Enacting Community on Dartmoor: MED Theatre's *Badgerland: A Dartmoor Comedy* (2015) and the spatial praxis of community performance within a conservation zone.

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Introduction

As a socially-engaged arts practice, community theatre[1] occupies a niche position in the cultural policy studies field, not least due to the difficulties involved in critically defining the term 'community'. No longer viewed in the UK as a grassroots movement of cultural activism (Braden 1978, Kelly 1984, Shelton Trust 1986), but as part of the publicly-subsidised cultural sector, community or participatory arts has been criticised, from within and without, for becoming a state instrumentality "with the status of ameliorative social work for what are pejoratively called disadvantaged groups (Watt 1991, 56), or for facilitating neo-liberal government policies of 'social inclusion' (Merli 2004, Mirza 2006). Australian researchers in sociology and cultural development (Mulligan and Smith 2010, Wyatt, MacDowall and Mulligan 2013), have observed a 'turn to community' in the arts, globally, and posit a close link between the 'instrumentalisation of the arts', wherein the arts are geared to the production of government determined 'social impacts', and Nicolas Rose's notion of 'governing through community' in which "governance in a post-welfare state shifts from the 'disciplinary' governing of society to a more collaborative and consensual mode" (in Wyatt, MacDowall and Mulligan 2013, 83). Whereas Kelly argued against the incorporation of community arts by state instrumentalities in the 1980s, the recent shift noted by Mulligan et al. appears to have confirmed community-based cultural practices as a technique of neo-liberal governance. Community is, perhaps, at its most ideologically slippery here offering the chimera of

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[1] Community theatre was a part of the alternative theatre movement that emerged in the UK in the 1960s (see Kershaw 1991). Much of that 'popular oppositional' practice is now included within what is referred to as applied theatre/performance. In the USA, the term more commonly used is community-based theatre or community performance to differentiate it from amateur practice known as 'community theatre'. In Australia, where I hail from, the term community arts or community cultural development includes community theatre, which is probably why I work across what are perhaps more separate fields of practice in the UK (see Jeffers and Moriarty 2017, 23).

'solidarity', or at least a loose sense of 'togetherness', while operating in hand with economic programmes producing precarious social conditions (Beck 1992, Adam, Beck and Van Loon 2000, Standing 2011).

In this chapter I will examine these entrenched positions on community, culture and governance in an analysis of a community theatre on Dartmoor. Dartmoor is an area in the county of Devon in the south west of England. Historian, Matthew Kelly, states that as "the largest of the five granite bosses formed 280 million years ago that intrude on Devon and Cornwall" and "as the highest and largest upland in the south of England", Dartmoor possesses "a particular if not quite unique geological history" (2015, 1-2). Key features of the landscape are the many rocky outcrops known as tors. Kelly describes their survival as "extraordinary" because they "predate the last deluge and the last ice age" (2015, 2). These granite protuberances give shape and form to Dartmoor's distinctive landscape and are at least one of the material or 'natural' features recognized in its designation as a National Park in 1951.[2] For some critics of post-war British conservation practice, however, the materiality of the granite does not signify an ancient – fixed and unchanging – 'natural' landscape but, rather, the foundational matter of moorland dwelling. Dartmoor is thus re-figured as a living, cultural (Beeson, 1991, Beeson and Greeves, 1993, Greeves, 2001) or "anthropic" (Kelly 2015, 2) landscape. The chapter aims to enhance understanding of the nature of cultural participation in community theatre, and to explore the value of this dynamic cultural practice in relation to the governance of a National Park area and the self-determination of those dwelling on Dartmoor.[3] In March 2015, MED Theatre performed the community play, *Badgerland: A Dartmoor Comedy*, a sequel to the company's inaugural production, *The Badgers* (1980). With this production of *Badgerland* in parish halls (Belstone, Manaton, Mary Tavey and Moretonhampstead), MED Theatre realized 35 years of theatre-making by and for people living on Dartmoor. Taking the opportunity of a certain circularity in the company's own performance history, I will explore how MED Theatre's practice has evolved in relation to other practices (in real time and

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[2] For more information on Dartmoor National Park (including maps) see the Authority webpage: http://www.dartmoor.gov.uk/index
[3] See Schaefer, Edwards and Milling (2017) for a broader discussion of rurality and cultural participation.

retrospectively), namely the community play movement (Jellicoe 1987) and rural (touring) community theatre (Kershaw 1978), and how the term 'community' is mobilized and is meaningful on Dartmoor. Central to this discussion are cultural and spatial theories of community continuous with the (unfinished)[4] history of community arts as a cultural practice struggling to open up spaces for democratic participation in the production of diverse meaning in society.

1. Cultural Policy Studies, Community Arts and Cultural Participation

It is notable that Mulligan et al. are writing from Australia where community arts was, according to Hawkins (1993), the 'official invention' of a social-reformist government seeking to increase access to and participation in public cultural provision. Hawkins examines the discursive construction of 'community' within the Community Arts Programme of the Australia Council for the Arts (from its inception in 1973 to the end of the study timeframe in 1991).[5] Her evaluation, including an extended analysis of community arts practices, reaches ambiguous - and contradictory - conclusions. On the one hand, Hawkins claims that the community arts programme led to a more equitable arts funding landscape producing "methods and rationales for disbursing grants that are more democratic than the search for excellence" (1993, 167). Furthermore, Hawkins views the community arts programme as producing a shift from a concern with access and participation, based on a deficit model of cultural participation in which non-participation in public arts provision is construed as cultural lack, towards recognition of cultural difference and plurality: "Terms like cultural rights, cultural democracy and cultural

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[4] Anthropologist, Kate Crehan, noted in *Community Art. An Anthropological Perspective* (2011) that academics have not studied the history of community arts, leaving main accounts of the practice to practitioners (p.80). Happily, that situation is changing. Crehan's text on seminal community arts organisation, Free Form, was quickly followed by a chapter on select community arts practices within Claire Bishop's *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship* (2012), Eugene van Erven's *Community Art Power. Essays from ICAF* (2013) and *Community Arts Dialogues* (2013), Rimi Khan's *Art in Community. The Provisional Citizen* (2015) and, recently, Jeffers and Moriarty's *Culture, Democracy and the Right to Make Art* (2017) and François Matarasso's *A Restless Art. How Participation Won and Why It Matters* (2019) (see https://arestlessart.com/).

