CRESCNews

CRESC at the Commons

More than 100 people packed into Committee Room 10 on the evening of February 10th to join in a public debate on 'How shall we Rebuild the British Economy?' This debate jointly organised by CRESC and the New Political Economy Network took up issues raised by politicians of all parties since the crisis who are concerned about the UK's dependence on finance, neglect of manufacturing, growing regional inequalities and a reliance on publicly funded job creation. (Issues highlighted in CRESC's earlier research on the national Business model).

Earlier in the same week, CRESC had launched another research report which criticised the political discourse of both front benches about "rebalancing the economy" which implies that such problems can be solved using policies from the existing repertoire. Working Paper 87[2] focuses on manufacturing and presents striking empirics about the decline of large firms and factories and associated problems about broken supply chains: the average British owned manufacturing firm now employs just 14 workers in bottom of the chain fabrication.

This certainly started a debate. A couple of days before the Commons meeting, Aditya Chakrabortty had devoted his Guardian column[3] to the issues raised by CRESC Working Paper 87 and highlighted the question of British content when the JCB digger is now no more than 36% British by value. The many public responses on the Guardian web site included one from James Dyson[4] who defended his "Apple model" of subcontracting manufacture to the Far East while retaining design and development in the UK.

There was a buzz in Committee Room 10 as the chair, Jon Cruddas MP, invited contributions from the five speakers on the platform before taking questions and comment from the floor. CRESC director

Karel Williams made the opening statement and he was followed by Brendan Barber (General Secretary, TUC), John Denham (Shadow Secretary of State for Business Innovation and Skills), Paul Everitt (Chief Executive, The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders) and Sir Alan Rudge (Chairman, ERA Foundation).

The diversity of the platform speakers and the audience on the floor was in itself significant. Many who made different journeys have now arrived at broadly similar conclusions about the problem of sectoral imbalance and about the importance of manufacturing which now sustains jobs and exports of goods and is a source of national security in an uncertain world. All the speakers from left and right agreed that urgent problems required new goverrnment interventions to rebuild supply chains, capacity and skills.

CRESC researchers, including John Law, Adam Leaver and Sukhdev Johal have developed a very distinctive line about new kinds of policies. They criticise the generic, pro enterprise, low tax, easy hire and fire policies of successive governments; and instead argue for sector specific privileges which would offer targeted (and earned) corporate tax cuts for manufacturing firms which increase

output or invest in capacity or workforce skills. It will be a little while yet before we convince all of our audience of the merits of this new approach, but with Working Paper 87 and the recent Commons debate we have certainly started an interesting discussion.

[1] http://www.cresc.ac.uk/publications/undisclosed-and-unsustainable-problems-of-the-uk-national-business-model

[2] http://www.cresc.ac.uk/publications/rebalancing-the-economy-or-buyers-remorse

[3] http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/feb/08/brain-food-britains-manufacturing-malaise

[4] http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/2011/feb/10/ideas-patents-and-the-yellow-digger

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Broken supply chains

John Law and Karel Williams

The British political classes who live in a metropolitan bubble, may be said to think and act in metaphors that detach them from the inextricable ex-industrial problems of Middlesborough and Wolverhampton. So it is in recent speeches made by David Cameron and George Osborne on 'rebalancing the economy' (both of whom echo Peter Mandelson's earlier sound bite about more 'real engineering and less financial engineering') as the coalition enacts rebalancing through pro-enterprise cuts in corporation tax, Fraunhofer networks to bring universities and industry together and trade missions to India and China.

The rebalancing metaphor and current policies both suggest we need a kind of steering correction through 'left hand up a bit and right hand down a bit' manoeuvring'. But what's really required is a dramatic U-turn because for thirty years British manufacturing has been irrelevant to successive Tory and Labour governments. They used public expenditure to create jobs which the private sector did not (especially in the ex-industrial regions like the North East and West Midlands) and increases in house prices via housing equity withdrawal, generated the increases in output and demand.'

Even without the crisis this national business model was unsustainable. Cameron and Osborne cite the CRESC research which shows that more than half the new jobs created under Tony Blair were publicly funded. They are more reticent about how, under Mrs Thatcher, as under Tony Blair, the value of housing equity withdrawal was larger than the growth in GDP. Much of the withdrawal went on consumption of imported cars, kitchens and holidays so British manufacturing output never increased and numbers employed declined steadily from 7.0 million in 1979 through to 4.0 million in 1997 to 2.4 million this year.

The Coalition's OBR forecast now envisages an export led boom which will bring us more jobs and compensate for public expenditure cuts. The Prime Minister's vision is that this will come from individual companies succeeding in global markets. We have "great

industrial strengths across our country, underpinned by world beating companies "and the task now is to back the high growth companies with new technologies which are" the big businesses of tomorrow". He does not recognise that a successful national manufacturing sector is an ecological system where supply chains profitably connect the different competences of small, medium and large firms.

If national manufacturing is an ecological system, then large and medium British owned firms are an endangered species at the top of the chain. If we look at firms we have only one large world class high technology contender in Rolls Royce and its aero engines and then a handful of worthy niche players like JCB or Weir typically

employing less than 5,000. If we look at establishments, the big factories are mainly closed or sold because of shareholder value demands for high profit and inept privatisations which destroyed domestic capacity. Three quarters of UK manufacturing employment is now in workshops employing 10 or less because what we have is the 'scrubby bush' that grows back after the tall trees are cut down.

