

# THE FREE UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL

*Foundations*

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**THIS IS A PROTEST!**

Higher Education is a right for all not a privilege for the few. It is on this basis the Free University of Liverpool is committed to FREE education for ANY student in the world who wants to study with us.

At the Free University of Liverpool we believe that critical thought and action are at the heart of changing the world we live in. With this in mind we support, teach about and practice cultural activism. We believe in the strength of intervention, in the necessity of interruption and the efficacy of interference in the powers that seek to privatise and instrumentalise education.

<http://thefreeuniversityofliverpool.wordpress.com>  
[thefreeuniversityofliverpool@gmail.com](mailto:thefreeuniversityofliverpool@gmail.com)

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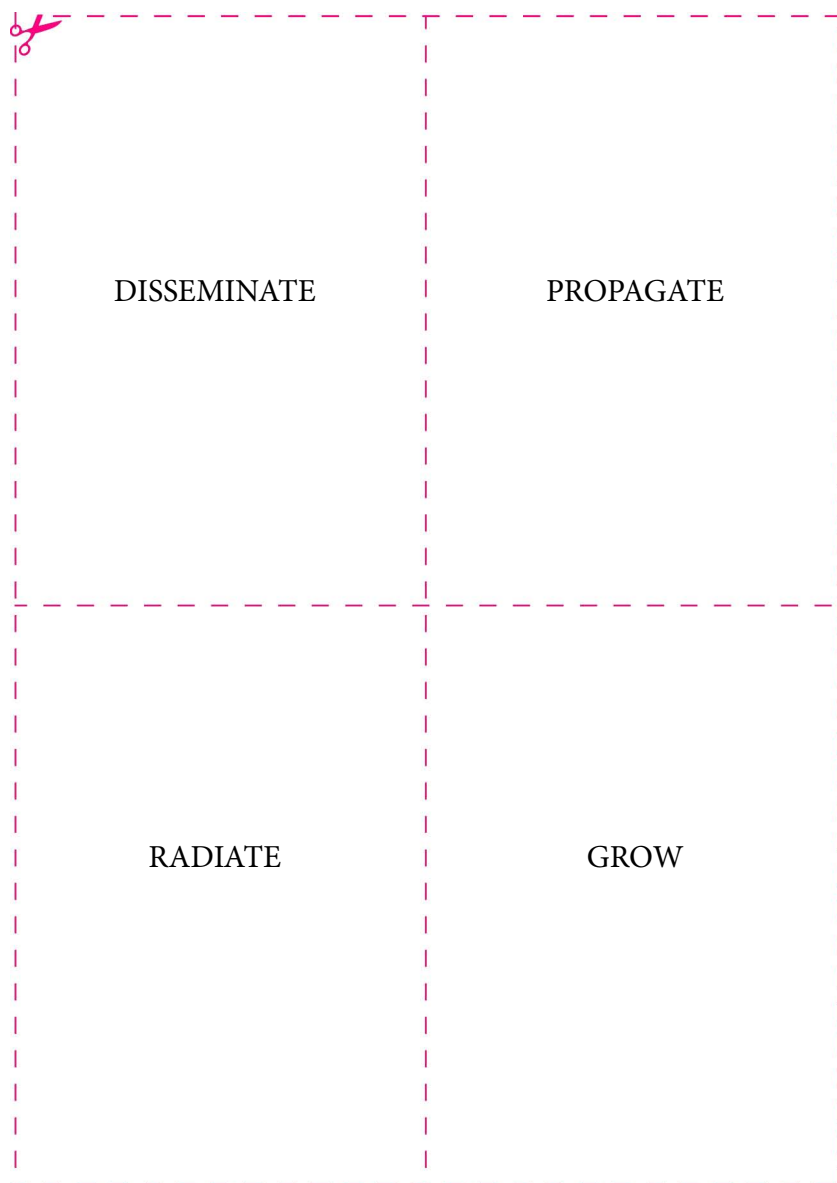
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## EDITORIAL

The Free University of Liverpool (FUL) is a protest and was founded in November 2010 during the hiatus of the student and public sector worker marches against the ConDem government's plans to privatise public sector higher education. After that initial burst of activity FUL started to think long-term about how best to intervene in the instrumentalisation and marketisation of higher education.

Let's take our own education into our own hands! What would need to be done in order for this to get off the ground? What are the most pressing questions in order to make FUL work?

FUL set up a Foundation Degree in Culture and Performance as an experiment in critical education and as preparation for the BA in Cultural Praxis that will run from October 2012 to coincide with the coming into force of the trebling of higher education fees in England. This is what you have in your hands right now.

This publication is first and foremost a document of the Foundation Degree and the various tactics and strategies we dreamed up in order to make FUL work. During the Foundation Degree in Culture and Performance, FUL has tried to re-envisage what learning means by asking some basic questions: is the difference between a learner and a teacher helpful to our attempts at reclaiming a love of learning from the forces of privatisation? Does blurring the boundaries between 'those who know stuff' and 'those who want to know stuff' help? How far are we replicating some of the repressive ideologies of learning and teaching in our programmes and what might we do to liberate ourselves? *Foundations* is an attempt to represent these processes and to inspire others to make their own university. In the following pages you will discover that FUL's Foundation Degree has been a long journey; not always one well planned or well executed but one that always retained a sense of urgency that grew out of its beginnings.

We know we're not reinventing the wheel. Radical education has a long, strong history. FUL has happily retraced territory bequeathed by those who inspire us and have energised our processes of co-learning. But we also suspect that if it is to be meaningful, learning and teaching must feel newly minted every time.

The sense of re-programming is at the epicentre of FUL's praxis and we have organised the publication accordingly to reflect this. This publication is divided into 5 sections each of which carries a title designed to intervene in normative 'university-speak'. So instead of Assessing and Graduating as you might expect from a Foundation Degree FUL explores what might happen when you auto-assess or even 'disgraduate'. Chronological in the main the opening section begins with FUL's early mission statement whilst the final section of the publication ends with projections of hopes and desires for the future of FUL. Dis:establishing contains FUL's successful proposal and feedback from the Live Art Development Agency. FUL then held a DIY Weekend to discuss its shape and content: a 'tactical curriculum' arose out of those heady two days, and in Anti:programming you will discover the structure we adopted and a record of the rich results. Auto:assessing comprises a number of responses to a question posed towards the end of the Foundation Degree: What have you learnt at FUL? One Sunday we met in Tuebrook to deliver our reports. What you will read in this section are versions of presentations that have undergone the 'Writers' Feedback Circle', FUL's tentative reconfiguring of the peer review process. Wedged in between the previous two sections is De:campusing, a visual image of FUL's rejection of institutional status in the built environment. From a cocktail bar in Dubrovnik and Tuebrook's British Legion to a 'kind of hill' in the Lake District, FUL is nowhere and potentially everywhere all at the same time. In Dis:graduating we end as we mean to go on, by revealing FUL's future directions but mainly the hopes and desires that will surge it forward.

***We engage in the  
adventure of knowledge  
to realise our  
hopes and desires***

Throughout our time together we have critiqued the received structures and relationships of the neoliberal university in order to recast them to affirm that education is for all and should be free for all. Every word and image over which you cast your eyes while reading this publication is imbued with the fundamental conviction that learning and teaching, learning-teaching, participating, contributing, facilitating, and/or giving birth to knowledge is ultimately humanising. We engage in the adventure of knowledge not to assist the accumulation of capital but to collectively and individually realise our hopes and desires. *Foundations* is about a community in the making and the making of a new forum for living and learning.

~~DIS:ESTABLISHING~~

## MISSION STATEMENT: NOV 2010

### THIS IS A PROTEST!

Higher Education is a right for all not a privilege for the few. It is on this basis the Free University of Liverpool is committed to FREE education for any student who wants to study with us. At the Free University of Liverpool we believe that critical thought and action are at the heart of changing the world we live in. With this in mind we support, teach about and practice cultural activism. We believe in the strength of intervention, in the necessity of interruption and the efficacy of interference in the powers that seek to privatise and instrumentalise education. The current cuts the ConDems announced are promising to ruin civil society in the UK. This is the last straw! We will not sit here and take it any more. We will rise up and educate each other and ourselves to FIGHT BACK!

We are interested in those who wish the world were otherwise and are willing to take steps to make it otherwise. Students wishing to learn with us will take a Foundation Degree: a six month introduction course to changing the world or Bachelor of Arts in Cultural Praxis: a three-year course, taught on the ground in Liverpool by a dedicated team of cultural activists, educationalists and cultural workers with experience and formal qualifications. The Foundation Course starts in October 2011 and the BA in Cultural Praxis starts in October 2012. Lectures, seminars and workshops will form the core activities of the university with equal weight given to the power of words and the power of action. Praxis is our watchword.

These courses are validated by the blessing of leading thinkers, writers, artists and educationalists, all of whom have contributed to the course by way of interviews and lectures. They believe, like we do, that higher education is a right for all not a privilege for the few.

The Free University of Liverpool is run cooperatively by The Committee.



## FUL TIMELINE: FROM TUITION FEES TO DIY8

**September 1998** University Fees are first introduced by the New Labour Government. Students charged £1,000 for undergraduate courses.

**2000** Lord Browne (CEO of BP) receives a 'FIRST award for Responsible Capitalism' and is presented with the prize by the Chancellor of the Exchequer Rt Hon Gordon Brown.

**2004** University Fees charge up to £3,000 a year.

**5 July 2009** Universities are moved into the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills under Lord Mandelson who promises that universities will be at the forefront of commerce. This makes way for the legitimisation of the neoliberal rethinking of the use of Higher Education in the UK.

**2009** Lord Browne (former CEO of BP) is commissioned to look into the future of higher education funding.

**12 October 2010** The Browne Report, Securing a Sustainable Future for Higher Education: An independent review of higher education funding and student finance is published. The review contains proposals to remove the cap on tuition fees and introduce a market in university courses. Different courses at the same institution would cost different amounts and different institutions would charge different fees. By creating a market, Lord Browne believes university departments would have to improve their standards if they were to continue competing for students.

**27 October 2010** Heated discussions amongst the people who were later to become the Committee take place. 'Access is everything!'

**29 October 2010** On the M62 during a trip to Manchester the Free University of Liverpool is first named.

**30 October 2010** The Free University of Liverpool is announced to local people during a Liverpool Biennial event. David Harvey and Alfredo Jaar are both vocally supportive.

**1 November 2010** The first of at least 36 formal meetings takes place between the people who were to become the Committee.

**3 November 2010** The House of Commons responds to the Browne review by making a number of recommendations including that the cap to universities be not allowed to be completely lifted. Instead there is agreement on a £9,000 per year cap.

**8-9 November 2010** (late into the evening and early morning) The first batch of emails sent out to prospective Visiting Artists and Scholars.

**9 November 2010** The people who were to become the Committee rip small black, red and white fliers into rectangles on the back of a coach to London to be handed out to people both on the coach and, subsequently, on the streets of London during the DEMOlition march.

**10 November 2010** Students stage the first in a series of national marches against the proposed increase in tuition fees. Nick Clegg, now deputy Prime Minister, is publicly outed as a lying hypocrite who tricked students into voting for him on the back of campaign promises NOT to increase the student fees when in power.

**10 November 2010** The people who were to become the Committee find a 20 cents piece outside the Houses of Parliament during the DEMOlition march and decide that that is the spot upon which the Free University of Liverpool should be launched nationally. A bottle of champagne is opened, a speech is made and an interview performed for some random film crew that happen to have noticed the national launch.

**November 2010** BA In Cultural Praxis is thought up. The key thematic elements of which would be Gender, Difference and Class to be delivered through Free Encounters and Free Conversations. Later on the Committee joke that they had dreamed up the worst possible course on the planet with themselves slaving away under the yoke of their own perceived areas of expertise/disgruntlement.

**20 November 2010** A talk is given at Queen Mary's about the Institute and ends up expanding on ideas around the Free University of Liverpool.

**21 December 2010** Monika Vykoukal donates several boxes of high quality critical books and magazines. This is the foundation of the Free University of Liverpool Library.

**19 January 2011** The Free University of Liverpool bank account set up under very heavy discussion on issues of ownership and place.

**8 February 2011** Paypal account set up. First donation received, £5.

**February 2011** In a search for space the people who were to become the Committee have a meeting with WECC (West Everton Community Council) Board of Governors. It didn't go well.

