

CRESC News

Issue 3

July 2006

A busy year for CRESC

This is going to be a busy year for CRESC because the programmes of work in all four themes are now well under way so that we have a growing stream of published outputs and dissemination as well as workshop and conference activity in all four themes: (1) Cultural economy, (2) Transformations in media, (3) Governance and citizenship, (4) Changing cultural values and politics.

You can sample the range and diversity of our publications on the CRESC web site from which copies of our working papers can be downloaded. Some 18 papers are currently posted on the web site and most of these will in due course become published articles. Michael Pryke is editing a special issue of *Economy and Society on the Cultural Economy of Finance*. This brings together papers from last autumn's workshop (organised by Michael with support from Paul du Gay) which practically helped to define what's new and different about the cultural economy approach to understanding present day capitalism. Co directors Tony Bennett and Mike Savage are involved with other CRESC researchers Elizabeth Silva and Alan Warde in the affiliate project on *Cultural Capital and Social Exclusion*. Dave Wright and Modesto Gayo-Cal are helping the other project researchers with a special June double issue of *Cultural Trends* will report their findings from a national sample survey about cultural tastes, knowledge and participation in the UK in the musical, visual art, literary, sport and media fields.

Another landmark was the publication of our first CRESC book in January 2006: *Financialization and Strategy* by Julie Froud, Sukhdev Johal, Adam Leaver and Karel Williams. This book analyses the impact of demands for shareholder value on US and UK giant firm strategy since 1980 through case study of firms like General Electric and Glaxo, as well as the FTSE 100 and S and P 500 as a whole. The book shows how the narrative and performative elements of strategy, along with corroborating financial numbers, have become much more important. Broadsheet papers like the *Guardian* and the *Financial Times*, as well as specialist business monthlies, noted the conclusion that giant firm managers are better at putting together narratives and claiming pay increases than

they are at delivering improved performance for shareholders. The academic reception is indicated by the early decision of one leading journal to commission a review article as well as the proposal by University of Sydney researchers to organise an international workshop around the book's argument.

More team work will deliver CRESC signature output in article and book form... Thus, Francis Dodsworth and Niamh Moore from the Qualitative Research Laboratory are coordinating a workshop, *Assembling the Liberal Subject*, about the relationships between citizenship, subjectivity, and practices of government in a series of essays that span the seventeenth to the twenty-first centuries. A first group of essays explore the delimitation of the liberal persona through the establishment of norms of privacy for religious conscience, the development of aesthetics as a discipline with the purpose of defining the proper mode of self-government and the development of prudence and responsibility through the promotion of insurance techniques. These are followed by a cluster of papers on liberal structures and infrastructures which enable and condition the liberal mode of life and government. Finally, the contestation and conflict evident in particular modes of neo-liberal government is explored in the fields of environmentalism, global corporate citizenship and multiculturalism

CRESC has been organising workshops which bring together international researchers in new combinations and put CRESC at the leading edge of new debates. In autumn 2005 our Qualitative Research Laboratory held a workshop on *Reusing Qualitative Data*, which explored how qualitative data could be used to further our understanding of socio-cultural change, and included contributions from ESDS Qualidata and Mass-Observation. One of our aims is to revive elites research which has been neglected over the past 20 years and provides an integrative theme which brings together CRESC researchers with different backgrounds and competences. Hence the importance of a one day international workshop on *Reviving Elites Research* in March 2006, organised by Karel Williams, where CRESC researchers presented alongside distinguished guests. These included Mick Moran from political science,

and John Scott the doyen of British sociological research into business elites as well as Bill Carroll, a Canadian researcher whose work on Canada offers a unique perspective into the changes of the past 25 years.

In the autumn CRESC will host two more major workshops. Shinobu Majima and Mike Savage from the Quantitative Research Laboratory are organising a workshop on *Rethinking Affluence*. Social and cultural historians have researched the precursors of consumerism in the immediate post war period while sociologists have separately focused on change since the 1980s and drawn attention to epochal shifts in popular cultural values. The aim of the CRESC workshop is to bring the two groups of researchers into dialogue and the dates of September 20-21 should go into your diary because confirmed speakers include Zygmunt Bauman, Avner Offer and Victoria de Grazia. For the Centre's annual methods seminar, Tony Bennett and Patrick Joyce are convening a workshop on the theme of the new cultural materialism to explore the role of science studies, actor network theory and posthumanism in cultural analysis. Guest speakers will include Kay Anderson, Francesca Bray, Bill Brown, John Frow, Graeme Gooday, Chandra Mukerji and Donald Preziosi.

