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# **Special Edition**

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# **Arts and Management**

**Introduction and Paper 6**

**Towards a Methodology:  
Organisational Cartographies**

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## **Introduction**

### **Why a special edition?**

The International Journal of Professional Management (IJPM) has a broad scope. Professional management is defined as “activities which have an impact on personal and/or organisational development.” This invites papers ranging from one-to-one coaching to globalisation, and everything in between.

It is good to reach out like this, but it is also good to reach in, to explore one topic in more depth. Special editions give the opportunity to bring together writers with similar interests, and have each one explore a different aspect of the same subject. This could be, for example, green issues, training programmes, e-commerce, or any activity that “has an impact on personal and/or organisational development.”

On this occasion we are having a special edition on the role of the arts in management?

### **Why the role of the arts?**

The scientific approach is good. Measurement, prediction, testing and reassessing gives you solid information. Sometimes too solid. It is rare, in human interaction, to have invariable truth with absolute proof. But we like to know, rather than just believe, and then assume we know, and unconsciously get in a rut that blocks alternative thinking. Scientific logic needs to be intermeshed with free flow human multi-directional thought, and the arts excel in that.

Often the arts are seen as the lesser discipline, less rigorous and therefore less reliable, but strict linear thought, especially in the social sciences, can lead to errors of omission. Linear thinking needs the addition of lateral thinking, as De Bono has eloquently pointed out in his six-hat model, for six types of thinking. We need regularly to don the green hat, for creativity, as part of balanced progress.

This is especially so in periods of change, and humanity is always in a period of change, with times of sudden and dramatic improvement – the wheel, writing, domestication of the horse, steam power, telephones, cars, and recently the computer and its many ramifications. Each of these changes has come about by somebody thinking of a new idea, something that didn't exist, and not being discouraged by it seeming impossible at the time. The first spark has been imagination. Nothing new can come without initial imagination, and the arts nurture imagination.

New knowledge comes from people thinking, experimenting, discussing, and then thinking, experimenting and discussing again. It needs an all round approach encompassing freedom to depart from the norm for creativity and innovation, and rigorous checking through replication and measurement. Arts and sciences have vital roles to play. This special edition focuses on the arts, but also has research, experimentation, discussion and rethinking at its core. The arts and sciences are two sides of the same coin.

This special edition emerged from papers at the 2016 conference of the Art of Management and Organisation (AoMO) – Empowering the Intangible.

Many thanks to Cathryn Lloyd and Geof Hill for co-editing this issue.

## **Art of Management & Organisation (AoMO)**

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Stephen Linstead is Professor of Critical Management Studies at the University of York and one of the founders of the Art of Management and Organisation Conference. He and co-author, Heather Hopfl published the seminal text *The Aesthetics of Organisation*. More recently Stephen has moved into the area of film as a method of research and engagement. His first documentary film 'Black Snow', depicting the tragic events of the Oaks Colliery disaster, has won a number of international film awards.

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## **The Art of Management & Organisation (AoMO)**

The Art of Management & Organisation represents a vibrant international community of scholars, artists and creative practitioners passionate in their exploration of the intersections between management, organisations and the arts. They organise a biannual international conference, publish their own peer-reviewed open access journal, *Organisational Aesthetics*, have a prominent social media presence and support various other events and training opportunities. The Art of Management & Organisation conferences are something of a unique experience and continually strive for experiential difference and excellence in pushing the boundaries between management and the arts. But where did it all begin?

The aim was, and continues to be, the exploration and promotion of the arts (in the most inclusive sense) as a means of understanding management and organisational life and its contexts; as well as the utilisation of artistic processes in the activity of managing. The conference grew out of the Standing Conference on Organisational Symbolism (SCOS), especially its 1992 conference on Organisation and Theatre at Lancaster, and was informed by the dramatic growth of field of organisational aesthetics in the following decade, specifically a series of workshops organised by Heather Höpfl and Stephen Linstead in Bolton and

Northumbria, culminating in an influential book 'The Aesthetics of Organisation' (Linstead and Höpfl 2000) published by Sage.

September 2002 saw the launch of the first Art of Management and Organisation Conference on London's legendary South Bank in collaboration with Tate Modern, followed up by the second in Paris in 2004 in collaboration with the Pompidou Centre. Since then the conference has continued its collaborative and open ethos in Paris (2004), Krakow (2006), Banff (2008), Istanbul (2010), York (2012), Copenhagen (2014) and most recently in Bled (2016) and has given rise to a vibrant global community of praxis – including both scholars and practitioners - and will continue to do so in Brighton on the 30th August – 2nd September 2018.

These experimental events focused on those dimensions of management and organisation that render them an art, not purely a science. However, the conferences rapidly evolved to encompass far more than simply a concern with organisational aesthetics. They came to embrace a cornucopia of ground breaking, exciting and informative encounters, extending from traditional academic papers, to displays, exhibitions, performances, screenings, demonstrations, community building processes, and skills sessions, all of which served to address the field of art and organisation in all its richness. However, throughout this blossoming they have most importantly continued to be informed by the themes of inclusivity, diversity creativity and innovation, pursued with a spirit of both inspiration and critical inquiry, which were central to the founding ethos of the conference series.