**26 March 2011** Students and workers unite to demonstrate against the general cuts in public spending. 500 000 people hit the streets.

**9 April 2011** Free University of Liverpool blog reaches the 10,000 hits mark.

**April 2011** Advice given about the purchasing of Oakfield Road; a 5 bedroom property for The Free University of Liverpool. The complications of which in terms of naming owners on legal documents led to further heated discussions.

**3 March 2011** One person who was to become one of the members of the Committee defends FUL against Collective Encounters hecklers from the back of an event at Islington Mill, Salford.

**4 May 2011** Email sent asking for support for a fundraising event for the Free University of Liverpool to senior management at local university.

**11 May 2011** Meeting demanded by senior management of local university.

**13 May 2011** Berlin. Free Work conference. Ephemera, Political and Social Theory. The first attempt to historicise the Free University of Liverpool in public goes well.

**31 May 2011** FUL responds to local university claiming that there is no link between the Free University of Liverpool and that local university. The Committee is born.

**June 2011** Schism in the Committee. One member leaves.

**29 June 2011** Open Day of the Free University of Liverpool. Less than a handful of people turn up.

**4 July 2011** DIY 8 Application at the Live Art Development Agency sent. This application is approved and £1000 is secured for the Free University of Liverpool funds.

**31 August 2011** Article about the Free University of Liverpool is published in national newspaper. Other articles follow in German Newspaper Süddeutsche Zeitung, Mancunian (Manchester Student Newspaper) and many others.

**31 August 2011** Free University of Liverpool's blog enjoys its busiest day with 1505 hits. Hits top more than 30, 000 over the following months.

**18-19 and 24-25 September 2011** DIY 8 double weekend sees the forced reuniting of the Committee. The basis of FUL's foundation degree suffers under the open division between the Committee members. The Committee decide that its days are thankfully numbered and puts a loose plan in place for its own dissolution. The Free University of Liverpool welcomes its new members and begins a new chapter of its protest.



## DIY8

This is the original call for proposals that DIY partner Platform and Live Art Development Agency put out as one of the LADA's 'DIY 8' projects in 2011. DIY is the Agency's innovative peer-to-peer professional development programme. It facilitates artists sharing practice through practice. Platform is a group of artists, campaigners and activists who work together on issues of social and environmental justice, and have been a partner on DIY since 2009. For DIY, Platform wanted to make a space for exploration of the immediate political situation.

### Call for Proposals: Ethics will be the aesthetics of the future\*

This DIY invites a response to the immediate UK political context of the severe cuts in public spending, including the arts. How do these cuts impact on live and interdisciplinary arts practices, and how do those practices challenge and transform both ethical and economic understandings? In hard times, how do we keep our integrity and maintain an ethical position? On what value system is our integrity based? Do we use sneaky tactics and take whatever money and run? Or, if we are inherently critical, do we bite the hand that feeds us? If we don't like the State, are we happy to be pushed towards private sector philanthropy? Is all money dirty money? If not, what non-marketised, non-exploitative forms of financial or resources exchange can we develop? We are seeking proposals to investigate some or all of these questions, and which will have at their heart a social process which fosters discussion, sharing, provocations and/or reflection. This Call is co-conceived by Platform and the Live Art Development Agency as part of ongoing pilot research into ethics, economics, live art and activism. The DIY project can take place anywhere in the UK. Findings from this DIY may inform future work and we hope to build on the relationships formed through this DIY's activity.

\* VI Lenin

### FUL's Application for DIY8 Ethics will be the aesthetics of the future

#### • The name and full contact details of the lead artist/applicant.

Gary Anderson, The Free University of Liverpool, c/o The Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home, 7 Bright Street, L6 1DL, mob. 07963 770 691 or home on 0151 286 0128

#### • Details of which region your proposed project will take place in and why.

Liverpool.

As the base for The Free University of Liverpool it is important that the DIY events nurture and examine notions and practices of immediate localisms within the context of a broader national (perhaps international) picture of critical live art/performance education. This is important in the light of the recent, broader onslaught against it led by the ConDems' public sector cuts. This DIY project would seek to build upon and further realise the resilience already keenly felt amongst artists in Liverpool, particularly those connected with educative practices, to pool resources, practices and plans in order to kick-start the teaching phase of The Free University of Liverpool, at the start of the academic year 2011. In this sense The Free University of Liverpool could act as a conduit through which capacity for Live Art and activism is developed through new and already established contacts.

#### • A description of your proposed project.

The project would comprise of two sets of events. The first will take the shape of a three day get-together which would be an exploratory, participant-centred, sharing of practices for education ranging from Freireian pedagogies to direct action (and other practices participants bring with them). The second set of events would be a curriculum-making forum for all previous participants the following week. The second event would see the participants, after a week's reflection upon the range of practices unearthed at the first event, come up with concrete plans of how a course at the Free University could be actualised and sustained. The ethical implications of 'free time', working voluntarily, (not) seeking institutional funding, (not) seeking donations and the balancing of working within and without the systems that tend to reproduce the repressive ideologies the mission statement of The Free University of Liverpool rails against.

Premises to be confirmed but likely to be the Social Centre on Bold Street – 'Next To Nowhere' – or West Everton Community Council; failing that, The Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home and Tuebrook Transnational will host it.

#### • This proposal responds to the call for "Ethics is the Aesthetics of the Future".

#### • The project's artistic rationale and proposed methodology.

The Free University of Liverpool has been subject to an internal legal process at Liverpool Hope University (where the three co-founders are employed) which culminated in the summoning to the University Secretary's office earlier this week (Wednesday 11th May) of two of its co-founders. The central defence against the suggestion that the Free University of Liverpool is operating illegally (by using the word 'university' and offering non-validated BA and Foundation courses) consisted of the co-founders' framing of the Free University of Liverpool 'as a performance' rather than a bone fide, privy council-endorsed university. Under those conditions, as far as we can gather, the legal department at Liverpool Hope University are happy



for the Free University of Liverpool to operate. We are keen to develop and share the notion of the deliberate blurring of boundaries between art, performance, protest, education and criticality and its appropriate-to-context 'framings' as 'mainstream,' 'radical,' and 'performative,' more publically as a tactic against the forces that wish to silence dissent and the generating of alternative models living/working/understanding. The central rationale then is to generate radical critical practices which can be effective, de-stabilising and provocative that, when appropriate, side-step the pitfalls that mainstream educative practices have put in the way of grassroots initiatives. In this light the project draws upon previously tried and tested notions and practices of the blurring of boundaries between art, activism and education, currently and historically, in the UK and elsewhere, particularly in the spheres of Live Art and Performance. From the anarchist-libertarians of the Modern Free School in Liverpool (founded in 1908 by a married couple 'the Dicks' along with Spanish radical Ferrer) to Beuys' Berlin experiments through PLATFORM's The Body Politic and the current raft of 'Free Universities' up and down the UK. This project shares their rationale in that it seeks to further liberate the practices of knowledge production and dissemination away from the logics of the market and its inevitable de-democratisation towards a grassroots, genuinely open, free and shared, sustainable and ethically driven set of practices that liberate rather than intimidate, empower rather than coerce, set free rather than pin down the vast potential of ANY human being to be a part of the anti/post/alter capitalist revolution.

Methodologically we will seek to facilitate as-non-hierarchical-as-possible series of discussions and events that seek to share practices and knowledges indigenous to participants (including ourselves) with a view to implementing them in an actual 'course' run BY participants FOR participants. This would include our own particular backgrounds in Live Art, activism and education.

• **An indication of who the proposed participants might be, including areas of practices, levels of experience, etc.**

We seek to bring together a range of experience and are particularly keen to attract new recruits for the Free University of Liverpool through this DIY programme. However, other co-founders of the Free University of Liverpool Lena Simic and Lorena Rivero de Beer will certainly participate. Local initiatives in self-education including will attend; local live artists Tim Jeeves and Bitt Jurgensen; local activist and educator Jenifer Verson; local theatre makers and activists Ben Philips and Mary Pearson along with local grassroots individuals from groups connected to Nerve Magazine, News From Nowhere radical bookshop and the WECC (West Everton Community Council), prospective 'students' who have already applied for a Foundation with The Free University of Liverpool as well as a number of visiting artists and lecturers at The Free University of Liverpool, both local to Liverpool and from national bases. But we

plan to make an open call to get people in who might be new, willing to engage, or just curious about The Free University of Liverpool.

• **An indication of the imagined outcomes and benefits for participants and yourself.**

We imagine an ongoing set of relationships between ourselves and other participants that results in courses being set up and run by ourselves and participants over at least a four year period. Foundation in Performance and Culture (2011/2012) and BA in Cultural Praxis (2012-2015).

• **An indication of the number of participants.**

We expect around 15 - 20 participants.

• **Details of how you will select participants.**

We will issue an open call through contacts and our own website. We are primarily interested in people who will take part in the Free University of Liverpool either as 'students' or 'teachers' – the blurring of boundaries between which is one of the goals of this particular project.

• **A simple schedule of activity which outlines what you will do and when you will do it.**

September 16, 17, 18 (first three day get-together) followed by Sep 23, 24 (curriculum planning)

• **A simple budget which shows how you will spend the grant.**

£500 will go to The Free University of Liverpool donations fund.  
£500 will go to the group of participants who will decide collectively what to do with it. This may include the paying for premises for the DIY events, for collective meals during the sessions, further get-togethers in the future or payment for each participant's contribution and/or attendance. The topic of what to do with the money from LADA (i.e. Arts Council, Government, taxpayer) will form one of the central features of a specific discussion designed to allow the emergence of some of the key problematics connected to setting up a 'free' education which will take place during the first three day get-together.

• **A short biography of the organiser(s) including your experience or interest in leading similar initiatives.**

Gary Anderson co-founded the Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home with Lena Simic and their three children Neal, Gabriel and Sid, and co-led, with them, LADA's DIY 5 First Retreat Then Advance in 2008 and is currently engaged in the co-running of The Free University of Liverpool.

### Reason for Selection

The proposal from The Committee of the Free University of Liverpool was the one selected. What Platform particularly liked about it was that FUL had a political, cultural trajectory that was already in motion which the DIY could be a big part of boosting. There was a rare combination of long-termism, cheek, openness, and grit about the specific proposal which stood out for Platform, and echoed the ongoing activist interests of the brief.<sup>(1)</sup>

### Jane's Reflection

Free University of Liverpool, full of love.  
Sep 23, 2011 • 9:44 am • by Jane

(a personal view...)

"Why free?"

"Who is it?"

"What scares you?"

"What trouble do you expect to get into?"

"What existing structures and conventions of universities do we want to ditch?"

"How 'Liverpool' is it?"

"Are we students? Who are we?"

"How will we know when people/we are committed?"

"Is it about curriculum or freeness? or both?"

"How will it function as a protest?"

"How will it end?"

These were some of the questions we asked, tickled and answered last weekend in the Next to Nowhere social centre in Liverpool. A group of maybe 20 people, from

1 On 28 Jun 2012, at 10:27, jane trowell wrote:

hi all, more on the reading group very soon. Still digesting. For such a modest format it's interesting to get a lot of constructive feedback. Exciting news is that the Free University of Liverpool are publishing a book in the autumn called "Foundations" and there will be a short section on the DIY they did. I re-read the call for proposals we wrote, and have drafted the following para, which I just wanted to run past you what do you think? Anything to tweak, add from your perspective?  
Jane

From: Lois Keidan <lois@thisisliveart.co.uk>

Date: 28 June 2012 11:00:17 BDT

To: jane trowell <jane@platformlondon.org>

Cc: CJ Mitchell <cj@thisisliveart.co.uk>, Aaron Wright <aaron@thisisliveart.co.uk>, Katy Baird

<katy@thisisliveart.co.uk>

Subject: Re: Free Uni Liv DIY

All great. We can't wait to see the book ....and hopefully sell it on Unbound.

Lois, CJ, Aaron and Katy

Liverpool and elsewhere got together to think where this protest goes next...

On Saturday we walked to Everton to move over 500 books that had already been donated to the University down to Next to Nowhere. We talked about books and libraries and power, and how we know what we know. And who told us we should know it.

We talked about how we feel about burning books, banning books, and sticking labels in the front of certain books that say "Warning, this book will damage your self-esteem/ethics/soul/neighbour".

