

Methodological Innovations Conference 2017

25 May 2017
Plymouth University



Poetry written on the day by Thom Boulton,
inspired by the talks given by some of the
various speakers of the event.

Crinkle Cut Chips, Salad Cream Sandwiches and a Big Slab of Meat

inspired by Clare Pettinger and Lin Adams

Appreciative Inquiry as an approach to optimise the role of food activities in 'marginalized' individuals.

1.

Did you hear
maybe see
that
viral video at a restaurant
of a
little girl who
gave her meal to
a homeless body outside?

She stood up,
a modern day worthy,
and took her plate to the
faceless person,
gave him her tasty meal.

Altruism replaced the word open
on the cafe's front door sign.

When she handed it over,
gave it over,
she saw he had pearl coloured eyes, and a
crinkled nose like her crinkle cut chips,
she saw his gravy stained beard, although
it lacked the gravy stains,
she saw him smile,
she didn't know she was the first to see it
in over twenty years.

2.

My father found cooking therapeutic,
from a palette of salad cream sandwiches,
sausage with chips,
came a thirst
when handed first Gary Rhodes book,
a desire for curries and stir fried vegetables,
pies and pastries, fish with funny sounding
names like
ling and monk,
sounded like a 70's detective show.

I grew up
tasting a slight bite of every culture possible.

3.

At Toby Carvery,
gathered with family,
I was refused an extra slab of meat,
so, thinking on my feet
I cleared out the roast potato mountain
and tallied a score of
24 – nil to me.

I didn't realise then but
that was
a real example of
a lack of
Appreciative Inquiry.

One slab of meat was all I wanted
but was refused,
so I engaged in a negative way,
took something I didn't want,
didn't need,
leant hard on those dry, crispy spuds and
drained the well.

It's a bit like society really,
call it an allegory of
making stakeholders or turkeyholders, pork, nutroast,
whatever your slab is,
give the meaty bit and watch prosperity,
refuse and watch them
abuse their bodies with
the wrong kind of spud.

Well... it makes sense to me!

I, language.

inspired by Claudia Blandon

'Asusu anya': becoming a researcher conducting ethnography with people who have difficulty using words to communicate. A post-humanist approach.

The animist squatted
tucked, neatly folded
his
dirty bare feet under
his
matching brown trousers,
cracked his knuckles,
matching the pitch he made
as he cleared his throat,
he'd seen Leonard Bernstein do it
before directing the
New York Philharmonic,
and once prepared through his ritual,
the animist began.

Placing his palm upon the bark
he opened his mind and stared.

There was nothing but silence.

In that moment even the birds pinched their beaks shut.
In that moment even the crickets hushed their violins.

They all wondered what he was doing.

After allowing several still moments to
fly past, leap on,
they figured it out.

He was 'reading the eyes'.

That oak tree's knotted eyes,
that oak tree that had stood,
been standing
in its geographical pinpoint,
speaking its own language
all these hundreds of years,
he, was trying to commune with it.

In the untethered instant
both beings were stripping skin,
shedding leaves
and merely existing,
sharing a breath.

Both ignored the province of man,
measured nothing by a phallus or face
both just were,
vibrant and silent,
sharing the place and breaking the
fabrication stitched by society,
this forced or fixed reality,
shattered by their willing to talk
without words.

On that day,
the animist, the oak,
both answered a question,
learned 'who they were',
and refused another,
realised not 'who I would have been',
but what I could still be.

Transformation Man

inspired by Sarah-Jane Hodge and Sarah Hocking
Re-Imagining Future Identities

Transmute lead to gold,
with wood working tools or
a trowel to dig down deep.

In Alchemy, metamorphosis is
changing the mindset, learning something new,
only by dissolving everything
can you
rebuild,
rock bottom is the first stepping stone.

The newborn phase or
commonly known as conjunction,
serves a function of alteration.

Our masculine and feminine unite,
into a new belief system and
create, a child – needing to be
nurtured to survive.

Feelings can overwhelm,
swallow, engulf,
by manipulating material we
embrace the ethereal and
reveal we have
transformed.