Our September conference on *Media Change and Social Theory* is the biggest event of the year if the measure is scale and immediate impact. This year's conference will be held at St Hugh's College Oxford from 6-8th September. The convenors David Hesmondalgh and Jason Toynbee with their organising committee have done an energetic job. The invited plenary speakers include, from the United States, Faye Ginsburg, Daniel Hallin, Toby Miller and Purnima Mankekar. What we had not expected was the large number of delegates who responded enthusiastically to the call for papers. In the end over 250 delegates applied and our conference administrators Catherine Lillie and Josine Opmeer have had to use their ingenuity in working out how this can all be fitted into the timetable of a multi stream conference. In this, as in all our other events, we owe a big debt to the support provided by Manchester and OU administrative staff.

Inquiries about forthcoming CRESC events can, in the first instance, be answered by Catherine Lillie and Josine Opmeer in the CRESC Office at CRESC@manchester.ac.uk

Value skimming and the public company

Julie Froud and Adam Leaver

CRESC's research on business pay has really captured media attention in 2006 when it has been reported in half a dozen national newspaper stories. Here Julie Froud and Adam Leaver present some of this research from CRESC's theme 1 on cultural economy. They argue that the research has important implications for how we should think about the giant public company and equity shareholding in a world where these major institutions are now being increasingly challenged by new comers like private equity which claim efficiency advantages.

The mainstream account of what public company shareholders and non-executive directors (NEDs) should do to control rewards and channel management effort in public companies has two sources. First, agency theory as propounded by American finance academics like Fama and Jensen in the 1980s; and second, corporate governance practice as articulated in the British combined code from the 1990s. According to agency theory, shareholders should monitor management and channel management effort into the creation of shareholder value through the design of pay contracts which incentivise managers to improve corporate performance. The practice of corporate governance after the Cadbury report of 1992 was to encourage shareholder activism and rely on (non executive) directors as intermediaries to act in the shareholder interest.

But, the evidence on pay and performance in UK and US giant companies suggests that UK shareholders are doing this job very badly. After two decades of real pay increases of more than 25% per annum, the going rate for a CEO in a giant British FTSE 100 company had increased to more than £1 million in 2002. But, as we argued in our book, *Financialization and Strategy*, top managers did not in return deliver a spectacular increase in corporate performance. FTSE 100 sales revenue generally grows no faster than GDP which fundamentally constrains management's ability to find profit and increase distributions. Shareholders benefited from the general increase in market values during the 1990s bull market but that owed little to

management effort and more to exogenous forces: company valuations and price/earnings ratios generally went up because middle class savings were channelled into shares in a period price of falling interest rates and irrational exuberance.

These developments have been recognised in the new realist explanations of top management pay. Harvard lawyer Lucien Bebchuk argues that boards have failed to restrain rent seeking as managers obtain a surplus over and above the market rate. The problem with this line of argument is that there really is no proper market in CEOs. The contribution of a star CEO is much more difficult to measure than is the case with cinema or football stars; and, although external recruitment is increasingly common, nearly half of current FTSE 100 CEOs have been internally promoted after more than 10 years inside the company. For these reasons, in *Financialization and Strategy* we introduced the term *value skimming*, which lumps top managers in with all the other stars who exploit position and which makes no judgement about what the market rate might be.

The argument about value skimming is important because it opens up new perspectives on the governance efforts of shareholders and directors who are arguably much more effective at inhibiting value skimming at the expense of other stakeholders than they are at encouraging value creation for the shareholders. Maybe, the relevant empirical measure is not the size of the individual CEO's salary but the percentage of sales revenue and profit claimed as top management salaries. In giant FTSE companies, salaries of one or two million pounds for a few top managers account for a very small proportion of turnover or profits in giant companies when 90% of non financial companies in the FTSE 100 have turnover of more than £500 million and more than half these companies have turnover larger than £5 billion. Furthermore, there is a very strong relation between company size and management pay so that many of those in charge of medium sized public companies earn moderately: CEOs in UK public companies with turnover of several hundred million in 2002 were on average earning no more than £150,000.

Most of the alternative forms of organization which employ the private sector officer class are associated with much higher percentage rates of value skimming from sales revenue and profit. Consider, for example, the professional partnerships in business services whose main customers are FTSE 100 companies. In the UK in 2004, the four largest law and the four largest accounting firms together employed some 4,500 partners who claim all the profit, which amounted to an average £500,000 per partner so that more than a quarter of their revenue goes directly to the partners. The claims on sales revenue are more modest elsewhere but increasingly claims on surplus are arranged so that much of it goes to a few. Consider, for example, private equity where funds use mainly debt to buy firms and hope to sell on at a profit so that the capital gains primarily benefit a few holders of large equity stakes who include senior operating managers as well as partners in the equity fund. Private equity could be understood as a machine of enrichment for executives from smaller companies where public shareholders would never allow extravagant salaries.

From this point of view, agency theory represents a cultural misunderstanding and corporate governance is a politically ineffectual programme for creating new shareholder, director and manager identities. We can admit that shareholders and NEDs in giant companies have failed to relate pay to performance, sanctioned extravagant increases in the going rate and licensed egregious value skimming by individual CEOs. But this indictment maybe misses the point. Shareholders of public companies have had some defensive social success in setting limits on the rate of value skimming so that the top management team does not claim a large percentage of turnover and profits for the few, as they do with financially engineered alternatives like partnerships or private equity. It was probably always too much to expect the governance efforts of shareholders or directors would induce top management to create value but the presence of shareholders in public companies does inhibit top management capture of value.

