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Mapping Methods of the Millbank Atlas

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Abstract

The Millbank Atlas is part of an ongoing collaboration that manifests as live projects developed in response to local desire and needs. Staff and student researchers of Chelsea College of Arts (a constituent college of University of the Arts London) come together with residents and others of the Millbank neighbourhood in Westminster to bring the Atlas into being. As both process and outcome, the Atlas creates meaning through conceptualising Millbank as comprised of reciprocal relations among the College and surrounding businesses, residential blocks, civil society groups, transportation links and other amenities, infrastructure and further aspects of this built and natural environment. Central here is the lived experience of Millbankers - those who reside, work and study in this London locale.

In what follows we revisit The Millbank Atlas to draw out a nascent aspect of our paper for VI Art of Research (AoR 2017). This begins with scoping our presentation for this conference, which was titled 'The Millbank Atlas: Catalysing Practice-based Research in a Spirit of the Civic University' to refresh our interest in the agency of collaborative practice-based research. We review our claim that as a community of practice < > practice of community, the Atlas catalyses through chiasmus. With this established we turn to our immediate concern: the catalytic role that mapping plays as the core practice in The Millbank Atlas. Drawing on Denis Wood's sense of mapping as an alternative to mapmaking, we go on to propose the Atlas as an instance of counter-mapping. Aspects of the Atlas' production, exhibition, dissemination and other impact are discussed with reference to counter-mapping as an emerging field with political purchase. Evidence of this includes the vital work of the Argentinian collective, Iconolasistas and the Counter\Mapping campaigns out of Queen Mary University in the UK.

The third part of this paper returns to the three core questions of AoR 2017. These we addressed at the conference with reference to the Atlas' catalytic potential to generate communities through collaborative, practice-based research. In what follows here we consider the questions from a fresh perspective: the agency of counter-mapping to produce new understanding that is not only communicable but also critically compelling. Drawing as both a literal act of inscription and as figurative language proves vital in this regard (e.g. mark making but also drawing metaphors, such as drawing together, drawing out). The paper concludes by insisting that the catalytic value of counter-mapping resides between the critical and creative process of making the maps and their outcomes as evidence-rich artefacts. Finally, we indicate a direction for future enquiry: probing the agency of counter-mapping as practice-based

research that gains traction through the maps' discursive production as they are read and negotiated.

Part One

In this follow-up paper to the one we presented at the VI Art of Research (AoR 2017), we return to its theme of catalysis to consider the transformative potential of mapping methods in spatial practice for community-oriented change. Our discussion unfolds in dialogue with the work of American cartographer and design educator, Dennis Wood. The sustained engagement in this paper stems from his brief email exchange with us further to Wood acquiring the publication, *The Millbank Atlas*, and it resonating with mapping activity he had undertaken in a Virginian neighbourhood more than a decade ago. We discussed The Millbank Atlas in our conference presentation as a case study of practice-based research that straddles academia and its local community beyond the institution. We argued for this project as an instance of civic learning for a civil society. Our contention was that the Atlas achieved this as a space, a critical context, that exemplified and challenged the new participatory paradigm that has come to mark the social, cultural, economic, technological and other dimensions of life in the UK in recent decades. Our interest in participation and/as spatial practice stems from the disciplinarity of the course we teach in Interior and Spatial Design at Chelsea College of Arts and its focus on local community engagement.

The Millbank Atlas unfolded over the 2016 - 2017 academic year as a student project, exhibition of this work and a legacy publication. The latter includes facsimiles of the maps made by our students to trace and retrace the neighbourhoods of Millbank, London. These neighbourhoods are home to Chelsea College of Arts (University of the Arts London), which sits on the Thames River beside Tate Britain in the borough of Westminster. The Millbank Atlas was the result of a loosely knit collaboration between our students and other Millbankers - local people who reside, work or otherwise engage here in a sustained and recursive way. This project probed the lived experience of Millbank to understand its significance as a particular area of London.

The practice-based methods that distinguished this project are discussed below in Part Two. Here we also contextualise and theorise several examples of the maps. First, however, there are the vital questions of who catalysed this project and why. Addressing these begins with acknowledging our own interests as educator-researchers at a specific moment in the history of higher education in the UK. We take this up by telescoping into our institutional context to locate our commitments within the shifting terrain of practice-based art and design research at Chelsea College of Arts (henceforth, the College).

