Locating Story:
collaborative community-based located media production

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Abstract

This paper considers located media production as a means for self representation and storytelling in local community settings. We present a pilot set of workshops in a local neighbourhood in Bristol, UK. Through a consideration of the workshop process and the resulting 'mediascapes' (located sound and images) we highlight a number of observations and questions which have emerged regarding the relationship of story to place in collaboratively produced located media.

The software used to develop this work has been developed by the Mobile Bristol project, an association of Hewlett Packard Research Laboratories, Bristol, the University of Bristol and the Applicance Studio.(www.mobilebristol.com).

1.Introduction

Located media production enabled by global positioning satellite and wireless technology is a relatively new area for community based media production. Like other preceding developments in media technology it brings particular creative constraints and opportunities for community media production and for telling the story of a community or place. In Autumn 2004 we ran a pilot set of workshops introducing located media production to a continued learning group who produced a set of 'mediascapes'.

The software used for the 'mediascape' creation in this project has been developed by Mobile Bristol for use in a wide range of projects with a variety of collaborative partners. What the experimental applications hold in common is the idea of being part of a *digital landscape* in which digital content and applications overlay the physical landscape of our environment. This digital layer may be described as containing one or more 'mediascapes' in which media files are played on the user devices, according to their location in the physical environment.

In essence, the technology enables the attachment of sound or other media files, to locations. The person creating the sound "tag", in this case the continued learners, can use the software to mark the spot where they want a sound to be heard. They can do this in situ, holding a Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) hand-held computer displaying a map, or they can do it from a PC. They can then use the authoring software to select the sound file, to attach it to the place and attribute the size of the area within which the sound will be heard. Once the sound is attached, users of the technology, wearing or carrying a device (PDA) that generates its location via Global Positioning Satellite (GPS software), will hear that sound when they are in the location selected by the author. For the purpose of this work we refer to such collections of located files as "mediascapes" although in this case, the authors worked only with audio files.

This pilot project raised a series of observations and questions as we attempted to locate the role of individual or collective story or story of place in both the process of making the 'mediascapes' and in considering to what extent these productions could be considered a story of community or place.

There are a series of observations and questions regarding the telling and locating of story which have emerged out of these workshops concerning:

- The locating (and recording) of the stories and other tellings in the environment and from the use of a map.

- The (re) locating of the stories and other information gathered and recorded, using the Mobile Bristol software editor in order to create a 'mediascape'.

- Locating of story through references to time and place

- The locating of a story of community or story of place within these 'mediascapes'.

Prior to discussing these observations and questions, we will present the wider context of this pilot, describe the workshop process and then introduce some considerations about community media and story in relation to located media.

2. A New Sense of Place?

A New Sense of Place? (NSOP?) is a project under the umbrella of Mobile Bristol which groups people from industry and academia interested in how emergent technology in the area of pervasive and mobile media can be used to enhance the ways in which people experience and interact with their physical environment and with each other in public and urban spaces.

NSOP? initially explored how the mobile media technology being developed by Mobile Bristol might enable children's imaginative engagement with their environment, and how the spatial practices of children and young people might change through the use of the technology (Williams et al, 2005). While also pursuing this work with children, the project members wished to expand into the local area and engage with local groups to build 'mediascapes' that can be accessed by other groups in the community. We were interested in the potential uses of this technology to support local communication and representation. How might this technology be used by local residents to create applications or content for their own purposes? How might that neighbourhood be represented in located media? How might the introduction of this technology or the applications created impact on local understandings of or local participation in civic life? What are the implications for spatial practice? How might this kind of media production relate to or differ from existing community media practice and story-making?

As an initial step we decided to pilot a series of workshops which could be repeated with different people, groups, areas of interest to produce 'mediascapes' in the same local neighbourhood, potentially creating 'layers' of community produced representations and information.

The multidisciplinary nature of this work means that there are a range of research interests in this project. In addition to the interest in community production outlined above, there were a set of considerations to do with the development of the Mobile Bristol authoring tool which we were using. What might be an appropriate tool set? What kinds of interfaces would suit this work – are aerial photographs, maps or some other representation useful for locating media? What kind of information is needed on a map in this context? How does authoring differ, when it is desk-based or when it takes place in the environment where the sounds and images are to be experienced? There are also a set of wider concerns to do with accessibility and affordability and sustainability of use of this technology in local community settings which could not be directly addressed in this pilot. These considerations while central to the project will only be addressed here when relevant to the role of story in this project.