Julie Froud can be contacted at julie.froud@mbs.ac.uk. A longer version of this article appears in the *Incomes Data Services Executive Compensation Review (No 304, June 2006)*. The article adds new evidence and develops arguments from *Financialization and Strategy: Narrative and Numbers* by Julie Froud, Sukhdev Johal, Adam Leaver and Karel Williams (Routledge, 2006, £29.99)

Beyond the Iraq war 2003?

Marie Gillespie

The decision to invade Iraq in 2003 caused deep rifts in public opinion around the world, and its disastrous consequences are still being felt – not only by Iraqis. The divisions in public opinion everywhere and the differences between governments in Europe and the United States are well advertised and much discussed. Here, Marie Gillespie, from theme 2 on media, reports on new CRESC research findings about another undisclosed aspect of division. This research exposes a yawning gap between public perceptions and those of security policy-makers concerned to win hearts and minds...

Public responses to the Iraq war 2003 and to the "war on terror" (now increasingly called the "long war") were debated at a symposium on "Terrorism, Media and War: From New York to London, From Iraq to Iran", held at King's College London in June 2006. The symposium was part of a three year research project based at CRESC, entitled *Shifting Securities: News Cultures before and After the Iraq War 2003*. Funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, led by Dr Marie Gillespie of the Open University, Dr Andrew Hoskins of Swansea University, and Professor James Gow of King's College London. The project uniquely integrates research on news audiences, news content, news-makers and security policy practitioners.

US strategy in the wider Middle East, including its approach to propaganda and public diplomacy, is changing, according to Mark Kimmitt, a keynote speaker at the symposium. General Brigadier Kimmitt is currently Deputy Director of Strategy and Plans at US Military Central Command (CENTCOM); as chief spokesman for the Multinational Force in Iraq, he was the public face of the US military during the Abu Ghraib prison crisis. He offered his views on how the US military is now engaged in a "long war" which, he believes, will require a radical, almost revolutionary change in US military culture and media strategy. He claims that the USA is shifting away from the "massive" use of force toward "maximal restraint" in the use of force, geared to winning hearts and minds in a battle of wills, rather than a trial of physical strength.

New research presented at the symposium calls this strategy into question. Key findings emerging from the project and presented at the symposium suggest that any attempt to mould hearts and minds using news media is likely to be fraught with difficulties. It will almost certainly be compromised by the ways in which audiences use and interpret news, and also by the changing character of news media.

In an increasingly competitive news environment, the emphasis is on getting news out first and fast, rather than corroborating sources and evidence. This makes news a more speculative business which needs to fill the "empty time" of 24/7 rolling news and respond instantly to breaking news. News language is becoming more probabilistic and tentative. "Citizen journalism" (for example, the incorporation of mobile phone images in reports on the London bombings in July 2005) is another factor underlining the traditional authority of national newscasters and challenging politicians' versions of events. The growing range of foreign-based and foreign-language news services, on satellite and cable television, and a vast array of internet services, multiplies the available perspectives on events. Cosmopolitan users of multiple news services, or "sceptical zappers", are a minority. Most of us are habitual consumers of the service which is most likely to confirm what we already think. But sceptical zappers often lead opinion in their social networks.

"Winning hearts and minds" is also more tricky than policy makers seem to hope because many UK news consumers believe that the terrorist threat is being exaggerated by government and magnified by some media outlets. Our research findings based on in depth interviews show high levels of political cynicism, even amongst those passionately engaged with the politics of security. Many see security policy as exacerbating racism. They believe that PM Blair's government cannot be trusted, has lied to the public and has cultivated a climate of multiple uncertainties and insecurities. Chief among these insecurities is terrorism. Interviewees suggest that the government exploits

public insecurity to deliver spurious security solutions in order to hold on to their weakening power base. The perception is that government does not listen to the public or truly represent them. Interviewees aspire to a more participatory style of politics, but are at a loss as to how to bring it about.

Personal and local security issues (jobs, health, schools, money, crime) are much more important to interviewees than the threat of terrorism. But environmental issues, loss of civil liberties and the trend toward state authoritarianism are also of much greater concern than terrorism. Most informants claim not to feel an increased threat of terrorism at a personal or local level. Even after the 7/7 London bombings, fears about further terrorist threats dissipated after a few weeks as people returned to their normal routines. They see global terrorism as a problem, but the measures taken as "over the top". With the wars on terror and in Iraq merging into the "long war", the gap between public perceptions and government policies grows wider.