Something broadly indicative of this context at the time of the Atlas is the institutional mandate to 'embed research in the curriculum' and in so doing, more effectively integrate graduate and postgraduate studies. This is part of a larger programme to demonstrate the value of research in the face of deep cuts in funding for education. With this in mind and in keeping with catalysis as the theme for AoR 2017, we called our previous paper 'The Millbank Atlas: Catalyzing Practice-based Research in the Spirit of the Civic University'. Harboured in this title is a double movement. On the one hand, the Atlas internalised research in the curriculum through practice-based

mapping methods that sustained the year-long project; on the other, the project externalised practice-based research in response to the interest of local communities beyond the College (discussed below and in the box to the right). This double movement hinges on our broader commitment as educator-researchers to deterritorialising practice-based research and unleashing it to roam across undergraduate studies and beyond the grounds of academia. This points to the catalytic potential of spatial practice, not so much as a species of design and/or research but as a creative sensibility for creating change with those people and communities directly involved.

Our touchstone here is a vital insight in the field of cartographic history. As Wood observes, maps proliferated much later than may be assumed, in tandem with the rise of nation-states in the last 500 years. But even more striking is Wood's argument that maps actually preceded states: 'It's almost as though it were the map that in a graphic performance of statehood conjured the state as such into existence. . . ' (2010, p.32). Through this idea that maps perform and in doing so make things happen (e.g. statehood), we came to better appreciate the catalytic potential of The Millbank Atlas to conjure up its local context as a distinctly civic one. Reciprocal relations mesh together the College and surrounding businesses, residential blocks, civil society groups, transportation links and other amenities, infrastructure and further aspects of this built and natural environment. Rephrasing Wood we might say, 'It's almost as though it were the maps composing the Atlas that, in their graphic performance of Millbank, conjured up "the local" into existence.' But how did this happen and to what ends?

The first step in making the site of our project mappable was to establish Millbank's borders. In keeping with the double movement described above, we approached this demarcation from the inside out. The boundaries of Millbank have been drawn and redrawn since the sixteenth century when the area derived its name from a local watermill. To grasp their present form, we nominated Wilfried Rimensberger to draw a map of Millbank as part of the borough of Westminster, whose larger parameters are well established as a local authority of London. Wilfried has lived locally for more than a decade. He is also a director of Millbank Creative Works (MCW), which is committed to 'building a local community-based innovation ecosystem'. As Wilfried has garnered a reputation for 'putting Millbank on the map' by raising broader awareness of this London locale, it seemed fitting that we commission him to 'put Millbank on OUR map', which is to say to demarcate the Atlas' activity. The boundaries bulged and tucked as Wilfried drew and explained the decision-making behind this eccentric expression of his local knowledge.

That this map was unofficial does not mean it was without authority. Commissioning Wilfried's version of Millbank gave his 'street cred' institutional validation. His drawing stemmed from his experience of and, importantly, his work in the area with various community groups. This made Wilfried's map a demarcation of social space, specifically of the social engagement that made the Atlas a community-orientated project. This took on a life of its own as he facilitated contact between the student cohort and various community projects composing his organisation, Millbank Creative Works. These projects included a food delivery service for people who are housebound; an upcycling project in collaboration with Tate Britain that transforms coffee bean bags into crafts; a gardening initiative designed to green the area in small pots and SouthWestFest, a community festival celebrating the people and cultures of

the London district of SW1. Each of these social enterprises addresses immediate needs by coordinating the energies and resources of local actors. The point is to recognise Wilfried's coordination. His drawing was a kind of meta-map whose significance only became apparent through its use. Enter the student-researchers who used Wilfried's map of Millbank to produce the cartographic experiments that came to compose The Millbank Atlas.

Our course, BA (Hons) Interior and Spatial Design is organised into design research studios. Our studio, dubbed 'Chelsea Local', takes up spatial practice through local engagement. As declared in our manifesto:

[Our studio] is concerned with socially and politically involved spatial practice. We work with public space, in real sites, through live collaborative projects, in which we critically engage with a place and its community. We encourage on-site participatory investigation through the making of spatial interventions that engage and involve diverse user groups and others and can drive change (Bradfield and Shechter, 2016).

Underpinning this is the conviction that interior and spatial design can catalyse participation through a process-based approach that attends to 'the local' in question as embedded in broader contexts.

Toggling between these perspectives, the specific and the general (what is sometimes called the 'glocal' in geography and beyond), is central to the kind of dexterous positioning the pedagogy of our studio aims to foster. This needs to be understood in terms of London as a major destination for studies in higher education. Many UK, EU and international students come for the culture, history and other buzzy qualities of this 'capital of capital'. Yet the sad fact is that many also fail to effectively engage their immediate context during their stay. Many glide from their lodgings to classes to museums, clubs and other cultural offerings like tourists, rarely interfacing with people or places that are not destinations. We have learned this anecdotally, often from students who are preparing to graduate, their imminent departure casting into relief what they have left undone as they begin to make sense of their stay overseas.

