

Everyday Creativity
A Morgan Centre conference
10-11 July 2018
 Humanities Bridgeford Street Building
 University of Manchester

Conference Programme

Tuesday 10 th July 2018	
10.30	Registration, tea and coffee
11.00	Welcome and Introduction
11.15	<p>Keynote Session 1: Professor Sarah Moss, University of Warwick – <i>Dirty laundry in public: doing the washing in fiction</i></p> <p>Chair: Vanessa May</p> <p>Room: Cordingley Lecture Theatre</p>
12.30	Vegetarian Lunch
13.30	<p>Paper Session 1</p> <p>1a. Creative approaches and methods</p> <p>Room: G7</p> <p>Chair: Alice Bloch</p> <p>- Penny Tinkler - <i>Moving in time: Creative methods for researching mobilities across the lifecourse</i></p> <p>- Amy Mulvenna - <i>Playing with Place: towards creative mapping praxis in Belfast</i></p> <p>1b. Everyday creative resistance</p> <p>Room: G33</p> <p>Chair: Laura Fenton</p> <p>- Carly Guest - <i>Creative resistance in the everyday: material, embodied and relational moments.</i></p> <p>- Leah Gilman - <i>"I'm not their parent but they have a right to know where they came from:" How identity-release gamete donors do non-parenthood in relation to their donor-conceived offspring.</i></p> <p>- Eija Sevón - <i>Children's creative resistance in everyday family conflicts</i></p>
15.00	Break, tea and coffee

15.30	<p>Paper Session 2</p> <p>2a. Creativity in histories, traditions and narratives</p> <p>Room: G7</p> <p>Chair: Leah Gilman</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sarah Neely - <i>'Reel to Rattling Reel': Telling stories about rural cinema-going in Scotland</i> - Laura Fenton and Penny Tinkler - <i>'It was like America!': The creative appropriation and narrative reimagining of postwar childhoods using Shirley Baker's photographs</i> - Simon Duncan - <i>Creating the ordinary; the invention of common law marriage</i> <p>2b. Creativity in environments, spaces and buildings in-the-making</p> <p>Room: G33</p> <p>Chair: Helen Holmes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Camilla Lewis, Vanessa May and Stephen Hicks - <i>Balconies as spaces for creative modes of living</i> - Christina Buse, Daryl Martin and Sarah Nettleton - <i>Everyday creativity in architectural design and construction</i> - Jennifer Mason - <i>Everyday poetics</i>
17.00	Drinks Reception/Book Launch
19:00	Conference Dinner (pay your own) at a local restaurant

Wednesday 11th July 2018	
9.45	<p>Keynote Session 2: Professor Sue Heath and Dr Andy Balmer, University of Manchester – <i>Seeing through the lines: some lessons in observational drawing</i></p> <p>Chair: Jennifer Mason</p> <p>Room: Cordingley Lecture Theatre</p>
11.00	Break, Tea and Coffee
11.30	<p>Paper Session 3</p> <p>3a. Writing differently Room: G7 Chair: Petra Nordqvist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Verónica Policarpo - <i>Taking the risk? Literary writing and sociology</i> - Sara Louise Wheeler - <i>"Call me Ishmael": encouraging creativity and flair in the standard social sciences student essay</i> <p>3b. Creativity in making, pleasure and consumption Room: G33 Chair: David Morgan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Helen Holmes - <i>Handmade Christmas: exploring the changing value of consumption</i> - Rebecca Collins - <i>Nonsense, whimsy, and little robots that beep: playfulness and pragmatism in hobbyist making</i>
12.30	Vegetarian Lunch
13.30	<p>Paper Session 4</p> <p>4a. Creativity in the face of exclusion and inequalities Room: G7 Chair: Owen Abbott</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cristiana Olcese - <i>Creativity to face everyday challenges</i> - Saskia Warren - <i>#YourAverageMuslim: work-based activism of Muslim women in British fashion and media</i> <p>4b. Creativity, materiality and memory Room: G33 Chair: Sophie Woodward</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Liz Mitchell - <i>The 'common art': Everyday creativity in the Mary Greg Collection at Manchester Art Gallery</i>