One strand of the project considers the interaction between British Muslim interviewees, the media and the government on the issue of the "war on terror". The British Muslim interviewees are diverse in every respect – a diversity that is often ignored by the media. Most show high levels of political and civic engagement, and express high levels of attachment and belonging to Britain. But persistent provocations and aggravations – not least implicit or explicit accusations of complicity with terrorism – trigger fears that their legal and cultural status as British citizens is under threat. They want to move beyond the antagonistic and adversarial relations triggered by the "war on terror", because it reinforces a sense of Muslim victimhood and oppression, mobilises a damaging politics of identity, and this in turn feeds into social exclusion and radicalisation.

The overall conclusion of this research is that governments and academics need to develop more joined-up thinking about the inter-relationship between different dimensions of security, if the yawning gap between public perceptions and those of policy-makers is to be bridged.

Marie Gillespie can be contacted at M.Gillespie@open.ac.uk The *Shifting Securities* project report on public perceptions of security is based on more than 200 in-depth interviews with multi-ethnic and multilingual news audiences around the UK. The full text of the report is available on the CRESC website www.cresc.ac.uk

Trans-territoriality and liberal governance

Grahame F. Thompson

The spectre of ‘fundamentalism’ is haunting the world. In every faith-tinted controversy, from the Danish cartoons to the French hijab, from British multiculturalism to Dutch language-rules, from American evangelists to Al-Qaeda militants, the word and the idea are wielded with vigour – though often without discrimination. Here, Grahame Thompson, draws on his CRESC research to bring some focus to this issue by asking exactly what fundamentalisms means. His answer makes the connection with broad theme 3 concerns about governance and citizenship.

This question about fundamentalism arises from a wider concern with the fate of territories and borders in the modern debates about ‘globalization’. We are often told that the traditional nation-state is no longer a relevant category for analysing the nature of the international system. States have been usurped in their role as guardians of economic and social security by anonymous global market forces on the one hand and trans-territorial political, social and cultural movements on the other. I have been trying to pin down what the consequences of these developments might be for the future of a broadly liberal domestic and international order.

This is not because I hold any particularly brief for liberalism as such, but because market forces and global social movements both celebrate and commit themselves to liberalism on the one hand, or attack and deny their faith in liberalism on the other. Liberalism is thus the subject of intense scrutiny and debate in these arenas --and others -- hence an interest in exploring its fate. The fundamentalisms which oppose liberalism are not just religious movements because there are secular as well as religious fundamentalisms. One thing all these fundamentalisms do, however, is to insist on the attribute of sameness – everything should be the same; in particular the same as them. This is in contrast to a liberal and tolerant order, which has always celebrated differences and learned to thrive within them.

It is the religious form of fundamentalism that has attracted the greatest attention in recent years, particularly in its Islamic manifestation. The attitudes of Islamic, Christian and Jewish fundamentalisms

towards the notion of territories and globalization are explored in Thompson (2006a). All three of these religious fundamentalisms are no respecters of national borders; their ideologies are thoroughly trans-territorial. From the point of view of the cadre of these movements they face an open, ever moving frontier of conversion, struggle and sometimes conquest; their ‘politics’ is de-territorialized and abundantly unconstrained. Small, roving bands of evangelists or militants are the iconic organizational form, loosely linked by global networks and support groups. The traditional nation-state is redundant to this conception.

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Thus these fundamentalists are the genuine global trans-territorialists of the current age. And nor are these groups or bands cultural movements in the conventional sense of that term. They tend to live as ‘outsiders’, isolated from traditional cultural ties and communities. Any individual can join as long as they commit; in principle form any ethnic, racial, social, linguistic, gender, or other backgrounds. These movements are genuinely ‘universalistic’ in their aspirations and ideology. But they are also ‘individualistic’ in their attitudes -- and very much part of the modern world despite their insistence on the clarity of ancient texts and purity of a lost past to which we should all return.

This poses a problem for modern ‘liberal governance’ since this has traditionally been organized either under the umbrella of the nation-state, or through the institution of international inter-governmentalism or multilateralism, where territories and boundaries are clearly demarcated. And liberal governance is predicated on the separation of religion

from the state. Those organizational forms -- like fundamentalisms -- that are no respecters of these mechanisms thus present a genuine challenge to the future of a liberal order as traditionally understood.

Similar problems emerge in the context of ‘market fundamentalism’ involving international market relations and the operation of multinational corporations. These have also detached themselves from the regulatory boundaries of the nation-state to become genuinely ‘trans-national’. One response to this has been the growth of claims about the emergence a new global legal order of adjudication in matters of dispute between companies, one no longer tethered either to domestic or international law. Another has been to claim a ‘global citizenship’ on behalf of those companies that respond to international pressures to conform to ethical and environmental standards, and agreements on non-exploitative working conditions. But can companies be citizens when this status has traditionally been confined only to natural persons?