Through projects like The Millbank Atlas, our studio aims to highlight the place where you are and your lived experience of this locale as valid subjects of enquiry. This is modelled through a curriculum that recognises the College--and by extension its students and staff--as situated. We are embedded in a built, social, cultural, economic and technological environment that is made and remade through the social energy and social action of the various communities involved. What, however, is ultimately at stake for our students is not learning about or interacting with Millbank per se. This is instead about evolving, adopting and experimenting with spatial design as a creative sensibility for not only grasping the complex processes that shape other built environments but also methods for supporting or changing through bottom-up approaches evolved in response to local need and desire.

Our previous discussion of the Millbank Atlas for AoR17 focused on the project's catalysis in terms of the chiasmus, community of practice < > practice of community. Prime here is the value of practice-based research in the service of civic learning for a civil society that is marked by a desire to '[integrate] teaching, research and [community] engagement such that each enhances the other' (Goddard and Kempton,

2016, p.2). Our immediate discussion nuances previous ones by drilling into what this catalysis entails. Part One has laid the groundwork through charting relations amongst key stakeholders in the Atlas: we as tutors on the course with particular interests as educator-researchers; Wilfried Rimensberger as a community representative committed to meeting local needs; and our studio's cohort, whose education unfolds as a medley of formal training and informal learning. Part Two of this paper takes up practice-based methods for organising these heterogeneous drives. We draw on Denis Wood's theories of mapping, mapmaking and counter-mapping to consider the Atlas as a graphic performance of Millbank that is site-specific - a complex proposition of this place.

Part Two

'What do maps do when they work?' asks Denis Wood in his introduction to The Power of Maps. 'They make present--they represent--the accumulated thought and labour of the past . . . about the milieu we simultaneously live in and collaborate on bringing into being' (Wood, 1992, p.1). A map's powers of persuasion are various as it presents this. Typically, a map is presented as a fait accompli and as such, elides the decision-making behind its production. This process resides with the commitments the map seeks to advance. Maps are cultural constructs that aim to operate on behalf of those who make and use them. This value keys into Wood's useful distinction between *mapping* and *mapmaking.*

In his view mapmaking is an expression of authorship qua ownership [read: possession is nine-tenths of the law]. This is the stuff of imperial expansionism, ruled lines cutting across swathes of land and through ignored cultures; ill-informed and uncaring powerbrokers using blunt pencils and abstract shapes to divide up the mineral spoils and colonial aspirations. This cartoon notwithstanding, mapmaking results in compelling artefacts designed to enforce the borders they create. Mapping, however, is something quite different in Wood's view. This he understands with reference to Robert Rundstrom's sense of mental maps: mapping as a 'fundamental process of lending order to the world' (as quoted in Wood, 1992, p.32). Differently said, mapping is a process of making sense. This, simply put, is the ambition of The Millbank Atlas.

To produce the Atlas the student mappers ventured into Millbank. Each was tasked with generating what Borden Dent would term a 'thematic map' as it concerned a particular theme in a specific area (Wood, 2010, p. 125). Some themes in the Atlas were familiar and expected: climate change, creative industries, unused spaces, recycling and upcycling, crime. Other foci were more abstract, even sensuous in their orientation:smell, touch, sound. Still others, like homelessness, were as transient as they were politically fraught.

Collecting these maps as an atlas tracked with our interest in creating a complex picture of Millbank. Though we typically think of this genre of publication as a collection of maps, and hence geographical in disposition, the original atlas was more inclusive. Published by the German-Flemish geographer Gerardus Mercator in 1595, *Atlas Sive Cosmographicae Meditationes de Fabrica Mundi et Fabricati Figura* translates as 'Atlas or Cosmological Meditations upon the Creation of the Universe and the Universe as Created'. Inclusivity was also at the heart of the 2010 blockbuster exhibition,

Atlas: How to Carry the World on One's Back at Reina Sofia in Madrid. Featuring diverse interpretations of the atlas in twentieth and twenty-first century art, this interdisciplinary extravaganza turned on the following definition:

'[An atlas is] a gathering of geographical maps in a volume and more generally, a collection of images before your eyes, in a systematic or problematic way--even a poetic way, at the risk of being erratic, if not surrealist--a whole multiplicity of things gathered through elective affinities, to use the words of Goethe' (Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, 2010).

