

Panel 13

IVSA Conference 2009

Appreciating the views: How we're looking at the social and visual landscape

Panel Title:	'Local/global interactions in the social landscapes of Cumbria'
Description:	<p>This panel is interested in the interactions and mobilities of people, objects, images and place. It will address the following questions: How do views, images, and performances in and of place shape and reshape the social landscapes of Cumbria? How do interactions of the local and global change perceptions of rural Cumbria? How does visual research contribute to our understanding of social and cultural change? How does research on local/global interactions develop our understanding of the structuring of new social practices to 21st century networks of living in Cumbria?</p> <p>Taking either a contemporary or historical approach, papers are invited on the following themes, and cross-over between these themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sensing and performing 'local distinctiveness' How do interactions and everyday practices between people, images and objects, such as food, drink, rural events, communities of care and landscapes construct senses of Cumbrian identity? How do visual representations of social life mediate images and perceptions of Cumbria?• Incorporating the global: migrant views to what extent are migrant workers in Cumbria visible or invisible in social landscapes? How is the presence of diverse groups of migrant workers changing the social and cultural identity of Cumbria, and to what extent is change represented visually? What are the views of migrant workers in rural Cumbria from the perspectives of employers, the elderly, migrant groups, long-time residents, and tourists? <p>Methodologically, we are interested in ethnographic fieldwork and other qualitative approaches to decoding and deconstructing the social landscapes of Cumbria, and visual, mediated and performed representations of those landscapes.</p> <p>Although Cumbria is specified as the place of focus in this panel, comparative studies from other places that address the panel topics are also welcomed.</p>
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Final Selected Papers

Name:	Dana Bentia, Lancaster University
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Paper Title:	Cooks as Guardians of the Landscape: Appreciating Foods in Cumbria
Description:	<p>The paper engages with the lifeworld of a Cumbrian cook and investigates how practices of cooking, eating, and touring mediate, mobilize, negotiate and perform sensory qualities of certain foods and places. In taking taste as a mode of dwelling which depends on ongoing processes of blurring or tracing of boundaries</p> <p>Food plays a significant role in defining the experience of place, in informing the ways in which particular places are 'absorbed', and in marking the spatial and temporal routes that are corporeal or imaginary. The reflexive and multi-sensorial encounters between people, foods and places that travelling and tasting afford frame multiple and varied processes, interactions and fusions between the senses; the visual, olfactory, gustatory, haptic and kinaesthetic.</p> <p>The paper engages with the lifeworld of a Cumbrian cook and investigates how practices of cooking, eating, and touring mediate, mobilize, negotiate and perform sensory qualities of certain foods and places. In taking taste as a mode of dwelling which depends on ongoing processes of blurring or tracing of boundaries, it critically inquires in what way the choreography between different sensing modes sustains or subverts the making of 'real' food, people and places. Thereby I relate the analysis to the emerging ethos of 'good, clean and fair' food as advocated by the Slow Food Movement in Cumbria.</p>

Name:	Sondra Cuban
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Paper Title	
Visual imagery in Migrant Fiction, Migrants' Working Reports, and Policy Pictures	
Description:	
<p>What do hostile lands look like to migrants who are cast as outsiders, especially in rural areas that are not used to immigrant settlement? This paper will explore visual imagery of labour migration in both fictional and ethnographic accounts of migrants' lived experience and social subjectivities.</p> <p><i>"Unfortunately, I came into care work because I cannot work as a nurse here. I thought I was going to work as a nurse eventually. So when I came here, just washing them. I never gave medication as I used to do. I never take blood pressure or temperature or anything else. I remember there was a time – an incident where this nurse was trying to find the vein of the client and she really pricked and pricked, and I could see the vein. And I was like, you know [laughs] we do that in Malawi actually. Yeah, I can't do anything about it because I'm – I'm just a carer" (interview with Malawian care worker)</i></p> <p><i>"My adaptation job pays only the minimum wage not a proper nurses' salary. Then they make deductions. Tax. Food. Accommodation. Uniform. Training fee. Agency fee. At the end of the week I have nothing left." (Two Caravans, by Marina Lewycka, p. 242)</i></p> <p>How does visual imagery of labour migration in both fictional and ethnographic accounts illuminate knowledge of the social care industry and of migrants' lived experience and social subjectivities, especially in rural landscapes? Crawshaw and Fowler (2008) conceptualise literary narratives as important resources for the social sciences because of the imagined spaces they create within existing policy norms. In the case of migrants from Malawi and Zambia, the first protagonist, in an ethnographic study (in Cumbria) describes in vivid detail her immediate experience of being deskilled as a former nurse, while the latter fictional character (in Peterborough) expresses concretely, an economic perspective of adapting at a high cost. Without doubt, care is provided by them under hostile policy conditions. What do these hostile lands look like to migrants who are cast as outsiders, especially in rural areas that are not used to immigrant settlement and how do their identities form as they narrate their experiences? Portraits are differently sketched by them in both fictional and ethnographic accounts than the policy scenarios created about them.</p>	

