

# NCAD DUBLIN

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### Research Project Cover Sheet

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# **UNDERSTANDING DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION IN THE CONTEXT OF ARTS-BASED RESEARCH**

**And the extent to which this may inform a curriculum intervention  
and approaches to teaching in my role as teacher/educator/artist**

Hannah Doyle

Student Number: 19198744

This essay is submitted in partial fulfilment of the Professional Master in Education, Year 2.

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## **Glossary of Acronyms**

ABR - Arts Based Research

CoP - Communities of Practice

Dev Ed - Development Education

NCAD - National College of Art and Design

NCCA - National Council for Curriculum and Assessment

PME - Professional Masters in Education

## Chapter 1: Introduction

This piece of interpretivist research is grounded in the experience of Change Lab which is a four week long studio based Development Education module in the Professional Masters of Education (PME) programme at the National College of Art and Design, Dublin. The Change Lab brief for 2020 describes it as

a space where your art practice has a social and ethical dimension as you create work that investigates complex, real world problems. The Change Lab explores the concept of agency and ownership through fostering collaborative teaching and learning methods. Over the process of the Change Lab you will engage from the tripartite context of being an artist, a researcher and a teacher. (Change Lab Brief, 2020 Appendix 1)

Irish Aid (no date, p.6) describes Development Education (Dev Ed) as “a lifelong educational process which aims to increase public awareness and understanding of the rapidly changing, interdependent and unequal world in which we live”. McCloskey(2014) says that Dev Ed

represents the enduring capacity of education to raise the learner beyond his or her physical environment, extend their imagination to new horizons, attain new forms of cultural expression, overcome societal inequalities and embrace humanisation above the ‘otherness’ of materialism. (p.1)

Through arts based research (ABR) described by Jones and Leavy (2014) as “any social research or human inquiry that adapts the tenets of the creative arts as a part of the methodology” (2014, p.1), we explored Development Education from a social inequalities angle during the Change Lab project.

ABR is a qualitative method of research based on human experience and connection. It is a suitable method of research to use when exploring Development Education as “by challenging stereotypes and encouraging independent thinking, Development Education helps people to critically explore how global justice issues interlink with their everyday lives”



(Irish Aid, no date, p.6). ABR is an empathetic approach to research which can be harnessed to gain a better understanding of people and their problems.

Chapter two will outline documentation of the Change Lab project, including details of the theme, the group composition and dynamics, the research approach and ethical considerations. In chapter three the project will be analysed through the conceptual and theoretical frameworks of Arts Based Research and Communities of Practice with a focus on group tension and how this can contribute positively to the success of a project. Finally chapter four will present a summary of observations and reflections including reference to the pedagogical outcomes of the research project.

## **Chapter 2: Documentation**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter will provide an account of my experience as an Artist, Teacher, Researcher, in the Change Lab 2020. It will establish the overall theme of Change Lab and the sub theme chosen by our group. The research approaches we used to generate ideas and develop our body of work will be documented along with a detailed description of the artwork produced. The group composition, dynamics and processes are described in addition to the ethical considerations that were a concern throughout the duration of the project.

### **2.2 Composition of the group**

The Change Lab groups were assigned by the module tutors at the start of the project. There were four members in our group, made up of one artist, one artist designer, and two designers. Our group composition was that of three mature students (in their thirties) and one member in their early twenties. The group composition made for an interesting dynamic and

each member's creative approach, processes and life and work experiences contributed greatly.

### 2.3 Change Lab Theme: Place and Space, Cancel Culture

The theme for Change Lab 2020 was 'Place and Space', with the point of departure being *Moment in Time: A Legacy of Photographs*, an exhibition of photography in the National Gallery of Ireland that we, as a PME class visited in February 2020. Over the summer months of 2020 we personally reflected on this exhibition in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and the new restricted lives we were leading. Individually the group members recorded, in our chosen medium, imagery and ideas based on personal reflections and observations of our *Moment in Time* (See Figure 1).



Figure 1: Drawing by Hannah Doyle, 2020

The commonalities within our individual work led us as a group to use Sustainable Development Goal no.10 - Reduced Inequalities (United Nations, 2021) to underpin our research project. Our group's sub-theme was Cancel Culture, an area of interest that we arrived at after initial discussion and research of topics such as 'art as activism', 'the power of words and images' and 'equality and representation'.

Brooke Kato (2021) of the New York Post defines Cancel Culture as “the phenomenon of promoting the ‘canceling’ of people, brands and even shows and movies due to what some consider to be offensive or problematic remarks or ideologies”. Cancel Culture is often considered as being performed on social media in the form of group shaming. Our group was concerned with the oppressive side of Cancel Culture, which alienates people, shuts down debate, and kills an argument before it starts. We were curious as to how this affected people and how they expressed their opinions online. A letter in Harper’s Magazine (2020) signed by 153 prominent artists and intellectuals argues that “the restriction of debate, whether by a repressive government or an intolerant society, invariably hurts those who lack power and makes everyone less capable of democratic participation”. It was this concept of power and participation that we focused on.

## **2.4 Research approach**

Through a series of group exercises set by the tutors of the module, we found our group dynamic and formed a solid starting point for our Change Lab project. As a group we discussed issues of oppressed groups in society, the power of words, language, public debate and identity.

The methods we utilised to gather information and data were group discussions, internet research - articles, artists work, mind maps, drawing, personal reflections, walking interview, material experimentation and group discussions. (See Figure 2)

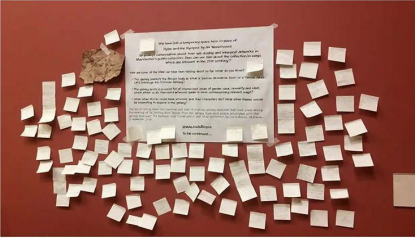


Figure 2: Photo by Tony Murphy of our research on the NCAD gallery wall, Adamczyk Harrington, E., Dolan, E., Doyle, H., Feighery, T., 2020

The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) in Ireland released a new Visual Art specification (2019) for the Leaving Certificate which outlines three strands “Research, Respond, Create”, which “serve to signify the importance of the symbiotic relationship between the learner, the practical work with which they are involved and their understanding of the place of, and emphasis on, Visual Studies within their work” (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, 2019, p.10). Our research group incorporated these strands into our project from the beginning, which helped us to structure the project but also gain an understanding of the new curriculum structure in post primary senior level visual art.