Expression, relieves frustration
metaphor becomes actual,
and evolution, adaption,
ferments into a
bright new star,
just shining through the
unlighted mist.

This poem is titled ‘a sociological approach to acquired brain injury and identity’ by Jonathan Harvey

inspired by Jonathan Harvey

An auto/biographical comedic insight into the (re)construction of identity after acquired brain injury.

Mother Superiority theory jumped the gun,
laugh at, not with,
ironically
if you don't laugh, you'll cry,
or keel over,
might as well extend your life,
they say that don't they?
They say, 'laugh and you'll add on years',
add them on where?

When can I cash this in?

Incongruity, a schema,
not expecting this,
breaking the rules, patterns mashed with a side of surprise,
you want an example?

Why did the chicken cross the road?
'a sociological approach to acquired brain injury and identity' by Jonathan Harvey.

So why laugh?

Interdependence, I've never been to Penzance
but Victoria Wood went into the Channel,
dark flake of comedy,
the lovely girl with a yellow cap, and a towel as big as a flannel,
or Mitchell and Webb,
Sherlock Holmes has dementia
can we venture away and just
I don't know, chuckle through the tears?

It'll be a sprinkler system,
jolted droplets
that might just dampen
and put out the fires of frustration.

The Fountains of Stewth

inspired by Jayne Raisborough

Working towards an antidote to anti-ageing.

collaborative piece written by **Thom Boulton** and **Tim Francis**

The Voice,
not Nick Couldry's but
Tom Jones with his invisible tinted hair.
Four rotating seats, forcing talent to be heard
not absurdly judging on looks, trudging through
image and routine, no need for squeaky clean,
just sing and be heard, live your dream.

*the pain of praise that's raging
Jayne Raisborough on ageing
loss pertinent nation
cross-fertilisation*

They axed
Arlene Phillips from Strictly,
quickly replaced with a younger model,
forget experience, forget her sexy older woman mystique,
she'd peaked so
do away and pray the replacement actually
knows something.

Gogglebox,
Shouting at the L'oreal and Olay lady,
damn your words, damn your lies,
could deny – should deny
but this chain, like Fleetwood said,
keeps us together, tethered
to some moral dimension,
an extension of the capitalist cultivators,
if it's lifestyle choice, they can rejoice that
crowds and hordes will hurry to buy
some fat to go on their face
or a new paste for follicles,
how many clues do you need...
"Old is icky, don't you want to feel young and pretty?"

*near sheeple
weird people
sexual to miserable
textual to visual
few in pain
new terrain
loan revolution
spiritual set it thick
own evolution
political rhetoric*

*sold joke and risible
new wealthy grasping ager
old folk not visible
lose stealthy rasping rager*

Next up, those babies
there'll be targets painted on their backs.
Too wrinkly? Umbilical cord shrinking?
Feeling eight months but want to look only three?
Luckily, they don't have wallets or language capabilities.

Turtles live for one hundred plus years,
they still swim the great expanse,
no coral based products to wax their shells,
no whale blubber to exfoliate the leathery skin,
and you know what?

They look bloody happy - don't they?

Let's have a visual encounter,
a faceoff with the age deniers,
those liars convincing you that
you're not good enough as is...

Once upon a time,
the matriarch was mighty,
respected, adored,
time to flip this scored con-man masterpiece,
feasting on silver pockets and golden locks,
cast it in the sea by the docks where the turtles swim,
and let it sink down and begin again.

The ending is always the best chapter of the book, anyway.

*confessionally us and them
especially older women
sink both better diction and lolly rules
link those metafiction follicles
wrinkles and insolubles
when fears hunger
ten years younger
the store of laughter
before and after
edgy and grassy
sexy and sassy
my spent mystery to lift me
identity of fifties
strange ill and rhythmical quirk stop of ramification
change film of professional workshop and inspiration
range of four confessional women crop geronification
slick keyhole gibberism*

*thick neo liberalism
the sick bored boy
not Nick Couldry.*