We talked about a library that reveals a library: people take the same heap of books and re-categorise it to reveal different biases and how knowledge is constructed. And how you decide this together. . . or not.

We talked about how the Word dominates formal education and how that excludes all kinds of people who learn best through their bodies and discredits their way of knowing, and stops us from connecting everything up. From flow. Capitalistic knowledge that would have us conveniently cut ourselves up into marketable categories: "Now I'm doing sport, I should buy this"; "Now I'm studying I should buy that"; "Now I'm cooking, I should buy these"; "Now I'm at home"; "Now I'm at work"; "Now I'm a lover".

And what 'young people' want and need . . . and who are we to know? And isn't 'university' already a huge deterrent to lots of young people? Who's this for? Who IS this for?!

We had a COMPLETELY delicious vegan lunch cooked by the Social Centre. The treacle tart was out of this world.

Later – during the exercise where we each read a book we'd chosen from the library we'd heaved down the hill – one facilitator fell asleep on the sofa and the other was so engrossed in reading about not working that the group, organised along horizontal principles, just collectively and silently decided to keep on reading. Although some of us were fidgety.

We spoke about desire. The sleeping facilitator later said how lovely it was to take a nap. The reading facilitator spoke about feeling engrossed and not wanting to be responsible. Feeling narky for one reason or another. We spoke about honesty. When are teachers/lecturers/facilitators filled with desire or feel able to be honest? Then we temporarily lost interest in books and wanted to talk about Kindle, apps,



blogs, twitter and You Tube. We went to the pub.

On Sunday, a growing sense of incredible nourishment and excitement. Three young brothers aged 10, 8 and 4 facilitated the warm-up, including some quite complicated maths.

"Everyone answer our questions!" [Groan] "But without the attitude!"

They improvised some ground rules which flowed out of them as easy as can be:

"Lesson No 1: Always listen to us

Lesson No 2: It's for your own good

Lesson No 3: Do your homework

Lesson No 4: There is no homework today

Lesson No 5: Always listen to us

Lesson No 6: (there was no lesson no.6)

(Nor 7)

Lesson No 8: Always sit down

Lesson No 9: Always put your hand up

Lesson No 10: There is no bullying

Lesson No 11: Treat us as you want to be treated

Lesson No 12: Do what we say or you'll get a smacked bottom and sent to bed

Lesson No 13: Don't go to the toilet in class time

Lesson No 14: Do you think I do this for my own good?"

Nuff said.

There was a bit of impromptu singing, and those who refused to sing. There was a sudden performance on a violin. There was talk of the emotional orchestra, and we became for a few blissful moments a Feral Choir. There was talk of someone's granddad's accordion, and how it kept nagging away as being something to learn, learn together, and learn from. Accord. Accord. Accordions like the Book Block's shields.

AND WHAT WAS IT ABOUT THE RAUCOUS CAUCUS RECOVERY CHORUS?

We were asked: What do you want to learn? And what do you want to teach?

When, in teacher training or in colleges or universities, does anyone ever ask you that?

HOW TO GET CAPITALISM OUT OF OUR HEADS.

BY ALL MEANS NECESSARY.

HOW TO DECOUPLE FROM THE STATE AND FROM STERLING. GROUND IT IN LIVERPOOL. 33 Housing Co-ops. 2 Food Co-ops. It's all here. Liverpool's radical history...

HOW TO TEACH PHILOSOPHY FOR SOCIAL CHANGE. PHILOSOPHY IS DANGEROUS TO STATUS QUO. THAT'S WHY THEY TRIED TO CUT IT. HOW DO WE RECLAIM THE WORD ITSELF?

HOW TO LEARN THROUGH THE BODY: SATISFYING POLITICS. Making, doing, touching, cooking, sounding, moving, tasting, feeling but embodying how power operates, how to love the senses, how to resist the chain, chain, chains.

And how the Free University of Liverpool will unfold.

Emerging from basement into Liverpool's hubbub: Hope Street Festival, post Tottenham-Liverpool football crowds, karaoke oozing from pubs, boarded up shops next to art installations. All mesmerising, all possible. All gorgeous somehow. Had a hug and tickle with the Ken Dodd statue in Lime Street station. He's so nice.

Off southwards. A feeling that this is very important. And exciting. And two fingers. Loads of two-fingers. Movement-building. No wonder so many academic 'names' have signed up to be faculty (although this faculty can be anyone at all...). 'Students' can't be healthily 'taught' by ill, sick, alienated, burnt-out teachers or lecturers. They would all weep with joy at this. It's been so long. Me, I think this is at first about reclaiming the joy of learning, which is all the more, when we learn together from whatever starting point. Experiments in learning, in public.

So eyes open for the Scratch Orchestra for Democracy: over-experience or no experience necessary. Bad attitude essential.

<http://platformlondon.org/2011/09/23/free-university-of-liverpool-full-of-love/>

~~ANTI:PROGRAMMING~~

## THE STRANDS: F / U / L

### F Strand (Philosophy, Finking, Free strand)

Filosofia/thinking/critical/reflexive/meta-course/themes

Lectures/conversations/provocations delivered by visiting artists and scholars, followed by seminar discussions

Time: Thursdays 8pm – 10pm (weekly meetings)

Location: Liverpool Social Centre + various

#### Thursday Meetings

- 6th October – power
- 13th October – freedom
- 20th October – autonomy
- 27th October – intermission + belonging: global
- 3rd November – belonging: local
- 10th November – borders
- 17th November – 'Don't mention the 47' film (Unity Theatre)
- 24th November – radical pedagogy
- 1st December – 'If Only' (the Bluecoat)
- 8th December – failure
- 15th December – gift/celebration
- 12th January – money
- 19th January – repression
- 26th January – unthinking
- 2nd February – doing nothing
- 9th February – artist talk: Gabriela Leon
- 16th February – body politics (Migrant Artists Mutual Aid)
- 23rd February – happiness
- 1st March – reading week
- 8th March – embodied ethics
- 15th March – 'If Only' (the Bluecoat)
- 22nd March – cultural capitalism
- 29th March – assessment/recruitment

Together at the D148  
weekends we designed a  
tactical curriculum consisting  
of 3 strands:  
the F strand,  
the U strand, and  
the L strand.

**Mini F Strand: The Ignorant Schoolmaster**

Jacques Rancière, *The Ignorant Schoolmaster: Five Lessons in Intellectual Emancipation*

Six meetings at the Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home:

- Tuesday 17th January 12:30 – 2:30 Chapter 1
- Tuesday 24th January 12:30 – 2:30 Chapter 2 + learn a prayer of different religion to what you have
- Tuesday 31st January 12:30 – 2:30 Chapter 3 + write a composition on art (one A4) which is connected with a passage from random book + come up with a theme for speech improvisation
- one week gap
- Tuesday 14th February 12:30 – 2:30 Chapter 4 + Me Too, I am a Painter! (bring painting/drawing)
- Tuesday 21st February 12:30 – 2:30 Chapter 5 (bring a speech)
- Tuesday 28th February 12:30 – 2:30 Introduction (bring a pedagogical gift)

**U Strand (You, Unmissable, Unusual, Unthinkable, United strand)**

Mini intensive courses which are all about 'you' and 'satisfying politics'

Physical bursts of energy/exchange between participants of FUL. A structural device to catch participants' impulses to learn/teach on whatever their fancy determines.

Time: varies (depends on U)

Location: varies (depends on U)

- Better Late Than Never: How to Read a Newspaper – meetings on Mondays at 9:30am, Bold Street Coffee.
- Conspiracy – online encounters
- A Guided Detour of Liverpool by a Meandering Outsider – 19th November, meet Next to Nowhere, 10:30am
- Crack Capitalism Lectures by John Holloway – A Northern Excursion – 28th, 29th and 30th November
- Conspiracy in the Hour of the Wolf – a collaborative experiment in writing 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd and 29th December at 3am-4am
- Making a Committee Mask – a physical engagement with archetypes of leadership and representation – 3rd, 4th and 5th February
- Tactics for Movement – 25th and 26th February
- Merz Barn Weekend – 10th and 11th March
- T Strand - The Virus We All Share - March

**L Strand (Locus, Local-Love, Locality, Liverpool)**

Collaborative, project-based action in immediate community.

Beginning with a series of mapping actions around Liverpool. Walks. Contemplations. Excursions. Incursions. Discoveries. Explorations.

One idea for this strand is finding 'housing' for the Free University of Liverpool.

- Rose Howey Housing Co-op - ongoing
- Walk Liverpool in London – 16th October
- Saturday Walks: first edition - 29th October
- LibrariFUL Weekend – 29th and 30th October
- FUL at Occupy London SX Solidarity Weekend - Saturday 5th and Sunday 6th November
- A Guided Detour of Liverpool by a Meandering Outsider -19th November, meet Next to Nowhere, 10:30am
- The Shopping Centre Tour of Leeds - Tuesday 29th November
- Don't Mention the 47 film screening - Static Gallery, 1st April

*three jokers in a VW Polo  
conjuring the Free University of Liverpool*

*glugging pricey champagne  
announcing the coming insurrection  
parliament appears unusually small*

*Breathing thick watery air  
Liverpool doesn't begin with an 'n'  
There's no Free University of Nowhere*

## CULTURAL CAPITALISM

As this session was closing, I was asked why I'd proposed it.

At the time, I said it was because it had come up as a subject in my own studies, and because it seemed pertinent in relation to our engagement with activities and institutions outside our own sphere.

I still believe this. But I've been thinking more about that question since, and think there's something additional at stake.

I keep coming back to that misquote of Bourdieu I made about how to focus only on the financial economy as a way in which power is negotiated is to omit vast chunks of the systems of power out of the analysis. It's by providing an adjunct to our understanding of negotiations of capital that I think this is important.

It provides an additional vocabulary with which to talk about social justice, but of equal importance, I think it clarifies something of the way in which power is manifested on a personal or group level; a way of understanding how power operates within the Free Uni specifically and activist networks more generally.

There's significant social prohibition on talking about these things; things like verbalising a hierarchy within a group is typically a no-no (and for good reason). Nevertheless, I think it is important (maybe even essential) to find ways of addressing them that aren't so problematic, and perhaps these ideas – along with an array of other options that we have collectively gathered in our FUL toolbox – will provide a way in which we can begin such an undertaking.

And just to be clear, this isn't necessarily about an absolute dissolution of hierarchy and power – that leads to either bland neutrality or the chaos of the roulette wheel – but is instead about finding ways of negotiating these systems; making them visible so that when they spill over into something icky, it's possible to negotiate accountability in a fair and clear manner.

### Definitions

We began with a collective definition of what the term Cultural Capital means to us as individuals. These were stuck to the walls of the room.

CULTURAL  
CAPITAL

How much are you  
wORTH to culture?

Reputation  
Resources

Power

Respect

Authority

BIG BELT BUCKLES

The  
critics  
agree...  
★★★★★

## Roulette

*[Capital] is what makes the games of society — not least, the economic game — something other than simple games of chance offering at every moment the possibility of a miracle. Roulette, which holds out the opportunity of winning a lot of money in a short space of time, and therefore of changing one's social status quasi-instantaneously, and in which the winning of the previous spin of the wheel can be staked and lost at every new spin, gives a fairly accurate image of this imaginary universe of perfect competition or perfect equality of opportunity, a world without inertia, without accumulation, without heredity or acquired properties, in which every moment is perfectly independent of the previous one, every soldier has a marshal's baton in his knapsack, and every prize can be attained, instantaneously, by everyone, so that at each moment anyone can become anything.*

Bourdieu, The Forms of Capital (1986)

Acknowledging this quote from Bourdieu, we randomised our roles in the room.

1. the person who decides when we change roles
2. the one everyone listens to
3. the one no one listens to
4. the one who feels out of their depth
5. the facilitator
6. the really privileged one
7. the one who is here for the first time
8. the government minister for education
9. the one we all fancy
10. the expert
11. the one who got us all together
12. the one who we've admired from afar but have never met before today
13. the scally
14. the sister of the person on their right
15. someone who's thirty years older than they were before they got this label

Though entertaining, the discussion was slightly chaotic until Lorena (the facilitator) and Lydia (the person who decides when we change roles) imposed some order on the proceedings.