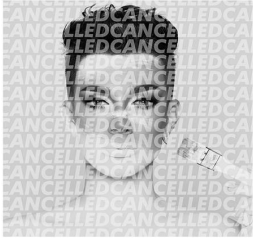
Our group developed a key question to base our research project on, “Does Cancel Culture Kill Free Speech?” Each member of the group investigated this issue through discussion, and a review of the topic in literature and media including social media, magazine articles, newspaper articles etc. with an emphasis on areas of censorship and “cancelling” in cultural outlets. We looked at a number of key examples of Cancel Culture in different areas of culture (See Figure 3).

**Exclusion / Inclusion / Democracy / Liberation / Sustainable / Social Justice / Weaken Open Debate**



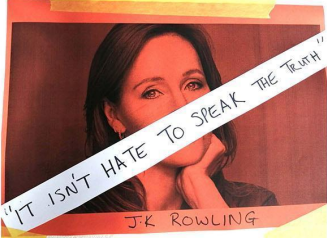
**Manchester Art Gallery** - Taking down of Hylas and the Nymphs

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/feb/06/takedown-waterhouse-naked-nymphs-art-action-manchester-art-gallery-son-ia-boyce>



**James Charles**

‘The impact was immediate; James has gone from being a beloved star to an icon of ‘cancelled culture.’ He’s been rapidly rejected by fans en-mass, losing over 3 million subscribers in mere days (one of the biggest losses of subscribers in YouTube history).’  
-Thinkhouse.ie



**J.K Rowling**

Harry Potter author J.K. Rowling came under fire in early June for controversial tweets she posted about the transgender community. Her stance has caused fans and stars like Daniel Radcliffe, Emma Watson, Rupert Grint, and Eddie Redmayne to speak out against her.

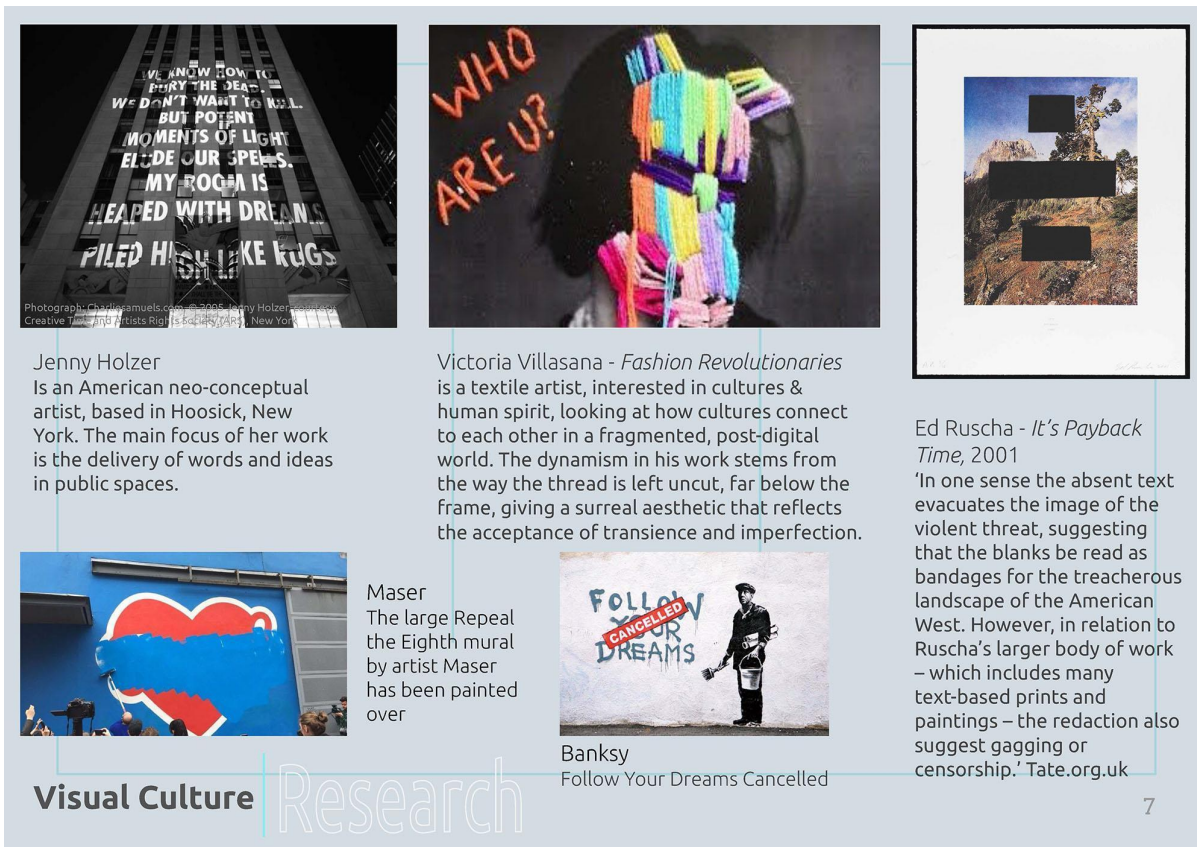
**Focused Research**

Research

6

Figure 3: Page from our Change Lab Notebook, Adamczyk Harrington, E., Dolan, E., Doyle, H., Feighery, T., 2020

Our group identified a number of artists who have socially engaged art practices or practices that comment on censorship in one guise or another. These artists included Banksy(2011), Jenny Holzer(2019), Victoria Villasana(2018), Maser(2018) and Edward Ruscha(2001) (See Figure 4).



Jenny Holzer  
Is an American neo-conceptual artist, based in Hoosick, New York. The main focus of her work is the delivery of words and ideas in public spaces.

Victoria Villasana - *Fashion Revolutionaries* is a textile artist, interested in cultures & human spirit, looking at how cultures connect to each other in a fragmented, post-digital world. The dynamism in his work stems from the way the thread is left uncut, far below the frame, giving a surreal aesthetic that reflects the acceptance of transience and imperfection.