3. Pilot workshops in Southville

The pilot workshops were established in partnership with a community centre in the Southville area of Bristol in the UK where we worked (and continue to work) with a well-established continued learning group. All the participants were older learners who participate regularly in the group (some for the whole 20 years that the group had been running) and have been involved in a range of arts and local history work. The mostly female group includes enthusiastic and experienced local historians. Amongst the 18 participants there were people who had lived their whole lives in the area and residents of other areas of Bristol. At least one member of the group was interested in the potential of digital media and in developing related ICT skills. They had recently received funding for a laptop and digital camera and started tentatively to make use of these. Four weeks prior to the workshops a number of the participants had tried out the technology by taking a located media boat tour of Bristol harbour, organised by the research team to introduce the idea of located media to the group..

In September 2004, we ran three weekly all-day workshops. The workshops involved making use of the Mobile Bristol (MB) toolkit to collaboratively produce and locate location-sensitive 'mediascapes' which can be experienced using a handheld device with an attached GPS unit (as well as the correct software and headphones) at particular places within and close to Southville.

The research team facilitated the workshops, providing support with the technology. Due to time constraints, team members made use of the software under the instructions of the participants. The

level of support required to produce 'mediascapes' with this size of a group and in a short timescale meant that the project required a quite large team of researcher and technical support.

<u>Day one</u>

The group were introduced to the concept of located media and the plan to produce 'mediascapes'. One researcher involved in the workshops wanted to use this opportunity to inform development of the MB editor, in particular regarding differences between how content might be produced in desk-based editing and how this differed to production in the environment. In order to observe these different processes, the participants were divided into two groups; an "indoor" group to work with maps and an "outdoor" group to make recordings about the local area on a walk. Each participant could choose which option they preferred. Although this division was imposed due to research interests, it unexpectedly proved a useful means of inclusion in the process since participants who did not want to walk, had difficulty walking or who could not stay for the whole day were able to participate in the indoor group.

The "indoor" group were provided with large maps of the local area. They worked individually or in pairs annotating the maps, identifying places of local or personal interest.

The "outdoor" group were taken by car to the floating harbour, about 20 minutes walk from the community centre. This once busy working docks is now a cultural and tourist location with museums, a cathedral, shops and arts centres. From here the group walked back to the community centre; a walk which involves crossing a bridge across the harbour and then one across the river leading back to Southville, a residential area considered as distinct from this central area and bounded by the river. The group explored the area and recorded observations, information, stories etc. on to handheld devices. Working in pairs they also carried a map of the area and marked the recording number of each recording onto the maps at the point where it was recorded.

Only the outdoor group were available for the afternoon of day one, which was spent reviewing the walk and the recordings and doing some initial planning of content for a 'mediascape' of this area. The group were not restricted to the recordings they had made nor were they restricted to the places they had already visited or commented about. They were also open in their choice of audience. Since there were nine outdoor participants, it was agreed that they would split into two outdoor groups. Each group then planned their own 'mediascape', plotting what they might include onto larger maps of the area and listening to their recordings.

<u>Day Two</u>

The participants were given a short presentation about how the location-sensitive technology works and how they would make the 'mediascapes' using the MB editor. Each of the three groups (two outdoor and one indoor) was taken through the process of locating one or two sound files in the streets outside of the community centre and then went outside to listen to them in situ.

The rest of the day was spent making the 'mediascapes'. This involved, for the outdoor groups, selecting from existing recordings from the walks, considering what new information might be recorded (some participants had brought scripts based on research they had conducted during the week) or recording stories and information based on the annotated maps. Next, assisted by members of the research team, all groups had to attach these sound files using the MB editor to produce their 'mediascapes'.
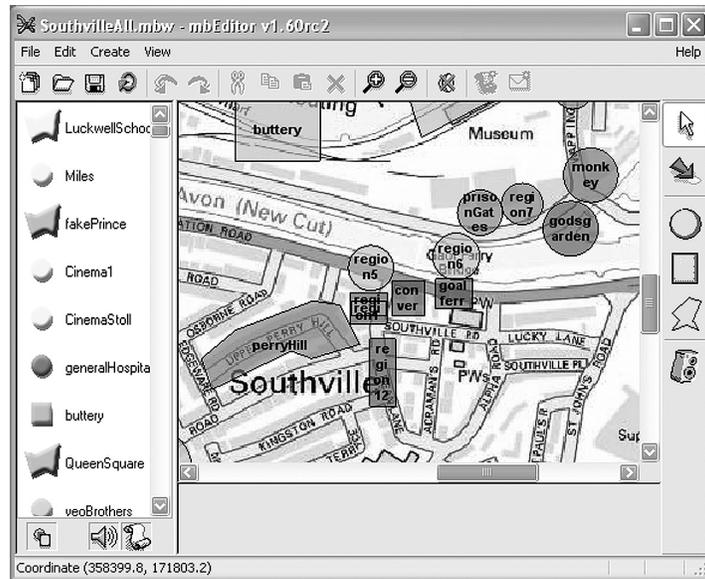
Figure 1. Regions with attached sounds on the map interface in the MB editor

Day Three

The participants finalised their 'mediascapes'. Both outdoor groups added final recordings and agreed final content and positions for sounds on their trails. They were then able to walk these and test them out. The indoor group's sounds were located in a spread across the area and were more difficult to experience. Given the size of the group and the tight schedule of the three days, there was only time to experience the 'mediascapes'; there was not time to refine them. Participants were interviewed about the process and the interviews videotaped.

