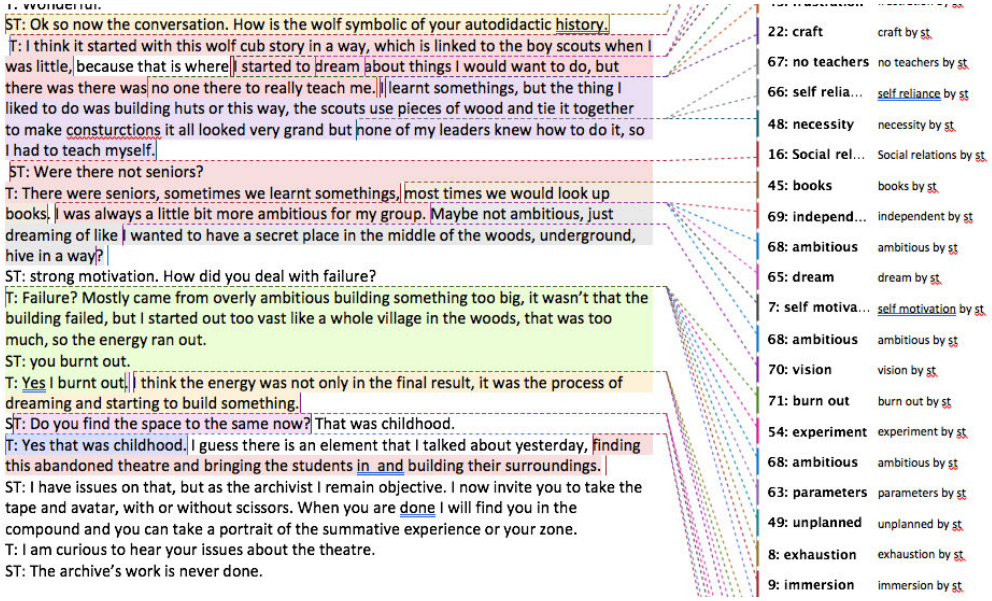
RADAR Access

		TC	HHWG	Autonomous groups	Retreat /Synthesis
Chapter 4	Approximating proximities	**2008/9** Blogger & Mediarumba initiate TC: Channel 4 funding social media community-based platforms creative startups. Open call for poetry submissions	**(late) 2009** Open call to creative writing enthusiats from public library Filtration process of 12 groups developing their own protocols only 1 group endures.	**2009** Becoming acquainted with alternative spaces in both cities, such as Autonomous Centre Edinburgh & Glasgow Social Centre.	
		2010			
		Open call invitation to filmmakers to make adaptations.	Weekly Wednesday meetings	Introduction & invitation to _OS blog Glasgow Social Centre / EDUEURCON invitation to Bochum	
Chapter 5	Field Observations	**Filmmakers pitch to poets: Speed Dating event** Public workshops on DIY filmmaking: Inviting local based independent filmmakers to run or host workshops based on their interests and expertise. Scheduling table of workshops. Informal school of DIY filmmaking. Initiating and co-ordinating access to public spaces. Building partnerships with Central Library, University of Edinburgh, Social centres and Community centres. These partnerships led to various forms of exhibition opportunities such as: **McEwan Hall: As part of facilitating a Msc Digital media Project** Hidden Door installation: Filmmaker's initiative to include films in another collective's exhibition.	Self-organised structure of meetings Scribes and Meeting minutes Silent stewardship Building sense of belonging Share opportunities Encouraging members to publish and exhibit.	Attend meetings attempting non-hierarchical organisation. Alternate modes of organising understanding **_OS** Field trips: Attend ALT Schools, TATE Liverpool with _OS/ Campsie Hills Various Online co-editing doc planning sessions of open propositions. Canvassing support from GACE and grassroot meetings in particular **Govan.** Various Informal gatherings of GSA & GU students in marginal unauthorised spaces, discussing issues of how austerity was effecting cultural production. **Glasgow Social Centre** Community project: Climate change quilt for representation at Copenhagen conference. / Haiti Hurricane fundraiser event.	Plenums/ Assemblies Sharing Testimonies: Activists reflect on efficacy of University Occupations in Europe. Insider perspectives: Activist Professor Dennis Rancourt. Autonomous education initiatives to develop theories of alternative economies with academics in solidarity with workers. Distinction between education activism in the West and the Global South.
Chapter 6	Clarifications			*Oct-Nov 2010* INSTAL: Evacuation of Great Learning: an ambitious experiment in non-hierarchical self- organised cultural production. Key reflections derived from this encounter as a participant observer.	Conference papers presented 2010-11 **The Art of Independence** The Rules of Collective Art: Social Engagement and Collaboration in Contemporary Art; Association of Art Historians. **The Scene of the Crime: Curating Resistance** Aesthetics & Ethics in Social Movement, University of Essex. **The calm before the storm: Reflections on Ivan Illich to the impatient reformer.