When in 2005 the Academy of Management decided not to continue to support its Arts initiatives, AoMO became the major available global channel for arts based inquiry in business and management. The conferences have thus unfolded as an endeavour to draw in and provide a space for new, promising, burgeoning or potential avenues of exploration that are evolving in or around the field of study of management and organisation. They have encouraged material from other critical traditions in the humanities and arts, which may be unfamiliar to those working in the organisation and management field – and have eventually included spheres as diverse as sport, philosophy, painting, technology, theatre, poetry, film, dance and art history. Indeed, 2016 saw the inaugural Heather Hopfl AoMO Artist in Residence, Scholarship awarded to a woodcraftsman, Emmanuel Guy.

Emmanuel is also an academic holding a professorship in maritime transportation and public policy at Université du Québec à Rimouski. The Heather Hopfl Artist in Residence Scholarship will also be the occasion to embark on a deeper reflection about the entanglements of his academic and artistic practices and how they can or cannot feed one another. Between now and the conference in 2018 it is planned that as artist in residence, Emmanuel will share on social media his experiences and reflections in this journey with the AoMO community. In addition, Emmanuel will be compiling a photo essay detailing artistic process, inspirations and developments to the chair to be published in AoMO's Organisational Aesthetics.

Organisational Aesthetics, as a journal, is attempting to create both a dialogue and a place for artistic forms and art-as-research within the domain of academic journals. In this way, it is a pioneer in the publication of management and organisation studies. Indeed, this special issue of the International Journal of Professional Management has emerged out of a successful stream of the 2016 AoMO conference, hosted by the IEDC in Bled, Slovenia.

### **Empowering the Intangible: Bled, Slovenia 2016**

The 8th AoMO conference was hosted by the IEDC Bled School of Management in Bled, Slovenia. The IEDC boasts of being a 'School with a View' with every right. Danica Purg, founder of the IEDC had a vision to create a learning environment in which business leaders were taught and explored the value of the arts to leadership and management. More than 30 years on she is president of a thriving private business school set on the shores of the idyllic

Lake Bled. It was in this resplendent environment that the AoMO community came together to explore the theme 'Empowering the Intangible'.

The theme of 'Empowering the Intangible' was developed by Professor Ian Sutherland, formerly of the IEDC. Ian is both an accomplished scholar and musician and was keen to explore how these interests and skill sets, so often thought to be mutually exclusive, converged to inform and ignite one another. In the spirit of exploration, play, creativity and critique, the 2016 Art of Management and Organisation conference explored the intangible aspects of organisational life.

Proliferating our academic and professional discourses are calls to recognise, engage and empower the intangible aspects of organisational life – the felt, sensory and emotional aspects that so often go under the radar. Like the medieval court jester that could speak of things courtiers could not, the conference theme "Empowering the Intangible" sought out novel ways of exploring, feeling and expressing management and organisation through the arts. AoMO 2016 encouraged the community to explore, feel and express the felt, sensory and emotional aspects of management, leadership and daily organisational life.

This conference attracted 145 delegates from around the world, highlighting the growing movement in this area of scholarly and creative interest. There were 11 streams, each showcasing academic work, practitioner methodologies and techniques and performances. Each stream is convened and facilitated by a small team of academics and/or practitioners with the support and oversight of the AoMO host to ensure each conference captures the diversity of the field. 2016 certainly did just that with the following streams:

***The Power of Poetics*** – This stream focused on the creative interplay between poetry, poetics and creativity in order to advance understanding of the concepts and their context. The stream encouraged participants to play with poetry of all varieties, to interpret poetics broadly and to be creative in exploring the power of poetry and poetics.

***Making the Intangible Tangible*** – This stream encouraged participants to explore 'stories' and 'storytelling' as a post-positivistic method of organisational enquiry in which stories are data.

***Leadership as a Performance Art*** – Arguing that the 'art of leadership' has much in common with 'performance art' this stream invited diverse ways of understanding, imagining, framing, and expressing leadership as a performance art by welcoming submissions that advance, celebrate, challenge, explore and illuminate theory and practice

***Fashion Futures*** – Fashion is undeniably an aesthetic power with a strong influence on consumption, community building and style, including of management, leadership and organising. This stream explored the intangible power of fashion (able) organising.

***Art, Space and the Body*** - This stream brought together theories and practices of art, creativity theory, phenomenology, performance and installation. The focus of the stream is the human body where the body in space can improvise, model and simulate forms of process-based creation, which in turn informs our understanding of the processes of organising systems and structures and people.

***Organising Movement: On Dance, Sound, Embodied Cognition and Organisations*** – Dance is more than an art form, it is a culturally shaped bodily practice and experience-based activity that allows the exploration of human movement, expression and sensemaking. This stream hosted papers, performances and demonstrations to explore dance as an art form, a social practice and its applications to organisational development and our understanding of organisation studies.