There were a number of constraints imposed on this process due to this being a research project as well as a community media workshop. Some constraints were intended for research purposes; we wanted to have groups working indoors and outdoors; we wanted to use the MB editor: others for pragmatic reasons: we could only resource a three day workshop; the area provided on the maps had to be manageable. There were also unintended constraints. The choice of using handheld devices for recording outside was pragmatic as these were available in sufficient number since they were used for accessing the located media. A button had to be held down to record and the microphone was in built. This led to these devices being used much as a Dictaphone might be used which produced quite succinct and usually individual recordings. This contrasted with some of the indoor recordings which included jointly told stories, and conversations and longer more leisurely accounts but which on the other hand lost the background sounds and atmosphere of being recorded in situ. As is often the case the participants were self-conscious about recording and hearing their own voices. Some preferred reading prepared material and some, concerned about the impressions their accents might give, suggested that they could be voiced by actors. They seemed on the whole, unconvinced by our arguments about the importance of hearing local perspectives in their own words.

On the other hand the project was completely open in regard to choice of content and audience. In some respects this was important given that the participants held the expertise in the local area and that we were interested in how people can make use of this technology in local contexts for their own purposes. However, in the context of these starter workshops this proved difficult. The group had no prior experience of making a 'mediascape' and therefore, were making sense of this new form while also making decisions about content and audience. There was also very little time to explore and consider audience and content and no time to change and refine the 'mediascapes' after they had been tested. Some of the group discussed their audience in terms of young grandchildren who would not know the history of the area and for whom, they thought, the mediascapes might provide an interesting way of learning about the area. It is worth acknowledging also that perhaps given the openness of the considerations of audience, that the audience for these pieces was in fact the research team and further considerations of audience developed in the making of the mediascapes. In spite of these issues, the resulting three 'mediascapes' from this project (one indoor group, two outdoor group) have a rich mix of story, opinion, poem, description, and history about the local area.

We have continued work with this group on a project about memories of their childhood experiences during the Second World War now that they have experience of what is entailed in producing located media. We also hope to work with groups who having experienced these 'mediascapes' can envisage particular projects for which they might make use of the technology.

The content and form of the 'mediascapes' were shaped by the technology and the process and also by what participants chose to record and importantly not to record. A series of issues emerged through this process regarding decisions made about what is recorded or not and what is located or not, which led us to consider how, why and where story is located in this production and how this relates to sense of place or community. It is worth situating this work in the context of community media and community story prior to addressing the locating of story in more detail.

4. Located media as community media

The use of located media technology in local or community contexts needs to be considered in the context of the wider area of community media practice. There is not the space here to address all aspects of community media practice but we will discuss some aspects pertinent to this project.

Community media projects are undertaken for a range of reasons. There are, however some common assumptions or interests in community and participatory media production. Much of this work is underpinned by a belief in the importance of and right to self expression for everyone, beyond this there are also a set of assumptions about the value of media production as an instrument for change both in terms of products which can be used to catch the ear of others or process which involves new perspectives on ones own experience, community or locality (Berrigan:1979:8, Nigg & Wade:1980:7).

Enthusiasm for or interest in the potential of new media technologies has played a role in shaping community based media use. They have provided new opportunities and constraints in participatory, community or locally based media production and new ways of using media to make sense of one's own experience. Different technology choices impact upon accessibility and usability. A shift from film to video production during the 1970s allowed easier and cheaper production and distribution methods enabling groups to record, for example, local events or issues and then play these back almost anywhere, rather than having to allow time for processing and being limited to places with cinema equipment (Kennedy:1973, Marchessault:1995). Changes in form such as the manipulation and merging of different media made possible or easier through the introduction of digital media technology and the forms of interconnection and association made available through hypertext, have an impact on choices of form as well as how groups can collectively produce media. Associatively linked documents on the web, for example, have a different impact and require different interpretive skills to a tightly edited linear short digital video (Miskelly;2002, Tomaselli:1989). Located media introduces new considerations, in particular in regard to the way in which they are rooted in place. The listener/viewer has to be in a particular place or move between places in order to experience the sound and images.