	<p>- Helen Holmes and Sarah Marie Hall - <i>The silent music sheet, the unsewn button and the replica tin: materialising nostalgia in the Marks and Spencer's archive</i></p> <p>- Epp Annus - <i>Creativity, memory, and materiality in Soviet Estonia</i></p>
15.00	<p>Keynote Session 3: Professor Ben Highmore, University of Sussex – <i>Mundane aesthetics and everyday poiesis</i></p> <p>Chair: Sue Heath</p> <p>Room: Cordingley Lecture Theatre</p>
16:15	Close, Tea and Coffee

Keynote Abstracts

Keynote 1

Dirty laundry in public: doing the washing in fiction

Professor Sarah Moss, University of Warwick

If I were ever to read my own on-line reviews, I'd find that some of the people who dislike my latest novel do so because the narrator is always doing the laundry. There's more than one reader offended by the idea of a father handling his daughters' underwear (it's a waste of time to argue with anonymous reviewers even in one's head, but I would like to know if they also think mothers shouldn't wash their sons' smalls). I noticed when I began to think about it that there's a laundry set piece in my earlier novel, *Bodies of Light*, which required days of research on Victorian washing practice and technology, and left me with the idea that staying dirty was the functional choice for women in Victorian cities.

I'm interested in a literature of laundry because laundry is even less visible in fiction than other forms of domestic labour and yet takes up hours of someone's time every week in most households. There's now an extensive scholarship on food in literature. Mrs Ramsay might know how to make a beef casserole in *To the Lighthouse* but it's hard to imagine her putting her visitors' sheets through the mangle. When *Jane Eyre* turns her hand to housework up on the moor, she kneads bread, tops and tails gooseberries, beats the carpets and washes the walls, but fresh clothes continue to appear as needful, even with three women in the house regularly crossing open moorland in ankle-length dresses. And yet from the eighteenth century, household guides assume that everyone has clean underwear daily, and in most of the houses I know the rhythm of the washing machine cycle is one of the anchors of the day. I have energetic conversations with friends, clever friends who write books and have several degrees, about whether it's worth getting a dryer, where we dry the clothes without one, whether ironing should be practised on special occasions or not at all. An early indication of the gulf between my mother-in-law's expectations and my own was her broad-minded concession that it didn't really matter if our town garden was small as long as there was room to hang the laundry out of sight of the house; on the other side my grandmother was clear that underwear should never be hung out where the neighbours would see it. Laundry practices bring environmental concerns, both global and very local; class markers; ideas about the value and use of time; anxieties about the public and the private, and that's before we think about who performs this work for whom.

I write about daily life because I think it matters, because I think there's a gender and class politics in the idea that domestic labour doesn't belong in literature, because we show love and anger and resentment in the way we do laundry and because you can say more with a nicely pressed shirt or a bloodstain than you can with flowers. Whoever does your laundry knows your secrets, and is therefore in a position of considerable narrative strength.

Keynote 2

Seeing through the lines: some lessons in observational drawing

Professor Sue Heath and Dr Andy Balmer, University of Manchester

What might happen when a bunch of sociologists are given sketchbooks, sets of paints - and licence to play? Apart from nervous hilarity and a fair amount of mess, we might also expect some reflections on where the drawn line might sit within the methodological palette. In

our plenary, we share some of our own methodological musings arising from a collaborative experiment in observational drawing involving the Morgan Centre and artist Lynne Chapman. Part of the deal was for Lynne to teach us how to sketch and for us to explore if and how we might be able to use sketching in our own research practice. In concluding that 'yes, we probably can', we grappled with a number of challenges to our more usual practices of seeing and representing the social world, which we will explore in this paper. In particular, we focus on the notions of sketchiness and concentrated seeing, before considering some specific examples in more detail. Along the way there might well be a spot of sketching. Come with pencils at the ready...

Keynote 3

Mundane aesthetics and everyday poiesis

Professor Ben Highmore, University of Sussex

While the term creativity can seem freighted with ideas of originality and expressive individualism, the philosophical term "poiesis" can suggest a more everyday sense of making, or of bringing forth. Thus the hurriedly prepared meal, made out of whatever is to hand, might be better understood as a form of poiesis than as a "creative" act. Poiesis could be the name we give to an everyday creativity: activities that will become misrecognised if we "promote" them to a level of artistic creation. Similarly, to register the everydayness of poiesis we need to rethink aesthetics as a form of mundane experience. And this means becoming attentive to the often ambiguous, habitual and "weak" sensorial experiences of daily life. In this talk I will use examples from the Mass-Observation archive and elsewhere as a way of investigating everyday practices of poiesis.

