



**ESRC SEMINAR SERIES: VISUAL DIALOGUES: NEW AGENDAS IN INEQUALITIES RESEARCH**

**SEMINAR FIVE: NEW VISUAL TECHNOLOGIES, MEDIA AND PRACTICES: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR INEQUALITIES RESEARCH**

**ABSTRACTS**

**Crossing the line: visualising youth leisure and urban music**

Dr. Brett Lashua, *Leeds Metropolitan University*

This talk spans a suite of projects concerned with popular music and cultural geographies of young people in Liverpool. Visual methods and creative media practices (mapping, documentary filmmaking, music videos, and music recording) feature prominently across these research projects. In particular I will discuss visual media practices in relation to the politics of 'youth' leisure, territorialisation, racialisation, and border-crossing. I will start from a 2-year ethnographic project, mapping popular music on Merseyside. This project invited musicians to sketch maps of their routes and routines. Some of these maps, particularly those drawn by young 'urban' musicians (e.g., rap, hip-hop, r'n'b, grime, soul, dubstep) brought me into contact with Urbeatz, a Liverpool non-profit urban youth culture and media agency. Consequently, Urbeatz film projects provide a second focus, including their *Crossing the Line* series (2007, 2008, 2010) about perceived boundaries in the city, and *L8: A Timepiece* (2010), a documentary about popular music heritage in the L8 (Toxteth) neighbourhood. Finally, more recent research with Urbeatz built upon these earlier mapping, music and film projects. *Liverpool ONE*, a 12 song compilation was released in March 2011. Promotional videos produced for this project highlight relations of young urban musicians with the city (e.g., the L1 postcode) and the regenerated 'Liverpool ONE' shopping area. Themes across these projects pose questions about the (in)visibility of racialised 'youth' in Liverpool, the use of creative media technologies to amplify stories young people tell about these spaces, and the power of crossing borders through the arts to address social exclusion.

**Research with, on and about video**

Dr Eric Laurier

Video is both a new and an old technology. Over the last decade or so there have been three significant changes: video cameras are now commonplace (on phones, computers as well cameras themselves), editing technologies have become available to non-professionals for the first time and the internet has provided a system of distribution outside of broadcast television and posting VHS cassettes. Across a range of communities of practice video is becoming intertwined with how they record, communicate, learn, remember, research, celebrate and more. In this paper I will provide an overview of work from the recently completed project 'Assembling the line' alongside marking connections with related work in studying and utilising video practices. What I hope to mark out is how varied a terrain video is becoming and some of the unique possibilities it has for social science analyses.

## **Older people video blogging and Wii bowling: Using multimodal interactional analysis to explore issues of access and digital inclusion with older people.**

Dr Dave Harley (University of Brighton)

This research uses multimodal interactional analysis to explore older people's engagement with emerging digital technologies and to highlight the situated meaning-making process that accompanies their ongoing incorporation into everyday life. The first research example shows an 80 year old YouTube video blogger called Geriatric1927 and his appropriation of YouTube for intergenerational 'conversations'. In this virtual environment Geriatric1927 and his fellow video bloggers are shown developing tactics for maintaining conversational integrity. They reinstate a sense of eye contact, take turns in conversation, share embodied gestures, share their understandings and negotiate simultaneous audiences, creating a conversational context in which common ground is shared where intergenerational contact can take place.

The second research example follows three teams of older Wii players taking part in a Bowling League set up in sheltered housing across Brighton and Hove in the South of England. These older Wii players are shown developing a 'sacred space' (Goffman, 1959) around the Wii which over time empowers them to take ownership of the communal spaces in which they live. Here they are able to learn new technical literacies and to establish new social connections through their involvement in the League. Both studies highlight the importance of social and embodied performance as an empowering element in terms of older people's access and inclusion with regards to the appropriation of emerging technologies. They also highlight the contested nature of digitally augmented meeting places for older people.

## **Photographic self-portraiture: Empowerment through user generated content?**

Dr Andrew Cox, University of Sheffield.

Although the self-portrait has a long genealogy in art and photography, self-portraiture was never a common genre either in familial or serious leisure photography (Chalfren 1985). Yet now "egotography", "daily booth" and 365 projects see an increasing number of individuals sharing self-portraits on the internet (Walker 2005) (a trend to self representation echoed in art photography (Bright 2010)). One social networking site has been built entirely around such self-portraits. If it is an Internet "meme", this could disguise the many different ways to make a self-portrait, and the different meanings they have in different contexts of use (eg Schwarz 2010, Palmgren 2010). Using published, digital ethnographic and auto-ethnographic data, this paper takes a practice approach (Schatzki 2002, Postill 2010, Gherardi 2009a, 2009b) to examine dilemmas in experiences of "empowerment" and determinism in Internet self- portraiture. It specifically seeks to address this debate within information science as a discipline.

## **Rethinking teacher professional development: Valorising gaming literacy and digital game paratexts in the literacy classroom**

Dr Christopher Walsh, The Open University

Including digital games in educational settings with children and young people is well documented in literacy research. Yet, models of teacher professional development providing practitioners with a metalanguage for connecting digital gameplay with school-based literacy practices, to date, have not been documented. This paper presents a gameplay model for teaching and professional development that facilitates educators in valorising pupils' gaming literacies in ways that support their acquisition of traditional and multimodal literacies. We examine data from a 2-year action research project that explored the impact of including digital games in the English curriculum with two secondary teachers in a large urban city in Australia. Classroom observations, interviews and the pupils' consumption and production of digital games and their paratexts—ancillary texts about digital games—are analysed to explore the knowledge around actions, design, situations and systems needed to authentically integrate digital games into the literacy curriculum. We argue that the gameplay model for teaching and professional development assists practitioners in understanding and talking about digital games and their paratexts with pupils. This moves the field of literacy research forward by providing educators with an essential knowledge about digital games that allows them to design literacy activities that acknowledge pupils' out-of-school literacy practices and also resonate with their lifeworlds.

## **New visual technologies and quantitative data**

Jo Mack and Peter Mitton, The Open University

The paper will draw on insights from the authors' ESRC funded research on poverty and social exclusion in order to explore new ways of researching and communicating quantitative surveys using data visualisation <http://www.poverty.ac.uk/> (abstract to follow)