*Apologies for my shoddy note-taking (and please add if there's anything I've omitted), but from memory:*

- We discussed the terms used. What does Bourdieu say capital is? What does

he mean when he talks about the Embodied, Objectified, and Institutionalised forms of Cultural Capital? We didn't get time to talk to look at Social Capital or Processes of Conversion

- We talked about negotiating the differing subjectivities of cultural capital, and wondered how, when it is so insubstantial and socially inscribed why the value has such power (though of course, financial capital is arguably equally flimsy)
- We talked about the dangers of using these terms, how their relationship to capital accumulation is inherent in the language
- We asked if Bourdieu was not just reducing everything to finance

Bourdieu himself had a response to this last point:

*The real logic of the functioning of capital, the conversions from one type to another, and the law of conservation which governs them cannot be understood unless two opposing but equally partial views are superseded: on the one hand, economism, which, on the grounds that every type of capital is reducible in the last analysis to economic capital, ignores what makes the specific efficacy of the other types of capital, and on the other hand, semiologism (nowadays represented by structuralism, symbolic interactionism, or ethnomethodology), which reduces social exchanges to phenomena of communication and ignores the brutal fact of universal reducibility to economic.*

Bourdieu, The Forms of Capital (1986)

As we typically do, we ran out of time.

## Conclusions

The final exchanges were the question on why I had wanted to facilitate this session, and a brief discussion on the nature of FUL as a cultural capital bank; one from which withdrawals and investments are made by all those who come to the project.

## THOUGHT CURRENTS, FOLLOWING PERSONAL NARRATIVES AND THE ILLUSION OF CONTINUITY: RADICAL PEDAGOGY IN 3 PARTS

We were asked by Britt, as part of the F-strand session on 'Radical Pedagogy':

Date: Fri, 18 Nov 2011 16:57:21 +0000  
From: Britt Jurgensen <britt@foolprooftheatre.com>  
Subject: [Everyone at FUL] Next F-strand meeting on Radical Pedagogy  
To: everyone@fulpool.org

Hello everyone,

next Thursday's meeting is about Radical Pedagogy. Seeing that this is supposively something we are all involved in by the power of being FUL, I thought this should be a collectively contributed session. So this is the plan: please bring something to share or do or read or discuss with us involving Radical Pedagogy. This can be anything: a memory, a game, an action, a question, a provocation, an example and so on. Each one of us will have 10 min max on the night.

In case what comes up in this process leaves us with the pressing desire for more discussion, we could add some focused pub time after the session is over.

xxBritt.

My response to the task was a created/constructed experience in 3 parts.

[Mary Introduction 1 minute, explanation 1 minute]

So I am thinking about thought currents and about the illusion of continuity. Ether exchange. I am thinking about following someone's/ your own (personal) narrative. Who is following your (personal) narrative?

Creating an experience: Radical Pedagogy. Creating/constructing and experience as a way of learning, also sourcing self-learning, priming the source.

Q: Does everyone have a mobile phone and access to the internet?

### PART ONE

[In Pairs, 2 minutes talking]

What thought currents from the Free University are most present in your consciousness? Unload/unpack what is on your mind.

Other is listening and responding by drawing a 'map' (word/or other) of the thought current as they are listening to it.

After 2 minutes I will say CUT

Stop mid-sentence – do not finish your thought. Write your mobile number on/ under the map.

Change. The next person talks about what thought currents from the Free University are most present in your mind. Unpack/unload our thoughts.

After 2 minutes, I will say CUT

Stop mid-sentence - do not finish your thought. Write your mobile number on/ under the map.

Exchange MAPS

### PART TWO

[Explanation 1 minute]

At some point on your way home or before bed, remember what you said, look at the map and text a thought continuation to the other person. From this different moment in time, what is most present in your consciousness on that thought current?

SEND

### PART THREE

In the morning at some point after you wake up, re-read the text message that you received from your partner. Check your email for instructions to Part Three

[Everyone at FUL] F-strand/ Thought currents, following personal narratives and the illusion of continuity: PART 3

On 25/11/2011 10:19, Mary Pearson wrote:

Hello F-strand and all,

If you agree to continue participating in last night's constructed/created experience, the instructions to PART 3 are as follows:

Re-read the text message you hopefully received last night in PART 2.

(If you missed PART 2, you can still do it: Remember the thought current you shared, consult your map, and text a thought continuation to the other person from what is most present in your consciousness from this different moment in time.)

At any point after waking up today, write an email to the Freeuni:

Crystallize the thought current into a sentence - or a few sentences - that is a statement or question most present in your consciousness from this new moment in time.

SEND.

I can post them on the blog later.

Thanks all, really enjoyed last night and being a part of this wonderfully strange creative beast that is growing. Generally I'm up for offshoot mini-strand reading meetings as time permits, though away in Jan/Feb.

M x

Replies to my email, in anti-chronological order:

sorry I forgot to do that 'from Gary' thing...gxx

On Sat, Nov 26, 2011 at 1:49 PM, The Free University of Liverpool <thefreeuniversity-ofliverpool@gmail.com> wrote:

There are levels of disconnectedness that are appropriate actually, when all is said and done. And that it would be nice to think that the pile of money we looked at in the pub paid for chips and chicken, but, they didn't, they, for reasons I'm familiar with, went astray...That's a good thing, hmmm...

This IS valuable,...And The money, in the end, was a generous tip for people of that pub.

Quoting lorenajohanna de beer <lorenajohanna@hotmail.com>:

i being thinking about something slightly abstract, related to how i feel towards others, i think it might be about the ego (but i don't want to use that word anymore...) and it feels connected with the relationship between speaking and listening and why we care about speaking at all

i feel i've being silenced for so many years, that i am silenced everyday by conventions of communications and social oppression... then, i find a place where i can speak...

it took me 34 years

it lasts a moment, maybe a few minutes, and it's gone...

and still, i feel a slight sense of guilt attached to it

but then... ( i hope) i might be able to properly listening because i found, for a moment, a way to be heard, to hear myself

mmm...

Date: Fri, 25 Nov 2011 21:35:13 +0000

From: unregulatedmusicdist@gmail.com

To: everyone@fulpool.org

Subject: Re: [Everyone at FUL] F-strand/ Thought currents, following personal narratives and the illusion of continuity: PART 3

You are hungry, you find some toast, and you become FUL. I cannot give you answers, or me answers but I can help you find them, as you help me too.



On 25 Nov 2011 20:40, "lena simic" <lenasimic@hotmail.com> wrote:

This Friday afternoon I am called by TalkTalk trying to sell me phone deal. I am quiet for ages. I am getting angry. I can feel rage in the body. I am quiet.

He speaks of the conversation being recorded, of great deals in the world, of phone bills being £50 or £60 a month... I am quiet.

He: Hello? Hello? Hello?

Me: Do not call me again.

He: I've been talking to you for ages...

Me: I do not want to be part of your system. I do not want to be part of this capitalist system anymore. I am not interested in you selling me your phone.

He: Well, Madam...

Me: Delete my number from your system.

He: We can't guarantee that your number is not going to stay with other departments.

Me: We refuse to be a part of this capitalist system anymore. We are working towards its destruction. You can delete my number. Thank you.

'I' becomes 'We'. I think of the Invisible Committee; I think of the Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home; I think of 'We are 99%' and Occupy movement; I think of anti-globalization movements, many yeses, one no; I think about 'We are Everywhere'; I think about the Free University of Liverpool. My 'I' is 'We'. I get to belong.

Date: Fri, 25 Nov 2011 14:26:58 +0000

From: Britt Jurgensen <britt@foolprooftheatre.com>

Subject: Re: [Everyone at FUL] F-strand/ Thought currents, following personal narratives and the illusion of continuity: PART 3

To: everyone@fulpool.org

After receiving a very beautiful text message and in this very moment in time for me FUL on a rainy Friday at 2.05 is about lines intertwining and layering to form a mesh, a fluid place of belonging. It is about conviviality, about contact over content, the desire to move rather than the will to reach, the how over the what. It's a lot about learning to trust. And it is about keeping on walking. A Zapatista saying John Holloway mentions sticks with me since days: 'preguntando caminamos' (asking we walk).

Thank you for an inspiring and humbling session.

## CONSPIRACY IN THE HOUR OF THE WOLF

*Conspiracy means "breathing together".  
To join the conspiracy, hold down a key as you  
breathe in and release it as you breathe out.*

In December 2011, on five Thursdays early mornings between 3am and 4am, some FUL members met online via Conspiracy in the Hour of the Wolf. This U-Strand was an experiment in lonely and yet collaborative writing in the middle of the night. Mara instigated the sessions and sent instructions to the list, such as using pen and paper, computer screen, letter writing, chat room and/or following one's own desires.<sup>(1)</sup>

### CONSPIRATOR 1

1 Dec 3am – 4am writing with pen and paper  
PRESENT, WOKE AT 3AM, MOVED FROM BED BY 3.05, WROTE

8 Dec 3am – 4am writing on your computer  
PRESENT, ALARM AT 3.30, STARTED WRITING WITHIN 10 MINS, STOPPED ABOUT 4.10 AS I FELT UNHAPPY WITH HOW PRODUCTIVE I'D BEEN/ WHAT I'D WRITTEN AND WAS TRYING TO FIGHT THE TIREDNESS. THE FIGHT WAS PRECISELY WHY I WANTED TO CONSPIRE, SO FUNNY HOW THE TRYING GOT TO ME!

ABSENT FOR THE NEXT TWO CONSPIRACIES DUE TO WORK/ LIFE LEAKAGE!

29 Dec 3am – 4am as you desire  
Woke at 3.05, opened eyes in the darkness, opened them wider – as wide as possible – and then closed them and went back to sleep. Didn't want to fight today.

### CONSPIRATOR 2

15th Dec  
Conspiracy in the Hour of the Wolf letter...

Dear\_  
I was dreaming when you woke me. I was dreaming about this letter, about who I might write it to. I was also dreaming about the mouse. A stress dream I think, the mouse was everywhere, all over the house, it had made a nest in the fuse box, and left droppings everywhere and I was running around trying to catch it and it kept slipping through my fingers...maybe I should write to the mouse?!

<sup>1</sup> For full instructions see <https://fulpool.org/blog/?p=405>

Dear Mousey...

Or Santa?! I did genuinely consider that (in my dream): what would I write to Father Christmas? Why is it 'Father'? How does that relate to the 'St' in St. Nicholas? Are father's saints? Ha ha ha ...

### *I was dreaming when you woke me*

No really, who to write to? I write to lots of people normally, and some I have at the top of the list, definitely due a letter – Jenny! I can't believe she is having a baby! I've been meaning to write for ages, maybe now would be a good time, and it is a sort of performance related thing, this hour-of-the-wolf business!  
Why not? As Lena would say!  
I wonder what she is writing right now: Love, War, Adventure. I wonder if Clare is joining us tonight, and the other FF girls.  
OK, time to start the letter proper...

Dear Jenny,

It's ages since I've written, and I've been meaning to for so long! I've been carrying a card around in my handbag for a couple of months! It is a black and white Aubrey Beardsley illustration of a very elegant long gown, possibly with a light over-dusting of glitter!  
So, this is 'conspiracy in the hour of the wolf', and I'm writing you a letter as part of it! ...

### CONSPIRATOR 3

1 Dec 2011 – 3am – 4am

3:25

...  
It feels good to take care of others. All the love one gets. I'm thinking of S., my revolutionary baby and our feeds in the night. Someone is needy on line again. I wonder if they are someone new... Someone new matters. We need excitement. Humans are so primitive. Always needing action. Never standing still. M. and J. are not online. Do I have to stay till 4? No. I need to go back to sleep. There's no wolf, just clock. Tic tocking clock.

***I'm thinking of S., my  
revolutionary baby and  
our feeds in the night***

8 Dec 2011 – 3am – 4am – document created 03:53

...

Another soul is here with me. I touch him slightly and then I leave. He needs to understand this is not about permanence. He can't trust me. We are here all alone. There is no togetherness here.

Does this make the four of us? Four again? Are the others cheating just like me, popping up and down whenever they want to, to give us an illusion that we are more than one? Are they all disobeying? There is no celebration tonight, only hard work. Tonight it all begins.

...

#### CONSPIRATOR 4

First things first: it's always about how to begin. I want to follow every instruction, short of leaving my bed. I'm not even sitting up. I want to correct already. The light isn't on yet. Give it time.

When you're waking up, it's always about first things first, but ever so slowly, slowing down time. Applying the brakes at that first moment when you sleep - it's as if you're thrusting through time. Perhaps it's simpler than this: sleep is slow and we want to return to it and thus its speed.