[5] In 1987 the Community Arts Board was reformed as the Community Cultural Development (CCD) Committee. See McEwen (2008) for an extended discussion of CCD's close links with government policy.

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diversity have gained ascendency, displacing 'access and participation' as the signs of a commitment to equity and social justice" (1993, 158-159). In other words, the programme is "a significant example of the value of cultural participation as a resource for the expression and affirmation of social difference" (1993, 167). Finally, Hawkins acknowledges that community artists developed a "significant body of skills in facilitating collaborative cultural production" (1993, 159), including capabilities "to express plural authorship, to establish democratic mechanisms for skilled and unskilled creatives to work together, and to collapse the social distance between producers and consumers" (1993, 159).

On the other hand, Hawkins contends that community artists have been overly concerned with "political process and community development" at the cost of developing a "dynamic aesthetic able to explore and critique the nature of the social order" (1993, 164). This evaluation of community arts as good at building community and bad at making art is based on a tendency towards producing didactic art in opposition to both high art *and* commercial, mass culture. Following the (then) emerging 'cultural industries approach' which attends to the central place of cultural consumption in people's everyday lives, Hawkins concludes that community arts is 'a cultural programme whose moment has passed' (1993, 166) within a larger argument for a radical overhaul of cultural policy, itself, aimed at dislodging art as a separate realm distinct from the diverse cultures of the everyday. According to Hawkins, community arts' inability to shake off notions of cultural disadvantage, evident in its limited aesthetic offer, implicitly affirms the hegemony of high culture (1993, 166-167).

In the UK, where the community arts movement developed more organically, perhaps, than in Australia, the attention of cultural policy studies turned to community arts practice somewhat later. Then the concern was to examine the apparently disproportionate effect of Matarasso's probing study, *Use or Ornament. The Social Impact of Participation in the Arts* (1997), on the development of cultural policy under New Labour. Merli's attention turned to Matarasso's study after it had established "a near-consensus in Britain among cultural policy-makers" (2002, 107) and was adopted as *the* model for evaluating the social impact of the arts, despite the fact that participatory arts practices comprise a

comparatively minor segment of the public cultural sector. [6] Belfiore points to this mismatch noting that, "the provision of arts to audiences (as opposed to the active involvement of participants in an arts project) constitutes by far the largest proportion of the publicly funded cultural sector" (2006, 31). She asserts that methods of social impact assessment should take into account these majority consumption-based practices (2006, 31). For cultural policy researchers, attachment to and elevation of participation and social impact provided evidence of the on-going development of instrumental cultural policy in the UK. At the same time, the community and participatory arts sector (especially as it bled into more informal or everyday practices) remained under-researched and largely unknown. It seemed, nevertheless, open to critique, without the same rigorous analysis of practice as undertaken by Hawkins, for instance. According to Merli and others (see in Mirza 2006), participatory arts was an official invention concerned to use or apply culture in the remediation of the negative social effects of New Labour's 'Third Way' economic policy. Participatory artists, according to Merli, were the "new missionaries" doling out benevolences to the poor in the form of participation in arts projects, without addressing the structural causes of poverty and deprivation (2002, 113).

Community arts featured marginally in this critique. According to Merli (2002), participatory artists drew on the same (unspecified) tools as an earlier generation of community artists, but these were re-directed to achieve the government objective of social inclusion. Belfiore's analysis of this phase in the development of instrumental cultural policy describes the incorporation of community arts terminology within mainstream cultural policy debate, although, as she notes, these keywords were re-defined and re-deployed by funding agencies in ways not in keeping with the ideological thrust of the earlier movement (2002, 7). It is precisely this appropriation, re-definition and re-direction of community arts in the UK that led theatre scholar, David Watt, to address the problem of definition of community in the Australian case. Watt asserts that because the development of community arts in Australia was "oddly and inextricably linked with the government agencies which funded it" (1991, 55), there had been little urgency to define

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[6] Merli's critique is in two parts: one problematizes Matarasso's lack of research methodology and the other is a moral/ethical critique related to the purported use of arts and culture to remediate the effects of social exclusion. It is this latter issue that I address here. For his own response see Matarasso 2003.

community. Hawkins notes that the ambiguity of 'community' in the cultural policy field operated strategically and served to challenge core precepts of arts funding such as standards of artistic excellence and the place of the arts and culture in the re-presentation of national unity and identity (1983, xviii, 11). However, as community arts made its mark, revealing artistic excellence to be a form of self-serving elitism and re-imagining pluralistic identities and values (Hawkins 1983, 10-17), the term became prone to appropriation by those seeking to reassert cultural dominance. This prompted Watt to unambiguously outline the critical project of community arts drawing on seminal texts from the UK movement: Owen Kelly's *Community, Art and the State. Storming the Citadels* (1984) and Shelton Trust's *Culture and Democracy: The Manifesto* (1986). Watt viewed such theoretical explication of community arts practice, as a "bulwark against both marginalisation as social work and against a similarly dangerous appropriation … [by] bastion[s] of the dominant culture" (1991, 56). He also thought the project worthwhile given that, in Australia, community arts remained a government-funded cultural programme.

2. Re-turn to 'community': differentiating dynamic and static definitions.

An influential body of cultural theory (see, as a leading example, Young 1990) problematizes the concept of 'community' for the way in which it territorialises social relations by constructing uniform groupings of self-identical subjects based on exclusion through difference. This notion of community is regarded as inherently violent because the symbolic boundaries of group membership are rigidly 'policed' in order to maintain the essential illusion of group coherence and uniformity. At the same time, there is reluctance to abandon the term 'community'. Cultural geographer, Gillian Rose, asserts that 'community' remains one of "the most powerful terms through which collective identity can be named and collective action legitimated" (1997a, 185). According to sociologist, Gerard Delanty (2003), "the persistence of community consists in its ability to communicate ways of belonging, especially in the context of an increasingly insecure world" (187). Writing earlier than Delanty, Anthony Cohen approached community as "a phenomenon of culture" (Cohen 1985, 38) and offered a detailed analysis of the dynamics of boundary-marking that constitutes the symbolic expression of community as the 'old

structural bases of community boundaries' are eroded (1985, 76). Cohen's theory of community as symbolically constructed underpins theorising of community theatre (see Kershaw 1991, 1992, McConnachie 1998). Significant conceptual labour has gone into re-thinking community and I will pick up on only one element of this discussion below through outlining the theoretical basis of the definition of 'community' in community arts.