If this expression first hailed from chemistry to describe the interaction of compounds and why some combine more easily than others do, Goethe adopted and adapted 'elective affinities' as an organising metaphor for his reflections on marriage as a struggle between passion and responsibility. Weirdly, this struggle was also at stake in the production of The Millbank Atlas. The same twin drives of passion and responsibility shaped the maps' common heuristic, which is to say their experimental method of translating qualitative and quantitative data into representations.

Consider those of third-year student Celine Jabar. Her maps show where crime has taken place in the Pimlico part of Millbank, using an abbreviated crime typology: adult crime in winter and night-time; adult crime in summer and night time; teen crime in summer and daytime. On the one hand, Celine's maps assume responsibility for building an accurate picture of the local scene. With different colours representing the types of offences committed, it is striking to compare and contrast the three maps, with their shifting pictures of crime depending on the season, time of day and whether the perpetrators were adults or teens. On the other hand, Celine's publicly declared and passionately expressed commitment to stop crime, especially crimes against women, finds expression through her careful choice of materials. With scored cork chosen to emphasise the roughness of the topic being researched and inverted tacks symbolically pinpointing crimes in a tactile and painful way.

Projects like this one are clearly not driven by the ambitions of mapmaking as Wood understands it. And yet, the instance described above, of Wilfried Rimensberger circumscribing Millbank to establish the Atlas's remit, reminds us the distinctions between mapping and mapmaking are less than clear cut. If, however, we follow Wood's preoccupation with the motivation of cartographic methods, the deeply human impulse that motored the Atlas as mapping comes into view. This is to say the maps spring from their makers' desire to express their embodied encounter with their environment. There was much plotting, charting, marking, scaling, shading, not to mention the making of keys to navigate these deeply personal maps. The drive here was to make the experience of Millbank, shareable.

These interpretive moves point to another category of Wood's. To mapmaking and mapping, we can add counter-mapping. Whilst often motivated by social injustice (e.g. First Nations' land claims in Canada), counter-mapping is more broadly understood as mapping 'against dominant power structures, to further seemingly progressive goals' (Peluso, 1995). Cue the growing practice of art mapping as critical cultural production. As Wood observes, it can be traced back in Western art to the historical avant-garde of the early twentieth-century and likely before. But it is

gaining traction as conceptual and post-conceptual art, giving rise to a catalogue of international exhibitions like the one touched on above.

The subjective, critical and innovative qualities of some leaves in the Atlas makes it tempting to read them as art maps. For sure, some are highly artistic, such as in Foraging and Mapping Nature by Joey Shu. Part map and part game, it challenges people to find plants in Millbank that are edible or can be used for medicine. Players are instructed to visit three local gardens (Bessborough, St George's and St John's), using instructions found in envelopes. These also contain cards with beautifully hand-drawn sketches of each species, a description of their nutritional and medicinal significance and recipes or other information about how the plants can be used. In fact, so engaged and, crucially, engaging was Joey's approach that she was commissioned by the Royal Horticultural Society to develop an installation for the Summer Urban Garden Show(2017), featuring medicinal and cosmetic creams she made using a collection of plants found in the Millbank area.

Joey's maps relied in large part on her personal encounter with Millbank, foraging and collecting data. While this resulted in her beautifully illustrated flowers, as well as a playful game for exploring the local area, it is easy to overemphasise the value of the Atlas, based on Joey's example, as a compendium of art maps. Many, it has to be said, fail to resolve in ways that critically engage with their immient logics. But why, we might ask, should they do so? After all, these are students of interior and spatial design. This helps to explain why the brief tasked them each with a theme. Our random assignment of these subjects hints at the project's pedagogic conceit. Although bringing the maps together as an atlas was always the plan, we never imagined it would comprise a rigorous and comprehensive representation of Millbank. More important was that each assignment served as a specific starting point for a specific mapper to engage with their specific context from a specific point of view.

Doubtless, the Atlas catalysed new modes of engagement with neighbourhoods around the College but this was slow in coming. For our post-internet students who have grown up online, the lure of Google is so compelling that if something is not searchable, it effectively does not exist. One of the most constructive ways of exploding this myth is to intercut our students' 'desk research' with face-to-face interpersonal exchange. We introduced them to Millbankers beyond the college to spark conversations on their shared context. In fact, it is this discursivity that best describes the kind of mapping or even counter-mapping at stake in The Millbank Atlas. Nowhere was this more obvious than in the co-production of local knowledge that animated the exhibition.