The light can go on now, I think. Time to breathe on Conspiracy.—

—I could sit up now. Feels like the natural stage to sit up. Here goes – stop writing! First: save.

The breathing was nice although I didn't follow the rhythm of the on-screen icon - is it 'icon'?

I feel I'm going to struggle to write for an hour. I should have left bed after all. [ . . ]

Oh, where am I? Still in bed, I'm afraid. I should leave it to get a little cold, to refresh myself before returning to bed so that I'm simulating going to bed. Here goes. Conspiracy again? Now I'm wondering whether I should be writing some of my work. No, can't do that. I could leave that for next week. That is, unless dear old Mara keeps the same instructions. [ . . ]

Funny that I feel sufficiently revived – as if I've done the allotted amount of sleeping necessary to launch into the day – to go on working as if it really is the morning and it's time for coffee. Goes to show how much sleep we actually need, or is it more to do with the fact that I'm edging into consciousness and feel buoyed by this experience? Which has been lovely, actually.

#### COLLECTIVE CONSPIRACY

For 22 December, Winter Solstice 5:30am (5am - 6am)

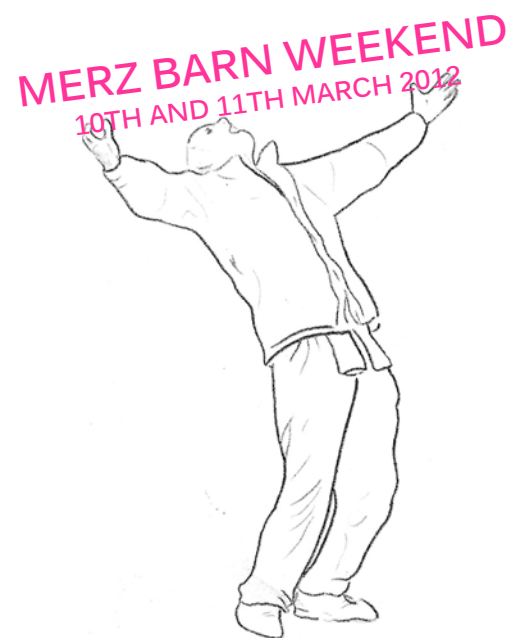
The chat room 'Wolf' was open pre- and post-Winter Solstice whilst we celebrated the actual moment of the planet being the farthest away from the Sun on Conspiracy at exactly 5:30am.

In chat room we wrote about two things:

Pre-5:30am: reflect on one moment in time that happened since Summer Solstice in June 2011.

Post-5:30am: imagine one moment in time that you long to have before Summer Solstice 2012.

5 people joined for Winter Solstice celebration.



we are on the top of the mountain in wales, or rather somewhere in the lake district

this is merz barn

the mountain is not really a mountain, it's a hill

we are about to scream

in a way that is the only way we can express ourselves

we is never all of us, there is never all of us but there is quite a few of us

someone has this idea that all we do is stand and go AAAAAAAHHHHHHHHH

we engage in a screaming exercise until the screaming stops

there is a moment when sid is kind of doing it on his own

he goes aaaaahhhh hahahaha and he laughing and screaming and laughing and screaming and that is the way we communicate



Watch the Merz Barn video at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w9xMpWRRdA>

**FUL Discussions at Merz Barn:**

- Merz Barn
- FUL framework and multiplicity of voices
- FUL future projects

The discussions were held on the slopes of the hills above Merz Barn. For each new discussion we changed our positions/perspectives.

**Merz Barn discussion** (30 minutes) considered what it might mean for FUL to have a relationship with LITTORAL. We talked about a possibility of Merz Barn being a training ground for FUL, a space for physical research and labour, a summer school, a location for Body Politic course, a DIY workshop. We acknowledged the difficulty of using 'militaristic' language (combat arm, boot camp) but agreed that Merz Barn is not about retreat but attack and resistance. We thought about the term 'exile' and about our need to reveal oppressive structures in society. We looked at the Death Valley as well as picturesque scenery. We were surprised at the similarity of land and housing politics here and in Liverpool. We tried to understand that we are standing upon a living organism, the field. We talked about the importance of fantasy and a different historical origin in the construction of Merz Barn and how we want to have more of it at FUL. We fantasized about a durational two-day long football match utilizing the masks created in a previous U-Strand workshop at FUL or inventing alternative games with new rules that are more befitting to the rural. We longed for new rituals. We thought about what it might be like to bring some Liverpool children to Merz Barn and make Merz snakesticks. We wanted to dance and participate in scything festivals. Ian said: "The fields are here, the woods are here, the camps are here." Ian also said: "Let's have a Liverpool Scything and Football Festival with the blades facing the other way."

**FUL framework and multiplicity of voices discussion** (15 minutes) considered issues of ownership of FUL, positioning of individuals within it and tried to allow for complex and contradictory feelings to exist within FUL framework. We talked about feelings of responsibility, individual agency and collective action. We thought it might be best to get on with doing stuff, work through action and act with desire without fear of the collective. We acknowledged that there is difficulty with consensus decision-making process as it stifles individuality and real disagreements that still exist. We also thought that consensus doesn't allow for fantasy and vision. We stated that we can experiment with many different ways of decision-making. We tried to remember that FUL is about feeding our appetites and that we all get nourished by it. We talked about issues of commitment and integrity. We wondered if we, each

***We talked about the importance of fantasy...***

one of us, own FUL and to which degree FUL is able to exist with its swinging/open door policy.

**FUL future projects discussion** (15 minutes) considered projects of hope and desire (PhDs), a series of individual practice-as-research projects which would allow for 'access' (other 'students' coming in through opening points in individual projects) and move us beyond being a supportive critical friendship network/reading group. We

***'Let's have a Liverpool Scything and Football Festival with the blades facing the other way'***

wondered if BA (Bold Affirmation in Cultural Praxis) could become one of the projects. We thought about how much it mattered that we were prioritising PhDs over BAs in these new ways of thinking about them. We agreed that individual projects were beyond consensus decision-making but thought it useful to write a list of these projects. We questioned

to which degree our individual projects are within the umbrella of FUL and to which degree FUL provides a critical context for them. We thought that 'FULpool' could act as a kind of advisory committee for the projects. We came up with a phrase: 'critical capital bank'.

We all agreed that these are very preliminary discussions and that we have a right to address these issues in new ways in new configurations with new outcomes and with complete or incomplete FUL membership. Nothing is ever final. This is a work in progress.

## A GUIDED DETOUR OF LIVERPOOL BY A MEANDERING OUTSIDER

A two-hour meander around Liverpool by role: mapmaker, significance identifier, prophet, poet, navigator, idler, illustrator, recycler, historian, quiet observer, logger, guard, ice-cream-tracker. The purpose: to spin yarns about fictional local people from the recent and distant pasts and leave their invented names to be encountered by others.

1. Select roles to take on and names of significant people to fantasise about.
2. Meander, encounter, and leave tangible traces to mark the site of a significant person. Internalise urban myths.
3. Reflect.

Following are four maps that Sally, Ben, Ruth, and Chris drew on their guided detour of Liverpool with Sally, their meandering outsider.

The images crystallise the moments in determinate and indeterminate ways: the contrast between an image taken to record a moment that was explained through language, and an image taken to record a moment that language fails to convey without disrupting its ephemerality (you have only to look at the noticeboard outside Chung Wah for this).

Also, I can't get over the image Ben took of the ruined warehouse! The heart on the left, looking as if it was spun onto the wall, is breathtaking. It's there, but if you don't venture like Ben did, you may never see it. And I only know the heart is there because I see it on the photo taken by Ben with my camera. So my camera has seen it and I haven't. I didn't even notice until I read your comments. That's amazing!

Oh no! I salute and mourn for Mary Elcot! This puts me in mind of how I think the English Defence League would behave if they got official recognition from some quarters – inevitably, this would predominantly be from private business. You only have to consider their attacks on trade unionists and trade unions for early indications of this fascism. Getting off my (unfortunately Arriva) bus last night after our session, I made the effort to read the sign they'd put up about travel arrangements during next week's strike. I was sent into a mini-rage (I was too tired for a larger one) by the last line: "We are sorry for any inconvenience next week's industrial action may cause".

Erm, sorry, but who made Arriva the moral arbiter on industrial action? The audacity! Possibly like you, I find this is unsurprising: they're a private business with contempt for customers. They'll take your money, but refuse to sort out problems with their service; they'll raise your fares, but are unlikely ever to raise the bar on courtesy and respect from driver to customer. And the analogy for this unequal relationship? Trade unionists are probably feeling this in their negotiations with you-know-who.

I think it was last year that I picked up a little book on anarchism from my local library. Since then, when I've had to take those buses and the anger about failure of social

***Spin yarns about fictional  
local people. . .  
Leave their invented  
names to be  
encountered by others***

rules and mores wells up inside me, a little picture of a bus in Barcelona pops up in my head. This bus (I think it was Barcelona) is from the early twentieth century (I think; memory is not serving me well) and is an example of one taken over by the people of that city in protest at rising costs and decreasing power over public transport. I salute

them! And so ever since then, when I step on my 432s or my 433s, I have been silently hatching plans to subvert the hegemony of privatised transport...

[...]

I jumped the gun of anti-privatisation rage: the sign on the bus was Merseytravel's, not Arriva's. I'm not sure how this alters what I've already said. In a sense it's worse that Merseytravel has made this sign, being a publicly-controlled organisation that should not be implying support for the government and hostility to strikers. That Arriva as a privately-owned company would be against industrial actions in all its forms is inevitable, however, which I think makes my case stronger, if just wrong in the first instance!

It would be interesting to know if any Merseytravel workers are striking.

Words by Meanderers: Ruth, Ben, Chris, and Sally.



## SATURDAY WALKS: FIRST EDITION

I remember when it was the L strand in Anfield and I remember that there was a group of us and we were walking into Liverpool through Everton Brow and it was this really gorgeous anticipation of what the view would be like for the people that weren't from Liverpool as they came up over the grass bank and got to see the city and when we did it, it was amazing and even more amazing than what almost we



had hoped for. And the sad thing about that was that we had talked as we were walking up the grass bank about all holding hands and we had kind of been aw oh no let's not do that because it was all a bit sentimental and it would have been really nice if we had held hands when we saw that view.





LIBRARY



## READING LIST: FOUNDATION DEGREE IN CULTURE AND PERFORMANCE

- Human Nature: Justice versus Power (1971) by Noam Chomsky and Michel Foucault
- News from Nowhere (1890) by William Morris
- The Dispossessed (1974) by Ursula K. L. Guin
- Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation (2004) by Silvia Federici
- An Essay on Liberation (1969) by Herbert Marcuse
- The Gender Knot: Unraveling Our Patriarchal Legacy (revised ed. 2005) by Allan Johnson
- What is Freedom? (1954) by Hannah Arendt
- Emancipation(s) (1996) by Ernesto Laclau
- Was my life worth living? (1934) by Emma Goldman
- Philosophy, Politics, Autonomy (1991) by Cornelius Castoriadis
- The Temporary Autonomous Zone (1985 and 1991) by Hakim Bey
- Magical Marxism: Subversive Politics and the Imagination (2011) by Andy Merrifield
- 'A Global Sense of Place' in Space, Place and Gender (1994) by Doreen Massey
- The Ignorant Schoolmaster (1991) by Jacques Ranciere
- The Gift of Rivalry (1949) by Georges Batailles
- George Bataille and the Notion of Gift (1999) by David Kosalka
- The Forms of Capital (1986) by Pierre Bourdieu
- The Tyranny of Structurelessness (1972) by Jo Freeman
- The Emancipated Spectator (2009) by Jacques Ranciere
- The Politics and Poetics of Transgression (1986) by Peter Stallybrass and Allon White
- No Room to Move (2010) by Josephine Berry Slater & Anthony Iles
- The Assault on Culture (1991) by Stewart Home
- 'Philosophy for Children' in Radical Philosophy journal, 170, Nov/Dec 2011 by Matthew Charles
- repression, Sigmund Freud in The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, translated by James Strachey.
- Perpetual Euphoria: On the Duty to be Happy (2010) by Pascal Bruckner
- Smile or Die: How Positive Thinking Fooled America and the World (2009) by Barbara Ehrenreich
- The Happiness Purpose (1981) by Edward de Bono