David Watt's intervention in a cultural (policy) debate in Australia in the 1990s alights on the notion of community forwarded by Owen Kelly in his self-admittedly partial and critical account of the British community arts movement. Watt notes that in delineating between community arts as social transformation or instrumental tool, Kelly drew on Britihs intellectual tradition sometimes contentiously refered to as 'left culturalism' (Marxist historians and cultural materialists) and adapted it to argue for how collective creation generates community as 'solidaity':

> [f]or a group of people to be defined as [a] living community it is not sufficient that they live, work and play in geographical proximity; nor that to an observer they have habits, goals and achievements in common … it is also necessary that members of a community acknowledge their membership, and that this acknowledgement plays a recognised part in shaping their actions (Kelly 1984, 49). EXTEND

Watt unpacks the theoretical /critical methodlogy that informs these seminal texts of the movement draw on a British intellectual traditaion thoeristing culturalist class and culture-based cutlures and adapt /update it to present articualtino fo community arts as social transformation rather than instruemeatnl tool. For Watt Kelly's text articulates different meanings of community as dynamic and statis and the manifesto goes on to develop this in distinction from indidiual and collectivist culture.

the Britain held to be responsible for "a 'culturalist' understanding of class as constituted pre-eminently in class consciousness" (Milner 1991: 111) developed within an earlier British intellectual formation. Shaped by twin crises in 1956, namely, the Soviet defeat of the Hungarian Uprising and the Suez crisis precipitated by Anglo-French imperialist misadventure (Milner 2002: 52), the emergence of British Cultural Studies in the 1960s and 1970s followed E.P. Thompson, Richard Hoggart and Raymond Williams in their turn away from Soviet communist doctrine, in which class was a conceived as

'category' or 'structure' (see Milnr), and examination of the 'active' 'conscious' formation of the English working class in the historical (lived) experience of industrial modernisation. Drawing on Thompson's notion of class as an experiential, relational and conscious process, Kelly states that:

Watt notes the dynamism in this understanding of community: "the interactions within a group of people who choose to see themselves as a community continually alters the nature of that community so that it is always in a state of becoming and therefore growing and thus avoids the stasis of a 'thing' to be serviced" (1991, 61). He asserts that this analysis is developed further in Shelton Trust's *Manifesto* which studiously avoids the 'anachronistic [Williams-ian] notion of collectivism as exclusively working class' shifting to 'conditional alliances of a wide range of social groups' (1991, 63). The focus of the 'post-Gramscian' manifesto therefore moves away from 'community', and locates democratic 'participation in the production of culture, and thus of social meaning' as a critical point in countering the cultural hegemony of an economic system that now operates as 'a method of ordering [a mode of] consciousness necessary to ever increasing production' (in Watt 1991, 62-63). Thus, for Watt, the notion of dynamic, as opposed to static, community within a struggle for cultural democracy against cultural hegemony, becomes a basis for understanding community cultural practices:

> Static notions of community are seen as impositions, usually categorisations by a dominant culture concerned to maintain itself as monolithic by exercising its power to define and thus subsume subgroups. Dynamic notions of community, on the other hand, allow the creation of purposive communities of interest which, by the process of self-definition, resist being thus subsumed … this autonomy introduces the possibility of internal negotiation as a basic mode of social interaction, and they are consequently potentially democratic and alterable. The commitment to democracy as a principle is then seen as leading to the possibility of broad alliances between autonomous groups working to undermine the dominant culture through an insistence on common access to the processes of creating meaning and value within the culture" (Watt 1991, 64).

Watt's analysis goes a long way toward articulating a theoretical understanding of community arts (including theatre). While this analysis moves away from Williams' 'culturalist' analysis of class-based social relationship, it remains within his cultural

materialist project which was, according to Milner, "essentially politico-institutional" and concerned primarily with how to "create and strengthen the institutions of political, economic and cultural democracy" (2002, 179). Cultural geographer, Gillian Rose (1997a, 1997b), extends this analysis by directly examining the way in which community arts workers intervene in the construction of social space by power, opening spaces for dynamic cultural processes in which dominant (and subordinating) narratives are actively resisted. Before I explore this connection, however, I will introduce the work of MED Theatre, a community theatre company established on Dartmoor. MED Theatre's community-based theatre practice resists regimes of power/knowledge which would govern Dartmoor National Park as a 'natural' environment, conserving its area for users typically drawn from outside park boundaries, at the cost of the local knowledge, interests and enfranchisement of those who dwell within.

3. Creating a Community Theatre Practice on Dartmoor

MED Theatre was not established, in the first instance, as a self-defined community theatre company. The company's beginnings were informal as a group of friends living on Dartmoor came together to make theatre about their experience. The early plays, written by poet and primate ecologist, Mark Beeson, problematize the designation of Dartmoor as a National Park and the 'preservationist' policies of the park authority (see further detailed discussion below) (Beeson 2013). *The Badgers* (1980) is set on Dartmoor against a decade of controversy surrounding the re-emergence of Bovine Tuberculosis (TB). The play deals with the unsystematic, ad-hoc response to the crisis by the then Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF). Lacking scientific proof of transmission of the virus from badgers to bovines, the MAFF bowed to pressure from various interest groups and initiated a badger cull in affected areas (see Kelly 2014). Written in rhyming couplets after the Tudor comedy/farce *Ralph Roister Doister* (1553), *The Badgers* deals with the deeply troubled relationship between scientific understanding, powerful interest groups (farmers' groups and the national press) and government policy formation, drawing direct parallels between the MAFF's extermination of wildlife in order to preserve livestock, and the impact of government planning policy on Dartmoor's human inhabitants. Rehearsed outdoors on a pile of granite rocks at Easdon on Dartmoor, torrential rain forced the performance of the

play indoors. It took place (dir. Heather Todd) in Easdon barn with the audience "seated on hay bales" while "packaging crates made up the stage" (Beeson 2015).[7]