The second phase of The Millbank Atlas took the form of a display and accompanying programme of public events in the Cookhouse Gallery at Chelsea College of Arts in January 2017. Our curatorial strategy was to organize the gallery as a space of mapping. First, there was a large table that featured as the hearth of the exhibition, around which we could work and socialise. Second, there was tea and coffee to encourage visitors to linger, chat and map. Finally, there was a Millbank Creative Works project office. This featured a desk/work space, an exhibition of recent projects and a board on which future projects and ideas were mapped.

A series of public events aimed to transform the Atlas from an exhibition of static understanding presented in the maps into an opportunity to share and dynamise our knowledge of Millbank. The idea here was to recast the maps as indexes of 'stuff of the world' through mapping as an open-ended process for tapping into the 'the stuff of individual lives'. This shift occurred during the curated conversation that launched the one-week exhibition. Staff and students of the College and members of the community were invited to tour the exhibition and discuss the maps. What unfolded was an exceptional encounter twice over - exceptional because it was a rare opportunity for these different communities to interact but also because touring the exhibition hosted a rich medley of conversations that emerged in response to a specific set of conditions of possibility: researchers and students listening to other Millbankers who in turn generously shared their local knowledge.

Consider our encounter with Jackie Mu's maps, which showed how climate change in Millbank is impacting the lives of people who live here. The maps 'came alive' when Sophie, a senior citizen and a long-term local resident, stood in front of Jackie's display and described, in a hoarse voice, how the growing pollution has impacted her breathing and speech and that of many of her fellow residents.

The final phase of the project was the printing and dissemination of the Atlas as a legacy publication. Collated in a box, it contains facsimiles of the students' maps featured in the exhibition, which are annotated with their reflections. Also featured is our curatorial essay, which aims to critically contextualise the project and an essay by Wilfried Rimensberger discussing the project's local impact beyond the College. Printing the maps on loose leaves aimed to foster various encounters with their content. As it turns out this design was motivated by the same logic that Wood observes in Everything Sings: Maps for a Narrative Atlas. Like The Millbank Atlas, this is a collection of student maps, in this case mapping Wood's neighbourhood of Boylan Heights in Raleigh, North Carolina, USA. But unlike Everything Sings the maps are not bound. As Wood makes the point, sequencing them encourages a linear reading that can subordinate the maps' potential storytelling in the service of a master narrative (2013, p.13). As a boxed catalogue, the hard copy of The Millbank Atlas allows the maps to be 'ordered (and re-ordered) to tell a story greater than those told by each individual map' (Wood, 2013, p.15).

Part Three

In the third part of this paper, we return to the three questions at the heart of AoR 2017. In our conference presentation, we addressed these vis-à-vis The Millbank Atlas as a project for critical participation in the service of civic learning for a civil society. In what follows we consider these questions from a fresh perspective, one more specific to our interest here in mapping methods for practice-based research: the agency of counter-mapping to produce a new understanding that is not only communicable but also critically compelling.

How does [artistic and practice-led research] relate to artivism/activism?

Addressing this question begins with acknowledging the type of enquiry at stake in the maps composing the Atlas. On first blush, they exemplify 'research' with a lowercase

'r' - the messy, tentative, process of finding things out. In an email further to receiving a copy of The Millbank Atlas, Denis Wood (2017) writes that its cartographic experiments recollect those in his courses way back in 1974: 'Many of your maps remind me of those my students made, wild, usually 3D things made out of everything (even food)'. Here Wood is observing a right of passage for those who critically engage with this kind of knowledge production: iconoclasm through challenging the conventions of traditional cartography. This is the stuff that some irreverently dub 'map crap' (Siglio Press, 2013). Think scale, orientation, street grids--the structures and ultimately strictures that coordinate cartography as a discipline and, in the process, discipline it in both productive and unproductive ways. This comes onto something Ira Glass observes in the introduction to *Everything Sings*. Here Glass writes:

> When I encountered these maps of Boylan Heights years ago, what I first loved was how impractical they were. Most maps are entirely about doing a job. They are dull salarymen who clock in early and spend their days telling you where stuff is with unrelenting precision. They never vary an inch from these appointed rounds. (2013, p.10)

And Glass goes on to illuminate what makes these maps different, concluding that they 'take a form [read: the map] that's not intended for feeling or mystery and make it breathe with human life' (2013, p.11). The apparent impracticality and the quality of 'human life' could not be more obvious, at times painfully obvious, in the discrete maps that compose The Millbank Atlas. Each one bears the traces of what might be called its student-mappers' fingerprints as they critically engage with cartographic conventions to conjure up an aspect of Millbank. Elsewhere, in an upcoming paper for Art, Design & Communication in Higher Education (2019, forthcoming), we discuss the maps' subjective and experimental qualities and why this means that few are sufficiently robust or rigorous to stand on their own. Here, however, we want to suggest their practical significance instead accretes to them together, as a collection--as a community-based Atlas. This comes into view when we shift from prioritising the critical skills acquired by our students through producing their respective maps and consider instead the consequences of the project overall as a critical mass of cartographic experiments with broader reach.