** An epistle addressing the New Opening University Dilemmas of Science and Higher Education in times of Reform The Student Government of the Graduate School for Social Research, Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw. **The Scene of the Crime: Curating Resistance. Ver 2.0** 8th Annual Historical Materialism SOAS: Spaces of Capital, Moments of Struggle for The Aesthetics, Class Composition, and Cultural Studies of Labor.
		2011			
		Tollcross Community Centre Property and Theft interactive drama production. Poetry quiet slam/ Zine making/ Art: Map of Me Amateur run Workshops : Feel Film/ Film Factory/ Clinics/ FIT/ Assembly **Forest Café (Bedlam premises)** Sinema: Crowdsourced soundtrack to silent film submissions made by workshop participants.	Group dynamic fluctuates Meeting minutes maintain continuity and conviviality	Early days of the Free Hetherington Occupation which lasted 212 days.	
Chapter 7	Evaluations	**dis-place *thiscollection* Glue Factory, Glasgow** Culmination of themes and partnerships with Glasgow based art spaces exploring alternative education and community engagement in forums to initiate a potential summer school. Blochestra & various artists adapt poems for opening night. What did this cross-city initiative expose?	Group invited to reflect on its self-organised origins with local activist writer, Cathy McCormack, as part of dis-place thiscollection's Glue Factory programming. Issues with Public Library as a meeting venue. Under pressure to pay room rates. Group reluctantly move to Partick Library	**_OS support tc by organising a forum:** Evaluate the concept of self-education processes presented by tc initiative Part of a feasibility discussion to develop a city-wide Summer School initiative.	
Chapter 8	Review/ Application	**2012**			**2018**
		Out of the Blue installation Msc Community Studies students take on *thiscollection* of own initiative. Reunion of workshop participants Filmmaking workshop run by O.B (*tc* filmmaker) Installation design Interviews fail to interrogate democracy & community as imaginary and instrumentalised.	Ongoing Public reading of works @ Partick Library Self-publication *Flatliners* Published in a local anthology *Hame* Group still running, during COVID Zoom calls were organised. **Group invited to return to original premises.**	**Free Hetherington ends** _OS members dissipate into different forms of activist projects with community organisations. Some go on to graduate studies, one active member trained as a teacher and teaches in the Hebrides. Once the lease on the flat where _OS gathered ended. DIY project spaces and start up social centres take over the discussion board.	**Autodidact Archives** Can theory hold in a context of formal educators reflecting on self-taught experiences. Cumulative reflection of conclusions elicited from all roles: community activist, artist, producer and educator within these self-organised groups of varying political orientations.