Paper abstracts

1a. Creative approaches and methods

Moving in time: Creative methods for researching mobilities across the lifecourse

Penny Tinkler, University of Manchester

This paper discusses a creative method for researching actual and hoped for spatial mobilities in and over time. It involves a novel elicitation method of creating and discussing 'biographical space maps' to explore mobilities historically and to trace their resonances across the lifecourse. The method has been developed through working creatively with women who were teenagers in the 1950s-70s to research relationships between their experiences in youth and later life. Spatial mobilities were integral to the processes and experiences of girls growing up 1950s-70s; they included everyday travel and important events and transitions such as starting work, leaving home, moving to pursue further education and going on holiday. These mobilities were utilitarian, exploratory, creative, also imagined and aspirational. They are a neglected aspect of social diversity and inequality and have implications for pathways into and through adulthood. The method is now being adapted for use in a publicly-available toolkit for creative reminiscence work.

Playing with Place: towards creative mapping praxis in Belfast

Amy Mulvenna, University of Manchester

Peter Shirlow argued that "the fundamental problem affecting Belfast is that geography matters in ways that are overt and obvious" (2006, p107). It is true that the material reality of geographies of division and everyday conflict remains a reality for many children and young people in Belfast: in the 26 peace walls, street murals, flag displays, in family stories, cultural traditions, and continued segregated schooling. Yet, along with these monoliths of political and cultural expression, children and young people's everyday lives are complexly and obliquely interwoven across various sites and flows of the social, material, cultural and political.

In this presentation, I discuss findings from my PhD research with children aged 6-12 across youth centres in Belfast. I focus on three processual and participatory 'creative cuts' we have developed (as opposed to methods), involving picnicking, tent-making, and curating a Museum of Found Things. This presentation will foreground in particular the materiality, tactility and 'intra-action' (Barad, 2003) emergent in mutable modes and moments of arts-based, creative mapping praxis, as well as the productive conceptual relations between 'dwelling with', playfulness, enchantment and everydayness (Ingold, 2000). Through the cuts, I seek to upend and extend existing research methodologies and ways of 'framing' childhood in Belfast today, opening up novel spaces and ways for participants to explore and express perspectives on what matters to them in their city. I further question: what particular advantages might creative, methodological mapping encounters bring to considerations of children's everyday geographies in other 'post-conflict' societies?

1b. Everyday creative resistance

Creative resistance in the everyday: material, embodied and relational moments

Carly Guest, Middlesex University

This paper explores creativity as a strategy for resistance that is both a process and product. Creative resistances might elicit and express emotion, forge connections and unruly alliances, disrupt and interrupt, and make the unmanageable more manageable. Drawing on data from four very different studies – generational memories of the 84/85 miners’ strike; women’s narratives of becoming feminist; women’s experience of incarceration and the lived experience of family carers – this paper finds material, embodied and relational moments of creative resistance in the everyday. It calls into question what it is that might be labelled ‘creative’ and/or ‘resistance’ and locates political action in the spontaneous, the momentary, and the everyday. It reflects on the use of creative methods – photo elicitation, walking interviews, collaging and emotion mapping – as a means of exploring accounts of creative resistance across various sites.

“I’m not their parent but they have a right to know where they came from:” How identity-release gamete donors do non-parenthood in relation to their donor-conceived offspring

Leah Gilman, University of Manchester

Recent work on the Sociology of the Family has often begun from Morgan’s (1996) assertion that families are something which is “done” rather than something which simply “is.” Families are actively and continually reproduced through, often routine and taken-for-granted, practices. In this presentation, I draw on 24 in-depth interviews with UK identity-release sperm and egg donors to demonstrate how particular social contexts can also require people to, quite actively and carefully, not “do family”. Whilst almost unanimously supportive of any donor offspring’s right to contact them in the future, donor participants were keen to qualify the nature of this potential relationship in order to make clear that they were not really family to donor offspring, and certainly not their “real” parent. Occupying an ambiguous and unscripted role in relation to their offspring, donors did this limiting work in highly creative ways, beyond simply screening out or ignoring their relationship to people conceived with their gametes. These discursive strategies included reframing the donation as a gift or public act, emphasising their relationship to recipients or expressing their relationship to offspring indirectly. Using these examples, I demonstrate that not constructing kinship connections can be as active and creative a process as constructing them and that “not really being family” or “not being the real parent” also needs to be continually reproduced through reference to family practices and discourses.