Ed Ruscha - *It's Payback Time*, 2001  
'In one sense the absent text evacuates the image of the violent threat, suggesting that the blanks be read as bandages for the treacherous landscape of the American West. However, in relation to Ruscha's larger body of work – which includes many text-based prints and paintings – the redaction also suggest gagging or censorship.' Tate.org.uk



Maser  
The large Repeat the Eighth mural by artist Maser has been painted over



Banksy  
Follow Your Dreams Cancelled

Visual Culture Research

Figure 4: Page from our Change Lab Notebook, Adamczyk Harrington, E., Dolan, E., Doyle, H., Feighery, T., 2020

The way in which the artists Banksy, Maser and Jenny Holzer displayed or presented their work was of interest to us. Their works were presented in public spaces, which makes them more accessible to the general public. Our group was concerned with the accessibility of ideas and art to the public and how artwork could be provocative, activist and have a social justice element inherent. We were interested in how these artists explored ways to display ideas through text, and represent cancelling, blocking out and censoring information and images in their work.

The concept of a Filter Bubble, that Pariser outlined in his TED talk in 2011, interested me personally. Having worked in technology companies I was aware of this tailoring of content but only when I researched it further during this project did I get an idea of how filtered our

individual social media feeds are. Pariser(2011) who coined the term Filter Bubble, says it is “your own personal, unique universe of information that you live in online. And what's in your filter bubble depends on who you are, and it depends on what you do. But the thing is that you don't decide what gets in” (Pariser, 2011). What Pariser implies is that we tend not to see news content that is unlike the information we ‘want to’ see, rarely seeing opinions on our social media feeds that are not a mirror of our own beliefs. This can be very damaging and harmful in many ways and the Netflix documentary *The Social Dilemma* delves deep into how these algorithms have developed over the last decade. In *The Social Dilemma* video (Orlowski, 2020), Jeff Seibert, the former Senior Director of Product at Twitter says “What I want people to know is that everything they are doing online is being watched, is being tracked. Every single action you take is carefully monitored and recorded” (Orlowski, 2020).



Figure 5: Page from our Change Lab Notebook, Adamczyk Harrington, E., Dolan, E., Doyle, H., Feighery, T., 2020

With this in mind, our group focussed on young people and how these developments affect them as they are being exposed to more technology and algorithms than any generation before. We thought it essential to seek out a young person who was vocal, insightful and willing to share his opinion. We engaged a spoken word artist Carl Óg to write a piece about Cancel Culture. His insightful prose focused the angle of our work, which we then worked with physically (See Appendix 2) (See Figure 5).

We printed many copies of his words on A3 paper. Some copies were left plain, some were zoomed in on and displayed only a couple of 'keywords', others we redacted using highlighters, tape and layers of tracing paper. We obstructed his words, changed the meaning in some instances and in others left them unedited. This was a comment on the ease of which words can be altered and skewed to change the meaning (See Figure 6).



*Figure 6: Installation photo by Tony Murphy of our work on display in the NCAD Gallery, Adamczyk Harrington, E., Dolan, E., Doyle, H., Feighery, T., Carl Óg, 2020*



## **2.5 Working in a group**

### **2.5.1 Covid-19**

Due to the Covid-19 restrictions that were in place in the NCAD we were required to wear masks at all times on campus and we were unable to interact closely with other students in the class as much as we might have done under normal circumstances.

### **2.5.2 Group dynamic**

We worked closely together as a group from the start of the project, sharing our experiences, opinions and questions. We did not officially assign roles of responsibility within the group, so would discuss the tasks that required attention at the end of discussions or meetings and allocate tasks to members of the group accordingly. We shared the responsibility for completing tasks each day collectively. Each member of the group had their own strengths, for example, one member of the group was great at keeping the group updated if someone could not attend the meetings. Another member was very active outside of the gallery setting, doing research and engaging with Carl Óg as part of the collaboration.

We checked in often with each other, in person at meetings in college or through Facebook Chat. If a group member was not able to attend the studio we would keep them informed about our progress and ideas that we were working through. As challenges arose, we learnt to deal with them and move on through group discussion. We did not dwell on issues for long, but took opinions and concerns on board.

We were a hard working group and wanted to create insightful work for the exhibition and develop interesting work that we could bring forward to our teaching practice. During our first workshop it became clear that our group members were opinionated and strong willed. I

felt we would need to listen to each other and be aware of varied viewpoints in order to work well as a group. There were moments of tension while working through ideas and discussions as a group, but I felt these tensions were a valuable contributor to debate and creative progression and ultimately resulted in work that was questioned, considered and well presented. Our project looked at opinions, debate and freedom of expression online and how this can be, at times, censored or skewed. It was important that we did not allow this to happen in our collaboration.

## **2.6 Gallery space**

Working in the NCAD Gallery space was of great importance to the project. It gave us a dedicated space from which to base our research and subsequent artworks. The gallery was a neutral space and we used a large white wall as a pin board to visually display our research and progress throughout the project. There were no distractions in the gallery, it was a blank space, which meant we could really focus on being artists and researchers.

## **2.7 Ethical considerations**

All case-studies and art works that we used for research purposes were widely available to the public. There was no profit or material gain to be made from the use of these materials and all reference images are credited.

When we engaged with Carl Óg we were aware of ethical concerns, the NCAD Code of Practice on Research Ethics (2017, p.3) states that “Ethical conduct in research demands respect for the rights of others who are directly or indirectly affected by the research. For human participants, both their physical and personal autonomy should be respected”. Our concern was to make sure that Carl Óg was paid for the work which he was commissioned. The NCAD agreed to pay an artist fee for his work on our behalf, which was paid after the

work was completed. A verbal agreement was made between our group and Carl Óg about how his work would be used. This agreement covered the use of photographs of Carl Óg as part of the exhibition work.

As we worked as a collaborative group, there was a sharing of work and we all consented to the use of each other's work for the purpose of the dissertation. All images created by the group have been referenced throughout.

## **2.8 Summary**

The Change Lab project was intense, due to the subject matter, the covid-19 restrictions, the deadlines, the working space of the studio and group dynamics, amongst other things.

Though this intensity is something I actually appreciate in a project as it creates an atmosphere of collective understanding and a certain bonding over the experience. Our group processes were considered and defined by the new Visual Art specification strands of Research, Respond, Create. This approach helped to define the phases of the work we were exploring.