Tomaselli, writing about community video production warns against the tendency to see communities as homogenous (Tomaselli:1989). He highlights the competing interests, contrasting experiences, age, gender, class differences of people within a community. Juhasz writing about video production in communities of interest, points to the overlapping groups, collectives or communities in which an individual participates and how he or she adjusts to the circumstances of each (Juhasz:1995:236).

These rich or dynamic understandings of community or collective can be useful when considering perceptions of place and in moving away from assuming that there is a commonly shared view about a particular place. Different places in a local area may well impact on overlapping affiliations and varied perspectives and experiences in different ways.

Located media holds potential both for multi-voiced production(such as the many located recordings in the Southville project) expressing a collective response to place or for a single voiced guided narrative that might be an individual take on place. The multiple voices are present not only in individual, collaborative mediascapes but in the potential to have many mediascapes located in the same space. The workshops in Southville involved a collaborative process, including individual and collective representations and editorial decisions. Furthermore, they were rooted in actual experience of place (either through extensive knowledge gained over time or gained on the occasion of walking through the area for this project). In a multi-voiced production including multiple ways of telling, the issue

arises as to how this is made sense of in terms of the place and community. To what extent might this be a community story/ies or story/ies of place?

<u>Community story and located media</u>

Lucy Lippard reminds us of the importance of story in what can be complex or alienating urban contexts:

> *"since revisionist history took hold in the sixties, an increased interest in oral history has given us access to local life, and insights into our own lives, illuminating places better than idealized or objectified histories can. Oral histories offer poignant additions to our own personal experience and provoke more optimism than pessimism about the contradictory human enterprise. Local knowledge and awareness contextualise historical information or images that might otherwise become detached as "high art". In cities and large towns, the need to know others' histories as well as one's own is particularly urgent and particularly difficult because the geography encourages alienation. Although more conventional physical bonds – like sharing schools, streets, stores, churches – are multiplied to the point where they are invisible and perceived as missing, cities are not free of narrative bonds to place, of folklore."* (Lippard:1997:p51)

There are many examples of powerful urban based oral history and community media projects. In the case of the located media projects we are considering an unfamiliar context where Lippard's alienating geography has to be negotiated in order to hear the story but also where the multiple invisible landmarks can be brought back into view.

In addressing story of community or place, we are considering story in a broad sense, not as a synonym for narrative which can be thought of as an organising method for story. In the context of collaboratively produced community based story, the result does not necessarily have an overarching narrative structure, it may contain microstories and other narrated accounts but also includes other modes of expression as well as considerations about what 'deserves' to be told (O'Sullivan et al:1994:194). The story of a local area or community can be thought of not just as a text but as a resource, from which many narratives, descriptions, recollections etc. can be drawn. Since a community story cannot be understood as a single narrative thread and given that it is polyvocal and without a definable end, story in this context might be understood as an ongoing process of telling from which different parts can be drawn out and told at different times for different purposes (Miskelly, 2002).

In these respects there is some correspondence with individual's life stories which are told in ways which are temporally discontinuous, informal and in fragments (Linde:1993). Linde suggests that we make use of coherence principles and systems to make sense of them against what we understand to be a coherent life. So too we make sense stories about place or community according to what we know of them and what we consider an adequate or coherent or meaningful account. When considering story of community of place produced using location sensitive media, there are additional factors relating to orientation in place and movement through space. As with shared understanding of personal landmarks or epochs (schooldays, weddings, new jobs) so we have shared understandings of physical landmarks, (schools, churches, rivers). In the case of the localities that we know well, these can be intangible or invisible boundaries between, for example, more or less safe spaces.

These located mediascapes are made up of formally, temporally and spatially discontinuous fragments placed within a space which implicitly or explicitly links them together in a variety of ways. This might be to do with the physical or architectural landscape, understandings and experience of the place, interpretations of the content of the fragments and the listener's use of interpretive resources and local knowledge. To what extent can this be considered a story of a place or a community, the story of a community in a place, the story of a group's experience of a place, or one set of experiences of a place?

What represents a richness of significance for one group may seem trivial, irrelevant or incomprehensible to someone unfamiliar with people or place. Eric Michaels experienced this when working with an Australian aboriginal community who wanted to make a video of one of their traditional dreaming stories. Watching the videoed story, Michaels attributed the lengthy pans across the landscape to inexperience with video production techniques, until it was explained that the landscape was integral to the story and these pans were an essential and deliberate part of the text (Michaels & Kelly:1984:30). Michaels experience points to how understandings of narrative and media

conventions can be both translated into new forms and misinterpreted when unfamiliar with the context. It also raises the implicit and explicit interrelation of story and place.

The following sections identify some of the interplay between technology, place, collaborative work and story in the case of the production of located media about Southville.