While coalition policy is to back the next generation of winners, broken supply chains powerfully constrain firm ambition. More than half of output comes from the British workshop sector which has a low purchase to sales ratio and high labour to costs ratio because these are bottom of the chain fabricators whose only realistic ambition is to avoid a price squeeze that would put them out of business. The factory sector is foreign owned by firms employing an average of 200 and accounting for one third of employment.

The problem here is that these are branch assembly plants whose ambition is limited by their fixed role in a global division of labour. Twenty years after the Japanese car makers arrived, all the Japanese manufacturers in the UK employ no more than 50,000 and never will.

The breaking of supply chains destroys British capacity and capability and creates major problems for the remaining players because it is, for example, no longer possible to construct a heavy engineering product with a high British content. (The JCB digger had a British content of 96% by value in 1979 and just 36% by 2010). Meanwhile, new corporate exemplars of success like ARM in chips for smart products or Dyson in vacuum cleaners have adapted pathologically by outsourcing everything except design and maybe chain organisation. The result is not the solution but another instalment of the problem because low wage outsourcing plus design and branding has made James Dyson a billionaire while his company employs around 2,000 in the UK.

What are the implications? Manufacturing is worth defending because it employs more than 2 million at above average wages. But, the government or the opposition must start to think much more radically outside the frame of product led individual company success and look at the specifics of chains, capacity and infrastructure as well as skills (outside the cage of EU rules within which the problem cannot be solved). And, as competitive market success will not create enough jobs we need to connect manufacturing renewal with a green new deal of sheltered employment in repair, maintenance and up grading for a low carbon economy. Middlesbrough and Wolverhampton deserve better than the hubristic detachment of the coalition

These issues are analysed in greater detail in "Rebalancing the economy or buyer's remorse" by Julie Froud et al. No. 87 (working Paper)
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Cultural Work: Futures and Pasts?

Mark Banks

In June 2010 CRESC hosted *The Future of Cultural Work*, a one-day conference held at the Open University (London office), organised in conjunction with the Centre for Culture, Media and Creative Industries (CMCI) King's College. The conference aimed to consider the politics and organisation of artistic and cultural work and employment, not simply in the current 'moment' but in its historical and future-oriented formations.

Around 80 academic and industry delegates heard a variety of papers beginning with a keynote from Melissa Gregg (Sydney) on the relationship between technology and intimacy in creative work environments. Here, we learnt how incitements to break the temporal and spatial constraints of the 'office' can lead to workers developing various dependencies and corrosive relationships with those mobile objects ostensibly designed to enhance personal liberty (such as smartphones, laptops, and email). If many of its supporters see creative and cultural work as the progressive effacement of work's established space-time domains, then this offered a sobering alternative view. On hearing this, we might have been forgiven for wondering how a politics of cultural work might develop amongst workers so seductively inveigled in the social and material relations of 'work's intimacy'. However, as a variety of papers then argued, the demands for a critical politics of cultural work have recently re-emerged, energised by those who seek to challenge the unwelcome consolidation of free and co-creative work in cultural and creative industry organizations, coercive new training and educational initiatives and oppressive models of organization and corporate governance – there is, then, a strange tenacity to the artistic critique, one seemingly able to adapt itself to the pressures of transforming workplaces.

Yet, if the cultural worker must appear to be politically mobile in response to shifting organisational models, then it is also clear that many of the problems such workers face look depressingly familiar. As a number of

> *how incitements to break the temporal and spatial constraints of the 'office' can lead to workers developing various dependencies and corrosive relationships with those mobile objects ostensibly designed to enhance personal liberty*

speakers emphasised, cultural/creative industries work is marked by, not the supersession, but the renaissance of traditional class, ethnic and gender divisions, inequalities of access and promotion, and various personal and social pathologies long associated with craft, cultural and artistic labour, (albeit now tied increasingly to a shifting international division of cultural labour supporting the trans-global production, circulation and exchange of cultural commodities).

Thus, while debates on cultural work in the context of creativity and innovation economies appear to be 'of the moment', they must also be understood within a wider historical frame, since such work has long exhibited conditions of precarity, inequality and disaffection while being widely lauded as the template or ideal for future work worlds (consider the work of Marx, C. Wright Mills, Alvin Toffler or Daniel Bell for example). Some of the questions delegates were left to ponder included: What are the intersections between historical, current and future patterns of work in the creative and cultural industries, and how do these relate to the discursive and material practices of culture and economy? And adjacent to this, how might we theorise the durability of cultural and creative work as a locus for politics, social critique and the utopian promise of non-alienated labour? Is cultural work now completely implicated with new forms of exploitation, including self-exploitation, or does it retain some redemptive, socially progressive qualities?

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Jazz and Race, Past and Present

An international conference, The Open University, 10-12 November 2010

Jason Toynbee

It seems obvious. These days no-one in the academy, apart from the odd 'Darwinian' crank, believes that race derives from people's physical make-up. Rather it is mostly understood as cultural, a matter of signification. Perhaps less obvious is the fact that music plays an important part here, and no more so than in the case of jazz. From the earliest days to the 1970s it was produced mostly by African-Americans. What has counted, though, is not so much this bare fact as its meaning. In some contexts today, and at certain moments historically, jazz has come to stand for black America – it becomes a kind of metonym for the creativity, dignity and self-sufficiency involved in being black, in the US at least.

On the other hand, race is also structural, emerging through deeply embedded social relations of difference which co-produce unequal access to resources, status and recognition: historical racism in short. From this perspective race is an enduring wound, a form of social pathology. One of the things we have been trying to do in the Black British Jazz research team based at The Open University (a CRESC affiliate) is to open up this problem of the contradictory nature of jazz and race, and consider the two dimensions of culture and structure together in the British context.