Children’s creative resistance in everyday family conflicts

Eija Sevón, Marianne Notko and Sanna Moilanen, University of Jyväskylä

In the ongoing study reported here, family conflicts are viewed from two theoretical perspectives of power as children’s resistance and pragmatic agency (e.g. Hitlin & Elder, 2007; Tisdall & Punch, 2012). Pragmatic agency can be defined as the ability to act innovatively when routines break down (Hitlin & Elder, 2007, p. 176), and is thus a kind of everyday creativity. The study focuses on the creative and unpredictable ways in which children manifest their resistance in family conflict situations. Two concepts utilized in childhood studies when interpreting pragmatic agency from the child’s perspective are interpretive reproduction and secondary adjustment. These conceptual tools also enable a positive approach to the study of family conflict situations and how families cope with them.

The participants were 53 Finnish children, aged from 4 to 13 years, recruited via two collaborative multimethod research projects. The children were studied using participatory methods. We analyzed all the family conflict situations to identify examples of resistance, defined as any episodes where the child described an open conflict, argument or act of resistance between themselves and their parents or siblings. The preliminary findings indicate that children have multiple ways of manifesting pragmatic agency in the family: their everyday creativity showed many forms of resistance and accommodation. Children's agency is linked to the opportunity to resist and to participate in the negotiation of power, and hence influence and initiate change in their family relationships.

2a. Creativity in histories, traditions and narratives

'Reel to Rattling Reel': Telling stories about rural cinema-going in Scotland

Sarah Neely, University of Stirling

As Annette Kuhn explains in relation to her pioneering research on cinema culture in 1930s Britain, 'how people remember is as much a text to be deciphered as what they remember (2002: 6). This paper, drawing from research conducted as part of a three-year AHRC-funded project looking at the history of the Highlands and Islands Film Guild (University of Glasgow and University of Stirling), will examine the ways in which cinema memories are narrativised. Through an analysis of the project's oral history interviews, but also correspondence with respondents, respondents' diaries and other written accounts, including poems, short stories and other forms of creative writing, the paper will focus in particular on the relationship between the sensory stimulation of the cinema-going experience and creativity. It will also make comparison with material drawn from Kuhn's Cinema and Culture in 1930s Britain Archive (Lancaster University), giving particular consideration to the ways in which cinema memories are narrativised across the various forms, but also the ways in which cinema memory (as a very particular form of cultural memory) may offer its own unique inflection to the ways in which stories are told.

'It was like America!': The creative appropriation and narrative reimagining of postwar childhoods using Shirley Baker's photographs

Laura Fenton and Penny Tinkler, University of Manchester

Postwar childhoods have become potent sites for creative production across literary genres of fiction and memoir, as well as in film and television. The postwar period is often reimagined in such texts as a time of relative innocence, when childhood was lived out in a series of outdoor adventures, free from the imposition of the contemporary preoccupation with 'health and safety'. This paper reflects on our experiences engaging in an oral history project conducted in partnership with a professional curator and Manchester Art Gallery as part of the exhibition "Shirley Baker: Women and Children; and Loitering Men". Former residents of 'inner city' areas of Manchester and Salford photographed by Shirley Baker in the 1960s and 1970s were interviewed about their recollections of the places represented in the photographs. Excerpts from interviews were then selected and edited for an audio guide that accompanied the photographs in the exhibition. Most interviewees were children and/or young people when Baker was photographing their areas. We argue that Baker's photographs provided visual material for the creative appropriation and narrative reimagining of childhood and adolescence, or for what we call 'everyday retrospective

creativity'. The photographs are not isolated images or stand-alone works of art, but rather part of a wider visual and narrative vocabulary for making sense of postwar childhoods. We conclude by reflecting on how 'found' - as opposed to elicited or generated - photographs can offer productive resources for oral history and qualitative interviewing, provided researchers are attentive to their position within a broader repertoire of visual and narrative practices.