### ***A Home for Happy People: Creativity, Critical Reflections and Belonging in Organisations***

– In this ambitious stream in which the convenors asked, can we be at home in organisations in the contemporary world of work or are we condemned to an endless unfulfilled, restless searching. If we can ‘be at home’ what does this feel and look like, if this is still a challenge what might it feel and look like and how can we express our hopes, fears and dreams for it?

***The Virtual Studio*** – This was another ambitious stream which sought to explore diverse academic perspectives on the role and nature of the ‘studio’ in arts-based methods and approaches to teaching and learning. This stream attracted a number of ‘virtual’ contributions in which contributors were streamed in live from international destinations to present and perform.

***Improvisation and the Art of Innovating Uncertainty*** - This stream explored how improvisation can contribute to a new understanding and practice of professional work, innovation and management in organisations. Times of uncertainty, disruption and overwhelming complexity call for an extension of the idea of professional work, innovation and management, which is often understood as a rational action of setting goals, planning, and controlling. While improvisation is often belittled as an unspecific and rather unprofessional dealing with messiness, we seek to look at improvisation differently. This stream brought together interdisciplinary scholars and practitioners with the goal of understanding and developing improvisation in organisation and management contexts.

***Arts-based Community Development*** – Art is increasingly used as a catalyst in global communities to explore and tackle community development issues. This stream brought together a range of accounts and projects that explored the skill sets required to undertake such work.

***The Open Stream*** – This stream captured innovative and unique submissions that did not fall neatly within the remit of the other streams. This year saw it play host to papers on artistic freedom, artful inquiry as a leadership skill, and silence as the essence of organisation.

Outside the streams were ongoing exhibitions, pop-up streams, events and gatherings and the freedom to express and explore ideas as they emerged. This special issue of the International Journal of Professional Management is a showcase of just some of the contributions made to the stream titled, ‘Making the Intangible Tangible: Stories as a Process for Organisational and Management Inquiry’. This popular stream ran for two days and included 13 experiential presentations. The stream took place in an amphitheatre style room, ideal for storytelling and wisdom sharing, yet, in a creative AoMO twist the space had access to an outdoor, enclosed private grassed area. Presenters took advantage of this surprise alternative sensory setting and thus, presentations or parts thereof alternated between the indoor and outdoor environs.

This is perhaps the essence of what makes AoMO conferences and events special – there are very few rules. Yes, there is a conference programme and yes, there is a book of abstracts but few days or hours at an AoMO conference will feel structured or predetermined. Organisers embrace and encourage changes to be made and creativity to emerge. Resources are provided to encourage such artistry from plasticine, to pastels, to paints and postcards. This culture of creative embrace, flexibility and democracy are among features that make AoMO conferences unique shared and safe spaces for innovation and liberal creation.

The University of Brighton, UK will host the 9th Art of Management & Organisation conference with the theme of Performance. Already, the organisers are encouraging events, workshops and performances in alternative spaces including the beach. To find out more visit [www.artofmanagement.org](http://www.artofmanagement.org)

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## **What do the articles published in this issue contribute to the knowledge associated with creativity and professional artistry in management?**

The following papers reveal how the use of stories provides a meaningful and creative way for professional practitioners to gain deeper insight into their practices and the organisations in which they work, and in turn develop the professional artistry they need to navigate organisational life. In keeping with the spirit of the journal we provide a brief snapshot of the papers as we intend to let the stories speak for themselves.

### **1. Stories as a Process for Organisational and Management Inquiry**

Cathryn Lloyd and Geof Hill

Practitioners are at the centre of organisations, and their personal stories are entwined with the company stories. Different professionals sharing their stories, in both artistic (hands on) and artful (using all the senses) can expand what we gain from experience.

### **2. Structuring Storytelling in Management Practice**

Martin Eley & Geoff Hill

The authors discuss stories they have solicited from business professionals that speak to issues of leadership. They posit a model for drawing emotional distinctions within stories about leadership.

### **3. Resistance, Resonance and Restoration: How Generative Stories Shape Organisational Futures**

Michelle LeBaron & Nadja Alexander

The authors discuss specifically at generative stories at work in organisations and how these types of stories can be crafted and how they contribute to organisational awareness

### **4. Telling Stories in Organisations: Reflective Practice/Curated Practice**

Jo Trelfa

The author articulates a process for generating organisational stories. Her model adds to the discussion of the literature about storytelling and reflective practice in organisational contexts.

### **5. Body Mapping: A Personal and Professional Artful Inquiry Process**

Cathryn Lloyd

The author describes her use of body mapping as an artful inquiry and a way to facilitate professionals' creative thinking and reflection about their professional practice

### **6. Towards a Methodology: Organisational Cartographies**

Kate Carruthers Thomas

The author uses a mapping metaphor, describing a very different approach to mapping.

### **7. Beating the Blues: An Exploration of the Value of Blues Music to Improve Performance**

Jack Pinter

The author describes his use of blues to elicit and perform organisational stories of discontent in ways that are seen as celebratory rather than complaining.