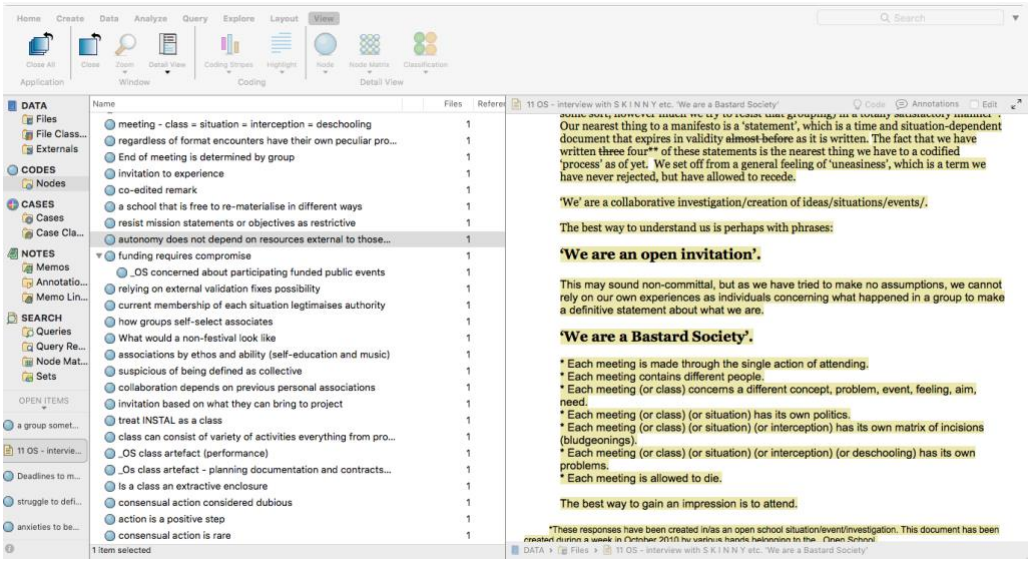
Legend

Ch 4 Approximating proximities: invitations and responding to open calls.
Ch 5 Field observation: data collection, analysis, memo making as a participant. A divergent curriculum of commons emerges by becoming embedded in group activities.
Ch 6 Clarification and synthesis of preliminary conclusions. Groups having established confront issues of self-institutionalisation.
Ch 7 Evaluation A converging forum for all groups to reflect and consolidate experiences.
Conference papers presented 2010-11: Form of theoretical clarification with a wider community of inquiry,
Ch 8 Review As groups evolve these updates test theories with different actors and contexts. **Application** Only the 2018 Autodidact Archives had direct researcher involvement.

Appendix 1 Research timeline colour coded.