5. Locating and recording in and about Southville

The locating and recording of stories, descriptions and commentary for this project took place in different contexts; the walk, the map and then 'follow-up' recordings. There were clear differences between indoor and outdoor groups regarding what was talked about, how it was talked about and what the groups chose to record.

The indoor group

The indoor group used the maps to identify their location and the location of various places including local landmarks and personal landmarks. This included people's homes, and contemporary or historical landmarks, for example a war time cinema, a popular café, local shops and manufacturers. The indoor group would often use the map to discuss the location of long vanished buildings. Often the discussions about these places included personal experiences such as queuing at the cinema or childhood visits to a department store. There was general agreement over the location of places and each prompted a discussion or a story.

What was shown on the map did appear to shape and prompt certain content, however this is just a starting point. Once the map had started the talk, it would take a life of its own leading to a discussion around all sorts of memories, events, jobs, people, not just buildings and streets

Many of the accounts and descriptions referred in detail to architectural and historical features, the process could usefully have been supported by images of the buildings in question. The still existing architectural features could be identified when exploring the 'mediascape' in the local area, but lost features which are remembered such as the pink marble steps that once led up to a now demolished cinema can only be evoked or supported by a photograph.

Street names were important in locating and in sharing information about Southville. The participants tended to start with the street name and then developed themes out of this. For example, a street would be located and a church identified which would then lead on to discussions about churches all over the map/area. When asked, the participants said that they preferred maps to aerial photographs as the street names helped them to orient themselves and to remember. The 'outdoor' group also made use of street names in their recordings as means of orienting the recording for the listener.

From these discussions a series of accounts were distilled that became recordings located in the *mediascape*. Overall the content of the indoor group's descriptions and recordings was more personal in nature than the outdoor group.

The 'outdoor' groups

The outdoor groups made recordings as they walked initially as one group, around the area. The recordings were responses to being in the place. As the group walked around there were many discussions raising a wide variety of memories, ideas, opinions and stories about the area as it is now and as it had been in the past.

Not all of the discussion and recordings were based on the group's knowledge or memory of the area. At the start of the walk we visited Millennium Square which as its name suggests is a recent addition to the city, a redeveloped area with street art, fountains and a number of new museums surrounding it. Some of the group had never walked through the square, others were more familiar with it. This area had previously been part of the working docks but had not been accessible to the public, so although members of the group knew the docks well, due to their working life experience, none of them had had access to this area.

Recordings in this area included discovery, for example, of a series of statues representing historical figures from the area as well as descriptions of the square and viewpoints from it to landmarks of Bristol, and comments on the safety or lack safety of the water features for young children, and recalling a trip to a wine festival. None of these aspects of the square would be identifiable from a map.

We' ve now come into Millennium Square, with the Explore@Bristo[a museum] on our right hand side. There' s a large silver dome which is part of the Explore situation. Lots of water around, waterfalls, pools of water, fountains and things.   On a local note it does worry me a little bit that they let children in to these waters being so near the docks, there must be rats around and I wonder if it's safe for children to paddle in as they do in the summer areas. We are approaching the statue of Cary Grant. A very well known film star who came from Bristol. He was born in Bristol and emigrated to America where he became very very famous.

Recordings made at the location of statues were used to include historical information which might not be easily connected to a building or street.

We are now in front of a statue of Cabot. He is looking down river, looking towards the entrance to the docks where he sailed the Matthew on his journey to Newfoundland.

Some of these recordings took in horizons, views, landmarks at a distance from the participant, they referred to objects in the near and far distance as well as the place where the speaker was standing. They acknowledged features which were fairly permanent such as buildings, transitory or non permanent such as boats, and fleeting impressions such as a jogger running past.

We' re walking towards Explore Bristol now. Joggers just passed us. Not many people around. But plenty of workmen"

On my left is the Arnolfini [an arts centre]. *And another lot of boats. Oh the sun' s out a bit more now. All scaffolding up at the Arnolfini because they' re spending a lot of money on it.…*

Recordings were made about buildings or places that are no longer there, public events in the past, events of wider historical interest. In contrast with the indoor group there were more recordings about public/official history including information read from local tourist information plaques. However there were also personal recollections

At the end of Prince Street is a public house called the Lusitiania, the louisiana. At one point this was called the Bathurst. And as a little girl I remember a monkey living on the balcony, who always wore a red coat, a red fez hat and a jewelled belt around his waist to which a very long chain was attached that was fixed to the ironwork of the balcony, and as children we used to torment the monkey, stand underneath and make faces and dance in front of him so that he used to go wild and dash up and down the balcony until such times as the barman came out and told us off.

and some personal recollections which also relate to public history.

