

IATL Pedagogic Intervention Grant: Video Project Coventry

Final Report (24 July, 2014)

The Pedagogic Intervention Grant was used to allow students taking the module 'Political Geography' to conduct a video project in the city of Coventry. The project was inspired by the University of Lincoln's organising principle of 'Student as Producer'. The produce of the students' efforts has been uploaded onto the IATL website. Other means for dissemination are currently under discussion.

The overall aim of the project was to encourage students to venture outside the conventional classroom setting for their research. This opportunity was meant to help them convert their acquired knowledge of the module's readings and lectures in a practical and creative fashion. Awareness of the politics inherent in space helped them utilise theories of space in everyday contexts. The project aided the students, in other words, in developing a 'spatial sensitivity' of the everyday. The project also encouraged students to look beyond the invisible boundaries of campus life and incentivised them to appreciate and analyse the otherwise overlooked and undervalued status of the city which hosts the University of Warwick.

Students were encouraged to make short, 5 to 10 minutes videos on themes related to their Political Geography module. The video projects were conducted with both cameras and mobile devices. Students looked at themes such as the city's history, uneven development, spatial-political securitisation, politics of memory, architecture, ethnic communities among other relevant topics.

The projects were presented and discussed in two separate sessions. The aim of the meetings was to allow students to display their work and to discuss it with their peers. The first took place in the evening on Thursday, 15 May, 2014. The second meeting, similarly held in the evening, occurred on Friday, 20 June, 2014. The meetings comprised three video presentations and one photo project. They were held in an informal, friendly and non-hierarchical atmosphere. The presentations were followed by long and extensive discussions on themes directly related to the module.

The quality of the project and the students' enthusiasm suggested an overwhelmingly positive response to both the workshop sessions and the project as such. Students appreciated the opportunity to bring the module's theories into practise and were enthusiastic about exploring the facets of everyday life in Coventry. The experience and success of the project has led me to incorporate the video project as an integral component of the module's programme. I am currently in the process of applying to the IATL to secure further funding to accomplish this.

http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/cross_fac/iatl/funding/fundedprojects/pedagogic/nieuwenhuis/

In closing, I would like to thank the IATL for their support. I am also very grateful to Paul Thompson, Senior Curator at the Herbert Art Gallery, for his time and help in this project.

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