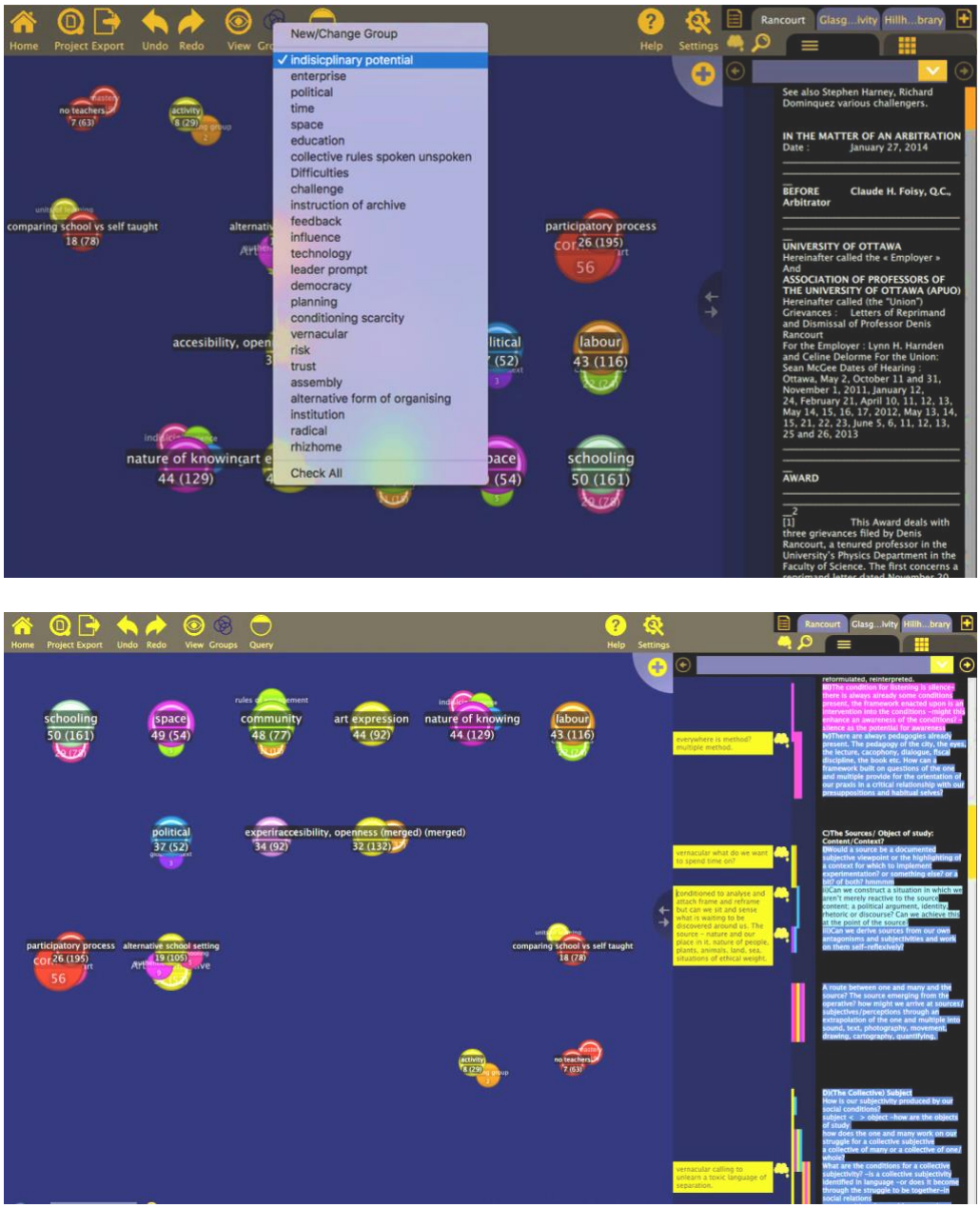


Quirkos

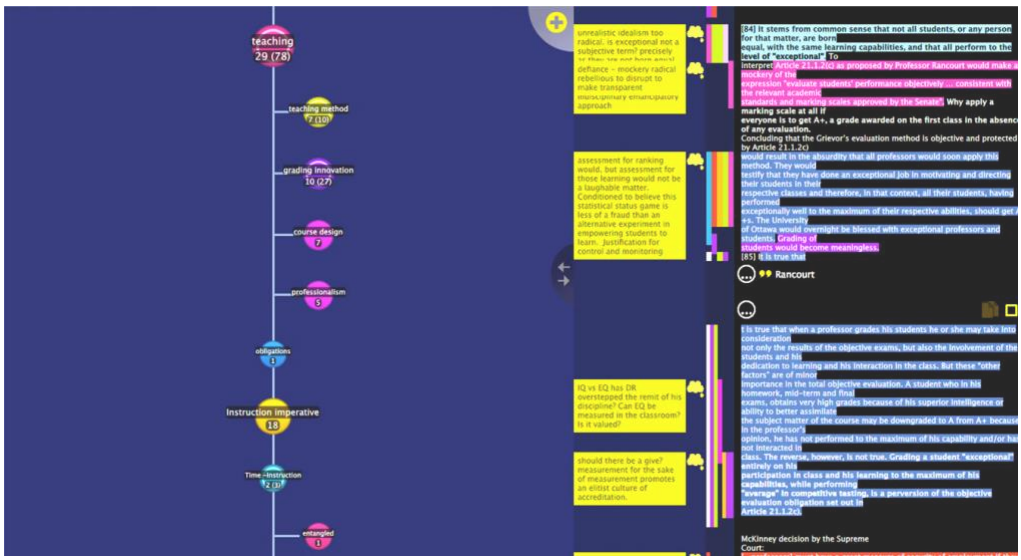


NVivo

