

Session A4: Interdisciplinary and Cross-Disciplinary Research.

Session Chair, Dr Melanie Smith

Room 961/962

Presentation 1 - Navigating futures at 60 Degrees North: Co-curation as praxis for deliberating value formation in future assembling and eliciting learning for sustainability in Orkney and Shetland.

Catherine McCullagh, Institute for Northern Studies (in applied research collaborative with Heriot-Watt University and Shetland Museum and Archives).

Abstract

At the North Atlantic's crossroads, the Northern Isles (NI) were once central to international flows of people, goods and ideas. Now, their open economies, high youth out-migration, and ecosystems abraded by climate change imply precarity. Here, maritime heritages connote complex, situated responses to global dynamics. In museums; households; submerged, and terrestrial, they navigate between "Authorised Heritage Discourse" (Smith 2006), and heritage-making "from below" (Robertson 2008).

Drawing on 'bricolage' research into how Orcadians and Shetlanders connect and/or disarticulate around their heritage futures, this paper presents a collaborative, performative praxis, prototyping co-curation as "deliberative value formation" (Kenter et. al. 2016) and elicitive social learning towards sustainable development. The epistemology, developed through ethnography, is opening-up NI-based conceptualisations of maritimities, from subsistence to contested sea-space utilisations, including renewable energies and cruise tourism. It informs an in-real-life and in-virtual co-curation with communities across both archipelagos of a new web-based resource. Once atomised objects; archives; practices; traditions, and sites are assembled and re-mobilised in new modalities: film; artworks, and digital modelling, increasing inclusivity and holism.

Through "shared authority" (Hutchison 2013), museum curators, boat-builders, mariners and artists, prototype co-curation as praxis. Getting "hands dirty" (Witcomb and Buckley 2013) together, they deliberate the value-formations that privilege selected aspects of Northern Isles' identity-work, whilst others are 'forgotten'. Maritime heritage-making, lately instrumentalised in commodified "identikits" (Macdonald 1997), is re-considered as future-assembling. Legacies, "beyond impact" (Facer and Pahl 2017) emerge, including a forum for heritage-based sustainable development, and a model of co-curation for preferred futures, useful for others in similar environments.

References

Facer, K. and Pahl, K. eds. (2017), *Valuing interdisciplinary collaborative research: Beyond impact* (Bristol: Policy Press, University of Bristol).

Hutchison, M. (2013), "Shared Authority": Collaboration, Curatorial Voice and Exhibition Design in Canberra, Australia', in Viv Golding and Wayne Modest, eds. *Museums and Communities: Curators, Collections and Collaboration* (London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic),143 – 162.

	<p>Kenter, J.O., Reed, M. S. and Fazey, I. (2016), 'The Deliberative Value Formation model' <i>Ecosystems Services</i> 21(B), 194-207.</p> <p>Macdonald, S. (1997), <i>Reimagining culture: histories, identities, and the Gaelic renaissance</i> (Oxford: Berg).</p> <p>Robertson, I. J. M. (2008) 'Heritage from Below: Class, Social Protest and Resistance', in Brian Graham and Peter Howard, eds. <i>The Ashgate Research Companion to Heritage and Identity</i> (Aldershot: Ashgate), 143 – 158.</p> <p>Smith, L. (2006), <i>Uses of Heritage</i> (Abingdon, Oxford: Routledge).</p> <p>Witcomb, A. and Buckley, K. (2013), 'Engaging with the future of 'critical heritage studies': looking back in order to look forward' <i>International Journal of Heritage Studies</i> 19 6), 562 – 578.</p>
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Presentation 2 - Social Innovation in Marginalised Rural Areas: identifying and characterising social innovations examples

Diana Valero, and Rosalind Bryce, Perth College UHI

Abstract	<p>Social innovation, despite being a criticised concept, has been embraced as an emergent approach to rural development. The broad scope of the concept makes it susceptible of being applied to different fields of activity (agriculture, forestry, delivery of services, social integration, etc.) in relation to different societal challenges (environmental conservation, creation of employment, enhancement of governance, poverty, etc.) and in different rural contexts (in terms of marginalisation, economic development, resources, etc.).</p> <p>This presentation draws in the work that the Centre for Mountain Studies in the EU's Horizon 2020 project SIMRA (Social Innovation in Marginalized Rural Areas) identifying and cataloguing examples of social innovation in relation to societal challenges in rural areas.</p> <p>In this presentation, we will explore the understanding of social innovation as a driver of transformation and change in rural areas: from examining how concrete examples of social innovation transform social practices in agriculture, forestry, and rural development to discussing the deeper meanings that those changes may have in terms of community reconfiguration. In concrete, we will discuss the identification of examples of social innovation and describe their core features.</p>
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Presentation 3 - The Environmental Impact of Later Prehistoric and Norse Communities in the North Atlantic; new investigations from Loch of Tuquoy, Westray, Orkney

Dr Scott Timpany, Archaeology Institute, UHI; Dr Tim Mighall, School of Geosciences, University of Aberdeen; Prof Antonio Martinez Cortizaz, Biología, Campus Sur, Santiago de Compostela; Prof Ian Foster, University of Northampton; Olwyn Owen, Historic Environment Scotland

Abstract	<p>Despite being an important location in the Viking/Norse world, and containing a wealth of Norse archaeological remains, little is known about the impact Norse communities had on the landscape of Orkney. To redress this, a palaeoenvironmental investigation of sediments from the infilled Loch of Tuquoy, located within 500m of the high-status Norse farmstead and Crosskirk at Tuquoy on Westray, Orkney, was conducted. Pollen, non-pollen palynomorphs, microscopic charcoal, sediment geochemistry and mineral magnetics were performed on a 2.2 metre-deep core. Two major periods of human activity occurred: the first from c. 900 to 150 cal BC and then between cal AD 700 and 1750, which encompasses the Norse occupation of the farmstead at Tuquoy. Pollen evidence suggests that cultivation of barley and oats/wheat and for pasture took place during both periods as part of a mixed agrarian economy. While the landscape was largely treeless from 850 cal BC onwards, minor woodland clearance occurred in both periods. A cultural landscape seems to have been created before the Loch of Tuquoy record commenced and development of vegetation thereafter appears largely unchanged by human activity from the Late Bronze Age onwards. The palaeoeconomy of the Norse seems to have been a continuation of earlier practices.</p>
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Presentation 4 - From Cèilidh to Page ... and Back Again!

Iain Howieson, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig UHI

Abstract	<p>For centuries, in the Gaelic-speaking communities of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, the oral tradition of song was vital. The songs provided entertainment and news, they celebrated success and marked disaster or loss, they made heavy work lighter and repetitive tasks less dull, and they reflected the history and the values of the communities that produced them.</p> <p>It was in the convivial, social setting of the cèilidh-house that these songs would often be shared, and great respect could be earned by the bards who made them. As literacy became more widespread, many of the popular songs already in existence were written down and circulated to a larger audience, and new songs were composed by literate poets, using similar conventions to those of the oral tradition.</p> <p>In the twentieth century, the work of so-called ‘township bards’ was seen by some scholars as parochial, limited and of dubious quality. But were such judgements based on sound analysis, using valid criteria? My research has been focussed on a consideration of the poetic techniques used in Gaelic ‘township poetry’ – especially that produced in the nineteenth century – and of the degree to which the work of scholars such as Hymes, Foley and Ong can illuminate such analysis. In my paper, I shall offer an update on my work so far.</p>
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