Name:	Viv Cuthill
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Paper Title:	
Cumbrian Hospitality	
Description	
<p>The contemporary emphasis of British tourism marketing and development is the promotion of 'local distinctiveness', highlighting the role of local and regional products, heritage and landscape in creating senses of place. On the 2009 Cumbria Tourism website, images of restaurants, cafes, hotels, attractions, towns, outstanding scenery and small numbers of visitors participating in tourist experiences are displayed, but there is a distinct absence of the people who live and work in Cumbria being presented visually to the visitor in these tranquil contemporary rural scenes.</p> <p>This paper is interested in the people who work in the tourism and hospitality sector, the people who come into contact with visitors, and the interactions that create social and cultural perceptions of place. In particular, it is interested in the migrant workers that populate this rural peripheral area of Britain on a temporary or more permanent basis. These workers may be invisible in tourist images of place, but they are highly visible in tourist experiences of place. This paper will consider how visual research methods can help to render the invisible visible and contribute to our understanding of social and cultural change.</p> <p>McDowell (2008) has suggested that networks of service –sector workers stretch across space keeping hotels open, and although consumer services are tied to specific localities, the labour force involved in consumer services is increasingly international. In the eating and drinking service encounter, therefore, how do migrant workers embody and perform a sense of Cumbrian hospitality and identity in the workplace, as they interact with local and global food and drink products and people from all over the world, and what can we learn about migrant worker experiences of living and working in Cumbria in the 21st century?</p>	

Name:	Polly Atkin
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Paper Title:	A centre come from where so'er you will? (Re)imag(in)ing Wordsworth's Grasmere from behind the scenes at the museum
Description	<p>In his poem 'Home at Grasmere', William Wordsworth describes the Vale of Grasmere as 'a centre/come from where so'er you will'. This suggests an inclusivity often belied by Wordsworth's other writings (not least his protest to the extension of the Railway through the central fells, due to fears about the influx of visitors). It is particularly pertinent when looking at The Wordsworth Trust, or Dove Cottage and the Wordsworth Museum. The Wordsworth Trust was set up in 1890 to buy the cottage Wordsworth lived in from 1799 to 1808, preserve it, and keeps it as a museum, 'for the eternal possession of those who love English poetry all over the world' . From its opening in 1891, it indeed drew visitors from all over the world, and continues to do so.</p> <p>Latterly it has also drawn other kinds of visitors, particularly behind the scenes. The Wordsworth Trust, like many museums/visitor centres, is staffed by a mixture of permanent staff (mostly non-locals who have settled in Cumbria), part-time tour guides (all local), and volunteers or interns (all non-local) who live and work at the trust from anywhere between three and nine months. This last group effectively become temporary residents: neither tourists, nor locals. They are afforded a sense of belonging in place, whilst at the same time knowing they must leave. This leads to a sense of being simultaneously at home, but also on perpetual holiday. Could this limboic state of being neither a local nor an itinerant be what Wordsworth meant by his 'centre come from where so'er you will'?</p> <p>My research on the construction of meaning around Grasmere through different media lead me to live and work at The Wordsworth Trust for eighteen months, as a participant-observer in Town End life. This paper will explore the homing processes of the non-permanent staff - from walking, to populating the local pub, to creative practices, to nomenclature - through analysis and images, reflecting on the place of the Legacy of Wordsworth in these processes, and their relationship to wider modes of living (with tourism) in Cumbria.</p>

Name:	Diane Rickerby
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Paper Title:	
	Artistic exhibit of migration in Cumbria
Description	
	<p>Diane Rickerby is a conceptual artist living and working with communities in Cumbria and the North-West. Her work, often emerging from those interactions, reflects many aspects of a particular sense of these places, and this presentation will support the other papers in this panel by addressing and demonstrating some of their themes. This section will be illustrated with several of her creative pieces on the theme of migration, deriving from working with local communities.</p>