### **8. Bringing the Body into Change Practice through Storied Performance**

Hedy Bryant

The author illuminates a particular form of storytelling in performative poetry and explores how her own poem 'The Shapeshifter' helped her to articulate her organisational practice related to organisational change.



## 6. Towards a Methodology: Organisational Cartographies

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Dr Kate Carruthers Thomas is a research fellow and project manager at Birmingham City University, UK. Her research builds on two decades of professional experience in the higher education sector. She specialises in interdisciplinary enquiry into the fields of higher education and gender with a particular interest in critical mobilities and mobile/spatial methods.

### 1. Starting points

This article discusses the development of a methodological practice I name organisational cartographies, a way of making sense of co-existing stories within organisational space using mapping in its broadest sense – as process, product and powerful metaphorical tool. The sense of plurality in the naming of this practice is deliberate; it is underpinned by Massey's plural and fluid understanding of space "as social relations shaped by power ... the product of interrelations on multiple scales" (2005, p11). As the article will show, there are multiple ways of representing and experiencing an organisation but as researchers, too often we search for a final reckoning, mapping and preserving a bounded territory, reducing complexity to an abstraction. MacFarlane 2010 writes "maps seek to mark the world and fix its flux, but in doing so they also loosen it from its moorings" yet "you can explore territory in any number of ways. It continues to change and you can continue to explore it – space is open to discussion and infinite" (Solnit 2010, p.2).

Readers should note that although this practice was developed in a higher education (HE) context, in the course of an investigation into 'a sense of belonging' in for mature part-time undergraduates, business practitioners seeking to critique how organisational space is defined, performed and experienced, will find transferable tools here with which they can experiment on their home turf.

The practice of organisational cartographies was introduced in an experiential workshop within the Making the Intangible Tangible stream at the AoMO 2016 conference. The stream focused on stories as a process of organisational and management enquiry and in Organisational Cartographies: Mapping Stories, workshop participants were invited to consider how different forms of mapping as a means of storytelling, could be used as a critique organisational rhetoric. This article outlines and discusses those mapping methods and the stories they generated. It concludes with a consideration of the implications of organisational cartographies as a methodological practice. Firstly however, it sets out the research context and introduces the underpinning spatial concepts.

### 2. Research context – why 'belonging'?

'Belonging' is a powerful narrative in the HE sector, inextricably woven into contemporary student agendas of engagement, retention and success, themselves touchstones of a marketised, heavily audited, highly stratified system. The UK narrative of 'belonging' is shaped by a paradigmatic United States (US) model of student integration and its modifications (Tinto 1975, 1989), influential for four decades far beyond the US. Terminology may differ, but both UK and US versions encompass academic and social spheres, both identify the relationship between individual and institution (university) as central and both model student belonging on an engagement with HE characterised by full-time study and involvement in extra-curricular involvement in university societies, social, sports and enrichment activities. For example: "new students need to 'become competent members of academic and social communities of the college' " (Tinto 1989, p.452) and

“at the heart of successful retention and success is a strong sense of belonging in HE for all students. This is most effectively nurtured through mainstream activities that all students participate in.”

(Thomas 2012, p.6).

The association between belonging and retention in the latter quote is unmistakable. Student retention carries both reputational and financial significance in the now predominantly student-funded UK HE system. A stubborn and continuing disparity between retention rates for mature part-time undergraduates and their young, full-time peers is therefore of particular concern for university managers. However, the dominant model of belonging is simply incompatible with the complex lives of mature part-time undergraduates, a diverse group of learners whose engagement with HE is largely shaped by simultaneous commitments of employment and/or family. A significant proportion enter HE with lower or non-traditional qualifications than their younger peers. Their maturity profile means they are more likely to live at home than in shared student living arrangements; competing external commitments mean they are unlikely to participate in university social, sports and special interest activities – those “mainstream activities all students participate in” (ibid). These are factors Thomas warns, which make it “more difficult for students to full participate, integrate and feel like they belong in HE which can impact on their retention and success” (ibid).

Mature part-time undergraduates occupy an increasingly peripheral and precarious position in UK HE. Their numbers have been in steep decline since the introduction of the Equivalent and Lower Qualifications (ELQ) ruling in 2008 and the £9000 per annum tuition fee in 2012. Nevertheless, they are still a part of system, still present on university campuses. The normative narrative of ‘belonging in HE’ tacitly identifies mature part-time undergraduates as problematic, yet many more successfully complete than withdraw from their degree programmes. So how do they negotiate ‘belonging’ from a position of difference?

My enquiry set out to challenge institution-centric and narrow concepts of belonging and to trace a wider, more complex territory, in the context of a diverse study body. The multiple case study involved 60 mature part-time undergraduates and 26 staff participants at four English universities with part-time undergraduate populations of varying size. It mapped stories of actors with differential access to power and resources within the organisational space of the university. The juxtaposition of these stories is the basis of the practice of organisational cartographies.