In all these matters complex implications follow for political organization and for the readjustment of liberal orders to a potential new reality. On the one hand it is possible to go fully along with the sentiments associated with trans-territoriality and trans-nationalism, even though many of the outcomes produced by these processes are thoroughly nasty ones. On the other hand, it might be considered that these pose too much of a threat to liberalism, which is seriously under attack from them. If this is the case, is there anything that can be done to re-territorialize or re-domestizes these trans-territorial activities? Such questions are directly posed by this research agenda, and several responses are offered all which involve difficult and dangerous choices to be made.

Grahame Thompson can be contacted at G.F.Thompson@open.ac.uk.

He develops the arguments above at greater length in a suite of four related articles: (a) ‘Religious Fundamentalism, Territories and “Globalization”’ CRESC Working Paper No.14; (b) ‘Exploring Sameness and Difference: Fundamentalisms and the Future of Globalization’ *Globalizations*, Vol.3, No.3, forthcoming September 2006; (c) ‘The Fate of Territorial Engineering: Mechanisms of Territorial Power and Post-Liberal Forms of International Governance’ *International Politics*, Vol.23, No.4, forthcoming November 2006; (d) ‘Global Corporate Citizenship and Liberal Governance: Reflections on ‘Lovesick’ Companies.’ *Mimeo*, Open University and CRESC, June 2006.

Understanding social capital and co-operation

Mike Savage

The previous articles show how much CRESC research is about material and cultural differences and conflicts. But CRESC is also interested in the conditions under which trust and cooperation are generated and this is specifically a focus for researchers from CRESC theme 4 on cultural values and politics. Here, Michael Savage reports on innovative research into the generation of trust and cooperation in small scale, intimate settings.

There is currently enormous interest in understanding the conditions under which people trust and learn to collaborate and co-operate with each other. This form of collaboration is often referred to as a kind of 'social capital', a kind of 'social glue' that is seen by social scientists such as Robert Putnam as essential for effective social organisation. Social scientists often think about social capital in terms of how people become involved in communities and supportive social relationships which support each other, but we still do not know much about the situations in which this happens. Whereas much research uses national survey data and uses abstract indicators for social capital, researchers in CRESC's theme on 'Cultural Values and Politics' are interested in the small scale, intimate, settings which might generate trust and co-operation, though possibly in unanticipated ways.

An example of our interests arise out of a recently completed ESRC project 'Social Networks and Social Capital', conducted by Mike Savage, Brian Longhurst, Kath Ray Gindo Tampubolon, and Alan Warde, which conducted detailed case studies of the relationships between members of three different kinds of voluntary association to assess how effective collaboration amongst these members was best sustained.

We took three different local organisations in the Manchester area, a constituency branch of the Labour Party (128 members), a local branch of an environmental group (36 members), and a local conservation society (118 members), and conducted a detailed survey on all the members of these groups (with an unusually high response rate of 80%). We supplemented this with detailed in depth interviews and detailed questions where members identified all the other members of the

organisation they knew, and the nature of the relationship with them. We also asked people about the extent of their involvement in the organisations. We found that the local Labour Party branch had the most trusting people and could elicit the highest amount of activism and involvement from its members.

Why was this the case? The members of all three organisations were broadly similar in their social characteristics (well educated, white, middle class) so we could discard this as a possible explanation. And, it was not obvious that the Labour Party members were more active because they thought they had the chance to influence other agencies. The particular Labour Party we researched was not in an area where Labour controlled, or was even particularly powerful, in the local authority. In addition, many labour members indicated they were frustrated with the New Labour government which might have been a factor for them to be less trusting than those in the other two organisations.

We began to identify reasons why the Labour Party members were more trusting when we looked in detail at the nature of the ties between members in the three organisations, using social network methods. However, our findings seemed counter-intuitive. Labour Party members were more likely to identify factions and divisions amongst themselves, and talked about political tensions between left and right wing groups. Different interest groups in the party co-existed and jostled for position. There was no one dominant core group within the local party, but a loosely connected inner circle of a dozen members. By contrast, in the conservation group there were only two dominant individuals, who others deferred to, and little sign of faction fighting. Members did not identify cliques or factions. In the environmental group, a small group of 'insiders' had relatively little contact and were insulated from other group members.

The interesting point, therefore, seemed to be that the greater internal tensions amongst the Labour Party members allowed them greater scope to be trusting and to work together for common cause. Perhaps the experience of dealing with different perspectives makes people more able to generate higher levels of trust and

involvement, whereas deferring to powerful individuals or cliques does not generate such high levels of involvement. The lessons from these case studies are intriguing. They suggest that trust and involvement may actually be strengthened where there is also a degree of conflict, where groups are lobbying for their positions, and where there are stakes which people battle over and which are precious to them. This would indeed make sense of the view that there used to be more co-operation in the past, when there was also evidence of tension – for instance between social classes, than in more recent organisations which may rely more on formal organisational structures without the same degree of factionalisation. It suggests too that we cannot easily plan social co-operation, if this is to be understood as a managed process in which people are expected to become involved in organisations in deferential ways.