## **Chapter 3: Analysis and reflection**

### **3.1 Introduction**

In this chapter the theoretical and conceptual frameworks of *Arts Based Research* and *Communities of Practice* used within this research will be outlined and their effectiveness or suitability for this project analysed. These frameworks were chosen as qualitative, interpretivist methods of research which were appropriate for this studio based project. The dynamics of the Change Lab group will be analysed and reflected upon, specifically the

effects of tension within groups and how this can be both a positive and negative influence on a project's outcome.

### **3.2 Arts Based Research**

Barone and Eisner (2011) define Arts Based Research (ABR) as “a method designed to enlarge human understanding” (p.4) and as “an effort to extend beyond the limiting constraints of discursive communication in order to express meanings that otherwise would be ineffable” (p.1). Leavy (Jones, Leavy, 2014) describes ABR as “any social research or human inquiry that adapts the tenets of the creative arts as a part of the methodology” (p.1).

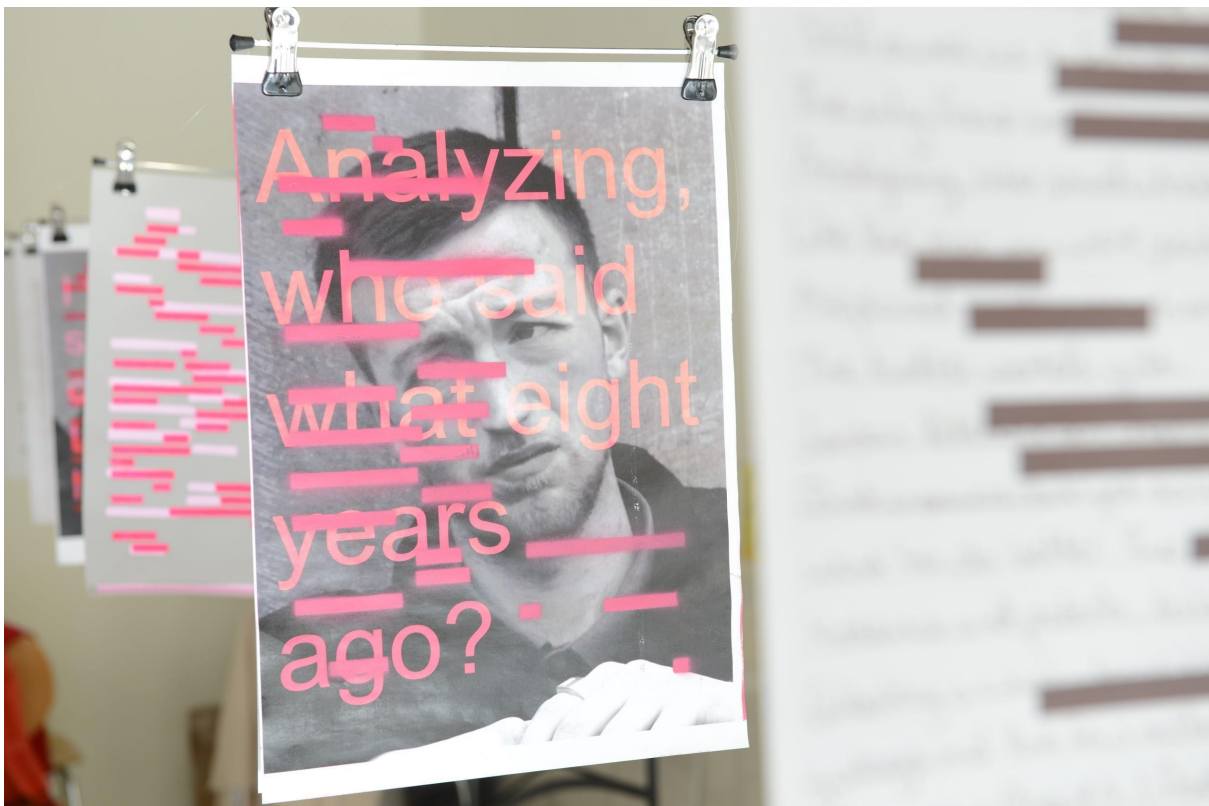
Our group explored the phenomenon of Cancel Culture from a variety of perspectives and the interpretivist approach allowed our research project to explore the human element of this subject, the emotive angle, that might not be captured in another method of research.

ABR differs from traditional methods of research. It is not concerned with arriving at a definitive outcome, it leaves room for ambiguity and interpretation. It is a qualitative method of research based on human experience and connection, and therefore is an empathetic approach.

Barone and Eisner argue that “a great deal of research and some of the most valuable research is not at all scientific” (Barone and Eisner, 2011, p.2). ABR brings another angle to understanding complex issues. Barone and Eisner outline it clearly,

The contribution of arts based research is not that it leads to claims in propositional form about states of affairs but that it addresses complex and often subtle interactions and that it provides an image of those interactions in ways that make them noticeable. In a sense, arts based research is a heuristic through which we deepen and make more complex our understanding of some aspect of the world (Barone and Eisner, 2011, p.3).

The ABR research framework was relevant and useful to our area of inquiry, the effects of Cancel Culture on freedom of speech, in that we were not searching for a final resolution. We explored Cancel Culture and how it affects people, especially young people and wanted to create work that would raise questions of the topic. It was through experimentation with visuals (collage, drawing, installations) and exploration of stories (online research) that we considered the effects of Cancel Culture and how it is and could be visually represented. The final artwork on display focused on personal experience through the written work of Carl Óg and the group's visual input. (See Figure 7)



*Figure 7: Installation photo by Tony Murphy of our work on display in the NCAD Gallery, Adamczyk Harrington, E., Dolan, E., Doyle, H., Feighery, T., Carl Óg, 2020*

Cancel Culture takes many forms and it is a subject of much ambiguity, debate, and emotion. We hoped, as a research group, that creating works of art made it possible for an audience to access these emotive responses to the subject. Due to the Covid-19 restrictions, the exhibition could not be opened to the public and therefore changed the way in which this work could be viewed.