### **3. Theoretical context: space and power**

Maps are not neutral products, they are powerful views of the world. Consider the Mercator projection of the world map, once omnipresent in western classrooms, offices and textbooks. Devised by Flemish cartographer, Mercator in 1569 to aid nautical navigation, using the tools and knowledge available to him at the time, the projection depicts a sphere on a flat surface and thus distorts the size of objects as latitude increases from the Equator to the poles. The land mass of Greenland appears much larger than it is relative to the landmass of Africa, whereas the latter is actually fourteen times the size of Greenland ...and three times bigger than the USA (Marshall 2016, p.117). Now discredited, the Mercator projection is criticised not only for its technical flaws, but also for the way it operates as a ‘technology of power’ (Harley, 1988), imparting political authority to a flawed Eurocentric representation of space, one with significant political resonance across centuries.

The practice of organisational cartographies is underpinned by Massey’s concept of space as “social relations shaped by power ... the product of interrelations on multiple scales” (2005, p11). Massey makes three key propositions: that space is the product of interrelations on multiple scales; that distinct and heterogeneous trajectories coexist in space; and that space is always under construction. She encapsulates these attributes in one phrase: space as “a simultaneity of stories so far” (ibid.). This problematises not only “the singular uniformity to which the classical map lays claim” (ibid. p.109), but

also the role of mapmaker who usually remains “the observer, themselves unobserved, outside and above the object of the gaze” (ibid. p.107).

Massey’s plural and fluid understanding of space is reflected in the work of psychogeographer and essayist Rebecca Solnit. Arguing that “a static map cannot describe change and every place is in constant change” (2010, p.2), Solnit reinterprets the atlas not as a series of static maps, but as visual, textual and literary forms created by multiple authors and artists; “a collection of versions of a place, a compendium of perspectives, a snatching out of the infinite ether of potential versions a few that will be made concrete and visible” (ibid.). In *Infinite City* (2010) and *Unfathomable City* (2013) Solnit presents atlases of San Francisco and New Orleans respectively in a way which deliberately unsettles the classic Western map, acknowledging space and our relationships with it as in flux. For example, she maps aspects of San Francisco in pairs and layers: butterfly habitats and queer spaces; shipyards and sounds; the comings and goings of the city’s tribes. “I chose pairs to use the space more effectively, to play up arbitrariness and because this city is ... a compilation of co-existing differences” (ibid.).

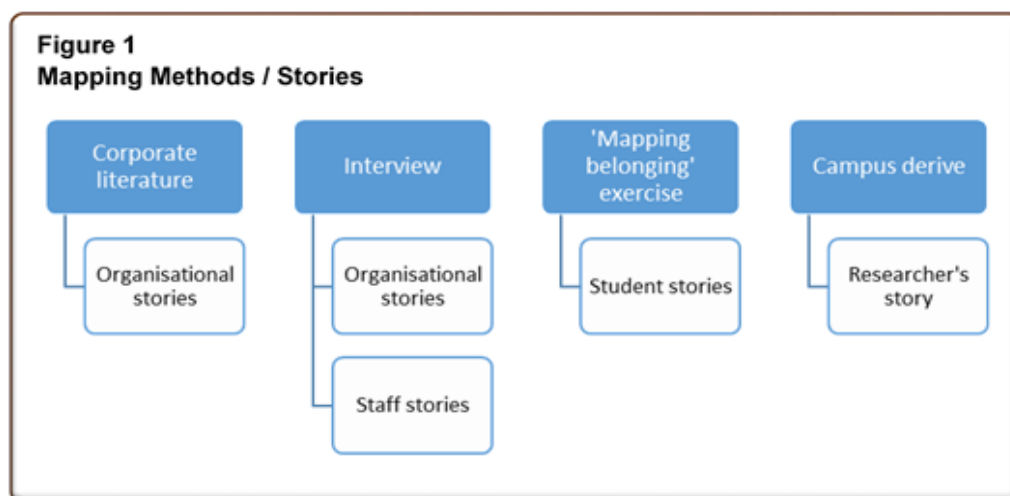
The practice of organisational cartographies is informed by Solnit’s playful contestation of the map’s internal coherence. It also acknowledges “the maker’s own participation and engagement with the cartographic process” (Comer 1999, p.229). As part of my practice, I enrolled a range of activities into the act of mapping/storytelling, including found materials, interviews, participatory diagramming techniques and the nature of my participation as researcher. At the AoMO 2016 conference, workshop participants were invited to move at will around four ‘viewpoints’ featuring representations of organisational, staff, student and researcher stories generated from four forms of mapping activity (Figure 1).

Following this activity, I then retold the researcher’s story of the enquiry, physically retracing my route through and around the data. Finally, researcher and participants co-created a further viewpoint through shared discussion and interpretations of the data.