I'd say the international conference held at the OU last November made a strong contribution to moving that enquiry forward. A telling combination of intellectual focus and ethical commitment was evident not only among the speakers, but also in discussion. Guthrie Ramsey's (University of Pennsylvania) keynote set the tone, exploring the notion of a 'social contract' in jazz. This has depended both on an apparent agreement among listeners and players concerning the way jazz is identified as

African American, but also on a 'nonlinear, African cultural legacy' which plays out in the music. Both convention and heritage are involved in other words, and significant tensions flow from this because the 'agreement' about the role of race is not actually understood in the same way by all participants.

Such stress points relating to the race dimension of jazz turned into fractures over the course of two days. As usual in a conference report there is no room to do justice to all the fine contributions. But I'll point to a few which seem to me to encapsulate wider concerns. For instance, George Burrows (University of Portsmouth) discussed the 'kitsch Britishness' of black pianist and composer Reginald Forsythe, who worked with leading American musicians in New York in the 1930s. Forsythe brought a sort of European sophistication to US jazz. Yet at the same time as a gay, black man he opened up a dissonant space, in effect, 'camping up Adorno' as Burrows put it, in ironic reference to that astringent cultural critic and enemy of popular culture, Theodor Adorno.

On the face of it Nick Gebhardt's (University of Lancaster) paper posed something utterly different; the idea that jazz needs to be understood in the context of the creolization which is at the heart of musics of the Caribbean. Move the notional centre-point of jazz 1000 miles South from the middle of the USA and a quite different picture of jazz

emerges, one in which the form has a strong universalist tendency, reaching *through* difference towards ubiquitous hybridity. Meanwhile Gayle Murchison's (The College of William and Mary) reading of some piano solos by Mary Lou Williams from 1927 suggested yet another race thematic in jazz. Mary Lou's improvisation, sometimes disparaged for its rhythmic irregularity, was actually a creative product of gendered difference. The pianist could perform the emergent African-American jazz tradition in another way just because as a women she was both in- and outside it.

Contradiction was key in many of the conference papers, then. But it was also manifested across the papers, and in discussions after the sessions. The next major European jazz conference will be held in Amsterdam in September on national identities and jazz, where no doubt we can usefully pick up the theme of contradiction again

All in all I'd say Jazz and Race was a terrific success. I think Guthrey Ramsey meant it in a positive way when he said he had never been to a conference in where there was so much openness and argument. That was my feeling too – arguing to try and smash the enigma of jazz and race. Thanks need to be conveyed to those who enabled all this to happen, especially to Kerry Lawrence (OU Sociology) our outstanding conference administrator, and conference organiser Catherine Tackley (OU Music and the BBJ project) who assembled such a fine roster of speakers. And I shouldn't forget the Peter Edwards Trio with Binker Golding who made great music during the reception.

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The politics of 'sustainability' in an urban region: making up the South East of England

Allan Cochrane

The economic crisis has thrown both the urban development market and urban policy in Britain into turmoil. New housing and renewal programmes have stalled. The familiar public/private partnership and volume house builder models for building and funding new urban extensions and fostering urban renewal are no longer viable. Urban and regional policy that was shaped around market assumptions of growth and the possibility of cross-subsidy has been overtaken by events.

In the high days of new Labour, although there was formally no national plan or, indeed, national planning framework, some underlying principles and assumptions were clear enough. They can be summarised relatively briefly: London and the South East was England's growth region ('an advanced industrial super-region' according to South East's now abolished Economic Development Agency) and the national economy's success depended on its success; it was, therefore said to be important that ways were found to sustain the region's growth; while in the other English regions the challenge was identified as finding ways of fostering self-sustaining growth.

From this perspective, in London and the South East the task was to deliver sufficient housing for key workers to sustain growth, developing strategies for the making of (new) sustainable communities on the edge of the region; in parts of the Midlands and the North by contrast, the task was defined as how to find ways to stimulate housing markets and foster urban renewal, with an emphasis on the renewal of housing markets in inner areas.

The notion of sustainable communities (and sustainability) was used to bring these two quite distinct forms of urban policy together, under the broad rubric that sustainable communities were those 'places where people want to live and work, now and in the future'. In practice, however, a central emphasis of policy – as expressed in the government's sustainable communities plan – was on the possibilities and challenges represented by developments in the Greater South East – the London City Region. At the plan's heart was the identification of four growth regions; Milton Keynes and the South Midlands, the London-Stansted-Cambridge-Peterborough corridor, the Thames Gateway and Ashford.

The limits to growth in the South East had been identified as the tipping point for national recession in the early 1990s when a lack of 'affordable' housing and the strains on transport and other infrastructure were understood to have led to a tightening of the labour market. So the task was defined as finding ways of reducing the likelihood of a similar occurrence. Providing housing for those who were needed to sustain the boom, even where (like teachers and other public sector workers, but also the growing army of service workers in retail, distribution, hotels and catering) they were not highly paid 'knowledge workers' was identified as a priority. The development model embedded in the plan relied heavily on the possibility of extracting a surplus from private housing developers to fund community facilities, schools, and transport infrastructure.