The first house in Dean Lane is the home of Russ Conway [a well known musician] *where he was born as a boy, and his father was the chief air raid warden for Southville and my father was a warden working with Russ' s dad so we often had contact with him.*

Some of the recordings include orientation for the listener, sometimes describing something as if they could not see it, sometimes assuming that the listener is there in that place and directing their gaze, stating movement or indicating where to stand.

Choices about what might be of interest to others, are reflected in how the discussion developed on the walk and what was actually recorded. The group walked and talked to each other and the research team about their memories and experiences of the area and about their working and family lives and recollections where these coincided with the place. Much of this and the stories recalled were not considered of sufficient interest or value to be recorded.

With the indoor group there were also differing opinions about the value of the personal and the official or public (hi)stories of the area. The research team were particularly interested (as individuals not just as researchers) in the personal recollections of place, rather than the official information that was recorded. But the group valued this public history and the importance of accuracy of information. There are social expectations to these recordings and for a group who had a good deal of experience of the area and which included local historians it was important that they shared this knowledge and did so clearly. They thought that people would be less interested in personal narratives or personalised accounts of place, although they did also record some personalised accounts.

Stories and other accounts emerged out of the experience. Both the indoor and the outdoor group used the resources available to them as triggers or hints but then took the discussion, story etc. in their own direction. This is particularly the case with the indoor group, whereas the outdoor group made selections from the rich environment around them and used immediacy and recall whereas the indoor group used recall. The indoor group identified themes meaningful to them through the map whereas the outdoor group responded to where they were.

Both groups included information that is not recorded on maps. In the case of the indoor group this was recalled detail or possibly things that were no longer there. The outdoor group mentioned more permanent features such as statues etc. but also the less permanent (boats) and the fleeting (a passing jogger).

6. (Re) locating – creating the mediascapes using the MB editor

The outdoor groups made selections from their recordings and added additional ones to fill what they considered important gaps. The indoor group selected accounts from their mapping exercise and recorded material from these to be located throughout Southville. Using the maps encouraged a broader geographical spread of recordings compared to the trails created by the outdoor group.

Group dynamics played a part in the choice with some participants being more confident with the process than others and some having made more recordings than others, but there was also some concern that all voices were included and that there was not duplication.

In some ways, given the time available, this proved to be quite an ad hoc process. The trails were made out of what was available with some additions, as participants identified other landmarks and stories about which they wished to record or felt they should have recorded during the walk. They also considered issues to do with orientation in the recordings, some trying to avoid recordings where the orientation (on the left, on the right) might confuse the listener. There was difficulty in locating some of the detail such as statues on the map interface. Also decisions had to be made whether to include references to temporary features such as boats. Some of these recordings were not used but others did remain because the recording held other information. Some recordings were included because of the encouragement and interest of the researchers who had their favourite stories too.

7. Locating story in time and place

As a collaborative community media project the production of the 'mediascapes' was a process involving negotiation, consensus, interrelation of the personal and the shared. As located media, there was the additional factor of rooting the process and the recording that emerged in the physical environment, which shapes also how the recorded fragments were understood in time and how they might be understood as a story of place or community.

The fragments are associatively connected in that they are part of the same the 'mediascape', and were made by an identifiable group of producers but those connections and the fragments themselves are made available through walking, by moving "through" the recordings.

Located media require different modes of interpretation to be brought to the already rich and complex area of personal or community story. In her analysis of Latvian illness narratives, Skultans highlights the complexity of the relationships of structure and interpretation and how these relate to content.

> "There is in all narratives an exchange between the purely personal and the shared social, literary and linguistic worlds […]. There is a stock of social and literary commonalities known to all, but not everyone draws upon them or does so in the same way. Although membership of a textual community is important, people's use of paradigms also has a personal dimension which arises from their experiences and intentions. Many people with eventful lives have little to say about them. There is no perfect match between lives lived and lives remembered." (Skultans:1998:xii)

Skultans observations can be understood in the context of the range of choices of content made by the continued learning group and in their considerations of the personal/unofficial and the public/official (hi)stories in those choices. The use of located media brings to this interpretive exchange an additional factor of "being there"; using the physical environment as part of the process of choosing what to tell and how to tell it. In this context there is an intersection between the personal

or historical account and the understanding of place or orientation. Orientation in time and place is fore-grounded in particular ways and according to particular understandings of place, movement in space and accounts and representations of time.

Baynham argues that orientation in space and time has been inadequately addressed in narrative theory, having generally been considered as part of a contextual backdrop to narrative structure (Baynham; 2003). He argues for "more complex and nuanced accounts of the ways in which orientations in space and time contribute to the construction of oral narrative" and suggests that accounts of narrative have typically privileged temporal orientation over spatial orientation. Like Certeau (1984), Baynham argues for the centrality of spatial orientation in construction of story. He suggests that instead of asking how are narratives oriented in space and time, that it is more productive to ask; how are spaces and times understood as semiotic resources, involved in the construction of narrative?. How can they be understood as constitutive of narrative action (Bayham:2003:p352)?

