Parallel Stream K

Workshop: Disappearing Narratives

Paper 2:

Disappearing Narratives: Accessing Structural Institutionalisms

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The MacPherson report provides an opportunity for us to make meaning between the lines of institutional interpretation. This interactive session explores how institutional rhetoric may be reinterpreted and reactivated to create alternative poetic narratives. We will engage in a 'punk'd' process of collage and erasure poetry to explore how institutional rhetoric can take on different identities when dismantled in new contextual settings, such as a university conference. From correctional institutional language to academic institutional language, by way of creative and poetic praxis, the session will engage participants in physical inter-acts of cutting, ripping, destroying, gluing, shaping, and marking what was originally a standing political output. We invite everyone far and wide, those with close connection to the report and those who are new to its contents, to participate in this performative, interactive session.

This session is the second instalment of a series of 'Disappearing Narrative' (DN) workshops and talks created by two institutional workers: an early career academic/lecturer and a university professional services staff member, both of which have different but overlapping creative practices inspired from within the academy. We are interested in the use of 'institutional data' as creative medium, through performative and participatory visual found poetry exercises; broadly we question how the purpose of institutionally generated, disseminated, and housed archival material is repurposed in new, alternative settings.

In our first DN talk, we utilised materials from Jimmy Reid's Upper Clyde Shipbuilding Papers with supplements from Glasgow Guardian (U Glasgow Student Union Publications) from the University of Glasgow Scottish Business Archives in order to engage an intimate group of undergraduate and postgraduate students from the Edinburgh Art College (now part of the University of Edinburgh) in a two-hour session.

In the Radical DMU session, we propose using the MacPherson report as our main text, with supplemented photographic material from the DMU archives to engage an interdisciplinary audience in the investigation of structural institutional imagery. Our overriding question is: how might we deconstruct and, ultimately, reconstruct our collective understandings of structural access at the institutional level? Is access permitted for all? The goals of our interactive session are two-fold: (1) to capture key discussion at the conference, visually, and by creating physical evidence of intellectual and reflexive activity; and (2) to understand the process behind a 'methodology of interpretation' and discuss its uses in a pedagogical geography. Ultimately, our main aim is to create an 'artist book' as an output, with the possibility of building a digital chapbook, that serves as evidence and record of our interpretations and ready to be catalogued into an institutional archive.