Creating the ordinary; the invention of common law marriage

Simon Duncan, University of Bradford

This presentation deals with the mass creativity of inventing tradition, so that the socially deviant became the legitimate ordinary. Before the 1970s unmarried cohabitation was both extremely rare and heavily stigmatised. The idea of common law marriage through cohabitation was unknown. Indeed, for many the crime of (Creativity) bigamy was preferable. How was it, then, that this deviance discourse disappeared as cohabitation became common and accepted, practically indistinguishable from marriage in everyday life? This depended on the creation of a different, more positive tradition. First, the rapid invention of the 'myth' of common law marriage gave cohabitation apparent legal similarity to marriage. Second, academics created a supporting myth that cohabitation as informal marriage had been widespread in the past. This allowed cohabitation to be presented as socially normal and the immediate past, the 'marriage centric' 1950s, as abnormal. The radically new practice of unmarried cohabitation gave the appearance of stability in the moral order. Rather than couples struggling to justify their behaviour (or more likely hiding it) there was nothing to explain about pervasive ordinariness. All this was a creative solution to a novel problem, but the solution rarely took the form of individual 'life experiments' but rather of the social invention of tradition.

2b. Creativity in environments, spaces and buildings in-the-making

Balconies as spaces for creative modes of living

Camilla Lewis, Vanessa May and Stephen Hicks, University of Manchester

This paper explores everyday creativity in how residents of a modernist housing scheme use their balconies. We theorise the balcony as a liminal space, separate from yet attached to both private/'inside' and communal/'outside' spaces. Our discussion is based on an empirical study of place, atmosphere and belonging among residents of Claremont Court, an example of post-war social housing in Edinburgh. In contrast to the ubiquitous depictions of modernist housing schemes as places of stigma, associated with social demise and a lack of community, we argue that they should be explored as places of everyday creativity, where residents modify spaces in order to negotiate relations with neighbours, develop a sense of home and portray the self. Our analysis of the creative ways in which residents used the threshold space of the balcony highlights the pivotal role that balconies can play in negotiating home and belonging in an urban context. At Claremont Court, residents understood their balconies as important spaces that allowed them to craft different relationships with self, home, their neighbours, the building and the city. In particular, we focus on the ways in which residents made use of the dual inside/outside character of their balconies as a way of circumventing territorial stigma; negotiating the private/public boundary; and creating comfort. To conclude, we discuss what a focus on such creative

everyday uses of threshold spaces such as balconies can contribute to theorising belonging and neighbouring, showing how the notion of home stretches further than the walls of house.

Everyday creativity in architectural design and construction

Christina Buse, Daryl Martin and Sarah Nettleton, University of York

Historically the distinctiveness of the architectural profession has been defined in terms of the aesthetic practice of design, and a division 'between architecture and building, and creativity and craft' (Imrie and Street 2011: XIX). Although recent research has highlighted how everyday creativity in architectural work is social and contingent (e.g. Yaneva 2009), there is still a tendency to focus on creative design practices as separate from the 'craft' activities of construction. However, the reality of everyday creativity in architecture and construction is more complex than these depictions suggests. This paper explores these issues drawing on data from an ESRC funded project 'Buildings in the Making', exploring the day to day work of architects designing buildings for care, using ethnography and qualitative interviews. This study reveals how in practice creative practices of drawing and design can be a collaborative enterprise, shared between architects and builders as designs evolve during the design and construction process. The artistic creativity involved in building design also exists alongside the everyday creativity of construction work, which involves adapting designs to the building 'in the making', drawing on embodied, tacit knowledge. Yet stereotypes of the architect as the creative 'lone genius' are still pervasive, and relate to architects' sense of an 'image problem' associated with the profession, and divisions between architecture and construction.