The aesthetic considerations of our research which involved experimenting with a variety of materials to create a visual interpretation and representation of cancel culture was inline with the ideas of ABR in that it “represents an effort to explore the potentialities of an approach to representation that is rooted in aesthetic considerations and that, when it is at its best, culminates in the creation of something close to a work of art” (Barone and Eisner, 2011, p.1).

Barone and Eisner (2011 p.18) state that the outcome of ABR projects “are not designed to reinforce stereotypical or taken-for-granted notions of what it means to attend to the physical world around us”, and they note that “quite the opposite is the case. Each possesses the capacity to disrupt our comfortable assumptions about these thoroughly human phenomena”.

Our Change Lab project could be described similarly, it investigates, delves into and expresses views of and about Cancel Culture and its effect on youth, in collaboration with the spoken word artist Carl Óg. It was not a definitive statement, it was intended to act as a springboard for discussion on the topic, enabling everyone to have and share their own opinion.

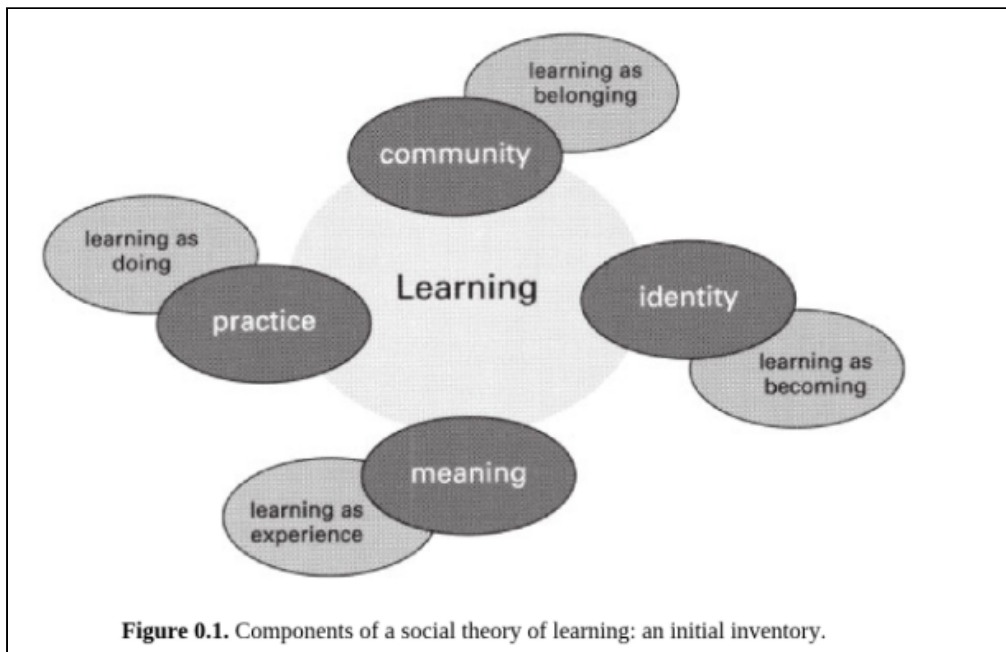
ABR has a base in pluralism and by its nature is accessible. Our group agreed with Barone and Eisner that pluralism and diversity are virtues (2011, p.4) in getting multiple perspectives on a topic. This pluralistic element of ABR was important because the focus of our project was opinion, open dialogue and how discourse is handled online by the general public. The idea that people's opinions can be 'cancelled' by a group online and the how and why of such events was central to our research. As outlined in chapter 2, the debate about Cancel Culture and freedom of expression is a divisive topic, as seen in the letter to Harper's magazine (2020), and our group did not take a stance on either side of the argument. Within our group, opinions were divided and much debate was had, and this I felt was a constructive way to approach the topic.

To put the ABR methods into perspective, one of the weaknesses of this approach is the subjectivity of the work produced, as the final outcome is the researcher's interpretation of the topic. The research is based largely on an individual's reality and lived experience, and their particular perspectives and biases. This perceived weakness was not of major concern to our group, as we were not trying to answer questions, rather we were attempting to raise them.

### **3.4 Communities of practice**

Communities of Practice(CoP) was a term coined by two researchers Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger in the late 1980s and early 1990s which outlined a significant rethinking of learning theory (Smith, 2003, 2009). CoP is concerned with the shift in thinking about how people learn. It is a "broad conceptual framework for thinking about learning as a process of social participation" (Wenger, 1998, p.2) (See Figure 8). Communities of practice can be identified as "groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis" (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.4). This style of learning is in contrast to the

transmission view of teaching and learning which means that the students role is to “passively acquire teacher specified knowledge and skills”. (Xie, Wang, and Hu, 2018, p.3)



*Figure 8: Components of a social theory of learning, Wenger (2008)*

Lave and Wenger’s theory of CoP sheds light on processes we engaged in and it is this participatory approach of CoP that is evident in our Change Lab project. The CoP framework comprises three elements as outlined by Smith (2003, 2009). Firstly, there is the Domain, an area of shared inquiry, secondly the Community, the relationship between members of the group, and thirdly, Practice, a “shared repertoire of resources: experiences, stories, tools, ways of addressing recurring problems—in short a shared practice” (Smith 2003, 2009).

We constructed a community of practice within our Change Lab group. Our group worked together in a shared ‘Domain’, i.e. four PME students working on a Development Education research project which involved exploration and interpretation of our chosen theme, Cancel Culture. Our ‘Community’ aspect of the project was the practice of talking, researching, discussing, critiquing and working together in a very intense way for several weeks. This



process ultimately led to our ‘Practice’, a collaborative body of work that culminated in an installation at the NCAD gallery as part of the Change Lab exhibition. We worked through a process of collaboration and skill sharing to create an outcome from which we can teach and others can learn. We shared an end goal, though we did not know what that would be exactly when we started the project. We worked together to work through ideas in a critical and decisive way.

We worked collaboratively throughout the project, communicating daily in person and/or online to discuss ideas, formulate plans, share research findings and to create the body of work which would be displayed in the NCAD gallery. We each had a distinct skillset, and brought our knowledge and skills to the table to provide something that will be a benefit to the group. It meant that the resources we could draw from, and the ideas from which we could create and develop work was large. It was through this collaborative process that we arrived at our final work.