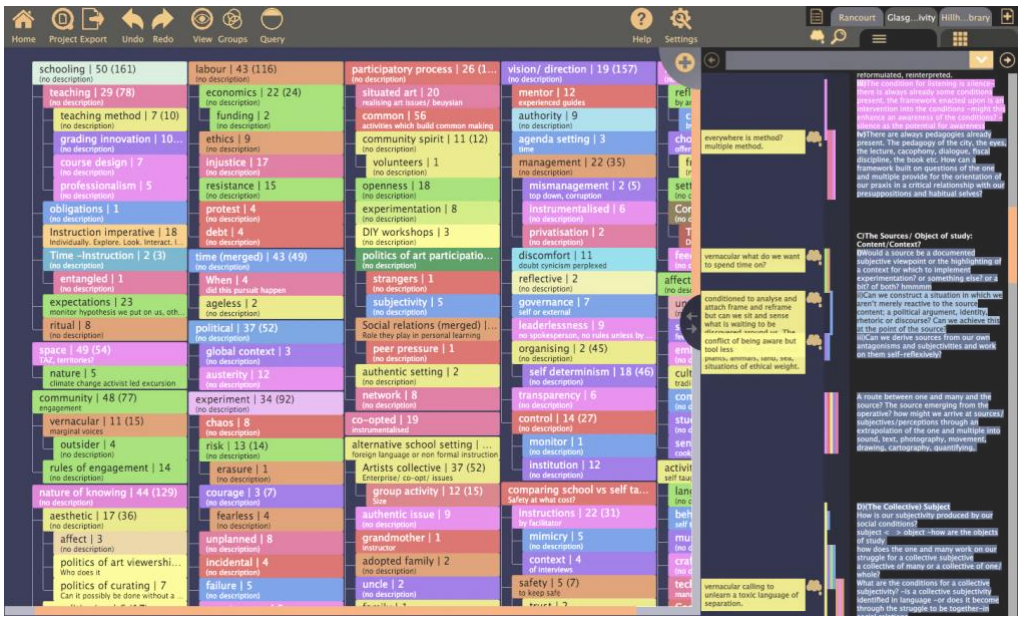
Appendix 2 Comparing Quirkos and NVivo Open coding of a transcript.