Everyday poetics

Jennifer Mason, University of Manchester

In this paper I will argue for an appreciation of 'everyday poetics' in our ways of understanding the experience of living in the world. There are two overlapping strands in the argument here. One is part of the 'creative turn' in social sciences methods, where the argument is that in order to explain and represent the world in all its messy and vital complexity we need an evocative or 'artful' appreciation that will be resonant. The second strand in the argument is more fundamental, and it is that there is something in the everyday experience of living in the world that is poetic or lyrical in character. It is this second strand that I am most interested in for this paper, although the interplay between the two is important. I will suggest that once we take on board the idea of the poetic character of everyday life, we may find ourselves moved to shift and re-envision our ways of theorising living in the world.

I shall illustrate my arguments about everyday poetics through a discussion of 'affinities'. Affinities are potent connections that arise in the everyday encounters of living in the world, where a spark or a charge of connection makes life charismatic or even toxifies it (Mason, 2018). I shall explore in particular how affinities involving potent connections with ecologies, environments and weather give insights into everyday poetics, and I will invite a consideration of whether and how this might inspire us to reconceptualise living in the world.

3a. Writing differently

Taking the risk? Literary writing and sociology

Verónica Polcarpo, University of Lisbon

Can social scientists take the risk of literary writing? How creative can we be, as social scientists, in the moment of communicating the science we are producing? What are the risks for science? And for literature? And for scientists? Are these epistemologies so different that they become irreconcilable, or is it possible to bring them together, in order to build a 'third way' of communicating our quest of knowledge? The relationship between literature and sociology is not new, with many novelists providing fruitful insights into ways of doing, manners, habits and the particularities of daily and social life. Famous examples are M. Proust's *A la recherche du temps perdu*, or G. Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*. However, if literature has often been a source for social scientists, either to document or to give insights about a particular subject, group or time, it has seldom been approached as a possible way of performing the 'art of knowledge'. The 'rules of the scientific game', namely (but not only) among those that more openly have embraced a 'natural sciences' approach to methods, results and impact, seem to have excluded this possibility. In this communication, I ask if, and in which terms, it is possible to bring creative literary writing into sociology. I explore the potentialities and risks of experimenting with literary writing tools to produce outputs outside the conventional scope of sociological writing. I argue that this 'literary writing' may constitute an important methodological innovation within sociology, critical to project the discipline beyond its self-referenced world.

"Call me Ishmael": encouraging creativity and flair in the standard social sciences student essay

Sara Louise Wheeler, University of Bangor

In her landmark chapter 'Writing: a method of inquiry', Richardson (1994) unclothed the emperor by declaring that she found much of qualitative writing to be boring. Having identified the problem of the homogenized voice of "science", and its dominance within the qualitative milieu, she highlighted the utility of creative writing techniques for producing engaging qualitative research outputs. In numerous subsequent articles, Richardson showcased, through demonstrable examples, the power of this innovative approach for communicating scholarly messages to a wide range of audiences. The impact of Richardson's body of work has been immense, inspiring an international community of qualitative researchers to push the envelope and experiment with their writing. For me, encountering Richardson's alternative paradigm was like rediscovering the sociology I had fallen in love with as an A-level student. I felt empowered once more to pursue topics of autobiographical interest and to find my own, authentic, scholarly voice. As a lecturer, I have sought to inspire the same spirit of experimentation, reflexivity and creativity in my students, sharing with them the plethora of tools at their disposal. Whilst it may seem slightly paradoxical to say that I have created templates and guidelines to facilitate this everyday creativity, the philosophies and logic which underpin these literary devices may not be immediately apparent and thus must be explained and taught to a certain extent. In this paper, I shall discuss my pedagogic approaches and materials, as well as my various degrees of success in eliciting truly interesting and highly readable student essays.

3b. Creativity in making, pleasure and consumption

Handmade Christmas: exploring the changing value of consumption

Helen Holmes, University of Manchester

This paper explores shifting values of consumption. Building upon a forthcoming paper (Holmes, in preparation) which explores how contemporary thrift operates on a continuum of interwoven and often competing motivations, I illuminate some of the practices and values associated with this shift; from hand-making Christmas gifts, to pro-actively saving money to spend on experiences rather than material things, to shunning the now widespread 'coffee culture' (Schulz, 2012). In turn, I illustrate how this shift is propelled by a number of factors, not least economic instability and increased awareness of issues of overconsumption and sustainable resource use, but also anti-capitalist/anti-consumption motivations, and crucially personal contexts and values. Whilst heeding scholarly criticism of the romanticised and elitist nature of the resurgence in activities associated with make do and mend, voluntary simplicity and austere lifestyles (Hall and Holmes, 2017), I argue that the pleasure and creativity of everyday consumption practices and decisions is all too often overlooked and forgotten. As I show this pleasure is often interwoven with the value of consumption activities, be that making a Christmas gift, saving for an experience, or resisting consumption practices deemed of little value.