### **3.3 Group dynamics and collaborative learning**

Bruton (2017, p.1) outlines Bruce Tuckman’s “Five stages of team development” which involves teams going through the following five stages; forming, storming, norming, performing, and adjourning. *Forming* is the beginning stage which “involves a period of orientation and getting acquainted”, the getting to know each other stage. *Storming* is noted to be “the most difficult and critical stage to pass through. It is a period marked by conflict and competition as individual personalities emerge”. Bruton notes that “To get through this stage, members must work to overcome obstacles, to accept individual differences, and to work through conflicting ideas on team tasks and goals”. During the *Norming* stage “conflict is resolved and some degree of unity emerges”, though it can be precarious, “if disagreements re-emerge the team can slide back into storming”. The *Performing* stage can be described as

the point in which the team have a “clear and stable structure, and members are committed to the team’s mission”, focus is on task, issue may still arise but is “dealt with constructively”. And finally Bruton describes the last stage of team development as created by Bruce Tuckman, *Adjourning*. During the Adjourning stage, “emphasis is on wrapping up final tasks and documenting the effort and results”.

It is interesting to note that our Change Lab group did go through these stages, though I only became aware of these stages after the project took place. The “Forming” stage went smoothly, we came together and discussed what we had created over the summer in relation to the project and got to know each other on a surface level. Next we worked on the group exercises, delivered by the tutors. I would consider this the “Storming” stage. There was heated debate and open discussions as we figured out each other's personalities and personal interests. As we entered the “Norming” stage, we decided on a direction for our project and devised a plan. We worked hard as a group to keep communication open, we delegated tasks and this “Performing” stage was a very productive time. The final stage of the project was our documentation and presentation of the work, celebrating its completion and this “Adjourning” of the project was a special moment that we shared as a group.

It is the “Storming” stage which interests me the most, in that it is crucial to the success or failure of a project. If this stage is worked through in an appropriate way a group can come out of this phase stronger and not fragmented. In my opinion, our group went through the *Storming* phase when individual work was being made separately by group members in order to work through ideas instead of working collaboratively. Our group dynamic was not yet fully formed at this stage and it was when we came together in meetings and talked through our work that we found shared interest and commonalities within our work from which we

could build our project concepts and move forward. In my opinion, our group worked through this storming stage through discussion and ultimately learnt a lot about each other's viewpoints on our topic.

### **3.4 Tension in teams - harnessing this energy in a positive way**

Group dynamics are integral to the success or failure of any collaborative project. My experience of working in teams as part of work experience but also my experience of being a teacher has made me aware of the tensions that can occur between a group of colleagues or students. The Change Lab project was no different, maintaining a good dynamic was essential to the successful completion of the project. As Andriessen, Pardijs, and Baker (2013) put it, “when students work together on educational tasks, they have to try to get on with doing the task whilst trying to get on with each other. The way that they learn together will therefore depend on the dynamic interrelations between processes operating on epistemic and socio-relational planes” (p.1).

Not only was it important to maintain harmony within the group, but it was essential that we could work through conflict when it arose, and harness that energy to create better work. Kling (2009, p.1) says that “conflict within teams is inevitable. And that’s a good thing, because it’s also essential to the creative collaboration that is a team’s *raison d’être*. Without differences of opinion, there can be no debate about important issues nor synthesis of ideas”. A willingness to take on others opinions/points of view was crucial to the CoP idea of a shared repertoire, domain and practice. I believe that our group benefited from different perspectives, though at times it was difficult to navigate. As we had not officially assigned roles within the group, the responsibility lay with each of us to work out challenges that arose. Kling (2009) suggests that “when things go wrong, look at the situation as a learning experience rather than an opportunity to point fingers” (p.2). Though Kling is talking

specifically about leading by example as the leader of a group, it is an important point and one that I will consider when presenting group work in the classroom. “Your example” he says, “will influence members of the team to behave the same way” (Kling, 2009, p.2).

### **3.5 Summary**

In summary, the ABR framework which we utilised in the Change Lab project was a suitable and dynamic method of research which allowed for the hybrid pedagogy which we embarked on as artists, researchers and teachers. It allowed for a freedom of expression, of materials and of outcome. The CoP that we found ourselves in throughout the project created a group dynamic which led to the development of creative work with social justice issues at its core. Although there were tensions along the way, I believe we resolved those issues and created a successful project. If we had not worked through this “Storming” stage would we have in fact “cancelled” each other's ideas, work and opinions? I think we showed that differences in opinion can lead to successful group work that can be developed from a diverse set of views. (See Figures 2,3,4,5,6,7)

### **Chapter 4: Conclusion**

In conclusion, the Change Lab project was an effective way of participating in group work as artists, researchers and teachers, to collaboratively develop and investigate Development Education. Working in a group raised more questions and ideas than working alone. Sharing skills and experiences was invaluable to the success of the project.

Many elements of this project could be used and/or replicated in the art classroom. As Heyn (2016) suggests the more students work with their peers, the more skills, ideas and viewpoints they are exposed to. As disagreements come up, as they inevitably will, it is the role of the teacher to model effective listening and problem solving skills. Heyn advises the

teacher to “remind students that to truly collaborate, there has to be a give and take” (Heyn, 2016). It is this give and take that was evident in our groups dynamic that led to the successful completion of the project.

It is not to say that this collaborative style of working is without its flaws or challenges. Authorship and accountability are areas of concern when working as a group, that could be explored more in the future, but with careful consideration and discussion these issues can be addressed within the group and modelled by the teacher/tutor.

Since the experience of the Change Lab, I have been able to utilise some of these learnings and bring them into the classroom through a unit of learning about the ‘power of words’. Building on what I have learnt from my research, I would like to use more group work to explore themes of social justice and Development Education in visual art and make links with other curriculum subjects.

The limitations of this research included the lack of access to the exhibition for a public audience, due to Covid-19 restrictions and therefore the effect of the work on an audience could not be observed.

My recommendations for future research would be to explore the group dynamic in group work within the context of a post-primary art classroom when addressing social justice issues to determine if empathy is and could be developed.

## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Change Lab Brief 2020

**NCAD** **DUBLIN**

National College of Art and Design  
School of Education

Fiona King | Tony Murphy | School of Education & NCAD GALLERY | PME CHANGE LAB 2020



Change Lab  
Artist | Teacher | Researcher

#### CONTEXT

**THE CHANGE LAB;** is a critical, immersive space for exploring how your practice as an artist/designer is inherently pedagogical. How you respond, research and create work through the lens of your practice as **an artist, a researcher** and **a teacher** is integral to the methodology of learning and teaching in Visual Art.

The Change Lab fosters a space where your art practice has a social and ethical dimension as you create work that investigates complex, real world problems. The Change Lab explores the concept of agency and ownership through fostering collaborative teaching and learning methods. Over the process of the Change Lab you will engage from the tripartite context of being an artist, a researcher and a teacher.

The use of the word **change** is in relation to our commitment to mapping what we are doing, here in the School of Education in NCAD, on to the new Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle Visual Art specification in post primary education. In conjunction with the aims of the Ubuntu Network <http://www.ubuntu.ie> the objectives of the Change Lab are to facilitate the student art teacher to:

- Create a critical working space to explore the potentiality of art as a social commentator through a development education lens.
- Create a body of art work that responds to a social justice or environmental issue, in light of COVID 19, through the key concepts of **place** and **space**.
- Curate and exhibit the art work in the NCAD Gallery space or on a virtual platform.
- Identify how your practice as an artist is inherently pedagogical.
- Critically map your work on to the current pedagogical shifts in curriculum reform taking place in post primary visual art education.

Education is a powerful force for change, enabling us to critically reflect on the way things are, to identify social injustices and unsustainable practices and to act for a better world. **Development Education (DE)** is an educational process that is concerned with building a student's knowledge, awareness and understanding of the world that they live in, and how that world is often an unequal one in terms of Human Rights and social justice (social justice is the view that everyone deserves equal economic, political, social rights, resources and opportunities). **Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)** extends the context of DE to go beyond the social justice thematic parameters of DE to also include issues focusing on the environment and the importance of maintaining and protecting the planet while meeting our development needs.

### Change Lab outcomes:

Over the duration of the Change Lab you will collaborate, in groups of three or four, drawing from your own disciplines and practice as artists and researchers to explore a social justice or environmental issue that is of interest to you. Each group will;

1. Construct a research note book that maps your;
  - Initial response to the brief, detailing your ideas and concepts that emerged through the mind mapping processes.
  - Contextual references to contemporary art practice and photojournalists that deals with social justice, Human Rights and environmental themes specific to the area you are exploring.
  - Research process, relevant resources and stimuli to underpin and interrogate your chosen issue.
  - Design process that you engaged in to create a collaborative art piece in response to your DE/ESD theme
  - Collaborative artist statement and individual artist-teacher biographies.
2. A resolved art work in response to your chosen issue.

### Point of departure - MOMENT IN TIME BRIEF



### TIME FOR YOU

#### Thinking Spaces: Visual and Textual

In light of our ongoing experience of Covid19, we find ourselves living in a strange void, disconnected by human touch, reliant on virtual platforms to remain present in each other's lives. Our interior worlds take on a new resonance as we cocoon ourselves within a familiar place whilst existing in an unfamiliar time and space. We approach an uncertain future as patterns of daily routines and rituals that define our lives erode and reconfigure to a slower pace. We look inward and imagine ways to calm our fleeting thoughts as there is no longer a definitive answer as to how long this experience will last. Within this time, we re-think about how to inhabit spaces and live our lives within a 2km radius. Our concept of place and space is challenged as social distancing is defining our human interactions; measuring sticks have taken on new meaning as we calculate what is the appropriate meterage to avoid human contact.

As an artist, teacher and researcher, take time to stop, breath and be still within this moment.

As a point of departure, reconnect with our lived experience of the photography exhibition *Moment in Time: A Legacy of Photographs*. Consider the photographs you viewed as a point of departure to influence your individual and collective consideration of 'place' and 'space'. Take time to think about how these photographers embraced analogue photography, the near magical process of uncertainty, as images are revealed through the slow, meticulous printing process in the dark room. Re-imagine being in that physical space. Recall and research the original iconic images you spent time with. How did these photographers chronicle 'place', 'space' and 'time' to shape a legacy of visual language that enables us to enquire, question and make sense of the world they lived in? From Ansel Adams and Art Sinsabaugh sweeping panoramic landscapes, Robert Frank's iconic visual poem to 1950's America, Man Rays' playful experimental photograms, Harry Callahan's and Aaron Siskinds' abstract, textural compositions. Consider the photographs you viewed as a point of departure to influence your individual and collective consideration of 'place' and 'space'.

**CHANGE LAB PROJECT BRIEF 2020**  
**THEMES:**

This year's Change Lab will be informed by two key ideas **Place & Space**

Artist, Laurie Anderson reflects that *'art about places is often about how we move through space, it's about point of view and perspective and scale and exploration but it's also about how we track these places and make them works of art'*.

<https://art21.org/watch/art-in-the-twenty-first-century/s1/introduction-to-place-by-laurie-anderson/>

In *What Remains* (2005), the documentary that chronicles the life and work of the artist Sally Mann, she reflects

*'...the things that are close to you are the things that you can photograph the best... it never occurred to me to leave home to make art'*.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iSWFdczmZDM>

Place and space have taken on particular resonance with the looming uncertainty of the coronavirus pandemic, focusing us to re-think how we inhabit and interact in spaces. Trend forecaster Li Edelkoort, speaks of how we are facing a global recession as the virus disrupts global supply chains and transportation networks.

<https://www.dezeen.com/2020/03/09/li-edelkoort-coronavirus-reset/>

According to Edelkoort we will now enter a 'quarantine of consumption' which ultimately will 'allow humanity to reset its values'. Edelkoort's forecast could be viewed as radical and challenging as she predicts that people will re-orientate their daily lives in relation to how we work, socialize and consume, to slow down, be attentive and give the earth time to mend.

**1. Space (Pedagogical)**

**Your thinking | teaching | learning space**

Space can relate to an interval of time, the freedom to think, develop and grow. Our perception of space can be conceptual, less concrete and more abstract than place, a thinking space. The head space to re-conceptualize how you see things from a different perspective. As an artist-teacher what spaces can we inhabit to foster innovative and critical thinking? It can also relate to the learning and teaching spaces you create. Over the process of the change lab chose spaces to work in that nurture and foster your creative process as an artist teacher and researcher.