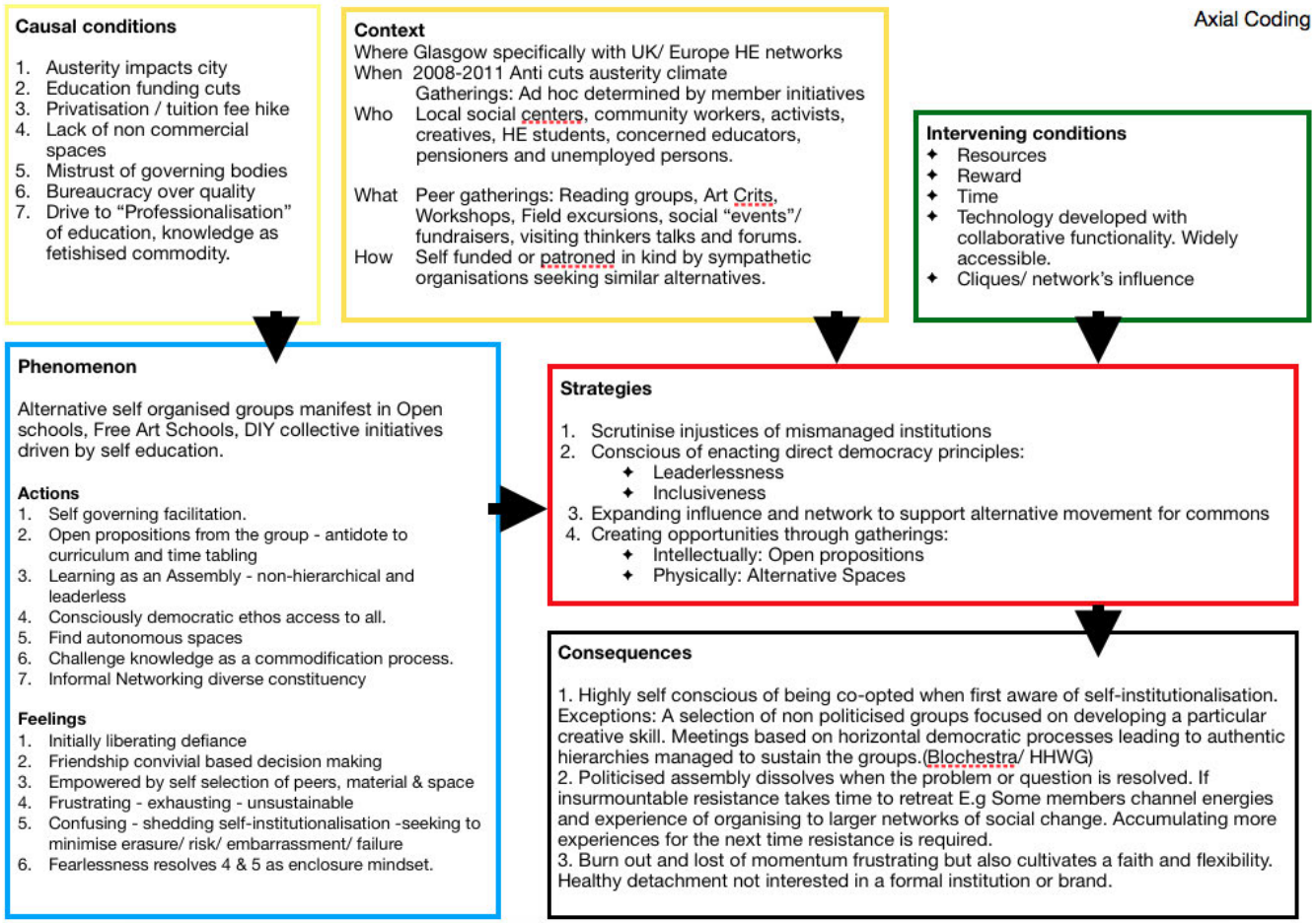
Appendix 3 Quirkos: 2 views of group filter “indisciplinary potential.