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...examining in detail how people relate to each other in local settings”

CRESC researchers are pursuing these interests in a cluster of related projects examining in detail how people relate to each other in local settings. Nick Crossley, has been looking at the kinds of interaction and support which can be found amongst those who go to gymnasiums. Jeanette Edwards is about to begin a project looking at members of a local genealogical society. Elizabeth Silva has examined the nature of intimate relations within the household, and their relationships with household technologies. By looking at 'big issues' of social co-operation and trust through focused local studies of this kind, CRESC expects to make a major contribution to our understanding of changing forms of social cohesion.

Mike Savage can be contacted at M.Savage@manchester.ac.uk. Mike's evidence and arguments about social capital are summarised in two recent papers: (a) 'The popularity of bureaucracy: involvement in voluntary associations', in P du Gay (ed), *The Values of Bureaucracy*, Oxford, Clarendon and (b) 'Social Capital, Networks and Associations', in *New Directions in the Analysis of Social Capital*, edited by Ros Edwards and Janet Holland, Routledge.

CRESC's Qualitative Research Laboratory

Niamh Moore

One of CRESC's distinctive features is the creation of two methodology laboratories, the Qualitative Research Laboratory and the Cultural Statistics Laboratory, with two associated researchers (Shinobu Majima, Cultural Statistics Laboratory and Niamh Moore, Qualitative Research Laboratory). While the notion of a Cultural Statistics Laboratory may appear to require less explanation, the uneasy juxtaposition of the words 'qualitative' and 'laboratory' seems to demand further elaboration. The 'laboratory' conjures up notions of white coats and test-tubes, of objectivity and experiment, of repeatability and generalisability, perhaps the very antithesis of qualitative research which foregrounds processes of meaning making and interpretation, the subjective, the 'messiness' of research (cf. John Law). Yet the work of those such as Latour and Woolgar in *Laboratory Life: The Social Construction of Scientific Fact* (1986) has opened up the practice of science for scrutiny and revealed the laboratory as a site subject to analogous processes of the production of knowledge as are more conventionally associated with much qualitative sociological research. With this understanding of laboratory practices in mind, the messiness of the lab, as much as the messiness of the face-to-face encounter in the field, might serve to remind us of the non-innocence of any research practices, and this, an interest in the politics of methods, flows through much work across CRESC.

Re-using Qualitative Data: Workshop and Papers

One of the initial qualitative laboratory projects, on re-using qualitative data, continues in a number of guises. Following the successful methodology workshop on *Reusing Qualitative Data* held at the University of Manchester on 28 September 2005 (see CRESC Newsletter 2, December 2005, www.cresc.ac.uk/public.htm for an account of the workshop), a number of the papers (Bishop, Moore and Savage) were also presented as a panel at the British Sociological Association Annual Conference in Harrogate in April this year, and will also be published in the *Sociological Review Online* (Bishop, Moore, Savage and Silva).

This does not end work on reuse as we are continuing to develop ways to pursue this issue, not least because CRESC offers a unique space for working through issues around reuse. Many discussions of reuse emerge from and cohere around the ESRC/Qualidata. This debate risks becoming polarised between those advocates of reuse, many linked with Qualidata, and those sceptical of the possibilities of reuse. CRESC's qualitative laboratory provides another space from which to consider these issues; one which starts from an intellectual interest in socio-cultural change over the past fifty years (and more), and from an interest in thinking about using existing

sources to examine this period. CRESC's interest in anti-epochalism, and in theoretically-informed, empirical, locally-situated research, calls into question many claims about change and the terms on which these claims are made. Furthermore CRESC's contribution to debates around re-use emerges in part from a commitment to interdisciplinarity. Our engagement with debates about reuse highlights the discipline specific nature of these discussions in the context of sociology, and the implications of how other disciplines and subdisciplines (e.g. history, oral history and anthropology) with alternative perspectives and practices on 'reuse' can be marginalised and ignored in specifically sociological debates.

We continue to contribute to these emerging debates, through, for example, participating in meetings of the ESRC-funded Demonstrator Scheme on Qualitative Data Archiving and Dissemination Scheme (QUADS). CRESC members (Moore, Savage, Silva) continue work on reuse. Mike Savage continues research with the Mass Observation Archive and data from Qualidata for his forthcoming book on English popular identities, from 1950 – 2000. Moore is currently working on some data from the Mass Observation Archive, drawing on the Nature and Environment directive from 1992 to look at people's accounts of their daily environmental practices and to examine the rhetorical moves which people make when discussing change and how to bring about change, particularly when they are trying to negotiate the meaning - or meaninglessness - of personal action and national and global politics. Moore and Savage are collaborating on a paper on affluence and austerity which brings together their research from the Mass Observation Archive, from the post war period (Savage) to the early 1990s (Moore) and which will be presented at the CRESC workshop on 'Rethinking Affluence' to be held in September. Silva continues work re-using data gathered earlier in a shared ethnographic project which involved video recording daily life in sixteen households with school-aged children.