**Gallery Space**

Explore the gallery/museum as a pedagogical space, a curatorial space of ideas. We will engage in an online session with Professor Sarah Glennie who opens up the conversations on how we shift our perception of what constitutes a gallery space in this time of COVID 19? She poses the question *How do we de-couple the gallery from a physical site, to create work that speaks and communicates to an audience on multiple virtual platforms?*

**2. Place (Situated)**

**Sensory | Experiential | Situated**

It is from within this context of home and place that you began to respond over the summer months and mapped your individual experience of COVID 19 by gathering textual and visual references of being within this space and time. You were advised to select and create material through whatever medium was relevant and ready to hand. Place can be concrete and physical, situating and locating you within a specific site, a locale, a region. A place can be expansive, territorial, political, anchored within an urban or rural landscape. The term a 'sense of place' is a concept that is present in several different fields of study. In defining place and space, the philosopher Yi-Fu Tuan, 1977, describes place as a location created by human experiences. Tuan states that *'space is freedom; place is security'* (p.3). How can you visually respond to your 'sense of place'?



#### 2020 CHANGE LAB Timeline:

##### DAY 1 - 7<sup>th</sup> September 9:30 – 4:30: CONCEPTUALISING DE

- 11:30 am - COVID 19 Safety guidelines and protocol Induction with NCAD COVID Manager Julia Doherty
- Rise, Shine and Connect mind - map
- Walking Debate
- Newtown exercise - building a community/reflecting on group dynamics

##### DAY 2 - 8<sup>th</sup> September 9:30 – 4:30: RESPOND AND RESEARCH TO DEVELOP A SHARED VISION

- Unpacking Change Lab Brief
- Simulated Gallery; critical Visual Literacy working with imagery in response to Moment in Time exhibition and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's).
- Discussing and presenting own work in response to moment in time brief. We will discuss and reflect on the process you engaged in to interpret your *Moment in time* brief over the summer months and evaluate how your ideas evolved to visually interpret your experience of COVID 19 from a personal standpoint.
- Discuss in your artist collective how can you excavate deeper into the themes that you explored within the narrative of the work/images/material you gathered you created over the summer months to extend into broader social/ political environmental concerns? Begin to gather artist reference that work with similar themes.

##### Day 3 - September 9<sup>th</sup> 9:30 – 4:30

9:30 – 11am – Present and discuss past Change Lab projects

11:30 am – Groups work on interpreting change Lab brief and formulating their ideas.

##### Day 4 – September 10<sup>th</sup>

9:30 -10:30am - ZOOM session with Professor Sarah Glennie, NCAD Director, on Curatorial practice

11am -1pm - Group presentation – reflective session to discuss the research process to date, initial interrogation of the theme, gathering research material. Contextualizing with artist support studies.

2 – 4:30 pm- Groups work on interpreting Change Lab brief and formulating their ideas.

##### Day 5 - September 11<sup>th</sup>

SDL - Groups work on interpreting Change Lab brief and formulating their ideas.

##### September 14<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> 9:30 – 4:30 pm

In collaboration with project leaders Fiona King & Tony Murphy work collaboratively to compile research relating to your selected issue.

Construct DE notebooks to record your process.

Create resolved art piece.

Input from Educators and NGO's in the field.

Dr. Jones Irwin, Associate Professor in Philosophy and Education, DCU.

Tony Daly 80:20 <http://8020.ie>

##### September 28<sup>th</sup> – October 1st

Filming and recording work and student voice in Gallery space

Online opening (TBC)

**Useful resources, references to begin with:**

<https://www.ideaonline.ie>  
<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300>  
<https://www.amnesty.ie>  
<http://www.ecounesco.ie>  
<http://www.worldwiseschools.ie>  
<https://www.irishaid.ie>

**Artist reference:**

Investigate the work of the following artists as a spring board to generate ideas and explore concepts of place, space and legacy.

With the question of Climate Change looming large Mark Edwards in his Hard Rain Project <http://www.hardrainproject.com> calls us to action and speaks of 'Our headlong collision with nature makes us dangerous passengers on planet earth'.

Sebastião Salgado.

GENESIS <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nHJWgQxTous>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ae0A4cnHfb0>  
<http://www.hughlane.ie/forthcoming/2436-our-plundered-planet>

JOHN GERRARD

<http://www.johngerrard.net>

Art21 is a celebrated global leader in presenting thought-provoking and sophisticated content about contemporary art, and the go-to place to learn first-hand from the artists of our time.

<https://art21.org>

**"Place"**

-  Barry McGee
-  Laurie Anderson
-  Margaret Kilgallen
-  Pepón Osorio
-  Richard Serra
-  Sally Mann

<https://art21.org/series/william-kentridge-anything-is-possible/>  
<https://art21.org/read/sarah-sze-studio-as-laboratory/>  
<https://art21.org/artist/barbara-kruger/>  
<https://art21.org/watch/art-in-the-twenty-first-century/s1/place/>

We Look forward to working with you, Fiona & Tony

## Appendix 2: Cancel Culture by Carl Óg

### Cancel Culture

The ruination of man  
Simps, intel and incels  
Grandads in the father figure roles  
Dad hasn't come back from the dole  
Still owes us a few quid.  
The only fans we have are scroll addicts  
Analyzing, who said what eight years ago?  
Like the man you were yesterday can't change  
And misplaced words means hanging from window  
The twitter worlds gift.  
Jordan Peterson to Ben Shapiro  
Questionable leaders of the bastards  
That the moaners don't get so label weirdos  
To men who want to do better, the divide just widens  
Violence and protests, a false left wing communist view  
Collecting a who's who of nazis  
people ignore gulags and the few million that Stalin killed.  
Famines and plagues I feel stupid and contagious taken literal  
made as liberal  
Dribble, attack to cover your tracks  
Teenagers can't buy alcohol but can do changes they  
can't take back  
Choices extreme as opinions, influencers minions  
No middle road Is the world gone deranged?  
This is the age of destroying the world our forefathers  
and mother's created with one sentence  
I feel offended.

*Carl Óg*

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