Appendix 4 Expanding the cluster labelled “Schooling”.



Appendix 5 Quirkos: Focused coding: alternative tree view of a transcript.



Appendix 6 Mapping Axial codes from field observations

Photovoice procedure

Fixing the avatar in a space that reflects the self taught experience

ST: If you can use the archivist's camera, it will be helpful. And how you would frame it. The rain is upon us. It really is. Yea from the wolf point of view.

T: There are different points of view.

Finding the spot

ST: did you know that H.'s was here? Did it make a diff.

T: No I didn't I saw the corner was occupied so I went to this corner.

Please take a photo of what you want us to see of this moment.

ST: So why did you give him a boundary? It is raining but you don't mind do u.

T: (Long pause) why did I give him a boundary?

ST: Or maybe explain the framing.

T: I think I wanted to link him to the house somehow. It is this issue of this vast project (pause) and every one will see it is too big, but from his point of view it is natural.

ST: the house does look poised over head to crush him tho.

T: Yes exactly yea.

ST: Ok, so the dreaming wolf.

T: The dreaming wolf.

ST: Is there anything else you would like to add?

13: instructions
instructions by st

30: context
context by st

13: instructions
instructions by st

2: reflections
reflections by st

7: self motivation
self motivation by st

63: parameters
parameters by st

73: space
space by st

62: boundary
boundary by st

72: perspective
perspective by st

68: ambitious
ambitious by st

70: vision
vision by st

14: interpretation
interpretation by st

47: courage
courage by st

69: independent
independent by st

37: risk
risk by st

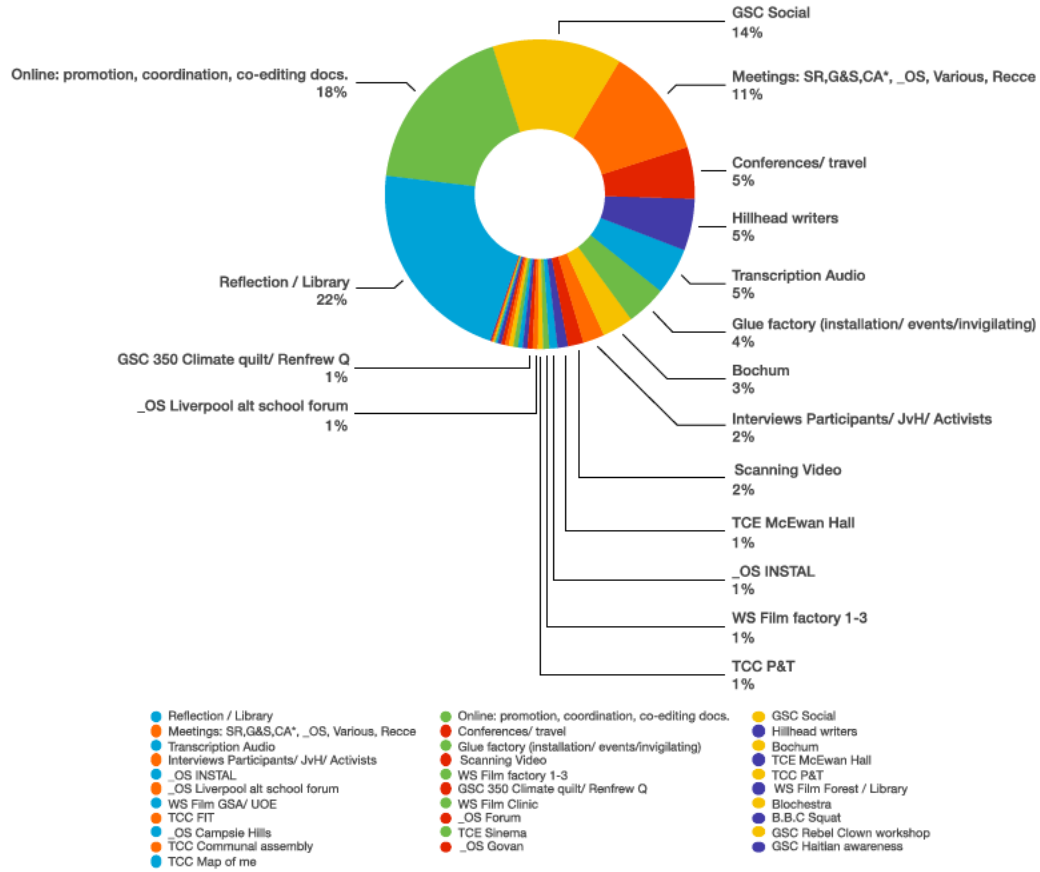
51: fearless
fearless by st

3: avatar
avatar by st

Appendix 7 Photovoice example in Autodidact Archive AA_T.

ACTIVITY	TIME / 2YRS
Reflection / Library	800
Online: promotion, coordination, co-editing docs.	672
GSC Social	500
Meetings: SR,G&S,CA*, _OS, Various, Recce	425
Conferences/ travel	200
Hillhead writers	200
Transcription Audio	180
Glue factory (installation/ events/invigilating)	156
Bochum	120
Interviews Participants/ JvH/ Activists	83
Scanning Video	60
TCE McEwan Hall	40
_OS INSTAL	32
WS Film factory 1-3	24
TCC P&T	20
_OS Liverpool alt school forum	20
GSC 350 Climate quilt/ Renfrew Q	20
WS Film Forest / Library	18
WS Film GSA/ UOE	18
WS Film Clinic	18
Blochestra	18
TCC FIT	15
_OS Forum	14
B.B.C Squat	14
_OS Campsie Hills	7
TCE Sinema	5
GSC Rebel Clown workshop	5
TCC Communal assembly	5
_OS Govan	4
GSC Haitian awareness	4
TCC Map of me	3
TCC Zine	2
TOTAL HOURS	3702

* Stan Reeves (Tollcross), Gale and Spells (National Library),Claire Askew (thiscollection). Potential contributors, locals, communities and visitors.
* WS - Workshop
* GSC Socials ala fundraisers.



Appendix 8 Research time bank analysis

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