Nonsense, whimsy, and little robots that beep: playfulness and pragmatism in hobbyist making

Rebecca Collins, University of Chester

In recent years there has been growing interest – from both academic scholarship and the general public – in hobbyist making (Price and Hawkins 2018). Whether or not this reflects a growth in the number or type of makers, or the range or scale of making practices, remains open to debate, but the potential of hobbyist making as a catalyst for other processes – personal, social, environmental, economic and political – is increasingly being recognised (Carr and Gibson 2016). This paper focuses on one example of how the playful creativity of hobbyist making transposes itself into mundane practical interventions aligned with sustainable everyday living. Based on 18 months of ethnographic work at an established 'maker space', it outlines how different forms of what might be termed 'creative play' produced what I term a 'maker habitus' (following Bourdieu 1977), a disposition oriented towards curiosity, problem-solving, fixing and improving. This was evidenced by participants' stories of domestic DIY, maintenance and repair making use of skills learned through their hobbyist practice. The biographical production of participants' 'maker-habitus' highlight key social and spatial enablers of their creative play, drawing attention to the complexity of the assemblages conducive to their genesis. I conclude by echoing my participants' call for a little more nonsense and whimsy in the service of problem-solving for everyday sustainabilities.

4a. Creativity in the face of exclusion and inequalities

Creativity to face everyday challenges

Cristiana Olcese, University of Manchester

This paper explores how people facing difficult circumstances – due to social inequalities, abuse and exclusions – use creativity to survive everyday life. In particular, it illustrates how they manage to identify suitable surrogates of what they need but is not available to them. This process requires the ability of translating qualities from/to objects of different natures (i.e. the need and desire of control over unavailable/denied life choices can be translated into control over one's own body), learning different meta-languages, and creating and inhabiting imagined places. This use of metaphors and ability of producing something to evoke something else is generally attributed to artists. Yet, this paper illustrates how this process is firmly entangled in everyday life. Data are based on the anonymised experiences shared and discussed by a group of psychotherapist trainees during a residential training in London in January 2017. Gestalt theory – and in particular the concept of 'creative adjustment' (Perls et al 1972) – is used to complement sociological theories about creativity in everyday life such as the concept of social aesthetic (Olcese and Savage 2015).

#YourAverageMuslim: work-based activism of Muslim women in British fashion and media

Saskia Warren, University of Manchester

Muslima lifestyle media, publishing and fashion are reshaping global media, leisure and recreation, and creating new spaces of identification and belonging in predominantly Western-liberal societies. Typically young, educated and upwardly mobile, Muslim women producers in the cultural and creative industries are challenging stereotypes and resisting socio-economic exclusion (Lewis 2015; Tarlo 2010; Khattab 2009; McGee 2008). Bringing into dialogue discourses on gender and creative labour (Worth 2016; Crewe 2013; Reimer 2008; Gill and Pratt 2008) with feminist geopolitics (Dixon and Marston 2011, Hyndman, 2007) this article explores how Muslim women are mobilising and interrogating notions of religious faith and gender in the advancement of creative careers. Informed by interviews and discourse analysis of social media channels, it points towards insecurity and forms of violence experienced in Muslima creative labour where leadership is predominantly white, male and secular. In this paper, the argument is advanced that Muslima media and fashion are re-negotiating familial, community, and institutional norms in a context of modernity, including patriarchalism, imperialism, and Islamophobia (Idriss 2016; Newsom and Lengel 2012; Essers and Benschop 2009). At the vanguard of change, then, British Muslim women producers are opening new spaces, discourses and practices in the work-place, and challenging conservative and western-liberal thinking on Islam, work, gender and equality.