The idea for a community theatre came to Beeson in a break from creative writing during a period of fieldwork on the Zomba plateau in Malawi. Beeson was working for the Malawian forestry department as a primate ecologist attempting to resolve the problem of bark-stripping of pine trees by blue monkeys in plantations adjacent to their Afro-montane forest habitat. Close observation of primate behaviour inspired Beeson to 'create and develop a community theatre organization in the Dartmoor National Park, where adults, teenagers and children could all work and play together in drama that dealt with issues around the manmade/natural interface' (Dickenson 2003). On his return from Malawi, Beeson wrote his first community play, *The Hedge*, specifically for and about his home village of Manaton. The play won second prize in Ann Jellicoe's Village Community Play Competition in 1982. An established playwright and literary manager with the Royal Court Theatre in London, Jellicoe relocated to the South West of England where she began to articulate, through performance practice, the principles of the 'community play' (see Jellicoe 1987). After the popular success of her first community play, *The Reckoning*, in Lyme Regis in 1978, Jellicoe established the Colway Theatre Trust (CTT) in 1980 to further develop the model.[8] Jellicoe encouraged Beeson to produce *The Hedge*, which he did in 1984 with a community cast in Manaton Parish Hall. He then wrote and produced a further three community plays, *Childe The Hunter* (1986), *The Swallows* (1987) and *The Green Woman* (1988), known collectively as the Manaton plays because they were written specifically for the village and performed by a community cast in the parish hall. Manaton and East Dartmoor (MED) Community Theatre was formally constituted and registered as

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[7] Images of the original production are available here:
http://www.medtheatre.themoon.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Article-Badgers-and-the-Scottish-Referendum.pdf
[8] The popularity of the CTT community play model exceeded the bounds of the South West of England. Kerhsaw notes that it even became possible to speak of an international community play movement (1992, 186). Claque Theatre (artistic director, Jon Oram), continues the CTT tradition of the community play. The community play is experiencing something of a practical and critical revival. See, for instance, Salford Community Theatre's *Love on the Dole* and
https://communitytheatreplaywright.wordpress.com/

a charity to produce drama for and by people living on Dartmoor in 1989, with Beeson in the role of Artistic Director.[9]

While encouraged by Jellicoe, Beeson, with other members of MED Theatre, developed an independent model of community performance in parallel to that of CTT. Typically, the CTT community play process is led by a core team of theatre professionals, including a playwright, director, stage manager, designer, and composer/musical director, who steer the community (people of the town or village) in its production of the play over a 24-month period of engagement. Despite opportunities for community members to be involved in the production of the play beyond performing – for example, as painters, carpenters, costume and prop-makers, musicians, accountants, caterers, drivers, printers, box office administrators, ushers, and child minders - there are questions about the extent to which community participation is limited to supporting the activities of a professional group controlling the creative decision-making process. Kershaw describes the exchange between professionals and community members as a form of 'barter' and argues that the performance conventions of the CTT community play turn the balance of power back in the direction of non-professional, community participants. He notes that community plays (written by a commissioned playwright) tend to draw heavily on local culture and 'history from below', and that performances eschew formal theatrical style drawing instead on popular traditions of performance (1992, 191-195). In particular, the adoption of the mode of promenade performance in community venues simulates vernacular cultural traditions, such as the village fair or carnival, and lends an atmosphere of informal celebration to community plays. It was this two-pronged alignment of (political) play and popular celebration that, according to Kershaw, promoted "accessibility, involvement, identification: the keynotes of successful community theatre" (1992, 193) and positioned community theatre as an effective (if small) part of a wider counter-cultural movement of 'celebratory protest' (1991, 16).

For reasons that will be outlined in the section below, MED Theatre has been concerned to develop a more democratic model of community performance making that

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[9] In addition to Beeson as Artistic Director, the company employs an Education team (Abby Stobart and Helen Gilbert), Company Development Officer (Gillian Webster) and an Artistic and Administrative Assistant (Suvi Rehell).

ensures that local Dartmoor people, themselves, rather than a group of external, professional elites, take a leading role in all aspects of performance making. I don't have space here to offer more than a brief outline of the evolution of MED Theatre's practice which includes community plays (since the 1980s), an educational arm (since the 1990s) and the young peoples' programme (since the 2000s). Key to the company's development has been the foundation of weekly 'drama clubs' for young people (ranging from 5-19 years old), in addition to the adult group that meets monthly.[10] The teenage company, Wild Nights, established in 2004 with support from HLF Young Roots programme and the Dartmoor Sustainable Development Fund, manage all aspects of their own creative projects, utilising diverse artforms including playwriting, music, film and experimental dance drama. The annual community play, often strategically incorporated into funded programmes of work to offset low levels of resource available for its production, offers an opportunity for these inter-generational groups to come together, typically over the long, dark Winter months, to collectively make and perform a piece of theatre that tours Dartmoor in early Spring. *Badgerland*, however, was a discrete production taking place alongside various professional arts and cultural development activities: *The Walk* (2014-2015) supported by Arts Council England; *Whitehorse Hill* (2015), a community play performed in Bellever Forest by the company and young people from Postbridge and Princetown, supported by the Heritage Lottery funded Moor Than Meets The Eye Landscape Partnership; and *Burrator's War* (2015), a young people's film project commissioned by daisi. Such a high level of activity by a small theatre company demonstrates its commitment to offer opportunities to Dartmoor residents to variously engage in cultural production processes.

An historical reference point for MED Theatre in this respect is the work of Medium Fair, a professional (Exeter-based) performance ensemble focused on touring theatre to rural communities in the East Devon and Teignbridge area in the 1970s (see Kershaw 1978). Frustrated by the minimal contact afforded by a busy touring schedule, which discouraged villagers from 'speaking or acting/doing for themselves' and inspired by the development of modes of 'collective creation' in the community arts movement, Medium Fair initiated the innovative Village Visit Week programme travelling to fewer

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[10] Rising Lights (5-7 years); Bright Lights (8-10 years); Bright Nights (10-12 years) and Wild Nights Young Company (13-19 years).

places for a lengthier period of creative/cultural engagement. Before visiting a village, the company researched the local area and its history, and developed relationships with relevant organisations and community groups. During the week-long visit, Medium Fair worked on a previously identified project in the village (such as a parish hall renovation or construction of a bus stop), created a performance drawn from their research into, usually, the history of the local area, and attempted to engage local people in creating their own performances drawing on similar research material. These professional and professionally-supported performances were shown together in a celebratory event on the final (Saturday) night of the week. In his research into the history of theatre and performance on Dartmoor in 1997, Beeson credits Medium Fair with establishing community theatre on Dartmoor after the company's visit to the village of Ilsington on the eastern edge of the national park (see Dartmoor Resource: http://www.dartmoorresource.org.uk/). The connection drawn between a tradition of community theatre started on Dartmoor by Medium Fair and developed by MED Community Theatre, serves to distinguish MED's model of community theatre practice from CTT's professionally driven one. Kershaw has noted that the community play movement "led to demands for more long-term participatory projects in single locations" (1992, 182), and it is clear that MED Theatre views its work within a long history of performance, including community theatre, on Dartmoor.