- The Happiness Project, Or, Why I Spent a Year Trying to Sing in the Morning, Clean My Closets, Fight Right, Read Aristotle, and Generally Have More Fun (2009) by Gretchen Rubin
- Happier: Can you learn to be happy? (2008) by Tal Ben-Shahar

~~DE: CAMPUSING~~

## CAMPUS

1. Two websites and 46 blog posts

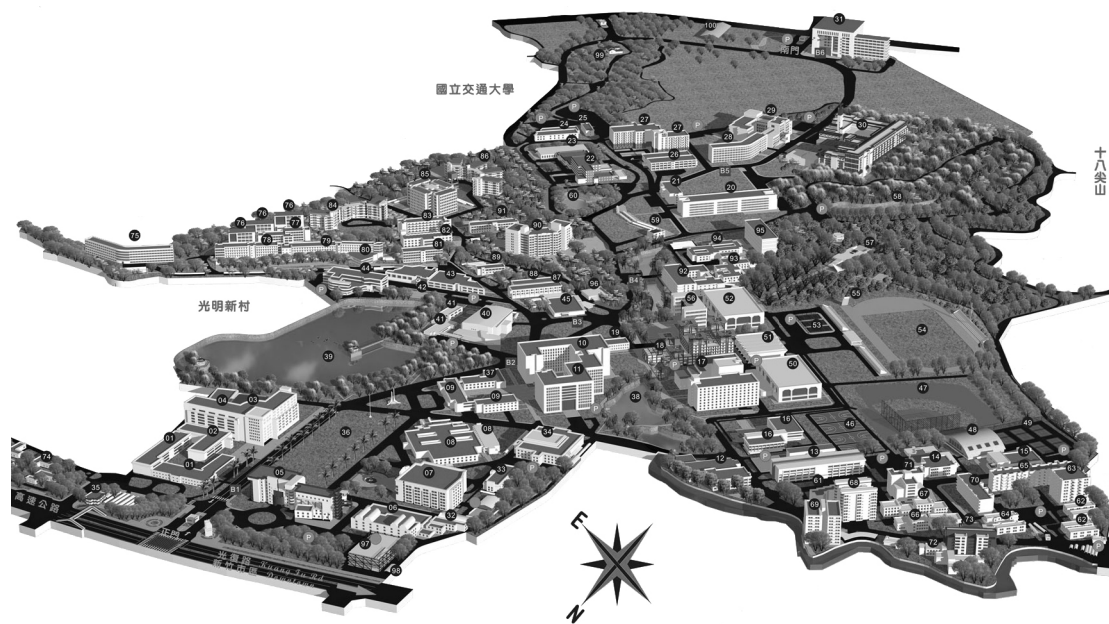
2. Emails, phone and skype

3. Ephemera journal; 4. the Guardian; 5. The Mancunian, 6. student newspaper; 7. Corridor8, 8. the contemporary art journal, 9. German daily paper Sueddeutsche Zeitung; 10. Mute Magazine, 11. The Sociological Imagination blog amongst 12 - 20. many others

21. News from Nowhere, 22. Next to Nowhere, 23. The Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home, 24. Bold Street Coffee, 25. Bold Street Newsagent, 26. Elyssa's Kitchen, 27. Tim and Britt's Front Room, 28. St. Paul's, 29. Hackney City Farm Cafe, 30. Merz Barn, 31. LIC Studio at the Bluecoat, 32. Leaf, 33. Ruth's Studio at WCS, 34. Selam Cafe, 35. Cocktail

Bar in Dubrovnik, 36. Shopping Centre in Leeds, 37. Everton Brow, 38. Breck Road, 39. trains between Liverpool and London, 40. Leeds, 41. Birmingham, 42. Nottingham, 43. Manchester, 44. Alfreton, 45. Loughborough, 46. plane to Berlin, 47. minibus travel to Merz Barn, 48. car travel from Codnor Park, 49. coach journey to Demo-li-tion student demonstration in London, 50. street in front of the Houses of Parliament, 51. Chelsea Theatre, 52. University of Cambridge, 53. hotel rooms near Nottingham Contemporary, 54. Islington Mill in Salford, 55. Berlin, 56. Queen Mary, University of London, 57. West Everton Community Council, 58. Liverpool Hope University, 59. the Bluecoat, 60. Showroom Gallery in London, 61. University of Loughborough, 62. tent at the campus of the University of Leeds for Performance Studies international conference

64. Bank Account with Cooperative Bank, three debit cards, paypal



~~AUTO:ASSESSING~~

## [EVERYONE AT FUL] FOR ASSESSMENT

From: everyone-bounces@fulpool.org on behalf of Miriam Craik-Horan  
(m.craikhoran@gmail.com)  
Sent: 13 May 2012 14:22:38  
To: Gary John Anderson (garyjohnanderson@hotmail.com)  
Cc: FUL (everyone@fulpool.org)

Hello dear folk of FUL

I wanted to be there this weekend but, as I couldn't, I would like to submit an apology for assessment.

The tipping point of what should be a longitudinal apology of around about a 6-month scope is my very own no-show on Skype about a fortnight ago. I told a couple of people whose contact details I had that I had a change of plan in my work schedule and was in Leicester with no internet. I felt pretty crappy.

I felt the need to label myself as a non-contributor, which – once endowed – is quite an immobilising force against my identity as a potential learner, teacher, or otherwise in FUL. I imagine I would be grateful to receive any notes that were taken to get the gist of what came out of the points raised. I imagine maybe I can contribute at another opportune moment, as feeding back on notes of a conversation I wasn't part of doesn't sit well for me and would presuppose something about modes of 'assessment' that doesn't seem very in tune with FUL. Although I wouldn't know, having not been there.

I also felt a bit shaken by the self-inflicted dilemma of 'commitment' entailed by a no-show. This one in particular, though exacerbated by perpetual absenteeism, feels like an exposition which is the only place I can find to situate 'assessment' in relation to not-being-there. If challenged by respectful 'presentees', in the airing of FUL discontents, I would cite my London-based collection of commitments as the accumulative force causing inequity with my single, but I believe no less valid, commitment to the project/s of FUL in Liverpool. But that doesn't resolve a thing. I want to understand how absence iterates itself in FUL praxis, just as 'presence' iterates as a neoliberal currency in UK formal education 'accounting' systems. Hence, needing to 'account' for absence in the trite apology that I'm making a right pig's ear of.

I imagined myself saying something ostensibly quite casual, like 'I would really love to see you all after so long'. In school I felt similar sentiments after the summer holidays but said 'how shit to be back' instead as it was more important to perform the culture of 'groupness' that we'd established than to be honest and truthful about my relationship to the group, and being in or out of it, whatever that meant.

And, as assessments have always seemed to me to be sort of empirical things with eyes, they 'look' for things to put green or red against. In this case, "sorry". Not that we understand each other any better for that.

So, I am trying to give some evidence I suppose, which is about a claim to having learnt about the loose-ends of pupildom in an ever so reflexive way. And I have learnt personally about the exposure entailed by this, which I have chosen to turn pejoratively against my esteem as a learner.

The point of this is probably a manoeuvre to extract an ambivalent 'grouping' response from this email list which would undermine my learning and enable me to experiment with 'presenteeism' in my studies next year.

Can I end with a 'thank you' rather than a 'sorry', as this something that I gladly cannot posture upon here?

Miriam

*Mary*

*We were at Bold Street Coffee for the newspaper group and we were reading something about some kind of very complicated worldwide banking system that I didn't understand and Jen got a bunch of spoons and packets of sugar and coffee cups and explained to me extremely clearly with the use of the sugar packets and cups and the spoons how these financial banking systems that I didn't understand worked and I thought Oh it is so much better to read things with people who know more than you do about certain things but also who are also able to break it down using sugar packets and coffee cups.*



## A FUL MANIFESTO ABOUT MULTIPLICITY BY A TOLERANT FUNDAMENTALIST

1. The work we have done with FUL is wonderful, if only by its ability to reveal our own limits and the limits of the structures we exist within.

2. We are searching for new social structures but we have to start from the existing ones so we will constantly fail. That is paradoxical and tricky because we need to take seriously these structures to really see what might work while acknowledging that we don't depend on them; that is, acknowledging that we will move on and leave them behind if they fail us.

3. It is very difficult to work with people and it always will be; past experience serves only to prove that is the case.

4. Human relationships become especially difficult when confronted with the search for new modes of being... although that also opens the potential for something profound and nurturing.

***What makes  
our lives livable  
is different for  
everyone***

5. Following/exploring one's desires while existing in and producing collective spaces can be a conflictive position . . . We all have the need to assert ourselves as individuals and we need the space to do so. We also need to be able to listen and give recognition to others; how to balance/negotiate those two sides in a fair way feels a core issue in any collective. What does our need for recognition mean in that context will be different for each individual. The danger is that there is a tendency to attach moral values to this process.

***It is very  
difficult to work  
with people and  
it always will be***

6. What makes our lives livable is different for everyone. Our cultures are reactionary, and we have to tolerate that to be able to move forward.

7. The last two points should be constantly reassessed, particularly when considering how to make FUL accessible to others.

8. There are complex alliances in operation that are decisive in deciding the shape the structures we create will take. We need to acknowledge that this need for alliances might be part of our reactionary cultures. We have to fight that, but it has to be done with love and tolerance.

9. Finding our individual ways will always feel slightly lonely and the collective can't be used to avoid that. We will always struggle in the space between homogeneity and heterogeneity.

10. All our thoughts/beliefs are contextual and will change, including this one.



*Sally*

*This was on the meander and it was set up so that people had different roles and Chris had the role of interpreter and we came up to a church that was built in different bits and he described what it was all about and I don't know to this day whether it was absolute fabrication or whether it was truth because the whole meander was about making up fantasies about historical people of Liverpool and it spilled over into telling me things about Liverpool that I don't even know if it was true or not because I do not know Liverpool. So it was all about fantasies and truths and it all got mixed up.*



## WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNT AT FUL?

I am penned in by my circumstances. Some months ago I started to wear ear plugs as a matter of course. I must politely request that you don't hold it against me, and that you don't store it up in your mind and retrieve it during one of those daydreams when you make one of those panoramic assessments of all the people you know and of all the situations you have been in. I can't help my neuroses. I plead with whatever for sympathy as I grind through my work. Being an attic fantasist is not easy, stuck here under the eaves, peering out of the window to look upon the row of dentist's and shops, and withstanding the infernal soundscape of car doors slamming and engines running. The ear plugs help. That is all.