Baynham identifies that there is little written about these aspects of story construction. Beyond this constituting function in narrative action, orientation holds a second function for located media in requiring the listener to orient herself in relation to the recordings. Spatial orientation is a prerequisite for accessing accounts.

The 'mediascapes' involve shifting perspectives on place. Within and between fragments, there are shifts between close up, in the distance, the whole area, 'over here', 'over there' etc. There is also the selective identification of certain (personal or shared) landmarks within the area and specific indications of place which also correspond to exact position and direction of the gaze or more general indications, or evocation of place through memory, or comment on place as a whole.

In contrast to a film or radio broadcast, for example, the listener here is in the place and can see these selected locations within the environment as a whole. They may know the area well or be exploring it for the first time. They may be visiting it on perhaps a busier, or wetter day. Familiarity and changing aspects of the environment will contribute to how the accounts are made sense of as a story of the place. The act of walking around creates links between these fragments but it can be presumed that the listener will use other interpretive resources (with whatever degree of satisfaction) to create the bridges between these linked but distinct fragments.

The mediascapes also involve shifts in time, the accounts are temporally discontinuous. There are shifts between fragments but there are also accounts which recount both the present of the recording and different pasts. There is the speaker's immediate experience (the directing of the gaze, the description of what is there, the jogger passing) but there are also the speaker's recollection of their past in that place (do you remember when we went to the wine festival here?) or explanation of what they know of the past of the place through its buildings or statues. A listener has to orient herself in relation to many pasts and to move through places and consider different perspectives on those places. Additionally the present of the recorded account is the past, a recorded event from the point of view of the listener. In the case of the recording made in situ, there are the background sounds, from *then,* for example, the clunking of machinery or traffic noise or a dog barking which accompany and echo the place as it is in the now of the listener.

As Baynham identifies, further research is needed into the ways in which we use orientation in stories to address the complex relationships between what he calls the *here and now* and the *then and there.* This may shed light on the experience of located community story with its additional quality of *being there, now.*

8. Locating a community story / a story of place

At each stage, this project has raised questions about story of community and story of place; questions regarding how the 'mediascapes' have emerged out of the workshop process and the negotiation of what stories and other accounts are told or not told, located or not located and how the process of telling and locating impacts on these choices as well as the technology in use. There are also questions regarding to what extent they can be considered as story/ies of place and community. How can what has been produced be understood, interpreted by others as a story of community or place?

The *mediascapes* are only partially narrative, they are a mix of different modes of expression which are loosely associated by their inclusion in a trail or a broader area, and by their collective production by a self-identifying local group.

The collection of recordings that were located do not represent a seamless guide through the area, they are a selection (in the case of the trails a series) of fragments located at places that are meaningful in some way to the participants. Even in the trails, there are gaps between recordings. The follower of the trail comes across voices as they follow the route. It is a loose structure which could be added to and could be overlapped with other accounts.

This may then perhaps constitute a collection of fragments which serve as a resource for the listener who can move around the *mediascapes* and make her own connections, relationships, interpretations and associations of the place and who rely on, build on or contrast with their existing knowledge and experience of the place and the community.

The recordings have been used to create *mediascapes* with the intention that they will be listened to in situ, that is, in the place that the recording is about. There is an understanding whether implicit or explicit that the recording is relevant to the listeners' location and that they should look around at that location and follow the implied, imagined or directed gaze of the speaker.

These productions might be understood as a latent story or a resource for story, as a set of fragments with associative links which are to do with their proximity as well as their linking through inclusion in the same mediascape.

The listener has to use their own interpretive resources, own knowledge, experiences, assumptions (not necessarily sharing those of group) about urban places and about this place. The experience of the 'mediascape' is overlaid and intertwined with the listener's knowledge and experience of this place in the moment. It relies on some shared commonalities regarding this kind of place and regarding understanding of personal and public stories of community and place.

Lippard considers that rather than having a sense of place we experience "serial senses of place" *All places exist somewhere between inside and outside views of them, the ways in which they compare to and contrast with, other places"* (Lippard:1997; p33). Both producing and experiencing the fragments can be seen as a process of creating a sense or story of place somewhere between the recordings (making them, locating them, listening to them) and being in that place. Although most of the still existing landmarks (buildings and street names) could be expected to remain for the foreseeable future, each experience of these fragments will differ from their recording and from each other. The jogger will not pass by (though another might at another moment) and the sun is unlikely to come out at the same point. So this experience or story of a place or a local view of place will shift because even if the recordings remain unchanged their locations do not. Each passage is as Lippard suggests, a palimpsest (Lippard:1997; p33). .