The shift from a professionally-facilitated community play to community-generated theatre has involved the generation of new modes of performance. Leaving aside performances made for outdoors on the moor, MED typically performs in the round in communal spaces. On the floors of parish halls (leaving the proscenium stage for overflow audience seating and the placement of theatre technicians), the audience is seated in a square formation around a large, circular, painted canvas on the floor. Breaks in each 'corner' of the square of audience seating allow the performers to circulate on and off 'stage'. After their turn in the central performance space, often utilising a simple, portable raised platform, the performers retire to the outer circle (where live musicians are also placed). It is a flexible performance arrangement creating a sense of flow from inner to outer circles with the audience held in the middle of alternating intensities of participatory performance from performing to audiencing to preparing (waiting in readiness) to perform again.

These performance conventions are illuminating for the ways in which they reveal different concepts, practices and enactments of 'community theatre'. According to Kershaw, the efficacy of the CTT community play depends on carefully balancing popular performance with the social(ist) critique typically embedded in the play (1992, 203). The reliance on a popular, participatory aesthetic to lend authenticity to the social critique contained in the play, 'transcends social differences, at least temporarily' and 'reinforces an idealised notion of community as an unchanging unity" (Woodruff in Kershaw 1992, 191). In contrast, Beeson is wary of the 'use of participation to strengthen networks of community', as in the CTT model of community play (see Kershaw 1992, 190). He characterises MED Theatre's work as 'provocative without antagonising to the point of building barriers', and as a 'catalyst for getting people to think in a social forum' (Beeson and Stobart 2010). In other words, participation is not simulated to lend authenticity to a less popular cultural form (theatre) introducing radical ideas into a putatively conservative context. Rather, the performance with its various levels of participation serves to hold performers and audience in collective cogitation on social, ecological and other issues that the participants are already immersed in. Bruce McConnachie, a North American community-based theatre academic and practitioner, asserts that community-based theatre is concerned more with 'imagining and constructing the relationships of an ethical community for the future' than 'representing the realities of actual or historic communities' (in 2000, 42). His description of the aesthetics and politics of community-based theatre as attuned to careful negotiation of symbolic boundaries between self and other, inside and outside, is most resonant with MED's practice as it seeks to construct an ethical community of the future drawing for imagination (and authenticity) on Dartmoor's history, ecology and folklore, thus highlighting its cultural wealth without fixing an essential identity in representation (pp. 42-43).

Before venturing further in understanding MED's community-based performance practice it is necessary to explore what is meant by Dartmoor as a spatial concept that it is possible to be inside 'of' and, from that insider position, to produce performance 'about'. I am going to explore notions of Dartmoor as both a dwelling place and as a National Park entity. This will lead into discussion of the evolution of a community practice in response to power-ridden social relations that construct National Park boundaries in such a way as

to leave those dwelling inside these externally instituted and governed borders feeling marginalised and powerless, or democratically disenfranchised. Thus, it will be argued that the activation of the internalised margin that is MED Theatre's community practice, is not a reactionary or exclusionary gesture to re-assert a pure, homogenous sense of place aka 'community', but a dynamic, critical and self-reflexive engagement with the spatial practices of power relations.

4. Dartmoor: dwelling place or 'a sort of national property'[11]?

The core principles of MED Theatre's community performance practice are derived from grasping the tensions inherent in understanding Dartmoor as 'a bounded political entity guided by distinct principles of land use' (Dilsaver and Whychoff 2005, 237) *and* as a dwelling place. The National Park concept itself is grounded in processes of (new) nation building in settler colonies and changing concepts of 'nature' and 'wilderness' promoted by Romantic artists (North American and British, for instance, Wordsworth) throughout the 19th century. It was first formalised with the founding of Yellowstone National Park in the USA in 1872. In the UK the first national parks were established in the 1950s and their formation is linked to several factors including widespread industrialisation, the concomitant movement of populations from the countryside to cities and towns, the ongoing enclosure of common land into private ownership, and a vigorous public campaign for rights of way and access to countryside. After the Kinder Scout mass trespass in the 1930s, a voluntary organisation, the Standing Committee for National Parks, was established to lobby government to secure public access to open countryside. The creation of national parks in the UK was taken up in a national government planning process tied to post-war reconstruction. The 1949 *National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act* enabled the designation of the Peak District as the first National Park in England and Wales in 1951. The designation of Dartmoor as a national park took place on 30 October 1951. The 1949 Act defined the purposes of National Parks as: '(i) preserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the areas; and (ii) promoting public enjoyment thereof, and opportunities

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[11] William Wordsworth's description of the Lake District as, "a sort of national property in which every man has a right and interest who has an eye to perceive and a heart to enjoy" (*A Guide through the District of the Lakes* 1810), is oft cited as envisioning the development of National Parks in the UK.

for open-air recreation and the study of nature thereby' (1-2).

Prior to the 1949 Act, the 1945 Dower report drew attention to the fact that much of the UK countryside was privately owned and needed to be protected as a working/living environment as well as a natural one. Dower recommended that the UK government provide a national land fund to buy land back into public ownership to prevent conflicts between the interests of nature conservation and, for instance, commercial agriculture, but none was established. Dower's 1945 report foreshadowed some of the complex and competing conflicts of interests that have characterised national park administration ever since: private and public, nature and culture, work and leisure, dwelling and tourism, living culture and heritage, local and national, local and global. With respect to Dartmoor, cultural environmentalist and MED adult company member, Tom Greeves, asserts that, "significant damage, practically and philosophically, has been done in the past fifty years as a consequence of the designation of Dartmoor as national park" (2001). Recalling the concept's colonial heritage, he argues that national park designation leaves:

> little or no place for awareness of the thinking and approach of the indigenous peoples of the area in question whether native North Americans, who had used, named and respected the land without disrupting ecological damage, or the Dartmoor hill farmers, tinners, stonecutters and peat cutters who had created the landscape now suddenly labelled as 'natural beauty' (2001).