#### 4. ‘A simultaneity of stories-so-far’ (Massey 2005, p.9)

##### A. Organisational stories

Organisational stories are defined as those reproduced, formalised and embedded in the university’s corporate literature and communications, e.g. the university website and social media feeds, mission statement and strategy and policy documents. These sanctioned messages create a corporate narrative which is both outward and inward facing. They provide shortcuts to corporate mission and identity “stabilising the meaning of particular envelopes of space-time ... securing the organisation as a site of authenticity ... singular, fixed and unproblematic in its identity” (Massey 1994, p.5). The corporate narrative is articulated as part of a positioning process through which universities map and protect distinct locations in a



'hierarchy of more/less valued HE' (Bathmaker et al 2008). For example, the narratives of elite, research-intensive Russell Group universities are distinct from those of the 'new' (post-1992) universities whose original mission was to widen the social base of the university system. Crucially too, such narratives define implicitly or otherwise, who 'belongs' within organisational boundaries.

I found organisational stories in publicly available secondary literature – prospectuses, brochures, online materials and through permitted access to internal strategy and policy documents. Organisational stories reflecting the corporate narrative also emerged in face-to-face interviews with university staff in senior and strategic implementation roles, whose responsibility it is to offer a coherent, abstracted organisational picture; literally a view from above (Box A).

#### **Box A: Organisational stories**

- We're a middle-sized university with a caring community feel – and a vocational focus
- It's in the lifeblood of this institution to recruit mature and part-time [students], and therefore it has become second nature to us to make sure that we're set up for them.
- We are a very proud widening participation institution. Lots of part-time students, lots of mature students, quite a high proportion of students with disabilities.
- The university strategies are more articulated in terms of the excellence of the student experience than about the avoidance of people leaving.

The enquiry discovered that organisational stories strain against changes wrought in the sector by successive strategic and policy shifts. They lose currency as wider geographies of power in the activity spaces of sector and institution determine criteria for viability and competitiveness. In matters of (in)equality and diversity, too often "institutional speech acts ... do not go beyond pluralist understandings of diversity and are non-performative in the sense that they fail to deliver what they have promised' (Ahmed 2006, p.764). As organisations outgrow established narratives, spaces open up between rhetoric and experience. These spaces are occupied by other stories.

#### **B. Staff stories**

Twenty-six semi-structured face-to-face interviews were carried out with staff across the four case study universities. Staff roles were categorised to ensure a degree of consistency between interviewees occupying different points in the organisational hierarchy and with varying proximity to students (including mature part-time undergraduates). I interviewed at least one member of staff from four role categories in each case study university: senior strategic (pro-vice chancellor or similar); senior implementation (faculty or service head, lead or similar); teaching academic (lecturer or senior lecturer or similar); and student support (student services, engagement or similar). The interviews provided opportunities to observe the interaction between subjectivity, institutional discourse and power and to note compliance with and resistance to the organisational stories described above. To use this practice in organisations other than universities, practitioners could devise a bespoke categorisation which captures broad functions e.g. management, frontline staff, 'back office' staff etc.

If peripherality is an integral element of part-time mature undergraduate identity, it also characterises the work of staff working closely with them, particularly academic lecturers. Staff

tell stories of teaching in the evening and at weekends, of having to repeatedly advocate for part-time students in scheduling and assessment arrangements, of colleagues' perceptions of part-time programmes as ones that don't fit 'the norm' (Box B). Stories told by staff located furthest from organisational centre revealed at best, a partial awareness of corporate strategic messages, a resistance to corporate narratives and a pragmatic acknowledgement of the complex lives of their students.

#### **Box B: Staff stories**

- We seem to be lone voices; I've been invited onto a couple of review panels and, as somebody described it, "Oh you're here to talk about the odd programmes!"
- I would say that every mature student has got more important thing than the degree on their mind – but I'm keen to stress to them what they are in terms of a fully paid-up member of the university – they should feel they can access as much as any other student on any other programme
- I'm always in there with elbows, fighting for part-time. We're not a big cohort here and a lot of decisions are made on the full-time and the Masters. You have to be quite assertive!
- "Those of us who choose to teach adult classes ... do set up a kind of protective enclave for them", says the lecturer. "We try to make the hours better; we try to get them in a decent room and keep the room; we try to nurture; we try to plan the sessions around their needs."
- All universities try and socialise their students into becoming 'university students' but if they're not on campus, how can we do it? The vast majority of our students work - every student's part-time now – yet we're continuing to treat them like full-time students.

#### **C. Student stories**

Student stories were collected in the course of group workshops involving a bespoke mapping exercise entitled Mapping Belonging. Adapted from an established technique of geographical research, participatory diagramming, Mapping Belonging generated visual and oral accounts of mature part-time undergraduate experiences of belonging on campus. "The use of participant-generated visual materials ... gives them distance from what they are usually immersed in ... allows them to articulate thoughts and feelings that usually remain implicit" (Rose 2014, p.27).

In the first part of the exercise participants were provided with a black and white photocopy of their campus map and asked to use different coloured pens to mark the places on campus where they felt they 'belonged' and places where they 'did not', alternatively referred to as 'hot' and 'cold' spots. The intention was to disrupt students' familiarity with their campus environment and to invite them to map something tangible and emotive in visual form. In the second part of the exercise, participants shared their maps with one another, meaning that the value of the exercise was not only in the visual product – the map of belonging – but in the discussion and reflection on the task.