In this context sustainability was defined through economic growth (sustaining the boom by ensuring that the labour market did not 'overheat' because of rising house prices) but coupled with environmental ambitions (reducing the resource demands of development and moving towards carbon neutrality) and the building of balanced communities (self-sustaining places within which trust would flourish and it was believed social capital would be built). In other words, three interpretations and understandings of 'sustainability' were brought together, namely: sustainability as environmental 'good' - looking for ways of minimising environmental harm; sustainability as economic growth - providing infrastructure and renewing the labour force; and sustainability as the building of sustainable communities - the search for balance. Such communities were also expected to bring social discipline, to deliver a morally responsible population making the right choices about appropriate behaviour.

Responding to the crisis

The assumptions under which the sustainable communities plan was initially developed have been overtaken by the harsher realities of the housing market, even in the previously favoured areas of the South East (as well as the inner cities of the Midlands and the North where the Pathfinder schemes have been abandoned). Even where local and regional agencies have survived the cull launched by the new Conservative/Liberal Democrat coalition government or been replaced by new local partnerships, their ability to negotiate effectively is substantially undermined. It is no longer possible to rely on the surplus generated from house building and sales to provide the infrastructural spending to underpin sustainable communities.

The decisions of the coalition government promise a reframing of the existing model - the end of what is identified as top-down planning and target setting, offering the prospect of 'localism'. Although in practice this may not amount to the handover of power from the centre to local agencies and community organisations, it certainly transforms the position of the South East and its official conceptualisation. It was in that region that targets for housing growth had most significance – there that supply and demand for 'affordable' housing were most disconnected. In effect the withdrawal of targets and the return of the initiative to local authorities (albeit with financial carrots for those that choose to allow housing development) repositions the London city-region as a suburban region, that is one whose politics are defined by the tensions between the defence of existing life styles and amenity and the continued pressures for growth and development.

Sustainability was the banner around which it was imagined a realistic and pragmatic urban policy linking environment and economic growth could be constructed. However, as Jacques Rancière reminds us, even 'realism' may turn out to be a utopian politics. Even in a context where the promise of growth might have been more realistic, the assumptions of unproblematic development were questionable, but today the problem of basing policy around the potential of market development is all too apparent. Such policies depended on the market actually delivering, on the coming together of housing and social infrastructure, on the integration of environmental and development agendas. Those assumptions were always problematic but the collapse of the growth agenda in the face of market induced crisis has confirmed the utopianism of the project particularly starkly.

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The Uneven Temporalities of Climate Change

Michelle Bastian

In attempting to explain humanity's inability to respond swiftly and proportionately to the massive ecological changes currently taking place, environmentalist Bill McKibben has suggested that one of the key problems is not a lack of will or a simple inability to act. Instead he suggests that we are in the grips of a fatal confusion about the nature of time. One way we think about this suggestion is to compare clock time with the events that are currently taking place in our world. According to the clock, things seem to be ticking along the same as ever. The caesium atom, which we use in atomic clocks, has the wonderful capacity to indicate seconds in a very regular and precise way. No matter what else happens in our world, whether it be mass extinctions, peak oil, dramatic changes in sea levels or extreme weather conditions, atomic clocks will continue to measure each moment as if it were the same as the last.

However, as we are well aware, moments are not the same. The moments prior to the climatic tipping point are full of urgency, confusion, dread and obliviousness. However, this is the time the clock cannot tell us, so in order to think through the uneven temporalities of climate change what might we turn to instead? Anthropologists have suggested that, rather than understanding time as an abstract and neutral container, within which we live out our lives, time can be understood as a method of coordinating the intertwined relationality of social life. So, we co-ordinate ourselves in reference to the changes occurring within caesium atoms because this seems to allow us to deal with the complexities of social life in the most coherent way. If this method of 'telling the time' has become incoherent, then perhaps we might want to rethink 'clocks' in radically new ways.

What if, rather than co-ordinating our lives with and through a stable and predictable atom, we co-ordinate our lives with something less predictable but maybe more accurate – turtles for instance

While this is without doubt a strange kind of suggestion to make, thinking about turtles as

Image: *Time* by Thomas Hawk

clocks might end up being quite an interesting thought experiment. In fact, turtles already indicate certain kinds of time for humans. Their status as one of the oldest surviving species on the planet and their resemblance to their fossilised ancestors often provides a way of linking the present with the ancient past. Individual turtles can live for centuries, dwarfing our own short lives in comparison and thus providing a different time frame from which to judge the consequences of our actions. And yet, the seemingly unchanging, superbly adapted turtle is in many places threatened with extinction. So rather than co-ordinate our actions according to our inter-relationality with the dependable caesium atom, what if we told the time by our inter-relationality with turtles? Perhaps the animal that has represented the virtues of slowness and steadiness, might actually be best placed to tell us the swift and urgent time of climate change.

Exploring the complex temporal world that is opened up by when we begin to think through the materiality of time, and the various forms of relationally it enables, is just one part of a new project that I am currently developing while at CRESC which explores the interconnections between time, community and the environment. Called 'Temporal Topologies of Community in the

Anthroposcene', it will examine the role concepts of time play in producing a sense of who we are 'with', both in terms of human communities, but also what have been called multi-species communities. Of course, time is not only about co-ordination; it is also partly about change and possibility. So a second case study that forms part of the project will look at how community based organisations are actively trying to transform their cities in response to the current convergence of crises facing them, including climate change, resource depletion and economic instability.