On Dartmoor, Greeves explains, the 'natural' or 'wilderness' ideology embedded in the national park concept led to a programme of destruction of man-made structures dating from the 19th and 20th century in an attempt to 'eliminate 'eyesore' or 'disfigurement' in the landscape' (2001). Beeson has also written about programmatic attempts by Dartmoor National Park, from the 1970s through to the 1990s, to return the Dartmoor landscape to an 18th century ideal of natural landscape. Robert Hewison cites Beeson's argument in an address to the European Council critical of 'the pastoral' as an idealised vision of landscape, and warning against an extension of heritage concepts and values from built to 'natural' environments:

> The term landscape specifies the ideal of any area's appearance and can use any time reference. Once this is applied, human and non-human features can be eradicated, or prevented from developing, to conform to the ideal. Useful buildings have been demolished by the authorities on Dartmoor, because they

date from a period after the early nineteenth century, the "ideal" for that area. The same authorities dis-courage the natural spread of trees on open hillsides, because during the ideal period hillsides were heath (Beeson 1991, also cited in Hewison 1992).

Jamal and Everett (2007) have noted that natural area destinations are "politically, economically and culturally contested spaces" (67). Drawing on Frankfurt school critique of instrumental reason, and in particular Habermas's 'knowledge constitutes interest' framework, they assert that:

> potential problems arise when scientific rationalism (where measurement, monitoring and production are dominant discourses) and economic rationalism (through increasing commodification, control, efficiency and productivity generating activity) intersect the life world of people in and around the protected areas. Without participatory opportunities in decision making and governance of the park's economic and ecological well-being, practical knowledge (e.g. local and indigenous knowledge in this instance) risks becoming marginalised in park management (Jamal and Everett 2007, 64).

MED Community Theatre was formed, partly, in response to just such a democratic deficit at the core of Dartmoor National Park administration. Through performance, the company sought to promote the interests and practical knowledge of those dwelling in the Dartmoor landscape, and to assert the landscape as a living or 'dwelled in' (Ingold 2000) one, in opposition to (national) heritage discourses, which would stake claim to it. Both Beeson and Greeves assert that Dartmoor's designation as a 'landscape of national importance' implies a centrist (South Eastern), urban-based, elitist construction, which gives little consideration to 'the quality of contemporary human culture in its area' (Beeson 1991, Greeves 2001).

In 1995 the *Environment Act* revised the 1949 Act and re-designated the purposes of National Parks as: '(i) the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of park areas; and (ii) the promotion of opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of their special qualities by the public' (Section 61). In addition, the Act established freestanding park authorities and further stipulated that it was the explicit duty of these new authorities 'to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the National Park' (Section 62). However, while the newly established park authorities were now required to care for the well-being of local communities they were also prohibited from 'incurring significant expenditure in doing so'

(Section 62). MED Community Theatre have, since the company's inception in the 80s, been concerned with issues of 'representation and local democracy', an area acknowledged as a particular problem by (then) Chief Executive of the Dartmoor National Park Authority, Nick Atkinson (2001). MED have sought to create a space – barely recognised or acknowledged until after 1995 - for local people dwelling in a nationally significant landscape to come together to consider how their life-worlds intersect with and, indeed, exceed the bounded and governed space of the National Park.

5. Spatial dimensions of 'power' and 'community' in *Badgerland: A Dartmoor Comedy.*

It has been important to examine the ways in which the National Park concept and preservationist practices of park authorities affect those living within the bounded and contested space of the park. Such an examination enables further, focused discussion of MED theatre's community-based practice in this context given the variable and contested notions of 'community' in circulation. Arguably, MED's community theatre practice is dynamically formed in response to power structures driving a wedge between conceptions of nature and culture and, in the process, establishing a bounded spatial zone of nature conservation which places the recreational pleasures of 'outsiders' above the cultural knowledge and practices of 'insiders'. MED's community practice enacts the struggles of a marginalised group to assert the 'quality of its living culture' (Beeson 1991) over ossified heritage constructions of a pastoral landscape.

While Watt has foregrounded the dynamism of community-based cultural practices, Gillian Rose extends the critical concept of community to include an understanding of the production of space by power (and resistance). Rose's 'spatial-cultural' analysis is based on community arts practitioners working in public housing estates on the urban fringes of Edinburgh. Her analysis focuses on how 'community' is dynamically activated as a spatial organisation of marginalised identity within a power-produced space. While Rose's analysis is engaged with community arts projects undertaken on the urban periphery, where city planning processes have progressively (re) located poor or deprived populations in public housing developments, there are similarities with Dartmoor in the construction of spatial zones such as centre and margin and the

location of social relations in terms of inside and outside, top (down) and bottom (up), and so on. What is distinct in the case of Dartmoor, however, is that it is the central interior of Dartmoor that is made marginal to external power relations. According to Rose, the operationalization of 'community' as 'marginal' serves to counter-pose a 'community' to this 'spatiality of power' and depends on a relational and constructed understanding of difference, not an essentialist one: "The marginalised community is nameable as such only because power has made it, not because of its inherent qualities" (1997b, 8). She notes that community arts practitioners employ critical anti-essentialising tactics in their un-fixing of 'community': "the community so named is not essentialised because the qualities which are given to it in the community arts workers' discourse are – none. Far from having an essence, these 'marginalised' communities are described through a discourse of lack. Their qualities are absent ones" (1997b, 8). In the following analysis of *Badgerland* I will explore the anti-essentialising tactics of MED Theatre as it engages in representing the 'place' and 'community' of Dartmoor. It will be argued that MED Theatre presents multiple images of real and imagined Dartmoor(s), the carnivalesque excess of which deeply unsettles the geography of lack.

Badgerland is a community play written for an ensemble of over twenty performers. Mixing rhyming couplets (spoken by adult participants) and verse, as well as prose, the play re-stages the meeting of archaeologists, Tintin Mills and Roger Reaves, and a cete[12] of badgers in *The Badgers* (1980). While the archaeologists are the same people some years on, the badgers in the sett they accidentally fall into, despite a now sophisticated technological armoury, are a different group: *meles meles*, we are informed, do not have a long lifespan. Thus, the re-activation of convivial social ties based on previous co-operation - in *The Badgers* (1980) the archaeologists and badgers had to co-operate to escape the sett before they were gassed by the men from MAFF - does not re-occur. These badgers, led by a badger called the Sow, are thoroughly political animals. Aware of trial culls in neighbouring counties and having caught wind of the Scottish Referendum for Independence, the badgers are fomenting political revolution on Dartmoor. Departing from *The Badgers* (1980), *Badgerland* has been written by Beeson for an inter-generational

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[12] *Cete* refers to the group name for badgers. Badgers live in a *sett*. Their scientific (Latin) name is *meles meles*.

ensemble and includes the struggles of young people living on Dartmoor. In addition to the central archaeologist/badger narrative, the stories of Esmee, a teenager recently relocated with her family from London to Dartmoor, and Harriet, who is the daughter of working Dartmoor farmers, are also presented. Harriet and her friends try to introduce Esmee to the joys of badger watching on the farm, a pleasure curtailed by the discovery of Bovine TB in cattle on the farm, and an outbreak of *phytophthora*[13] in a plantation of larch trees.