### *Being an attic fantasist is not easy*

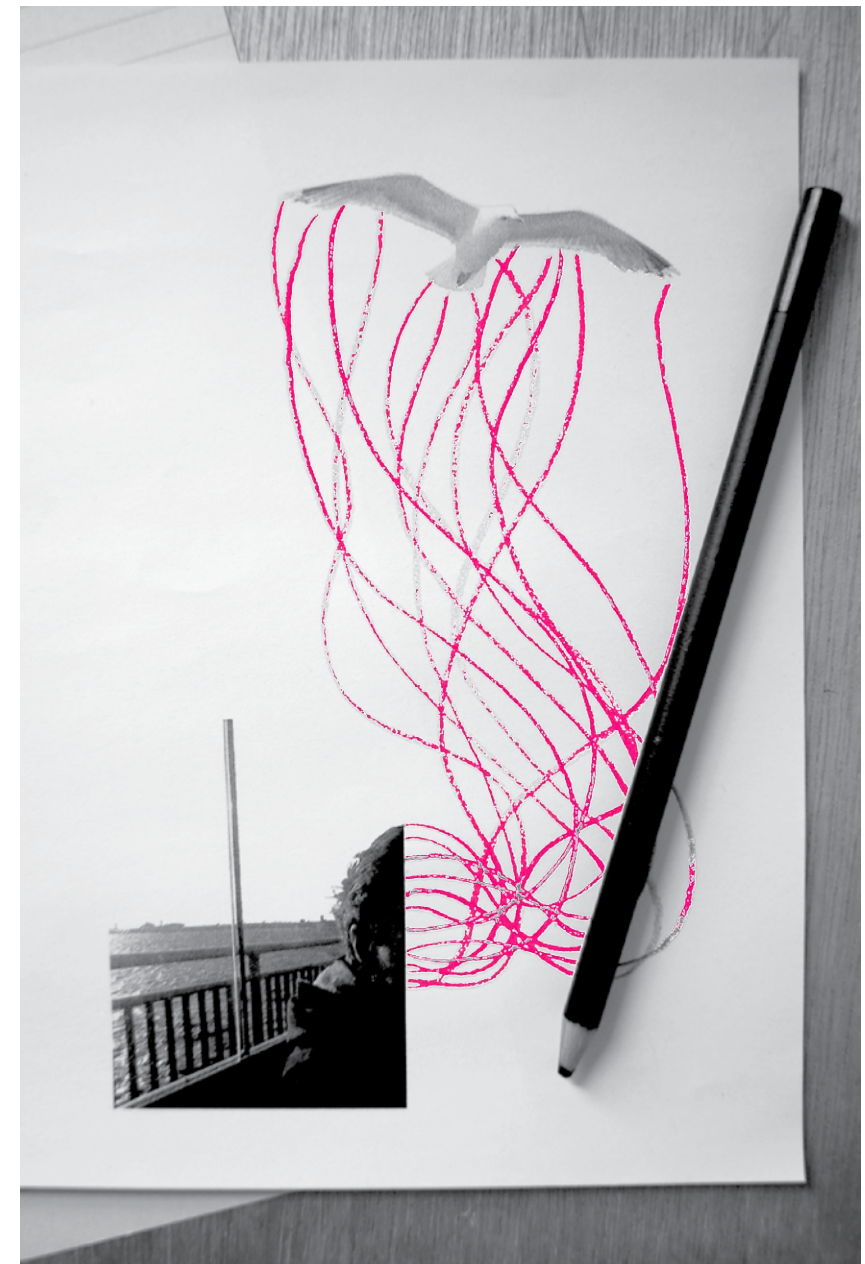
Perhaps it's not the ear plugs that offend you. Perhaps it's my intense hatred of children playing on the street; of barking dogs; the come and go of small-time drug dealers, black-clad in Superdry or North Face, dealing on the move as they walk up to their clients, cup the exchange in one another's hands, smile at their grimy little transaction, depart in opposite directions. Somehow I am beguiled by the co-ordinates of these scenarios: the pace and timing, the ounces and prices. But I despise these people: lump of shit lumpenproletariat.



*Quit it with your head down.* For too long downcast as if shamed to look the world in the eye, I was drawn to moments in which transcendence slipped in. One day at a bus stop that functioned as a shelter for contemplation on an ad hoc basis,

### *The dying light was refulgent*

conversation and other unwanted distractions from an ear-plugged world receded. *Let the air and light consume you.* The dying light was refulgent; the moment expanded. Looking over my shoulder I discovered a peculiar display of at least thirty seagulls bobbing along on a boisterous tide. Every now and then some number would launch into the air only to be suspended by wind tunnels determined to prevent flight. It was as if they were puppets, nature working the ropes. I was struck by a naive thought: were they struggling to take flight or were they attempting to gain freedom from it? Humans are perpetually frustrated at not flying and yet these seagulls appeared to find pleasure in suspension. We are always elsewhere and otherwise.



*Jen*

*I am standing at the desk trying to get into the University of Liverpool library because I need to go get photocopies of my pedagogical gifts and they passed me a sheet of paper to sign in to get free access and you put down your name and it says your institutional affiliation and I put down The Free University of Liverpool. And it was a beautiful moment because I felt 'get me into your knowledge' and I walked through the stacks to find Ursula K Le Guin and Albert Camus The Rebel.*

## WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNT AT FUL?

There are some things I've sort-of-learnt and one thing I've really learnt.

I sort-of-learnt what Rancière was on about and how to book a place at the Next to Nowhere basement; how to network productively with other Free Unis in the UK and how to dodge pressure from my own not-so-free uni for being involved in this Free Uni. I sort-of-learnt how to make a mask out of globby clay; how to get hits on the website and how to talk around personality clashes; how to rename Anfield; how to work in a group with people I haven't chosen to work with; how to fetishise the Free Uni; how to undervalue it; how to keep going when you don't want to; how to encourage people without patronising them (I haven't mastered this yet), how to criticise people without insulting them (I haven't mastered that either) and some other things too. But the thing I really learnt at the Free University of Liverpool is to recognise when I go 'ping'.

*For me  
mutuality  
needs a focus*

I hardly ever go ping and I haven't found a way to manufacture a ping. Pinging happens for so many reasons, under conditions so various it wouldn't be sensible to try to list them all. But there are three things that, in combination, make me go ping.

For me to go ping there needs to be **Energy**. That's the first thing: energy. Energy in this sense is something like that 'I-cant-stop-thinking-about-it-but-I-don't-in-any-way-feel-tired-or-drained-by-it' feeling. That's hard to come by and I have to be careful with it coz sometimes it's the wrong kind of energy. The wrong kind of energy leaves me depleted and frustrated after its initial thrill. But the right kind of energy comes from something I want to call 'mutuality'; that's the second thing.

**Mutuality**. It's a bit like 'equality' or 'friendship' or 'being-in-love' but different, a bit like 'respect' but more than that, a bit like 'understanding' but lighter than that. Mutuality happens between things when for some reason the things in question 'know' something. It's like souls touching for a bit. It's weird and powerful and happens across difference just as much as across homogeneity.

So energy is the first thing and mutuality is the second thing. But mutuality in a ping can't really be free-flowing or fluid or unorganised. For me mutuality needs a focus. Focus is the third thing. Energy, Mutuality and Focus.

**Focus** is complex, though. It has two properties: time and reach. Focus needs time but not the kind of time that comes about with good time management. Being busy all day long or lying on the grass under a tree doesn't seem to make any difference to the sort of time that is a property of focus. I've started to think of this time as time that can't be counted. It's the time that nurtures insight or resolve or commitment and has to do with lifetime spans of time rather than monthly calendars full of meetings.

The second property of focus is reach. Reach does not respond to one problem but many. Reach is to do with how powerful the focus is, how far the focus goes, how many problems it covers. I sometimes want to reach too far or too many people with a focus and because of that the focus can lose integrity. Reach needs to be kept an eye on. Reach is the thinking that can call itself 'kill-as-many-birds-with-one-stone-as-possible-thinking'. In the interests of integrity I have to remind myself 'not too many birds though'.

Pinging is a bit like that property we are trained to recognise in a 'masterpiece'; accessible complexity and pleasing simplicity at the same time.

The one thing I really learnt at the Free University of Liverpool is that I go ping when I'm present with others in energy, mutuality and focus.

*Grace*

*I can't pin down specifically when these things have happened but in my mind it is like a cluster of moments when I feel like I've moved past apprehensions about what this is and how it functions and something pure and valuable has happened between us in terms of really rich thought or a shared smile or laughter – something that is like mutual respect and there's a lot of generosity and I feel it's very valuable and so thank you.*

## WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNT AT FUL?

A box of 6 free range eggs bought locally

10 scraps of paper torn from the day's agenda

Words given me by the witnesses to my learning statement

Each one acted as a trigger to reflect on my learning with FUL over the last few months.

I can only remember what I said for two of these words.

Scatological: 'I've learnt that I don't always understand what people are saying'.

And sex: 'I've learnt that sometimes it's really exciting and sometimes it's boring'.

Perhaps all my learning through FUL sits somewhere between these two.



*Lorena*

*I have a moment that juxtaposes  
two moments in time. It is February  
and I am with a bucket in my head  
and I am saying that I want to leave  
The Free University of Liverpool;  
and 3 months later I am in a church  
in Tuebrook and everybody is  
presenting their final year projects  
and it is so beautiful and I am so glad  
to be there.*



## WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNT AT FUL?

Lurking within the Free University of Liverpool, beside the investigations into radical pedagogy, the protests against tuition fee hikes and the pleasures/problems of each other's company, there has been a solid determination to negotiate systems of power.

Over the course of the Foundation Degree, we explored questions of authority on a number of occasions, and have made some interesting approaches to the subject. Of course, some of those negotiations have been flawed, and some have gone fully awry, but we survived it all.

An essay by Jo Freeman was shared amongst us. Called 'The Tyranny of Structurelessness', it, as the title suggests, discusses the problems that are likely to arise when there is no defined structure within a group. She examines the mechanisms by which informal structures arise, tracing many of them back to friendship groups and groups within these groups. Without a formal structure to hold and maintain them, there's a risk that such groups become a hidden elite and wield a form of power that is not easily challenged.

It's easy to find online and is well worth a read.

As a parallel to these hidden dynamics, the same person who drew our attention to the Freeman essay also drew our attention to the power that words have; the way that actions gain a particular force when they're done 'in the name of' something else.

It's very hard to disagree with someone when they use certain words.

Words like:

**Activist**  
**Ethical**  
**Anti-capitalist**  
**Equality**  
**Post-colonial**  
**Inclusion**  
**Radical**  
**The Working Class**  
**Feminism**

**Elitism**  
**Privilege**  
**Revolution**

These words are the keys to a wonderful conceptual toolbox, and are very important in the fight for another power word: **Justice**. The point being made is not that they should be forbidden. Nevertheless, we need to be aware when using them that these words carry a lot of power.

It's essential – no matter how noble the programme with which we are involved - that we don't forget the less principled part in us all; the animal part, the part that is about gaining status, that makes a stake for (often conceptual) territory, that vies for a particular place in the hierarchy (which isn't necessarily always a place at the top).

Freeman's work is important because she draws attention to the fact that, for all the ideals, beliefs, and determined sense of justice that we might have, we are still people. And people aren't (that much) different from animals. We form groups, make alliances, have power struggles, create hierarchies.

To separate any kind of activism from these human processes is potentially very dangerous. Bertrand Russell observed that 'much that passes as idealism is disguised hatred or disguised love of power'.

The majority of people I meet are good people. We all do bad things when we're scared, tired, lonely or defensive and we shouldn't forget that, but most people do know how to be good to each other. How to behave well. Certain words, including those that I have listed above, can sometimes act as an obstacle to creating a welcoming, friendly and respectful environment.

People have been good to each other for thousands of years, and in a massive range of cultures and contexts. Of course, they've only done this sometimes, not all the time, and usually to some groups more than others, yet being good to each other is something that most of us know how to do. My point isn't that everyone should like each other, or that we should shy away from disagreement. Rather, it's a reminder that in the battle against hegemony, we sometimes forget that we live our day-to-day existence through the personal. Justice, privilege and equality also matter there.

Gary

*I remember going on a really big march to London with Lena and the kids and Lorena. And I remember this moment when we decided we'd shake and crack open a bottle of champagne – we were just outside the Houses of Parliament – to announce to nobody but to everybody that The Free University of Liverpool is born. And my memory of that is there's this picture I've seen of this old radical theatre-maker called Piscator, this sort of photo-collage where he is walking next to one of the theatres that he worked in and he is about three times bigger than the theatre - it was like some photomontage - and my image of the three of us and the kids standing outside parliament is that we are all like giants hovering over the Houses of Parliament.*

## ADDRESSING THE OTHER

It was the autumn of 2011. At FUL we were running the Foundation Degree in Culture and Performance and preparing a collaborative session on Radical Pedagogy. I was reading the new edition (170 – Nov/Dec 2011) of Radical Philosophy journal and came across an article by Matthew Charles titled 'Philosophy for Children', which introduced me to Jacques Rancière's book *The Ignorant Schoolmaster*.

It was the winter of 2012. I set up a mini F strand reading group for *The Ignorant Schoolmaster*. I learnt about universal teaching and no need for explication of things. This was radical. How can you teach without explaining? Rancière insisted on equality as a starting point. I learnt about different speeds of learning and taking it slow.

### ***How can you teach without explaining?***

I wondered about attention and desire – to keep at it and figure it out. I learnt that it is important to take time and read something properly. A lot is in the text itself, in all the energy that went into it. I wondered about consumption of text which took ages to write. I wondered how were we

ever to address the relationship between the producers/writers and consumers/readers. The investment of energy between us felt too different.