As part of CRESC's new cross-theme research focus on cities, this project will look at the ways concepts of time are being negotiated in the Transition Towns movement. The particular focus will be the work of Transition Liverpool as it seeks to build local resilience and prepare the city for a post-carbon era. The Transition process actively seeks to engage in reshaping how communities engage with the future, for example through the creation of 'Transition Tales' and 'Energy Descent Action Plans'. It also rejects simplistic notions of progress, suggesting that inspiration for the future can be gained by looking to the past. However, since the beginning of the Transition movement there has been considerable debate about the ability of the initial model, developed for a small town, to translate to the larger urban setting. As an active member of Transition Liverpool's core group, I am practically engaged in this debate and in searching for strategies for making Transition work in Liverpool. This project will thus take the form of what might be called 'philosophical action research', in that I am seeking to understand philosophical questions about time and social change while working to facilitate it. Thus, as I negotiate the dual role of activist and researcher I am hoping to gain insights that can also contribute to CRESC's Social Life of Methods theme.

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Communities of memory?
Working class nostalgia revisited

Ben Jones

It is a widely held assumption that the major slum clearance and suburbanisation schemes of the mid-twentieth century generated an out-pouring of nostalgia for the older patterns of life from those displaced. Variations on the theme of loss - of mutual support networks, everyday sociability, and of 'community feelings' - have been present in sociological accounts since Wilmott and Young's influential Family and Kinship in East London published in the late 1950s. More recently, cultural historians such as Bourke and Waters have insisted that the working class autobiography is saturated by sentimental, rose tinted accounts of family and neighbourhood life. However, new research by CRESC post-doctoral fellow Ben Jones casts doubt upon the alleged ubiquity of nostalgia and argues for a more nuanced approach to the politics of place and the role of emotion in understanding memories of urban change. Here he outlines his findings and raises further research priorities which are central to CRESC theme 5 'Trajectories of Participation and Inequality'.

My research, which is based upon the analysis of more than 150 autobiographies and oral narratives, points to the neglected roles played by gender, generation and economic inequality in shaping memories of Brighton's working class neighbourhoods. It also highlights the degree to which published narratives were shaped by the politics and practices of the (usually) middle class gentrifiers who held particular ideas about co-operation and community.

An analysis of autobiographies produced by Brighton based QueenSpark and Hackney's Centreprise between the 1970s and 1990s showed that 'nostalgic' narratives constituted only a small percentage of these community publishers' outputs. The majority of writers, far from sentimentalizing the past, used their narratives to register their experiences of living with inequality. These are the 'other stories': of poverty, domestic drudgery and educational 'failure', physical and mental illness, familial violence and desperate attempts to resist subjugation. Here we are alerted to an important social function of storytelling: to make audible what Sennett and Cobb have termed the 'hidden injuries' of class.

Inspection of contemporary sources of opposition to slum clearance during the 1950s and 1960s shows that this was limited to a small number of (usually elderly) owner-occupiers and small businessmen. The vast majority of tenants were, it seems, only too glad to be offered modern, spacious accommodation on one of the town's suburban estates. The experience of displacement and suburbanisation was, however, always mediated by gender and generation. Elderly residents, who had perhaps lived in the same neighbourhood for many years, often found the adjustment to suburban living difficult. Younger families, and particularly young mothers, tended to welcome the change.

This research demonstrates that, in so far as it existed at all, nostalgia was as likely to be

Slum clearance in Brighton, 1860s-1960s

Source: Map Series: National Grid 1:10560 1948-1976: 1st Imperial Edition 1948-1977, pub.1963

expressed by those living on suburban council estates as by residents of inner-urban terraces. Indeed, since the de-industrialisation and the residualisation of council housing that began in the 1970s, positive recollections of increased space, privacy, good quality design, green-space and associative culture have receded in popular memory.

A sense of belonging was, moreover, premised upon a more generalised spatially-specific 'local knowledge' (about cultural norms, social practices and everyday spaces) and the feeling of 'being known' that comes from living in a neighbourhood for a number of years. In this regard I was struck by the degree to which a number of my findings about place, inequality and belonging resonated with those of Rogaly and Taylor on social identities and social action from their work on three Norwich council estates (see their recent *Moving Histories of Class and Community: Identity, Place and Belonging in Contemporary England*, 2009).

This newly emerging research casts the ubiquity of working class nostalgia into doubt and raises questions that require further research: for example, precisely what losses (cultural, social, spatial,) did people mourn during slum clearance and suburbanisation

and who, exactly, was doing the mourning? Here, we need to understand the 'community' politics of middle-class professionals who have gentrified formerly working class districts since the 1970s.

Recent research on neighbourhood change in Manchester has contrasted working class nostalgia with an alternative, present-centred orientation to place: the 'elective belonging' of middle class incomers (see Savage et al. *Globalisation and Belonging*, 2005). Yet many of the earlier Brighton gentrifiers articulated a radical politics of place in which nostalgia for versions of community or melancholic framings of everyday life arguably played a significant role. Furthermore, recent trends in gentrification research have shifted attention away from the gentrifiers to consider the effects of gentrification on working class residents.

Clearly these issues and other questions relating to the socio-cultural trajectories of particular communities over time require the elaboration of different theoretical models and methodological approaches from a range of disciplinary perspectives. Given the recent and exciting renewal of interest in class and community I am currently in the process of establishing an interdisciplinary network of scholars working on the material and emotional experiences of working class neighbourhoods in 20th and 21st century Britain. CRESC will be holding a workshop on this theme in June 2011. I would love to hear from anyone who would like to contribute to the workshop and/or be part of the network. Dependant upon its success, there are plans to develop comparative European and international perspectives on this area of research.