The opening speech of the play is uttered by Esmee, the teenager relocated to Dartmoor:

> So this is my new home! All round me
> Moors stretch to the edge of the world,
> Bog after bog, a dreary wasteland
> Punctuated only by the dark
> Monstrosities of tors, sinister
> Silhouettes against a grim skyline,
> The loneliest place I've ever been.
> We've moved down to Devon from London –
> Oh dear. What were my parents thinking?
> There, I was happy: friends, lots to do,
> Everything on my doorstep. Birds would
> Sing from the trees in the well-kept parks
> I walked to school through. Here it's a bus
> That takes me, roaring along the lanes
> With bullying voices. I hate them.
> Nothing to do, and if I had a
> Friend, which I don't, I'd have to persuade
> Parents to drive for miles to see them –
> There's no public transport. Primitive.
> (Badgerland 2015: 1).

Esmee's bold opening speech juxtaposes Dartmoor to London, re-inscribing the Nation's capital as the centre of cosmopolitan culture (green manicured parks replete with birdsong and purposeful pedestrians) in contrast to boring, bleak, 'remote' Devon. The speech instigates a centre versus margin spatial politics with London in the centre and Devon/Dartmoor on the periphery. It is a bald re-statement of the political economy of the UK where economic, political and cultural power is centralised in the city state of London

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[13] A fungus-like infection that can kill trees and shrubs, *Phytophthora* presents a considerable threat to natural ecosystems and forest-based industries see:
http://www.dartmoor.gov.uk/lookingafter/laf-naturalenv/laf-treeswoodlands/laf_pram16710

(see Ertürk, Froud, Johal, Leaver, Moran, Williams 2011). But whereas Esmee's parents, who relocated the family to Devon, might relish the contrast between city and countryside, for Esmee, the moorland itself is a 'wasteland': dreary, dark, sinister and grim. In many ways Esmee's sense of Dartmoor typifies the ways in which the dystopian - alienating, dangerous, polluted - urban landscape is depicted. This is the landscape that her parents probably left, made mobile through London capital, in search of the rural idyll. Esmee's speech somewhat inverts the dichotomy asserting the countryside as a wasteland: ugly, strange, forbidding and, unlike the city, as primitive or un-developed. It also extends the analysis beyond a mere reversal of opposition between the urban and rural, city and countryside. While providing space for the perspective of a young person who perhaps hasn't had a say in being relocated, what it also points to is substantial inequality in this spatial politics of centre and margin. As an incomer, all Esmee can see is a strange, rather ugly landscape which only compounds her sense of social isolation and loneliness exacerbated by a lack of public transport infrastructure which threatens her mobility, independence, and connection to extended social networks. The issue then becomes not about how London and Dartmoor, city and countryside, urban and rural, exist in complementary opposition but points to the inequality inherent in centre/marginal power relations, resource allocation and development planning. Esmee's speech thus raises important questions concerning the development of Dartmoor's infrastructure to service those living within the park.

In another scene, a local ecologist, Giselle, addresses a public meeting in the village hall called to agitate against a recent proposal at national government level to re-route the coastal railway line across Dartmoor. Re-routing the railway across moorland will provide a safe inland route as an alternative to the existing line, which is threatened by coastal erosion, an effect of global warming. The ecologist is outraged that Dartmoor's fragile ecology can be sacrificed to provide secure passage, a thoroughfare, for rail commuters across the moorland. For her, it reveals how tenuous the 'protection' afforded by national park status is, and how readily local/specific ecological concerns are ignored when national and regional interests come into play. The ecologist is interrupted/heckled by a young man, Danny, who urges those gathered in the village hall to consider the damage that the lack of a viable rail route will wreak on the local/regional economy. Rejecting nimbyism, he

suggests that the rail line needs to move from the coast and that Dartmoor should be considered as a possible alternative route. He further asserts that:

> …as for damage to Dartmoor's ecology, if we still had the railway lines to Princetown and Moretonhampstead, think how many fewer cars there would be polluting the Dartmoor air with their greenhouse gases. And while we're at it, we should straighten the lanes out, and widen the main roads where they suddenly go down to single track.

Danny's interjections effectively close the meeting down as it becomes a squabble between, as it turns out, mother and son. The exchange, however, highlights the pressures between protection (heritage, ecological) and development planning with respect to Dartmoor National Park as an area of 'natural beauty' and 'public enjoyment'. It also starts to build an unsettled picture of Dartmoor as a local, cohesive 'community' with the family unit of Giselle and Danny presenting a fractious image of familial dis-unity.

Giselle and Danny's debate reveals different and contested national, regional and local stakes in Dartmoor. Giselle asserts that Dartmoor is not respected as an ecologically unique place worthy of protection from development in the form of a national infrastructural project. She opposes this development for the way in which it locates Dartmoor as a transit corridor, a secure and speedy thoroughfare, destroying its special qualities in the process. She'd rather see Dartmoor as a bounded and protected ecological zone. This eco-fundamentalist position recalls some of the more problematic aspects of 1970s national park (protectionist) policy discussed earlier in this chapter. Danny's arguments allude to the fact that Dartmoor has a history of working railways and that, since the closure of the lines in the 1960s, road traffic has increased leading to environmental pollution and safety issues with more cars using roads that were never built for the current amount of traffic. While roads on Dartmoor have not been developed, development has occurred just off Dartmoor with the building in the 1980s of the A30 and A38 roads around the circumferential edges of the park. These roads increase cars and traffic around and on Dartmoor. Danny's speech highlights how it is impossible to enclose Dartmoor as a bounded, protected – pastoral or ecologically pure – landscape. Doing this increases

development pressures on the edges of the park, which also come to bear on Dartmoor itself.[14]