### **Box C (1): Student stories**

- One stares at the map, then exclaims: “Is it that big? I’ve only ever been in two buildings on this campus. Are we allowed in that sports hall?”
- I’ve got so much stuff needs doing at home, why would I want to spend any more time on campus than I need to?
- One student rings the entire main campus site in blue. “I’ve just said cold for the whole thing because I don’t even know where it is”.
- I’ve hardly used the university at all because I live very close. I tend to come in for lectures then go home via the library. I prefer the quiet working environment at home
- This is somewhere you come every couple of weeks, then go. We come on a Saturday so everything’s shut. You’re lucky if you can get a cup of coffee or a warm drink.
- There’s loads of buildings but I don’t find a need to go to them. I don’t need accommodation, I’ve come to university having got my career.
- I think we’re the poorer relation ... the main campus is much better equipped. We have to pay the same as they do, but we’re never going to be the same.

Across all four case studies, students’ maps of belonging revealed limited engagement with campus beyond their classroom, a pattern reflecting a way of engaging with HE which must accommodate other commitments, most commonly family responsibilities and the demands of employment. Students’ discussions included mixed experiences of libraries and learning centres, genuine enthusiasm overlaid with lack of confidence in searching for resources and discomfort about age differences. For those attending evening and weekend classes, quiet buildings, distant satellite teaching rooms, cafés closed out of hours and empty vending machines are familiar experiences of the ‘university’ space. Also common across all four case studies was evidence of negligible involvement in the familiars of contemporary ‘student life’ – the Students’ Union building, the bar, the gym.

In organisations other than universities, practitioners can take a similar approach to the way staff use organisational spaces including communal areas, different floors, outside space. What are the experiences of staff using the organisational buildings at different times of day, staff on shift for example? What assumptions, including cultural assumptions, are made about the way staff will or should use different spaces? Who is present in particular spaces, who is absent or invisible?

A limited engagement with physical campus spaces, does not however, exclude mature part-time undergraduates from experiencing a sense of belonging. I learned to look beyond the obvious for practices of belonging negotiated from a position of difference (Box D). For time-poor, mature part-time undergraduates a sense of belonging is less likely to be associated with the university or Faculty as a whole and more likely to be engendered within a year group, shared professional identity or small group of peers engaging with HE in a similar way. Student participants enact belonging in snatched lunch and coffee breaks, car shares or on private Facebook pages. For some it is an intensely private emotion. These are liminal spaces of belonging, difficult to map in two dimensions and certainly difficult to capture in organisational strategy and policy documents.



### **Box C (2): Student stories**

- I brought my grandson in and played snooker on the tables they've got in the Union. It was lovely. I thought, this is my university, I can do what I want!
- I've waited all my life to study. I've made sacrifices to get here. Why would I drop out? I'm looking at my hat and gown!
- If we hang out anywhere in between sessions we stay in the department; we generally walk to Sainsbury's then we come back here.
- I feel part of my course; I very much feel part of my year group. We all give up our weekends to be able to study. Everybody's sort of in the same boat.
- The only reason I'm still here is these people. It's like camaraderie in the bunker!

### **D. Researcher's story**

"Representation is always partial, local and situational and ... our self is always present, no matter how much we try to suppress it" (Richardson 2007, p.91). If the research process is compared to cartography, then the researcher is the mapmaker. Their story is not a 'view from above, but one of multiple co-existing trajectories within the organisational space; one among a 'simultaneity of stories-so-far'.

In the conference workshop, I recounted my story, the researcher's story, of the enquiry as I walked around the viewpoints constructed with the materials described above. A significant element of my story was the strategy I developed to take account of my dual status as an academic researching on university campuses. For while I was a visitor, an outsider at each case study site, as a university graduate and employee in the sector I was researching, I was also an insider. My educational and professional background meant I could anticipate and easily recognise generic features of the organisational campus template e.g.: the library, the lecture theatres, and the Students' Union.

"In situations strongly familiar to us, strangeness is not a given but something researchers can only achieve by finding the proper strategies to uncover what is not-so-normal ... in that sense researchers are like fish trying to discover the water that surrounds them."

(De Jong et al 2013, p.168)

My chosen strategy to make this familiar strange was an adaptation of a psychogeographical practice: 'dérive'. Psychogeography is described as "the point where psychology and geography collide. ... the emotional and behavioural impact of urban space upon individual consciousness" (Coverley 2010). Dérive is the foundation stone of psychogeographical practice, the activity that connects urban wandering, flâneury, gothic form and "local history with attitude" (Self 2007, p.12), "a particular way of walking for the purpose of exploring the impact of urbanisation ... intended to disrupt the habitual ways in which individuals normally experience environments" (Bridger 2013, p.3). Dérive requires the walker to abandon conventional motives for movement, e.g. travelling to or from work, and to allow themselves to be drawn by the attractions of the terrain and the encounters they find there. In the canon of psychogeography there are almost as many 'brands' of dérive as renowned psychogeographers.