Data and Methodology Directory

One important initial aim has been to develop joint laboratory projects. A preliminary project has been the development of a CRESC Data and Methodology Directory. Given the scale of CRESC, and the number of projects being carried out under the auspices of CRESC, the aim has been to develop an online directory of the data generated and data sources used by CRESC members in their research and the method/ologies which are being employed in their research and engagement with data. This database is initially available as an internal resource on the CRESC intranet, but may ultimately be made available more publicly, specially to possible user groups, to advertise the range of skills and experiences across CRESC. The directory allows the mapping of a

picture of what is happening across CRESC, aiming to facilitate identifying and developing possible synergies across projects, and identifying aspects of research and methodology where CRESC is making distinctive contributions.

Narratives, Numbers and Images: Conference and Workshop

One such area is in the consideration of different 'orders' of data: 'narratives', 'numbers' and 'images'. Following the publication of *Financialization and Strategy: Narratives and Numbers*, by CRESC team Julie Froud, Sukdev Johal, Adam Leaver and Karel Williams (Routledge 2006), the interests of a number of CRESC members are coalescing around this cluster of terms. This includes theme 2 members (Bennett, Gillespie, O'Loughlin) interested in the role of statistics in the construction of the culture industries and the cultural sector; and theme 4 members Harvey and Knox with interests in the using of visualizing technologies in the reconfiguring notions of expertise, which draws on ethnography of road building projects in Peru. We are currently planning a two day conference on 'Narrative, Numbers and Images' for March next year, with the aim of developing this with a series of approximately half a dozen seminars over the following nine months.

The National Child Development Survey: A Qualitative Component

Arising from an invitation to Savage to chair the 'social participation' working group for the next sweep of the National Child Development Survey (NCDS), and to consult on the possibility of an additional qualitative component to the NCDS project, the qualitative laboratory will be involved in an innovative development, the planning of a qualitative component to the next round of the NCDS. This is an important and unusual project in creating qualitative data which is intended from the outset for re-use, and opens up a range of methodological and substantive issues which suggest possibilities for developing synergies with existing CRESC interests. The generation of retrospective qualitative life story data alongside the existence of a range of quantitative life course data opens up quite challenging methodological issues for thinking about how to make sense of this data. Furthermore involvement in developing a qualitative component of the NCDS, alongside the involvement of Savage and Majima in developing survey questions around social participation, broadly defined, may feed into emerging work around 'narratives and numbers' and may also provide data which could be analysed as part of the theme 4 project on 'After Social Movements'.

Future Developments

The work of the laboratories continues to develop, with the appointment of a new researcher in visual cultures at the Open University anticipated by the Autumn. A workshop entitled *Rethinking Affluence: Socio-Cultural Change in the UK c1950-2000* and organised under the auspices of the Cultural Statistics Laboratory will be held at the University of Manchester on 20-21 September 2006.

Niamh Moore can be contacted at Niamh.Moore@manchester.ac.uk.

Relevant research and Manchester's cultural institutions

Andrew Miles

Demonstrating the value of its research in terms of policy relevance and the development of closer links with the wider cultural sector are core elements of CRESC's remit. Over the past 18 months the Higher Education and Innovation Fund has sponsored a scheme led by Andrew Miles (Andrew.miles@mamchester.ac.uk.) This has enabled the Centre to work closely with cultural institutions and agencies in Manchester, to investigate their research needs, and to undertake research which sheds light on issues relevant to cultural users.

The local and regional cultural sector already produces a lot of data in response to the requirements set by government and other funders. Much of this is descriptive 'box office' and other survey based audience development data, which has been subjected to standard forms of

analysis. Demands for evidence are increasing but the staff of cultural institutions feel that they often lack the time and the training to implement programmes of research or to interpret their findings in detail. Above all the sector wants to achieve a deeper level, sociologically informed, understanding of existing and potential audience groups. Reflecting the prominence of the social inclusion/cultural diversity agenda, there is particular interest in the motivations and cultural preferences of non-attenders.

Following consultations with the management and marketing teams at a number of the City's key cultural venues – such as Manchester Art Gallery, the Lowry, The Royal Exchange Theatre and Urbis – CRESC is currently working in partnership with the City's arts marketing consortium, Arts About Manchester, to investigate the issue of non-attendance in more detail.

The research includes an extensive postal and web-based survey of leisure interests and cultural engagement within the local population. But the main focus is on in-depth interview with various types of user and non-user groups, looking at influences on their day-to-day leisure activities and exploring their cultural trajectories. The findings of this research will be disseminated via briefing meetings and published feedback to local institutions and the cultural sector more broadly over the coming months and in future years.

In a further dimension to the HEIF project, CRESC has developed a strong collaboration with the new Northwest Cultural Observatory, which has led to a joint seminar series on key research issues in the local cultural sector. The meetings, which have attracted a good mixture of cultural service providers, policy makers and academics, have explored themes such as measuring cultural value, taste communities and the structure of cultural participation, the impact of local geography and belonging on cultural preferences and practices, and the role of the family and generational issues in cultural consumption. As well as substantive research questions, the series has also been concerned to address the methodological issue of how best to translate and present debates and findings across the cultural sector.