From an institutional perspective, the project's value is hitched to its status as a research outcome of Interior and Spatial Design at Chelsea College of Arts that models a practical approach to embedding research in the curriculum and in doing so, cross the boundaries that mark progression from graduate to postgraduate teaching and learning. This may help to explain why the Atlas is also one of few outcomes to be recently funded, published and distributed by Research at the College. But its authority as an academic output is only part of the project's purchase. As Wood (2017) observes in his email to us:

> I never thought to do anything with these [maps], much less involve the community in any way until with Robin Moore we decided to make the atlas that became *Everything Sings* (published in 2010) . . . I was excited to see how from the beginning you were into community involvement and into presenting and making a record of your work. Adding Wilfred Rimensberger's perspective made a real contribution.

This points to co-investigation as core to the Atlas as a complex portrait of place. The project, exhibition and publication built a heterogeneous community comprised of established practice-based researchers, student researchers, lay participants and other members of the general public. What emerged was a micro-culture for hosting dialogue and pooling energy, time, skills and knowledge to address the threats and opportunities the stakeholders share. Key here is the project's legacy. It mobilised counter mapping for the local communities of Millbank that coalesced in the Atlas as a community resource. This publication is being variously leveraged in funding applications for local projects as well as policy debates on local development. All this is to say that as practice-led research in the service of artivism/activism, the Atlas exemplifies the potential of curricular projects to not only meet the needs of their students and institution but also those of others beyond academia--when, that is, all are prioritised in the projects' becoming.

How can ideas and/or practices of catalysis be considered with particular research processes, in relation to larger contexts and realms of art, politics and society?

In his opening keynote for the AoR 2017, the eminent anthropologist Tim Ingold drew a striking conclusion: [Whereas] mainstream science continues to think of art as a medium for the communication of its own findings,' observed Ingold '[it is] now art, rather than science, that is leading the way in promoting radical ecological awareness'. In Ingold's view, science has lost its radical ecological awareness in its search for the 'new', consequent to playing to the neoliberal data/knowledge economy where 'truth is not a concern'. Science and more specifically scientists have drifted 'ever further away from their objects of study into a world of their own making' (Ingold, 2017). Importantly, Wood makes a similar argument in his quest to unhook mapmaking from the discipline of cartography. Tapping into some of the same epistemic anxieties that have crippled practice-based research in art and design he asserts the professionalisation of cartography tracked with its drive to be perceived as a body of knowledge, 'one that progressed from the solution of one problem to that of another (as cartographers imagined other sciences)' (Wood, 2010, p.121). And like Ingold, Wood argues for a different understanding of his field, one that is much more experimental. A similar sense of science, one driven not by disciplinary or corporate interests but instead by wonder and direct encounter is precisely what Ingold advocates for going forward. Crucially, this entails looking to its past, by approaching science in the way set out in a famous lecture by the nineteenth-century chemist, Friedrich August Kekulé. Here science is likened to pathfinding: walking delicately through the wood, paying attention, notting every twig, every fallen leaf. A pathfinder, according to Ingold and following Kekulé, 'corresponds with things in their formation' rather than being informed by what is already precipitated out; a pathfinder doesn't just collect but accepts what the world has to offer' (Ingold, 2017).

It is hard to overstate the resonance of this approach for us as facilitators of The Millbank Atlas. As should by now be clear, there are significant overlaps with the methods and ambitions of this project as practice-based art and design research and what both Ingold and Wood are calling for in their respective fields. Most immediately the Atlas shares with them a commitment to first-hand engagement that is as immersive as it is emergent. The project takes Millbank as it is, not as something frozen in a research report as a context for fieldwork. We called our brief for the project

'Drawing Out' to encourage students not only to literally draw their own maps (hand drawing was encouraged) but also figuratively 'draw out' facts and figures alongside hidden stories and histories of the neighbourhood. They were engaged in what Wood describes as 'mapping deeply' - mapping 'the play of things and events that produce, that result in, that constitute the … neighbourhood' (Wood, 2015, p.312). By paying attention, attending to things, the students were engaged in the type of research that according to Ingold and Wood has the power and potential for catalysis in the larger contexts and realms of art, politics and society.