*How can I ever truly understand you? I would need to live with you, or at least be your lover. How can we even start this exchange? Will you meet me?*

All Rancière sessions had homework attached to them. The last homework included 'pedagogical gifts to the group'. My pedagogical gift consisted of re-reading and sharing a text I came across whilst doing my PhD: Jacques Derrida's 'Roundtable Discussion' for the inauguration of Villanova University's philosophy department. I rejoiced at the idea that we all have a right to philosophy, to contemplation, to consideration of life, to reflection. It was through this discussion that I understood the difference between law and justice. At the time of reading this conversation for the first time I remember watching a Thomas the Tank Engine cartoon with my son who was around 5 and one character/policeman saying 'Law is the law and it cannot be changed'. I found myself explaining to my child how that is so wrong, and how the whole point of the law is that it can be changed. This was my first 'deconstruction for children' lesson. In the article Derrida considers Emmanuel Levinas' concern around the notion of justice as the relation to the other.

*How am I to truly touch you? Will you always stay a mysterious other? Will I respect you for your otherness? Will I be able to address you as equal?*

It was the spring of 2012. I completed level 1 Philosophy for Children course by SAPERE. I remembered my preoccupations about children and their learning processes. I remembered endless talks with my fellow parents about home schooling and flexi-schooling. As a child growing up in a long-forgotten socialist country I

***As a child, I remember  
looking at the world  
in wonderment, being  
amazed at the universe,  
always beyond my  
understanding***

Throughout the Foundation Degree I lamented about the impossibility of doing something 'useful', something to do with 'community'. I tried and failed. Maybe it has to do with taking things slow, allowing time for development of relationships.

*Can you ever forgive my assumptions? Can you allow for an exchange? Are you part of me already? Are you bothered?*

It is the summer of 2012. I am looking forward to meeting the children through the delivery of Philosophy for Children sessions in July and later on in September. In the autumn 2012 I plan to organize the reading group around Levinas's *Totality and Infinity*. In both cases I hope for communities of inquiry, for the process of figuring it all out. As a child, I remember looking at the world in wonderment, being amazed at the universe, always beyond my understanding. I lived through the process of figuring it all out.

*Are you still here?*

### Pedagogical Gifts from Rancière Reading Group

'Dancing at the Edge of Time: Thoughts on Words, Women, Places' (1997) by Ursula K Le Guin

An amazing essay that changed my life about being a woman writer and a mother at the same time called the fisherwoman's daughter.

*The Rebel* (1951) by Albert Camus

Age sixteen my high school teacher had us read this and it is a great manifesto for what it really means to challenge authority.

'The Villanova Roundtable: A Conversation with Jacques Derrida' (1994)

Read it during my PhD, and re-read just before my PhD viva. Gets things into perspective and as a bonus you get to understand Derrida.

<http://www.egs.edu/faculty/jacques-derrida/articles/villanova-conversations/>

'What is a conversation? What is it for?' in *Dialogues II* (1987) by Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parinet contains the lines I most repeat to myself when struggling with someone's stupidity/arrogance/domination.

Richard Strauss's *Eine Alpensinfonie* performed by the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra and conducted by Mariss Jansons

This music is an education. Of what, how, and why, I could tell you but won't. That's my personal secret. Recline, breathe deep, and climb towards your own secret.

*Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (1992) by Toni Morrison

I chose this because in three short achingly beautiful essays Toni Morrison gives us a chance to re-see ourselves, black and white, and to meet each other all over again on different and just lines.

*Momo* (1973) by Michael Ende.

One of my all-time favourite children books. I read it over and over again and as I got older it revealed new layers of meaning. It's about love and time and the evils of capitalism. It also features men in grey suits that smoke time cigars and a turtle that can predict exactly half an hour of the future. What else do you need?

*W was thinking of hopping the 15  
but S had the far better idea – it  
was gloriously sunny but not too  
hot – of walking from Lime Street  
to Tuebrook. Though W remembered  
the general direction, for S's sake he  
felt obliged to consult the map.*

*It's easier to set out from central  
Liverpool to the suburbs than you  
think. This is especially the case with  
Tuebrook: up London Road, left onto  
Norton Street, right onto Islington  
and straight up the hill bearing left  
at the fork in the road by a branch of  
Staples.*

*Lately W had increasingly felt that  
the city dispersing into its suburbs  
was marked by nineteenth century  
drinking fountains, a grandiose  
example of which lies at the  
beginning of West Derby Road.  
From there a straight walk ensued  
along a dual carriageway flanked by  
the usual dissonant mix of housing  
estates and small-scale industrial*

*units. An array of walls scaling the first quarter of West Derby Road formed a curious architectural mash-up of industrial and social histories, provoking enquiries from S about Liverpool's social and ethnic demarcations. The city offered itself up like an encyclopaedia.*

*Spotting the entrance to Newsham Park, W suggested they make a detour on their way to The Venue. This was S's and W's first encounter with Newsham Park. What a beautiful space! Not unlike a London common, they thought. They threaded their way through to a palatial building on the other side. Was this the former children's home of which W had heard mention? There were no signs to reveal the building's former use. W and S worried about its future: far too beautiful to be sliced up into 'luxury' apartments and nothing short of barbaric to demolish it outright.*

*W and S crossed the road for a closer look as an elderly mother and her son got out of their car. S walked over to ask them about the building. W was right: it was an orphanage, The Seaman's Orphanage, in which the mother had been none other than*

*a nurse! With sadness she recalled the lives of the unfortunate youths who had boarded there – how they would look after their mothers, unlike the children of today who murder theirs. The son remarked how the expansive rooms and the flooring were sights to behold. Apparently tunnels burrowed their way from the Orphanage down to the Pier Head, like some sort of expressway for disconsolate young souls. 'I've not been the same since leaving that place, I have really missed it', said the mother ruefully. The local library closed recently and with it a communal space for storytelling; there was resignation in the mother's voice as she referred us to the internet for further information.*

*So it would seem, not only is there richness in the known and perceived but also in the chance encounter, serendipity and the stories waiting to be told.*



## ACCOUNTS: 2011

<b>Total income for the year:</b>	£2,338.59
<b>Total expenditure for the year:</b>	£1,541.32
<b>Balance carried forward:</b>	£797.27

Date	Description	Expenditure	Income
	Opening Balance (donations, etc)		£813.59
29-Jun-2011	DIY award (first payment)		£900.00
14-Sep-2011	Paypal Donation		£10.00
17-Sep-2011	Babysitting	£35.00	
18-Sep-2011	Babysitting	£35.00	
18-Sep-2011	Taxi to take the books from the Institute	£6.00	
18-Sep-2011	Lunch at the Social Centre	£64.00	
19-Sep-2011	Paper Charts	£2.00	
23-Sep-2011	Lunch: Lorena, Gary, Lena	£14.95	
24-Sep-2011	Books from News from Nowhere	£162.80	
24-Sep-2011	Lunch at Social Centre	£80.00	
<i>DIY</i>	Social Centre Space Rental	£150.00	
24-Sep-2011	Pub – angry group anti-facilitation	£50.00	
25-Sep-2011	Baby-sitter Sun	£50.00	
25-Sep-2011	Pub	Unknown	
26-Sep-2011	Rubber Stamp	£21.12	
30-Sep-2011	Paypal Donation		£10.00
20-Oct-2011	DIY award (second payment)		£100.00
<i>October</i>	Babysitting	£56.00	
<i>October</i>	Social Centre Space Rental	£60.00	
5-Nov-2011	Britt train ticket to London	£25.00	
5-Nov-2011	London Field Trip Expenses	£175.95	
5-Nov-2011	Field Trip Occupy LSX (4 adults, 4 children)	£143.50	
9-Nov-2011	Nottingham Trip	£60.00	
9-Nov-2011	Fee for talk at Nottingham Contemporary		
17-Nov-2011	Cinema	£25.00	
27-Nov-2011	Trip to London – Lena and Lorena	£93.00	
27-Nov-2011	Being Seen Being Heard Symposium		
28-Nov-2011	Leeds Trip	£80.00	
<i>November</i>	Babysitting and taxi for babysitter	£107.00	
1-Dec-2011	If Only	£25.00	
3-Dec-2011	DIY picnic at Artsadmin	Unknown	
3-Dec-2011	Associated costs with DIY picnic trip	Unknown	
27-Dec-2011	Paypal Donation		
<i>Nov / Dec</i>	Social Centre Space Rental	£20.00	

## ACCOUNTS:

### 2012

<b>Total income for the year:</b>	£1,189.63
<b>Total expenditure for the year:</b>	£1,023.48
<b>Current balance:</b>	£166.15

Date	Description	Expenditure	Income
1-Jan-2012	Balance carried forward		£797.27
27-Jan-2012	Donation from Kerstin Bueschges		£160.00
27-Jan-2012	FUL donation to Mutual Artists' Aid	£100.00	
<i>January</i>	Chris - travel to Radical Routes gathering	£20.00	
<i>January</i>	Social Centre Space Rental	£10.00	
5-Feb-2012	Mask-making workshop	£100.50	
25-Feb-2012	Movement tactics workshop	£60.00	
<i>February</i>	Social Centre Space Rental	£10.00	
25-Feb-2012	Trip to Birmingham (Gary, Lorena)	£60.00	
27-Feb-2012	Adjustment to match bank balance*	£227.98	
11-Mar-2012	Contribution to Merz Barn visit	£230.00	
30-Mar-2012	Paypal Donation		£4.63
<i>March</i>	Social Centre Space Rental	£15.00	
5/13/2012	Space hire for FUL Assessment	£30.00	
30-May-2012	Paypal Donation		£4.63
<i>June</i>	Money from private donor (through PSi)		£175.00
30-Jun-2012	PSi - Picnic	£25.69	
30-Jun-2012	PSi - Anarchist Badminton and stationary	£20.00	
30-Jun-2012	PSi - trip to Leeds (x 2)	£40.00	
30-Jun-2012	PSi - Banner, paint, etc	£10.00	
30-Jun-2012	PSi - Coffees	£10.00	
30-Jun-2012	PSi - Post-liberation drinks	£25.00	
1-Jul-2012	Paypal Donation		£48.10
17-Jul-2012	Adjustment to match bank balance	£29.31	

\*Due to uncertain costs in previous year.

~~DIS:GRADUATING~~



PHDS  
ASSOCIATED  
PRINCIPLE

## FUL'S FUTURES: BA (BOLD AFFIRMATIONS) IN CULTURAL PRAXIS AND PHDS (PROJECTS OF HOPE AND DESIRE)

We have agreed to run **BA (Bold Affirmations) in Cultural Praxis**, starting in October 2012.

**BA (Bold Affirmations) in Cultural Praxis** is a structure which promotes future and present students/learners to enter the 'FUL Network' and its related **PhDs (Projects of Hope and Desire)**.

This is an opportunity for students/learners to take a shot at radical thinking or go on a journey of desiring and becoming. There is no prescription and learning is undertaken in cooperation with other FUL-ers.

We have agreed to recruit around 20 students/learners to '**mentor/collaborate/exchange**' with. On average each of us would get 1-2 'students/learners' whom we would see on a weekly basis (or according to individual plans as worked out between students/learners and each one of us).

**BA in Cultural Praxis** would have **monthly meetings (Jamboroos)** for all involved which would serve as 'check-ins' as well as critical framings for the overall course: a kind of critical umbrella for both students/learners on BA in Cultural Praxis and all involved in various Projects of Hope and Desire. Monthly meetings would help the emergence of '**the integrity gang**', FUL's own quality assurance inspectorate team, a sort of perverse Ofsted or QAA.

We are yet to develop a clear policy on recruiting these 20 students (see agenda for next General Meeting), but we all felt there should be a mix of 'open call' as well as bringing people into FUL who we already know. We stress the need to be super-clear on the 'package' we are offering the students through the BA in Cultural Praxis.

**BA in Cultural Praxis** will work through:  
mentoring/collaborating/exchange (weekly or by agreement)

- Jamboroos - monthly meetings for all involved
- FUL Weekends, Road Schools and Rural Residencies (on initiative)
- FUL Reading Groups (on initiative)
- Participation in PhDs (students/learners choose what to do)

List of PhDs (Projects of Hope and Desire) in alphabetical order:

- FUL Counselling
- FUL Failure Laboratory
- FUL Radio: The Sound of Change
- Homebaked Housing
- Philosophy for Children
- Rose Howey Housing Coop
- The Liverpool Anarchist Communist Sunday School
- The May Day Rooms
- The Quarterly Reject
- Tuebrook Transnational
- WEA course on Radical Teaching Practices

The Free University of Liverpool will be operating **FUL Press** through one of its working groups.

This is an extract from MINUTES and ACTION POINTS from ASSESSMENT/FUTURE meetings 13th and 14th May 2012. Updated and revised for publication in July 2012.