The fall of the archaeologists into the badger sett introduces another spatial axis to the increasingly messy matrix of centre and margin, inside and outside. The opening up of the vertical and hierarchical axes, disrupts the dominance of the human world for a 'more-than-human' worldview that takes into consideration the being (and all that entails) of other forms of animate life. The carnivalesque entry into and exploration of the 'underground' in terms of the disruptive and constructive potentialities of other animate life forms (including viral contagion), latent desires (self-determination, social connection) and radical ideas (political independence), gives lie to the notion that Dartmoor is a securely bounded, fixed entity. Dartmoor National Park boundaries are revealed to be thoroughly permeable. The satisfying resolution to *Badgerland*, because this is theatre and the play is a comedy, attempts to make the most of this mutability. All the different characters and their storylines come together out on the moor and it suddenly occurs to them, via Esmee, that the solution to the Badgers underground insurrection and a proposed rail line across the surface of Dartmoor might be an infrastructure project to build an underground rail system (*Badgerland* 2015). This underground transport system would avoid sensitive ecological sites above ground and would engage the archaeologists in digging and documenting significant sites of human history below ground. The idea captures the imagination of the badgers too as they are promised some development, around historical human sites, in the form of houses and facilities. The hedgehogs, concerned for their survival as badger prey in an independent Badgerland, hope that this will end the badgers' claims for political independence. For the younger humans, however, the notion of an Underground reveals the desire for infrastructurally-enabled connection on Dartmoor. The play ends as Esmee and Danny recite possible 'tube' stations, with the names of Dartmoor towns and villages rolling off the tongue:

ESMEE:

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[14] For images of MED Theatre's 'Badgerland' performed in a village hall on Dartmoor, 2015, see: http://www.medtheatre.co.uk/badgerland/

… Bovey... Moreton... Princetown, Yelverton...
DANNY:
Brilliant. And at Postbridge, Dousland, Widecombe, Leusdon, Hexworthy,
Ashburton, Buckfastleigh, South Brent, Sheepstor, Meavy, Walkhampton,
Mary Tavy, Peter Tavy, Lydford, Brent Tor, Cornwood, Shaugh Prior,
Harford, Gidleigh, Throwleigh, Belstone, Sticklepath, Holne, Sourton, and
even Chagford.
(*Badgerland* 2015)

Conclusion

The objective of this chapter was to explicate the significance of the term
'community' in a self-defined community-based theatre practice on Dartmoor and, in so
doing, to counter critical discourses of community cultural practices framed solely in terms
of instrumental arts policy linked to neo-liberal forms of governance. MED Community
Theatre was formed by people living on Dartmoor to creatively explore the ways in which
the national park concept and preservationist policies over-determined crucial aspects of
their lives. It was noted that National Park policies and practices overlooked Dartmoor as
a cultural landscape in attempting to instantiate a 'natural' (English heritage, pastoral) one.
These policies and practices directly led to the feeling that those dwelling inside park
boundaries were marginalised in relation to external – southern metropolitan, professional
- powers governing the park in the leisure and recreational interests of the same urban elite.
It has been argued that the activation of this marginalised identity by MED Theatre is not
a reactionary gesture to re-assert a unified image of a bounded 'local' Dartmoor
'community'. Rather, MED's activation of Dartmoor's marginality engages dynamically
with the spatial practices of power relations and is critically anti-essentialist when it comes
to 'community'. At one and the same time, in *Badgerland*, MED Theatre depicts Dartmoor
as a 'geography of lack' *and* as an excessively uncontainable space. The bounded area of
Dartmoor National Park is shown to be a governmental fiction traversed, horizontally and
vertically, by various policies, people (tourists, incoming settlers and researchers), animals
(badgers and hedgehogs), ideas, desires, debates and agents of bio-contagion. In un-
working marginality and community in this manner, MED Theatre creatively intervenes in
the on-going formation of Dartmoor as a dwelling place, opening space for the expression
and affirmation of the inordinate richness of (more-than) human lives lived on the granite

high plateau, and countering discourses of containment within conservation management. These discourses would reduce Dartmoor to a natural landscape re-inscribing a dichotomy between natural and cultural worlds that cannot be upheld in everyday life.

Given that this discussion of a community-based theatre company exceeds the discourse of instrumentalism that frames and contains arts policy and practice in the UK, a concluding comment on culture and power is warranted. The official adoption of participation and social impact as central principles of public arts subsidy in the UK may derive from a desire to appear to operate a less elitist and more democratic (participatory) system of arts funding and/or an attempt to align cultural policy more closely with central government agendas (and funding streams) by demonstrating the efficiency and efficacy of the arts in other – economic and social – policy fields. In any case, the knotty issue of the 'instrumentalisation of the arts' has emerged and is difficult to unravel. The current predicament, however, serves neither established nor community-based arts and cultural practices, and especially not the latter, which is reduced to and evaluated (by policy makers, peers, and academic researchers) on the basis of misappropriated aims, objectives and values. If community-based cultural practices have anything to contribute to the politics of culture, rather than increasingly divisive cultural politics, it is that material processes of cultural re-production cannot be separated from socio-economic relations. In other words, the 'social impact of participation in the arts' is a 'straw man' as society and culture are, pace Williams and Bourdieu (1977, 1984), already co-implicated in complex and complicated ways. Critical attention given to the place of participation and social impact in cultural policy directs focus away from more fundamental problems of culture and power: firstly, the maintenance of elitist views of culture – as has been argued, the diversion of community arts to address cultural deficit re-affirms the hegemony of high art; and, secondly, the neglect of the centrality of the market and mass culture in everyday life (see Hawkins 1993, 164-167). Critical energy should worry these loose threads of the instrumental cultural policy knot. First, it needs to be recognised that community cultural practices are based on core values of collective dynamism and cultural democracy (including cultural difference and cultural diversity) and that these remain relevant and potent in cultural practice and policy. Second, the central place of mass culture in everyday experience must be acknowledged and public intervention in the cultural sphere should,

therefore, extend to commercial culture, especially the regulation of diversity of ownership, and in supporting access to new technologies. These arguments for the democratic reform of cultural policy are not new, but their re-animation is critical at a time when public 'investment' in arts and culture establishes market-like conditions within a narrow field. While industrial constraints intensify competition between and commodification of public arts and culture, the commercial sector, and a significant section of everyday cultural activity, remains at risk of monopolistic and homogenising forces.

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