

Work package 4 - Product using location and context sensitive technologies - The training of urban design professionals.

The Nature and scope of the work package

Eden Grove is situated within the immediate locale of London Metropolitan University, North campus. The work package relates to the university's continuing mission of connecting with the local community and bridging the gap between formal and informal learning as a continuum of activities (Cook et al 2008). This is the area from which many of the students are drawn. It is an area steeped in social and cultural heritage, as "Cities are very much the crucibles of cultural juxtaposition, fusion, hybridization and syncretism" (Sheller and Urry 2006: 14).

The work package will enrich the students' knowledge and understanding of urban education in a meaningful context by using mobile learning technologies to immerse deeply into one particular urban setting, namely Eden Grove and Georges Road in Holloway, London, N7 from 1850 until the present day. The use of a historical perspective will demonstrate continuation, change and causation and enable a better understanding of both contemporary and future urban contexts.

Rationale for undertaking the work package

The work package will explore how schools are signifiers of both urban change and continuity of education policy and practice in one inner city locale. It will explore urbanism and urbanisation by examining the flows of diverse peoples within urban space and infrastructures (Castells 1996). Since 19th century there has been a big influence of religious schools in the area. The significance of such schools has particularly been reflected in terms of academic achievement, ideologies and processes of social, cultural and geographical power.

The work package will provide evidence of how the organisation and re/structuring of urban space, in particular related to religious practices worked alongside educational discourses and policies to support participation in civic urban life and educate generations of working class children. The intention is to examine the community from the past, in order to engage, understand and inform the present, as urban space and society becomes made and remade.

Outline of development/Research process

The work package uses a complex interplay between mobile learning technologies, iconic physical infrastructures and educational discourses to visualise urban education through various collective images and representations (cf: Durkheim's notion of the *social imaginaire*). This will enable them in both formal and informal learning contexts, when combined with the *real*, to examine past and present representations of urban form, and relate these to a contemporary study of urban education.

The intention is to create a digital 'technoscape' (Appadurai 1996, Urry 2006) to represent urban land, space, and subjects using a combination of social and cultural

scripts. These will include oral histories, local historical stories, and material elements that detail changes in the urban form, such as old photographs of pupils and landmark school buildings and historical maps. The intention is for the student to *move through* the re-constructed landscape and thus “perform that landscape” (Sheller and Urry 2006: 9) and to experience the locale through a virtual tour of the past and present.

Initial field work was carried out from extensive visits to the site to gain a sense of the locale and gather contemporary images. Data was collected using primary sources from oral histories and secondary sources using community resources and historical sources such as Pathe newsreels. Other materials for the work package such as video clips and photos were gathered from university library archives and Islington local history centre archives.

The development and production process involved the following elements...

- Capture and digitise oral histories, Pathe news clips and local historical stories.
- Capture and digitise material elements that detail changes in the urban form, such as old photographs, school buildings and historical maps
- Initial field work and documentation of the site
- QR code and MEDIASCAPE production (see below) to support the underlying pedagogy of the work package
- Create mobile tour QTVR shoot of interior and exterior of buildings
- Support + troubleshoot execution of the mobile tour

High end mobile phones (HTC diamond + Nokia N95) will be used by small groups of 2 or 3 students at a time. They will allow real research to be done on the move as they have an excellent qwerty keyboard and provide a full internet experience. Also for the first time flash is capable of running in the mobile browser, which will allow intuitive (touch screen) access to all the associated learning objects. The voice recorder on the phone will be used to allow report writing and note making for final presentations to be captured quickly and efficiently. Students can also produce video podcasts of themselves and even edit the videos they make on site using the phones. Finally QTVR (quicktime VR) movies of the structures under investigation can be viewed and manipulated in real time again using the phones.

To allow students to ‘perform the landscape’ a virtual learning environment using QR codes and MEDIASCAPES will be produced: The way we place ourselves into local context is changing profoundly: We have GPS technology to pinpoint our location, we have satellite images and 3D maps of almost every relevant place in the world and we have the web that contains information about most of the places in the world. It is now possible to construct content and ‘place’ it in context using mobile devices (i.e. Bluetooth / SMS / RFID / QR codes etc) where other users can access and add to it. For more information on this please refer to this short video which we recently produced for JISC techdis (<http://www.techdis.ac.uk/>) describing QR Code use and best practise:

www.rlo-cetl.ac.uk/developers/smith/techdis.mov

Transferable Skills to enhance professional practice:

1. Critical understanding of a range of cultures and social situations and be able to apply these to real world issues. These real world issues could include - inner city, urban, community; schooling of working class children, past/present lived urban experiences, movement of peoples in/out of locales.
2. Awareness of a wide range of issues that have implications for a range of professional contexts including teacher education, teacher workforce and other work in/with schools, educational research, urban design professionals, planning and regeneration, community development.
3. Use of audio-visual and technical materials to support team/collaborative learning, academic dialogue as well as learner autonomy in the communication of complex ideas and completion of tasks.
4. Make the links between theoretical analysis and practical contexts - can relate this to understanding and use of praxis. Praxis in this context means firstly 'shared practice' - when communities of practice bring together learners and practitioners to develop and share useful learning insights. Secondly it is also the process of putting theoretical knowledge into practice - so in this case this would include applying theories of urban education/urban studies with the real, lived context of the Eden Grove working class community.
5. Application of higher order cognitive and intellectual skills – exploring issues in depth and over time.
6. Carry out research and investigate the subject within a conceptual framework, pose and answer questions and construct arguments. The conceptual framework refers to the work package's overall objectives and foundations. These are related in a logical way to all the aspects of the enquiry, so the conceptual framework acts like a map that provides coherence to the study. In essence this combines the use of historical descriptions, visual/digital materials and MLO technologies and student-led research activities to explore, examine and explain the community from the past in order to understand and engage with the present, as urban space and society becomes made and remade.
7. Develop general study skills, problem solving skills and communication skills.

Script segments from the actual mobile tour:

The tour demonstrates the rapid and continuous development of education in London from the 19th century to the present day.

Key Questions to consider when on the tour

- As you take the tour identify continuities and change as evidenced by the educational settings

- What do you learn about the socio-economic conditions over time? Which social class has been educated in this area? What indicators are there that the area has changed?
- What do you think has been the influence of religion in the area? How can you tell?
- What can the education of the past tell us about the present?
- What do you think have been the educational challenges faced by those living and working in the area?

Starting at the Holloway Road end walk west down Eden Grove.

The first place to explore is the building on the right with Notre Dame De Sion above the door.

Task: What other institutions used to be built like this?

The second building is the red brick building on the left – a former vicarage.

Look at the plaque. What does this suggest about the importance of the building and what it stood for?

Task: Look at the newsreel from the 1930s that was filmed in Eden Grove.

Some of the educational buildings in Eden Grove have now been demolished. These included a lecture hall and a Roman Catholic Grammar School for boys at Cornwall Villa, which was connected with the church of the Sacred Heart (see further on). What does their presence suggest about forms of education in former times? What might the lecture hall have been used for? Who were these classes for?

Task: Can you work out where these other buildings may have been located and what Eden Grove would have looked like in former times?

At this point turn right.

You will come to Our Lady of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Roman Catholic Church next to it is a former school, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Roman Catholic School.

The school is different in design from the London 3-decker style of the time, with the hall at the centre and classrooms coming off this central point. What do you know of class sizes at the time?

What does the close proximity of church and school buildings suggest? Can you see any indications of the relationship between education and religion in the architecture of the building itself?

Now walk south towards Georges Road.

Take a look at the LCC flats on your left.

In the 1920s this area was known as the Ring Cross Estate and was in the second highest criterion for overcrowding and squalor, with people living in some of the worst slums. Why do you think the area was so heavily populated?

What does the past and present housing stock suggest to you about the socio-economic status of the local community? How do you think the surroundings affected the children when they came to school?

What do you think was here before the flats? Why do you think they were replaced? What could have happened to previously-established communities?

Now look at the current Sacred Heart School. What sort of school is this now?

The school is built in an open style, giving each classroom some access to the playground. When do you think it was built? What does the architecture suggest about the educational approaches at that time in terms of health, cleanliness, modernisation and efficiency?

Task: Looking at the exterior of the school, what changes do you think have been made to the school recently? What effect do you think this has had on the environment and the education of the children?

Further down Georges Road on your left you will see **Radford House, a five storey block of flats backing on to Hartnoll Street, which was built in 1929 and the smaller four-storeyed Hartnoll House for cheaper letting.** What did these buildings replace and who was housed in them?

Task: Using the local maps and old photographs sketch the road layout of the area in the 19th century.

As you continue to walk down Georges Road you will come to St. James' School flats on the right hand side. This was an early attempt at change of use of a building as part of gentrification of the area.

Task: Compare the structure of this building with those you have seen earlier. Can you see where the different entrances for boys, girls and infants would have been. How has the architecture changed? Why do you think this is?

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