How can artistic and practice-led research intervene in the realms outside the art world or academia?

We will address this final question by looping back to the programme of public events that activated the exhibition of the Atlas. It is easy to assume that intervening in the realms outside of the art world and academia involves doing so literally, by placing our bodies, minds and practice beyond these spheres. Yet as a two-way interface, the Atlas modelled something else. We have already discussed the curricular rationale that compelled our students to explore the College's neighbourhood. And we hinted at the outreach of the curated conversation conversation. It engaged Millbankers by inviting them into the College, not so much as an audience to view the exhibition but part of the constituency, with our conversation keying into myriad others about their neighbourhood. For many, this public event was the first occasion they had ever crossed the threshold. Having never been invited on campus, they had no reason to attend. It seems that prioritising local community engagement has been subordinated to linking the College into an international matrix of leading institutions for art and design education. Yet the exhibition vivified how projects like the Atlas can make connections amongst diverse communities both in and beyond the sectors of education and culture. We contend that mapping initiatives have a special responsibility in this regard. Simply put, their sensibility, their capacity to negotiate proximity, relationships, adjacencies and other complex territorial dynamics makes them especially well placed to turn maps into networks. Or at least this is the invaluable lesson we learned through the community mapping session that featured in the exhibition.

Facilitated with Nicolas Fonti, a researcher based at the Bartlett School of Architecture, and a key member of the community-mapping initiativeJustMap, our session brought together students, Millbankers and others from across London who are committed to mapping local value and safeguarding it for the people who generate it. JustMap uses methods that help to identify assets, dynamics, proposals and controversies. Upto this point, some of our students regarded the Atlas largely in terms of learning gain. Through mapping and remapping Millbank they acquired skills in spatial design to be redeployed in professional practice. On the one hand, our community mapping session put these to the test as they drew on the students' hard-won knowledge to identify new sites for intervention and novel ways to design for change. On the other hand, it was through this session that we watched, before our eyes, the Atlas as a mapping project transform into an expression of solidarity as we connected with JustMap and other mapping projects. From map to network, we came to appreciate our place in a growing internationalcommunity of practice-based researchers and projects that share with the Atlas a commitment to valuing place. This is not placed as an abstract location, but as the site for lived experience, with this shaped by social,

cultural, economic, geographic, political, technological and other conditions. Insisting on the local impact of regional, national and international development is something that drives the Argentinian collective, Iconolasistas, to posit counter-mapping as a critical means for coordinating complex territorial viewpoints to support transformational practices for community-based change (2016). While in the short term the Atlas anchored change like this in Millbank, the project's long-term consequences can only be imagined. Our hope is this project will encourage our students and others to set up their own local initiatives and link into the global network of counter-mapping that is mobilising practice-based research in the service of more equitable, sustainable and engaging futures for all.

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Appendix:

Key:
Mapping the Millbank Atlas:

Red - Mapping the Atlas

Green - Mapping Millbank

Blue - Mapping The Millbank Atlas Exhibition

Working with Communities for Reciprocal and Other Benefit

As the facilitators of The Millbank Atlas, we are often asked what makes it a community project. Does the local community lead and evaluate it? How do they contribute? What are the benefits to those involved? Questions like these often take us back to square one: How does this project understand, position and benefit community as a general ideal and, more specifically, the particular communities involved?

'Community' is a subject that has been enjoying diverse attention ever since we can remember. Some people lament the loss of communities (small towns, churches, etc.); others celebrate the emergence of new ones (online networks, political movements, etc.). Still others, such as sociologists working with Actor-Network Theory, are interested in how communities are made, remade, unmade and composed of heterogeneous materials; people, customs, resources, skills and more (Latour, 2005). The latter understanding chimes with our immediate interest: community as less of a noun and more of a verb. 'The community' as a monolithic and nondescript category gives way to community formation. This is not something that is easily taught in light of this often organic process taking years if not decades. Hence our fascination with collaborative ways of working that can, in small and unassuming ways, incubate the communities the Atlas assembles as a process that ebbs and flows.

Because shared experience is often vital to the sense of belonging that supports community membership, we encourage practices that offer an interface through which this can take place. Enter mapping, not only for understanding local communities and their contexts but for forming new communities too. Two vital groups of stakeholders in the Atlas are those with local knowledge (Millbankers) and those seeking to acquire this (our students). What both groups tend to share is a drive to more meaningfully understand and potentially act in response to community need. The Millbankers are often motivated to work with the students because these learners provide the locals with different points of view on something that many take for granted: their neighbourhood. The students are motivated to work with Millbankers in order to learn through practice. They acquire transferable methods for making sense of complex contexts based on Millbank as a case in point. These methods often include informal interviewing. The students ask the Millbankers questions about their lived experience of this locale. This is a conversation that, we

have been told by some interviewees, can prompt them to take stock of how they perceive their neighbourhood and, recalibrate these views in response to changing circumstance.