*Ben Jones's monograph **The Mid-Twentieth Century English Working Class: Identity, Community and Social Memory** will be published by Manchester University Press at the beginning of 2012.*

For more details of Ben's work and plans for the June workshop please Email. Contact: benjones6@googlemail.com

Introducing the CRESC Blog

WikiLeaks: The Many Lives of Data

As part of the remaking of the CRESC website we have added a blog page for commentaries and debate on current issues. Evelyn Ruppert and John Law inaugurated the blog with a discussion of Wikileaks. The following is an abbreviated version of what they wrote. The blog is at http://www.cresc.ac.uk/news/blog.

Evelyn Ruppert:

It is instructive that the government policy of sharing data between government offices in order to connect the dots in key intelligence records has in part made WIkileaks possible. Since September 2001, the US military internet system, SIPRNet (Secret Internet Protocol Router Network) has been expanding beyond the Department of Defense to include more US embassies in order that military and diplomatic information can be shared. As a result some three million people now have access to SIPRNet.

But government data sharing is not of course intended to include the fourth estate. While media outlets have long been recipients of leaked data never before have they received such volumes and in a readily shareable and searchable format. For some, such volumes of digital data represents no less than a 'data deluge'. However, while the numbers of leaked government communications is unprecedented, we know that this is still a fraction of what is sequestered in government databanks. Just as the data currently being released as part of open government initiatives such as the US Data.gov is partial so too are the leaks. Additionally, the release of the data was brokered by major media outlets. At the end of July, *The Guardian, Der Spiegel* and *The New York Times* were each given a three-month head start before WikiLeaks released the secret military documents about the US conduct of the war in Afghanistan. Nick Davies's account of how this arrangement was worked out between The Guardian and Julian Assange reads like a spy novel: of

meetings in hotels and usernames and passwords scrawled on café napkins. At the end of November, along with *The New York Times, Der Spiegel, Le Monde* and *El Pais, The Guardian* was again involved in brokering the release of the embassy cables. But the brokered release did not end after the head start period had lapsed. While sites such as The Guardian enable you to download data such as the source of a cable, recipients, subject field, and tags (keywords), they do not include the full body text 'for obvious security reasons' as Simon Rogers puts it. The obvious security reasons are not so obvious to anybody who has not seen them. Is the media itself playing a role in censorship while appearing to be a champion of free speech and the right to access to information?

As with any data, leaked data passes through many layers and filters. WikiLeaks has brought to the fore the kinds of questions that we need to ask about any data: what is being materialised, registered, categorised, included and circulated; who is doing and analysing the data (technologies, people) and where is data located (institutions, corporations). All of these elements mean that data has many possible lives. Some of those lives are currently being illustrated through visualisations of word counts and tag clouds, maps of the origins of cables, and breakdowns on their security ratings. As for analyses of content the media have relied on the traditional method of reading and story-telling. The next wave of analysis may well involve the use of the numerous tools and software now available for analysing content such as sequencing and word pattern analysis.

John Law:

As Evelyn Ruppert notes, most content analysis has still to come - except in the form of good old-fashioned story-writing. It's a cliché, but visualisations are stories too. But what kinds of stories do the media's

visualisations tell? At the moment what we get is world maps and if we compare those produced by *The Guardian* and *Der Spiegel* we get different stories. The blog map from *The Guardian* tells us about the numbers of cables sent from selected capital cities. In the map much of the surface is covered by large blue circles, and the world looks fairly well covered. If we go to *Der Spiegel*, we get another interactive world map, and if you click on a city you get to see a time-line graph of the cables, and in some cases you get taken to stories based on those cables. At the same time, it looks very different to *The Guardian*'s visualisations. Why? Well *Der Spiegel*'s cartographers have tried to visualise the importance of the city in question (in terms of the number of cables) by using circles of different sizes. Big circles are important sources of cables, small circles aren't. *The Guardian*'s blog map has tried to do the same thing, but the effect could scarcely be more different. In the latter the circles are spread out all over the map, and the different regions of the world don't look very different; whereas for *Der Spiegel* they do. Washington aside, in this way of picturing the story, it's Europe and the Middle East that dominate the map. South and East Asia aren't so prominent, and Africa and Latin America become relatively marginal.

Maps are devices. Like other forms of data, they are the product of practices that select, simplify, generate, and display particular relations. Evelyn notes that they embed prejudices and concerns, and that they are subject to control. I would add the completely unoriginal observation that they are also generative. That they do things. That they enact relations. With this in mind, it's fascinating to compare and contrast the work of the *Der Spiegel* cartographers with that of their colleagues at *The Guardian*. Why are they so different?

CRESC research and the BBC's
Great British Class Survey

One of CRESC's major research concerns has been to broaden the range of social science methods, away from our traditional reliance face to face sample surveys and qualitative interviews. We've been interested in championing ethnographic work, various kinds of historical analysis, as well as relatively under-used quantitative approaches such as social network analysis and mulitple correspondence analysis. We have become especially interested in how digitalisation is implicated in new modes of social ordering and we have argued that social researchers need to be involved in experimenting with new kinds of data and modes of analysis. Our cross cutting theme on *The Social Life of Methods* speaks directly to this concern.

We are therefore delighted to have been associated with the BBC's *Great British Class Survey*, which has given us first-hand experience in developing a web questionnaire on a topical issue which has considerable public 'reach'. This venture is itself an interesting point of departure for the BBC who are keen find new ways of engaging their audiences through involving them in interactive quizzes which are both 'fun to do' and also generate data which can then lead to innovative documentaries. The Great British Class Survey is the first interactive commission by BBC Current Affairs, and is based around a web survey asking people to answer questions on their economic, social and cultural resources. It was launched in the last week of January with a publicity blitz on television, radio, and in the print media and has already obtained over 100,000 respondents, making it the biggest survey of social class ever conducted in the UK - or indeed in any part of the world. It was linked to a wider BBC Current Affairs investigation into class, which also included two documentaries on BBC Two.