4b. Creativity, materiality and memory

The 'common art': Everyday creativity in the Mary Greg Collection at Manchester Art Gallery

Liz Mitchell, Liverpool Hope University

In 1922 designer and educator W. R. Lethaby wrote an article titled 'The Need for Beauty'. Four years after the end of the First World War, in the same year that newly-elected Prime Minister Andrew Bonar-Law described the country's 'crying need for tranquillity and stability', Lethaby made a passionate case for what he called 'the common art'. The

common art, he wrote, out of which all great art emerges, 'is concerned with all the routine things of life – laying the breakfast table and cleaning the doorsteps of our houses, tidying up our railway stations, and lighting the High Streets of our towns'.

This paper introduces a little-known collection of domestic objects and amateur crafts informed by this idea and put together in the same period. The Greg Collection of Handicrafts of Bygone Times was given to Manchester City Art Galleries by collector Mary Hope Greg, also in 1922. Intended as both a material history of everyday life in the past and a spur to creative practice in the future, it was a response to the devastation of war, founded on Mrs Greg's personal belief in the redemptive capacity of everyday creative practice. The collection is still held by Manchester Art Gallery, where it has, in recent years enjoyed a significant renewal of interest. This paper thus considers both the historical origins of the collection, in the context of interwar concepts of the 'everyday', and its relevance within a contemporary context, informed by 21st century approaches to creativity, health and wellbeing.

The silent music sheet, the unsewn button and the replica tin: materialising nostalgia in the Marks and Spencer's archive

Helen Holmes and Sarah Marie Hall, University of Manchester

In this paper we explore how nostalgia and collective memory are materialised and imagined through the archive. Drawing upon research into the Marks and Spencer's (M&S) archive, we argue that archives, particularly those containing objects, command our nostalgia, conjuring romanticised imaginaries of bygone times. In doing so, they re-appropriate objects and their histories into contemporary narratives. This paper adds to a growing body of work exploring the potency and creativity of everyday materials and objects and their ability to produce, imagine and memorialise affinities between people, places and times gone by (Holmes, under review).

In the case of the Marks and Spencer's archive, we illustrate how M&S is part of collective British memory, promoting middle class ideals of British family life. The archive and the objects it displays materialise such imaginaries, creating a yearning for the spirit, values and opportunities of times gone by. These imaginaries are subsequently interwoven into contemporary narratives of family life – weaving together past, present and future – to create unattainable ideals of family (Hall and Holmes, 2017). Significantly we draw upon the biographies of three objects from the archive to make our argument, these are: a music sheet, an unsewn button and a replica tin. By making these objects central to our account, we illustrate how their fibres, textures, patterns and forms materialise nostalgia through the archive (Miller, 2005).

Creativity, memory, and materiality in Soviet Estonia

Epp Annus, Ohio State University

The presentation analyses the strategies of performing memories through material recreation in Soviet-era Estonia. In 1944, when the Red Army approached the borders of the Estonian Republic, Leonhard Lina, like many thousands of others, went into hiding. Lina found a secure hiding place in a potato pantry in his parents farm home, where he spent his days laying on his back, getting out from the pantry only in the night-time. While laying in the tiny pantry, Lina started to construct a set of toy furniture, an exact replica of the

interiors of his home in Rakvere town. His elaborate set, built over a period of ten years, included many pieces of furniture, but also dishes and utensils, flowers in a vase, hangers for clothes, even a toothbrush. The furniture set was meant to be a gift to Lina's daughter.

Lina's story provides an excellent example of retelling and rethinking one's life-experience through material objects. This is nostalgia-creation, performative longing for the times past, now irrevocably lost - Lina's home was destroyed in the war. At the same time, Lina's is also a materialized version of storytelling, a way of transferring the past to the next generation. Lina strives to recreate and sustain the objects and the whole lifeworld that was lost: even though he engages in a creative activity, he aims to be a copyist. He recreates the past home-world in its detailed everydayness. This presentation is interested in this dialectics of creativity, memory, and materiality.

Conference venue and travel information

The conference will be held in Humanities Bridgeford Street Building, number 35 on the campus map. Please do let us know in advance if you have any accessibility issues and we can advise you on the best route into the building:

<http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=6507>

Information on how to get to the Oxford Road Campus of the University can be found by clicking on the following links:

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