Mapping is an activity that is well disposed to knowledge transfer, especially when the map presents insights that stem directly from lived experience and hence outstrips what is easily accessible through published sources. In spatial terms, the maps conjure up a new and shared context between the mappers (Millbankers and students) and in so doing, create a new albeit a small and temporary community of sorts. The role played by the maps as artefacts go to the heart of our preoccupation with a community of practice < > practice of community. This springs from a shared commitment to developing a richer and more heterogeneous understanding of all aspects involved in what communities compose, only a fraction of which ever find form on the maps themselves.

It has been observed that most of our research on mapping in The Millbank Atlas as an interface for community formation has focused on our students' experience. We take on board that a more robust account would include a more careful analysis of the value of this for Millbankers, both as individuals and a local community. A collective debriefing with mappers could provide a useful mechanism for more formally understanding the benefits of this project for the community in ways that could test and supplement anecdotal evidence.

The Ethics of Practice

The ethical concerns that attend The Millbank Atlas are for us some of the most urgent and intriguing aspects of this practice-based research. Simply put, they are often confounding. The diversity and complexity of working with and living-breathing people beyond a college context easily outstrips the kind of risk management addressed by health and safety assessments where only students are involved. One reason for this outstripping is that in many cases, the Atlas' ethical issues cannot be anticipated in advance. They arise through practice and must be worked out through practice.

This presents us as educators with both a challenge and an opportunity. As is well known, many codes of ethics in the arts and humanities are based on social science models and hence inappropriate for practice-based art and design research. Added to which, they are typically geared to research at the post-graduate level or beyond. Clearly, more needs to be done to support research amongst undergraduates, and we are pleased to say that in the 2018 - 2019 academic year, Chelsea College of Arts has begun to look at this more closely. What we can bring to this enquiry is a different point of view. This begins with acknowledging that ethics codes do important work by, for instance, establishing guidelines for appropriate behaviour. But theory without practice is academic in the worse sense of the term. As practitioners involved in educating future practitioners, we seek to inculcate an approach that is both more sensitive and rigorous than abiding by the rules of good conduct. What we encourage is more akin to a sensibility, an appreciation of the range of issues involved and how they might inform the kind of decision-making that practitioners are required to engage in.

Something we find useful is the kind of 'not knowing' advanced by Artist Placement Group. Formed in the UK in the 1960s, this radical network sought to place artists in industrial, administrative, commercial and other contexts beyond the worlds of art. The hinge of these placements was the conviction that 'context is half the work' (Please see Hennig and Jordon, 2016 for a useful overview of Artist Placement Group as well as case studies). We take this to mean that aesthetic and/as ethical action is always a personal response to a concrete situation. Experiential learning like the kind fostered in our studio requires our students to actively engage with new and unfamiliar contexts. Framing this engagement in terms of responsibility, as in the ability to respond, is powerful when understood as a patient curiosity in the service of appropriate decision and action. This is not, of course, a silver bullet; ethics do not disappear. But because an attitude of not knowing recognises conundrums and even mistakes as part of the learning process, they are afforded space for critical consideration. Peer-to-peer exchange can be helpful in this regard. Our students often engage with members of communities beyond those of Chelsea College of Arts in pairs or small groups to ensure their personal safety. An added benefit of this arrangement is the reflective conversation on the students' shared experience that can arise after the fact.

One of the criticisms often made of the Atlas is that it lacks the heroism that frequently characterises architectural enterprises. This is often most obviously ramped up in so-called 'paper architecture': speculative drawings and other proposals for built environments that, idealised on the page, will never need to survive the rough and tumble of real life. One reason why projects like these are so popular in other studios on our course, BA (Hons) Interior and Spatial Design, is that they are free of real-life constraints, ethical and otherwise, and they can be even more fun and imaginative to produce. Comparing these speculative projects with those of our students is revealing. Mapping projects like those featured in the Atlas may offer knowledge that is modest in scope, at times even closer to information about the everyday. However, the process of making these maps is also often the stuff of deep learning. As such, it is meaningful to the learner as a lived experience that can be variously and, hopefully, confidently referenced as embodied knowledge in the face of future challenges and opportunities.