Mike Savage, former Director of and now Visiting Fellow at CRESC was involved in the design of the survey, along with Manchester sociologist Fiona Devine. Many of the questions drew directly on CRESC research on cultural capital, including measures from the *Cultural Capital and Social Exclusion* project (which also involved Tony Bennett, Elizabeth Silva and Alan Warde). One of the most innovative features of the quiz is that after answering questions, participants will receive a detailed report that reveals how they scored on the three factors – economic, social and cultural. Some simple benchmarking allows respondents to compare themselves with the UK population as a whole. When the data is analysed – by a team which includes CRESC researchers – it will lead into a report which will inform a BBC programme.

The project itself is a fascinating example of the 'social life of methods' in action. After its launch, through BBC prime time TV, radio features, and through a BBC blog and prominent web site presence. Perhaps one of the most intriguing features of the project, is the way that it has taken on 'a life of its own', with discussions about the project being prominent in Facebook and Twitter, as well as other kinds of online sources. Here, respondents frequently post their own 'results' and ask for comments from others. Sometimes criticisms are directed against the survey for asking the 'wrong' questions, but on the whole, they are treated as a 'performative' invitation to join debate. The following examples are illustrations of the kind of conversations generated.

By your own admission (#1) you 'must do better' in terms of your social and cultural experience/skills; debating is a quintessentially social and cultural activity. I am not surprised that you scored so poorly in these areas and recommend you try harder with it <landlordzone>.

Talking to my friend SS this morning on the bus to The British Library, she mentioned "The Great British Class Survey" which is an online test you can do to find out about your economic, social and cultural capital. (And which is part of an associated sociological study)

Loving both a good quiz and a prospective class analysis, I started the experiment. Being a university educated girl coming from a working class background, I found it pretty interesting to do, but I felt torn on so many answers. For example, on one of them you had to say what three factors were among the most important to having a good career. Even though my brain kept going "no, no!" my fingers clicked on "hard work" as the most important. Isn't that perverse. I guess I'm so brainwashed in the American dream and its equivalents. **feminist memory**

We can see other conversations on this project from a variety of web based discussion groups ranging across 'Christian Mums', 'Eminem fans', 'Leeds festival', and various bike forums. The project is therefore reaching groups which are not normally associated with debating ideas about stratification and inequality.

This all leads on to further excitement later this year when the results of the survey will be presented by the BBC. These results will be dependent on the analyses carried out at York and Manchester, by a research team which includes Theme 5 researcher Niall Cunningham at CRESC. As well as a BBC documentary there will also be an interactive visualisation that will allow the public who log onto their BBC site to explore their findings from a large number of angles. Respondents can thus reflect on how they are being categorized in the research process itself. Interesting times for social science – and for CRESC

For more details, go to bbc.co.uk/labuk
Mike Savage, University of York
Contact: Mike Savage, University of York

New CRESC Working Papers

The following working papers have been added to the CRESC website
http://www.cresc.ac.uk/publications/papers.htm

Working Paper No 82

Consumer Participation: Boycotting and Buycotting in Europe
Luke Yates
September 2010

Working Paper No 83

Conduct of conduct' or the shaping of 'adequate dispositions'? Lessons from an empirical study of labour market and career guidance in four European countries
Isabelle Darmon
Coralie Perez
October 2010

Working Paper No 84

Following the line of least resistance?: Advertising, Agencements and Crashes
Liz McFall
October 2010

Working Paper No 85

The New Literary Front: Public Diplomacy and the Cultural Politics of Reading Arabic Fiction in Translation
Vron Ware
November 2010

Working Paper No 86

Digital Devices: Nine Theses'
Mike Savage
Evelyn Ruppert
John Law
December 2010

Working Paper No 87

Rebalancing the Economy (Or Buyer's Remorse?)
Julie Froud
Sukhdev Johal
John Law
Adam Leaver
Karel Williams
January 2011

Working Paper No 88

The Meanings and Uses of Artmoney
Mark Banks
February 2011

Working Paper No 89

The End of Public Media?The UK: canary in the coal mine?
Richard Collins
February 2011

Working Paper No 90

America's debt safety-net
Johnna Montgomerie
February 2011

Working Paper No 91

The Age of Insecurity: indebtedness and the politics of abandonment
Johnna Montgomerie
February 2011

Working Paper No 92

Gender, indebtedness and social reproduction: another politics of the subprime crisis
Johnna Montgomerie
February 2011

Working Paper No 93

The design and content of the 'Social participation' study: A qualitative sub-study conducted as part of the age 50 (2008) sweep of the National Child Development Study
Jane Elliott,
Andrew Miles,
Sam Parsons,
Mike Savage
February 2011

Forthcoming Events

For more information about all our forthcoming events please check out our website http://www.cresc.ac.uk/

CRESC Annual Lecture 2011

CRESC Annual Lecture 2011 March 4th 5.30 Brunei Gallery, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

Andrew Ross, Professor of Social and Cultural Analysis, New York University

Is Urban Sustainability Possible in the Age of Climate Justice?