Certeau's account of spatial stories may represent some useful first steps to thinking about what located media might represent as story of place – in terms of the intersection between place and expression. Certeau suggests that stories involve "identification of place" and actualisation of space as a key aspect of their role in everyday life. His description of stories as spatial trajectories takes on a new resonance here. For Certeau, stories *" traverse and organise places; they select and link them together, they make sentences and itineraries out of them."* (Certeau:1984:115). In the case of located media this practice is embodied as well as recounted. The fragments in these located media pieces, represent a traversing and organising of places on a number of levels.

The listener is required to travel, and is listening to a series of recordings which organise places in terms of previous journeys (both actual in the recording, the recollection or both). These fragments have emerged out of using both an itinerary and a map and then through a renegotiation or reorganisation of fragments onto place.

Certeau describes the development of maps from the medieval charting of an itinerary – a movement through space, which represented a visual account or story of that journey - to the gradual disappearance of the itinerary (which represented the journey which made the maps possible) from the map itself to be replaced by the increasingly accurate record of the size and distribution of physical features in a place rather than the use or experience of that place (Certeau:1984:119-121). The process of creating community based located media does suggest a reinvesting of itinerary, of *spatial story.* It does so in a way which represents a dialogue – a move to and from itinerary to map. Many of the most personal stories or stories evoking an experience of the local area as lived, came

from responses to exploring the map rather than exploring the local area. This may well be in part due to other aspects such as being seated in a relaxed atmosphere with the time to reflect and tell as opposed to trying to take in a whole area, while making recordings and keeping up with the rest of the group. Furthermore, these stories which reintroduce the itinerary to the map and the place are reliant on the sophisticated development of mapping technology. The itineraries have to be reintroduced to the modern map and its system of coordinates in order to be located since they are reliant on the accuracy of global positioning satellites.

9. Conclusion

The process described in this paper involved drawing on the resources of the participants, the environment and other supports such as maps and old photographs to draw out some narratives, descriptions, recollections and other representations from this latent or potential story of place and community. Different aspects of that story may be drawn out at different times for different purposes and in different ways.

This paper raises some observations about collaborative community based production of location sensitive media and raises some questions about how this might be considered as story of place or community. Our wider interest is in how these technologies can be used to consider a local area, to share ideas and to think about change.

Degrees of familiarity with a place, knowledge of official/public and unofficial/personal (hi)stories influence both how particular accounts come to be recorded and located and how these glimpses provided by located media might work into a story of place and contribute to an experience of place. The process involved some new perspectives for the participants as well as an opportunity to consider ongoing change in the local area. These perspectives can be shared with others and serve as an opportunity to experience other peoples senses of place.

The resulting mediascapes were only one way of approaching a collaborative located media project. In addition to the interrelation of individual and collaborative, public and personal, and the mix of different modes of representation that are common in community media, located media introduces new issues and practices to do with orientation and the rooting of representations in place. Our pilot work in Southville, shows a rich potential for commenting, describing, considering and telling stories about place and about living in a place. The accounts emerge out of a consideration of place and different stories appear to emerge from considering maps or being in the place. Further consideration is needed of this shaping of what gets told (or not, in what ways and how the context affects this, for example, through using a map or through walking. We continue to consider different ways of relating story to place and considering how this influences what is told. Our ongoing work with this group, has focused on one period of time, the Second World War and for this project accounts have emerged through discussion of that period and have then been located. The relationship between consideration of place and what gets told has to be considered along side all the other dynamics of collaborative media production.

Mediascapes are intended to be experienced in the environment from which certain views, artefacts, buildings or spaces are picked out for attention. The resulting itinerary is what might be thought of as a spatial story which draws out one story of place or one group's story of place or journey through a place. To experience (and in some respects to produce) these stories of place, it is necessary to be located physically, to move around and to make sense of the collage of different accounts.

To what extent this is a new understanding or experience or story of a place or to what extent this might appear to be a disparate series of recordings, depends perhaps on the local knowledge of place and generalised knowledge of (English) urban places. Further questions arise regarding how this might impact on local understandings of place through the accounts of that place and through moving through the place as well as hearing these accounts. Other people experiencing the mediascapes in situ could be expected to be drawn to and want to know more about different artefacts, buildings etc. and to have different perspectives on particular sites. Ongoing production of mediascapes with different groups in the local area could record a rich range of perspectives and stories. In this process it would be important to consider which aspects of community or local experiences are foregrounded and which are ignored or disguised through located media production.

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12

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