The BFI Film and Television Database

Richard Paterson

The perceived social, political and cultural importance of film underpinned the establishment of the BFI in 1933 as an educational organisation. At the time there were worries in the political establishment about the impact of this new medium on children, and not just British children but those in the colonies too, where American films were seen to offer a potentially subversive message. Within a couple of years the BFI had extended its brief beyond education to set up the National Film Library (later to be renamed the National Film Archive), had begun publishing the Monthly Film Bulletin (with details of every theatrical release in the UK), and in relation to both activities began assembling data on file cards about film and later British television. In the 1980s the data from these cards was transferred on to a relational database, albeit one now seen as relatively primitive. A programme to merge our various legacy databases, BID (BFI Integrated Database) began in 2002 and has now been partially made available online at bfi.org.uk/database providing basic filmographic data covering 810,000

films and tv programmes, 1.2 million people, 210,000 organisations and 23,000 festivals.

The significance of this first step in making data available – we expect at some future date, resources permitting, to be able to provide information about our archival holdings and to an array of rights data – is that researchers now have access to a major resource from which they can derive information which could provide fundamental data for any number of research projects. Not just the straightforward listing of all the film or television credits of an individual over their working life, and in some cases a biography, or the credits list for a particular film, but also the ability to see where two individuals worked together, or to get a synopsis of some esoteric title with shot listing, or how many times and when a particular place or organization has figured in film history.

We have made the database available – warts and all – and will be looking to informed specialists to fill in gaps and offer

corrections so that it can continue to grow and realize a use value that none of those who have been involved in the inputting of data over all this time could have imagined possible. Some elements have been available for years on CD-ROM, and latterly through online subscription, as Film Index International with the additional bonus for researchers there of the identification of related journal titles held in our Library. These, for now, remain a paid-for subscription service.

We are pleased to make the database available to all, including the HE community, continuing to extend our provision of online resources which address our remit. Alongside Screenonline (www.screenonline.org.uk) - the guide to British film and television which makes material from our Archive accessible to UK education free of charge – and this new online BFI database, as well as through our other activities, we look forward to continuing partnerships with UK Higher Education across the many subjects which today teach about film and television.

User engagement

User engagement is the official ESRC term for our responsibility to work with, for and through a multiplicity of non academic research users as well as the academic community which we reach through academic publication and conferences. User engagement takes many forms so that, for example, some of our workshops have practitioner speakers. The two short articles below highlight different aspects of CRESC's two way engagement with users: Andrew Miles explains how HEIF project funding has allowed us to do relevant research on participation and non attendance with Manchester's cultural institutions; while Richard Paterson of the British Film Institute introduces a film and tv database which will be of interest to CRESC and other media researchers



Centre for Research on
Socio-Cultural Change

Future CRESC Events

Date	Event
15th June	CRESC/ COIN Seminar 4: Cultural Capital and Family Transfer 10th Floor Conference Suite, Harold Hankins Building
6th -8th September	CRESC Annual Conference: Media Change and Social Theory St Hugh's College, Oxford
20th- 21st September	Cultural Statistics Laboratory workshop: Rethinking Affluence: Socio-Cultural Change in Britain c.1950-2000 Chancellors Conference Centre, Manchester

To book a place at any of these events email: cresc@manchester.ac.uk or find more details a www.cresc.ac.uk

CRESC Conference 2006

Media Change and Social Theory

6-8 September 2006

St Hugh's College, Oxford

A conference hosted by the ESRC Centre for Research on Socio-Cultural Change - a collaboration between The University of Manchester and The Open University

The 2nd CRESC conference is entitled Media Change and Social Theory and will focus on how to enrich the intellectual resources we draw upon to understand the media. The conference brings together some 250 media and cultural studies scholars and social theorists to try to push forward media theory.

Plenary speakers include: Daniel Hallin, Liesbet van Zoonen, Annabelle Sreberny, Faye Ginsburg, Purnima Mankekar, Nick Couldry, Philip Schlesinger, Toby Miller, Tony Bennett, and Karel Williams. More information about the programme, including some 200 speakers, will be available on our website soon.

For more information about the programme and registration (student discounts available) please contact the CRESC main office at Manchester. Tel: +44 (0)161 2758985, e-mail cresc@manchester.ac.uk, website: www.cresc.as.uk

Additions to the Working Paper Series

Working Paper 12

Rethinking Elite Research

Julie Froud, Mike Savage, Gindo Tampubolon, Karel Williams

Working Paper 13

Re-Instating an Ethic of Office? Office, ethos and persona in public management
Paul du Gay

Working Paper 14

Religious Fundamentalisms, Territories and 'Globalization'
Grahame Thompson

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Working Paper 18

Muddled modernities in 'peasant' China
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