How are scholars going to write about cities in the era of global warming? The conceptual tools of urban environmentalism—such as ecological footprint, urban metabolism, or closed-loop economies—have had some influence on the "sustainable cities" movement, but the new demands for climate justice require us to show that what happens in any one city in the global North has direct consequences for populations in the global South. This lecture describes Andrew Ross's ethnographic efforts in Phoenix, Arizona (one of the world's most unsustainable cities) to respond to that demand. It focuses on some of the methodological challenges that have arisen in his research and suggests ways of meeting them.

**To reserve a place please email:
stacey.vigars@manchester.ac.uk**

We would ike to welcome the following people who have joined CRESC recently:

Medina Aitieva

Medina has been awarded a research studentship from CRESC to work on her PhD at the University of Manchester. Her MA degree from Ball State University focused on gender and ethnic differences in the migration of young adults in Kyrgyzstan. Before starting her PhD, Medina taught sociology at the American University of Central Asia. Her doctoral research looks at the transformative processes of family due to transnational migration in Kyrgyzstan, and sheds light on methodological difficulties of researching the region.

Niall Cunningham

Niall joined as RA in Quantitative Analyses under Theme 5's 'Trajectories of Inequality and Participation', working alongside Andrew

Miles and Mike Savage. His particular interest lies in the spatial dimensions of inequality and participation but he is very excited by, and keen to draw on the breadth of scholarship and expertise both within CRESC and across the wider University. Niall was previously an RA at Lancaster working on an AHRC project entitled Troubled Geographies: Two Centuries of Religious Division in Ireland.

Gemma John

Gemma held a postdoctoral fellowship at the Institute for the Advanced Studies in the Humanities at Edinburgh University before coming to CRESC. Her doctoral work examined the social consequences of the implementation of the Freedom of

Information legislation in Scotland. She is currently developing a new cross-theme project, bringing together academics affiliated to themes 4 and 1 to examine the social objectives and cultural assumptions designed into the formulation of the Big Society and its implications for responsibility and social fragmentation.

Ben Jones
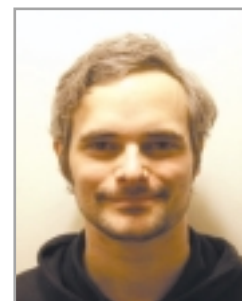
Before joining CRESC as an ESRC post-doctoral fellow Ben was based at the University of Sussex where he was awarded a DPhil in 2009. He is a social historian with research interests in the modern working class, urban change and collective memory. As part of the CRESC Theme 5 he is establishing an interdisciplinary network on working class neighbourhoods in modern Britain. We would love to hear from academics and community-based groups who would like to be involved. *Contact: benjones6@googlemail.com*

CRESC Annual Conference September 6th- 9th 2011

Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester.

Framing the City

The CRESC annual conference 2011 takes the rubric of 'framing' to scrutinise the processes by which cities are conceptualised, realised, lived, ordered and depicted, disrupted, changed and contested. More than half of humanity now lives in urban areas and city processes affect the whole globe. The rates of growth, decay and transformation; the diversity, complexity and flows of population and activities, as well as the scale of problems and possibilities posed by city life are breathtaking. This conference seeks to bring together contemporary approaches to the descriptive and analytical challenges of thinking through processes of change in urban and city contexts. The conference takes the following themes as inspiration for a call for papers with confirmed plenary speakers as shown:

- **CITY MATERIALITIES**

   (city objects, plans, designs, discourse, built environments, assemblages, archaeology, urban morphology, infrastructure, post-industrial regeneration, economies, mega events, spatiality ...)

   Plenary speakers: Professor Nikos Salingaros (University of Texas at San Antonio) and Dr Albena Yaneva (University of Manchester)

- **CITY AFFECT**

   (the experiential, the senses, the auditory, passions, hopes, fears, violence, the imaginary, creative writing and literature ...)

   Plenary speakers: Iain Sinclair and Professor Alistair Bonnett (University of Newcastle)

- **CITY ENVIRONMENTS**

   (sustainability, living and working environments, ecologies, city geographies, nature/culture, eco-cities ...)

   Plenary speakers: Professor Maria Kaika (University of Manchester) and Professor Alan Simpson (Mackintosh School of Architecture, Glasgow)

- **SOCIAL AND CULTURAL INEQUALITIES IN THE CITY**

   (social and cultural capital, governance, territorial dimensions of participation, contested spaces of belonging, social movements, underground resistance, critical urbanism ...)

   Plenary speakers: Professor Rosenlund Lennart (University of Stavanger, Norway) and Professor Talja Blokland (Humboldt University, Berlin)

- **MEDIATING THE CITY**

   (creative practices, cultural industries, urban identity, art, street art, broadcasting, music, advertising, dance, film, print and visual representation ...)

   Plenary Speaker: Nick Couldry (Goldsmiths College, University of London)

- **CITY MIGRATION, TRANS-NATIONALITY AND BORDERS**

   (mobility, flows, boundaries, identities, difference and belonging, states, nations, settlements and borders ...)

   Plenary Speakers: Dr Sabine Hess (Institute for European Ethnology) and Dr. Jan Rath (University of Amsterdam)

Please submit either a) proposal for individual papers, or (b) panel proposal including 3 papers by the end of April 2011 using the proposal forms online. Abstracts should not be more than 250 words.

The proposal forms should be sent to CRESC Conference Administration, 178 Waterloo Place, Oxford Road, University of Manchester, Manchester, M13 9PL, UK. Tel: +44 (0) 161 275 8985 / Fax: +44 (0) 161 275 8985 CRESC.AnnualConference@manchester.ac.uk / http://www.cresc.ac.uk

Proposals for performances, exhibitions and displays are welcome, but must be self-funded.