In campus *dérive*, I followed Solnit's lead (2013, 2010, 2006, 2001), in extending psychogeographical practice beyond the urban hothouse and interpreting 'place' in the widest sense. I used the act of walking to establish connection with each case study institution. Campus *dérive* acknowledges campus boundaries but is not bounded by them and considers liminal spaces between the university and its host town or city. Through campus *dérive* I was not seeking to discover whether I 'belonged' but to understand how relationships of power and psychosocial dimensions of that organisational space might impact on belonging.

At each case study site, I mapped not only the physical spaces of the case study institutions, the sights and sounds of them, but also the psychosocial dimensions of those spaces, the sense I made of them, how places were labelled and named. I took an interest in the spatial relationships of the campus, who was visible and not. I listened to language, to regional accents, to "opportunistic conversations which take on a life of their own" (Holliday 2004, p.278). An example of the latter is quoted in the case study account of one university, one with close links to the Church of England.

"Two men are chatting at the next table, one a chaplain in dog collar, jeans, ear stud, with an iPad. I can't help but overhear. The chaplain says, 'For me this is my parish, thousands of students. We worship every day, sometimes it's just me, but every day we shroud this place in prayer. That is my job.'"

(Thomas 2016)

While walking, I allowed myself to experience a spontaneous and unedited flow of impressions, observations and thoughts which I later transcribed in a research journal. These form the opening and closing sections of each case study account (see Box D).

My ability to utilise *dérive* was facilitated by certain kinds of privilege. "There are three prerequisites to taking a walk – that is, to walk for pleasure. One must have free time, a place to go and a body unhindered by illness or social restraints" (Solnit, 2001, p.234). That I was able to 'drift' freely around a university campus without ID, without being stopped, questioned or ejected, says something about the liberal social values of 'the university' as a public space but was also dependent on geographies of ethnicity, gender, age and dis-ability. "The freedom to move, to write, to map is a situated freedom" (hooks 1992, p.343). Was I, a middle-aged, White woman, 'seen'? How might I have experienced campus *dérive* as a young Black man, a Muslim woman in full hijab, a wheelchair user or visually impaired person in the corridors, halls, cafés and green spaces of the campus?

#### **Box D: Researcher's stories**

- The campus is close to the city walls. I enter through an ancient stone arch leading on to a leafy path. The buildings are low rise, a series of interconnecting courtyards and small enclosed green spaces. Cloistered, contained.
- Travelled from the station on a grey drizzly morning. A large urban campus, edged by busy road and arteries into the city centre and out into beyond. Of the city but not in the city.
- Another sunny, sharp day. From my vantage point in the library, I look out across staircases and walkways beneath a soaring atrium to glass-walled staff offices, several stories deep. Here in the library it's airy, light and open-plan, with small clusters of PCs, group working spaces, sofas and stools in pink, orange, purple, red. Students move the furniture around to suit their needs, creating bespoke study habitats, taking control of the space. If IKEA designed a library, it would be like this.
- In reception, lights flash frenetically on a tall Christmas tree; beyond is the canteen, a space not dissimilar to an airport lounge or a hospital waiting area – bland, functional. A banner encourages students to acquire the university loyalty card and benefit from special offers. A television screen near the service area advertises the staples of student life on a loop: software, print credits, student surveys, global/international student groups, entrepreneurship events, careers fairs, the university app. These are interspersed with contact numbers for student support facilities “for those struggling to settle in or returning and feeling unsure”.

## **5. Discussion**

As a storytelling practice, organisational cartographies borrows from certain critical and nuanced explanatory frameworks, including feminism, post-structuralism and post-colonialism, which see in between and beyond grand narratives to map co-existing differences and “open up the imagination of the single narrative to give space (literally) for a multiplicity of trajectories” (Massey, 2005, p 5). Earlier in this article I compared the research process to cartography and the role of the researcher to that of the mapmaker. Perceptions of objectivity and neutrality are problematised by maps “inevitable abstractness ... the result of selection, omission, isolation, distance and codification’ (Corner 1999, pp.214-215). Every map, conventional or otherwise, is the result of the mapmaker’s judgement: how to represent space; what to include and what to exclude. It is not so much that “all views from above are problematical – they are just another way of seeing the world. The problem only comes if you fall into thinking that that vertical distance lends you truth” (Massey 2005, p.107).

My enquiry into mature part-time undergraduate belonging created critical cartographies of four organisations, cartographies reflecting my judgements and decisions, my own geographical imagination as a researcher. This approach honours complexity and aims to “leave openings for something new” (ibid). Shaped by the spatial, the social, the psychosocial and the psychogeographical, the enquiry experiments with a set of alternative cartographies to capture a wider, more complex organisational territory. This atlas of belongings maps ‘the university’ as a space of multiple centres experienced in multiple ways. Organisational cartographies uses mapping in its broadest sense to disrupt the powerful singular and make sense of co-existing stories within organisational space. As a method of organisational and management enquiry, it applies a spatial, qualitative lens to organisational structures and power relationships and can enable the stories of the most peripheral actors to be heard.

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